

Relationship between the Restrainer and the Holy Spirit (An Identity inquisition into 2 Thessalonians 2:7)

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ABSTRACT: The word ‘Restrainer’ derived from the Greek word ‘katechon’ or ‘katechōn’ has the potency to put the upsurge of immorality on hold in the contemporary society according to Apostle Paul. Of course, Paul says that His presence on earth gives man breathing space relative to full blown moral decadence that will be occasioned by the son of perdition in the last days. Accordingly, the contemporary society is like a bubble that is waiting to burst; in the face of moral decadence that has permeated into its fibers. For Paul, the comprehensiveness of such evil days will manifest as part of eschatological events. Of course, the removal of the Restrainer from the way of the son of perdition will expose the full control of the Devil. This obstructor had since been interpreted variously among scholars. Some do not know who or what is meant, while others stir middle course on the matter. This vagary of opinions a problem facing the Church calls for the establishment of the proper personification of the concept. Conclusions in this research were derived from related literature, journal articles and oral participatory interviews that were analysed in the contextual light of Pauline postulation in his second epistle to the Thessalonians. This paper found that the Holy Spirit restrains people from the tendency of going into full acts of immorality, so He fits the description of the Restrainer, for that this paper is of the opinion that the Restrainer is the same person as the Holy Spirit.

Keywords: Identity inquiry, Pauline Restrainer, textual evaluation of 2Thess. 2:7

Date of Submission: 24-03-2019

Date of acceptance: 08-04-2019

I. INTRODUCTION

There is no gain saying the fact that morality as a societal fabric is fast collapsing on daily bases too. For instance, the United States that was often considered one of the world’s leading nations of the world, sadly, is now more and more leading the world in immorality. Great nations often reflect great character and purpose. But when their standards and values decline and decay, their days are numbered. When families are strong and parents instil true values and godly character in their children, the nation is strong. But when a society abandons traditional "family values," history shows that its Day of Judgment looms.¹ From its beginning, the United States has found its core values in the pages of the Bible. British historian Paul Johnson explained:

*"Hence, though the Constitution and the Bill of Rights made no provision for a state church—quite the contrary—there was an implied and unchallenged understanding that America was a religious country, that the republic was religious not necessarily in its forms but in its bones, that it was inconceivable that it could have come into existence, or could continue and flourish, without an overriding religious sentiment pervading every nook and cranny of its society. This religious sentiment was based on the Scriptures and the Decalogue was embodied in the moral consensus of the Judeo-Christian tradition and manifested itself in countless forms of mainly Christian worship"*²

America of all people had in the recent past demonstrated in clear terms that there is a great deal of distortion in her moral and spiritual equilibrium by her legalization of same sex marriage. Other prevailing social ills like arms running, terrorism, Cultism and so on across the globe are further pointers to the evil days ahead. The Bible had obviously declared that in these last days more terrible things will be happening. However, contemporarily, it is only the presence of the God’s Spirit in the church; as in individual believers, that has been acting a check on the full blooming of the days of tribulation that are yet to come as indicators show.³ The comprehensiveness of such evil days will come at the removal of the Restrainer from the way of the son of perdition (i.e. at rapture). “Nearly all of the popular solutions to the problem of the restrainer’s identity have assumed that the man of lawlessness is being held back by the restrainer.”⁴

The confusion of the Thessalonians was not about the coming of that lawless one, but over the rumor regarding the arrival of the day of Yahweh. Accordingly, Paul is explaining that the Messiah's parousia has not yet occurred because, in fact, other prophesied events must be fulfilled first. So, "the coming of Christ and our gathering to him" are being restrained.⁵

Despite the fact that scholars agree that parousia is yet to take place Randy's last a submission from which it is deducible that the restrainer is a factor restraining the rapture than restraining the full-scale manifestation of lawlessness as the passage implies is not acceptable. However, this really main challenge this research had battled.

Research Frame Work

This research had devoted some pages to do among other things an exegesis of the passage that projects the Restrainer and cleared some related terms

The Restrainer and the Restrained

The Apostle Paul utilizes several temporal adverbs in the text of 2 Thessalonians 2 which strikingly points to his literary intentionality. (In the diagram above, the temporal adverbs run down the centre and are coloured red.) Surely Paul's use of no less than five temporal adverbs is an intentional textual clue to his meaning! Of these five temporal adverbs, the last four are particularly illuminating. This "only...now, until...then" sequence is perhaps the most emphatic textual device of 2 Thessalonians 2. It serves to distinguish between the present and the future activity of the restrainer -- in the present, he is "holding back" the Lord's return "only now", but in the future ("until...then"), he will be revealed to the world as "the Lawless One." Paul dramatizes this distinction by placing the words "now" and "until" back to back in the original language -- he is restraining the day of Yahuwah "only...now, until" the time when he arrives and is "then" revealed.⁶ He wrote to his Thessalonian audience reminding them thus, "and now you know what is holding...back" (2:6). The word restrainer according to KJV, or holding back by NIV, is found in the original Greek language in 2 Thessalonian 2 verses 6 and 7 in a present participle from the verb *katechw* (cat echo).

The normal meaning of *katechw* (*katecho*) in the New Testament is well established by its frequent usage, especially by Luke and Paul. The BAG Greek lexicon lists the primary lexical range of this word as follows: "to hold back," "prevent from going away," "hinder," "hold down," "suppress," "restrain," "check," or, "to hold fast," "keep," "retain," "possess," "confine in prison," "occupy." The normal meaning of *katechw* (*katecho*) seems to be rather well established. In the passage under our scrutiny, then, some unidentified entity is "holding onto," "holding down," "holding back," "hindering" or "delaying" something.⁷

From Rogers' contribution to the original language, it is deducible that the Restrainer performs the duty of delaying or suspending the action of some sort. The action could be that of a human factor or any other factor that can delay an action from being consummated. Rogers opines that this passage applies to the second coming of Christ "So, "the coming of Christ and our gathering to him" are being restrained. Thus, verse 6 should be understood to say, "and now you know what is holding him (Christ) back," or even, "now you know what is holding it (the day of Yahuwah) back."⁸ But a careful analysis of verses 7-9 of the passage in question that reads thus, 2Th 2:7-9 "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let until he is taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,"

Exegesis on II Thessalonians 2: 7

(a) Authorship and Date of the second epistle to the Thessalonians

The second epistle to the Thessalonians is an address from Apostle Paul, in 50 CE, directed towards the correction of the impression and problems of the eminence of Parousia which left some Thessalonian Christians at sea relative to the urgency that first letter to them portrayed or interpretation of the same by false teachers. This eschatological expression needed Paul's second address to put the records straight against false teachers. It was observed that there were attendant problems inherent with the false interpretation of his First letter in its fourth chapter about the coming back of the Lord. These problems included such as Laziness, Celibacy Busy-boding and other side ills. This also may have been the work of the enemies of gospel truth hence he would resist whoever involved whether angels or human beings.⁹ Indeed Wallace commenting on the relationship between the first and second letters of Paul to the Thessalonians says

Second Thessalonians does not have nearly as widespread acceptance as does 1 Thessalonians. After the Pastoral Epistles and Ephesians, in fact, 2 Thessalonians is the most doubted book in the corpus Paulinum. The reasons for this doubt, as well as the reasons why many NT scholars accept the authenticity of 2 Thessalonians, need to be examined.¹⁰

In 1 Thess. 3:1-6, Paul tells his audience that the sending of Timothy was what prompted a letter to the Thessalonians. When Timothy returned to Paul, the apostle's heart was warmed and he penned his first letter to the believers at Thessalonica.

It was occasioned by an entirely different set of circumstances. In 2 Thess. 2:2 Paul states, "Do not be quickly shaken from your settled state, nor be disturbed by a spirit, nor by a message, nor by a letter as though from us." This verse seems to indicate the occasion for the writing of this letter. It would be unusual for Paul to mention a forged letter as a possibility unless it really had happened. Hence, in light of this verse (as well as data gleaned from Acts and 1 Thessalonians), one would like to propose the following historical reconstruction.

Purpose of the Letter

Primarily, (1) the purpose was to correct the doctrinal error that the forgery had created about the day of the Lord. But since Paul's ambassador had gone to Thessalonica originally just to check up on them, the letter reveals two other purposes as well. (2) Positive: To commend them and encourage them in their perseverance in the faith; (3) Negative: To rebuke those who, because of their eschatological self-deception (viz., they believed that since the day of the Lord had come the Lord's return must take place soon), had abused this doctrine for their own gain and were expunging off the whole church.¹¹

II Thessalonians was written at Corinth not long after I Thessalonians, for both Timothy and Silas are still with Paul (i, 1), and the silence of the Acts shows that once Paul left Corinth, Silas was not again his companion in the ministry. There seem to be allusions in iii, 2, to the troublous stay of a year and a half at Corinth (Acts, xviii); in ii, 14, to the letter quite recently written to the Thessalonians; and in iii, 7-9, to the ministry of Paul among them as not long passed.¹²

The Restrainer

The beginning of our dilemma on the identity of the Restrainer precipitates from the fact that Paul did not mention the "restrainer" that is holding back sin and lawlessness. What or who that restraining force is, Paul does not say specifically in this letter. Many have speculated as to the identity of the restrainer, naming the restraining force as 1) human government; 2) gospel preaching; 3) the binding of Satan; 4) the providence of God; 5) the Jewish state; 6) the church; 7) the Holy Spirit; and 8) Michael. Whatever now restrains the Antichrist of vv. 3, 4, 8-10 from being revealed in the fullness of his apostasy and evil must be more than human or even angelic power. The power that holds back Satan from bringing the final apostasy and unveiling of his Satan-possessed false Christ (the Antichrist) must be supernatural. It must be God's power in operation that holds back Satan, so that the "man of sin," "the son of destruction" (v. 3) won't be able to come until God permits it by removing the restraining power. The reason for the restraint was so that the Antichrist would be revealed at God's appointed time and no sooner, just as was Christ (Gal. 4:4) because God controls Satan.¹³

The varying opinions of New Testament scholars on the same issue compounded issues. However, investigation into the subject matter proves that the noun form of the subject is derived from the root verb restrain from two Greek words *κατέχων* (katechon) or *κατέχων* (katechōn) employed by Paul attracting and for the Restrainer as with the neuter article 'τὸ' indicates the masculine article ὁ employed by Saint Paul "referred to as both neuter τὸ κατέχων (to katechon), "what is restraining") and masculine (ὁ κατέχων [ho katechōn]"He who now restrains")"^{14 15} The first value the Restrainer is at least a thing while the second value brings it close to a masculine noun- a person or any other masculine subject that may share gender a person. This is one of the special futures of eschatology. The doing verb 'restrain' means to hold back from or control in doing something. Restrainer suggests holding back by force or persuasion from acting or from going to extremes (restrained themselves from laughing). Check implies restraining or impeding a progress, activity, or impetus (trying to check government spending). Curb suggests an abrupt or drastic checking (learn to curb your appetite). Bridle implies keeping under control by subduing or holding in (bridle an impulse to throw the book down).

According to Rogers' view on the above passage "Paul holds out the post-tribulation parousia of the Messiah at the time of the rapture of the church".¹⁶ And relating to the text of 2 Thessalonians 2, one is faced with a difficult reading, which over the centuries many scholars have been stumped by its meaning. A casual reading of these verses in the English Bible translations leaves the impression that the man of lawlessness is being held back from making his appearance by some unnamed person, force or event.¹⁷ Attempt to pry into the identity of the Restrainer in the past points to Rome. According to Barnes, tradition has it that,

...that which hindered was the Roman empire: this tradition might have been derived even from the apostle himself; and therefore the primitive Christians, in the public offices of the Church, prayed for its peace and welfare, as knowing that, when the Roman empire should be dissolved and broken in pieces,

*the empire of the man of sin would be raised upon its ruins... The former began to take effect at the Reformation... Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, Lactantius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose, Hilary, Jerome, Augustine, and Chrysostom, give much the same interpretation that has here been given of the whole passage... that it is agreeable to the tradition of the primitive Church...*¹⁸

While Barnes is of the opinion that Rome is implied, Clerk remains uncertain about the identity of the Restrainer stating that Verse 7; (For the mystery of iniquity doth already work)

There is a system of corrupt doctrine, which will lead to the general apostasy, already in existence, but it is a mystery; it is as yet hidden; it dares not show itself, because of that which hindereth or withholdeth. But when that which now restraineth shall be taken out of the way, then shall that wicked one be revealed-it will then be manifest who he is, and what he is.¹⁹

Guthrie (1970: 1163) brought in yet a new perspective to this identity palaver by insinuating that the Holy Spirit of God was likely intended than the indistinguishable identity with which Paul had suspended his readers. But he twisted the thought by says “it is less plausible that the Holy Spirit is intended”.²⁰ This paper hoped Guthrie was going to make the subject matter a bit explicit but he expressed the same indecision hence he stopped short at Pauline suspended ideology. However, he admitted that there is ambiguity in the passage as it relates to the definiteness of the identity of the Restrainer.

Above all, the demise of many of the believers to whom the letter was addressed posed a question as to the authenticity of the urgency the first later purported. The idea that they were to be alive to see or experience the Parousia being paramount seemed to lose grip on the church. On this note, the church queried of the plight of those who had died without experiencing Parousia.

Richison in recent comment on the passage has it that

*... The lawlessness of our time is the seed of the destruction that will come in the Tribulation. When God takes the church indwelt by the Holy Spirit in the Rapture, all restraint against law will break down. Children will hate parents and parents hate children. Order and trust in business will break down. Great numbers of people will revolt against the government. Anarchy will be the norm. Above all, revolt against Jesus Christ will be the most important value in society. Jesus is the target of Satan. He has been Satan's target since the fall of man (Genesis 3:15). Satan will attack the Word of God and all that it represents.*²¹

These historical records above could not stop the researchers from attempting other possible identification as – the Holy Spirit – acting through the Church. The reason for this inference is hinged on the fact that Rome by character had already been the persecutor of the Church. She had done a number of unprintable and unpalatable things to the Church including extra judicial killings and other persecutions, before Constantine's 313 AD declaration that reduced the awful plight of the Church.²² This angle of reasoning appeals also to the fact that the activities of the man of prediction may not only have been politically encapsulated. It rather, for this paper, has a broader perspective which is more globally reaching than mere Roman politics over Palestine and or the then known world. It is the opinions of this paper that immorality and other acts of conscience-less-ness could be the property of this scenario. It is the added opinion of this paper that the full unveiling of the son of perdition looks like when Satan will be let loose at the end of the millennial reign of Christ and his Saints. This time shamelessness will become the order of the day more than ever.

This research found safe landing for its opinion in the words of Willmington²³ in his answer to the question, ‘Who or what is this powerful Restrainer?’ He States inter alia three theories to include “(a)... human government. However, this is unlikely for Satan already exercises a strong influence upon the Kingdom of Mankind (Matt. 4: 8). (b) ...the angels. This too is remote (Jude 1:9) and (c) ... the Holy Spirit. This is by far the most logical conclusion”.²⁴ He courageously settled for the Holy Spirit as the restrainer. Buttressing this point Willmington quotes Ryrie as writing that the tribulation argument is simply this. The Restrainer is God. And the instrument of restraining is God-indwelt Church (Eph. 4: 6, for God indwelling; Gal. 2:20 for Christ indwelling; I Cor.6:19 for spirit indwelling). It should be remembered that Christ said of the divinely indwelt and empowered Church that, ‘the gates of hell shall not prevail against it’ (Matt. 16:18) so we can say this indwelt, empowered church is an adequate restraining instrument against the forces of darkness... Since the restrainer is ultimately God, and since God indwells in all Christians either He is withdrawn from the hearts of the believers while they are left on earth to go through the tribulation, or else when He is withdrawn all believers are taken with Him. Since it is impossible that the believers will be ‘dis-indwelt’, the only alternative is that the believers too will be taken out of the way before the appearance of the Man of sin, which signals the start of the tribulation²⁵

This is true when compared in the light of the fact that He (the Holy Spirit) shall abide with the Church for ever. As long as the believers are still here the Holy Spirit will remain with the church. This is true in view of the fact that so many unbelievers, though in their unbelief still distinguish between the morally upright and

desire to be like them but for their master who would always make it difficult if not impossible for them to attain such a divine height.

Granted the indisputable presence and manifestation of the Holy Spirit in today's Church one would venture to posit that the acknowledgment of the person of the Holy Spirit and his presence can do a lot for the new age as well as keep the church focused. One is making this conclusion on grounds that the Christian is the light and salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13ff), meaning that the peace of the earth is dependent on them.

If so, the added responsibility to influence the world for good remains an inevitable obligation. It also may hold that for any Christian to strive above ordinary attitudinal level unto the excellence of living, the one must remain in tune with the Holy Spirit. This connection is basic, in the light of the functions of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

It follows, therefore, that the reason why one still has some breathing space on earth as per the non-unleashing of the full weight of the devil's wickedness on the earth is that the Holy Spirit is still here. Common sense may, therefore, compel one to believe and accept the reality of the presence and contemporaneous activities of the Holy Spirit in the present day church. One needs to be reminded the ever abiding Spirit of God promised in John 14: 16 "And I will pray for the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor, to be with you for ever", and fulfilled in Acts 2 will only expire on earth when the carriers of the Holy Spirit are lifted from here below.

This Research compelled one to re-examine the text above in the light of the Church's conceptions about the Holy Spirit relative to the church. More compelling also is the conflict arising from Pentecostal and Charismatic movements within the mainline churches. This situation also accounts for part of the reasons for the proliferation of churches and mixed fire being burnt among believers today which calls for caution. It might not be out of place, however, to mention that the lukewarm attitudes found among the mainline churches could have been as a result of her neglect of the promise of the father or outright ignorance resulting from ill concepts of her founding fathers.

Concerning the society II Thessalonians 2: 7 makes it clear that the society is contemporaneously manageable because of the Restrainer. Attempt to pry into the identity of the Restrainer in the past points to Rome. A tradition has it that

...that which hindered was the Roman empire: this tradition might have been derived even from the apostle himself; and therefore the primitive Christians, in the public offices of the Church, prayed for its peace and welfare, as knowing that, when the Roman empire should be dissolved and broken in pieces, the empire of the man of sin would be raised upon its ruins... The former began to take effect at the Reformation... Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, Lactantius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose, Hilary, Jerome, Augustine, and Chrysostom, give much the same interpretation that has here been given of the whole passage... that it is agreeable to the tradition of the primitive Church...²⁶

While Barnes is of the opinion that Rome is implied Clerk remain uncertain about the identity of the Restrainer Verse 7. [For the mystery of iniquity doth already work] There is a system of corrupt doctrine, which will lead to the general apostasy, already in existence, but it is a mystery; it is as yet hidden; it dare not show itself, because of that which hindereth or withholdeth. But when that which now restraineth shall be taken out of the way, then shall that wicked one be revealed-it will then be manifest who he is, and what he is. See the observations at the end of this chapter. "2Th 2:17"²⁷

Guthrie brought in yet a new perspective to this identity palaver by insinuating that the Holy Spirit of God was likely intended than the indistinguishable identity with which Paul had suspended his readers. Guthrie says "it less plausible that the Holy Spirit is intended"²⁸. This paper hoped Guthrie was going to make the subject matter a bit explicit but the same indecision was expressed hence he stopped short at Pauline suspended ideology. However, he admitted that there is ambiguity in the passage as it relates to the definiteness of the identity of the Restrainer.

These historical records above lend credence to this research as it strengths possible identification of the Restrainer as – the Holy Spirit –who is acting through the Church. The reason for this inference is hinged on the fact that Rome of the character was the persecutor of the Church. She had done a number of unprintable and unpalatable things to the Church before Constantine's 313 AD religio licita declaration that reduced the awful plight of the Church.²⁹ This angle of reasoning appeals also to the fact that the activities of the man of prediction may not have been politically related. It rather has a global perspective which is far reaching than mere Roman politics over Palestine and or the then known world. It is the opinions of this paper that global immorality and other acts of conscience-less-ness are referred to by the Apostle Paul. It is the added opinions of this paper that the full unveiling of the son of perdition looks like when Satan will be let loose at the end of the millennial reign of Christ and his Saints when shamelessness will become the order of the day.

The Holy Spirit indwelling his church the contemporary society through the believers who are found in works of life restrains people from all forms of moral wickedness noticeable in the individual churches and

public life. The actualization of this hope will definitely, in turn, produce some positive impact on all segments of the society and Nigeria in particular. If the believers who occupy positions of authority in Government allow the Holy Spirit to control them there will be no reason why one cannot go all out in the battle against corruption, support Due Process even if one thinks or have proved that all Government functionaries are corrupt including the Presidency. The Spirit filled believers will always be reminded that they are stewards of the Master above. Once the Holy Spirit functions in the life of the individual Christian who will manifest as the salt and light of the world (Matthew 5.13); the society will be better for it.

Analysis of 2Thessalonian2:7-9

Selected phrases and words in passage 2Thess. 2:7-9	Analysis	Conclusion
7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work	Iniquity already in existence but not in its fullness	Not in full bloom because of the Restrainer blocking the way of the architect of ills
8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed,	Jesus coming for the rapture of the saint(Carriers of the Holy Spirit)	Removal of the restrainer will usher in the full bloom of wickedness
9 ‘Whom’	‘Whom’ son of perdition	‘Whom’ the Lord (Jesus Christ) shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.
9 Satan	son of perdition who works iniquity with power and signs and lying wonders,	Satan is the son of perdition
‘Even him’	‘Even him’ Jesus Christ	‘Even Jesus Christ’ whose coming is after the working of Satan (the son of perdition)reveals that the restrainer is working to dowses the heat of the actions of the son of perdition, so the son of lawlessness has no relationship with Christ for now.The restrainer, therefore, cannot be any other person than the Third person of the Trinity-the Holy Spirit who is the Comforter that abides till Christ comes to destroy the final works of the son of Perdition.

Ngigi unequivocally opines that “this ‘Restrainer’ is the Holy Spirit who indwells true believers in the Lord Jesus and will be taken away from the way of Son of perdition some time as part of eschatological fulfilment. This by implication the true Christians in whom He dwells will be also taken to meet Christ in the air”.³⁰

It had been a lingering inquisition as to ‘who’ or ‘what’ the relationship between the Restrainer is as found in II Thessalonians 2:7 and the Holy Spirit. Different shades of scholarly opinions had been advanced on the obstructor. He had since been translated variously among scholars; as some do not even know who or what is meant, while others stir middle course in the matter of his identity. These vagaries of opinions remain a problem facing the Church (generic) that needs the establishment of the proper concept. And as there is no end to learning, this research inquisition into the identity of the Restrainer and His relationship with the Holy Spirit remains relevant.

This Research compelled the Researchers to re-examine the text above in the light of the Church’s concept of the connectional relationship between the Restrainer and the Holy Spirit, and His relevance to the contemporary Church. More compelling also is the conflict arising from Pentecostal and Charismatic movements within the mainline churches. This contemporary religious atmosphere calls for an inquiry into all things Biblical as to guide the church from 21st century possible heresy hence this contribution.

Accepting that the function of the Restrainer (the Holy Spirit - II Thess.2: 7) as the name implies is to reduce the evil functions of the man of perdition - the devil. It follows, therefore, that the reason why one still has some breathing space on earth as per the non-unleashing of the full weight of the devil’s wickedness on the earth is that the Holy Spirit is still here. Common sense may, therefore, compel one to believe and accept the

reality of the presence and activities of the Holy Spirit. If allowed in the churches the Holy Spirit will restrain people from all forms of moral weakness noticeable in the individual church members, which in turn will definitely produce some positive impact on the Nigerian society.

Moral Restraint as a tool

Having established the fact that the Restrainer is the same person of the Holy Spirit whose mission also includes “World Evangelization”³¹ it follows that through the same Holy Spirit motivated evangelization Christian ethics spreads making the dark world brighter than it can hide evil conducts. This in its right and force brings pressure to bear on human conscience, which is the seat of the moral content of human conduct, intentions, or character with regards to feeling of obligation to do right or be good.³² Human consciousness as the seat of moral goodness or blameworthiness³³ and or the “Inner Light” of God²⁸ 30, is the channel through which Restrainer moderates the activities of man. Moral restraint is the tool that produces a new way of life which invariably is the life of Christ. A life of high moral standard and a demand to reflect the beatitude in Matt.5 and the Ten Commandments in appreciation of what Christ did for mankind. While the Restrainer restrains the man of perdition He is also busy creating in the life of the believers the strength of character or morals that make the earth habitable for now till the Rapture.

II. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research remains resolute that of the fact that the Restrainer referred to by the Apostle Paul is the same person as the Holy Spirit. This report also opines that the Restrainer will remain on earth with the believer in Christ as long as they may stay on earth. It is one’s added opinion that same person through the believers sanitizes the society by compelling the believers to express high morality which challenges darkness at all times. In the final analysis, the presence of the believer on planet earth by implication restrains the man of Lawlessness. Finally it is the strong opinion of this paper that Rapture which will involve the lifting of the believer in whom dwells the Restrainer will open the earth for full manifestation of the son of lawlessness which will in turn usher in the expected Unitary Market and the introduction ...of the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six- Beast “666” (Revelation 13:18)

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Ukoma A. N. " Relationship between the Restrainer and the Holy Spirit (An Identity inquisition into 2 Thessalonians 2:7)." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*. vol. 24 no. 04, 2019, pp. 18-25.