



Notes

If you have questions during the week, please drop us an e-mail at jim@calvaryroswell.com or phil@calvaryroswell.com

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Thru the Scriptures 2006-08



2 Thessalonians 1-3

November 15th-21st, 2007

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Ti 3:16-17)

2 Thessalonians—

[In this second letter,] Paul reminds the Thessalonians that God has not forgotten them, that he is going to straighten out the world at last. When people go through time of great persecution, they say, “Isn’t there going to be a time when this injustice is corrected? How can a man like Hitler get away with killing so many Jews? How can a man like Stalin get away with killing so many of his own people? Why does a man like Saddam Hussein stay in power? Why doesn’t God punish these horrible evildoers now? Why does He wait so long to straighten things out?

But Paul says, “Have faith! Be patient! A day is coming when a threefold repayments will be made: First, believers will be repaid for their sufferings, because these trials build their endurance and make them worthy of the coming kingdom of God. Second, the unbelieving will be repaid for their unbelief and the misused opportunities in life; they will face the righteous Judge who knows their hearts, and He will exclude them from His presence. Third, the Lord Himself will be repaid, for He will “ be glorified in his holy people and... marveled at among all those who have believed” (2 Thess. 2:10)

Stedman, Ray C. , *Adventuring Through the Bible.*

Helpful Study Links:

Additional Commentary: (Great Resource!)

http://preceptaustin.org/2_thessalonians_commentaries.htm

Sermon Links:

“The Growth of Faith” by C H Spurgeon

[http://preceptaustin.org/](http://preceptaustin.org/spurgeon_on_2_thessalonians.htm#tgof)

[spurgeon_on_2_thessalonians.htm#tgof](http://preceptaustin.org/spurgeon_on_2_thessalonians.htm#tgof)

Commentary:

The commentary used throughout this booklet is

With the Word Bible Commentary

by Warren W. Wiersbe.

ISBN 0-8407-9108-9



Author: Paul (1:1, 3:17)



Time: It appears that 2 Thessalonians was written quite soon after 1 Thessalonians, perhaps within 12 months. This would place the date of composition in the early a.d. 50s and would make this epistle the third of Paul's canonical writings (assuming Galatians was his first).



Theme: Cure Confusion and Encouragement in Suffering

The Confusion:

2 Thessalonians is the sequel to 1 Thessalonians both in time and in Biblical understanding. Not long after receiving 1 Thessalonians from Paul, some of the Thessalonians believers fell prey to false teaching, thinking the final day of the Lord had already begun. Paul wrote this brief letter to correct that error by pointing out that certain identifiable events will precede the final day of the Lord.

The Encouragement:

The church in Thessalonica was undergoing a serious season of suffering. God encourages them that all their persecution and suffering would ultimately be worth it all. Throughout the letter, the question of how all their pain could be a good and righteous part of God's plan is addressed.

Practically, he also addressed the problem of those who refused to work because they thought the end was near or already upon them. Paul encouraged all the Thessalonians Christians to attend to their labors and not to live off others.

Putting it in Context

Consider the situation that these Christians found themselves in – imagine going through this yourself. The Thessalonians went through much criticism and hostility because they had believed Paul's message about Christ. The message of great blessing in Christ seemed a bit contradictory to their experience of persecution.

Paul's brief second letter to the Thessalonians met three crucial needs. These needs are reflected in the following questions that were probably being asked by the Thessalonians.

- Is God doing the right thing by allowing believers to suffer so much?
- What is God doing about the evil people who are persecuting believers?
- Have the terrible days of the antichrist already arrived?
- Is it really worth being godly when it brings so much pain?

The joy the Thessalonians experienced at the beginning of their Christian walk soon met with the painful and unjust realities of life. And when this happens, believers today, like them, have some pressing needs to be met. This letter should help believers to become honestly and deeply convinced that what God is allowing to happen is part of his process of justice. The temptation is to quietly think that God is not being fair. But the proper balance will come when believers learn to be content with present suffering without blaming God. They must anticipate the future judgment of their enemies while still witnessing to them and seeking their salvation. Another need the letter addresses is how to keep going during the tough times. The goal is not a tight-fisted teeth-clenched resignation to life's problems, but rather a joyful, optimistic, and very wise assessment of the good and the bad in life with a view to maximizing all the good for Christ. This letter should help believers learn to keep their eyes both on the realities of this age and the rewards of the next.

Outline 2 Thessalonians

Second Thessalonians may be divided into three major sections:

Paul's encouragement in persecution (ch. 1);

Paul's explanation of the day of the Lord (ch. 2);

Paul's exhortation to the church (ch. 3).

I. Salutation (1:1–2)

II. Comfort in Persecution (1:3–12)

A. Encouragement (1:3–4)

B. Exhortation (1:5–12)

III. Correction of Prophetic Error (2:1–17)

A. Crisis (2:1–2)

B. Correction (2:3–12)

C. Comfort (2:13–17)

IV. Practical Exhortations (3:1–15)

A. Regarding Prayer (3:1–5)

B. Regarding Undisciplined Living (3:6–15)

V. Benediction (3:16–18)

Daily Bible Study

Friday, November 16th, 2007

Passage for today: 2 Thessalonians 1

Questions to Ponder

1. What does chapter one tell us about the Thessalonians' love and faith? What did it prompt Paul to do?
2. How would you describe your own love and faith? Is it in a state of growth or decline?

With the word Bible Commentary

Along with persecutions on the outside, the church was facing problems on the inside. Some people were suffering great trials for their faith. Others had quit working and were idlers. Still others were harboring the wrong idea that they were experiencing the “day of the Lord.” Paul wrote this letter to encourage the suffering (chap. 1), enlighten the confused (chap. 2), and warn the careless (chap. 3).

In times of trial, the essential thing is your faith (v. 3). God will see you through, so trust His promises. Remember that others are watching you and you can encourage them (v. 4). You may be tempted to fight back, but leave that to the Lord (vv. 5–9).

The lost will be eternally separated from God's glory (v. 9), while the saved will bring glory to the Lord (v. 10). Meanwhile, be sure that God is glorified by your life today (vv. 11–12).

“No pain, no palm; no thorns, no throne; no gall, no glory; no cross, no crown.”

William Penn

—Wiersbe, W. W. (1997, c1991). *With the word Bible commentary* (2 Th 1:1). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Daily Bible Study

Saturday, November 17th, 2007

Passage for today: 2 Thessalonians 2

Questions to Ponder

1. What aspects of the Lord's return were the Thessalonians troubled about? What advice and warnings were they given so they would have a proper attitude towards the Lord's return?
2. In verse 15, what are they exhorted to do? Does this apply to us as well?

With the word Bible Commentary

Satan wants to shake the saints and make them lose their confidence, and one of his chief weapons is deception. Someone claimed to have a letter from Paul saying that the day of the Lord was present, and others said they had messages through the Spirit (1 Thess. 5:21). The believers forgot what Paul had taught them (v. 5), so they were trapped by the lies of the enemy.

The "times and seasons" of God's prophetic plan are in God's hands (Acts 1:6–8), and He has everything in control. A sequence of events is sketched here to assure us that the church is destined for salvation and not judgment (v. 13; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9). The Spirit of God in this world is keeping God's program on schedule.

Beware "prophets" who contradict what God has already said in His Word (v. 15). If you stand on the Word, you will not fall for the devil's lies. God's people can face the future with assurance, hope, and comfort because of the unfailing grace of God (vv. 13–17).

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Daily Bible Study

Sunday, November 18th, 2007

Passage for today: 2 Thessalonians 3

Questions to Ponder

1. What does Paul ask for at the beginning of this chapter? Why does he ask for this? What does this tell us about the place of prayer and the work of the ministry?
2. How would the Lord apply this to your life within the body of Christ?

With the word Bible Commentary

Conflict (1–2). Anyone who seeks to live for the Lord will have enemies (2 Tim. 3:12). The weapon we use is prayer, and the purpose for which we pray is the sharing of the Word of God (Col. 4:2–3). Not everybody in the church at Thessalonica was devoted to the Lord, but Paul still asked for their prayers.

Confidence (3–5). God’s faithfulness to us is the basis for our faithfulness to Him. If we love Him, we will keep His Word, and we will be patient in times of trial.

Command (6–15). The word *command* (vv. 4, 6, 10, 12) means “a military order.” Some of the Christian soldiers in the church were breaking rank and disobeying orders, and Paul had to admonish them. Those who cannot work must be cared for by others, but those who *will not* work must be disciplined. Never let the bad example of others keep you from being a good example.

“Work is not primarily a thing one does to live, but the thing one lives to do. It is, or should be, the full expression of the worker’s faculties, the thing in which he finds spiritual, mental and bodily satisfaction, and the medium in which he offers himself to God.”

Dorothy L. Sayers

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Daily Bible Study

Monday, November 19th, 2007

Passage for today: 2 Thessalonians 1

Questions to Ponder

1. How did the Thessalonian's respond to suffering and tribulation? Is this a common response? What does our response to persecution and suffering say about the reality of our walk with the Lord?
2. According to this chapter, what two things will the Lord do at His return?

With the word Bible Commentary

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Daily Bible Study

Tuesday, November 20th, 2007

Passage for today: 2 Thessalonians 2

Questions to Ponder

1. What is the primary motive of the antichrist? What methods will Satan use to reveal him? Why will many people be deceived?
2. In what ways is the “mystery of lawlessness” already at work in the world? What is restraining him?

With the word Bible Commentary

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Daily Bible Study

Wednesday, November 21st, 2007

Passage for today: 2 Thessalonians 3

Questions to Ponder

1. What example does Paul give us in verses 8 and 9?
2. Why did Paul choose to do this? What kind of life are we called to? How are we to respond to those who do not obey these instructions?

With the word Bible Commentary

Conflict (1–2). Anyone who seeks to live for the Lord will have enemies (2 Tim. 3:12). The weapon we use is prayer, and the purpose for which we pray is the sharing of the Word of God (Col. 4:2–3). Not everybody in the church at Thessalonica was devoted to the Lord, but Paul still asked for their prayers.

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"Abounding in Love."

2 Thessalonians 1:3-4

When you face trials of many kinds, do you find it hard to love those who are closest to you? Here in 2 Thessalonians 1:3, Paul expresses his thanks to God for the church in Thessalonica. He said that his thanksgiving was fitting (or due them). But why? Paul gave thanks for them because he saw that their faith was growing exceedingly and because he witnessed that *their love toward one another was abounding*. Paul was thankfully excited because he was watching these young converts display a mark of true growth in Christ—they were loving one another even in the midst of trials.

He described their love as *abounding*. Saint, is your love toward others *abounding*? The Greek word for abounding used here gives the idea that love was not only being poured into their own lives, but it was also overflowing out of them toward their fellow believers around them. In other words, they were being used as vessels of God's love. But how could that be—they were in the midst of persecution and tribulations (v. 4)?

When I look into my own life, I see that this truly is something that has to be done by the Lord in and through me. I have noticed about myself that when I face trials of many kinds, my first response is usually to clam up and to try to hoard all of God's love for myself. This is only fitting (in my mind) because "*I'm going through a tough time and need all the love I can get.*" But this is not the way of our crucified Savior, Jesus Christ. Nor is it the life He calls His disciples to live out during times of struggle.

In John 13:34, 35 Jesus called His disciples to love one another as He loved them. He told them that in doing this—in loving one another selflessly—that others would look upon them and know that they were Christians. And in Romans 5:5, Paul wrote that hope (the longing expectancy for heaven) does not disap-

point us. Why?—because as we hope for heaven more and more in the midst of our trials, we find more and more that the love of God is being poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom He so graciously gave to us. That passage in context is talking about trials. And Paul is essentially expressing the same thing from within himself that he was seeing being exhibited in the lives of his beloved brethren in Thessalonica.

Today, are you going through a struggle of some sort? If so, are you finding God's love pouring out of you into others? As you read this epistle this week, keep in mind that these Christians were under severe persecution and trials and yet the Lord was moving through them in such a way that they were still able to love one another in the midst of their struggles. They were set apart from the world by this display of faith. And for Paul (and the Lord in heaven), this was reason to rejoice.

Saint, set your heart on the love that the Father has for you. See how graciously He has poured it out on you in His sacrifice. Let His love work within you to change your heart, and then allow that love to flow through you—whether in good times or bad. May our Great and Mighty God love through you this week as you endure hardship for His name and then love His people as He has loved you!

"Everlasting consolation."

2 Thessalonians 2:16

Taken from *Morning and Evening*

By Charles Spurgeon

"Consolation." There is music in the word: like David's harp, it charms away the evil spirit of melancholy. It was a distinguished honour to Barnabas to be called "the son of consolation"; nay, it is one of the illustrious names of a greater than Barnabas, for the Lord Jesus is "the consolation of Israel." "Everlasting consolation"-here is the cream of all, for the eternity of comfort is the crown and glory of it. What is this "everlasting consolation"? It includes a sense of pardoned sin. A Christian man has received in his heart the witness of the Spirit that his iniquities are put away like a cloud, and his transgressions like a thick cloud. If sin be pardoned, is not that an everlasting consolation? Next, the Lord gives his people an abiding sense of acceptance in Christ. The Christian knows that God looks upon him as standing in union with Jesus. Union to the risen Lord is a consolation of the most abiding order; it is, in fact, everlasting. Let sickness prostrate us, have we not seen hundreds of believers as happy in the weakness of disease as they would have been in the strength of hale and blooming health? Let death's arrows pierce us to the heart, our comfort dies not, for have not our ears full often heard the songs of saints as they have rejoiced because the living love of God was shed abroad in their hearts in dying moments? Yes, a sense of acceptance in the Beloved is an everlasting consolation. Moreover, the Christian has a conviction of his security. God has promised to save those who trust in Christ: the Christian does trust in Christ, and he believes that God will be as good as his word, and will save him. He feels that he is safe by virtue of his being bound up with the person and work of Jesus.