

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

II THESSALONIANS 1:1-12

LESSON: A GROWING CONFIDENCE

—March 31, 2019



INTRODUCTION— I THESSALONIAN 5

1ST—5:25-28 The final exhortation for behavior is:

- *Pray for us (ministers).* Paul does not say please or if you will. He emphatically charges this. He says "us" not just for me—but for all God's chosen ministers. What an impact would be made upon the world if we obeyed this one charge (5:25).
- *Greet all Christian brethren with a holy kiss* (greet them immediately with care). The point is that affection and care are to be expressed between believers (5:26).
- *Read this epistle to all the holy brethren* (believers). Why was that necessary for Paul to give this exhortation? This was an oath by the Lord to be read aloud. And Paul charges all the brethren to be made accountable to the Lord. We must see to it that every believer hear the Word of God. Reading it aloud gives everyone the opportunity to hear his message because it would answer a lot of their questions and offer needed encouragement. What a challenge to the churches! To provide ministries that will carry the Word of God out to those who are unable to worship and study at the regular service (5:27).

Paul ends it with a benediction: "*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.*" Only God's grace resting upon them can they heed and follow the exhortations (5:28).

LESSON: I. PRAISE FOR THE FAITHFUL 2 THESSALONIANS 1:1-4

2nd—1:1 Paul, and Silvanus and Timotheus unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. As we continue on to ¹Paul's second letter, to the Thessalonian body of Christ, it begins in a customary way. Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy are introduced as the people that the epistle is from. Paul is the specific author. He has the apostolic calling and authority. He also places his name first, which is typically a custom of signifying importance.

2nd—1:2 Grace unto you , and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. As Paul ends his letter in 1Thessalonians 5:28, he also begins his salutatory greeting in this second letter to the Thessalonians in the same customary way. Both grace and peace are blessings. Paul is wishing extra favor upon them from God, and *peace* that surpasses their understanding in the midst of persecution. There can be no true peace until we recognize that God has bestowed His grace upon us in completely forgiving us of all our sins in Christ Jesus.

2nd—1:3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;—Paul was in constant thanks to God. The believers should have a love that abounds and overflows toward one another that is not taken for granted. All are to be thanked in whatever capacity they are in, for we are all growing. In the letter of 1 Thessalonians 4, Paul had exhorted the church to grow more and more in love for one another. They needed the message because there was some tension in the church surrounding the Lord's return. Paul's exhortation had worked: The word "**exceedingly**" (*hyperauxanei*) means to grow beyond measure; to grow far beyond what would be expected. The church had straightened out the differences and the differing parties were now

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¹ <http://www.bridgewaybiblechurch.com/index.php/sermons/1-thessalonians-study/133-1-thessalonians-1-1> (Also taken from June 6, 2010 lesson—Witness In Daily Life.

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walking hand in hand with one another, their faith growing, and their charity (love) overflowing for one another.

This is the reason Paul thanks God for them. This kind of love...

- binds individuals together as a family—as the family of God
- binds individuals in an unbreakable union
- holds individuals with the deepest affection
- nourishes and nurtures one another
- shows concern and looks after the welfare of one another
- always cherishes one another, comforts, supports, and encourages one another regardless of differences or circumstances.

Most of us have some boundaries in our minds of how far we will go in loving someone. Limitless love is love that goes beyond those barriers. Paul gives thanks for the increase of all those graces that they were not only true Christians, but had become growing Christians. A flourishing faith in Jesus and a limitless love for other people are two vital signs for a growing spiritual life.

2nd—1:4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecution and tribulations that ye endure. All those with Paul gloried in the Thessalonians meaning the churches of God. Paul did not glory in his own gifts, nor in his labor among them, but he gloried in the grace of God which was bestowed upon them, and so his glorying was good, because all the commendation he gave to them, and the pleasure he himself felt, centered in the praise and glory of God. Why did he esteem them and thanked God? -Namely, for the increase of their faith, love, and patience. They were believers having enduring patience and strong faith in facing persecution and tribulation. The word "**patience**" (*hupomones*) means to be steadfast, to endure, and to persevere. The Thessalonian believers endured and held fast to their faith in Christ through all the persecutions and tribulations thrown against them. The word "**tribulations**" (*thlipsesin*) is a more general word than persecutions, and refers to any kind of trial or trouble. **Persecution** is a clear sign of God's coming judgment. So, the keys to surviving suffering are patience and faith. **The point is this:** the presence of God and His glory in the believer is a clear sign that God exists and is and is going to vindicate His dear believer. The Thessalonian believers were persevering and holding fast to their faith through all the trials of life: temptations, peer pressure, disease, accident, loss of job, death—whatever the trial was, they remained faithful to Christ. They did not buckle under and give into the crowd, nor to discouragement, and despair. They held on———— to their faith in Christ.

1. Their endurance and faith was a strong testimony to others, that Paul and the others boasted of them. What a testimony!
2. Their endurance and faith was a sign of God's coming judgment upon unbelievers. The believers received a supernatural strength—God's strength, when they were persecuted.

II. JUDGMENT FOR THE WICKED 2 THESSALONIANS 1:5-10

2nd—1:5a Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God... — "**Token**" (*Gr endeigma*) refers to the result of a demonstration and thus means a "**sign**", "**proof**" or "**evidence**." It would seem that from *verse 4*, it is not just the suffering, but it is their patience and faith in the persecutions and tribulations they went through that gave evidence of God's righteous judgment. God is always going to be righteous and judge righteously whether we do right or wrong. God's wise process is through purging, purifying, and perfecting us through suffering which works to make His beloved people worthy of the kingdom. Therefore, it was evident that God was with them perfecting them and developing Christian character. What happened because of this? Paul and the others gave "**glory**" to the Thessalonians, which could also certainly be understood as a sign of the way God would look upon endurance in His righteous judgment at the coming of Christ. They endured persecution and tribulations, with patience and faith in God by having the right attitude.



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2nd-1:5b ...that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer.

3. Their endurance and faith proved that the believers were counted worthy of God's kingdom which they suffered for. The phrase "**counted worthy**" (*kataxioo*) means to count, reckon, and declare worthy.

If something is important enough, you would go to the extreme to have it; you would do all it takes to get a hold of it, and even suffer for it. We should all ask ourselves this question: Is the kingdom of heaven that important to me to even suffer for it? A believer is not saved because he remains faithful through the sufferings of this life. He is saved because he believes in Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord. However, when he suffers in this world and endures through the suffering (with a right attitude), he is counted worthy of God's kingdom. He does not disappoint God. He proves his grit—that he is truly a man or a woman of God. He or she sucks it up and not take offense of the small stuff. He is worthy to enter heaven, for he or she has proven their faith. Therefore, there is a purpose in persecution when the believer's patience and faith endures to bring Christian character to give God glory.

2nd-1:6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; — Why is there to be judgment? The purpose of judgment is to rectify injustices. Much of the world's behavior (man's behavior) is evil and unjust. Therefore, God must judge, for judgment is the righteous and just thing. Not to judge would be the wrong and an unjust thing for us. He Himself is just and righteous! Therefore, His very nature demands that all the injustices and wrongs that men have inflicted upon others be judged and punished. The word "**recompense**" (*Gr antapodidōmi*) means to reward or pay back. The enemies of the gospel, those who were troubling the Thessalonians, will be judged and punished by God for the suffering they caused. God will repay those who trouble or afflict you with trouble or affliction. Just as the righteous judgment of God works to perfect believers, so it works to repay the wicked!

2nd-1:7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels. Jesus Christ is coming to give "**rest**" (*Gr thlibō*) to the believer as well as to judge the world. The word "**rest**" (*Gr anesis*) means primarily "**release**" or "**relaxation**." The believer will be released from the injustices, sufferings, and death of this world. **Note:** the Person who will execute judgment is Jesus Christ Himself.

1. Jesus' return will appear with be a spectacular reveal from heaven. The word "**revealed**" (*apokalupsei*) means to be unveiled and uncovered.
2. Jesus' return will be with His powerful mighty angels. The angels will return with Him for several purposes.
 - a. To add to the majestic glory and triumph of His person and presence.
 - b. To carry out His orders and to execute His justice and mercy.

2nd-1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:—

3. His return in judgment shall be "**In flaming fire**." Fire is a symbol of judgment. This is a reference to the brilliance and glory and holiness of His appearance—so brilliant that it will be the flaming fire of God's pure holiness. He comes with the sword of God's vengeance to destroy. Who are those to be destroyed?
 - a. Those who do not know Him; who do not have a personal relationship with Him through Jesus Christ. Instead of seeing God and coming to know Him, men have rejected Him.
 - b. Those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ will be judged.
 - i. Every person who have heard the gospel of Jesus Christ and rejected it.
 - ii. Every person who have professed the gospel of Jesus Christ but does not obey the commandments of the gospel.
 - iii. Every person who have been baptized but does not obey the commandment of the gospel.



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- iv. Every person who has joined the church and holds a membership in the church but does not obey the commandments of the gospel.

The point that stood out in the Thessalonians was their obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ no matter what.

2nd—1:9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;—The penalty of judgment will be terrible but it will be deserved. Why? Because those who are to be judged had the opportunity to know God, but they chose to deny and curse Him and to walk as they desired throughout life. Note three significant facts about the penalty and punishment of judgment.

1. The word "**who**" (*hoitines*) means persons "*who are such as*" deserve this punishment.
2. The phrase "**shall suffer punishment**" (*diken tisousin*) means to pay the penalty.
3. The words "**eternal destruction**" (*olethron aionion*) do not mean annihilation or ceasing to exist. They mean complete ruin and loss; to cut off, excluded, removed, separated, extinguished, deprived, abhorred, and banished from all the good things of life.
 - **complete ruin and loss:** from all that life should be
 - **to cut off:** from all presence of God and from the glory of His power and of heaven.
 - **excluded:** from all joy, pleasure and satisfaction. It is utter emptiness.
 - **removed:** from all companionship and associations and from all possessions. It is being left all alone and left with nothing. It is utter loneliness.
 - **separated:** from the presence of all goodness and righteousness—from God and from all those who sought after righteousness. And there is no prospect of the separation ever ending, not even for an hour.
 - **extinguished:** from love and affection. It is a hell of passion let loose.
 - **deprived:** from the Holy Spirit restraining the force of evil. It is a hell of lawlessness.
 - **abhorred:** from the bodies of glory. It is a decayed carcass.
 - **banished:** from all hope. It is being eternally lost forever, and there is no prospect of the banishment ever ending—not even for one hour.

Hell is the absence of God's presence and glory of His power.

2nd—1:10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day:—The time of the judgment is set. Note the word "**in**" (*en*). When Jesus Christ returns, His glory is going to be seen "**In His saints.**" The entire world will see the wonder and glory of...

- The height of His love.
- The depth of His mercy.
- The length of His grace.
- The breadth of His power.

Jesus will not only be glorified, but will be admired. In that day, all believers will adore and worship Him, including those in the Thessalonian church who believed Paul's testimony of the gospel.

III. PRAYER FOR THE AFFLICTED 2 THESSALONIANS 1:11-12

2nd—1:11 Wherefore, also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power. Paul's prayers are the encouragement he desires to impart to them. Only God can accomplish His will in the lives of the believers.

1. A person must be counted worthy by God. How can a person be counted worthy? No person has any worthiness of his own. If a person is to be acceptable to God, he is to approach God through faith in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. God only accepts a person as worth only if he comes in the name of Jesus Christ—believing in and trusting Jesus Christ to save him. God counts and credits us with righteousness because we come to Him in the perfect righteousness of His Son.



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2. God must complete the work of faith in us. We age, deteriorate, die, and decay. We cannot complete anything, not permanently. God has to take our initial belief in Christ...
 - a. and complete the good pleasure of His goodness in us
 - b. and complete the work of faith in us—complete it with omnipotent power

2nd—1:12 That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. The name of Christ must be glorified in us and we in Him. This simply means...

- c. we must let Him live and move and have His being in us—everyday
- d. we must live and move and have His being in us—everyday.
- e. We must let Him be glorified in us.

The result of the answer to this prayer would be that God will be glorified in the believers and that the believers will be glorified in God. All this will be accomplished by God's wonderful grace. His presence in our lives makes all the difference in the believer.

SUMMARY:

Paul's Second Epistle to the Thessalonians is in one sense a follow-up to the first letter. The Thessalonians were undergoing dreadful persecution. Though persecuted, their patience and faith did not fail, but endured! The apostle and those with him gave glory at the increase of their faith, and the abundant exercise of their charity (love). There is purpose in praise, because of the work God has done in us. There is purpose in persecution when our character is being perfected and developed even during injustices. And there is purpose in God's presence especially in that final day of His Second Coming when evil will be no more. And we will find rest. When our life is committed to bringing glory to God, we will find true purpose in life. These people are the fruit of Paul's ministry. They were walking well. We don't want to forever lose the opportunity to connect to "**Who**" gives meaning to life (**1:1-4**).

Their sufferings not only proved a judgment to come, but tried them, purified them, and proved them worthy that would perfect and develop character.

²Two principles here are established:

- **First, the righteous judgment of God:** it is righteous in His eyes, on the one hand, to reward those who suffer for His kingdom sake: and, on the other, to retaliate (pay back) those who persecute His children.

It is a righteous thing for God to punish those who trouble you. We are to leave judgment and vengeance in God's hands. God will bring rest to the believers who are persecuted. We will see God's vengeance on those who reject His Son.

- In the **second** place, **the glorious manifestation of the Lord Jesus:** All believers will look upon Him with wonder and admiration. He shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels.

And in flaming fire—the intense fire of God's holiness will consume and destroy evil. None will be able to resist at the final judgment. Our eternal fate will not be like those who have troubled us and persecuted us. They will be punished with everlasting destruction. Two reasons for judgment—(1.) they did not know God, and (2.) they did not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The wicked will not be annihilated, as some suppose.



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However, Hell is real and is a continual state of destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. The righteous in contrast will be with the Lord forever. On that final day, The Lord will be glorified in the Thessalonian believers by the power of faith, which would shine the brighter through their persecutions; and that afterwards they might be glorified in Him at the manifestation of His glory according to the grace of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. This includes us also. Because the Thessalonian Christians were in the midst of persecution and tribulation, they needed prayer. Paul assured them that he and his associates pray always for them (**1:5-10**).

When God sees that we are real and count us worthy of this calling, the name of Jesus is glorified. The calling is to see Jesus glorified in us at His coming. We find God's awesome purpose in life when He is glorified. Who we are in Jesus is more important than who we are in anything else (**1:11-12**).

APPLICATION:

Can you pass the test of persecution and tribulation with patience and faith? It can only be done by the power of God. Do not hesitate to embrace the Savior.

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