

“Introduction To The Book Of 2nd Thessalonians”

2 Thessalonians 1:1-12

Message by Michael J. Barnard

January 26, 2019

Teaching Aim: To explore the reason why Paul wrote the book of 2nd Thessalonians such a short time after writing 1st Thessalonians. To realize the importance of being on solid ground doctrinally and to see how incorrect doctrine can negatively affect our Christian walk. To recognize going through the trials of life in a godly way prove our faith and strengthen our walk with Christ. To understand the Second Coming of Christ should bring hope to every born-again believer, but terror to unbelievers.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (*BIBLE STUDY*)

Part I: The patience and faith of the Thessalonian believers in the face of persecution (2 Thess. 1:1-5)

1. The book of 2nd Thessalonians was written approximately half a year after 1st Thessalonians. Most scholars believe the book was written either late in A.D. 51 or early in A.D. 52 from the city of Corinth. What was the occasion behind this writing? (Hint: Read the introduction to 2nd Thessalonians in your study Bible.)

2. Take a moment and read **1 Thessalonians 1:1** and **2 Thessalonians 1:1-2**. What, if any, difference do you see in the text? Paul almost always begins with the words “*grace and peace.*” Why are these two words significant to every believer in Christ? What does the acrostic: “*GRACE - God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense*” mean to you? (See **Tit. 2:11-14**) Why are you thankful for the grace of God?

3. Paul’s practice was to begin his letters by thanking God for something good about the people he was writing to (**vs. 3**). Do you thank God for the people God has brought into your life? Can you thank God for something good about them? What did Paul thank God for in **verse 3**? How is **verse 3** an answer to Paul’s prayer in **1 Thess. 3:9-13**? What are some ways that God has answered prayer in your life?

4. What did the Christian love demonstrated among the persecuted Thessalonian believers lead Paul to do (**vs. 4**)? What did Paul boast about to the other churches in Macedonia and Achaia? How do you respond when you are under the gun and people are attacking you? Are you willing to suffer for Christ?

5. John MacArthur writes, *“For believers, afflictions are to be expected (cf. 1 Thess. 3:3) as they live and develop Christian character in a satanic world. Suffering is not to be thought of as evidence that God has forsaken them, but evidence that He is with them, perfecting them.”* (See **Matt. 5:10; Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 12:10**) Why do you think God allows suffering in the world? How has going through hard times in the past affected you?

6. How did the Thessalonian believers give evidence that they would be counted worthy of the kingdom of God (**vs. 5**)? Are we as Christians saved by works? If so, are we saved by our works or by the perfect work of Jesus Christ? (See **Eph. 2:8-10**) As the Thessalonian believers suffered, Paul said they proved themselves worthy of something; what was it? What do you think of when you think of the kingdom of God?

Part II: God will repay those who persecute His people, but it will be done in His way and in His perfect timing (2 Thess. 1:6-10)

1. I've heard it said by people, *“I don't get mad, I get even.”* Is this an attitude Christians should have? Why or why not? (See **Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:12-13; Rom. 12:17-21**)

2. According to **verse 7**, how will the return of Jesus Christ affect suffering believers (**vs. 7**)? Will Jesus return alone, or will the angels of heaven be with him? (See **Matt. 24:29-32**) What will the purpose of the mighty angels be?

3. What will be a telltale sign of the return of Christ (**vs. 8**)? What can we learn about the Second Coming of Christ from **Rev. 19:11-16**? What is flaming fire indicative of? On what two groups of people will Jesus Christ (the roaring Lion of Judah) take revenge? Why? Why do you think more people don't receive the good news of the Gospel?

4. What will the punishment be for those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ? What is the meaning of the word “everlasting?” Does “destruction” mean “annihilation?” What is the difference? (See **Matt. 13:36-43, 47-50**) Discuss the meaning of the following quote from R.C. Sproul, “*For the unbeliever, the day of the Lord is a day of darkness with no light in it. For the Christian, the day of the Lord is a day of light with no darkness in it.*” Why should every unbeliever be terrified of the day of the Lord? How will believers alive at the time respond to this day and the Second Coming of Christ (**vs. 10**)?

Part III: Paul’s prayer for the Thessalonian believers and for the glory of Christ (2 Thess. 1:11-12)

1. E.M. Bounds wrote, “*Many persons believe in the efficacy of prayer, but not many pray. Prayer is the easiest and hardest of all things; the simplest and the sublimest; the weakest and the most powerful; its results lie outside the range of human possibilities – they are limited only by the omnipotence of God. Few Christians have anything but a vague idea of the power of prayer; fewer still have any experience of that power., Prayer is our most formidable weapon, but the one in which we are the least skilled, the most averse to its use., Prayer is a trade to be learned.*” Why is it important for every Christian to work at improving their prayer life? What is Paul’s prayer for the Thessalonian believers (**vs. 11**)? On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your prayer life? What are some practical steps you can take to improve your praying?
2. What was the essence of Paul’s prayer in **verse 12**? There is special significance in the Bible when it comes to a name. What is the meaning of the name “*Jesus*?” What can we learn about His mission from this name? What Old Testament character had the same name as Jesus? In what way was his mission similar to that of Jesus?
3. What truth do we learn from John 3:36? Have you received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord? If not, why not repent of your sin and do so in prayer right now?

MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- As Christians, our faith in the God of the Bible should grow with every experience we go through. (See **Rom. 1:16-17**)
- The mark of the true Christian is love; love for God and love for others.
- God allows trials and tribulations in our lives to help us grow spiritually and draw near to Him.
- Rest will finally come for suffering believers when Jesus returns and makes things right.
- The Second Coming of Christ will be a time of judgment for those who have rejected Him.
- The return of Christ will be a time of awe and majesty; He will be admired by those who believe in Him.
- Our hope, prayer and assurance as regenerate Christians is that God will count us worthy of our calling on the day of Jesus Christ.