

Second Thessalonians

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INTRODUCTION AND OUTLINE

Chapter One

2 Thess. 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians

- These are the same three men who are mentioned in First Thessalonians as the men who are greeting the *church of the Thessalonians*.
- Notice that 1st Thessalonians begins in almost the exact same way:
 - 1 Thess. 1:1 *Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
 - In 1 Thess. The words of 2 Thess. 1:1-2 are put in one verse, whereas 2 Thessalonians has the same greeting taking up two verses.

1b in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

- Both God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are mentioned here, but the Holy Spirit is not mentioned until we get to 2 Thess. 2:13.
- I am sure, however, that the Holy Spirit was at work here, because the Scriptures are inspired by him.
 - 1 Peter 1:11 *Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.*
- Where one person of the Trinity is at work, the whole of the Trinity is at work; for example, the Bible says in Colossians 2:9 *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*
- So, when the Father works, the other two persons in the Trinity are also working, and that goes for each person of the Trinity.

2 Thess. 1:2 Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Paul mentions two communicable attributes of God in this verse: **grace** and **peace**.
- I think these two are used respectively to be attributed to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- So, we could say “Grace from God our Father” and
- “Peace from the Lord Jesus Christ.”
- So, there is what some theologians call *trinal*, which means that what one person of the Trinity does, the other two do likewise.
- The outline of this book will be expressed in three words referencing the three chapters of the book.
- Chapter One → The Position
- Chapter Two → The Prophecy
- Chapter Three → The Practice

Chapter One

THE POSITION – 2 Thess. 1:3-12

The Growth of Faith, 3a

2 Thess. 1:3a We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly,

- Paul thanks God for the members of this local church always, or consistently.
- Being thankful is *meet* (or fit, or proper).
- That is because their *faith groweth exceedingly*.
 - Notice Ephesians 4:14-15 *That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:*
 - 1 Peter 2:2 *As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*
 - 2 Peter 3:18 *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*
- Their faith had grown from the first time Paul visited them and established

them and from the first letter that he wrote to them. This made Paul thankful.

- Their faith grew *exceedingly*. This word “exceedingly” means “beyond measure;” that is, beyond what he could express or even know for sure.
- All churches should grow in faith in this way.

The Abounding Of Love, 3b

3b and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

- But not only is their faith growing exceedingly, but their charity (love) of everyone toward each other *aboundeth*.
- This word “abound” means “to exist in abundance.”
- Would it not be wonderful if in every church of the Lord Jesus that love would abound.
- Paul had already made mention of this in 1 Thessalonians 3:12 *And the Lord make you to increase and **abound in love** one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:*
- Philippians 1:9 *And this I pray, that your **love may abound** yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;*

The Patience of Hope, 4a

2 Thess. 1:4a So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith

- Hope is not mentioned here, but before we learned of the *patience of hope* (1 Thessalonians 1:3).
- Paul and his company here glory in this church’s *patience and faith*.
- The word “glory” can mean “**to brag**.”
- Paul could brag about their patience and faith, but it doesn’t seem to me that this word should be this strong in this reference.
- The word can also mean “**to be joyful**.” I am sure that Paul and his company were very thrilled and joyful for their growth in faith.
- Notice the phrase “churches of God.”
 - God’s churches are local and individual and independent.
 - There is no One Big Church but simply local, independent churches.
- The two things they need for their benefit are *patience and faith*.

- Paul commended this church before for their patience (1 Thess. 1:3) and encouraged them to be patient toward all men (1 Thess. 5:14).
- They will need patience and faith for what follows.

4b in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

- This church will need both patience and faith due to their persecutions and tribulations that they are enduring.
- The word *persecution* comes for a Greek root word that means “to make to flee.” Their enemies were trying to get them to flee from God’s truth and God’s service, but they were enduring.
- The word *tribulation* means “a pressing down, or an oppression.” Their enemies were pressing down upon them to make it harder to serve the Lord, but their patience and faith helped them to endure.
- The word *endure* means “to hold up,” or to withstand in the time of hardship.
- Here is endurance – Ephesians 6:13 *Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*
- They had faith, patience, and endurance, but they LACKED one thing, and that was HOPE. So, now Paul is going to give them hope.

2 Thess. 1:5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

- The Thessalonians had received letters that were said to be written by Paul. These letters had so distorted the promise of God and the details of the end times that the Thessalonians thought, no doubt, that they may be living in the Tribulation.
- These were fake letters that were forged to make them think that Paul wrote them.
- Their *patience and faith* is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God.
 - That is, the righteous judgment of God on every believer in this life, as God’s chastening hand upon his children.
 - Hebrews 12:8 *But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.*
- Which is a token also of the coming judgment of God against the wicked.
 - Romans 2:5 *But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto*

thyselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

- So, if they are under God's chastisement, they are counted worthy of the kingdom of God, and they are worthy to suffer for it for the glory of God.

2 Thess. 1:6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

- This *righteous thing* is the righteous judgment of God.
- Recompense and Reward are their hope.
- Some call this God's *law of compensation*.
- So, Paul turns now to the judgment of the enemies of the Gospel, that God will recompense (or repay) for the tribulations that these enemies of the Gospel have brought upon the churches and have troubled them.

2 Thess. 1:7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

- There is rest for those who are troubled. They can rest with Paul and his company.
 - They can rest because of the salvation of their souls, for the Lord has given them rest for their souls.
 - Hebrews 4:10 *For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.*
- There is a rest for the body in the grave.
 - Ecclesiastes 9:10 *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, **in the grave**, whither thou goest.*
- There is also a future rest for all believers *when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven*.
 - 1 Peter 4:13 *But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*
- Jesus will be revealed *with his mighty angels*
 - Mark 13:27 *And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the*

uttermost part of heaven.

2 Thess. 1:8a In flaming fire taking vengeance

- There is both Rest and Recompense in the Lord's return.
- Writers have given different meanings to these words.
- Some believe the angels will come in the form of fire as they come to execute punishment (Christ's judgment) upon the lost world.
- Some believe that this fire illustrates that Jesus will come as the lightning – Luke 17:24 *For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.*
- Others believe that this flaming fire illustrates the very vengeance of God upon unbelievers *in flaming fire*, which will be God's way of judgment. I believe it is apparent that this is God's vengeance.
 - Now, vengeance is not revenge.
 - Vengeance means that God will satisfy his justice, because sin must be paid for.
 - Revenge is a retaliation due to a *personal grudge*.
 - God has no personal grudge against sinners—he is both *love* and *light*.
 - In *love* God forgives the sinner by grace through faith.
 - In *light* God executes his will according to his truth; therefore, Romans 12:19 says, *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*

8b on them that know not God,

- Some profess to know God – Titus 1:16 *They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.*
- Some know God by the revelation of nature, but they do not know him really and actually and as the real, true God and a God who can save their souls.
 - Rommans 1:19 *Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are*

without excuse: 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

- They are in unbelief.
- There is enough revelation in nature for a person to know somewhat of God, but that revelation is not sufficient to salvation.
- The Gospel must be revealed to a person, and he must believe it before he really knows God.
- To really know God, one must be known of God – Galatians 4:9 *But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?*

8c and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

- There is much confusion here concerning those who *obey not the gospel*.
- What does it mean to obey the gospel?
- This is answered well in Romans 10:16 *But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?* (Isaiah 53:1)
- So, to obey the gospel is to believe the gospel.
- So these have not believed the gospel

2 Thess. 1:9a Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction

- Both punishment and destruction are everlasting here.
- Matther 3:12 *Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.*
 - Mark 9:44 *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*
 - Mark 9:46 *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*
 - Mark 9:48 *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*
- Matthew 10:28 *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*
- So, then, this is not only everlasting punishment as stated in Matthew 25:46 . . .
 - Matthew 25:46 *And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*

9b from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

- This everlasting destruction is not annihilation nor even of everlasting punishment in hell, but here the destruction is the everlasting destruction, or loss, of the presence of the Lord in his glory and power.
- Certainly the lost will not be separated from God eternally in a literal way, because God's wrath will be with them eternally; but the lost will be lost from the presence of God's mercy, love, longsuffering, grace, and promises.
- Also loss of the saints they knew on earth, the presence of holy angels, the happiness and joy of eternal life in the Lord, the New Jerusalem,
- They will perish from the presence of God when prophecies that are now future will come to pass, and all battles with Satan will be ended, and the lost will be cast finally in the lake of fire.

2 Thess. 1:10a When he shall come

- Verse 7 above says, *And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus **shall be revealed from heaven** with his mighty angels,*
- Luke 12:40 *Be ye therefore ready also: **for the Son of man cometh** at an hour when ye think not.*

10b to be glorified in his saints,

- Though the lost in hell have lost the *glory of his power*, yet the saints in heaven are glorifying Christ by their very presence before God the Father as trophies of the grace of God through Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.

10c and to be admired in all them that believe . . . in that day

- The word *admired* means the saints will *marvel at* the Son of man when he comes back.
- But only to those who believe . . . in that day.
- Jesus will be admired in that day. What is that day?
 - Matthew 11:22 *But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at **the day of judgment**, than for you.*
 - Romans 2:5 – . . . *the **day of wrath and revelation** of the righteous*

judgment of God;

- 1 Corinthians 1:8 *Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the **day of our Lord Jesus Christ**.*
- Ephesians 4:30 *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the **day of redemption**.*
- 1 Thess. 5:2 *For yourselves know perfectly that the **day of the Lord** so cometh as a thief in the night.*
- 2 Peter 3:10 *But the **day of the Lord** will come as a thief in the night; . . .*
- 2 Peter 3:12 *Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the **day of God**, ..*

10d (because our testimony among you was believed)

- This clause is a parenthesis. As we read the previous part of this verse, we left this part out due to its being a parenthesis.
 - The Thessalonians believed the testimony from Paul and his company, who were among them when they went into Thessalonica to preach the gospel to them.
 - Then, they believed the gospel.
 - So, this implies that, when the gospel was believed, by Paul when preached by him to them, that same faith will be alive and well *in that day* when Jesus comes again.
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2 Thess. 1:11a Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling,

- Paul is praying often for these believers that God would count them worthy of *this calling*.
- Some say this is the effectual calling to salvation:
 - First, the General Call
 - Matthew 22:14 *For many are called, but few are chosen.*
 - Second, Effectual Call
 - 1 Corinthians 1:26 *For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:*
 - Romans 1:7 *To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be*

saints:

- But this is not that calling, because Paul is writing to those who he believes are true believers.
- But he is speaking here of *this calling*, which seems (as the following verse may support) to be a calling to Christian duty as believers.

11b and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power:

- So, Paul calls them to fulfill the good pleasure of God's goodness and the work of faith with power given to them by God himself.
 - Ephesians 4:1 *I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,*
 - Philippians 2:13 *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*
 - And theirs is a *work of faith* just as Paul's work was a *work of faith* as taught to us in his first letter to the Thessalonians.

2 Thess. 1:12a That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you,

- The lost world dishonors and degrades the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- But in the believers his name is glorified by their faith, their patience, and their good works, which only believers can do.
- And, as we preach the gospel, the Lord's name is glorified in others, also, and this until Jesus comes again.
- James 2:7 *Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?*
- Romans 1:5 *By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:*
- What we do, we do for his name's sake.

12b and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Paul is desiring that the believers (ye) would be glorified in him (Christ).
- They are glorified in him by God's grace, for it is grace by which God's glory

comes into the believer's heart, regenerates the sinner, and gives him life for service to him.

- They are also glorified, because we sit together with him in heavenly places.
 - Ephesians 2:6 *And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:*
- We are glorified in God's promise to bring us to his eternal kingdom when Jesus comes again.
 - Romans 8:17 *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also **glorified** together.*
 - Romans 8:30 *Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also **glorified**.*
 - This is past tense in English, but it is actually future, because God's promise is true and sure.
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:24 *Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.*
 - The *it* in this verse is the promise that God has given to every believer, that he will do what he promised.
 - 1 Peter 3:18 *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:*
 - This is their POSITION

Chapter Two

THE PROPHECY, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17

- This chapter is the most difficult of the three chapters of this book, because there are many theories as to the prophecies of this book.
- However, there are some salient points that we should put to our thinking and understanding to help us to mature in our Christian doctrine.

2 Thess. 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

- Paul *beseeches* his brethren, or he begs them not to do two things, which we will see in verse 2.
- The important aspect of verse one is that he beseeches them by two (2) things:
 - By the **coming** of our Lord Jesus Christ
 - Paul speaks to the Corinthians in 1 Cor. 1:7 of *the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*.
 - Paul spoke of Christ's coming in his first letter to the Thessalonians in 3:13; 4:15; and 5:23 and now here in 2 Thess. 2:1.
 - By our **gathering** together unto him.
 - Notice in Romans 6:5 *For if we have been **planted together** in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:*
 - We noticed in 1 Thess. 4:17 *Then we which are alive and remain shall be **caught up together** with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*
 - Romans 8:17 *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also **glorified together.***
- So, Paul begs them by the coming of Christ and our gathering together unto the Lord that they have a certain frame of mind.
- These two things should keep our minds sound and sober until the Lord comes to take us away.

2 Thess. 2:2a That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled,

- First, *that ye be not soon shaken in mind*
 - Many things worry us and take our attention in our minds.
 - When we are afraid, we soon get shaken in our minds.
 - Wars, diseases, rumors, etc. all shake us in our minds, and we cannot think properly in order to put our complete trust in God.
 - The things that can be shaken (or tottered) are individuals, the earth, and heaven.
 - The Lord asked about John the Baptist in Matthew 11:7 . . . *What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?*
 - The earth and heaven – Hebrews 12:26 *Whose voice then shook the **earth**: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also **heaven**.*
 - But our minds can also be shaken, which brings on excitement and illogical conclusions in our minds to cause us to waver our opinions according to the affairs around us.
 - It also causes some to swerve away from the true doctrines of the Bible and even for some to *another gospel*.
 - In other words, don't look for another doctrine to cure your troubled mind.
 - 1 Peter 1:13 *Wherefore **gird up the loins of your mind**, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;*
- Second, *nor be troubled*
 - Robertson says this word *troubled* has to do with crying out, or being extremely excited about a thing.
 - Believers should not be shocked by anything that has to do with serving the Lord. All can be expected, and God knows all.
 - We are even to be happy in our tribulations – 1 Peter 3:14 *But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not **afraid** of their terror, neither be **troubled**;*

2b neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us,

- Paul speaks here of three things that might trouble the minds of his hearers.
 - First by spirit

- This is probably a prophetic spirit, which claims to be the Spirit of God but is in fact a false spirit,
 - Spirit of the world, 1 Cor. 2:12
 - 1 Corinthians 2:12 *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.*
 - Spirit of antichrist, 1 John 4:3
 - 1 John 4:3 *And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*
 - Spirit of error, 1 John 4:6
 - 1 John 4:6 *We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.*
- But we are to renew the spirit of our mind – Ephesians 4:23 *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;*
- Second by word
 - This would include any word spoken in respect to the coming of the Lord.
 - The implication here from what follows is that this word is not from Paul himself but are actually from the *wisdom of the world* or from *traditions of men*.
 - These would be words of persuasion through logic and even scientific method to try to prove something that opposed God’s word.
 - Paul himself told Timothy in 1 Timothy 6:20 *O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:*
- Third by an epistle (letter) as from us
 - Even if Paul were to write an epistle to them with a different message, it would not be true.
 - There were some accusations that some men had an epistle from Paul that taught such a contradiction.
 - But the doctrine that Paul preached in 1 and 2 Thessalonians is the true doctrine and is not to be confused with another epistle supposedly from Paul that might oppose this doctrine.
- What follows is the subject of which Paul desires, that they have a sound and

sober mind and not to be troubled.

2c as that the day of Christ is at hand.

- The phrase “at hand” means “immediately, or very soon.”
- Paul neither in these two letters nor in any other writings has said that Jesus’ coming is “at hand.”
- That would mean that Christ would come specifically within a very short time.
- Their minds concluded, no doubt, that not only would Jesus come in their lifetime, but that he would come within a day or so, or a month or so, or perhaps within the next year.
- How many times have you heard this preached, that Christ would come within a year or so? This is the main thrust of many today who teach on the coming of Jesus Christ.
- If Jesus, then, were not to come within a month or two or a year, Paul’s hearers would be subject to turning away from his whole body of truth; for, if he is wrong in this, then he must be wrong in everything else.
- Let us not base our faith or doctrine in the prospect that Jesus is to come immediately, or very soon. He may not come for what would be a long time for us even though it may have no time element for God.
- This false doctrine about the coming of Jesus Christ had troubled the minds of some of Paul’s hearers, so he encourages them to keep a sober mind regarding Jesus’ second coming.
- Paul, then, continues to express some things that are to take place before the second coming of Christ.

2 Thess. 2:3a Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, . . .

- A Falling Away
 - Some think this is a *political* falling away, that of the Roman Empire, which fell in 476 AD.
 - Some think it is a gradual and general, *spiritual* falling away from truth, which we know is true from the very beginning of the first church in Jerusalem.
 - But this falling away, in my opinion, has a direct connection with the *son of perdition*, mentioned in the next part of this verse.

- It is a falling away from God’s truth and from his practices prescribed for the churches of the Lord.
- These practices would include
 - Falling away from the true gospel
 - 2 Corinthians 11:4 *For if he that cometh preacheth **another Jesus**, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive **another spirit**, which ye have not received, or **another gospel**, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.*
 - Galatians 1:6 *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto **another gospel**.*
 - Falling away from the true practice of religious rites, those things we call ordinances.
 - Baptism was changed in practice and in purpose – Babies were baptized for the purpose of saving their souls.
 - See the list in . . .
 - 1 Timothy 4:1-3 *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall **depart from the faith**, giving heed to **seducing spirits**, and **doctrines of devils**; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their **conscience seared with a hot iron**; 3 **Forbidding to marry**, and commanding to **abstain from meats**, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.*

3b and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

- Man of sin revealed
 - Some say that this is Satan
 - Some say that this is a Roman Emperor
 - Some say this is Simon Magus, the sorcerer
 - Some say it is the antichrist that will be revealed in a seven-year tribulation.
 - Some say a succession of men, the succession of popes, who have so degraded the truth of Scripture.
 - Even in his day, John Gill notes many of the sins of this church:
 - “. . . it is not easy to reckon up their impieties, their adulteries, incest, sodomy, rapine, murder, avarice, simony, perjury, lying, necromancy,

familiarity with the devil, idolatry, witchcraft, and what not; and not only have they been guilty of the most notorious crimes themselves, but have been the patrons and encouragers of others in sin; by dispensing with the laws of God and man, by making sins to be venial, by granting indulgences and pardon for the worst of crimes, by licensing brothel houses, and countenancing all manner of wickedness;” (John Gill).

- So, this man in his position, one now and one later, is effectively called *the son of perdition*.
 - With *another spirit, another Jesus, and another gospel*, these ones who deceive so many souls are sons of perdition, or destruction.
 - Judas Iscariot was given the same name *the son of perdition*.
 - And he went to *his own place*.
- Time of the Antichrist
 - If it is the anitchrist in the seven-year tribulation, then it will happen after the Rapture of the saints, but before the actual Return of the Lord to the earth. Dispensationalists mostly believe this.
 - If it is the line of the popish heads of the Universal Church, then it will happen before the Rapture.
- That is what Paul wants the Thessalonians to know.

2 Thess. 2:4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God,

- This *man of sin, son of perdition* is the antichrist. He opposes.
 - He opposes the truth of the gospel
 - He opposes God himself
 - He opposes the Lord’s ministries, his church, and the ordinances
 - He opposes right and exercises evil and wickedness.
 - He pretends that Christ dies again and again in the sacrifice of the mass.
 - He makes angels and saints to be intercessors
 - He makes Mary, the mother of Jesus, to be a great intercessor, even greater than Jesus himself.
 - He worships images, angels, and saints
 - He teaches works for salvation rather than the grace of God.
- He exalts himself above all that is called God
 - Whatever is proper and right in the worship of God, that which is called *godly*, or that which gives honor and praise to God, this man opposes.
 - He opposes God in a deceptive way, for he exalts himself to be in the place

of God.

- God does not oppose Satan; He just allows him to exist and gives him some freedoms
- Jesus opposed him on earth
 - At the temptations
 - At the cross – crushed his head

4b or that is worshipped;

- Sometimes angels are called gods, and this man has exalted himself above the angels. The book of Hebrews tells us that man was made *a little lower than the angels* (Hebrews 2:7).
- Roman Emperors were considered gods, but popes made themselves higher than these emperors. It is said that some emperors have held the stirrups of a pope while he mounted his horse. It is said that emperors have been reprimanded for holding the wrong stirrup.
- It is said that one king was thrown under the pope's table to lick bones like a dog.
- The Jews call Rome Magdiel, which means *it magnifies itself*.
- But it gets worse:

4c so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

- He is as God sitting in the *temple of God* this side of the Rapture.
- The temple of God is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ – 1 Corinthians 3:16 *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*
- In the first local church in Jerusalem, there were those who demanded that believers be circumcised.
- Acts 15:24 *Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:*
- 1 John 2:19 *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*
- This man made himself to *sit in the temple of God*, which means that he is as

God in God's church. In other words, he is the head of the church, the new Church, the church of Christendom, what today is called The Christian Church in a general way. We call it the Catholic Church, or it can be called Christendom.

- But Christ is the head of his church, not the pope.
- He is not God, but he shows himself that he is God.
- He is known as "Lord God, the pope."
- He is known as the Vicar of Christ on earth, which means he is God on earth.
- He was called God by Constantine, and it is well known that no one can judge God, so the pope cannot be judged; he is the judge.
 - James 4:11 *Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.*
- Pope John XXII was called "Our Lord God The Pope."
- A fitting verse would be in Ezekiel 28:2 *Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God:*
- Others have put themselves in the place of God or calling themselves the Messiah of God, but they have been discredited.
- The pope has the highest religious seat in the world.

2 Thess. 2:5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

- Evidently, according to this verse, Paul, when he was first in person at Thessalonica, he mentioned this very thing to them. Now he is just reminding them of it.

2 Thess. 2:6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

- The *what* in verse six (6) is the Roman Empire, for it was this empire that held back or hindered the revelation of the son of perdition.
- The Roman Empire was in charge of world government, and Pagan Rome had to be removed before Papal Rome could take over as a world power.

- The *he* in verse six (6) is the Roman emperor. The office is taken for the man. Whoever was in the office was the emperor, just as it is with the papacy: whichever pope is in the papal seat, he is the *son of perdition*.

2 Thess. 2:7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

- In Paul's day, the *mystery of iniquity* is already working, though the Roman emperor is still in power. That is why it is a mystery.
- The antichrist is already making his plans to take over as soon as the Roman emperor is dethroned. John said in 1 John 2:18 that there are now *many antichrists* – 1 John 2:18 *Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there **many antichrists**; whereby we know that it is the last time.*
- There was also a *spirit of antichrist* in New Testament times – 1 John 4:3 *And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that **spirit of antichrist**, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*
- The one who is keeping this wicked one from being revealed must be *taken out of the way*. This is the Roman emperor.
- **John Gill** says, “which was done partly by Constantine the emperor receiving the Christian faith, whereby the Roman empire as Pagan ceased; and by increasing the riches of the church, and feeding the pride, ambition, and covetousness of the bishops, especially the bishop of Rome; and next by removing the seat of the empire from Rome to Byzantium, which he called Constantinople: here the Greek emperors continued in succession, and neither they themselves, nor even their exarchs, resided at Rome, but at Ravenna;”
- By moving the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome to Byzantium (Constantinople), it gave Constantine, when he took up Christianity, the power to make the Pagan Roman Empire to cease.
- By 476 AD Rome was only a name. When Mohammad had taken over the eastern part of that empire, and the Goths, Vandals, and Huns had taken over the western part, the popes had risen to the height of their power, which is the revealing of the *man of sin*.

2 Thess. 2:8 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:

- The popes, then, took power over kings and emperors and crowned them, deposed them, and excommunicated them at will.
- The Lord Jesus will consume him eventually, as this verse says.
- With the spirit of his mouth: For some, this is either the Holy Spirit, or the spirit of the Gospel, which is the only power over this kingdom of darkness that brings people out of darkness into his marvelous light.
- I believe this is the Lord Jesus, because it is with the sword of the Spirit that Jesus himself will bring judgment upon this *man of sin* and will destroy him in the end.
- This will be done *with the brightness of his coming*.

END 7-29-2020

2 Thess. 2:9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

- The coming of this wicked one is *after the working of Satan*. That is, he will deceive, lie, and murder.
- This is what Satan did to Adam and Eve, because it is his nature.
- The working of Satan will be shown in two ways:
 - *With all power*
 - Not omnipotence, though he may claim this.
 - Power to install national leaders and to excommunicate them.
 - Power to speak to all nations with authority.
 - *And signs and lying wonders*
 - These are like the signs and miracles
 - Sign of the cross, signs through images, signs in appearances such as that of Fatima.
 - Wonders like the wonders of the magicians in Egypt in Moses' day.
 - Healings, Baptism for salvation, prayer for the dead, exorcism.
 - Transubstantiation – “In the celebration of the Eucharist, by means of the consecratory Eucharistic Prayer, the actual substance of the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ.” Taken from Catholic Encyclopdia
 - Saint Anne's Basilica in Canada has had healings from its building in

1658 through its burning and rebuilding between 1922 - 1942 and even today. “Two pillars near the entrance are filled with racks of crutches, canes, braces, and other signs of disabilities. Each item has been left by a pilgrim who reports being healed at the basilica.” Wikipedia

2 Thess. 2:10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

- With deceivableness of unrighteousness
 - He is not trying to deceive by way of unrighteousness.
 - But he is putting unrighteousness in the place of righteousness and thinks it to be real and true righteousness.
 - Paul speaks of this in Romans 10:3 *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.*
- This unrighteousness is *in them that perish*.
 - Without the true righteousness of God, a person will perish, for it is only God's righteousness that can save a lost soul.
 - Romans 10:4 *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*
- *They did not receive the love of the truth*
 - It is not only the truth that saves, for truth without emotion and love is as cold as ice.
 - But with truth comes the love of the truth when the righteousness of God is worked within a believer.
- *that they might be saved*
 - It is only through the love of the truth that a person can be saved.
 - The truth is the Gospel of Christ, and a person must come to love the Gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation.
 - So, this gospel of self-righteousness will turn a person away from truth to idols and to self worth and salvation by works and religion.
 - The way this is worded, it seems that those in charge of these things want to do all they can to keep people from being saved, though their words seem to indicate that they desire eternal life—that is deceit.

2 Thess. 2:11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

- The pronoun *them* I believe refers both to those teachers who are teaching a false gospel and also those who are hearing the false gospel.
- God will allow them to believe a lie by sending them *strong delusion*. The more they practice these wicked things, the more they are deluded to believe the lie. It has been said that the more a lie is told, the easier it is to believe.
- God will not stop them from practicing these things but will let them go on in their delusions to believe this big lie of religion.
- He sends it to them in leaving them to their own thoughts and practices.
- We know that God will, however, come to some of them with the Gospel as it is preached in truth and compel some to come to Christ and believe on him for salvation.

2 Thess. 2:12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

- The word *damned* here means judged.
- God gave these over to a *reprobate mind* that they may be damned, or judged according to their unrighteousness – Romans 1:28 *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;*
- Because they *believed not the truth*.
 - Not only did they not *love* the truth (vs 10); they did not *believe* the truth.
 - The truth was being preached all around them.
 - They heard it and hated it.
 - They shunned it and persecuted those who believed the truth.
 - Therefore, they will be judged under those circumstances.
- They *had pleasure in unrighteousness*
 - Actually, they loved their unrighteousness.
 - They loved the world.
 - They loved the lies and the deceit that was being given to them.
 - They *had pleasure*, or enjoyed, this unrighteousness.
 - Maybe because they actually thought it was real, true righteousness.

2 Thess. 2:13a But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you,

brethren beloved of the Lord,

- The word *bound* here has the meaning of *owing a debt to someone*.
- In other words, Paul and those working with him (the ministers) owe their thanks to God for those saints at the church of the Thessalonians.
- He tells them this, no doubt, because of the discouragement they have received from the negative news that Paul has just written to them concerning the *falling away* and the *antichrist*.
- They give thanks *alway*, or at all times to God for them because of what God has done in their lives through his grace and mercy.
- Then Paul calls them *brethren beloved of the Lord*.
 - Paul is speaking to the leaders of that church, which are men.
 - They are brethren of the Lord Jesus –
 - Hebrews 2:11 *For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,*
 - They are also brethren of Paul and those working with him and also the members of the churches of the Lord.

13b because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

- This can be a very difficult portion of Scripture.
- The time of this verse is *from the beginning*
 - This is not the beginning of **the gospel** – Mark 1:1 *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;*
 - This is not the beginning of **the preaching** of the gospel to them – 1 Thessalonians 2:9 *For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.*
 - This is not the beginning of **the creation** – Mark 10:6 *But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.*
 - This is *from the beginning*, before the world began.
 - Proverbs 8:23 *I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.*
 - Ephesians 1:4 *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*

- God has *chosen you to salvation*
 - The word for *chosen* means to *take for one's own, to claim, to prefer.*
 - God took his people to be his own before the foundation of the world.
 - This time element goes all the way back into timeless eternity past at the choosing of the people of God.
 - This is a choosing to salvation, the salvation of the soul by the Spirit of God through regeneration by grace through faith in Christ.
 - But the choosing did not happen at the time of regeneration or faith but *before the foundation of the world.*
 - The same decree that chose us to salvation also chose Jesus to be our Savior, the only Savior there ever was or ever will be (Acts 4:12).
- *Through sanctification of the Spirit*
 - The word *sanctification* means *to set by for a specific purpose.*
 - So the Spirit of God is set by in a person to bring him apart from the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life and bend his affections and his will toward the things of God.
 - Psalm 110:3 *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.*
 - *Belief of the truth*
 - This *truth* can refer to Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). We must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, because John 3:16 states *whosoever believeth **in him** should not perish, but have everlasting life.*
 - This *truth* may refer to the Bible, God's word.
 - Romans 10:17 *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*
 - 1 Peter 1:23 *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*

2 Thess. 2:14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- Called by the gospel
 - Notice the pronoun *he* in this verse. This is God himself.
 - It is God who called us unto salvation.

- God called us to be saints – Romans 1:7 *To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints:*
- God called us according to his purpose – Romans 8:28 *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*
- Called to obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ
 - John 17:5 *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*
 - Jesus had a glory before the foundation of the world.
 - On earth he humiliated himself (See Philippians Chapter 2)
 - When he went back to heaven, he was glorified – John 7:39 *(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)*
 - John 12:23 *And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.*
 - One day we will have that glory upon us when we get our new bodies – Philippians 3:21 *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his **glorious body**, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

2 Thess. 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

- Stand Fast
 - Because of what has been said before, Paul here mentions two things that believers in local churches should do.
 - The first is to *stand fast*
 - This Greek word for *stand fast* is STEKO and means *to be stationary, or to persevere*.
 - Someone might say “stay with the stuff.”
 - Someone might say “don’t give up.”
 - Someone else may say “stay at the helm.”
 - Or “don’t quit.”
 - Or even “be faithful”
 - They were to stand fast in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - They were to stand fast in the teachings regarding the second coming of the

Lord, as that is the main subject of this letter.

- They were not to be *shaken in mind*, as stated in verse 2.
- Because, as Paul had taught them, there is a *falling away* that is coming.
- Hold The Traditions
 - The second thing they were to do is to hold the traditions they have been taught by Paul and other true ministers of the gospel.
 - This word *hold* means to grab hold of a thing and keep it.
 - There were many traditions, but they were to grab and hold onto those things that they have been taught by Paul and his helpers.
 - These were the truths of God's word, the precepts taught by Jesus Christ.
 - Paul had taught them to these Thessalonians ***by word***, which refers to those times when he was with them in the flesh and taught them many things.
 - Paul also taught them ***by epistle***, referring perhaps to his first epistle or letter and also including this second epistle written to them to encourage them and teach them.

2 Thess. 2:16a Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father,

- Now Paul points attention to Jesus Christ and God the Father, because it is through the Father and the Son that all precepts, blessings, consolations, and encouragements come.
- Without them there would be none of the following, for only God through the Lord Jesus Christ can bring *all spiritual blessings*.
- Notice Ephesians 1:3 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:*
- If you are wondering where the Holy Spirit is, you can go on down in Ephesians Chapter 1 and read verse 13 *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that ***holy Spirit*** of promise,*

16b which hath loved us,

- The first blessing mentioned here is that God loved us.
- He first loved us – I John 4:19 *We love him, because he first loved us.*
- It is an everlasting love – Jeremiah 31:3 *The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.*

- Ephesians 2:4 *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us.*
- Love always GIVES, and we read in the next part of the verse . . .

16c and hath given us everlasting consolation

- Consolation and Comfort are the same thing using the same Greek word.
- Paul tells the believers in 2 Corinthians 1:3 *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all **comfort**;*
- In that same chapter in verse 6 he used both words – 2 Corinthians 1:6 *And whether we be afflicted, it is for your **consolation** and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be **comforted**, it is for your **consolation** and salvation.*

16d and good hope

- Hope and faith are each a gift from God.
- With this everlasting consolation comes a **good hope**, which means that it is based upon the goodness of God, not upon our own imagined hope.
- It is also called our *blessed hope* – Titus 2:13 *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*
- Our hope is both sure and steadfast – Hebrews 6:19 *Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;*
- Hope makes not ashamed – Romans 5:5 *And hope maketh not ashamed; . . .*

16e through grace,

- Romans 4:16 *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; . . .*
- Romans 11:6 *And if by grace, then is it no more of works: . . .*
- Everything we receive from God is by grace, not of the works of the law.
- Even our Christian life must be lived by grace and by faith.
- Acts 13:43 – . . . *Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.*
- Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11, and Hebrews 10:38; Habakkuk 2:4 all say *The just shall live by faith.*

- So grace and faith order our lives, living them for the Lord to his glory.

2 Thess. 2:17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

- God's love, his consolation, his hope, and his grace are given to bring comfort to their hearts.
- These are also to establish them, or to make them solid believers and ministers of the word and work of God.
- We are to be faithful in two basic principles: word and work.
- **In word**; that is, from the word of God, to be faithful in reading it, studying it, living it, and giving it.
- **In work**; that is, to be faithful to give legs and feet to the knowledge they have from the word of God, as Paul told the Philippians in Philippians 2:16 ***Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.***

Chapter Three

THE PRACTICE

2 Thess. 3:1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:

- The Prayer
 - Paul asks for prayer here. It is a special and abiding prayer that he desires from the leaders and the other members of the Thessalonian church.
 - He has asked for prayers at other times, that a door of utterance would be opened to him and that he would have boldness to preach the gospel.
 - His desire was that folks come to know Jesus as Savior, and he wanted to take every advantage of preaching and teaching the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation.
 - Paul knows, also, that there are many adversaries – 1 Corinthians 16:9 *For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.*
 - Even the devil sometimes would hinder him from his work –
 - 1 Thessalonians 2:18 *Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.*
 - And sometimes the Spirit of God hindered them.
 - Acts 16:6 *Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were **forbidden of the Holy Ghost** to preach the word in Asia, 7 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the **Spirit suffered them not.***
 - So, he, as well as all who witness the gospel need prayers from other saints of God so that we may continue on in the work of God.
- The Purpose
 - *that the word of the Lord may have free course*
 - That is, so that the word of the Lord may go forth without hindrance and continue through many obstacles, that it may run on and on throughout the whole world.
 - Without prayer, the gospel may be hindered, and many obstacles from people and even from Satan himself may be in the way of the work of preaching and teaching the gospel of Christ.
 - These words *free course* are a good understanding for what Paul is

endeavoring to say to the church there, but they are really simple in thought and very understandable.

- The word free, as you can see in the text, is supplied by the translators. The literal Greek says "may run."
- The subjunctive is the word *may* or *may have* in the KJV.
- There is a possibility, then, that this running of the gospel from one place to another could be hindered; so prayer is needed so that God would intervene against any hindrance of the spreading of the gospel.
- Also, the phrase *have free course* is in the present tense and infers the continued running on and on of the gospel to the people of the world.
- Let us pray in our own day that God would help us to preach the gospel on and on, that it may continue running and running.
- that it may be *glorified*
 - The word of God is glorified when it is preached, listened to, hearkened, and obeyed.
 - That is the glory of the word of God in its distribution and its obedience.
 - Paul says here that the word may be glorified with the church at Thessalonica.
 - So should it be with every church.

2 Thess. 3:2a And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men:

- He may be referring here to the Jews who were enemies against the truth.
 - 1 Thessalonians 2:14 *For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:*
 - The Jews were the first to be enemies, not only of the Lord himself and of the disciples, but also of the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - They could also be sometimes the most cruel enemies of the gospel and of the assemblies as the message of Christ went into all the world.
 - Some of this was out of jealousy toward the Gentiles, who were granted repentance and faith to be saved.
- He may also be referring to the false brethren among them, who claimed to be believers but were not. They only made a pretense of faith to be among the believers so that they could corrupt the very word of God and make the cross of

Christ of none effect.

2b for all men have not faith.

- Of course, there is no one who has faith within himself. Faith must come from God; it is a GIFT of God says Eph. 2:8-9.
- The word “all” here refers to all who were among them, not every person in the world.
- Paul here is more concerned with the enemies among them, who are the more dangerous than the enemies of the world at least at this time.
- Those who do not have faith are more able to twist the scriptures and teach another gospel than the world could or would, so they were the more dangerous persecutors.
- The world at large persecutes with a physical persecution, but those among them would persecute with what might be called *spiritual* persecution, reaching into those things which they do not understand and wrest the scriptures to their own peril.
 - 2 Peter 3:16 *As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

2 Thess. 3:3a But the Lord is faithful,

- How many scriptures can we find that tell us that the Lord is faithful?
- Let’s take just two in addition to this one:
 - Hebrews 10:23 *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)*
 - 1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
- The Lord’s faithfulness here is, no doubt, pointing to his faithfulness in comforting these believers in the midst of false professors and false witness, even false prophets, which plague the churches in every generation.
- God is also faithful in being effective, perhaps, in the lives of some of these who had no faith, bringing them to repentance and faith in Christ, to which God has been faithful throughout the generations of history and to which he

will be faithful until his return when all his sheep shall be brought into the fold.

3b who shall stablish you,

- The Lord is also faithful in establishing this church and other churches.
 - 1 Thessalonians 3:2 *And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, **to establish you**, and to comfort you concerning your faith:*
 - We find here that God establishes them through ministers who are faithful in their duties to preach and teach the truths of the word of God.
 - Here we have Timothy, a fellow laborer with Paul, who was sent to Thessalonica to establish and comfort them concerning their faith.
- We do need to be established and comforted in our faith in Christ, because sometimes our faith seems to fail.
 - Luke 22:32 *But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*
 - This is how the faithfulness of God establishes us.
 - Christ is our intercessor; and, just as he prayed for Peter, he prays for us to his Father that our faith may be strong in order to strengthen others.
- We also need to be established in the doctrines of scripture.
 - We can have good preachers and teachers, but it is actually God who instructs us through the Holy Spirit.
 - It is the Spirit's job to lead us into truth.
 - That is why it is important not to forsake our assembling together, because we need to be strengthened in faith and in doctrine.

3c and keep you from evil.

- God is faithful to keep us from the domination of evil.
 - Romans 6:7-11 *For he that is dead is freed from sin. 8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*
 - God is also faithful to keep us from the evil one, Satan
 - Notice why Christ prayed for Peter that his faith fail not:

- Luke 22:31 *And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:*
- Satan, I am sure, wants each one of us to sift us as wheat, to thrash our lives with sin so that we will be ineffective for the cause of Christ.
- When you are tempted to sin, remember that God is faithful.
 - 1 Corinthians 10:13 *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

2 Thess. 3:4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

- Paul desires that he may have confidence in the Lord concerning the members of the church at Thessalonica, that they do according to his commandments, which come from the Lord himself, and that they will continue to be faithful to do them.
- Both the commandments and those things that the church saw in the lives of Paul and his partners, their conduct, their prayer life, and even their faithfulness in serving the Lord gave them confidence.
- If God commands a thing, we all as believers should not only do these commandments but also be faithful to continue to do them.
- My mother always called this “sticktoitiveness.”

2 Thess. 3:5a And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God,

- The word *direct* means to run through in a straight line.
- Our love for God
 - In other words, not to direct our hearts in a round about way but straight into the love of God, not questioning our love for him or his love for us.
 - So, first we consider our love for him.
 - The love we have for God is a love that first resides in God himself and from which we inherit this love by grace through faith.
 - One of the benefits of being justified by faith is shown in Romans 5:5 *And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

- Matthew 22:37 *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*
- God's love for us
 - Jeremiah 31:3 *The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an **everlasting love**: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.*
 - Romans 8:37 *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*
 - Ephesians 5:2 *And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.*
 - 1 John 4:19 *We love him, because he first loved us.*
 - John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

3:5b and into the patient waiting for Christ.

- Patient Waiting
 - Not only does Paul desire that the Lord direct their hearts in the love of God, but he also desires that the Lord direct their hearts into the patient waiting for Christ.
 - The coming of Jesus Christ is the theme of this letter and Paul's first letter to this church.
 - His desire is, not only a looking for the coming of Christ, but also a patient waiting for Christ.
 - The Lord himself must give us the patience that is needed for our looking for and waiting for Christ to come.
 - As we are patient, waiting for the coming of Christ, there is another verse which speaks of what we should do in our patience.

Patient Continuance

- Romans 2:7 *To them who by **patient continuance** in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:*
- The same Greek word is used for *patient continuance* as is used in our text translated *patient waiting*.
- We are to continue in *well doing* and seeking (or looking and waiting for)

immortality, eternal life.

2 Thess. 3:6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

- Paul gives many commandments in his two letters to this church.
 - The first reference is found in 1 Thessalonians 4:2 *For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.*
 - 2 Thessalonians 3:4 *And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.*
 - Others are found in 2 Thess. 3:6; 10, 12
- But some walk *disorderly* and not after the traditions (commandments) that they have received from Paul.
 - Those who walk disorderly are to be rejected by the faithful.
 - They are to withdraw themselves from them.
 - We call this church discipline. The Bible has much to say about this.
 - Romans 16:17 *Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them** which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and **avoid them.***
 - So, the church is to **withdraw from** these disorderly brethren and **avoid them** according to the scriptures we have just read.
 - These disorderly brethren are either backsliders, or reprobate, or have apostatized.

2 Thess. 3:7 For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

- In prompting these church members to follow him, Paul advises them that he did not behave himself disorderly among them but came with a sincere desire and a determination to preach the gospel to them, even though they did not support him with their carnal means most of the time.
- Therefore, Paul was an example of an orderly Christian.
- Paul encourages the Philippians to mark some other people:
 - Philippians 3:17 *Brethren, be followers together of me, and **mark them***

which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

- They were to mark them who walked disorderly, and they were to mark them who walked *so as ye have us for an example*.
- So, mark the good and the bad so you can tell the difference.
- In verses 8-10 Paul gives some detail as to his own conduct in their presence.
- In verse 11 Paul gives commands to them who are disorderly.
- In verses 13-17 Paul explains to these Thessalonians how they should live and what should be their reaction to the disorderly.

Paul's Conduct In Their Presence, 8-10

2 Thess. 3:8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

- Now in verses 8-10 Paul is describing his own conduct in his labor and travail night and day as a witness to this church.
- He did not eat his bread for nought; that is, he did not expect the Thessalonians to supply him with his food. He and his company relied on no one but themselves to supply their food and their living. They worked for it.
- He did this so he would not be chargeable to them, or that he would feel compelled to do something for them because of their support. He had no support from them at this time.

2 Thess. 3:9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

- Paul in the verse says that he does have the *power*, or the authority to compel these church members to support him.
- But instead of compelling them to do so, he wanted to be an example for them to follow.
- They were also to do their work without expecting any compensation for it. It is for the Lord, not for money.
- Also, I think he did it to show that many of the disorderly would compel them to pay for their services.
- Therefore, it was easier for them to follow Paul and his men rather than to follow those who were disorderly.

2 Thess. 3:10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

- Those who were disorderly, those who would make merchandise of the members of this good church, would take money from them and in return teach them false doctrine.
- So, Paul commands those in charge at the church that if any would not work, neither should he eat.
- Some who preach make their vocation just that, a vocation, a job, but not only a job, but a job which pays well and in many cases to make the preacher rich.
- All preachers and pastors should be busy, and there is nothing wrong with supporting a full-time pastor; but the pastor must not be lazy and do nothing but enjoy life and preach someone else's sermons, and collect money from the church.
- In the first church, some waited tables while the apostles gave themselves continually to prayer and ministry of the word (Acts 6:4).

Paul's Commands To The Disorderly, 11

2 Thess. 3:11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

- This church is commanded in this chapter 3:6 to withdraw from these disorderly people.
- They are disorderly, because they do not work in their own business but pry into other peoples business and are called *busybodies*.
- Peter says in 1 Peter 4:15 *But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.*
- They depended upon others to supply their needed things for livelihood.

Church's Reaction To The Disorderly, 12-17

2 Thess. 3:12 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

- So now Paul gives his commandment and exhortation from the Lord concerning these who are disorderly.
- **First**, he says that they should work *with quietness*. We have learned already that to be quiet means to mind your own business.
- **Second**, as a result of doing their own work, they are to *eat their own bread*.
 - This means that they are to earn their own way by working.
 - This, of course, does not include those who are very poor and have no opportunity for productive work.
 - Neither does this include those who are unable to work.
 - The message here is to those who are able-bodied but who would rather mooch off someone else than to do a day's work.

2 Thess. 3:13 But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.

- This word *weary* carries with the idea of starting a good work but becoming weary of doing it, as many Christians do today.
- It means, according to Robertson's Word Pictures, to become cowardly, to lose courage, or to faint.
- Perhaps some who work get weary quickly, but Paul tells them not to be weary in well doing.
- Mostly, well doing does not make one weary unless it is a weariness, not to the body, but to the mind and attitude.
- John Gill says on this verse concerning *well doing*, "which is well done when done according to the will of God, in faith, and from a principle of love, and in the name and strength of Christ, and with a view to the glory of God."
- He instructs those who are industrious to continue the work and not get discouraged in doing benevolent work toward those who are in need.

2 Thess. 3:14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

- Paul give several instructions for this church to follow.
- He says, then, that if any man does not obey what Paul instructs in this epistle (letter), then that man is to be *noted*.
- This man's name is to be written down and let it be known by letter or otherwise that this man is not to be allowed in the company (as a member) of this church, that the man may be ashamed.

- This may be a part of the meaning of 1 Timothy 5:20 *Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.*

2 Thess. 3:15 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

- On certain occasions and for certain sins a person is to be counted as an enemy and a heathen – Matthew 18:17 *And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.*
- But here the sin is not so bad that this man should be considered an enemy of the church or against believers, but he is under discipline of the church and should hopefully be reinstated into the membership of the church.
- He is to be admonished (or gently rebuked) or cautioned as a brother in Christ.

2Thess. 3:16 Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.

- The goal of any church is *peace*.
- We have peace in our hearts by grace through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- He is here called *the Lord of peace*.
- Paul says in Ephesians 2:13-15 *But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;*
- One way the Lord can give a church peace in itself is for the Lord to *be with you all*.
- His presence makes the difference.
- But not only his real presence, but his knowledgeable presence. We need to KNOW that the Lord is with us and in our midst.

2 Thess. 3:17 The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.

- Paul closes this letter with a salute to this wonderful church.
- He does this, as he says, *with mine own hand, which is the token of every*

epistle.

- Paul may not have written with his own hand the body of each letter, but his salutations were of his own hand so that the recipients would know that it is Paul himself who is the author of the letter under the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

2 Thess. 3:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

- This verse actually needs no commentary or explanation.
- This is the desire of every pastor, missionary, deacon, and of each and every member of the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ, that the grace of God be with all of them.
- For it is only by his grace that we know God, by which we are saved, through which we work by the in-working of the Holy Spirit and the peace that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord to the edification of the saints of God in the churches and to the glory of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- Paul begins and ends this and his first letter with grace.
- In this letter he begins in 1:2 with *Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
- And he ends it here with this verse.
- Let us pray that the grace of God will shower our churches with grace so that we may not be weary in well doing.

T H E E N D