

2 Thessalonians: Introduction

- **Eschatology:** The study of Bible prophecy regarding the end times.

If you have ever found Bible Prophecy challenging or confusing, you are not the first. The Thessalonians had the same problem – and they were taught personally by Paul. They did pretty well considering it seems he was only there for a few weeks.

- **Misunderstanding on the part of the Thessalonians** led to:
 - Anxiety

Due to the troubles and persecutions they were enduring, some of them thought they were already in the midst of the Day of the Lord, the time of God's wrath – the time we have also called the Tribulation preceding the Second Coming of Christ. They were confusing the specific events of the Tribulation with trouble and persecution in general.

- Idleness

Because they rightly understood that the Lord could come for them at any time, some took this to mean that He must be coming soon. Therefore, they quit working and were doing nothing but waiting around for Jesus. They were using the imminence of Christ's return as an excuse for idleness in the present moment.

2 Thessalonians: Introduction

- Author: Paul the Apostle
- Date: 54 A.D.
- Location: Corinth
- Purposes:
 - To correct their confusion regarding end times
 - To teach them more about the end times
 - To reprimand those whose lives were disorderly
 - To encourage them in troubles and persecution

This Roman-era arch in Thessalonica is believed to be the remains of the first McDonald's.

2 Thessalonians: Introduction

- Topics Covered:
 - Present Persecution of Believers in Jesus
 - Future Judgment by God of Unbelievers
 - The Day of the Lord
 - The Man of Sin (Antichrist, the Beast)

Also called "the prince who is to come" in Daniel 9:26

- The Return of Jesus Christ
- A Life of Obedience
- Dependence upon God

2 Thessalonians: Overview

- Overview of the Letter:
 - Greetings 1:1-2
 - Thanksgiving and Prayer 1:3-12
 - Instruction on the End Times 2:1-12
 - Encouragement to Stand Fast 2:13-17
 - Encouragement to Rely Upon God 3:1-5
 - Live Like You Know Jesus! 3:6-15
 - Closing Words 3:16-18

Lessons from the Thessalonian Church

- This church was an example to other churches.
 - In Faith
 - In Love
 - In Patience in the Midst of Trouble (**See 1:3-4**)

Faith

Romans 4:5(NKJV) But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,

Romans 5:1(NKJV) Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Romans 10:17(NKJV) So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Hebrews 11:1(NKJV) Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:6(NKJV) But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Love

John 13:34-35(NKJV) A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.
By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

1 Thessalonians 4:9(NKJV) But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another;

1 Peter 1:22(NKJV) Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,

1 John 4:7-11(NKJV) Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Patience in the Midst of Trouble

Psalms 37:7(NKJV) Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.

Romans 5:3-5(NKJV) And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Ephesians 4:1-2(NKJV) I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love,

The God Factor

- Read Again **2 Thessalonians 2:16 – 3:5**
- Note that these are **instructions** from Paul to the Thessalonian Church
- Note also the **unmistakable supernatural component** that is needed in our lives for all of this to make any sense.
- Paul obviously lived with a **moment-by-moment consciousness of God**; so should we.

The God Factor

- Closing Prayer:
 - For the empowering and working of God's Spirit
 - For that **unmistakable supernatural component** to be evident in our lives
 - For Faith
 - For Love
 - For Patience in the midst of Trouble
 - Our obedience needs to be **empowered by God**.
 - **The God Factor** must always be allowed in.