

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

NOVEMBER 20TH - 21ST, 2021 // BOOK OF 2 THESSALONIANS

## ABOUT THE MAIN AUTHOR, PAUL

- Jewish-born near the border of Lebanon in modern day Turkey.
- Also a Roman citizen.
- A highly-educated religious leader and Pharisee that persecuted Christians until his dramatic conversion around 35 A.D.
- Ministered mostly to non-Jews.
- Executed by Nero in 68 A.D. in Rome.

## THE CITY OF THESSALONICA

- A strong urban center of the Roman Empire in Greece with a population around of 200,000.
- A booming commercial and affluent port city with a massive trade industry due to its geographic position.
- Extremely diverse because of the foreign merchants that lived there.

## THE 2ND LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

- Was written shortly after 1 Thessalonians, so around 51 A.D. by Paul with Silas & Timothy.
- Due to some news Paul had received, this second letter includes more correction than the first letter, though there is still encouragement for the people.
- Paul is dealing with real issues in real time because he wants the church to flourish.

## THE PURPOSE AND THEMES OF THIS BOOK

- Paul reminds them that persecution for their faith doesn't go unnoticed by their Father.
- Jesus hasn't returned yet because the Great Apostasy hasn't occurred, nor has the Man of Lawlessness been revealed.
- While the events leading to Jesus's return could happen quickly, don't quit your day jobs! Get to work, earn a living, be a contributor.
- Knowing our best life is yet to come gives us the confidence to live worthy of our calling from Jesus.

## BOASTING (2 THESSALONIANS 1:1-4)

### THE BEAUTY OF COMMUNITY

With the theme of persecution for their faith playing a role in this letter, it's good to be reminded that we all need each other. Paul's inclusion of Silas and Timothy as authors of both letters lets the church know he doesn't go it alone, and they shouldn't either.

- **Relationships within the church give us stability in an unstable world.**

### "TO THE CHURCH...IN GOD & JESUS CHRIST."

Paul reminds the Thessalonians that he didn't start the church, God did through Jesus. Not only did Paul not start the church, he also doesn't sustain the church's existence. It's the grace and peace that comes from the Father and the Son that keeps the church alive and well.

- **We work, but God brings life & growth.**

### REASONS FOR THANKSGIVING

Though a young church, the Thessalonians already had a reputation for sound doctrine and for fulfilling the command of Jesus to love one another (John 13:34-35).

- People and circumstances can affect what we believe and how we live, but this church didn't waver in the tough moments. They grew in **endurance** and in **perseverance**.

## JUDGMENT (2 THESSALONIANS 1:5-10)

### FINALLY, ALL THINGS WILL BE MADE RIGHT.

While Paul has an optimistic view of how all things will end in Jesus, he has a realistic view of how things appear now. It seems that evil is winning and good is being destroyed. Paul says that Christians are evidence that there is a God and an afterlife. This church willingly suffered, knowing that Jesus, the righteous Judge, would one day justify their faith in Him.

### VENGEANCE BELONGS TO GOD

Evil is real. Evil people do evil things. In Paul's time, the church was under tremendous persecution from people. But it wasn't for the church to defend itself, Jesus will. Nothing escapes His gaze. He is a fiercely protective Husband of His bride, the Church.

- **You mess with the church; you mess with Jesus. Don't mess with Jesus!**

## ONLY JESUS IS WORTHY TO JUDGE AT THE END.

Paul says that Jesus's judgment is righteous. He is the standard for what is right and wrong, which is revealed in the Bible. When Jesus returns, He will repay unbelievers according to their unbelief. But He will pour out love, mercy, and grace on believers, **not because they earned their salvation but because they believed in the Savior's finished work.**

## THE HORROR OF THE REALITY OF HELL.

Jesus does not return at the end as a slain lamb, but as the righteous King and Judge. He will come with His powerful angels and with flaming fire. His judgment is on those who don't know God and on those who don't obey His gospel. They choose to pay their penalty.

- At the end, unbelievers get what they want, an eternal existence without God.

## THE JOY OF BELIEF WILL ALSO BE ETERNAL.

The only difference between those in heaven and in hell is belief. Christians live to glorify Jesus in all things and will glorify Him forever. Why? Because we marveled at Him. We're amazed by Him. **We believed!**

- **If we don't marvel at Jesus now and glorify Him now, why would we want to do so when He returns?**

## THE WAY (2 THESSALONIANS 1:11-12) KNOWING THE END CHANGES US NOW.

Since the Thessalonians knew how Jesus would one day usher in His kingdom, they lived worthy of His calling by depending on the Spirit's power in them to produce good works. And they were able to live this way by faith in Jesus.

- **What you believe always changes how you live.**

## LIFT JESUS UP NOW & HE'LL LIFE YOU UP.

How we face persecution, affliction, and suffering for Jesus gives glory to Him. Living in obedience to His Word gives glory to Him. Working to advance His kingdom gives glory to Him. And when Jesus returns, we will be glorified by Him as we are transformed.

- **All we accomplish for His glory is by His grace alone.**

## WHO DO WE LIVE FOR?

- Do we live for our names and pleasure or for Jesus and His kingdom?
- Are we people who seek out meaningful relationships with God's people?
- **Do we crumble when our beliefs are under attack or do we stand firm in faith?**
- **When unbelievers attend this place, do they know that Jesus is here?**

## WHAT DO WE REALLY BELIEVE?

- **Do we really believe that there is a heaven and hell and that all people will spend eternity in one place or the other?**
- **Do we really believe that Jesus misses nothing and will one day judge all things according to His righteousness?**
- **Do we really believe that the grace of Jesus is sufficient for any needs we have?**

## THE GOSPEL IS AVAILABLE TO ALL...

- **God**, in love, created us in His image to rule over this world as His representatives for His glory, living in obedience to Him.
- **Man** believed a lie and rebelled against God's word, plunging us into sin so that we deserve death and eternal separation from Him. We can't save ourselves and need a Savior to deliver us.
- **Jesus**, who is God the Son, became one of us, lived in full obedience to God's word, died in our place and paid the penalty for our rebellion, rose from the dead victorious over sin, death, hell and the devil, and is coming again for all who believe.
- **The question: will we repent and believe?**