

## THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

DECEMBER 12TH, 2021 // BOOK OF 2 THESSALONIANS

### CONFIDENT (2 THESSALONIANS 3:1-5)

#### SHIFTING GEARS

Paul moves past the eschatological teachings of his letter onto practical applications of daily Christian living.

- He starts by petitioning the church in Thessalonica to join them in the prayer that the "word of the Lord [would] **spread rapidly** and **be honored**, just as it was with [them]."

#### RAPID SPREAD AND HONOR

Paul knew that the success of his ministry, the rapid spreading of the gospel and it being honored, was dependent on prayers.

- Paul wanted to see an **urgency** in spreading the gospel and a **reverence** towards it. **There is a severe lack of both urgency and reverence in our culture today!**

#### GOD'S PROMISES

God says through the prophet Isaiah, "My word that comes from my mouth will not return to Me empty, but it will accomplish what I please and will prosper in what I send it to do." (55:11)

- We must take God's promises and **believe in them in faith and in prayer ask God to perform His promise for His Glory.**

#### PRAYERS OF DELIVERANCE

Paul asks that God would deliver them from "wicked and evil people." He wisely points out that the faith they are lacking is the cause of hindrance and hostility towards the Gospel.

- So, Paul asks the church to partner with him in prayer that **God would deliver them from wicked and evil people or change them.**

#### HE IS FAITHFUL

Paul is trying to instill his confidence in Lord's faithfulness with this young church. Reminding them that **even if all men do not have faith, the Lord is faithful.**

- Paul's **confidence in God's ability to strengthen and guard them against the evil one stems from his experience with God's faithfulness.**

No temptation has come upon you except what is common to humanity. **But God is faithful; he will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation, he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to bear it.**

- (1 Cor. 10:13)

#### CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD

Paul says that he is confident, in the Lord, that the church in Thessalonica is doing what was commanded and that they will continue to do so.

- **God's work of strengthening and guarding us is accomplished through our cooperation with His will and obeying His word.**

#### GOD'S LOVE AND CHRIST'S ENDURANCE

Paul prays, "may the Lord **direct your hearts towards God's love...**"

- **"Because he has his heart set on me,** I will deliver him; I will protect him because he knows my name. When he calls out to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble." (Psalm 91:14-15)

Paul prays, "may the Lord direct your hearts towards God's love and Christ's endurance." "Now may the God who gives endurance and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another. (Romans 15:5)."

- When we set our hearts on what Christ endured for us, **we should be moved to at least "live in harmony with one another."**

### A GOOD WORK (2 THESSALONIANS 3:6-13)

#### WITHDRAW FROM THE DISORDERLY

Paul commands that they should withdraw from every brother or sister who is **idle and does not live according to the tradition** given to them.

- This command is repeated in 1Cor. 5:11, where Paul says, "**not to associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister and is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or verbally abusive, a drunkard or a swindler.**"

We are to withdraw from these "Christians" because "bad morals corrupt good character" (1Cor.15:33), and their justification of sin and compromise will ultimately lead you to ignore convictions.

- This is not done as a punishment but **in hopes of repentance and restoration when the person misses fellowship.**

#### SETTING THE EXAMPLE

Paul set a good example for working hard, as to not burden anyone and to be willing to sacrifice for the sake of the gospel.

- With his own example in mind, Paul goes on to command the church that "if anyone isn't **willing to work**, he should not eat." **Everyone who was able to work was responsible for providing for their family.**

### "THERE ARE SOME AMONG YOU..."

Paul addresses some people within the church that had allowed their idleness to become sin ("they are not busy but busybodies").

- Paul instructs the church to "command and exhort" such people to "**work quietly and provide for themselves.**" **Get out of the business of others and stop expecting others to provide for them.**

#### GROWING WEARY

With godless pagan nations surrounding this young church and now issues within the body, Paul encourages these believers to "not grow weary in doing good."

- In Galatians 6:9, Paul encourages the church in Galatia the same way, telling them that if they **do not give up, at the proper time, they will reap a harvest.**

### OBEY (2 THESSALONIANS 3:14-18)

#### WITHDRAW FROM THE DISOBEDIENT

Here Paul is completing the command of withdrawing from the disobedient by explaining what it means to withdraw.

- Paul instructs them to **take note** and **do not keep company with him**, with the purpose of **causing him to be ashamed.** The purpose is not to make him an enemy but to **warn him as a brother.**

#### CONCLUSION TO THE LETTER

Paul closes by saying, "May the Lord of peace himself **give you peace in every way.**" An appropriate blessing considering the persecution and tribulation they were experiencing.

- **Only God can supply a lasting internal peace, "which surpasses all understanding."** (Phil. 4:7)

As was customary in this time, a scribe would write down what the apostle spoke. However, Paul indicates that the final greeting of his letter was personally penned and signed.

- He did this for a personal affectionate touch as well as a way for the recipients to verify that the letter was truly from Paul.

Paul closes his letter in the same manner that it began, by praying that the "**grace of our Lord Jesus Christ**" **would be with them all.**

- The inclusion of "all" shows Paul's heart for everyone mentioned in the letter. **Those doing the rebuking**, as well as **those in need of rebuking** are dependent on the grace of our Lord.

#### URGENCY AND REVERENCE

- **Do we have an urgency when it comes to spreading the Gospel?**
- Paul's prayer was that the Gospel would spread rapidly without hindrance. **How often is the Gospel hindered by our inactivity and prayerlessness?**
- **Has our societal irreverence bled into Christianity?**

#### INVENTORY

- If the church is supposed to be a place where people would genuinely feel sad if excluded, **how are we doing?**
- **Are we dependent on the Spirit of God to help us from "growing weary?"**
- **Is our heart focused on redemption and restoration for everyone we come across?**