

## THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

DECEMBER 5TH, 2021 // BOOK OF 2 THESSALONIANS

### PERISHING (2 THESSALONIANS 2:9-10) COUNTERFEIT

The man of lawlessness (Antichrist) is Satan's attempt to continue to imitate the Son of Man (Christ).

- Both the Antichrist and Jesus have a coming and a revealing, a death and resurrection, both demonstrate power, and both claim exclusive worship.

### COMING WITH POWER

The antichrist is also empowered to perform Miracles, signs and wonders. Christ is empowered by God while the Antichrist is empowered "in accordance with the work of Satan."

- **A display of spiritual power, signs, or wonders are not enough to prove that they are from God.**

### BEING DECEIVED

The antichrist will also come with every kind of wicked deception. V. 10 tells us that this deception will only take root in those who are perishing.

- This will be an evil that attracts a fallen humanity. The enemy will use the allure of power, sexual immorality, and selfishness in a way that has not yet been experienced.

### THOSE WHO ARE PERISHING

The ones who will be deceived are those who "did not accept the love of the truth [to] be saved (v.10)."

- Through our rejection of Jesus and the only way to salvation we are choosing a delusion. **God does not force this delusion on anyone, it was chosen!**

The ones who are perishing are ready for the deception because they have chosen to reject truth and accept a lie, so God gives them over to what they want and sends a strong delusion.

- God is not keeping someone from receiving the truth, but in His infinite wisdom knows what the individual truly desires.

By the individual choosing a lie over truth, God uses this delusion to judge people "so that they will believe **the lie.**"

- This isn't just "any" lie, but it is "the" lie. The lie that has been entrapping the human race since Adam. **It's the lie that God is not God, and that we are or can be gods.**

"Those who did not believe the truth but **delighted in unrighteousness,**" will be condemned.

- We should have a distain for sin and not put our stamp of approval on it by allowing it go unaddressed in our lives or celebrate it in the lives of others. **Sin is an occasion for sorrow not joy.**

### DELIGHTING IN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

"They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served what has been created instead of the Creator, who is praised forever (Romans 1:25)."

- "Although they know God's just sentence—that those who practice such things deserve to die they not only do them, but even applaud others who practice them (v.32)."

### STAND FIRM (2 THESSALONIANS 2:13-15) CONTINUED THANKFULNESS

Paul repeats his proclamation of thankfulness from 2 Thess. 1:3. He felt **obligated to operate in thankfulness** for the work God had accomplished in Thessalonica.

- **The more we operate with thankfulness and gratitude, the more we start to notice things to be thankful for.**

### LOVED

Paul reminds the church in Thessalonica that "they are loved by the Lord."

- Despite the persecutions and troubles that they were facing, the Thessalonians could be certain of a few truths: God would deal with the ones causing affliction, God will give the one's being afflicted rest, and **above all they are loved by God.**

### CHOSEN

Paul says they are chosen for "salvation through sanctification."

- Through the work of the Holy Spirit and a belief in the truth we begin the process of sanctification, where **faith and the Spirit work in tandem to make us more like Christ and useful in the work of God and His kingdom.**

Paul reminds this young church that it was the sovereign work of God to bring them to salvation. They were chosen from the beginning, meaning before they chose God, He had already chosen them.

- There was evidence of sanctification in their lives because they were separated from the world unto God.

### CALLED

Paul tells the church that "God called [them] to this through [their] gospels, so that [they] might obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

- They were chosen before the foundation of the world, but the actual call came to them through the proclamation of the gospel from Paul.

Not only does God receive glory through the redemption of His creation, but we get to experience "glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

- "We are God's children, and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and coheirs with Christ—if **indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.**" (Romans 8:16-17).

### STANDING ON TRUTH

Paul then instructs this young church to do two things in light of the truths he just shared. He tells them to "stand firm and hold to the traditions you were taught."

- His exhortation is to stand firm on the Word of God. Knowing that what they taught was not the word or tradition of man, but the inspired Word of God.

### ETERNAL ENCOURAGEMENT (2 THESSALONIANS 2:16-17) GIFTS FROM THE FATHER

Paul reminds this young church again that they are loved by Jesus Christ himself and God the Father and as a display of His love has given them "eternal encouragement and good hope by grace.

- God's love for us is the primary motivation for all His work in and through us.

God offers encouragement that transcends time and is purer than anything the world offers.

- We are to encourage one another, but the eternal encouragement we receive from God is without blemish and is sufficient. **We must learn to encourage ourselves in the Lord.**

### GOOD HOPE BY GRACE

God gives us a good hope of a future without fear, sadness, pain.

- This promise of eternity that we place our hope in is a gift of grace that we receive from God. They are not obtained by human effort or any other means, but a good gift from a Good Father. **He is the only source of "good" hope!**

### OUR SOURCE OF ENCOURAGEMENT AND STRENGTH

Finally, Paul prays that God encourage [their] hearts and strengthen [them] in every good work and word."

- Paul again is speaking to the fact God should be our source of encouragement and our strength. That God is the engine that drives every word and deed.

### THE TRUTH VS. THE LIE

- There is no middle ground when it comes to believing the truth or the lie.
- **We have the promise of eternal life, but have we exchanged truth for a lie?**
- **Do we believe that there is something better here and now causing us to squander our inheritance.**

### CONTEXT MATTERS

- When we take this letter in its entirety, we get a better picture of who God is. We see **He is just** in earlier studies and that **He is loving** this week. **To omit either truth of God's character gives us a distorted and damaged view on who God is.**
- Context is also important when we look at Paul reminding the church of **God's love for them, the eternal encouragement they have, and the good hope of grace** right after speaking about end times and the Antichrist. **Paul is shifting our focus on what is truly important.**

### JUDGING FRUIT

- One cannot claim to be chosen without evidence of sanctification. **The two go together!**
- **Are we placing our hope in anything or anyone but, Christ?**
- **Are the words we speak and deeds we do consistent with what we believe?**