

# Second Thessalonians

**Author:** Paul the Apostle

**Written to:** The church in Thessalonica

**Timeline:** c. 51 - 54 A.D. written from Corinth shortly after Paul's first letter to them

**Theme:** The Second Coming of Christ

**Purpose of writing:** Paul assured the believers that the Day of the Lord had not yet come. He corrected their misconception that they currently were going through the Great Tribulation.

## **Introduction:**

The believers either misunderstood Paul's first letter or were being misled by others. The Thessalonians were fearful that the Day of the Lord had come and they were in the Great Tribulation (2:1-3). Paul recounted the events that must first take place before that day ~ there will be a great apostasy (2:3), the restrainer will be removed (2:7), and the man of sin will be revealed (2:3). Paul encouraged them to "stand fast" (2:15) in the things they were taught.

As we begin our study of the book of 2 Thessalonians consider the following questions and write your responses:

Since the time when Paul wrote his first letter to the Thessalonians, false doctrine had come into the church. Many of the believers were wavering in their faith. Consider this as you answer the following questions.

1. Make a list of at least five false doctrines which are prominent in the body of Christ today.

2. How could false doctrine cause a believer to waver in her faith? How do you make sure that you do not waver in your faith?
  
3. When bank tellers are taught to recognize counterfeit currency they do not study counterfeits, rather they spend many hours studying and handling the *real thing*. Then when they are confronted with a counterfeit, they recognize it immediately as such because it does not match what they know to be genuine. Think about your personal study of the Word. How does this protect you from falling prey to false doctrine?

### **Paul's Salutation**

Read 2 Thessalonians 1:1-3

1. Look at verse 1. Paul said that the church of Thessalonica was *in God and in the Lord Jesus Christ*. What does it mean to be *in God* and *in the Lord Jesus Christ*? In what ways does this description characterize your relationship with the Lord? How has the Lord blessed you this week as you have been *in Him*?
  
2. Paul and his companions wished the Thessalonians grace and peace from the Lord. How do you need the Lord's grace and peace today?
  
3. Look at verse 3. Write definitions for the words *bound* and *fitting*. For whom are you bound to *thank God always*? Why are you so bound?

## **Christ's Coming Our Comfort**

Read 2 Thessalonians 1:4-12

1. Look at verse 4. What persecutions and tribulations (afflictions) are you currently experiencing? Are you allowing the Holy Spirit to enable you endure them with *patience and faith*? If not, what is holding you back?
2. As you read verses 5-10 make a note of everything you learn about the Day of the Lord (referred to as *that Day* in verse 10).
3. Look at verses 11-12. What does each of the following mean? Describe a practical way in which you might do each of the following.
  - be counted worthy of God's calling
  - fulfill all the good pleasure of God's goodness and the work of faith with power

## **Events Preceding Christ's Coming**

Read 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

1. In verses 1-3a, Paul reminded the Thessalonians *not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled*. They seemed to have forgotten the truth which he wrote them about in his first letter: The Lord would return for His people *before* the Day of the Lord (Day of Christ in verse 2) or the Great Tribulation period (see 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). In verse 3 Paul warned them not to be deceived. How can times of persecution and trouble cause you to be deceived? How do you protect against this tendency?

2. The *son of perdition* referred to in verse 3 is the Antichrist. Make a note of everything you learn about him from verses 3-10.
3. Look at verses 9-12. Not everything that is supernatural is from the Lord. What do you learn about the working of satan? What do you learn about those who will perish?

### **Warnings to the Wicked Concerning His Coming**

Optional: for more information concerning the Lord's Second Coming read the following warnings and make a note of what you learn: Matthew 24:30-31, Mark 8:38, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8, Jude 14-15, and Revelation 1:7

### **An Appeal to Sound Doctrine**

Read 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

1. Read verses 13-14. In contrast to those who will go through the Great Tribulation, these verses describe *our* future as followers of Christ. Write out your response to the Lord's divine plan for *you* as His child.
2. In verse 15 the Thessalonians were exhorted to *stand fast*. They were not to let *anything* turn them aside from sound doctrine. Note: *traditions* referred to the truth of God's Word and not the traditions of men. How do you *stand fast* in the truth of God's Word especially in the face of opposition from non-believers?

3. Make verses 16-17 your prayer for yourself today. As you sit before the Lord, ask how He, *our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and our God and Father* wants to bless *you* with each of the following.

- His love
  
- His everlasting consolation
  
- good hope by grace
  
- comfort for your heart
  
- establishing you in every good word and work

## **Consistent Christian Conduct**

Read 2 Thessalonians 3:1-18

1. In verses 1-5 Paul asked the Thessalonians to pray for him and his companions. What do you learn from this section of Scripture about specific ways that you can pray for those who teach you the Word of God? Take some time today and lift their needs to the Lord.

2. Read verses 6-15, concentrating on verse 6. Paul warned the Thessalonians against idleness. He issued this warning not a *suggestion* but as a *command* in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Amplified Bible puts it this way:

...that you withdraw and keep away from every brother (fellow believer) who is slack in the performance of duty and is disorderly, living as a shirker and not walking in accord with the traditions and instructions that you have received from us.

Why do you think that idleness is such a danger in the body of Christ? How do you avoid idleness in your own life? How is idleness different from times of refreshment?

3. In verse 16 Paul spoke of the Lord's peace. Are you experiencing peace *always* and in *every way* in your life this week? If not, what can you learn from Philippians 4:6-7?

## **Summary**

As you conclude your study of the book of Second Thessalonians consider the following questions and write your answers:

1. What is the most significant thing that you have learned from your study about the Lord, His character, or His attributes? How does this encourage you? Take a few moments to thank and praise the Lord for the things that you learned about Him.
  
2. What is the most important lesson or new insight that you have learned from your study of this book? How can you apply this lesson in your life this week?