

2nd Thessalonians: teaching #1

A Prophetic Prayer of Edification, Exhortation & Comfort

Background

Who

The Apostle Paul

- The man – his leadership, his care
- The Theologian – doctrine of end times
- The Missionary (church planting methods- self supporting, self propagating, self governing)

Where

Thessalonica

- 100 miles from Philippi (about the distance from Boise to McCall)
- On Roman Road (called the Egnation Way)
- This is the capitol city in the Macedonian region and was a very important commerce city.

When

- Paul's missionary journey to Macedonia, covered in Acts 17
- Between his visit to Philippi (where he had been severely beaten and thrown in jail) and Berea (where the people eagerly examined the scriptures to see if Paul's message was true)
- Written while Paul was still on his journeys, possibly from Corinth.

Why

- A second letter was needed to follow up the first letter
- The church was undergoing persecution and Paul wanted to encourage them to stay the course.
- The first letter dealt with questions about the return of Jesus.
 - **1 Thess 1:9-10**
They [the believers in Macedonia and Achaia] tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.
 - **1 Thess 2:19-20**
¹⁹For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? ²⁰Indeed, you are our glory and joy.

- **1 Thess 3:13**

¹³May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

- **1 Thess 4:17-18**

¹⁷After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸Therefore encourage each other with these words.

- **1 Thess 5:23-24**

²³May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.

- Some false teachers had tried to twist Paul's words and bring their own understanding of the 2nd coming. It had led to confusion that Paul wanted to set straight
- Paul wanted to give direction on how to deal with those who were disorderly in the church.

What

- It is a revelation of the Lord Jesus and what his coming means for believers and what it means for those who reject the truth.
- It is a reversing of the persecution and the coming of justice
- It is the last, desperate plans of an enemy who throws all he has at the church for one last battle – a battle that is over by Jesus just showing up alive
- It is a management meeting – how the church should operate, how we should live, how we should work, how we should love.

Summary of 2nd Thess. 2 – Paul's prayer

Stand Firm against the enemy and take ground for the Kingdom of God!

Three themes of Paul's prophetic prayer: (A prayer of edification, exhortation and comfort. [KJV])

1. Edification & thanksgiving - True & authentic faith is being revealed

^{1:3}We ought always to **thank God for you**, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing.

⁴Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring.

- ❖ Your love is increasing
- ❖ You are persevering under adversity
- ❖ You are fulfilling God's calling & purpose

^{1:11}...we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that

by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith.

¹²We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- ❖ You have grown in maturity in your understanding of grace, faith, hope & good works
- ❖ Don't tire of doing good.

2: ¹⁶**May our Lord Jesus Christ** himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, ¹⁷encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.

2: ¹³**But we ought always to thank God for you**, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

Ephesians 2 8

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

2. Exhortation - Standing firm in the midst of the devils adversity

2: ¹⁴He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵So then, brothers, **stand firm** and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.

- ❖ Stand firm – everything is in God's great plan
- ❖ The antichrist will be used as a point of separation – the goats and the sheep. (2:8-12)

2: ⁸And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. ⁹The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, ¹⁰and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. [*Jesus said – “Even the elect will be deceived if that were possible.”*]

Stand firm!

Ephesians 6

¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹²For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of

righteousness in place, ¹⁵and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

3. Encouragement – God will strengthen you as you take ground for the kingdom

- ❖ Let your life be an example of diligence and work ethic
- ❖ God will give you peace

^{3:2} **And pray** that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith. ³But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. ⁴We have confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we command. ⁵**May the Lord** direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.

- ❖ God is faithful
- ❖ He will strengthen & protect you from the evil one
- ❖ He will direct your hearts into His love
- ❖ He will give you Christ's perseverance
- ❖ God will give you peace

^{3:16} **Now may the Lord** of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.

This is Paul's prophetic prayer of edification, exhortation and comfort - and it is ours.