2 THESSALONIANS

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Key Verse:

THANK GOD FOR GROWING FAITH

2 Thessalonians 1:1-7

Key Verse: 1:5

1. Greetings (1-2)

Paul wrote this letter shortly after writing 1 Thessalonians. He had received some news from Thessalonica, so now he wrote again to encourage the believers. He begins with his classic greeting: "Grace and peace to you..." Grace and peace go together. Both are God's gifts to us through our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Growing in faith and love (3-4)

When worldly people encounter trials, their love grows cold and they are full of complaints. But when God's people persevere in the midst of suffering, their faith grows and their love increases. Paul thanks God for the growing faith and love of the believers.

3. Jesus will come from heaven (5-7)

God is just, so revenge is a useless motive. When Jesus comes in power and glory, he will pay back those who persecute his children. And those who suffer for his sake will be counted worthy of his kingdom.

Prayer: Lord, help me to persevere in trial so that my faith and love may grow.

One Word: Grow in faith and in love

SO THAT JESUS MAY BE GLORIFIED IN YOU

2 Thessalonians 1:8-12

Key Verse: 1:12

1. The day he comes to be glorified (8-10)

When Jesus comes in glory with his holy angels he will punish those who do not know God or obey the gospel of Jesus. They will be shut out from the presence of God eternally and sent to the fiery lake of burning sulfur to join the devil and his angels (Rev 21:8). But God will be glorified in his holy people. God's people, made holy by the blood of Jesus, will marvel at his glory and

power and majesty. There is no need to hold any grudge in our hearts. We must trust God's goodness and his justice and live lives of obedient faith, with our hope set fully on Jesus.

2. May God count you worthy (11-12)

May God count us worthy of his calling. Jesus must rule our hearts. Then our purpose will be to glorify him. May he, by his power, fulfill our every good pur- pose and our every act prompted by faith. May the name of Jesus be glorified in us and may we be glorified in him.

Prayer: Lord, rule my heart and life so that your name may be glorified in me.

One Word: May Jesus be glorified

THE SPLENDOR OF HIS COMING

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

Key Verse: 2:8

1. Don't be deceived (1-4)

Many people have an unnecessary curiosity about the time of Jesus' second coming. The believers in Thessalonica were upset by a report that Jesus' second coming had already occurred. Jesus said that no one knows when he will come again. When he comes, everyone will know it. In the meantime, the devil is working hard to deceive God's people. Lawlessness and rebellion come from the devil. Jesus' people must not be drawn into either one.

2. The man of lawlessness (5-12)

Before Jesus comes again Satan will make a great effort to lead the whole world astray--as he is doing now! He will send a lawless one and equip him with power to do miracles and signs to deceive those who are perishing. The lawless one will exalt himself over God. Men are deceived because they do not love the truth, but delight in wickedness. Those who love the truth will be saved. Jesus will destroy the lawless one by the splendor of his coming.

Prayer: Praise Jesus who will come in splendor and bring victory. Lord, help me to love the truth and welcome him with joy.

One Word: Jesus is coming in splendor. Love truth

STAND FIRM

2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

Key Verse: 2:15

1. Called through the gospel (13-15)

God called us because he loved us. Our salvation does not rest on our feeble faith or faithfulness. It rests on the love and power and grace of God who called us through his gospel. When we believe the gospel, which is the truth, God's Spirit works in us to purify us from sin. God calls us through his gospel so that we might share in the glory of Jesus Christ.

2. Strengthened to do good deeds (16-17)

We must hold fast to this gospel--the gospel which Paul teaches--and stand firm in our faith. God's grace is an undeserved gift. But he did not save us to become useless; he saved us to do good works. God himself gives us his word and his work to do. We cannot do anything good without his direction. Jesus himself and God the Father will encourage us and strengthen us to do his work.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for calling me through your gospel. Strengthen me by your word and Spirit to do your work.

One Word: Stand firm in God's truth

PRAY FOR US

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

Key Verse: 3:1

1. Pray that the message be spread (1-2)

Paul's personal prayer request is that the gospel might spread rapidly and be honored. The gospel is honored when people believe and obey it. Without faith, men become enemies of the gospel; so Paul asked prayer that they be delivered from wicked men who were not believers. May God's concerns become our personal prayer topics.

2. The Lord is faithful (3-5)

We can't trust people, not even ourselves, to be faithful. But our God will strengthen us and protect us from the evil one. Paul had confidence that the believers in Thessalonica were continuing in obedience to God's word. He prayed that the Lord would direct their hearts into God's love and teach them Christ's perseverance.

Prayer: Lord, let the word of the gospel spread to all the young people of this land, until you raise America as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Direct my heart into God's love and teach me the perseverance of Christ.

One Word: Pray for your country

WARN THE IDLE BROTHER

2 Thessalonians 3:6-18

Key Verse: 3:10

1. Paul's example and rule (6-10)

Idleness displeases God. Paul set an example of diligence. He was concerned about the idleness of a few Christians. Love of the easy-going life spreads quickly. Paul felt so strongly about this matter that he gave us a rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat."(10)

2. Be busy, but don't be busybodies (11-15)

When we are not busy doing the work the Lord gives us to do, our minds become busy with useless things. We lose God's peace. We become busybodies. God's word says, "Work hard and earn the bread you eat." We must never tire of doing what is right. Idleness is a spiritual problem, so we must not hang around with idle people; we must warn them as brothers.

3. Peace at all times (16-18)

Paul's final word of blessing is a prayer for the Lord's peace. This is the best blessing.

Prayer: Lord, heal my busy mind and lazy hands and help me to be busy and loving.

One Word: May the God of peace give peace