

# TRUTH FOR TROUBLED TIMES

## 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

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### *Stand firm in the face of serious suffering.*

How many times do we hear someone say, “*Hang in there!*” to a person going through difficulties? While perhaps well meant, such words may do little to give help or hope to the suffering individual. Serious pressures demand biblical principles from an eternal perspective.

#### **I. FIVE REASONS WE SUFFER.**

With regard to pain, God has at least five objectives He may want to accomplish in our lives.

- A. To develop our faith. James 1:2-4
- B. To expose error. 1 Corinthians 3:13-15
- C. To learn obedience. Hebrews 5:8
- D. To create humility. 2 Corinthians 12:7
- E. To bring glory to God. 1 Peter 0 4:16

#### **II. FOUR WAYS WE CAN ENCOURAGE THE SUFFERER.**

2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

The apostle Paul provides us with a first-aid kit we can use to help those who suffer ... and to help ourselves when we are the ones who are hurting.

- A. Offer Compassion. 2:13a
- B. Offer Instruction. 2:13-14

If God is good (He is) and He chose us for salvation (He did), then our present troubles must be part of His plan (they are).

- 1. First, these verses tell the sufferer: “*God has chosen you for salvation; you are still in His family even though you may not feel like it.*” 2:13
  - God Loved Us.
  - God Chose Us.
  - God Saved Us.
  - God Is Sanctifying Us.
  - God Causes Us to Believe the Truth.
- 2. Second, these verses remind the sufferer: “*God has called you. You didn’t whistle for help. He did the calling.*” 2:14
  - God Calls Us Through the Gospel.
  - God Shares With Us the Glory of Our Lord Jesus Christ.
- C. Offer Exhortation. 2 Thessalonians 2:15
  - 1. Stand Firm.
  - 2. Hold True.
- D. Offer Intercession. 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17
  - 1. He Prayed That They Be Encouraged.
  - 2. He Prayed That They Be Established.
  - 3. He Prayed That They Be Ethical.

#### **III. THREE BENEFITS FROM SUFFERING. 2 Corinthians 1**

- A. The ability to comfort others. 1:3-4
- B. A Dependence on God. 1:8-9
- C. Learning to give thanks in everything. 1:10-11

These verses reveal not only the path where our suffering leads but also the tender hand of God who leads us.