

“THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF PRAISE”

Suffering Helps Us to Grow

2 Thessalonians 1:1-4

Pastor Bruce Henry

Sunday AM, April 3, 2016

2 Thessalonians

Author: The apostle Paul.

Date: Written in AD 51.

Title: This is the second letter Paul wrote “to the church of the Thessalonians” (1:1).

Fast Facts: Paul probably wrote 2 Thessalonians from Corinth during the summer of AD 51, several months after he wrote 1 Thessalonians. He wrote 2 Thessalonians to further explain and clarify God’s program of events relating to the day of the Lord (including Christ’s second coming). He also encouraged the believers to correct the disorders remaining among them.

Brief History of Thessalonica:

- The city of Thessalonica is known today as Salonika and is the second largest city in Greece. It came into being in 315 B.C. Founded by the Greek general Cassander, who later became king of Macedonia, Thessalonica developed into a major commercial port and military launching point. At the time that 2 Thessalonians was written, Thessalonica was the capital and the most populous city of Macedonia, boasting over 200,000 people.
- During Paul’s 2nd missionary journey (AD 49-52), he & Silas persuaded many in this bustling seaport town to follow Christ. The city’s jealous religious leaders incited a riot by bringing charges of sedition against Paul & Silas for worshipping Christ over Caesar (Acts 17:5-7). The two men were forced to flee by night to Berea (Acts 17:10).

Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3
Affliction Affirmation	Prophecy Explanation	Response Clarification
Why are we suffering?	What will occur?	How do I respond?
Peace amidst Pain	Lawlessness vs. Restraint	Work while Waiting
“The Lord knows!”	“The day of the Lord”	“Do not grow weary!”
Commendation	Correction	Clarification

HELP FOR TROUBLED TIMES

A Brief Series from 2 Thessalonians 1

“The Encouragement of Praise”

Suffering Helps Us to Grow 2 Thessalonians 1:1-4

“The Encouragement of Promise”

Suffering Prepares Us for Glory 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10

“The Encouragement of Prayer”

Suffering Glorifies Christ Today 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

For what blessings did Paul give thanks and thereby encourage his friends?

I. PRAISE FOR THEIR EXPANDING FAITH. 1:3a

- “Faith” is a sense of personal confidence and absolute trust in God, which manifests itself in positive responses to what God says.
- “Growth exceedingly” is a strong word meaning “to grow beyond.” It suggests that the growth was unusual and abundant; entirely beyond natural expectation.

II. PRAISE FOR THEIR EXPRESSIVE LOVE. 1:3b

- Universal > “every one of you all” – Every member of the Thessalonian body was apparently sensitive enough to the Spirit’s ministry to allow for the development of this virtue.
- Mutual > “toward each other” – Love cannot be possessed without being expressed. The Thessalonians were functioning as true New Testament disciples by exhibiting such love (cf. John 13:35).
- Multiple > “abounded” – This word implies a broad dispersal, an outward diffusion, as of a flood irrigating the land.
- Rational > The Greek term for “love” (agape) suggests rational and benevolent affection. It springs from deliberate choice and is the disposition of the will whereby one acts kindly, graciously, and thoughtfully toward another. It is more volitional than emotional.

III. PRAISE FOR THEIR ENDURING PATIENCE. 1:4

- “Patience and faith” are commended because of the pressure of “persecutions and tribulations.”
- The concepts of “patience” (the ability to “abide under” difficult circumstances without running) and “faith” (personal confidence and trust in God) are intimately related. Patience is the produce of dependence upon God.
- “That ye endure” speaks of “standing bravely erect and firm” in the midst of heated opposition. The present tense of this verb indicates that they were at that moment undergoing the persecution.