

“Paul’s Praise for a Preserved People”

2 Thess. 1:1-4

Finding Peace in the Midst of the Storm

On his second missionary journey, Paul is accompanied by Silas and Timothy. After traveling to Athens, Paul sends Timothy to find out the condition of the church in Thessalonica. After sending the first letter, he received a response documenting their condition and questions. Second Thessalonians is Paul’s response.

I. The introduction

A. The author (v.1)

Here is one of the few places where Paul, Silas, and Timothy appear together (2 Cor. 1:19; 1 Thess 1:1 and 2 Thess 1:2).

B. The audience (v.1)

The Church is the body of Christ, not because of what it does, but because of what it is. We are the church, not by performance, but by position.

C. The opening salutation (v.2)

Paul pulls from the wellspring of God’s cool thirst quenching grace and peace. Is it possible that we might tire of hearing about God’s grace?

II. A prayer of thanksgiving (vv.3, 4)

A. The character of his gratitude

1. It is natural and spontaneous (“we ought always”).

To speak of gratitude as an obligation is like saying you are obligated to breathe or sleep or eat. You do not have to breathe or sleep or eat, but neither are you capable of not doing them.

2. It is proper and appropriate (“only fitting”).

Here the word means, “Suitable.” It is a proper expression of worship to thank God for His work of grace in and through His people.

B. The cause for his gratitude (v.3)

Continued on the other side...

The connector Paul uses gives us the reason why he was thankful.

1. Because they have an enlarging faith

Two of God's choicest channels for an enlarging faith are a steady intake of God's Word and trials.

2. Because they have an increasing love

His word for "grows ever greater" means, "to super abound." It is also a present active indicative. The word picture is that of a fire or a flood covering everything in its path.

C. The communication of his joy (v.4)

The fruit of perseverance and faith in the midst of persecution and affliction glorifies our heavenly Father (Matt. 5:16).

- If we pursue knowledge, we will become a Scribe.
- If we pursue holiness, we will become a Pharisee.
- If we pursue peace, we will become a Pacifist.
- If we pursue obedience, we will become a legalist.
- If we pursue giving, we will become a philanthropist.
- But if we pursue Christ, we will become a Christian.

The world without Christ sees a hopeless end. The person with Christ sees an endless hope.