



2nd

Thessalonians

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PASTOR'S

BIBLE

CLASS

Preparing for the Second Coming

Atlanta Belvedere SDA Church **STUDY GUIDE**

INTRODUCTION

▶ This second Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians is personal, affectionate, gentle, and persuasive. It is more formal, authoritarian, and theological. In it, Paul scolded and encouraged them for departing from Christian beliefs and practices. He mixed encouragement and discipline in varying proportions in this letter as the situation required. He fulfills the divine directive, *“Those whom the Lord loves He chastens and rebukes.”*

▶ Second Thessalonians stands out for its teaching on the second coming of Jesus. The teaching is explicit as it relates to the events leading up to the second coming and its meaning for both sinners and saints. The Thessalonians who were seemingly doubting their ability to make it on the Christian journey were encouraged by Paul as he acknowledged their virtues and achievements. Paul knew that judicious praise could do what indiscriminate criticism cannot do. Wise praise never makes a person rest upon his laurels but fills him with the desire to do still better. Paul reminded them that a strong spiritual community is marked by a strong faith, and ever-increasing love, and patient endurance.

THEME

The theme of 2 Thessalonians is the truth about the second coming of Christ.

THE OCCASION AND PURPOSE

- ❖ It was reported that there were some problems in the church (3:11).
- ❖ They were experiencing persecution from both Jews and Gentiles (Acts 17:5; 1 Thess. 2:14-16; 3:3-4).

- ❖ They had wrong ideas about the second coming of Christ. Some blamed Paul for the false view that “*the day of the Lord has come*” (2:2), which resulted in some people quitting their daily work; and meddling in other people’s affairs (3:6, 11).

The purpose of the letter is to stop the false teaching and its devastating consequences for Christian living.

TEACHING

They were experiencing persecution and Paul praised them for their steadfastness and continual growth in faith and love even though they did not think they were deserving of the praise (1:3).

Their patient endurance of persecution is seen as proof of God’s righteous judgment. Their suffering was preparing them for membership in the coming kingdom (1:5) when recompense will be given to both the sinner and the saint, the tormentors and the afflicted.

The reward for the persecuted will be “*rest*” and eternal fellowship with the Lord in the kingdom while tormentors will have eternal ruin and separation from the presence of God (1:7, 9).

The time of the coming of the Lord (2:1-12).

He deals with the error that the day of the Lord has already come by showing the events on the divine timetable have not yet run their course.

Christ will not come until the self-deifying “*man of lawlessness*” appears. He will come as the human incarnation of all evil. He will deceive men and require their worship. Christ will come to destroy the man of sin (2:5-6).

The '*man of sin*' is identified as an evil force in the world. God is in control, and He will ultimately triumph over Satan.

While Christians wait for the second coming of Christ and the salvation to be given in the gift of life in God's kingdom; they must be obedient to the doctrine taught them by Paul and his associates (2:15; 3:4, 6-12). It is a life of good works and words (2:17) not idleness and gossip and troublemaking, but the Christian activity of prayer (3:1), personal industriousness (3:6-12), and tireless well-doing (3:13).

AUTHORSHIP

Paul is the author, as the epistle claims (1:1; 3:17).

1. The nearness of the end was unpredictable and certain things must happen first was prevalent in the time of Jesus and Paul (Matt. 24:36, 41; Luke. 21:34-36; Matt. 24:32-33; Luke 21:29-30).
2. Similarities in thought and language between the two letters do not necessarily indicate imitation by a disciple.
3. Gnostic teaching about redemption as a completely accomplished fact could arise quickly in a church in the Greek world, as it did in Corinth.

Second Thessalonians was written about AD 51 from Corinth.

Outline

- I. **INTRODUCTION** (1:1-4)
 - A. Greetings (1:1-2)
 - B. Thanksgiving (1:3-4)
 - i. It should be noted that thanksgiving and prayer continue to 2:17, but theological arguments

appear in 1:5-10 and 2:1-2, which makes structural and logical analysis difficult.

II. **BODY (1:5-3:15)**

- A. A second coming will usher in the day of recompense for unbelieving persecutors and faithful believers. (1:5-10)
- B. The coming has not yet occurred; it will be preceded by events still to take place (2:1-12).

The man of sin (or the '*son of perdition*', 2:3) will be an extremely influential leader with international fame. He will be powerful and prideful and will seek to usurp the divine place in the world. He is the "*Antichrist or the Beast.*"

The antichrist reminds us that it is possible to be a great leader but not a good leader. God wants His leaders to be both great and good.

	GREAT LEADERSHIP		GOOD LEADERSHIP
1.	Has to do with competence.	1.	Has to do with character.
2.	Makes us effective in our work.	2.	Makes our work constructive.
3.	Enables our cause to progress.	3.	Enables us to choose the right cause.
4.	Means we are skillful.	4.	Means we have good hearts.
5.	Ensures our skill will influence.	5.	Ensures our service will impact.

Believers are to stand fast (2:13-17).

- C. To be prepared for the coming Christians
 - Must obey the pattern of Christian doctrine and living taught by Paul and his associates. (3:1-15)

vv. 1, 2 - Paul prayed for them, he now asks that they pray for him.

Why do ministers need the prayers of others?

1.	Their work is a great work.
2.	Their work is weighed down with opposition and hindrances.
3.	Ministers feel their need not only of human sympathy, but of divine grace, wisdom, and strength.
4.	Prayers knit the heart of the minister and people more closely together.
5.	For the furtherance of the gospel.
6.	Deliverance from obstructive enemies (Acts 18:12).

vv. 3, 4 - The apostle's cheerful assurance and confidence on behalf of the Thessalonians.

1.	Double blessing in store for them.
2.	To assure the Thessalonians of the double blessing.
3.	Paul's confidence based in the assurance. <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The grace and strength of the Lord; not in themselves or their wisdom or strength.b. Their present and future obedience to his commands.

v. 5 - Paul's continued prayer for his converts.

1.	Jesus is the true Director of the heart. <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The heart needs direction.b. The heart that is self-led is misled.
2.	The right direction of the Christian heart. <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Love for Jesus is the motivation.b. True patience of Christ: His sufferings and their sufferings – they need His patience to endure them.

v. 6 - Paul's method of dealing with the idle.

1.	Busy bodies <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Rebuke.b. Withdrawal from the disorderly brethren.
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vv. 7-10 - Paul's example supports the command.

v. 13 - Exhortation for well-doing.

A needed and powerfully recommended injunction.

1.	Putting into practice the patience of Jesus.
2.	God is glorified by well-doing (Jn. 15:8).
3.	God remembers it (Heb 6:9, 10).
4.	A blessing attends it (James 1:25).
5.	It follows us into glory or final rest (Rev. 14:13).

vv. 14, 15 – The true spirit of faithfully dealing with an erring brother.

1.	The command repeated.
2.	Social excommunication.
3.	The spirit in which the command should be carried out. <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Don't regard him as an enemy.- Affectionately admonish him.

v. 16 – A prayer for peace.

I.	The Author of this blessing <ul style="list-style-type: none">- He is our abiding Peace (Eph. 2:14).- He gives it to us (Jn. 14:27).- He guides us into the way of peace (Lk. 1:79).- He is the Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6).- Peace is preached by Him (Eph. 2:17; Acts 10:36).
II.	This peace includes <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reconciliation with God.- Peace with one another.- Peace in all relationships of life.- Peace in the midst of uncertainty.- Peace in the midst of persecution.- Peace in the face of death.
III.	A Prayer for continuous peace "Always".

	- Uninterrupted peace (Isa. 48:18) with no breaks in it by the world, the flesh, or the devil.
IV.	Peace acquired by praying, preaching, and conversation.
V.	The source of this peace continuing is the unbroken presence of the Lord, <i>"The grace of the Lord be with you all."</i> - Jesus is Peace. He reigns in peace, and He directly bestows peace through His own graciousness.

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