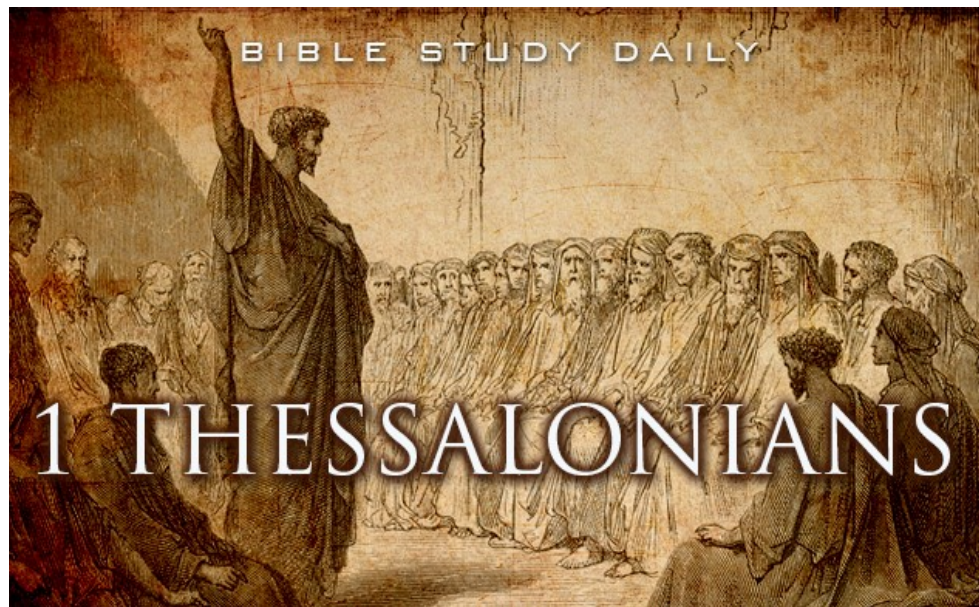




# BIBLE STUDY DAILY



This document contains the introduction to the book of 1 Thessalonians as well as my study notes for the book.

## Name

The title “2 Thessalonians” comes from the intended audience designated in 1:1, “To the church of the Thessalonians.” The body of the epistle makes it clear that Paul’s intended audience in Thessalonica is both Jewish and Gentile Christians.

## Author

Paul claims authorship of 2 Thessalonians in 1:1, and 3:17.

Externally, many of the early church fathers attribute the book of 2 Thessalonians to Paul including Irenaeus, Polycarp, Ignatius, and Justin.

## Genre

Epistle

## Literary Form

The epistle to the 2 Thessalonians is a personal letter that includes sections of encouragement and instruction.

## Time Frame

2 Thessalonians was written a few months after 1 Thessalonians while Paul was in Corinth in A.D. 50-51 during his second missionary journey to respond to questions arising from the first letter.

## Emphasis

The emphasis of 2 Thessalonians is on 1) God’s greatness, 2) salvation through faith in Christ alone, 3) the second coming of Christ, and 4) the life of the believer. 2 Thessalonians is markedly cooler and less enthusiastic than 1 Thessalonians.

## Outline

Introduction, greeting, and thanksgiving (1:1-12)

Instruction regarding the Day of the Lord (2:1-17)

Instructions to the Thessalonians (3:1-16)

Call to sanctification (4:1-12)

Concluding blessing and greeting (3:17-18)

# What I Noticed Today (2 Thessalonians 1-3)

## 2 Thessalonians 1

In verses 1-2 Paul opens the second letter to the Thessalonians in the typical fashion: he announces himself, his intended audience the church in Thessalonica, and a greeting.

**Note:** Paul uses the Latin name “Silvanus” for Silas who Paul selected to join him on the second missionary journey when Barnabas left him (Acts 15:22).

In verses 3-10 Paul expresses thanksgiving for the Thessalonian believers:

- The faith you have and love for each other is increasing.
- Therefore, we boast about you among God’s churches, about your endurance, and faith in all the persecutions you face.
- Our righteous God will repay those who have persecuted you and reward with rest those who were persecuted.
- This will take place when the Lord returns from heaven, taking vengeance on those who don’t know God (unbelieving Gentiles) and those who don’t obey the Gospel of our Lord (unbelieving Jews).
- Their punishment will be eternal destruction and separation from the Lord’s presence.
- In view of this, we always pray for you that 1) God will consider you worthy of His calling, and 2) will by His power fulfill every goodness and work of faith in you, so that the name of Jesus will be glorified by you and you by Him, according to the grace of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Note:** When the phrase “the name of Jesus” is referenced as in verse 12 it stands for the entire character, attributes, reputation, etc. of Jesus. Paul is praying these believers become fully Christ-like (sanctification).

## 2 Thessalonians 2-3

These two chapters address a doctrinal error that existed in the Thessalonian church dealing with the end times. In 2 Thessalonians 2 Paul deals with the doctrinal error itself, and in chapter 3 he deals with the practical application.

## 2 Thessalonians 2

In verses 1-12 Paul instructs the Thessalonians regarding the coming of the Lord and our being gathered together to him (the rapture of the church).

**Note:** Paul had instructed the Thessalonians about the Day of the

Lord when he had been with them and again in his first letter to them. They had apparently also received false teaching which Paul needed to correct.

- Do not be upset by spirit, message, or letter that tells you the Day of the Lord has come.

**Note:** Apparently, the source of the rumors the Day of the Lord had come, came from a variety of sources and this had convinced some of the Thessalonians that the message was true.

- The Day of the Lord will not come until the apostasy comes and the man of lawlessness/son of destruction is revealed.

**Note:** Apostasy means “rebellion.” In this case, it is the widespread rejection of God. The man of lawlessness/son of destruction is the antichrist (1 John 2:18).

- The man of lawlessness exalts himself and opposes God. He causes others to worship him. He sits in God’s sanctuary claiming to be God.

**Note:** Paul’s reference to the man of lawlessness sitting in God’s sanctuary indicates the temple will be rebuilt at some point in the future in Jerusalem.

- You know what currently restrains the man of lawlessness.

**Note:** There is a lot of scholarly debate over who or what the “restrainer” is that holds back the man of lawlessness. Some say it is the Roman empire but the empire is long gone. Some say it is Satan but why would Satan hold back sin? The most plausible answer is the restrainer is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has the supernatural power to hold back the man of lawlessness.

- The one restraining him will do so until it is time for him to be revealed.

**Note:** The Holy Spirit lives in the lives of Christians so when believers are raptured the Holy Spirit will be gone from earth and the man of lawlessness will have free reign over the earth until the coming of the Lord (after the man of lawlessness is revealed there will be a seven-year time of tribulation on the earth). This is a strong argument from Paul for a pre-tribulation rapture of the church.

- The coming of the lawless one is Satan’s doing. He will come with false miracles, wonders, and signs among those who are perishing.
- They are perishing because they did not believe and accept the Gospel in order to be saved.
- For this reason, God sends them a strong delusion so they believe what is false, and all those who did not believe will be condemned.

In verses 13-17 Paul transitions from his doctrinal teaching on the Day of the Lord to practical application; exhorting the Thessalonians to live in anticipation of the Day of the Lord.

- Paul thanks God for the Thessalonians because the Lord chose them from

the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit through belief in the Gospel.

- God called them through the Gospel so they might obtain glory in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Therefore, brothers stand firm and hold to the teaching (the message and letter) we gave you.

**Note:** Paul's exhortation is another indication that he was worried the Thessalonians would fall back into their old ways or accept false teachings.

- In closing this section, Paul prays for the Lord and God who loves us and gives eternal encouragement and hope by grace will encourage your hearts, and give you strength in every good work and word.

**Note:** The "good work" Paul refers to is work when done unto the Lord. The reference to "word" is a reference to the Gospel.

## 2 Thessalonians 3

In verses 1-5 "Finally" marks the beginning of Paul's concluding remarks. He prays for the Thessalonians and issues final exhortations for living the Christian life.

- Paul asks for prayer that the Gospel might be spread rapidly and honored as it was with the Thessalonians.
- Paul asks for prayer that they might be delivered from wicked and evil men who are not of the faith.
- God is faithful and will strengthen and guard you from the evil one.
- Paul has confidence in the Lord that they are doing and will continue to do what they have been instructed.
- Paul concludes the prayer asking that the Lord direct their hearts to God's love and Christ's endurance.

**Note:** In Paul's prayer we see the two reactions to the Gospel: some accept it and some evil men oppose it. However, the Lord will give them strength and protection, and direct their paths.

In verses 6-14 In this final group of exhortations Paul is sterner; issuing his exhortations as "commands" in the name of the Lord Jesus:

- Keep away from every brother who does not walk responsibly according to the tradition you received from us.
- You must imitate us; we did not eat anyone's food free of charge. and we worked day and night so that we would not be a burden to anyone.
- It is not that we don't have the right to support but we did it to be an example to you so you would imitate us.
- In fact, when we were with you previously we told you anyone who isn't

willing to work should not eat.

- We hear there are some among you who are not working at all but are interfering with the work of others.
- Do not tire of doing right.
- We command and exhort such people (those not working) in the name of the Lord Jesus to work so they may eat their own food.
- If anyone does not obey this instruction don't associate with them so they might be ashamed and repent. Treat this person as a brother, not as an enemy.

**Note:** It seems that some of the Thessalonians took Paul's previous letter literally when he said the Day of the Lord would come swiftly at night. Perhaps they thought it was senseless to work if the Day of the Lord was upon them. Paul's doctrinal teaching and application teaching in 2 Thessalonians are aimed at correcting this misunderstanding.

In verses 16-18 Paul closes the letter in his usual fashion; a prayer, a benediction, and a confirmation that these were his words.

**Note:** Paul's closing greeting in his own hand is evidence of his use of an amanuensis (someone who took dictation). His amanuensis for 1 & 2 Thessalonians may have been Silas.

*Some thoughts for additional consideration:*

- *As in Paul's day, there are those who hear the Gospel and turn to God in faith but there are those who actively oppose the truth of God's Word.*
- *The church also faces destruction from the inside, as there are those who believe falsely, and worse, those who knowingly preach falsehoods. Believers need to constantly be on guard against those who would weaken and destroy the church.*