

# 2 Thessalonians 1 Commentary

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HE HAS NOT YET COME

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Another [Overview Chart - 2 Thessalonians](#) - Charles Swindoll

## COMPARISON OF 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS

### 1 THESSALONIANS

### 2 THESSALONIANS

Addresses how the  
Thessalonians were  
evangelized as they received  
the Word of God

Addresses how the  
Thessalonians are being edified,  
noting their progress in faith,  
love, and patience

The imminency and importance  
of the Lord's return is  
emphasized

Misunderstandings about the  
Lord's return are corrected

The saints are comforted and  
encouraged

The saints are assured of God's  
judgment on His enemies

Paul is concerned with the  
church and its hope of the  
rapture (meeting Christ in the  
air)

Paul is concerned with Satan,  
the man of sin (Antichrist) and  
their destruction at the revelation  
(return of Christ to the earth)

Contains the outstanding  
passage on the rapture of the  
saints in 4:13–18

Contains the outstanding  
passage concerning the day of  
the Lord in 2:1–12

**2 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:**

NET 2 Thessalonians 1:1 From Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 1:1 This letter is from Paul, Silas, and Timothy. We are writing to the church in Thessalonica, to you who belong to God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

NIV 2 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

GNT 2 Thessalonians 1:1 Πα λος κα Σιλουαν ς κα Τιμ θεος τ κκλησ Θεσσαλονικ ων ν θε πατρ μ ν κα κυρ ησο Χριστ ,

KJV 2 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

YLT 2 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, to the assembly of Thessalonians in God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ:

ASV 2 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ;

CSB 2 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy: To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

NRS 2 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

NAB 2 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

NJB 2 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silvanus and Timothy, to the Church in Thessalonica which is in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ

GWN 2 Thessalonians 1:1 From Paul, Silas, and Timothy. To the church at Thessalonica united with God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- 2Co 1:19 1Th 1:1-10
- 2 Thessalonians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Paul and Silvanus and Timothy** - While Paul wrote the letter, he includes the names of two other faithful servants who played a role in the founding of the church at Thessalonica. Paul was a humble servant willing to share the acclaim with his fellow servants modelling his exhortation in Php 2:3+ "with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves," a good model for all of us. Paul is clearly the author for he uses the first person pronoun ("I") in 2 Th 2:5 and 2 Th 3:17.

**Matthew Henry** says "Those who are aged, and strong, and eminent, should pay respect to, and support the reputation of, those who are younger, and weaker, and of less note."

**Paul** (3972) ([click brief overview of his life](#)) is from Latin, **Paulos** meaning "little, small". Before his Damascus Road experience he was known by his Hebrew name **Saul** (Greek **Saulos**) which means "desired" or "ask" (derived from Hebrew word for "[ask](#)"). Paul is always referred to as Saul in Acts until his clash with Bar Jesus at Paphos, when Luke suddenly writes, "But Saul, who was also known as Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fixed his gaze upon him." (Acts 13:9+). From this point on in Acts (and in the epistles) he is always referred to as Paul .

**Silvanus** ([click more in depth discussion](#)) is a Roman proper name ("person of the woods" from Latin "silva" = wood, originally the name of the "god" of the woods) and is generally regarded as synonymous with **Silas** apparently the contracted form of **Silvanus** (compare Acts 18:5+ with 2Cor 1:19) Luke always calls him Silas, but Paul always uses Silvanus. Upon the separation of Paul and Barnabas, Silas was selected by Paul as the companion of his second missionary journey (Acts 15:40+).

**THOUGHT** - Note that God uses unknown, unsung believers like **Silvanus** for His glory and He desires to use you in the same way. Are you submitting your will to His? God desires our availability more than our

ability. Silvanus was available for God's use. It did not matter whether he was called to "play second fiddle" to both Paul. **Silvanus** did not seek glory for himself, but only for his Lord. If God calls you to this lot, will you willingly accept it? An interesting verse in the Old Testament (KJV) says that "as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth **by the stuff** ("staying by the supplies."): they shall part alike." (1Sa 30:24). Are you willing (if God so wills) to "stay by the stuff" while others take the lead?

Staying "by the stuff" means "staying by the supplies."

**Timothy** (5095) (**Timotheos** from **Time** = worth or merit of some object + **theos** =God) means literally "honoring God". The Greek word for "honor" has in it the ideas of reverence and veneration. Timothy was son of Eunice, a friend, traveling companion, and co-worker of Paul as well as his disciple (cf "you followed my teaching" - 2 Ti 3:10+) See Whyte's article [Timothy as a Young Minister](#) and [What can we learn from the life of Timothy?](#) The relationship between Paul and his young co worker was deep and abiding. Paul associates the name of Timothy with that of his own in the salutation of four other epistles.

None of Paul's companions more fully reflected the spirit of the apostle than Timothy, whom he sent to Corinth in order that the Corinthian believers might have a visual reminder of how their spiritual father lived, Paul writing that "I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church." (1 Cor 4:17).

**Timotheos** - 24x in 24v Acts 16:1; Acts 17:14; Acts 17:15; Acts 18:5; Acts 19:22; Acts 20:4; Rom. 16:21; 1 Co. 4:17; 1 Co. 16:10; 2 Co. 1:1; 2 Co. 1:19; Phil. 1:1; Phil. 2:19; Col. 1:1; 1 Thess. 1:1; 1 Thess. 3:2; 1 Thess. 3:6; 2 Thess. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:2; 1 Tim. 1:18; 1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:2; Phlm. 1:1; Heb. 13:23

#### Related Resources:

- American Tract Society [Timothy](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Timothy](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Timothy](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Timothy](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Timothy](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Timothy](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Timothy](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Timothy](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Timothy](#)

**Spurgeon on Silvanus and Timothy** - Paul loved to associate his fellow-workers with himself when writing to his brethren and sisters in Christ. Although he had a superior experience to theirs, he put Silvanus, and Timothy, his own son in the faith, with him as his fellow-evangelists in writing to "the church of the Thessalonians

**To the church of the Thessalonians** ([Click here](#) for map) **in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**- There is an interesting secular article on [Thessalonica](#) (See especially the topic [Thessalonica in the Roman Era](#)) and its history at [Wikipedia](#). In this salutation then "**church**" clearly refers to a **local** church (see notes below on "church"). Notice the church's two "addresses" one earthly ("physical address") and the other heavenly (in God their "spiritual address"), which is true of every true church since that time.

**In God the Father** distinguishes this assembly from any pagan secular or religious assembly ( which is what the word "ekklesia" meant in secular Greek), whereas "**and the Lord Jesus Christ**" distinguishes it from Jewish assemblies (they were "in God" but not "in Christ"). Of the two addresses, one's spiritual address is the more important. If we have come to Christ, we must see ourselves as primarily new creatures "in the Lord Jesus Christ," and "in God the Father." Paul stresses this truth throughout the letter. The root and ground of the church of Thessalonica's spiritual existence and her power in the pagan culture was based on her union (**IN**) with the Father and the Son. **Paul** reiterates this principle of union describing "the churches of Judea which were **in Christ**." (Gal 1:22+)

Paul's indication of the character of the readers gives a clear indication of the essential nature of the Christian church. Its members are people who have received and accepted the call of God and Christ unto eternal life and thus have been separated from the world in its spiritual alienation and death. They have been brought into a new sphere of life, into vital union **in** God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Note how Paul places the two names side by side on a basis of equality providing clear witness to his conviction concerning the deity of Jesus Christ for to unite the name of a mere man, however exalted, with the eternal God Would have been unthinkable for a strong monotheist like Paul.

**W E Vine** comments on "in God..." noting that the preposition **I N** "is frequently used by Paul to express **intimacy of union**, and is not readily explained by any simpler term. Here it introduces the spiritual description and may be paraphrased thus: "in relationship with God, as Father, and with Jesus Christ as Lord. ([Collected writings of W. E. Vine](#))

**Hiebert** agrees with the idea of union writing that the members of the church in Thessalonica "are people who have received and accepted the call of God and Christ unto eternal life and thus have been separated from the world in its spiritual alienation and death. **They have been brought into a new sphere of life, into vital union with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.** Their faith and experience center in these two names... Their new life as an assembly was the development of the communion that flowed from that new relationship with Christ." ([1 & 2 Thessalonians: BMH Book. 1996](#))

**THOUGHT:** No matter what our sphere of trouble or pain, as believers we need to remember **the spiritual sphere in which we also live** as those who are **in** God the Father and **in** the Savior, the Lord Jesus.

**Spurgeon on to the church** - Paul loved to associate his fellow-workers with himself when writing to his brethren and sisters in Christ. Although he had a superior experience to theirs, he put Silvanus, and Timothy, his own son in the faith, with him as his fellow-evangelists in writing to "the church of the Thessalonians"

**Church** (1577) (**ekklesia** from **ekkaléo** = call out in turn from **ek** = out + **kaleo** = call, English > ecclesiastical) is literally "the called out ones" or "a company called out". **Ekklesia** was the familiar, nonreligious Greek political term for an **assembly of citizens** "called out" from their homes to assemble and transact public business (used this way by Luke in Acts 19:39).

Although the **church** as defined in the NT is not found in the OT, the Greek word **ekklesia** is used in the Septuagint (LXX) to describe Israel (Deut 18:16, Neh 13:1, compare Acts 7:38). **Ekklesia** used of a lawfully convened assembly of citizens in a Greek city in Acts 19:39, of a riotous mob in Acts 19:32, 41, of an assembly consisting exclusively of professed believers, 1Cor 1:2, cp. Acts 5:11, 14, of the whole company of the redeemed of this age, described as **the church which is His** [Christ's] **body** (see Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:22,23). In Acts 9:31 there is an isolated instance of its use in the singular to include all believers in a country—Palestine.

In his five earlier epistles (First and Second Thessalonians, Galatians, First and Second Corinthians), Paul addresses the assembly and in the four later (Romans, Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians) he addresses the saints.

Not every gathering of religious people was a church for there were a number of other "assemblies" (**ekklesia**) in Thessalonica, including cults gathered around the gods of the pantheon and ancient labor unions gathered behind the ideology of their craft. This fact helps explain why Paul went on to give not just the **physical** address of this "assembly" but also its **spiritual** address (in God).

For the Jews of the Dispersion and the devout pagans who frequented the synagogues, **ekklesia** also had a religious connotation. In the Greek Bible ([Septuagint = LXX](#)) the term was used of the Israelites assembled for religious purposes. The Septuagint usage however has no reference to the meaning of **ekklesia** as used by Paul, for the truth of the **church** composed of Jews and Gentiles was a mystery not revealed until the New Testament. In the Septuagint **ekklesia** referred to the assembled people of God. This religious connotation led to its distinctively Christian usage as the assembly of the believers in Jesus Christ. When the Jewish nation forfeited its prerogative of being the distinctive people of God through its rejection of the Messiah, the believers in Jesus Christ carried on the claim to be the true **ekklesia**, the Christian church. With the multiplication of Gentile converts the term **church** lost its Jewish implications and became the distinctive designation of a spiritual fellowship that transcended all racial distinctions, not just Jew and Gentile. Barclay observes that "In the New Testament the Church is always a company of worshipping people who have given their hearts and pledged their lives to Jesus Christ." It is interesting that in the New Testament the word **church** never means a building. In contrast **ekklesia** stresses that we are a people called out of the world (an elect assembly) unto the Lord to represent Him in a fallen world.

**Spurgeon on in God our Father** - What a wonderful expression! The Church is in God as God is in the Church, what a blessed dwelling-place for the people of God in all generations: "**in God our Father**"

**God the Father** is a family term which only applies to those who have been born again. Without meaning to sound harsh, sadly I hear many people who are clearly not saved referring to God as their **Father**, but simply put God is not their Father, Satan is their

father (John 8:44), for they are still confined to the kingdom of (spiritual) darkness (of which Satan is "king" - Col 1:13+, 1 Jn 5:19+). The apostle John records that although Jesus "came to His own (Jews)...those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become **children of God**, even to those who **believe in His name** who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but (born) of God. (Jn 1:12-14+, John 3:3-7+ cf other passages on our new family relationship - 1Jn 3:1+, 1Jn 5:1+ Gal 3:26+)

**Thessalonica** in Paul's day was at the zenith of its splendor. Famous hot springs attracted tourists. It possessed a natural harbor situated on the Thermic Gulf which made it one of the world's greatest docking yards. Xerxes the Persian established his naval base at this bay when he invaded Europe. It lay about 100 miles southwest of Philippi and was at that time a more important center than Philippi, a Roman colony, while Thessalonica had a predominantly Grecian culture. This ancient city was located on the great Roman road that went from the Adriatic Sea to the Middle East called the Via Egnatia or Egnatian Way. The main street of city of Thessalonica was actually part of that road. This fact along with the excellent natural harbor were important factors that enabled the spread of the Gospel to all the world.

## 2 Thessalonians 1:2 Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

NET 2 Thessalonians 1:2 Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

NLT 2 Thessalonians 1:2 May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 1:2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

NIV 2 Thessalonians 1:2 Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

GNT 2 Thessalonians 1:2 χ ρ ις μ ν κ α ε ρ ν η π θεο πατρ ς [ μ ν ] κ α κυ ρ ου η σο Χ ρ ι σ τ ο .

KJV 2 Thessalonians 1:2 Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

YLT 2 Thessalonians 1:2 Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ!

ASV 2 Thessalonians 1:2 Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

CSB 2 Thessalonians 1:2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 1:2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

NRS 2 Thessalonians 1:2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

NAB 2 Thessalonians 1:2 grace to you and peace from God (our) Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

NJB 2 Thessalonians 1:2 Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

GWN 2 Thessalonians 1:2 Good will and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are yours!

- Ro 1:7 1Co 1:3,8
- 2 Thessalonians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ-** **Grace** is the transforming power of God to live a transformed life led by and empowered by His Spirit. When we live life on that "higher plane," the natural "fruit" is peace with God and peace of God. **Peace** is a right and harmonious relationship among men ("horizontal peace") or between men and God ("vertical peace"), with a sense of total well-being, all of this of course the result of the gift God Himself gives.

**THOUGHT** - Is this not a simple but powerful prayer we should pray for all the saints in Christ Jesus? Have you ever prayed **grace** and **peace** for other believers? **C H Spurgeon** says that "Blessed men scatter blessings. When the benediction of God rests upon us, we pour out benedictions upon others."

**Grace to you and peace** - This phrase is found 11x - Rom. 1:7; 1 Co. 1:3; 2 Co. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:2; Phlm. 1:3; Rev. 1:4.

Grace is an unearned blessing to unworthy sinners.

- D C McCasland

The common greeting among the Greeks was **chairein** ("rejoice, greetings") while the Hebrew greeting was **shalom** ("peace, prosperity, wellbeing"). Christianity took these everyday words of greeting and transformed them into vehicles able to convey the

distinctive truths of the gospel. **William Barclay** adds that "When Paul took and put together these two great words, grace and peace, **charis** and **eirene**, he was doing something very wonderful. He was taking the normal greeting phrases of two great nations and molding them into one."

**Spurgeon** - This is the apostle's usual salutation when he is writing to a Christian church. When he is writing to a minister, it is "grace, mercy, and peace," for God's most prominent servants especially need great mercy on account of their heavy responsibilities and many shortcomings; but to the church Paul's greeting is, "Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul is opening with a prayer that the Lord's **grace** (God's transforming, supernatural power dispensed by the Holy Spirit to live the abundant life - see discussion of empowering aspect of grace at 2Ti 2:1+) be with all the the saints at Thessalonica...

**Grace** (5485) (**charis**) is God's free, unmerited favor bestowed through Christ upon guilty sinners. Grace is God's provision for us because of the death of Christ for our sins. God is the Source for all our provisions. We do not earn nor deserve His gifts. We do not deserve anything from God except condemnation and eternal punishment. Nothing undermines natural self-effort more than a proper understanding of the supernatural grace of God. The Bible personifies Jesus as "**grace**." "For the grace of God has appeared bring salvation to all men..." (Titus 2:11+). If people do the doing, they get the glory. If God does the doing, then God gets the glory. Grace glorifies God, because God does the doing.

**Grace** is the cause and **peace** the effect or the result to all who receive that favor (grace) in Christ. **Grace** is fountain of which **peace** is the stream. Grace and peace are a couplet. We cannot have one without the other. We must experience God's **grace** before we can experience His **peace** and thus these two words sum up the **Gospel**, **grace** being the "cause" and **peace** the "effect" (cf Eph 6:15+). The order in the New Testament is always "grace and peace," never the reverse. We cannot reverse the order for if we bypass grace, we cannot possibly have peace in our life. Christians must live their life based on grace. We cannot live the supernatural, abundant life on our own resources. And of course ultimately the Source of peace is the Spirit who bears it in and through us (Gal 5:22+). Every believer has peace with God, but not all Christians have the peace of God. So many churn inside because they do not understand and therefore fail to see God's sovereign hand in every circumstance of their life. To experience this peace of God, one must soak one's mind with the Word of God and prayer. Although the context is different the principle in Isaiah applies that God "will keep in perfect peace all who trust in (Him), whose thoughts are fixed on (Him)!" (Isa 26:3NLT) Biblical **peace** is the supernatural given ability to "sit down" on the inside. Are you standing up on the inside? Fix your thoughts on the Prince of Peace. Peace is the consequence of appropriating grace to our life.

No Christ, no peace.

Know Christ, know peace.

**Peace** (1515) (**eirene** from verb **eiro** = to join) pictures the binding or joining together what is broken or divided and conveys the basic meaning to set at one again. It is reflected in the modern expression "having it all together." Everything is in place and as it ought to be. **Eirene** is the root word for our English "**serene**" (serenity) which means clear and free of storms or unpleasant change, stresses an unclouded and lofty tranquility. **Peace** implies health, well-being, and prosperity. Christ Jesus through the blood of His Cross binds together that which was separated by human sin, the sinner who puts his faith in the Lord Jesus, and God. In secular Greek **eirene** referred to cessation or absence of war. In Adam all men before salvation "were enemies" (Ro 5:10+, Ro 5:12-+), "alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds" (Col 1:21+) and so were "at war" with the Almighty'.

**Barclay** adds that "in contemporary colloquial Greek this word **eirene** had two interesting usages. It was used of the serenity which a county enjoyed under the just and beneficent government of a good emperor; and it was used of the good order of a town or village. Villages had an official who was called the superintendent of the village's **eirene**, the keeper of the public peace. Usually in the New Testament **eirene** stands for the Hebrew shalom and means not just freedom from trouble but everything that makes for a man's highest good. It is interesting to note that Chara and Eirene both became very common Christian names in the Church. ([Daily Study Bible](#))

Saints now have "been justified by faith" and "have **peace** with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro 5:1+) because they have "been reconciled" (Ro 5:10+) The war between the believer and God is over, and the treaty was written not with **pen** and **ink** but with **Cross** and precious **blood**, where the Lamb of God paid the price in full ([tetelestai](#) in Jn 19:30+) so that believers now can be at rest in Christ (cf Heb

4:10+). Paul writes later in this letter that the "**peace of God... shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus**" (Php 4:7+), referring to the peace that comes from being in unbroken communion or fellowship with God. The first **peace** is often referred to as peace **with** God (justification) and the later as the peace **of** God (fellowship, communion, daily walking with your Savior). **Peace** with God then is the harmony that exists between the Creator and His creatures who by grace through faith "**receive the reconciliation**" (Ro 5:11+).

**ILLUSTRATION of PEACE** - Jim Walton was translating the NT for the Muinane people of La Sabana in the jungles of Colombia. But he was having trouble with the word **peace**. During this time, Fernando, the village chief, was promised a 20-minute plane ride to a location that would have taken him 3 days to travel by walking. The plane was delayed in arriving at La Sabana, so Fernando departed on foot. When the plane finally came, a runner took off to bring Fernando back. But by the time he had returned, the plane had left. Fernando was livid because of the mix-up. He went to Jim and launched into an angry tirade. Fortunately, Walton had taped the chief's diatribe. When he later translated it, he discovered that the chief kept repeating the phrase, I don't have one heart. Jim asked other villagers what having "one heart" meant, and he found that it was like saying, There is nothing between you and the other person. That, Walton realized, was just what he needed to translate the word **peace**. To have **peace** with God means that there is nothing--no sin, no guilt, no condemnation--that separates us. And that peace with God is possible only through Christ (Ro 5:1-note).

**THOUGHT** - Do you have "one heart" with God?... with your fellow man (husband, wife, children, co-workers, etc)

**From God (theos) the Father and the Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ (Christos)** - Note that the Son getting equal billing so to speak with the Father, for clearly BOTH are the source of the grace and peace. The implication is clear - Jesus is God, even as the Father is God! The sum total of God's activity toward his human creatures is found in the word **grace**; God has given himself to His people bountifully and mercifully in Christ. Nothing is deserved, nothing can be achieved. The sum total of those benefits as they are experienced by the recipients of God's grace is **peace**, God's **shalom**, both now and in the ages to come. The **peace** flows out of the **grace**, and both together flow from **God the Father** and were made effective in human history through **the Lord Jesus Christ**

**Spurgeon** gives some background on the reason for this letter - In the church of Christ, the teaching has always been that Christ is coming quickly and that teaching must never be withdrawn, for he is coming quickly, as he said to John in the Revelation. At the same time, this teaching has given an opportunity to certain presumptuous people to prophesy that at such and such a time Christ will come. They know nothing about it, and their prophecies are not worth the breath they spend in uttering them.

**Father (3962) (pater)** was not a term generally used for God in the Old Testament and so to be able to call **God our Father** as Paul does is a privilege believers need to meditate upon (see Primer on Biblical Meditation). We belong to His family and have all the rights of members of His divine family. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus places special emphasis on the Fatherhood of God, addressing Jews who were not accustomed to addressing God in such familiar, intimate terms.

**THOUGHT** - Perhaps you have had a less than ideal earthly father and this experience makes it difficult for you to appreciate (and appropriate) the glorious truths inherent in the fact that the Almighty God Himself is now our Father. Study Jesus' description of the personal care and concern our Father manifests for each of His children (Mt 6:25,26+, Mt 6:27, 28, 29+, Mt 6:30, 31, 32+, Mt 6:33, 34+)

**Lord (2962) (kurios** from **kúros** = might, power in turn from **kuróo** = give authority) describes the One Who has absolute ownership and sovereign power and authority. In the New Testament, Jesus is referred to some ten times as **Savior** and some seven hundred times as **Lord**. When the two titles are mentioned together, Lord always precedes Savior. And even if, as some erroneously contend, Lord were simply a synonym for God, the very term God by definition includes the idea of sovereign authority and lordship. Kurios is used in more than 7000 verses in Old Testament Septuagint (LXX), usually translating the Name "Jehovah".

**THOUGHT - Lord** is not merely a name that composes a title, but signifies a call to action so that every saint should willingly, reverently bow down to Jesus Christ. If Christ is our **Lord**, we are to live under Him, consciously, continually submitting our wills to him as His loyal, loving bondservants ("love slaves"), always seeking first His Kingdom and His righteousness (Mt 6:33+). According to this practical working "definition" beloved we all need to ask ourselves "Is Jesus Christ my Lord?". "Do I arise each day, acknowledging this is the day the Lord hath made?" (Ps 118:24+) "Do I surrender my will to His will as I begin each day?" (cp Ro 12:1+, Ro 12:2+) Beloved, don't misunderstand. None of us have "arrived" in this area of Jesus as Lord of our lives. And it is precisely for that reason that Peter commands us to continually "**grow** (present imperative see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) in the grace (unmerited favor, power to live the supernatural, abundant life in Christ) and knowledge (not just

intellectual but transformational) of our **Lord** and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen." (2Pe 3:18+) So do not be discouraged. Don't "throw in the towel" as they say. Keep on keeping on, pressing (continually = present tense) "on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Php 3:14+)

**2 Thessalonians 1:3 We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater;**

NET 2 Thessalonians 1:3 We ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith flourishes more and more and the love of each one of you all for one another is ever greater.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 1:3 Dear brothers and sisters, we can't help but thank God for you, because your faith is flourishing and your love for one another is growing.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 1:3 We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing.

NIV 2 Thessalonians 1:3 We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing.

GNT 2 Thessalonians 1:3 Εχαριστεν φελομεν τθε πντοτε περ μν, δελφο, καθς ξιν σπιν, τι περαυξει πστις μν κα πλεον ζει γπη νς κστου πντων μν ες λλους,

KJV 2 Thessalonians 1:3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

YLT 2 Thessalonians 1:3 We ought to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because increase greatly doth your faith, and abound doth the love of each one of you all, to one another;

ASV 2 Thessalonians 1:3 We are bound to give thanks to God always to you, brethren, even as it is meet, for that your faith growth exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all toward one another aboundeth;

CSB 2 Thessalonians 1:3 We must always thank God for you, brothers. This is right, since your faith is flourishing and the love each one of you has for one another is increasing.

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 1:3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other,

NRS 2 Thessalonians 1:3 We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of everyone of you for one another is increasing.

NAB 2 Thessalonians 1:3 We ought to thank God always for you, brothers, as is fitting, because your faith flourishes ever more, and the love of every one of you for one another grows ever greater.

NJB 2 Thessalonians 1:3 We must always thank God for you, brothers; quite rightly, because your faith is growing so wonderfully and the mutual love that each one of you has for all never stops increasing.

GWN 2 Thessalonians 1:3 We always have to thank God for you, brothers and sisters. It's right to do this because your faith is showing remarkable growth and your love for each other is increasing.

- are: 2Th 2:13 Ro 1:8 1Co 1:4 1Th 1:2,3 3:6,9, as is, Lu 15:32 Php 1:7 2Pe 1:13
- your: Job 17:9 Ps 84:7 92:13 Pr 4:18 Isa 40:29-31 Lu 17:5 Joh 15:2 Php 1:9 1Th 4:1,9,10 1Pe 1:22 2Pe 1:5-10 3:18
- 2 Thessalonians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THANKING GOD FOR ANSWERS TO PRAYER

By far the longest sentence in this letter is 2 Th 1:3-10.

**We ought** - (we owe a constant debt) - **Ought** is more literally "owe" which is literally used of financial debts but of course here speaks of a moral "debt." It pictures the thanksgiving as a debt and present tense indicates it is a lasting obligation. The verb implies a personal obligation but not one which forces us to do something because of outward pressure. We are motivated by the great



price God paid to clear the "books" of our enormous, unpayable debt of sin! Paul pictures the giving of thanks as a "debt". Paul feels a sense of obligation to keep on giving thanks to God because of His continued blessings on the saints at Thessalonica. (And so should we dear brother and sister in covenant with Christ!)

We owed a debt we could not pay,  
Jesus paid a debt He did not owe.  
--Thank You Jesus!

**We** instead of **I** suggests the three men were united in their thanksgiving. Note that the ground of their thanksgiving is the saints at Thessalonica ("**you**"). **Hiebert** commenting on the **we** writes "That Paul should thus include his two co-workers in the thanksgiving is consistent with the fact that all three stood in the same close relation to the Thessalonians. It is further in accord with the consistent use of the plural in this epistle." He goes on to comment that "This expression of his thanks to God is an illustration of Paul's practice of taking his various experiences, whether sad or glad, into the presence of God. All experiences were viewed in relation to Him. Thus he practiced the presence of God in his life." ([1 & 2 Thessalonians: BMH Book. 1996](#))

**THOUGHT** - Do you see all that comes into your life whether sad or glad as allowed by an omnipotent God Who is in control no matter how you feel?

**Ought** ([3784](#))(**opheilo** from **ophéllō** = heap up) means to owe something to someone. Literally it speaks of financial indebtedness and thus means to owe money, to be in debt, or to describe that which is due (Mt 18:28, Lk 7:41, 16:5, 7, Philemon 1:18). The verb **opheilo** was sometimes used to describe "the debt" itself. Figuratively, as in the present passage, **opheilo** describes a sense of indebtedness to someone for something. **Opheilo** in most of the NT uses conveys the sense of necessity, duty or to be under obligation (obligation = moral requirement which conveys the binding force of civility, kindness or gratitude, when the performance of a duty cannot be enforced by law). The idea is that one is held or bound by duty, moral obligation or necessity to do something. **Opheilo** is used again in this letter in 2 Th 2:13 "B ut we **should** (**opheilo**) always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord...."

**D Edmond Hiebert** points out that "While Paul often remarks that he gives thanks for his readers, only in this letter does he say "we ought to thank God" (1:3; 2:13)" (1 & 2 Thess)

**Always to give thanks to God for you brethren** ([adelphos](#) expresses their spiritual kinship and affection) - **Give thanks** is first in the Greek sentence for emphasis and present tense signifies their continual gratitude to God for the saints at Thessalonica. Why are they giving thanks? Paul gives two reasons - (1) The **faith** is growing and (2) their **love** is spreading. Paul continually models the giving of thanks to God (read 1Co 1:4; 2Co 1:11 Ep 1:16; Col 1:3; 1Th 1:2; 1Ti 1:12; 2Ti 1:3; Phm 4, Acts 28:15, Ro 1:8): Paul had prayed in 1Th 3:10 "that we may see your face, and may complete what is lacking in your faith" and now he thanked God for the answer because their **faith** was **greatly enlarged**."

One of the best weapons for fighting Satan is praise!  
-- Warren Wiersbe

Why did Paul pray? Look at his heart in Php 1:7 "I have you in my heart." Paul was practicing what he preached in 1Th 5:17 (cf 1Th 1:2, 2:13, 3:9, 2Th1:3, 2:13) Not only does prayer change people and situations, but so does praise. Paul was in the habit of breaking into frequent thanksgiving for God's presence in his ministry - 5x in 2Corinthians he breaks into thanksgiving or is concerned with offering thanksgiving (2 Co 1:11; 2:14, 4:15; 8:16; 9:11).

**Always** ([3842](#))(**pantote**) means at all times and all occasions which indicates that their thanksgiving was continual and regularly repeated, not sporadic or occasional.

**Give thanks** ([2168](#)) (**eucharistéo** from **eú** = well, + **charízomai** = to grant, give) means to show oneself grateful, be thankful or give thanks. Thanksgiving is the capacity to appreciate God's goodness to us - even the disagreeable things that happen to us. We come to realize that everything that God allows to come into our lives, He does for our good (Ro 8:28+). The regularly recurring nature of the thanksgiving is implied in the use of the [present tense](#) of the verb. It was their practice to give thanks to God "continually, never skipping a single day. A reading of the Pauline epistles makes clear that Paul assigned a high place to thanksgiving in the Christian life. You can always tell a person's values by what he or she appreciates. Paul and his team constantly expressed their gratitude for God's operation in their lives and His work in the lives of the saints at Thessalonica. Rather than being a source of grief these Christians evoked gratitude. In this they served as models for all Christians. Do others give thanks to God for you or do you serve as a source of grief?

**ILLUSTRATION** - Mary Chestnut's father-in-law had the enduring habit of returning thanks after his meals. As he left the table he would invariably say, "I thank God for a good dinner." When asked why he didn't pray prior

to eating, he replied "My way is to be sure of a thing before I return thanks for it." Christians never fear that giving thanks involves a gamble. Their experience verifies that nothing will ever be more certain than God's provisions for life. The feeding of the four and five thousand people offers a parable of God's provisions. After everyone had eaten to complete satisfaction, seven and twelve basketsful remained. Left over! Ready to serve to others! That's what Jesus accomplishes with those who commit themselves to him. For the use of Peter's boat, Jesus filled the nets so full of fish they began to tear and the boats nearly to sink. The divine bounty proved so lavish it threatened disaster! If that for the use of a boat, what will God give for the use of a life?

**As is only fitting** - NET = "rightly so." ESV = "as is right." Fitting is *axios* which literally pictures a scale and what is on one side of the scale brings up the other beam of the scales. Thus on one side was His gratitude to God and on the other was the growth of the saints. In other words his thanksgiving was an appropriate response to their growing faith.

**Because** - Term of explanation. Explains why it is right to always give thanks to God for these saints.

**Warren Wiersbe** - An easy life can lead to a shallow faith. The great men and women of faith in Hebrews 11 all suffered in one way or another, or faced tremendous obstacles, so that their faith could grow. Paul had prayed for the believers in Thessalonica, that their faith might be perfected (1 Thes. 3:10); and now he thanked God for answered prayer.

**Your faith is greatly enlarged** - Phillips translation has it "I always thank God for you .... Your faith has made such strides ... that we actually boast about you." Paul bursts out with a verb found only here in all of Scripture, the word **huperauxano** which speaks of the increase in their faith beyond measure, abundantly and wonderfully increased and continuing (because it is in the present tense) to do so! Of course, their "immeasurable" growth in faith ultimately was a gift from God Who Alone deserved the thanksgiving and praise.

**C H Spurgeon** explained how to get a strong and growing faith: "By that means you are to grow. This is so with faith. Do all you can, and then do a little more; and when you can do that, then do a little more than you can. Always have something in hand that is greater than your present capacity. Grow up to it, and when you have grown up to it, grow more." (from his message [The Necessity of Growing Faith](#) - 2 Thess 1:3 - this was given a week after his message [A Lecture for Little-Faith](#) as a follow-up message)

Don't miss the fact that their faith was growing in spite of "**much tribulation**" which they experienced "**with the joy of the Holy Spirit**." (1 Th 1:6+). As **Hiebert** says "The storms they have endured have not destroyed their faith but rather strengthened its roots." In fact their faith had grown so much that Paul said "the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place **your faith toward God** has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything." (1 Th 1:8) The witness of their faith was rippling through the entire area.

**Faith** (4102)(**pistis**) is synonymous with trust or belief and is the conviction of the truth and in Scripture speaks of belief respecting the Gospel of Christ and man's relationship to God and divine things. As **Swindoll** says **pistis** "implies both knowledge and action. One may receive knowledge of a certain truth and may even offer verbal agreement, but "trust" or "confidence" is not said to be present until one's behavior reflects that truth....For the Jew, and therefore the Christian, **pistis** became a description of the means by which someone relates to God." **Faith** is not believing in spite of evidence—that's superstition—but obeying in spite of circumstances and consequences. As **pistis** relates to God, it is the conviction that God exists and is the Creator and Ruler of all things well as the Provider and Bestower of eternal salvation through Christ. As faith relates to Christ it represents a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through Whom we obtain eternal salvation and entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. Stated another way, eternal salvation comes **only** through belief in Jesus Christ and no other way.

Uses of **pistis** in Thessalonians - 1 Thess. 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:8; 1 Thess. 3:2; 1 Thess. 3:5; 1 Thess. 3:6; 1 Thess. 3:7; 1 Thess. 3:10; 1 Thess. 5:8; 2 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 1:4; 2 Thess. 1:11; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Thess. 3:2;

**Alexander Maclaren** wrote that "**Faith** is the hand that grasps. It is the means of communication, it is the channel through which the grace which is the life, or, rather, I should say, the life which is the grace, comes to us. It is the open door by which the angel of God comes in with his gifts. It is like the petals of the flowers, opening when the sunshine kisses them, and, by opening, laying bare the depths of their calyxes to be illuminated and coloured, and made to grow by the sunshine which itself has opened them, and without the presence of which, within the cup, there would have been neither life nor beauty. So faith is the basis of everything; the first shoot from which all the others ascend."

**Greatly enlarged** (only use in NT)(5232)(**huperaxano**) means to grow luxuriantly, as a good and healthy tree

in a good soil; and, if a fruit tree, bearing an abundance of fruit to compensate the labour of the husbandman. Faith is one of the seeds of the kingdom: this the Apostle had sowed and watered, and God gave an abundant increase. Their faith was multiplied, and their love abounded: and this was not the case with some distinguished characters only; it was the case with every one of them. For this the apostle felt himself bound to give continual thanks to God on their behalf, as it was "meet" and right. A faith that cannot be tested cannot be trusted. New believers must expect their faith to be tried bc this is how God proves to them whether their decision was genuine. Faith is like a muscle and must be exercised to grow stronger & tribulation and persecution are God's tools to strengthen our faith. Paul's earlier fears about their faith (1Th 3:5, 10) have disappeared in light of their exceptional growth. love. Paul in fact used them as an example to other churches. **Hudson Taylor** learned to trust God in the minutest of details even when it seemed as if God had forgotten him. An easy life can lead to a shallow faith. "The suffering in China has multiplied the blessings because it has purified the church."

A faith that is continually growing greatly is like a tree growing beyond measure - resplendent, verdant, flourishing, a joy to behold! It is worth noting that several uses of the root verb ([auxano](#)) help us understand how/why the Thessalonian church was experiencing such growth in their faith. Ponder these passages that use [auxano](#) and how they relate to the growth of one's faith...

Acts 12:24+ But the Word of the Lord (THE GOSPEL) continued to grow ([auxano](#) - [imperfect tense](#)) and to be multiplied.

Acts 19:20+ So the Word of the Lord (THE GOSPEL) **was growing** ([auxano](#) - [imperfect tense](#)) mightily and prevailing.

1 Corinthians 3:6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God was **causing the growth** ([auxano](#) - [imperfect tense](#)) .

1 Peter 2:2+ like newborn babies, **long for** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the pure milk of the Word, so that by it you **may grow** ([auxano](#)) in respect to salvation, (ONE OF MOST IMPORTANT VERSES IN NT REGARDING PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION - IN SHORT, NO WORD, NO GROWTH! LITTLE WORD, LITTLE GROWTH! DO NOT BE DECEIVED. TIME IS SHORT. GET IN THE WORD AND GET GROWING! YOU WILL NEVER REGRET IT!)

So what we see is that faith is a "tree" that grows in a "garden" watered by God's Word and energized by God's power.

**THOUGHT-** From the preceding meditation, it follows that if you want your church to growth in their faith like the Thessalonians then sow in the Word and pray for God's power to His Word in each heart. Paul summed it up well in some of his last recorded words "Preach the Word, be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. (2 Ti 4:2+).

**And the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater** - Young's Literal accurately places the verb at the beginning for emphasis = "**abound** doth the love of each one of you all, to one another." Is this not an answer to the great prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ in John 17:26 "that the **love** with which You **loved** Me may be in them, and I in them." Indeed, "By this all men will know that (THE SAINTS AT THESSALONICA) are My disciples, if you have **love for one another.**" (Jn 13:35) (cf the impact in 1 Th 1:8-9+)

**"Behold, how they love one another!"**

Confession of pagan world beholding miracle of Christian fellowship.

**Hiebert** adds on **grows...greater** - In contrast to the preceding verb (**faith is greatly enlarged**), which suggests an inner, organic growth, this implies an outward diffusion, "as of a flood irrigating the land." The present tense records that their love is continually increasing, overflowing its normal limits like a river. This overflowing love is being revealed by every one of you. "Every one" particularizes this manifestation and asserts that it is true of every member without exception. And that love was being mutually expressed "for each other." "Every individual member was a radiating centre for a love that extended itself to each and all throughout the church." (ibid)

**ILLUSTRATION OF LOVE TOWARD ONE ANOTHER** - The sequoia trees of California tower as much as 300 feet above the ground. Strangely, these giants have unusually shallow root systems that reach out in all directions to capture the greatest amount of surface moisture. Their intertwining roots also provide support for each other against the storms. That's why they usually grow in clusters ([PICTURE](#)). Seldom will you see a redwood standing alone, because high winds would quickly uproot it!

Notice that even though their love is growing Paul still prays for it to continue to grow in 2 Th 3:5, praying "May the Lord direct your hearts into the **love** of God and into the steadfastness of Christ." The love of God is an infinite well from which the saint should continually "drink" and prayer energizes that continual growth.

**THOUGHT** - 2 Th 3:5+ is a great short prayer to pray for your family, your fellowship, your disciples. You can be assured God will answer it for 1 John 5:14-15+ says "This is the **confidence** which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will (BEST FOUND IN HIS WORD, WORDS LIKE 2 Th 3:5+), He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him." So pray believing/knowing God will answer this prayer affirmatively in His perfect timing!"

**Love** (26)(**agape**) is unconditional, sacrificial love and Biblically refers to a love that God is (1Jn 4:8,16+), that God shows (Jn 3:16+, 1Jn 4:9+) and that God enables in His children (see note on fruit of the Spirit - Gal 5:22+). **Agape** is a love that impels one to sacrifice one's self for the benefit of the object loved...(it) speaks of a love which is awakened by a sense of value in the object loved, an apprehension of its preciousness. Wuest explains that **phileo** love is "an unimpassioned love, a friendly love. It is a love that is called out of one's heart as a response to the pleasure one takes in a person or object. **Agape** is volitional (enabled by the Spirit). **Phileo** is emotional

**One another** (240) (**allelon**) means each other and speaks of a mutuality or sharing of sentiments between two persons or groups of persons. See study of the many "**One Anothers**" in the New Testament.

[Grows] **Greater** (NET = "is ever greater" in present tense - continually)(4121)(**pleonazo** from **pleion** = more) means to cause to increase or superabound and so to be present in abundance or to have plenty (2Pe 1:8+, Php 4:17+). To have more than is necessary or more than enough to meet one's needs (2Co 8:15). To become more and more. **Pleonazo** was a term taken from the money market and was used of the accumulation of interest, in this case the interest in the "spiritual account" of the Thessalonians as a result of their unconditional love for one another.

**THOUGHT** - Earlier Paul had used **pleonazo** in 1 Th 3:11-12+, praying "Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you; and may the Lord cause you to **increase** (**pleonazo**) and abound (**perisseuo**) **in love for one another**, and for all people, just as we also do for you." So what do we see in 2 Th 1:3? Clearly **God answered Paul's prayer for increasing love in the Thessalonian fellowship**. What would happen in our fellowships if we began to pray 1 Th 3:12+ without ceasing? Do you think God would answer affirmatively? That is a rhetorical question! Clearly God would answer! Do we really believe that?

**Spurgeon** has a convicting note on **we ought always to give thanks to God** - Whether we shall praise God or not, is not left to our opinion Although the commandment saith not, "Thou shalt praise the Lord," yet praise is God's most righteous due, and every man, as a partaker of God's bounty, and especially every Christian, is bound to praise God, as it is meet. It is true we have no authoritative rubric for daily praise; we have no commandment left on record specially prescribing certain hours of song and thanksgiving; but still the law written upon the heart, teacheth us with divine authority that it is right to praise God; and this unwritten mandate hath as much power and authority about it, as if it had been recorded on the tables of stone, or handed to us from the top of thundering Sinai. The Christian's duty is to praise God. Think not ye who are always mourning that ye are guiltless in that respect; imagine not that ye can discharge your duty to your God without songs of praise. **It is your duty to praise him. You are bound by the bonds of his love as long as you live to bless his name. It is meet and comely that you should do so.** It is not only a pleasurable exercise, but it is the absolute duty of the Christian life to praise God. This is taught us in the text, — "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet." Let not your harps then hang upon the willows, ye mourning children of the Lord. It is your duty to strike them and bring forth their loudest music. **It is sinful if you to cease from praising God; you are blessed in order that you may bless him; and if you do not praise God you are not bringing forth the fruit, which he as the divine husbandman, may well expect at your hands.** Go forth then, ye sons of God, and chant his praise. With every morning's dawn lift up your notes of thanksgiving, and every evening let the setting sun be followed with your song. Girdle the earth with your praises; surround it with an atmosphere of melody, so shall God himself look down from heaven and accept your praises as like in kind, though not equal in degree, to the praises of cherubim and seraphim. (from Spurgeon's message entitled "[A Lecture for Little-Faith](#)" - 2 Thess 1:3).

[Sing for joy in the LORD](#). O you righteous ones;

Praise is becoming to the upright.

-- Psalm 33:1+

**Spurgeon** - What a kind of sacred network Christian love makes, intertwining every believer in Christ with every other believer! "The love of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." Oh, that this might really be the case in all the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ!

**Spurgeon** - "We ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, since your faith is flourishing and the love each one of you has for one another is increasing." We must beware of imagining that we have reached a state of finality in religion. Beware of that spirit, but rather imitate the example of the apostle Paul who wrote, "Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead, I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus" (Php 3:13-14). We are not content with merely being alive; we wish to be healthy. And we ought not to be satisfied with being saved; we should desire to have our faith in full strength and to have all our graces at the highest degree of development.

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**Spurgeon** - When faith commences in the soul it is simply looking unto Jesus, and perhaps even then there are so many clouds of doubts, and so much dimness of the eye, that we have need for the light of the Spirit to shine upon the cross before we are able even so much as to see it. When faith grows a little, it rises from looking to Christ to coming to Christ. He who stood afar off and looked to the cross, by-and-by plucks up courage, and getting heart to himself, he runneth up to the cross; or perhaps he doth not run, but hath to be drawn before he can so much as creep thither, and even then it is with a limping gait that he draweth nigh to Christ the Saviour. But that done, faith goeth a little farther: it layeth hold on Christ; it begins to see him in his excellency, and appropriates him in some degree, conceives him to be a real Christ and a real Saviour, and is convinced of his suitability. And when it hath done as much as that, it goeth further; it leaneth on Christ; it leaneth on its Beloved; casteth all the burden of its cares, sorrows, and griefs upon that blessed shoulder, and permitteth all its sins to be swallowed up in the great red sea of the Saviour's blood. And faith can then go further still; for having seen and run towards him, and laid hold upon him, and having leaned upon him, faith in the next place puts in a humble, but a sure and certain claim to all that Christ is and all that he has wrought; and then, trusting alone in this, appropriating all this to itself, faith mounteth to full assurance; and out of heaven there is no state more rapturous and blessed.

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### **How to Grow in Faith - Russell Spray.**

**"We...thank God ... that your faith groweth exceedingly" (2 Th. 1:3).**

#### **I. Realize the Purpose of Faith**

"He that cometh to God must believe ..." (Heb. 11:6).

- A. Faith is the way to please God.
- B. Faith is the means by which we receive God (2 Peter 1:9).
- C. Faith is the way to receive blessings from God.
- D. Faith enables us to do things for God.

#### **II. Remember the Promises of Faith**

"Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:22).

- A. The promises of faith are extensive enough to meet all our needs—physical, mental, and spiritual (Phil. 4:19).
- B. Acquaint yourself with the promises by searching the Scriptures.
- C. Memorize the promises.
- D. Apply the promises to your areas of need.

#### **III. Recognize the Privilege of Faith**

"Saved through Faith ... not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8).

- A. Faith is not merited or earned; it cannot be purchased.
- B. Faith is given to us by God. Simply take it.
- C. Faith is for all—the young and old, rich and poor, black and white.
- D. God is the author and finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:2).

#### **IV. Respond to the Power of Faith**

"Kept by the power of God through Faith ..." (1 Peter 1:5).

- A. God's power is unlimited. He is omnipotent.
  - B. Faith releases God's power.
  - C. Active faith accomplishes the impossible—removes mountains, lifts burdens, sets men free from the bondage of sin.
  - D. Faith is the victory (1 John 5:4).
- 

**Family Trademarks (LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER)** - The Aran Islands, off the west coast of Ireland, are known for their beautiful sweaters. Patterns are woven into the fabric using sheep's wool to craft the garments. Many of them relate to the culture and folklore of these small islands, but some are more personal. Each family on the islands has its own trademark pattern, which is so distinctive that if a fisherman were to drown it is said that he could be identified simply by examining his sweater for the family trademark.

In John's first letter, the apostle describes things that are to be trademarks of those who are members of God's family. In 1 John 3:1, John affirms that we are indeed part of God's family by saying, "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!" He then describes the trademarks of those who are the children of God, including, "Beloved, let us **love one another**, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God" (1 Jn 4:7).

Because "love is of God," the chief way to reflect the heart of the Father is by displaying the love that characterizes Him. May we allow His love to reach out to others through us—for love is one of our family trademarks.

Father, teach me to love with the love of Christ that others might see Your love reflected in my care and concern for them. May Your love drive and dominate my responses to life and to others. By Bill Crowder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**Love is the family resemblance the world should see in followers of Christ.**

**2 Thessalonians 1:4 therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure.**

NET 2 Thessalonians 1:4 As a result we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and afflictions you are enduring.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 1:4 We proudly tell God's other churches about your endurance and faithfulness in all the persecutions and hardships you are suffering.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 1:4 Therefore we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions that you are enduring.

NIV 2 Thessalonians 1:4 Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring.

GNT 2 Thessalonians 1:4 στε α το ς μ ς ν μ ν γκαυχ σθαι ν τα ς κκλησ αι ς το θεο π ρ τ ς πομον ς μ ν κα π στεω ς ν π σιν το ς διωγμο ς μ ν κα τα ς θλ ψεισιν α ς ν χεσθε,

KJV 2 Thessalonians 1:4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

YLT 2 Thessalonians 1:4 so that we ourselves do glory in you in the assemblies of God, for your endurance and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye bear;

ASV 2 Thessalonians 1:4 so that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions which ye endure;

CSB 2 Thessalonians 1:4 Therefore, we ourselves boast about you among God's churches-- about your endurance and faith in all the persecutions and afflictions you endure.

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 1:4 so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure,

NRS 2 Thessalonians 1:4 Therefore we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith during all your persecutions and the afflictions that you are enduring.

NAB 2 Thessalonians 1:4 Accordingly, we ourselves boast of you in the churches of God regarding your endurance and faith in all your persecutions and the afflictions you endure.

NJB 2 Thessalonians 1:4 Among the churches of God we take special pride in you for your perseverance and faith under all the persecutions and hardships you have to bear.

GWN 2 Thessalonians 1:4 That's why we brag in God's churches about your endurance and faith in all the persecutions and suffering you are experiencing.

- **speak proudly:** 2Co 7:14 9:2,4 1Th 2:19
- **your perseverance and faith:** 2Th 3:5 Ro 2:7 5:3-5 8:25 12:12 1Th 1:3 3:2-8 Heb 6:15 10:36 Heb 12:1-3 Jas 1:3,4 5:7,8 2Pe 1:6 Rev 14:12
- **your persecutions:** 1Th 2:14 3:3,4 Jas 5:11

- 2 Thessalonians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Therefore** - Term of conclusion. Based on the greatly enlarged faith and growing love for one another they begin to boast in this church.

**we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God** - We ourselves is emphatic so what Paul is saying that he, Silvanus and Timothy were compelled to boast about the Thessalonian church to the other churches they visited. **W E Vine** adds on **we ourselves speak proudly** "i.e., the missionaries, 2 Th 1:1, **'ourselves'** occupies the place of emphasis, thereby implying, first, that others had reported the progress of the church at Thessalonica, and, second, that this progress was so marked that the men who had laid the foundation of the work, and who might, therefore, have been expected to maintain a degree of reticence about it, were constrained to break even so good a rule." **John Calvin** comments that "By these words Paul shows us that we are under an obligation to give thanks to God not only when He does us a kindness, but also when we consider the kindness which He has shown towards our brethren."

**Hiebert** adds "Others are talking about the Thessalonians, and the founders, justly proud of their converts, cannot restrain themselves from doing likewise. It is indeed high praise for the readers, intended to encourage them in their affliction. They now "boast" in their converts, "speak proudly of" them (NASB). The present tense indicates that this is not an isolated event; it is rather their practice to speak about them with elation...Where the churches in view were actually located we cannot say, other than Corinth. Certainly Paul does not mean all the churches in existence at the time, nor should we restrict his meaning to Corinth and vicinity.

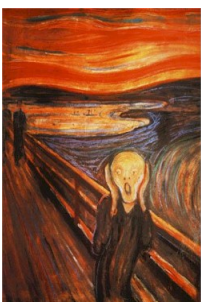
**THOUGHT** - Have you ever justifiably boasted in the work of some of your fellow saints. It is not necessarily a bad thing and ultimately God gets the glory, for as Paul said in 1 Cor 1:30-31 **"by His doing** you are in Christ Jesus, Who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, so that, just as it is written, **"LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD."**

**Hiebert** on **among the churches of God** - The only description given of these churches is that they belong to God, being "the congregations of God's people" (NEB). No geographical limitations are added. It is usually held that Paul means the churches in Corinth and its neighborhood

The saints at Thessalonica endured and held fast to their faith in Christ despite all their persecutions and afflictions. They did not buckle under and give in to the crowd nor to discouragement and despair. The very fact that they were steadfast and holding on to their faith served as a bright, shining testimony to those who witnessed their attitudes and actions.

**for your perseverance and faith** - **Hiebert** points out that **perseverance** (see more on [hupomone](#) below) "does not denote a meek submissiveness but rather a heroic endurance under trial. It is closely linked to their **faith**. Without a living, robust **faith**, they would not have been able to remain steadfast under their afflictions. Their **perseverance** as believers amid persecution manifested the reality of their **faith**." Paul had already commended the Thessalonians for the **'steadfastness (hupomone)** of hope (note "hope" has a foundation! A "Rock") in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father." (1 Th 1:3+) And he will use [hupomone](#) one more time in this letter in one of his closing prayers for them "May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the steadfastness ([hupomone](#)) of Christ." (2 Th 3:5) So even though these saints had persevered (1 Th 1:3+) and were clearly persevering in this passage, Paul still felt compelled to pray for their future **perseverance**.

**THOUGHT** - Paul knew that present **perseverance** did not guarantee future **perseverance**, for spiritual warfare with **persecutions and afflictions** would continue as long as they (and we) are in this fallen, godless, Christ hating world. O, how we need to hear and heed this reminder and not cease praying similarly for our church leaders, our believing family members, our disciples, and OURSELVES, for it is such perseverance which demonstrates "we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end. (Heb 3:14+) (See [Perseverance of the Saints](#))



Afflictions Press from Without

**in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you** (present tense = continue to) **endure** (holding on) - **In the midst of** means the readers are in the very center of continuing harassment and yet they were continuing to forbear (enabled by the Spirit). "The point of the apostolic boasting is that the Thessalonians are maintaining their unwavering trust in the Lord amid persecution for their faith." (Hiebert) Note that **persecutions** (see [diogmos](#) below) **and afflictions** are both in the plural, indicating these difficult, painful, pressuring circumstances were many and varied! **Hiebert** adds that the verb **endure** (see [anechomai](#) below) "pictures them as bravely holding themselves erect and firm under the sufferings endured because of their faith."

God uses **afflictions** to produce **perseverance**, Paul writing "And not only this, but we also exult in our **tribulations** (See below on [thlipsis](#)), knowing that tribulation brings about **perseverance** (see [hupomone](#)); and **perseverance**, proven character; and proven character, hope." (Romans 5:3-4+)

**C H Spurgeon** reminds us that "The refiner is never very far from the mouth of the furnace when his gold is in the fire."

Gold is tested by fire

Saints are tested by afflictions

**Perseverance** ([5281](#))([hupomone](#) from **hupo** = under + **meno** = stay, remain, abide) literally means abiding under. The root idea of **hupomone** is to remain under some discipline, subjecting one's self to something which demands the submission of one's will to something against which one naturally would rebel. It portrays a picture of steadfastly and unflinchingly bearing up under a heavy load and describes that quality of character which does not allow one to surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial. The picture is that of steadfastness, constancy and endurance. It has in it a forward look, the ability to focus on what is beyond the current pressures (eg Jesus "Who for the joy set before Him **endured** [verb form [hupomeno](#)] the Cross despising the shame" see notes on [Hebrews 12:2](#)). And so **hupomone** does not describe a grim resignation or a passive "grin and bear" attitude but a triumphant facing of difficult circumstances knowing that even out of evil God guarantees good.

**Hupomone** - 31v - Lk. 8:15; Lk. 21:19; Rom. 2:7; Rom. 5:3; Rom. 5:4; Rom. 8:25; Rom. 15:4; Rom. 15:5; 2 Co. 1:6; 2 Co. 6:4; 2 Co. 12:12; Col. 1:11; 1 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 1:4; 2 Thess. 3:5; 1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 3:10; Tit. 2:2; Heb. 10:36; Heb. 12:1; Jas. 1:3; Jas. 1:4; Jas. 5:11; 2 Pet. 1:6; Rev. 1:9; Rev. 2:2; Rev. 2:3; Rev. 2:19; Rev. 3:10; Rev. 13:10; Rev. 14:12

**THOUGHT** - How are you doing beloved? If you are like me (and most saints), you are experiencing manifold trials! Are you bearing up under them, leaning hard on the strengthening of the Spirit (the only way we can supernaturally remain under the "load.")?

**Persecutions** ([1375](#))([diogmos](#) from [dioko](#) = to chase, to pursue - gives picture of being chased!) literally refers to a chase or pursuit and figuratively means to put to flight or to pursue with repeated acts of enmity. **BDAG** writes that **diogmos** is a program or process designed to harass and oppress someone." It means to systematically organize a program to oppress and harass people.

**Afflictions** (note **PLURAL!**)([2347](#))([thlipsis](#) from [thlibo](#) = to crush, press together, squash, hem in, compress, squeeze in turn derived from [thláo](#) = to break) originally expressed sheer, physical pressure on a man. **Thlipsis** is a strong term which does not refer to minor inconveniences, but to real hardships. **Thlipsis** pictures one being "crushed" by intense pressure, difficult circumstances, suffering or trouble pressing upon them from without. In Scripture **thlipsis** is most often used of outward difficulties, but it is also used of emotional stress and sorrows which "weighs down" a man's spirit like the sorrows and burden his heart. **Thlipsis** then includes the disappointments which can "crush the life" out of the one who is afflicted. Thus persecution, affliction, distress, opposition or tribulation, all press hard on one's soul. Paul commended the saints at Thessalonica in the first letter for "having received the word in much (NOT A LITTLE!) **tribulation** ([thlipsis](#)) with the joy of the Holy Spirit." (1 Th 1:6+, also in 1 Th 3:7+) **Martin Luther** had a good word on the purifying effects of **afflictions** writing that "Whatever virtues tribulation finds us in, it develops more fully. If anyone is carnal, weak, blind, wicked, irascible, haughty, and so forth, tribulation will make him more carnal, weak, blind, wicked and irritable. On the other hand, if one is spiritual, strong, wise, pious, gentle and humble, he will become more spiritual, powerful, wise, pious, gentle and humble."

"Through many **tribulations** (afflictions - [thlipsis](#)) we must enter the kingdom of God."

- Paul and Barnabas in Acts 14:22+

**Endure** (put up with, bear - in the present tense = continually "hanging in there!") ([430](#)) ([anechomai](#) from **aná** = in, up + **echomai**, the [middle voice](#) of **echo** = to have, to hold) means literally to hold



one's self up, erect, upright and by extension firm against a person or thing. Thus **anechomai** means to put up with, to bear with (equanimity or evenness of mind especially under stress), to tolerate, to forbear, to be patient with. The figurative idea is to **endure discomfort or to hold out** in spite of persecution, threats, injury, indifference, or complaints and not to retaliate (esp 1Cor 4:12). It conveys the sense of putting up with others, exercising self-restraint (for believers only possible empowered by the Spirit) and tolerance.

**Spurgeon** - One of the clearest proofs of the judgment to come is to be found in the present sufferings of the saints through persecutions and tribulations; for if they, for the very reason that they love God, have to suffer here, there must be a future state and time for rectifying all this that is now so wrong.

**Vine** comments - The present continuous tense (present tense of [anechomai](#)) indicates that the afflictions which beset them at the beginning, 1 Thessalonians 1:6; 2:14, **had been continued or renewed**. Confession of Christ had brought upon them the hostility of their fellow citizens, Luke 21:12, cp. Acts 17:5, 6; now they were learning that righteousness and godliness also excite opposition, see Matthew 5:10; 2 Timothy 3:12. In these afflictions, however, they would be sustained by the knowledge that the Lord Jesus regards persecution of His people as of Himself, see Acts 9:4, 5, and cp. Zechariah 2:8, and through grace they would yet learn to rejoice in it, 2 Corinthians 12:10. Moreover to the Christian there is not merely present blessing in persecution, there is also the assurance of future reward, Matthew 5:10–12.

One of my favorite quotes regarding **afflictions, suffering and trials** is from **Warren Wiersbe** - When God puts His own people into the furnace, He keeps His eye on the clock and His hand on the thermostat. He knows how long and how much. (If we rebel, He may have to reset the clock; but if we submit, He will not permit us to suffer one minute too long. The important thing is that we learn the lesson He wants to teach us and that we bring glory to Him alone.) We may question why He does it to begin with, or why He doesn't turn down the heat or even turn it off; but our questions are only evidences of unbelief. (Job 23:10+) is the answer: "But He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold" (NKJV). Gold does not fear the fire. The furnace can only make the gold purer and brighter." (Wiersbe, W. Be Patient. An Old Testament study. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books)

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**Hampton Keathley III** - One can not truly learn to trust God in the tough places of life by simply reading or being told about suffering. We have to suffer. Suffering is a necessary tool. If even the Lord Jesus learned the meaning of obedience by the things He suffered, how much more must this be true for us (Heb. 5:8)? There is a saying by Goethe, the German poet, that "talent is formed in solitude, but character in the storms of life."

In the vast plains of the Serengeti in southeast Africa, about the only thing that grows are gnarly old acacia bushes. These don't provide very straight arrow shafts for the little bushmen that inhabit the plains, so they've formulated an ingenious process to keep their quivers full. First they go out and find a suitable branch; it doesn't matter if it's got a 30-degree angle in it, just so it's the proper thickness and length. Next they'll build a fire, and right beside the fire they'll drive two rows of pegs into the ground, about six to eight inches apart. Then they'll put the branch into the fire to get its juices flowing making it pliable. When it's hot enough, they'll fish it out of the fire and jam it between the two rows of pegs and let it cool. It's a little straighter. Back to the fire, back to the pegs, back to the fire, back to the pegs ... until finally the pegs are right next to each other, with only an arrow's width between them. When the bushman pulls it out this last time, he's got a perfectly straight arrow that's useful to its maker.

We like the part about "useful to the maker," but it's the fire and that bending we'd just as soon avoid. If you want to be made useful, though, you've got to take the tough with the easy. We learn from the account of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in Daniel 3:12-29+ that God doesn't always take His children around the fire—Sometimes He meets them in the middle of the furnace.<sup>9</sup>

**Phillips Brooks** - O, do not pray for easy lives; pray to be stronger men! Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers; pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be a miracle.

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**Todd Kinde** - This present life is a testing ground of faith. The trials and struggles are to sift us to purify our lives. They also refine us to bring us forth as pure and holy (see 1 Pet. 1:6–7). **In one Arab country**, a church composed of former Muslims has been established. As a part of their weekly worship they ask one another the question, "How have you been persecuted this week?" They use this opportunity to comfort one another in the struggle and to keep discipline in the church; those who are not being persecuted for faith in Christ in such a culture are probably not living in a manner any different than the world, thus their profession of faith is suspect. (Evidences of Genuine Christianity)

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The seventeenth-century minister, Jeremy Taylor was persecuted for his faith. His house was plundered, his family driven out, and his estate confiscated. He wrote: "I am fallen into the hands of publicans and they have taken all from me. What now? They have not taken away my merry countenance, my cheerful spirit, and a good conscience; they have still left me with the providence of God, and all His promises ... my hopes of Heaven, and my charity to them, too; and still I sleep and digest, I eat and drink, I read and

meditate. And he that hath so many causes of joy, and so great ... [should never choose] to sit down upon his little handful of thorns.”

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#### Related Resources:

- Afflictions-Suffering-Quotes, Devotionals, Illustrations
- Phil 1:29 - [See Discussion of Persecution/suffering](#)
- 2Ti 3:12-[See Discussion of Persecution](#)
- Torrey Topical Textbook [Perseverance](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Perseverance](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Perseverance](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Perseverance](#)
- CARM Theological Dictionary [Perseverance](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Perseverance of the Saints](#)
- Spurgeon's Illustration Collection [Children: Perseverance Heeded in Teaching Perseverance](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Perseverance](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Perseverance](#)
- Webster Dictionary [Perseverance](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Perseverance](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Perseverance](#)

**2 Thessalonians 1:5 This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering.**

Shogren [All of this gives] evidence that God will pronounce a right verdict, which will result in you being considered worthy of God's kingdom, for which you are also suffering.”

NET 2 Thessalonians 1:5 This is evidence of God's righteous judgment, to make you worthy of the kingdom of God, for which in fact you are suffering.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 1:5 And God will use this persecution to show his justice and to make you worthy of his Kingdom, for which you are suffering.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 1:5 This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering--

NIV 2 Thessalonians 1:5 All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering.

GNT 2 Thessalonians 1:5 νδειγμα τ ς δικα ας κρ σεως το θεο ε ς τ καταξιωθ ναι μ ς τ ς βασιλε ας το θεο , π ρ ς κα π σχετε,

KJV 2 Thessalonians 1:5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

YLT 2 Thessalonians 1:5 a token of the righteous judgment of God, for your being counted worthy of the reign of God, for which also ye suffer,

ASV 2 Thessalonians 1:5 which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God; to the end that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

CSB 2 Thessalonians 1:5 It is a clear evidence of God's righteous judgment that you will be counted worthy of God's kingdom, for which you also are suffering,

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 1:5 which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer;

NRS 2 Thessalonians 1:5 This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, and is intended to make you worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering.

NAB 2 Thessalonians 1:5 This is evidence of the just judgment of God, so that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God for which you are suffering.

NJB 2 Thessalonians 1:5 It all shows that God's judgement is just, so that you may be found worthy of the kingdom of God; it is for the sake of this that you are suffering now.

GWN 2 Thessalonians 1:5 Your suffering proves that God's judgment is right and that you are considered worthy of his kingdom.

- **plain indication of:** 2Th 1:6 Php 1:28 1Pe 4:14-18
- **righteous judgment :** Job 8:3 Ps 9:7,8 33:5 50:6 72:2 99:4 111:7 Jer 9:24 Da 4:37 Ro 2:5 Rev 15:4 16:7 19:2
- **will be considered worthy:** 2Th 1:11 Lu 20:35 21:36 Ac 13:46 Eph 4:1 Col 1:12 Rev 3:4
- **for which indeed you are suffering:** 2Th 1:7 Ac 14:22 Ro 8:17 1Th 2:14 2Ti 2:12 Heb 10:32,33
- 2 Thessalonians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## WORTHINESS FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD

*This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment* - *This is* is not in the original but does help understand that Paul is referring to their **perseverance and faith** in face of their manifold trials.

**Plain indication** (only here in NT) ([1730](#))(**endeigma** from **endeiknumi** = cause to be made known, demonstrate) means evidence, proof of something; a thing pointed out, a thing proved. Only 2 Th 1:5.

**Steve Lewis** explains this easy to confuse passage this way - It looked to the Thessalonians like the tribulation **persecutions and afflictions** they were experiencing did not make sense in light of the righteous judgment of God. Does God let the righteous suffer without punishing their persecutors? Is there unrighteousness in God for allowing His children to suffer? Something about the Thessalonians was a **plain indication** (**endeigma** = indicator, evidence, confirmed proof) that God does indeed judge righteously. The indicator was not the trials themselves, but their **response to the trials**. Their **perseverance and faith** provided a solid proof that God was at work within them, enabling them to behave in ways that were opposite to their own natural desires. ([Reference](#))

**Hiebert** explains this somewhat obtuse passage - In the NIV rendering, "**All this is evidence**," the added words "**all this is**" summarize the experience of the readers (**ED: persecutions and afflictions**). Those experiences are viewed as "**evidence that God's judgment is right**." The noun rendered "**evidence**" (**endeigma**), a passive form used only here in the New Testament, quite literally means "**a thing pointed out, a thing proved**," hence, "**evidence, plain indication**." But what does Paul regard as "**a plain indication**" (NASB) that God's judgment is right, is in accord with the divine standard of what is right? He can hardly mean that the fact that his beloved readers are suffering for their faith is an evidence of God's righteous judgment...Paul can hardly be thinking of His present judgment. Rather, Paul is thinking of the whole preceding statement concerning their **steadfast endurance and faith amid their sufferings for the gospel**, and that situation is evidence that the righteous judgment is still future and grace is still calling them to endure. That they were enabled to endure was evidence to themselves that a new life had been imparted to them, and God's sustaining presence with them now indicates that He will not allow their unjust sufferings to go unrewarded. The reference "**God's judgment**" looks forward to the future day of judgment at Christ's return. This future reference is evident from the definite article and the singular number as well as the following verses. God's "**judgment**" (**kriseōs**), the act of distinguishing and separating the good from the evil, is "right," is just and without partiality. This demands that "the Judge of all the earth" shall come to set aright the enormities that now prevail. For a similar thought, see Philippians 1:28.

**Leon Morris** - There is a difficulty in that the **persecutions and trials** seem on the face of it to deny rather than to prove that God's judgment is right. (**ED: THAT IS THE SAINTS DO NOT DESERVE THESE TRIALS. THE TRIALS ARE NOT THE RESULT OF THEIR SINFULNESS, BUT ACTUALLY OF THEIR "SAINTLINESS!"**). But we should not understand the evidence to be the sufferings. It is not the persecutions but the attitude of the Thessalonians in their troubles that is the decisive thing. Such constancy and faith could come only from the action of God within them, and if God has so inspired them this is clear evidence that he does not intend them to come short of the final attainment of the kingdom (cf. Phil. 1:28). Perhaps we should also notice Simeon's view that we cannot think of iniquity as triumphing over a moral God: 'The very existence of such enormities' as persecution is then ' "a manifest proof," or demonstration that there will be "a righteous judgment of God".' (TOTC-2 Th)

**POSB** comments that the perseverance and faith of the Thessalonian saints was "a sign of God's coming judgment upon unbelievers. The believers received a supernatural strength—God's strength—when they were persecuted. Their strength was so forceful that it was clear that it was being given by God. The believers ... were not becoming hysterical, were not retaliating, were not accepting the persecution like passive sheep (see 1 Peter 4:14). The point is this: the presence of God and His glory in the believer is a clear sign that God exists and is going to vindicate his dear believer. He is going to judge and take vengeance upon the persecutors of His dear people. Persecution is a clear sign of God's coming judgment.

**ESVSB** - The Thessalonians' endurance and faith under persecution constitute evidence of the righteous judgment of God. Since

God is granting them the grace to endure, he is clearly on their side and is working to make them worthy for entrance into the kingdom of God. Cf. Phil. 1:28, where the Philippian Christians' fearless perseverance in persecution is a proof (Gk. *endeixis*, from the same root as *endeigma*) that they will be saved and their enemies destroyed when Jesus returns.

**Pfeiffer** says this passage "refers not so much to persecution as to their faith and steadfastness in persecution. This stalwart response is clear evidence or a plain indication that God's righteous judgment will be favorable in their case (cf. II Cor 4:16 ff. and Phil 1:28). Though this righteous judgment will be culminated at the end, it is in operation already (Jn 3:19)." (Wycliffe Commentary)

**John MacArthur** - Having a right attitude toward suffering is essential, and that required attitude is concern for the kingdom of God. They were not self-centered, but concentrated on God's kingdom. Their focus was not on personal comfort, fulfillment, and happiness, but on the glory of God and the fulfillment of His purposes. They were not moaning about the injustice of their persecutions. Rather, they were patiently enduring the sufferings they did not deserve (v. 4). This very attitude was positive proof that God's wise process of purging, purifying, and perfecting through suffering was working to make His beloved people worthy of the kingdom (cf. 2:12) by being perfected (cf. Jas 1:2-4; 1Pe 5:10). For believers, afflictions are to be expected (cf. 1Th 3:3) as they live and develop Christian character in a satanic world. Suffering is not to be thought of as evidence that God has forsaken them, but evidence that He is with them, perfecting them (cf. Mt 5:10; Rom 8:18; 2Co 12:10). So the Thessalonians demonstrated that their salvation, determined by faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ, was genuine because they, like Christ, were willing to suffer on account of God and His kingdom. They suffered unjustly as objects of man's wrath against Christ and His kingdom (Ac 5:41; Php 3:10; Col 1:24). "Kingdom of God" is used here in its spiritual sense of salvation (MSB)

**Ryrie** - Difficulty in understanding the meaning of verse 5 is encountered only if the verse is made to refer **tribulations and persecutions** as if they alone were a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God. However, the meaning of the verse is clear if the manifest token of the righteous judgment of God is the endurance and faith of the Thessalonians in the midst of persecutions (v. 4). Not suffering itself but their attitude of faith and constancy in suffering is the proof he cites. In other words, since endurance could only be the working of God within the believer (and sometimes it is only in the times of trial that such working of God can be irrefutably demonstrated), this proves that God can declare the believer's worth to be a partaker of the kingdom. "**Consider worthy**" (*kataxioo*) means "to declare or count worthy," not "make worthy" (like *dikaioo*, "justify, or declare righteous"). Thus the Thessalonians are urged to view their endurance as a proof of God's working in them and a guarantee that He will keep His promises concerning their future place in the kingdom. When Christ returns, righteous and unrighteous will be separated, and the believers in Thessalonica are assured that they will be among the righteous. (EvBC-2Th)

**W E Vine** comments - *endeigma* = an evidence, a proof, i.e., to themselves. Of this patient endurance they had been incapable until a new power, even **the power of the Holy Spirit**, had wrought in them this strange experience in which joy went hand in hand with affliction, 1 Thessalonians 1:6+. That they had endured patiently and that faith had not failed, was proof of the new life (i.e., 2 Cor 5:17+), and a guarantee that, in the end, God would vindicate Himself and them. Thus all thoughts of vengeance would be excluded and a solemn sense of submission to God encouraged instead.

**William MacDonald** - The fact that they were standing up so bravely under the **persecutions and afflictions** was an indication of the righteous dealings of God. He was supporting them, strengthening them, encouraging them. If they had not received His divine power, they would never have been able to demonstrate such patience and faith in suffering for Christ. (BBC)

**So that** (purpose clause) Expresses the purpose of the preceding. As Morris says "the judgment is in order that they may be counted worthy of the kingdom."

**Steve Lewis** explains **considered worthy** - The Thessalonian believers are **considered worthy** of the kingdom of God because they have kept their faith in Christ, even when faced with severe opposition. The verb **considered worthy** (*kataxioo*) does not mean to **make** one worthy, but to **declare** one is worthy. This verb is an aorist passive infinitive = "to have *been declared* worthy at a specific point in time." It is unfortunate that many English Bibles have translated this as if it were a future tense (NASB, HCSB, NIV are examples). **They have already been declared worthy**, but in a future sense at the time the millennial kingdom begins they certainly "will be" shown to have been worthy. Their worthiness to participate in the kingdom of God was established well before persecution came upon them -- it was established when they placed their faith and trust in what Christ did on their behalf by dying on the cross. There is no human effort involved in meriting the kingdom of God. These believers had outwardly confirmed the inward truth (BY THEIR SPIRIT ENABLED SUPERNATURAL RESPONSE TO PERSECUTION) that they indeed are Church-age saints who will eventually rule with Christ during His 1000-year kingdom on earth (see 1 Th 2:12+ and 2 Ti 2:12+ = "if we endure, we will reign with Him" - we are enabled to **endure** ONLY because He gives us the *supernatural* power to endure, to do what we could never do in our *natural* strength!). Their response to life's trials definitely confirmed that they already had a saving relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. The phrase **for which** does not mean "*in order to gain the kingdom*" but "*in the name or interest of the kingdom*" -- **their suffering was not in order to gain more merit before God Their suffering was because they had already been declared worthy of the kingdom. You are persecuted because you are a Christian.** (cf, Php 1:29+, 2 Ti

3:12+) ([Reference](#))

**John Walvoord** - Here is a profound principle though it is not stated explicitly in this verse. For the Christian the present age is a day of suffering, a day of trial, a day of temptation, but in the future the glory will be ours. It is the pattern which Christ Himself went through, suffering first and the glory following. The pattern for the world is just the opposite. The ideal for the world is eat, drink, and be merry now, for the suffering will follow. Judgment will come later. The Thessalonians were in trial now, but this was to them the evidence of their future glory. The very fact that they were in trial caused by their persecutors was the token or sign that their persecutors were going to be tried in the future. ([Commentary](#))

**Steven Cole** - The idea in verse 5 is not that suffering somehow qualifies us for being worthy of God's kingdom. That would make salvation a matter of human works or merit. Rather, persevering in suffering is an evidence that God is working in us, preparing us for His eternal kingdom, when we will escape His righteous judgment through the blood of Christ, but unbelievers will be judged ([Sermon](#))

**you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God** - The NET version is not the best "To make you worthy of the kingdom of God" The idea is not to **MAKE** them worthy but to **COUNT** (deem, declare) them worthy. The idea is that in that they would be reckoned or declared worthy. Who is **worthy of the Kingdom of God**? Jesus says it is one who has been born again (John 3:3+), so when a person suffers in this world and supernaturally endures, he is shown to be a genuine believer, worthy of entering the Kingdom of God. In short, the perseverance and faith of the saints at Thessalonica are clear demonstration that on that future judgment day they will be found "worthy." Note that that will not be considered or counted worthy because they merited or earned that designation. They will be shown worthy (to enter the future Kingdom of God - in the same way they were saved (initially entered the Kingdom of God), by grace through faith. As **Leon Morris** says "By his choice of this word the apostle is excluding human merit even in a section where he is drawing attention to a noteworthy piece of endurance, and is emphasizing that attainment to the kingdom is not the result of human endeavor at all, but of the grace of God." (TOTC)

A believer is not saved because he remains faithful through the sufferings of this life; he is saved because he believes in Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord. However, when he suffers in this world and endures through the suffering, he is considered or counted worthy of God's kingdom (**ED: BUT HE IS ENABLED TO SUFFER BY THE SAME POWER THAT ENABLED HIM TO BE SAVED!** cf Gal 3:3+). Ultimately his perseverance in suffering was proof that he possessed the "divine nature" (2 Pe 1:4+). The idea is similar to Jesus' declaration that "the one who endures to the end, he will be saved." (Mt 24:13) His endurance will not save him, but would be a clear sign that he was truly born again.

**Considered worthy** (2661) (**kataxioo** from **kata** = + **axioo** = to think worthy from **axios** = worthy) means to deem worthy, to be regarded as worthy or thought of as deserving. All NT uses are [passive voice](#) which is important as this indicates the "worthiness" comes from an outside source. All three uses describe believers and two of the uses are in the context of salvation (Lk 20:35, 2 Th 1:5). **Kataxioo** means they are not made worthy, but declared worthy by God and by His grace.

Luke 20:35+ but those who **are considered worthy** (**kataxioo**) to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage;

Not only does Paul encourage the saints with this truth of present sufferings yielding future good, but later in this section he prays for the consummation of this goal...

2 Thessalonians 1:11+ To this end also we pray for you always, that our **God will count you worthy of your calling**, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power.

**LASB** has an interesting note - In Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, he had said that Christ's return would bring deliverance from persecution for the believers and judgment on the persecutors. But this caused the people to expect Christ's return right away to rescue and vindicate them. So Paul had to point out that while waiting for God's Kingdom, believers could and should grow in their endurance and faithfulness through the hardships they were suffering.

**THOUGHT** - Our problems can help us look upward and forward, instead of inward (Mark 13:35, 36+; Philippians 3:13, 14+), they can build strong character (Romans 5:3, 4+), and they can provide us with opportunities to comfort others who also are struggling (2 Corinthians 1:3-5). Your troubles may be an indication that you are taking a stand for Christ. When you do so, you are experiencing the privilege of showing that you are worthy of God's Kingdom (see also 1:11). (LASB)

**G. K. Beale** explains "Their enduring faith through suffering is the badge (the evidence or sign) by which they will be *counted worthy* of not being judged but of inheriting *the kingdom of God* at the end of history. One will not be able to enter the kingdom without the badge of enduring faith and its accompanying good works." (IVP Commentary)

**For which** (huper = in behalf of, for the sake of) **indeed you are suffering - Suffering** (see pascho below) is in the present tense indicating their suffering was continual or ongoing. This is not a popular teaching that when you believe in Jesus you are GUARANTEED entrance into a life in which **suffering** will come because you are a follower of Jesus (read John 15:18-20). That their present suffering had purpose and would be associated with future glory would serve to encourage the saints to "hang in there." As Paul said "For momentary, light affliction is **producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison**, 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen (THE FUTURE KINGDOM OF GOD); for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor 4:17-18+)

**Vine on for which** - They had given their allegiance to a rejected king, see Acts 17:7+, assured of the legitimacy of His claims, and of the certainty of His ultimate triumph. Suffering with Him now is the condition of reigning with Him then, Romans 8:17+, cp. also 2 Timothy 2:12+, and Acts 14:22+, "through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God."

**Hiebert** - Thus Paul encourages them to turn their attention and concern away from the painful present to the glorious future as their motivating allegiance. The prospect of the coming kingdom is well worth suffering for.

Paul wrote in Php 1:28-29+ "in no way alarmed by your opponents—which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God. For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake." **Granted** is [charizomai](#) from [charis](#) which means suffering is a gift of God's grace! You probably won't hear that in an most Gospel presentations!

[Keathley](#) adds that "the clear intent was to remind them that they were suffering for the kingdom (equivalent to suffering for Christ) and that this was and is never in vain. In God's righteous judgment, things will be made right."

**Lewis** writes that "This entire discussion also implies that there will be a righteous judgment in the future during which the Thessalonians' persecutors will be punished (see 2 Th 1:6-10).

**THOUGHT** - We need to remember what our final destination is -- we are destined to participate in the kingdom of God. Especially during times of suffering, we can take comfort in the fact that this world is not all there is. Jesus is coming for us very soon! (Lewis)

**E W Rogers** - On the side of divine sovereignty we have been made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, and this meetness is solely due to our association with Christ in His death and resurrection. We are graced in the Beloved, altogether independent of anything in ourselves, either before or since we were saved. But God allows His people to go through persecutions and tribulations in order to develop in them the moral excellencies which make them "worthy citizens" of that kingdom. Some of the apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for Jesus' name. Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians that God would count them worthy of their calling most certainly had nothing to do with adding anything to the work of Christ. The Cross makes the believer worthy of his position in the kingdom, but patience and faith in tribulation manifest such an one as morally worthy of it. Among members of any earthly society there are those who are discreditable as well as others. Paul prayed that it should not be so among these saints. (Concerning the Future)

**Matthew Henry** - Religion, if it is worth any thing, is worth every thing; and those either have no religion at all, or none that is worth having, or know not how to value it, that cannot find in their hearts to suffer for it.

**Are suffering** ([3958](#)) ([pascho](#)) means first of all to have an experience. In other words, the basic thought is what happens to a person (i.e., what they "experience.") It means to undergo something; to experience a sensation, to experience an impression from an outside source. And from this basic meaning pascho in the NT can either be a good "experience" (cf Gal 3:4), but most often refers to a bad "experience" with the idea of to suffer (or to endure something unpleasant). (Mt 17:12; Lk 22:15; 24:46; Acts 1:3; 17:3; 1 Cor 12:26; Phil 1:29; 2Th 1:5; Heb 2:18; 9:26; 1Pe 2:19–21, 23; 3:14, 17; 4:19).

**Warren Wiersbe** - When suffering comes, it will either make us or break us. If we accept the suffering, yield to God's will, and by faith continue to stand true, then the suffering will cause us to grow. If we resist the suffering, complain to God, and give up in unbelief, then the suffering will break us and weaken our testimony. See 1 Peter 4:12–19. (WEONT)

**2 Thessalonians 1:6 For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you,**

NET 2 Thessalonians 1:6 For it is right for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you,

NLT 2 Thessalonians 1:6 In his justice he will pay back those who persecute you.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 1:6 since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you,

NIV 2 Thessalonians 1:6 God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you

GNT 2 Thessalonians 1:6 ε περ δ καιον παρ θε νταποδο ναι το ς θλ βουσιν μ ς θλ ψιν

KJV 2 Thessalonians 1:6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

YLT 2 Thessalonians 1:6 since it is a righteous thing with God to give back to those troubling you -- trouble,

ASV 2 Thessalonians 1:6 if so be that it is righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict you,

CSB 2 Thessalonians 1:6 since it is righteous for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 1:6 since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you,

NRS 2 Thessalonians 1:6 For it is indeed just of God to repay with affliction those who afflict you,

NAB 2 Thessalonians 1:6 For it is surely just on God's part to repay with afflictions those who are afflicting you,

NJB 2 Thessalonians 1:6 For God's justice will surely mean hardship being inflicted on those who are now inflicting hardship on you,

GWN 2 Thessalonians 1:6 Certainly, it is right for God to give suffering to those who cause you to suffer.

- De 32:41-43 Ps 74:22,23 79:10-12 94:20-23 Isa 49:26 Zec 2:8 Rev 6:10 11:18 15:4 16:5,6 18:20,24 19:2
- 2 Thessalonians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Romans 2:9 There will be tribulation ([thlipsis](#)) and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek,

Romans 12:17-19+ - **Never** pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. 18**If possible**, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. 19**Never** take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord. 20 "BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD." 21 **Do not be overcome** ([present imperative with a negative](#)) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) by evil, but **overcome** ([present imperative](#)) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) evil with good.

## GOD WILL REPAY RIGHTEOUSLY

**For after all** - This reads literally "if so be that" ("if indeed [it is] a righteous thing with God.") which introduces **afirst class conditional** statement. The idea is "as it certainly is." This type of statement indicates there is no doubt in the fulfillment of what follows.

The purpose of this judgment will be to rectify injustices.

God is just: He will pay back.

**it is only just** (right) **for God to repay with affliction those who afflict** (present tense = continually afflict) **you** - Literally "to give back to those troubling you -- trouble." "To the ones afflicting you, affliction." This truth would have encouraged the suffering saints that (1) they did not need to retaliate (cf 1 Th 5:15+) and (2) the injustices done to them by Christ's adversaries (e.g. see Acts 17:5-8+, 1 Th 1:6+, 1 Th 2:14+, 1 Th 3:3-4+) would come back on the heads of their adversaries! Every believer has a Covenant Defender who will avenge the wrongs done to us in His Name. And in contrast to the purifying effect of the afflictions that came on the believers, these afflictions would only punish, not purify.

**POSB** - God is going to rectify all the injustices of the world. God's judgment is going to fall upon every person who has mistreated others. All unjust behavior of men will bear the terrible judgment of God.

**Hiebert** - The judgment will be righteous because it is "a righteous thing with God" to judge righteously. His verdict will never be

arbitrary or capricious, but in strict harmony with that which is just. "With God" (para theō) literally, "alongside of God," indicates that such is His viewpoint in exercising judgment. This assertion concerning the character of God and His judgment was intended to afford strong consolation to the afflicted readers. "The pious sufferers of all ages have stayed their souls upon the truth of an eternally righteous God....God's righteous character in judgment assures a twofold outcome in the judgment. He will mete out strict justice to both the evil and the good....This principle of just requital lies at the basis of our belief in a moral universe. Our sense of justice demands such a requital. Not good but evil creates a moral problem for us. In the face of present injustices our conscience tells us that there must be a future retribution. A world in which justice was not done at last would not be God's world at all. (Ibid)

**William MacDonald** quotes Williams who says "God's action in allowing His people to be persecuted, and in permitting the existence of their persecutors, had a double purpose—first, to test the fitness of His people for government (v. 5); and second, to manifest the fitness of their persecutors for judgment." (Believers Bible Commentary)

**Leon Morris** adds that "Often retribution is pictured as overtaking men in the world to come, but there are not wanting passages which indicated that it may operate in the here and now (e.g., Ro. 1:24, 26, 28)." (TOTC)

**Just** (1342) (**dikaios** from **dike** = right, just) defines that which is in accordance with high standards of rectitude and so describes one who is upright or fair. Jesus used **dikaios** to describe His Father as "O **righteous** [dikaios] Father" (Jn 17:25) Same word used in 2 Th 1:5 to describe God's **judgment as righteous**.

Deuteronomy 32:4 The Rock! His work is perfect, for all His ways are just. A God of faithfulness and without injustice, **righteous** (Lxx = dikaios) and upright is He.

**Repay** (pay back, render) (467) (**antapodidomi** from **anti** = in turn + **apodidomi** = render <> from **apo** = from + **didomi** = give) means to give back in return for something received. The idea is to practice reciprocity with respect to an obligation. It means to pay back something owed. So when adversaries persecute followers of Jesus, it is as if they are persecuting Jesus, and they are accumulating a debt owed that will be paid back in full by God at their future judgment! Woe!

Deuteronomy 32:35 (**GOD IS THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGE**) 'Vengeance is Mine, and **retribution** (Lxx = **antapodidomi** = "I will repay"), In due time their foot will slip; For the day of their calamity is near, And the impending things are hastening upon them.' (see Romans 12:19+)

Psalms 103:10+ He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor **rewarded** (Lxx = **antapodidomi**) us according to our iniquities.

Joel 2:25+ "Then **I will make up to** (Lxx = antapodidomi - to the believing remnant of Israel) you for the years That the swarming locust has eaten, The creeping locust, the stripping locust, and the gnawing locust, My great army which I sent among you.

Obadiah 1:15 "For the day of the LORD draws near on all the nations (**GREAT TRIBULATION**). **As you have done, it will be done to you**. Your dealings **will return** (Lxx = antapodidomi - literally the Greek reads "your reward will be recompensed") on your own head.

**Afflictions** (2347) see above on [thlipsis](#)

**Afflict** (2346) (**thlibo** from **tribos** = wear away, rub, break in pieces; NIDNTT says **thlibo** is from the root **thlao** = squash, crush) (See study of related word [thlipsis](#)) literally means to press, squeeze, crush, squash, hem in and then to be narrow. **Thlibo** used literally pictures putting pressure upon or pressing in upon or pressing hard upon a person as when when Jesus was forced to get in the boat to keep from **crowding** Him (Mark 3:9). While some uses of **thlibo** refers to physical affliction, other uses are figurative and refer to emotional or spiritual affliction (e.g., "conflicts without, fears within" in 2Cor 7:5) And so in Paul's letters **thlibo** usually refers to the hardships he and his fellow workers experienced during their missionary journeys (2Cor 1:6; 4:8; 7:5; 1Th 3:4; 2Th 1:1-7).

#### Related Resources:

- Covenant Defender of Every Believer
- God's Attribute of [Righteous](#)
- Classic sermon by Robert G. Lee - [Pay-Day Someday](#)
- [What does the Bible say about revenge? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Are there different levels of punishment in hell? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is an avenger of blood in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)



- [What does the Bible say about retaliation?](#)

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## James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - THREE FACTS OF UNIVERSAL IMPORTANCE 2 THESSALONIANS 1:6–12

Here are events that are sure to come, and will affect all mankind.

### I. A New Revelation.

“The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His angels of might in flaming fire” (v. 7). The same Lord Jesus who was forsaken by His disciples in the time of His greatest sorrow. In the day of His humiliation He could have called “legions of angels” to His assistance, but now the angels of His might came with His burning Presence, to accomplish His long-delayed purpose of gathering out of His kingdom all things that offend and them that do iniquity (Matt. 13:40–42). “The reapers are the angels” (Matt. 13:39), who are waiting now till the “harvest of the earth is ripe” (Rev. 14:15). The Lord has been during this age revealing Himself as the meek and lowly and merciful Christ; but He will yet reveal Himself as a “flaming fire” against all ungodliness. Who shall be able to stand when He so appeareth?

### II. An Unfailing Retribution.

“Taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 8) The day of grace has now passed; there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries (Heb. 10:27). The culprits are those who know not God, because they have not obeyed the good news of Jesus Christ. To obey the call of the Gospel of Christ is the way to know God, whom to know is eternal life. There may be some excuse for ignorance, but there is no excuse for neglect. “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” What is the punishment? Everlasting destruction from the Presence of the Lord and the glory of His power. Not annihilation, but eternal banishment from the Presence of the Lord and the glory of His power. “In His presence there is fulness of joy. At His right hand there are pleasures for evermore” (Psa. 16:11). Then what will it mean for those who are eternally exiled from the Kingdom of God and the pleasures that are ever flowing from His beneficent Presence? Call this state or condition by whatever name you may. There is an awful atmosphere about it. “Escape for thy life.”

### III. A Christ-Honouring Reward.

“He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe” (v. 10). He shall be glorified in glorifying His saints with His own glorious likeness. He shall be “admired” in the work of grace bestowed upon all them that believe. While the reward will be ours, the glory will be His. “Not unto us, O Lord, but unto Thy Name be the glory.” “All principalities and powers in heavenly places shall be made to know by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God” (Eph. 3:10). We shall be satisfied when we shall see Him as He is; and He shall be satisfied when He shall see us as we shall then be. The Church will be His joy and crown of rejoicing at His Coming (1 Thess. 2:19, 20), and something to be wondered at through all the coming ages. Its presence with the Christ of God in the glory will mean: “Blessing and glory, and wisdom and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, unto our God for ever and ever” (Rev. 7:12).

“Thou shalt see my glory soon,  
When the Work of Grace is done.”

**2 Thessalonians 1:7 and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire,**

NET 2 Thessalonians 1:7 and to you who are being afflicted to give rest together with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels. 8 With flaming fire he will mete out punishment on those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 1:7 And God will provide rest for you who are being persecuted and also for us when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven. He will come with his mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don't know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 1:7 and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels 8 in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

NIV 2 Thessalonians 1:7 and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the

Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. 8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

GNT 2 Thessalonians 1:7 κα μ ν τ ο ς θ λ ι β ο μ ν ο ι ς ν ε σ ι ν μ ε θ μ ν , ν τ π ο κ α λ ψ η ι τ ο κ υ ρ ο υ η σ ο π ο ρ α ν ο μ ε τ γ γ λ ω ν δ υ ν μ ε ω ς α τ ο 8 ν π υ ρ φ λ ο γ ς , δ ι δ ν τ ο ς κ δ κ η σ ι ν τ ο ς μ ε δ σ ι ν θ ε ν κ α τ ο ς μ π α κ ο ο υ σ ι ν τ ε α γ γ ε λ τ ο κ υ ρ ο υ μ ν η σ ο ,

KJV 2 Thessalonians 1:7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

YLT 2 Thessalonians 1:7 and to you who are troubled -- rest with us in the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven, with messengers of his power, 8 in flaming fire, giving vengeance to those not knowing God, and to those not obeying the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ;

ASV 2 Thessalonians 1:7 and to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, 8 rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus:

CSB 2 Thessalonians 1:7 and to reward with rest you who are afflicted, along with us. This will take place at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with His powerful angels, 8 taking vengeance with flaming fire on those who don't know God and on those who don't obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 1:7 and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

NRS 2 Thessalonians 1:7 and to give relief to the afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels 8 in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

NAB 2 Thessalonians 1:7 and to grant rest along with us to you who are undergoing afflictions, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 in blazing fire, inflicting punishment on those who do not acknowledge God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

NJB 2 Thessalonians 1:7 and for you who are now suffering hardship, relief with us, when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven with the angels of his power. 8 He will come amid flaming fire; he will impose a penalty on those who do not acknowledge God and refuse to accept the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

GWN 2 Thessalonians 1:7 It is also right for God to give all of us relief from our suffering. He will do this when the Lord Jesus is revealed, coming from heaven with his mighty angels in a blazing fire. 8 He will take revenge on those who refuse to acknowledge God and on those who refuse to respond to the Good News about our Lord Jesus.

- **who:** Isa 57:2 Mt 5:10-12 Lu 16:25 Ro 8:17 2Co 4:17 2Ti 2:12 Heb 4:1,9,11 1Pe 4:1 Rev 7:14-17 14:13 21:4
- **when:** Mt 13:39-43 16:27 25:31 26:64 Mk 8:38 14:62 Joh 1:51 Ac 1:11 1Th 4:16,17 Tit 2:13 Heb 9:28 Jude 1:14,15 Rev 1:7 Rev 20:11
- **his mighty angels:** Joh 1:3 Eph 1:2 Col 1:16 1Pe 3:22 Rev 22:6,9,16
- 2 Thessalonians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## RELIEF FOR PERSECUTED AT SECOND COMING

**And to give relief to you who are afflicted** (see [thlibo](#)) **and to us as well** - This reward of relief for believers presents a striking contrast with the repayment with retribution for unbelievers. Note the phrase **to you** which would serve to encourage the persecuted saints in Thessalonica. **Relief** (see [anesis](#) below) means a letting loose or relaxing of the pressure which fits nicely with [thlipsis](#) which speaks of pressure they were currently experiencing. Clearly the ánesis is provided as a comforting prospect for those who were being afflicted. It describes a cessation of trouble and difficulty for the saints! The day is coming when Christ will take the pressure off of His disciples and that will be their blessed state of rest ("a Sabbath rest for the people of God" Heb 4:9+) forever and ever. Amen!

God will recompense tribulation to the lost,  
but rest to the saved.

--Warren Wiersbe

**LASB** has an interesting note - The "rest" (relief) mentioned by Paul has two dimensions. We can **rest** in knowing that our sufferings are strengthening us, making us ready for Christ's Kingdom. We can also **rest** in the fact that one day everyone will stand before God. At that time, wrongs will be righted, judgment will be pronounced, and evil will be terminated.

**Ryrie** - Paul is not saying that the Christian will be free from trouble until Christ comes, but he does assert that there can be rest in the midst of trial. (Ibid)

Affliction is coming to those who afflict;

Rest and relief to those afflicted.

**Relief** (425)(**anesis** from **aniemi** = loose, let up, hold back ~ relaxing or release) refers to relaxing of custodial control and thus giving one some liberty as in the present passage. It means a "relief from tension" or "slackening of pressure," as when one takes down a taut bowstring. Anesis can also refer to relief from something onerous or troublesome.

## HERE COMES THE JUDGE!

**When the Lord Jesus will be revealed** - The Person Who executes the judgment is the **Lord Jesus**. He is now physically hidden from view but one day **will be revealed** (**apokalupto**) for all (believers and unbelievers alike) to see. In this passage Paul is not speaking of the rapture but of the Second Coming at the end of this age (for comparison see study of Second Coming).

John describes this global event writing

"BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen." (Rev 1:7<sup>±</sup>)

And again in Revelation 19:11-16<sup>±</sup> John describes Jesus' Second Coming this way

"I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war." 12 His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. 13 He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. 15 **From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations**, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. 16 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

Jesus Himself described His triumphant return, to unbelievers a frightening terror, to believers a fulfilled triumph....

"And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. (31)

"And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. (Matt. 24:30-31<sup>±</sup>)

**Will be revealed** (601)(**apokalupto** from **apó** = from + **kalúpto** = cover, conceal - see **apokalupsis**) literally means to remove the cover from and so the idea is to remove that which conceals something and making it fully known. Almost all of the NT uses have a figurative use, especially to some aspect of spiritual truth that was heretofore hidden but now has the "lid removed" so that it can be seen (understood). The idea is to make manifest something previously secret or unknown. Apokalupto describes the last book of the Bible (Rev 1:1<sup>±</sup>) as well as the future revealing of believers (Ro 8:19<sup>±</sup>) who the world does not know (1 Jn 3:1<sup>±</sup>).

**John MacArthur** points out that "When Paul referred to the Second Coming in relation to believers, he favored the word *parousia* ("presence"; "coming"). For believers, Christ's return is the presence of One they know and have an eternal relationship with. They know Him as revealed in the Old Testament prophecies, the New Testament gospel records of His life, and the elucidation of His life, death, and resurrection in the epistles. But in verse 7 when Paul wrote the Lord Jesus will be revealed, he used a different word, *apokalupsis* ("revelation"; "unveiling"; "uncovering"). That word, which has the idea of manifesting what was previously hidden or secret (cf. Ro. 2:5; 16:25; 1 Cor. 14:6; 2 Cor. 12:1, 7; Gal. 1:12; Eph. 3:3), views the return of Christ in relation to unbelievers. The One who has been hidden will be revealed in all His sovereign glory to a world that does not know or worship Him. He will be

unveiled as Judge (2 Thes 1:8). This will be the Day of the Lord

**From heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire**- Jesus will return just as He went (Acts 1:9-11+), bodily, physically, in the clouds, but then in awesome glory. Note the three prepositional descriptions introduced by **from...with...in**. The glorified Lord Jesus is currently seated "at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens," and it is **from** the heavens that He will come in glory "Who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:" (2 Ti 4:1+) **WITH His mighty angels** is more literally the "angels of His power," which emphasizes that the Lord Jesus is the Source of their power (cf Heb 1:3), even as they execute His commands.

Isaiah 66:15 For behold, the LORD will come in fire And His chariots like the whirlwind, To render His anger with fury, And His rebuke with flames of fire.

**MacArthur** says "the Lord Jesus Christ returns from heaven with the holy angels He will return **in flaming fire**. The fire described here is the fire of judgment (as in Isa. 66:16; Mt. 3:12; 13:30; Heb. 10:27; 2 Peter 3:7, 10)."

**Hiebert on in flaming fire** - As descriptive of the returning Lord, it pictures Him as encircled, as it were, with a fiery robe, like a flame leaping and blazing forth (Isa. 66:15; Rev. 1:14+ = "His eyes were like a flame of fire."). The Old Testament theophanies were frequently marked by the presence of fire (Ex. 3:2+; Ex 19:18+; Ex 24:17+; Ps. 18:12; Isa. 30:27–30; Da 7:9–10), speaking of the divine majesty and indignation against sin. This Old Testament concept of the fiery manifestation of Jehovah's presence is now ascribed to the returning Lord Jesus. It is an indirect but unmistakable Pauline testimony to the true deity of Jesus Christ. His return will indeed be a terrible sight for His enemies.

Isaiah 66:15 For behold, the LORD **will come in fire** And His chariots like the whirlwind, To render His anger with fury, **And His rebuke with flames of fire**.

Daniel 7:9-10+ "I kept looking Until thrones were set up, And the Ancient of Days took His seat; His vesture was like white snow And the hair of His head like pure wool. **His throne was ablaze with flames, Its wheels were a burning fire.** 10 "A river of fire was flowing And coming out from before Him Thousands upon thousands were attending Him, And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; The court sat, And the books were opened.

**Ryrie** explains the **flaming fire** as descriptive of "Christ's person and not His work. In other words, the flaming fire is the robe of the Lord in which He appears at His coming. It is an awesome description of His appearing at His second coming after the Tribulation (cf. Matt. 24:29–31)."

**Mighty** (powerful) (1411)(**dunamis**) describes especially achieving power. It refers to intrinsic power or inherent ability, the power or ability to carry out some function, the potential for functioning in some way (power, might, strength, ability, capability), the power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature. **Dunamis** is the implied ability or capacity to perform. It conveys the idea of effective, productive energy, rather than that which is raw and unbridled. Dunamis is used in 1 Th 1:5 (Gospel coming to the Thessalonians) , 2 Th 1:7, 2 Th 1:11, 2 Th 2:9 (Antichrist).

**Angels** (messengers)(32)(**aggelos/angelos**) literally means a messenger. Most of the NT uses refer to heavenly angels (messengers) who are supernatural, transcendent beings with power to carry out various tasks. **Vine** adds that *aggelos* refer to "an order of created beings, superior to man, Heb 2:7; Ps. 8:5, belonging to Heaven, Mt. 24:36; Mark 12:25, and to God, Luke 12:8, and engaged in His service, Ps. 103:20. Angels are spirits, Heb. 1:14, i.e., they have not material bodies as men have; they are either human in form, or can assume the human form when necessary, cp. Luke 24:4, with Lk 24:23, Acts 10:3 with Acts 10:30." Angels will accompany Jesus at His Second Coming...

Matthew 25:31 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and **all the angels with Him**, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

Mark 8:38+ "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father **with the holy angels**."

Luke 9:26+ "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and **of the holy angels**.

**2 Thessalonians 1:8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.**

NET 2 Thessalonians 1:8 With flaming fire he will mete out punishment on those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 1:8 in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don't know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 1:8 in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

NIV 2 Thessalonians 1:8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

GNT 2 Thessalonians 1:8 ν πυρ φλογ ς, διδ ντος κδ κησιν το ς μ ε δ σιν θε ν κα το ς μ πακο ουσιν τ ε αγγελ το κυρ ου μ ν ησο ,

KJV 2 Thessalonians 1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

YLT 2 Thessalonians 1:8 in flaming fire, giving vengeance to those not knowing God, and to those not obeying the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ;

ASV 2 Thessalonians 1:7 and to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, 8 rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus:

CSB 2 Thessalonians 1:8 taking vengeance with flaming fire on those who don't know God and on those who don't obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 1:8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

NRS 2 Thessalonians 1:8 in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

NAB 2 Thessalonians 1:8 in blazing fire, inflicting punishment on those who do not acknowledge God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

NJB 2 Thessalonians 1:8 He will come amid flaming fire; he will impose a penalty on those who do not acknowledge God and refuse to accept the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

GWN 2 Thessalonians 1:7 It is also right for God to give all of us relief from our suffering. He will do this when the Lord Jesus is revealed, coming from heaven with his mighty angels in a blazing fire. 8 He will take revenge on those who refuse to acknowledge God and on those who refuse to respond to the Good News about our Lord Jesus.

- **dealing out:** (With flaming fire) Ge 3:24 De 4:11 Dt 5:5 Ps 21:8,9 Ps 50:2-6 Da 7:10 Mt 25:41,46 Heb 10:27 Heb 12:29 2Pe 3:7,10-12 Rev 20:10,14,15 Rev 21:8
- **retribution,** De 32:35,41,42 Ps 2:9-12 94:1 Isa 61:2 63:4-6 Heb 10:30 Rev 6:10,16,17
- **that know:** Ex 5:2 1Sa 2:12 Ps 9:10 79:6 Isa 27:11 Jer 9:6 Zep 1:6 Joh 3:19 Jn 8:19 Ro 1:28 1Co 15:34 1Th 4:5
- and that: De 4:30 Ps 18:44 Isa 1:19 Ac 6:7 Ro 1:5 2:7,8 6:16 10:16 15:18 Ro 16:26 2Co 10:5 Ga 3:1 Heb 2:3 5:9 11:8 1Pe 1:2 3:6 4:17
- 2 Thessalonians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Dealing out retribution** - NET, ESV, KJV, YLT, CSB, NRS have **flaming fire** in this verse whereas NAS has it in the previous passage. Thus NET reads "**With flaming fire** he will mete out punishment." This verse is a continuation of the description of the Second Coming of Christ to triumph over all His foes and over all the foes of His followers. Not one error will be made in the reckoning of who deserves retribution. His retribution (see *ekdikēsis* below) or divine payback will be full and perfect, giving the criminal all but no more than his or her guilt deserves. **Dealing out** is *didomi* which means giving and is in the present tense (contemporaneous action to the appearing of Christ) of which **Hiebert** says "vividly pictures Him as "giving" or executing "punishment" (*ekdikēsin*) in that day."

**Hiebert** notes that "In the Old Testament the rendering of vengeance is asserted to be the prerogative of Jehovah (Dt. 32:35; Ps. 94:1; Ro 12:19). But here that dread prerogative is transferred to Jesus Christ. It is in harmony with the assertion of our Lord, "For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son," (John 5:22)."

**Retribution** (1557)(**ekdikesis** from **ek** = out, from + **dike** = justice; see also **ekdikos**) is literally that which proceeds "out of justice". **Ekdikesis** means to give justice to someone who has been wronged and **free from any element of self-gratification or vindictiveness**. It means to repay harm with harm on assumption that initial harm was unjustified and that retribution is therefore called for. The word indicates full, complete punishment. **Ekdikesis** was a technical term for administrative justice. **W E Vine** says **ekdikesis** describes pay back that is based on justice and "not (as often with **human vengeance**) from a sense of injury, or merely out of indignation. The judgments of God are holy and right, and free from any element of self-gratification... There is thus no element of vindictiveness, of "taking revenge,"... in the judgments of God; they are both holy and right (cp Rev 16:7+). Only 9 uses in NT - Lk. 18:7; Lk. 18:8; Lk. 21:22; Acts 7:24; Rom. 12:19; 2 Co. 7:11; 2 Thess. 1:8; Heb. 10:30; 1 Pet. 2:14

## **NOT KNOW GOD NOT OBEY THE GOSPEL**

**To those who do not know God and...do not obey the Gospel-** The verbs **know** and **obey** have been viewed by some writers as suggesting two groups (respectively Gentiles and Jews) but others see it as the same group of persecutors (composed mainly of Jews but undoubtedly also with some Gentiles) described two different ways, which is what is know in Hebrew poetry as [synonymous parallelism](#).

I agree with [Steven Cole](#) who writes "Some scholars think that these two phrases (v. 8) refer to two distinct groups: the Gentiles **do not know God**" (1 Thess. 4:5), whereas "**those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus**" refers to the Jews. But I agree with the majority of scholars who argue that such a distinction is too subtle and that rather, Paul is using [synonymous parallelism](#) here. Both phrases refer to unbelievers in similar language with slightly different nuances.

**Pfeiffer** "Some have suggested that two groups—Gentiles (cf. 1 Th 4:5) and Jews—are indicated. More likely this is a blanket reference to all who refuse to act on what they know about God and who, more specifically, reject his revelation in Christ." (Wycliffe Bible Commentary).

**Marvin Vincent** on **know God** sees one class and not two - In the two classes, — those who know not God and those who obey not the gospel, — it is not probable that Paul has in mind a distinction between Jews and Gentiles. **The Jews were not ignorant of God, yet they are described by John as not knowing Him** (E.G. John 8:19 = 'And so they were saying to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "You **know** [[eido](#)] neither Me nor My Father; if you **knew** [[eido](#)] Me, you would **know** [[eido](#)] My Father also.'). The Gentiles are described by Paul as **knowing God**, but as refusing to glorify him as God (Ro 1:21+). Paul rather describes here the subjects of God's judgment as one class, but under different aspects." (Word Studies)

**Leon Morris** - There are separate articles with those who **do not know God** and (those who) do not **obey the gospel**. The most natural understanding of this is that there are two groups of people. Some are so sure of this that they see the **Gentiles** in the former expression and the **Jews** in the latter (cf. Way translates it '*on those heathen who ignore God, on those Jews who refuse obedience*'). **This, however, seems to be reading too much into the passage** Rather, those who **do not know God** means anyone, heathen or not, who is guilty of culpable neglect of such knowledge of God as God has made possible (AKA [general or natural revelation](#)); it is the rejection of proffered light (as in 1 Thess. 4:5+). Those who **do not obey the Gospel** form a specific example of the foregoing; they reject the ultimate revelation (AKA [special revelation](#)) of God's saving activity. (TOTC)

**Cole** adds "'Those who do not know God" does not refer to people who are innocently ignorant (ED: NO ONE IS INNOCENTLY IGNORANT BECAUSE OF [GOD'S NATURAL REVELATION!](#)), but rather to those who have willfully turned away from the revelation that God has given them. They have suppressed the truth in unrighteousness (Ro 1:18+). As Paul argues (Ro 1:20+), God has clearly revealed His invisible attributes, eternal power, and divine nature through His creation. He adds (Ro 1:21+), "For even though they **knew God**, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened." So people who do not know God are culpable. They do not know God because of the hardness of their hearts (Eph. 4:18+). Because they love their sin, such willfully ignorant people **do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus**" (2 Th 1:8). Jesus preached (Mark 1:15+), "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." It wasn't a helpful hint; it was a command. Paul told the Athenian philosophers (Acts 17:30-31+), "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead." **To repent and believe the gospel is to obey the gospel** Because it is "**the gospel of our Lord Jesus,**" **believing the gospel entails obeying the Lord Jesus Christ**. John 3:36+ equates believing in Jesus with obeying Jesus: "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." Paul referred to "**the obedience of faith**" (Ro 1:5+; Ro 16:26+; cf. Acts 6:7+) (ED: SEE DISCUSSION OF "OBEDIENCE OF FAITH"). If someone claims

to believe in Jesus as Savior but he isn't submitting to Jesus as Lord, his claim is questionable. Those who (CONTINUALLY) live in disobedience to the Lord Jesus do not know Him and will face His judgment.

So how can they **know God** in Romans and not **know God** in 2 Thessalonians? The simple answer is they ALL know Who God is from his [natural revelation](#) but they do not know who Christ is from His [special revelation](#), the Gospel. In short they have no personal relationship with God the Father through Christ the Son enabled by God the Spirit. They know Him as God but cannot truly call Him their Father (cf John 1:12-14+). In the context of the persecution in Thessalonica, there were both Gentile and Jewish adversaries, and strictly speaking the latter did have access to the special revelation in the Old Testament, but they failed to see (and obey) **the Gospel of our Lord Christ** which was present in those writings (cf Ge 3:15+ = [the protoevangelium](#)). Paul made it clear that "The Scripture (REFERS TO THE OLD TESTAMENT) foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, **preached the gospel** beforehand to Abraham, saying, "ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU." (Gal 3:8+)

**and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus- Obey** is in the present tense so what Paul is saying is that these individuals habitually do not **obey** or generally do not **obey** the truths propounded in the Gospel. To **obey the gospel** is the same as believing the truths of the gospel by receiving them. The only one who could continually obey the gospel is one who had a circumcised heart and thus a new God given motivation to please God (Php 2:13+, Ezek 36:27+).

John associates obedience with belief writing

"He who **believes** (present tense) in the Son has eternal life; but he who **does not obey** (present tense) the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."(John 3:36+).

Let's look at one example in Romans 8:12-14+ which shows those who in their daily practice do not obey and those who do obey the Gospel. Paul writes...

So then, brethren, we (BELIEVERS) are under obligation, not to the flesh (SINFUL, FALLEN FLESH WHICH TEMPTS US AND TRIES TO ATTAIN RULERSHIP IN OUR LIFE), to live according to the flesh– 13 for (TERM OF EXPLANATION - PAUL EXPLAINS TWO DISTINCT LIFESTYLES) if you are living (PRESENT TENSE - HABITUALLY, CONTINUALLY) according to the flesh, you must (OR ARE ABOUT TO) die (**THIS GROUP IS AN EXAMPLE OF THOSE WHO DO NOT OBEY THE GOSPEL**); but (THE STRIKING CONTRAST) if by the Spirit (RELIANCE ON HIS SUPERNATURAL POWER) you are putting to death (PRESENT TENSE - AS YOUR GENERAL PRACTICE) the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are being led (PRESENT TENSE - HABITUALLY, CONTINUALLY) by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God (THOSE WHO DO NOT OBEY THE GOSPEL ARE NOT CONTINUALLY LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD AND ARE NOT "SONS OF GOD" - IN OTHER WORDS **THEY DO NOT KNOW GOD!**)

**Obey** (5219)([hupakouo](#) from [hupó](#) = under and has the idea of submission + [akoúo](#) physical hearing and apprehension of something with the mind - akouo gives us our English *acoustics* - the science of design which helps one hear) ([Click](#) related noun [hupakoe](#)) literally means "under the hearing" or to listen under, listening with attentiveness and then responding positively to what is heard -- to obey what is heard. The sense is that one understands and responds accordingly. Hupakouo implies *really listening* with a readiness to *execute* (obey) what is requested or ordered.

**Gospel** (2098)([euaggelion](#) from [eú](#) = good + [aggéllō](#) = proclaim, tell) is literally good news or glad tidings. In secular Greek it originally referred to a reward for good news and later became the good news itself. The word **euaggelion** was commonly used in the first century as our words "good news" today. The idea then and now is something like this - "Have you any **good news** (euaggelion) for me today?" This was a common question in the ancient world. In ancient secular Greek **euaggelion** described **good news** of any kind and prior to the writing of the New Testament, had no definite religious connotation in the ancient world until it was taken over by the "Cult of Caesar" which was the state religion and in which the emperor was worshipped as a god (see more discussion of this use below). Our English word **Gospel** is from the Old English or Saxon word **gōdspell** (**gōd** = good + **spell** = message) which is literally "good tale, message". When I was a young man **Godspell** was actually the name of a popular musical play ([See description](#)). I wonder if they really understood the meaning of this word which is the very foundation stone of Christianity.

The writers of the New Testament adapted the term Gospel as God's glorious message of salvation for lost otherwise hopeless, helpless sinners. [Euaggelion](#) is found in several combination phrases, each describing the gospel like a multifaceted jewel in various terms from a different viewpoint (from the NASB, 1977):

1. the gospel of the kingdom (Mt 4:23+, Mt 9:35+, Mt 24:14+)
2. the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Mk 1:1+) because it centers in Christ

3. the gospel of God (Mk 1:14+, Ro 15:16+, 2Co 11:7+, 1Th 2:2+, 1Th 2:8,9+, 1Pe 4:17+) because it originates with God and was not invented by man
4. the gospel of the kingdom of God (Lu 16:16+)
5. the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24+, Ro 1:1+),
6. the gospel of His Son (Ro 1:9+)
7. the gospel of Christ (Ro 15:19+, 2Co 2:12+, 2Co 9:13+, 2Co 10:14+, Gal 1:7+, Phil 1:27+, 1Th 3:2+)
8. the gospel of the glory of Christ (2Co 4:4+)
9. the gospel of your salvation (Eph 1:14+)
10. the gospel of peace (Eph 6:15+)
11. the gospel of our Lord Jesus (2Th 1:8+)
12. the glorious gospel of the blessed God (1Ti 1:11+)
13. In Ro 16:25, 26+ Paul called it **"my Gospel"** indicating that the special emphasis he gave the gospel in his ministry.
14. **An eternal gospel** - Rev 14:6+ (Some writers such as C I Scofield interpret this as a "different gospel" than the other "gospels" mentioned above but I think such a distinction is incorrect and is poorly substantiated).

For a rewarding study, study the preceding references in context making notation of the truth you observe about the gospel. If you would like a special blessing, take an afternoon to go through all 76 uses of **euaggelion** in context making a list of what you learn about the gospel. The Spirit of God will enlighten your heart and encourage your spirit in a very special way...and you'll want to share the "good news" with someone because of your "discoveries"!

**Euaggelion** - Matt. 4:23; Matt. 9:35; Matt. 24:14; Matt. 26:13; Mk. 1:1; Mk. 1:14; Mk. 1:15; Mk. 8:35; Mk. 10:29; Mk. 13:10; Mk. 14:9; Mk. 16:15; Acts 15:7; Acts 20:24; Rom. 1:1; Rom. 1:9; Rom. 1:16; Rom. 2:16; Rom. 10:16; Rom. 11:28; Rom. 15:16; Rom. 15:19; Rom. 16:25; 1 Co. 4:15; 1 Co. 9:12; 1 Co. 9:14; 1 Co. 9:18; 1 Co. 9:23; 1 Co. 15:1; 2 Co. 2:12; 2 Co. 4:3; 2 Co. 4:4; 2 Co. 8:18; 2 Co. 9:13; 2 Co. 10:14; 2 Co. 11:4; 2 Co. 11:7; Gal. 1:6; Gal. 1:7; Gal. 1:11; Gal. 2:2; Gal. 2:5; Gal. 2:7; Gal. 2:14; Eph. 1:13; Eph. 3:6; Eph. 6:15; Eph. 6:19; Phil. 1:5; Phil. 1:7; Phil. 1:12; Phil. 1:16; Phil. 1:27; Phil. 2:22; Phil. 4:3; Phil. 4:15; Col. 1:5; Col. 1:23; 1 Thess. 1:5; 1 Thess. 2:2; 1 Thess. 2:4; 1 Thess. 2:8; 1 Thess. 2:9; 1 Thess. 3:2; 2 Thess. 1:8; 2 Thess. 2:14; 1 Tim. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:8; 2 Tim. 1:10; 2 Tim. 2:8; Phlm. 1:13; 1 Pet. 4:17; Rev. 14:6

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION** - The tragedy of this verse is that in their self-deception many even today (even in so-called evangelical circles-[see this article](#)) claim to **know** Christ and even claim to **obey** His Gospel but will one day be shocked by the words of the Lord Jesus...

Not everyone who says to Me, **Lord, Lord,** (THIS WOULD IMPLY THEY THINK THEY "KNOW" HIM) will enter the kingdom of heaven (BE GENUINELY SAVED), but he who does (present tense = as their general lifestyle = direction, not perfection) the will of My Father Who is in heaven will enter. 22 **"Many** (NOTE THIS ADJECTIVE - NOT "FEW") will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' (THEY CLAIM THEY HAD "RELIGIOUS WORKS" AND THEY MAY HAVE) 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never (AT ANY TIME) knew you; DEPART (COMMAND TO BE OBEYED IMMEDIATELY!) FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE (present tense = as their general lifestyle) LAWLESSNESS (WHICH IS SIN - 1 John 3:4+).' (Mt 7:21-23+)

#### Related Resources:

- [What is general revelation and special revelation? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**2 Thessalonians 1:9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,**

NET 2 Thessalonians 1:9 They will undergo the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his strength,

NLT 2 Thessalonians 1:9 They will be punished with eternal destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from his glorious power.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 1:9 They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,



NIV 2 Thessalonians 1:9 They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power

GNT 2 Thessalonians 1:9 ο πινης δ κην τ σουσιν λεθρον α νιον π προσ που το κυρ ου κα π τ ς δ ξης τ ς σχ ος α το ,

KJV 2 Thessalonians 1:9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

YLT 2 Thessalonians 1:9 who shall suffer justice -- destruction age-during -- from the face of the Lord, and from the glory of his strength,

ASV 2 Thessalonians 1:9 who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might,

CSB 2 Thessalonians 1:9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction from the Lord's presence and from His glorious strength

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 1:9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

NRS 2 Thessalonians 1:9 These will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, separated from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,

NAB 2 Thessalonians 1:9 These will pay the penalty of eternal ruin, separated from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power,

NJB 2 Thessalonians 1:9 Their punishment is to be lost eternally, excluded from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his strength

GWN 2 Thessalonians 1:9 They will pay the penalty by being destroyed forever, by being separated from the Lord's presence and from his glorious power.

- **Will pay the penalty:** Isa 33:14 Isa 66:24 Da 12:2 Mt 25:41,46 26:24 Mk 9:43-49 Lu 16:25,26 Joh 5:14 Php 3:19 Heb 10:29 2Pe 2:17 3:7 Jude 1:13 Rev 14:10,11 20:14 21:8 22:15
- **away from the presence of the Lord:** Ge 3:8 4:16 Job 21:14 22:17 Ps 16:11 51:11 Mt 7:23 22:13 25:41 Lu 13:27
- **the glory:** 2Th 2:8 De 33:2 Isa 2:10,19,21 Mt 16:27 24:30 Tit 2:13 \*Gr: Rev 20:11
- 2 Thessalonians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **ETERNAL PUNISHMENT -- NOT ANNIHILATION BUT RUINATION!**

**These** - Those who do not know God and who do not obey the Gospel of the Lord Jesus. In short, every unregenerate soul. In context, this sad truth would serve to encourage the saints at Thessalonica not to seek retaliation against those who persecute them. They could rest fully assured that a **payday** was coming **someday** for their persecutors and therefore they needed to leave room for the wrath of God (Ro 12:19+).

**Will pay the penalty of eternal destruction** - The verb **will pay** (**tino**) is used only here in the Bible and speaks of a penalty and in regard to punishment means to undergo it or to experience retribution. **Tino** means means to pay a price by way of recompense (as when one settles a debt), and in this case will be an eternal recompense. It is worth noting that the Greek word for **penalty** (**dike** - see below) comes from the same root as the word righteous (**dikaos**), the implication being that the penalty is right and is deserved by those penalized! The punishment meted out meets God's standard for perfect justice! **Morris** adds " it is not a mindless infliction of vindictive punishment, but the meting out of merited desert." The is no in justice with God! **Eternal destruction** (this specific phrase only here in NT, and once in apocrypha - 4 Macc 10:15 describing eternal destruction of the tyrant Antiochus Epiphanes) means they would be eternally ruined, an absolutely horrible thought. Forever and ever, they would be unable to do anything of worth or value. Little wonder the doctrine of eternal punishment is so difficult to accept.

**Robert Thomas** says "A price must be paid in return for the suffering inflicted on God's people and that price is none other than "everlasting destruction." (EBC)

**John MacArthur** - The lost will not cease to exist but will experience forever a life of uselessness, hopelessness, emptiness, and meaninglessness, with no value, worth, accomplishment, purpose, goal, or hope. They will be ruined forever; "They pass into a night on which no morning dawns" (quoting Leon Morris).... Two conditions under which the lost will serve their eternal sentence reinforce the horror of their punishment. First, they will be forever away from the presence of the Lord (cf. Matt. 7:23; 25:41; Luke 13:27; Rev.

22:15). There is a great chasm fixed between the eternal realms of the blessed and the cursed (cf. Luke 16:26), separating the cursed from all that represents God's presence. And since "every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights" (James 1:17), there will be no vestige of goodness in hell. The lost will also serve their eternal sentence away ... from the glory of His power. Jesus described hell as a place of darkness (Matt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30; cf. 2 Peter 2:4, 17; Jude 13), cut off from the visible display of God's splendor and majesty. There will be no relief from hell's horrors; nothing of God's glorious presence to bring any shred of beauty, pleasure, joy, or peace. The lost will share hell with the devil and his angels; it will be a place of "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28), where "the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night" (Rev. 14:11). Yet no words can adequately express the misery of this reality. (MNTC-1-2 Thess)

**Ryrie** says "The phrase **"everlasting destruction"** (KJV) occurs only here in the New Testament and is everything opposite from eternal life. It is not annihilation but separation from the presence (literally "face," *prosopon*) of God and the manifestation of His power. Note, however, even throughout eternity, eternal punishment of the wicked will be in the sight, *enopion*, of the angels and of the Lord, Rev. 14:10<sub>±</sub>. Throughout these verses, the power of God is pointedly emphasized to remind the Thessalonians that even though their present adversaries seem so powerful, there is One who is mightier than all, who will mete out punishment on their tormentors when He appears in great power and glory.

**Wiersbe** says "Some cultists have tried to dilute the meaning of "everlasting destruction," saying it means either temporary suffering or total annihilation; but both ideas are false. The phrase means "eternal judgment," no matter how men try to twist it or avoid it." Sadly not just cultists but able, esteemed theologians like John Stott have strongly attacked the doctrine of eternal punishment (See Robert Peterson's "[A Traditionalist's Response to John Stott's Arguments for Annihilationism](#)")

**J I Packer** writes "In 2 Thessalonians 1:9 Paul explains, or extends, the meaning of "punished with everlasting [eternal, *aiōnios*] destruction" by adding "and shut out from the presence of the Lord" — which phrase, by affirming exclusion, rules out the idea that "destruction" meant extinction. Only those who exist can be excluded. It has often been pointed out that in Greek the natural meaning of the destruction vocabulary (noun, *olethros*; verb, *apollumi*) is wrecking, so that what is destroyed is henceforth nonfunctional rather than annihilating it, so that it no longer exists in any form at all." (from his article [Evangelical Annihilationism in Review](#) which is commented on by [Gavin Ortlund](#)).

POSB says "the penalty of judgment will be terrible, but it will be deserved. Why? Because those who are to be judged had the opportunity to know God, but they chose to deny and curse Him and to walk as they desired throughout life."

**Penalty** (justice, punishment)(1349)(**dike**) primarily custom. The standard to which a thing is to conform and then came to denote what is right and then, a judicial hearing hence, the execution of a sentence or "punishment" of what is rightly deserved. It means "justice, a judicial decision, especially a sentence of condemnation, execution of sentence, punishment."

**Eternal** (166)(**aiōnios** from **aiōn**) means existing at all times, perpetual, pertaining to an unlimited duration of time. Rienecker says this adjective literally " means agelong and everything depends on the length of the age. In the NT there is never a hint that the coming age has an end." See additional [discussion of aiōnios](#) in study of eternal punishment, specifically the importance of an [accurate understanding of aiōnios as a refutation of the false teaching of universalism](#) (everyone will be saved). **Aiōnios** is used twice in the Septuagint of Daniel 12:2+ "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to **everlasting (aiōnios)** life, but the others to disgrace and **everlasting (aiōnios)** contempt (literally abhorrence)." Do you see the clear definition of **everlasting**? Just as those who obey the Gospel of the Lord Jesus will enjoy life everlasting with Him, those who reject His gracious free gift of salvation will experience everlasting sadness away from Him! The Scripture is absolutely clear that eternal destruction will last forever and ever. Jesus undergirds this sad, unpopular doctrine when He declared that "These will go away into **eternal (aiōnios)** punishment, but the righteous into **eternal (aiōnios)** life." (Mt 25:46) In short, the difficult (and I do not like thinking about it at all!) doctrine of eternal punishment is clearly described in both the Old and New Testaments. These are like "neon signs" warning all men and women to "take refuge in the Son." (Ps 2:12<sub>±</sub>, cf Nahum 1:7) Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved (Acts 16:31+) and enter eternal life in the presence of the glory of His power!

**MacArthur** - **Aiōnios** (eternal) refers in the overwhelming majority of its New Testament uses to things of endless duration, such as God (Rom. 16:26), the Holy Spirit (Heb. 9:14), heaven (Luke 16:9), salvation (Heb. 5:9), redemption (Heb. 9:12), the covenant (Heb. 13:20), the gospel (Rev. 14:6), God's kingdom (2 Peter 1:11), hell (Matt. 18:8; 25:41, 46; Heb. 6:2; Jude 7), and, most frequently, eternal life (Matt. 19:16, 29; 25:46; Mark 10:17, 30; Luke 10:25; 18:18, 30; John 3:15, 16, 36; 4:14, 36; 5:24, 39; 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68; 10:28; 12:25, 50; 17:2, 3; Acts 13:46, 48; Rom. 2:7; 5:21; 6:22, 23; Gal. 6:8; 1 Tim. 1:16; 6:12; Titus 1:2; 3:7; 1 John 1:2; 2:25;

3:15; 5:11, 13, 20; Jude 21). Like all of the above-mentioned things, the destruction of the wicked will have no end but will last forever.

"The perpetual duration of this death is proved from the fact that its opposite is the glory of Christ. This is eternal and has no end."  
-- John Calvin

**Destruction** (3639) (**olethros** from **ollumi** = to destroy. Derivative = **apollumi** = destroy utterly or fully and has to do with that which is ruined and is no longer usable for its intended purpose) is a state of utter and hopeless ruin and the end of all that gives worth to human existence! Do not confuse with a state of annihilation (and non-existence so that there is no longer an actual conscious, personal perception - **annihilationism is NOT biblical**) for **olethros** signifies an unavoidable, very real experience of distress and torment!

The destruction Paul warns about is a time of unavoidable distress, disaster and ruin. This **destruction** will not be a loss of *being* but rather a loss of *well-being*. The idea of **olethros** is **to suffer the loss of all that gives worth to existence**. If the reality of this tragic truth does not motivate you to run to and embrace the Cross of Christ if you have not already done so, I don't know what will! (Related words - **exolothreuo**; **olothreuo**) Paul used **olethros** in 1 Thes 5:3+ "While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then **destruction** (**olethros**) will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape."

Destruction means not 'annihilation' but complete ruin.  
It is the loss of all that makes life worth living  
-- Leon Morris

**Away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power**- Hell will be bad enough because of the conscious, real, personal, perpetual torment (however that is manifested), but the worst aspect of Hell (in my opinion) is being forever separated from the Creator Who originally made you in His own image. Real purpose is found only in the Lord, so that absence from **the presence of** (literally the face of) **the Lord** means an eternal existence without any purpose (except to suffer for one's sin - an absolutely horrible thought, but one that is tragically absolutely true for all who reject Christ!).

It is worth noting what the first sin did to man's relationship with God Moses recording "They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves **from the presence of the LORD** God among the trees of the garden. that when Adam and Eve sinned their reaction." (Genesis 3:8+).

**Stallar** - The word "**presence**" (prosōpou) literally means "face," following the Hebrew way of saying the concept. To be in the presence of the Lord is to be before His face. To be lost is to be outside of His presence and not to see His face. Although orthodox Christianity argues for the omnipresence of God—he is everywhere—for the unbeliever there will be no favorable presence of Jesus in eternal hell. To be cut off from the favor of God is the worst retribution a person could experience. (21st Century Commentary)

The phrase **presence of the Lord** - 30x in 27v - Gen. 3:8; Gen. 4:16; Gen. 27:7; Lev. 10:2; Lev. 16:1; Num. 16:7; Num. 17:9; Num. 32:27; Num. 32:29; Num. 32:32; Deut. 14:23; Deut. 14:26; Deut. 29:15; Jdg. 5:5; 1 Sam. 26:20; 2 Sam. 21:1; Job 1:12; Job 2:7; Ps. 97:5; Isa. 23:18; Lam. 2:19; Lam. 4:16; Jon. 1:3; Jon. 1:10; Acts 3:19; 2 Thess. 1:9; Jas. 4:10

Robertson writes that "**Destruction** does not mean here annihilation, but, as Paul proceeds to show, separation from the face of the Lord."

**Away from....from** are both the preposition **apo** which is a marker of dissociation, implying a rupture from a former association. Of course the only "association" a non-believer had with the Lord was they were were made in the image of God. They had no "family ties" with the Lord, for Satan (Jn 8:44), not God, was their father. In this context the state of separation will be both physical (hell versus heaven) and eternal.

**Steven Cole** says the phrase "**away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power**," comes from the LXX of Isaiah 2:10, 19, 21+, where it is repeated three times. Each time, Isaiah adds the description, "**from the terror of the Lord and the majesty of His power**."....All of this tells us that hell is not going to be a wild, eternal party, as the world often portrays it! All of the language of the Bible indicates that hell will be eternal, awful, conscious torment. No one spoke more about hell than Jesus. He spoke of the rich man in hell who was in torment and cried out (Lk 16:24), "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame." Using the imagery of Isaiah 66:24, Jesus also referred to hell as, "where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched" (Mk 9:48). If you ask, "Are the flames of hell literal?" my answer is, "I don't know, but I don't want to find out!" The language Jesus used is horrifying! He repeatedly referred to the final state of unbelievers as the place of "outer darkness," where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt. 8:12;

22:13; 25:30). Some try to argue that “eternal” in the Bible doesn’t always mean “forever and ever.” But Jesus referred to it (Mt. 25:41) as “the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.” He added (Mt. 25:46), “These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” If eternal life lasts forever, then eternal punishment must also be forever. We dare not use softer language than our Savior did with regard to the eternal punishment of those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus! There is nothing but really bad news for all who reject Jesus Christ!

Isaiah 59:2 says "But **your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God**, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear."

“Heaven is primarily the presence of God.

Hell is the loss of that presence.”

-- E J Bickness

**Presence** (face) (4383)([prosopon](#) from **pros** = towards + **ops** = eye, the part around the eye and so the face) means literally toward the eye or face. **TDNT** - The basic sense of [prosopon](#) is “face,” “countenance.”

**Glorify** (1391)([doxa](#) from [dokeo](#) = to think) in simple terms means to give a proper opinion or estimate of something. **Glorify** is something that is a source of honor, fame, or admiration. It describes renown, a thing that is beautiful, impressive, or worthy of praise. It follows that the **glory of the Lord** expresses all that He is in His Being and in His nature, character, power and acts. He is glorified when He is allowed to be seen as He really is and only believers will be privileged to witness this incredible resplendent display of His glory. To be where God is will be glory. To be what God intended will be glory. To do what God purposed will be glory. I like the way Puritan writer **Thomas Watson** described God's glory - Glory is the sparkling of the Deity... We may see God's glory blazing in the sun and twinkling in the stars (Ps 19:1)... A sight of God's glory humbles. The stars vanish when the sun appears." Little wonder that Revelation 22:5+ says "need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they (ALL BELIEVERS) will reign forever and ever."

Glory of God expresses the sum total of the divine perfections.

-- Marvin Vincent

**Power** (2479)([ischus](#)) (see note by Wayne Barber [ischus](#)) refers to “power as an endowment.” **Ischus** is the inherent ability which stresses the factuality of the ability, not necessarily the accomplishment. **Ischus** is inherent power or force. A muscular man’s big muscles display his might, even if he doesn’t use them. It is the reserve of strength. **Ischus** therefore conveys the sense of endowed power or ability. The idea is that it is the active efficacy of the might that is inherent in God, His indwelling strength. **Ischus** is that strength which one has in possession or ability. One might think of **ischus** as God's latent power. It is His capability to function effectively. He is able! Generally it may be said that while both **ischus** and **dunamis** include the idea of manifestation or of power in action, **ischus** emphasizes the outward, physical manifestations, and **dunamis** the inward, spiritual or moral virtue.

**Vincent** adds **ischus** "is indwelling power put forth or embodied, either aggressively or as an obstacle to resistance: physical power organised or working under individual direction. An army and a fortress are both  $\sigma\chi\upsilon\varsigma$ . The power inhering in the magistrate, which is put forth in laws or judicial decisions, is  $\sigma\chi\upsilon\varsigma$ , and makes the edicts  $\sigma\chi\upsilon\varsigma$  valid and hard to resist."

**Spurgeon** says "Observe that our Lord is spoken of as coming in His glory and as, at the same time, taking vengeance in flaming fire on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel. This is a note of great terror to all those who are ignorant of God and wickedly unbelieving concerning His Christ. Let them take heed, for the Lord will gain glory by the overthrow of His enemies and those who would not bow before Him cheerfully shall be compelled to bow before Him abjectly. They shall crouch at His feet. They will lick the dust in terror and at the glance of His eyes they shall utterly wither away. As it is written, they “shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.” But this is not the main object for which Christ will come, nor is this the matter in which He finds His chiefest glory, for, observe, He does this as it were by the way when He comes for another purpose. To destroy the wicked is a matter of necessity in which His spirit takes no delight, for He does this, according to the text, not so much when He comes to do it as when He shall come with another object, namely, “To be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in them that believe.” ([Sermon](#))

**Ray Stedman** has a pithy exposition of this passage especially the description of Hell - Exclusion! Banishment! Separation! But not annihilation! Some claim that what these verses mean is that when people die their existence also ends; that they go out like the light of a candle and they are no more. But Scripture never describes it in those terms; rather, it speaks here of "eternal destruction." The word is "ruin," the loss of everything that makes life worthwhile; the trashing of life. Some folks like to make jokes about hell, but

I want to tell you that when you read the Scriptures you discover that hell is no joking matter. Jesus himself is the One who speaks of hell more than anyone else in the New Testament. Some say they do not mind going to hell. They say, "all their friends are going to be there." They speak of hell as if it were one great Animal House, with a fraternity party going on forever, where you just waste yourself and no one can stop you or say anything against what you are doing. That is never the picture that Scripture gives. C. S. Lewis has put it well: "*In hell, everybody will be at an infinite distance from everybody else*"

Loneliness and emptiness! The Apostle Jude describes those in hell as "wandering stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever," (Jude 13b RSV). Those are very sobering words. In connection with that, I would like to quote from an excellent message on hell which was preached by a young pastor who preaches to some 10,000 people, many of whom are not Christians, every Sunday morning in a church near Chicago. Here is part of that sermon:

"One writer calls it the bottomless pit. And that conjures up dreamlike feelings of falling away -- falling, falling, falling. You've all had dreams like that, where when you woke your heart was beating because you were falling. Picture in your mind hanging over a precipice, and God is hanging onto you, and you're hanging onto him. And you decide you don't need him anymore. So you let go. But the moment you let go you know you made a mistake. You're falling and every moment you fall further and further away from the only source of help and truth and love, and you realize you made a mistake and you can't get back up and you fall further and faster and further and faster into spiritual oblivion, and you know you're going the wrong direction and you'd give anything to go back but you can't and you fall and you fall and you fall and you fall. How long? Forever. And all the while you're falling you're saying, "I'm further now, I'm further. I'm further from the only source of hope, truth, and love." In hell there is never the bliss of annihilation. You'd give anything for annihilation, but it's unavailable, only the conscious continuation of emotional anguish, physical anguish, relational anguish, and spiritual anguish forever."

What terrible thing must one do to merit such an end? Turning one's back on God's offer of grace, is the answer of Scripture. God does not want anyone to perish like that. He says so. And he has gone through terrible agony to keep it from happening. But no matter how much you dislike passages like this, two truths always emerge:

First, it is justice that is being carried out; not meanness, not cruelty, not capriciousness, but justice on God's part. It is his righteous reaction to cosmic treason on man's part. That is what turning your back on Jesus means: Treason against the King of the universe.

And second, it is self-chosen. It is what those involved have always wanted: freedom from God. Everything in their life has said, "I don't want God messing up my plans and telling me what to do." There comes a time where man says to God, "Thy will be done," or else God says to man, "Thy will be done." What you want is what you get! I do not like preaching like that but that is reality, and Scripture confronts us with reality at every turn. ([Sermon](#))

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#### Related Resources:

- Eternal Punishment - a discussion of this "unsavory" subject
- [Why is the idea of eternal damnation so repulsive to many people? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Is hell real? Is hell eternal? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is eternal death? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**2 Thessalonians 1:10 when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed--for our testimony to you was believed.**

NET 2 Thessalonians 1:10 when he comes to be glorified among his saints and admired on that day among all who have believed-- and you did in fact believe our testimony.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 1:10 When he comes on that day, he will receive glory from his holy people-- praise from all who believe. And this includes you, for you believed what we told you about him.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 1:10 when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

NIV 2 Thessalonians 1:10 on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

GNT 2 Thessalonians 1:10 τὰν λθ νδοξασθ ναι ν το ς γ ο ι ς α το κα θαυμασθ ναι ν π σιν το ς

πιστε σασιν, τι πιστεθη τ μαρτυριον μν φ μς, ντ μρ κεν.

KJV 2 Thessalonians 1:10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

YLT 2 Thessalonians 1:10 when He may come to be glorified in his saints, and to be wondered at in all those believing -- because our testimony was believed among you -- in that day;

ASV 2 Thessalonians 1:10 when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be marvelled at in all them that believed (because our testimony unto you was believed) in that day.

CSB 2 Thessalonians 1:10 in that day when He comes to be glorified by His saints and to be admired by all those who have believed, because our testimony among you was believed.

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 1:10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

NRS 2 Thessalonians 1:10 when he comes to be glorified by his saints and to be marveled at on that day among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

NAB 2 Thessalonians 1:10 when he comes to be glorified among his holy ones and to be marveled at on that day among all who have believed, for our testimony to you was believed.

NJB 2 Thessalonians 1:10 on that day when he comes to be glorified among his holy ones and marvelled at by all who believe in him; and you are among those who believed our witness.

GWN 2 Thessalonians 1:10 This will happen on that day when he comes to be honored among all his holy people and admired by all who have believed in him. This includes you because you believed the testimony we gave you.

- **to be glorified:** 2Th 1:12 Nu 23:23 Ps 89:7 Isa 43:21 44:23 49:3 60:21 Jer 33:9 Mt 24:30, 25:31 Joh 11:4 17:10 Ga 1:24 Eph 1:6,12,14,18 2:7 3:10,16 1Pe 2:9 Rev 7:11,12
- **to be marveled at:** Ps 68:35
- **our testimony to you was believed:** 2Th 2:13 1Th 1:5 1 Th 2:13
- in that: Mal 3:17 Mt 7:22 24:36 Lu 10:12 2Ti 1:12,18 4:8
- 2 Thessalonians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Revelation 19:14<sup>+</sup> - And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.

This passage describing the glorious fate of believers is the absolute antithesis of the preceding description of the inglorious fate of unbelievers!

**When** - This amplifies Paul's earlier description in 2 Th 1:7 "when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven." Not "if" but "when," for His return is certain, although the time of His return is uncertain (When is hotan which is indefinite, indicating that the exact time of His coming is not known.). and in 2 Th 1:7 Paul explained that when He comes He would "give relief to" the saints "when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire." The word **relief** is anesis which gave rise to the name "Anacin" a pain relieving medication! The ultimate "pain relief" will take place with Jesus returns!

When our Lord Jesus Christ returns, we are going to share with Him in glory.  
-- Warren Wiersbe

**He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day-** Note that He is not glorified BY His saints but IN His saints. Jesus said when He returned it would be with "with power and great glory." (Mt 24:30) and "when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne." (Mt 25:31) A glorified Christ will be further glorified in His people. As **Stallar** says "The expression "to be glorified" (endoxasthēnai) here in verse 10 means "to be honored or lifted up" (this word will be repeated in v. 12). Jesus is the chief One who is glorified or honored on that day." (Ibid) **On that day** is the day of Christ's coming (2 Ti 1:12, 18; 2 Ti 4:8), a day of bad news for their wicked persecutors and good news for the saints at Thessalonica.

**B H Carroll** - The eye of every Christian should be fixed on the second coming of the Lord in view of the judgment that will follow that coming, and his heart should turn to the fact that with that day everything that goes wrong in time will be righted.

What does this mean **glorified in His saints**? John says "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that **when He appears, we will be like Him**, because we will see Him just as He is.." (1 John 3:2+, cf 1Co 15:42, 43) So John says "like Him" which means we will be glorified. In Col 3:4+ Paul writes "When Christ, who is our life, is revealed ([phaneroo](#) = make visible that which has been hidden) , then **you** also will be revealed ([phaneroo](#)) **with Him in glory.**" And so at the Second Coming of Christ glorified believers will be like Him and will reflect Christ's glory.

**Ray Stedman** - God will not glorify us because we have lived a good, decent life, or anything like that. Scripture never puts it on that basis. Rather, our glorification is based upon the fact that we have believed that Another did something for us. Another died in our place, and God has honored the death of that Other to such a degree that he offers to accept us, with our terrible record of failure and defeat, and to offer us an eternity of delight and glory with him. ([Sermon](#))

**Ryrie** says "the **second coming of Christ** will also be a time of glorification of Christ as well as a time of retribution. Two very amazing statements are contained in verse 10. First, when He comes He will be glorified **in** (not **by**) His saints (the word for the preposition "in" is prefixed to the verb [endoxazomai](#) "to be glorified" as well as standing alone after the verb). In other words, Paul is making the astounding claim that the glory of the Lord will be mirrored in believers (cf. John 17:1; Eph. 2:7). **Only the grace of God can lift a sinner to the place where he becomes the means of reflecting the glory of God.**" (EvBC)

**Robertson** says glorified in His saints describes "The sphere in which Christ will find his glory at the Revelation (Second Coming)." Don't read that too fast! What is that "sphere" in which Christ will find His glory? Clearly, amazingly, in His followers! The Lord of Glory will be glorified in us! If that does not boggle your mind, I do not know what will! We who had nothing but filthy rags for God, will by amazing grace present fabulous glory to God. And as Paul says "from Him and to Him and through Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen." (Ro 11:36+)

**Morris** on **glorified in** - The verb is a compound found (see [endoxazomai](#)) in the New Testament again only in verse 12; its meaning is 'be glorified-in', and it is followed by another 'in'. The Lord will be glorious and his glory will be in his saints too (cf. 1 John 3:2+, 'when he appears, we shall be like him'). Masson, Thomas and others see the meaning that he will be glorified in the midst of his saints (cf. Ps. 89:7) (TOTC)

**Vine** on **be glorified in His saints** - **In**, en, is not here "by" or "among," but, as in John 17:10, "I have been glorified in them," and Galatians 1:24, "they glorified God in me," (cp. Isaiah 49:3; Isa 61:3). **While the glory of His might destroys the wicked, the glory of His grace is exhibited in His saints**, and in their manifest likeness to Himself (see passages below)...

Romans 8:19+ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared **with the glory that is to be revealed** ([apokalupto](#)) **to us.** 19 For the anxious longing of the creation **waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.**

Romans 8:29+ For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; 30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, **He also glorified.**

Philippians 3:21+ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait ([apekdechomai](#) waiting patiently with great expectation for Second Coming) for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; (WHAT HAPPENS TO BELIEVERS AT SECOND COMING?) Who **will transform** ([metaschematizo](#)) **the body of our humble state into conformity** ([summorphos](#)) **with the body of His glory**, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

1 Peter 1:7+ so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result **in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ**

**Stallar** writes "Jesus at the Second Coming will be honored in believers. One must inquire at this point into the nature of the idea of being glorified in someone (1:10). The Greek preposition translated "in" (en) can at times carry the force of "among." If this is the sense, then Jesus is glorified among the saints. That is, He stands among them on that day as the One who receives honor. If this interpretation is correct, the passage does not emphasize any honor directed to believers. This is highly unlikely. One must again mention 1:12 and the statement that Jesus would be glorified "in you, and you in Him." Both uses of the word "in" must be taken as parallel and identical. The idea of "you among Him" is nonsensical in this setting. In addition, the positional truth of believers being in Christ is found everywhere in Paul's writings and should get the benefit of the doubt in any explanation (e.g., Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:6-7). Thus the notion of "in" as "among" must be jettisoned. Morris correctly summarizes Paul's intent: "It seems that he is saying that those who are in Christ and in whom Christ dwells will by virtue of that fact share in his glory. On the great day it is not only the Lord himself who will be glorious, but his glory will also be seen in the saints... the idea is that of the Lord's glory being shared with or mirrored in his people. They are one with him and they will share his glory."

**Spurgeon** - The crowning honor of Christ will be seen in His people and this is the design with which He will return to this earth in the latter days—that He may be illustrious in His saints and exceedingly magnified in them. Even now His saints glorify Him. When they walk in holiness they do, as it were, reflect His light. Their holy deeds are beams from Him who is the Sun of righteousness. When they believe in Him they also glorify Him, for there is no grace which pays lowlier homage at the throne of Jesus than the grace of faith whereby we trust Him and so confess Him to be our all in all. We glorify our gracious Lord, but beloved brethren, we must all confess that we do not do this as we could desire, for, alas, too often we dishonor Him and grieve His Holy Spirit. By our lack of zeal and by our many sins we are guilty of discrediting His gospel and dishonoring His name. Happy, happy, happy day when this shall no more be possible—when we shall be rid of the inward corruption which now works itself into outward sin and shall never dishonor Christ again, but shall shine with a clear, pure radiance like the moon on the Passover night when it looks the sun full in the face and then shines upon the earth at her best. Today we are like vessels on the wheel, but half fashioned, yet even now somewhat of His divine skill is seen in us as His handiwork. Still the unformed clay is only in part seen and much remains to be done. How much more of the great Potter's creating wisdom and sanctifying power will be displayed when we shall be the perfect products of His hand! In the bud and germ, our new nature brings honor to its Author, but it will do far more when its perfection manifests the Finisher. Then shall Jesus be glorified and admired in every one of us when the days of the new creation are ended and God shall usher in the eternal Sabbath by pronouncing His grace-work to be very good. ([Sermon](#))

**B H Carroll** on how He will be glorified in His saints - [Sir Christopher Wren](#) is glorified in [Westminster Abbey](#), which was the greatest work of his genius, and as one steps into the abbey he passed under a sentence which reads, "Whoever wishes to see the monument of the architect, let him look around." The illustration helps us to see what will be the character of the **glory of Jesus Christ in His people**. When he saw them they were utterly lost, their nature depraved, under condemnation, without a friend, sinking down beneath the righteous frown of God. He came to save them, some of them drunkards, some of them whore-mongers, some robbers, some murderers, and commencing the good work in them by regeneration, and continuing it by sanctification, until their spirits were perfected, and consummating it by the resurrection and [glorification](#) of their bodies so that these that had been drunkards, liars, thieves, murderers, adulterers, **stand there on that day in his own glorious image**. Who did this? What mighty architect? It was Jesus. **Jesus will be glorified in his people just as the sculptor will be glorified in the statue that comes from the skill of his hands and the thought of his mind**. The sculptor looks on a piece of rough, unhewn marble, that a thousand people can see nothing in but marble, but with his eye of genius he sees in it the angel that can be carved from it. He begins to chip and chisel until, at last, form and outline appear. The rough outline assumes symmetry; the face takes on 'expression, the eyes seem to glow with fire, and as the finishing touch is put upon the statue, we marvel at the artist in his work. In that way Christ will be glorified in his people.

**THOUGHT** - **Robert Hawker** prays "In that, all-decisive hour, Lord grant that I may be found in thee, waiting thy approach, and not be ashamed before: thee at thy coming! Amen"

#### Related Resource:

- [What is glorification? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**And to be marveled at among all who have believed** - The radiance of the glory of Christ at His Second Coming will surpass any glory we have ever seen! All believers will finally see Him in all His glory (see above - 1 Jn 3:2+) **All who have believed** refers to the saints in Thessalonica. **Believed** ([pisteuo](#)) is aorist tense depicting the moment in time past when they heard and received and believed the Gospel (cf 1 Th 2:13).

**Cole** comments that "We will marvel at the glory of the Lord and give Him all praise when we see Him. But also, as His bride adorned for the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:5–8), we will actually share His glory throughout all eternity!"

**Ray Stedman on to be marveled at** - He describes the glory of Jesus that will be seen "in his saints," and the way they cause people to marvel at what God has done in human lives. It is not Jesus himself and his glory that is described, but the saints reflecting the glory of Jesus. That is what causes the whole universe to marvel. That is what Paul is describing in this wonderful picture. The Apostle John says in his first letter, "It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is," (1 John 3:2). That is what Paul calls in Chapter 8 of Romans, "the day of the manifestation of the sons of God," (Romans 8:19 KJV). When the curtain is lifted on what God has been doing with his people through all these years, how he has been changing them inside, at last the world will see what God has been accomplishing. I remember singing as a young Christian,

Holy, holy, holy, is what the angels sing,  
And I expect to help them make the courts of heaven ring.  
But when we sing redemption's story, they must fold their wings,  
For angels never felt the joy that our salvation brings.



There is a glory, a joy, that only the redeemed know. That marvelous manifestation of the grace and glory of God will be evident in those who have been changed by his grace. That is what this day is describing. ([Sermon](#))

**Matthew Poole** - To raise up such a number of poor, sinful, despicable worms out of the dust into such a sublime state of glory and dignity, will be admirable.

**Spurgeon** - Those who look upon the saints will feel a sudden wonderment of sacred delight; they will be startled with the surprising glory of the Lord's work in them; 'We thought He would do great things, but this! This surpasseth conception!' Every saint will be a wonder to himself. 'I thought my bliss would be great, but not like this!' All his brethren will be a wonder to the perfected believer. He will say, 'I thought the saints would be perfect, but I never imagined such a transfiguration of excessive glory would be put upon each of them. I could not have imagined my Lord to be so good and gracious.'

**John Phillips** - It will be a day of "splendor unimaginable." Amazing! Unbelievable! Awesome! So, over against their present persecutions, privations, and pains, Paul sets that glorious day when we shall be paraded before the universe to hear the cheers and hosannas of the angels. As Paul told the Corinthians, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4:17). The angelic hosts have long wondered about the mystery of God's interest in, love for, and dealings with the human race generally and the church particularly. When He laid the earth's primeval foundations, they sang and shouted for joy (Job 38:4-7). They visited this planet on numerous occasions during the Old Testament age. They crowded around the cradle and awoke the echoes of the Judean hills when heaven's Beloved was born in Bethlehem (Luke 2:8-15). They dogged His earthly pathway from His cradle to His grave. They are now servants of those who are salvation's heirs (Heb. 1:14). They desire to look into these things (1 Peter 1:12). One day they will understand. The church will be God's object lesson to the universe of His grace, kindness, and wisdom (Eph. 1:7; 3:10). They have glimmerings of it now. They will see it fully then. The coming of Christ in glory will make it all clear. He will be gloried in His saints. An admiring universe will look at us and glorify Him.

**Be marveled at** (2296)([thaumazo](#) from **thauma** = wonder, admiration) means to wonder, marvel, be struck with admiration or astonishment, be surprised by the unexpected (WE THINK WE CAN IMAGINE HIS FUTURE GLORY -- BUT WE CANNOT AND IT WILL BE BEYOND OUR IMAGINATION! O GLORIOUS DAY!). **Thaumazo** describes the human response when confronted by divine revelation in some form (Mt 9:33). Be surprised (Gal 1:6). It denotes incredulous surprise. **Luke** uses **thaumazo** to express reaction to miraculous events or to teaching (cf. Lk 1:63; 2:18; 4:22; 7:9; 8:25; 9:43; 11:14; 20:26).

**Believed** (4100)([pisteuo](#)) means to consider something to be true and therefore worthy of one's trust. In context of the NT it means to accept God, Jesus, His Gospel, as true, genuine, or real and have a firm conviction as to the goodness, efficacy, or ability of God to do what He promises to do. The idea is to entrust oneself to God in complete confidence.

**For our testimony to you was believed** ([pisteuo](#)) - NIV, ESV have "because you believed our testimony to you." The testimony of Paul, Silvanus and Timothy in Thessalonica was received and believed by the recipients of this letter.

**Ray Stedman on for our testimony to you was believed** - That last clause, "because our testimony to you was believed," is simply Paul's way of expounding on the little word *all*: all who have believed. In fact the New International Version renders it, "this includes you because you believed our testimony." That is what Paul means. God will not glorify us because we have lived a good, decent life, or anything like that. Scripture never puts it on that basis. Rather, our glorification is based upon the fact that we have believed that Another did something for us. Another died in our place, and God has honored the death of that Other to such a degree that he offers to accept us, with our terrible record of failure and defeat, and to offer us an eternity of delight and glory with him. That is what the apostle is setting forth here. ([Sermon](#))

**Guzik** - This shows the difference between one destined for judgment and one destined for glory. The difference is belief in the message Paul preached (our testimony), the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Vine** has an interesting note on their **testimony** - The labors of the missionaries at Thessalonica had been **twofold**: they had proclaimed certain facts, and they had borne witness to the power of those facts. While preaching (*kērussō*, as in 1 Thess. 2:9, cp. *kērugma* = "thing preached," 1 Cor. 1:21, marg., or "message," Titus 1:3), is objective, i.e., is concerned with that which is external to the preacher, testimony, or witness, is mainly subjective, i.e., is concerned with the preacher's own experience.

**Vine on was believed** - when it is set before them, some refuse the truth altogether, and some while they accept the facts remain unmoved thereby, others not only accept the facts but, submitting thereto in heart, begin to live with a new purpose and to manifest a new character. To the latter class those addressed belonged, "they had become obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto they had been delivered," Romans 6:17

Paul described the testimony of himself, Silvanus and Timothy in the first letter as well as the response....

1 Thessalonians 1:5+ for our Gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

1 Thessalonians 2:13+ For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, **you accepted it** not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

**Testimony** (3142)([marturion/martyrion](#) source of English "[martyr](#)") means evidence, proof. The content of what a witness tells. Marturion is the declaration of facts which confirms or makes something known. Marturion is an objective act, circumstance or statement that provides evidence or certifies the truthfulness of something. The content of what is witnessed or said. (See also [marturia/martyria](#)) **Testimony** (marturion) means just that—a testimony or witness. A person can only testify to what he himself has seen or heard or experienced. A witness in a courtroom is to report only what he knows objectively, factually, and personally. He is not to speculate, guess, or deduce.

**Spurgeon on on that day, and to be marveled at** - WHAT a difference between the first and second comings of our Lord! When He shall come a second time it will be to be glorified and admired, but when He came the first time it was to be despised and rejected of men. He comes a second time to reign with unexampled splendor, but the first time He came to die in circumstances of shame and sorrow. Lift up your eyes, you sons of light, and anticipate the change which will be as great for you as for your Lord—for now you are hidden even as He was hidden and misunderstood even as He was misunderstood when He walked among the sons of men. "We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like He; for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John 3:2+) His manifestation will be our manifestation and in the day in which He is revealed in glory, then shall His saints be glorified with Him. ([Sermon](#))

**2 Thessalonians 1:11 To this end also we pray for you always, that our God will count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power,**

NET 2 Thessalonians 1:11 And in this regard we pray for you always, that our God will make you worthy of his calling and fulfill by his power your every desire for goodness and every work of faith,

NLT 2 Thessalonians 1:11 So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 1:11 To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power,

NIV 2 Thessalonians 1:11 With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith.

GNT 2 Thessalonians 1:11 ε ς κα προσευχ μεθα π ντοτε περ μ ν, να μ ς ξ ι σ τ ς κ λ σεω ς θε ς μ ν κα πληρ σ π σαν ε δοκ αν γαθω σ ν η ς κα ρ γον π στεω ς ν δυ ν μ ει,

KJV 2 Thessalonians 1:11 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power:

YLT 2 Thessalonians 1:11 for which also we do pray always for you, that our God may count you worthy of the calling, and may fulfil all the good pleasure of goodness, and the work of the faith in power,

ASV 2 Thessalonians 1:11 To which end we also pray always for you, that our God may count you worthy of your calling, and fulfil every desire of goodness and every work of faith, with power;

CSB 2 Thessalonians 1:11 And in view of this, we always pray for you that our God will consider you worthy of His calling, and will, by His power, fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith,

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 1:11 Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power,

NRS 2 Thessalonians 1:11 To this end we always pray for you, asking that our God will make you worthy of his call and will fulfill by his power every good resolve and work of faith,

NAB 2 Thessalonians 1:11 To this end, we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and powerfully bring to fulfillment every good purpose and every effort of faith,

NJB 2 Thessalonians 1:11 In view of this we also pray continually that our God will make you worthy of his call, and by his power fulfil all your desires for goodness, and complete all that you have been doing through faith;

GWN 2 Thessalonians 1:11 With this in mind, we always pray that our God will make you worthy of his call. We also pray that through his power he will help you accomplish every good desire and help you do everything your faith produces.

- **we pray:** Ro 1:9 Eph 1:16 3:14-21 Php 1:9-11 Col 1:9-13 1Th 3:9-13
- **our God:** Ps 48:14 68:20 Isa 25:9 55:7 Da 3:17 Rev 5:10
- **will:** 2Th 1:5 Col 1:12 Rev 3:4
- **calling:** 2Th 2:14 Ro 8:30 Ro 9:23,24 Php 3:14 1Th 2:12 Heb 3:1 1Pe 5:10
- **fulfill:** Ps 138:8 Pr 4:18 Isa 66:9 Ho 6:3 Zec 4:7 Mk 4:28 1Co 1:8 Php 1:6
- **the goodness:** Ps 51:18 Lu 12:32 Eph 1:5,9 Php 2:13 Titus 3:4-7
- **the work:** Joh 6:27-29 Eph 1:19,20 1Th 1:3 1 Th 2:13 Heb 12:2
- 2 Thessalonians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

1 Thessalonians 1:2+ We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers;

## A CLOSING PRAYER

**To this end also** - Probably the "end" refers to the entire section from 2 Thes 1:5-10.

**Stallar** has an interesting note on **to this end** - The words "to this end" have the idea of "with this in mind." This introductory saying is similar to that found in Romans 14:9 and 2 Corinthians 2:9. The apostle refers back to 2 Th 1:5-10, the coming of the Lord and the glorification of the saints, longing for the realities of their experience at the future Second Coming to have an impact here and now. It is one thing to look ahead with a kind of escapist mentality during trying times. It is quite another to live earnestly in the now in the light of one's ultimate destiny. So Paul brings the Thessalonian believers back to the present time with his prayer. (21st Century Commentary)

As **John Phillips** says "Paul himself seems to have been overwhelmed at the magnificence of this prospect. As usual, when Paul found himself overwhelmed, he prayed! "Wherefore also we pray always for you," he says. Paul did not pray just when he was in a tight corner; he also prayed when he was in a bright corner." (Ibid)

**A T Robertson** on **to this end also** - So Col. 1:29+ ("For this purpose also"). Probably purpose with reference to the contents of 2 Thes 1:5-10. We have had the Thanksgiving (2 Th 1:3-10) in a long, complicated, but rich period or sentence. Now he makes a brief Prayer (verses 11 and 12) that God will fulfil all their hopes and endeavours. Paul and his colleagues can still pray for them though no longer with them. (Word Pictures)

**We** (Paul, Silvanus, Timothy) **pray** (present tense - continually, cf 1Th 1:2+ above) **for you always** ([pantote](#) - at all times), **that** ([hina](#) - purpose, introduces content of prayer) **our** (intimacy, personal relationship) **God will count you worthy of your calling** - Paul has just stated that their persecutions and afflictions were "a plain indication of God's righteous judgment so that **you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God**, for which indeed you are suffering." (2 Th 1:5+). **Count you worthy** can mean "make worthy," for it ultimately is the Spirit's sanctifying work which makes us worthy. **Your calling** speaks of the effectual call of the Spirit which is opposed to a general call (as in Mt 22:14). **MacArthur** explains that "Jesus referred to it when He said, "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him" (John 6:44). God's effectual call activates in time His election of the redeemed in eternity; He "called us with a holy calling ... according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity" (2 Tim. 1:9)." (See [What is the effectual calling/call? | GotQuestions.org](#))

"Whom He counts worthy He first makes worthy"

-- Lillie

**Stallar** has a different thought on **count worthy** - The idea "count worthy" (*axiōsē*) has been challenged by some who see its meaning as "make worthy." If this is the sense, the request is stronger with ethical overtones. In that case Paul's wish is that God will transform the Thessalonian believers so that their experience matches their standing before God. However, the sense of "count worthy" better fits the earlier context. This shows that Paul's prayer is that God will consider the believers worthy. The implication of Paul's statement in 1:5 is that they are worthy of the kingdom (using a similar word). Their continued faith under fire confirms this

status. Paul's prayer is that the Thessalonians will continue the display of their true standing. (Ibid)

**Michael Martin** - Paul prayed that the church may be worthy of that kingdom. The verb used (axiōsē -[axioo](#)) may mean “**count worthy**” (its normal meaning) or “**make worthy**” (a rare meaning). The former would focus on the determination of God to “consider” (NIV) the church worthy and would imply not so much godly living by the church as the application of the grace of God. On the other hand, the verb may focus on the **growing Christian character** of the church God is “making” (RSV) worthy. Although this is an uncommon use of the word, it is in line with the emphasis on ethical acts in the remainder of the verse. However, Paul may not have been making a sharp distinction between the two since the extension of grace and a resultant growth in godliness are inseparable in the apostle’s teachings (cf. Eph 2:10). The absence of either makes a mockery of the other. In a sense, then, Paul’s prayer requests that the kind of “evidence” (v. 5) of membership in the kingdom already displayed among the Thessalonians would continue in abundance and further validate God’s call in their lives. (NAC-2 Th)

**Our God** - 7x in the two Thessalonian epistles - 1 Th 1:3 1 Th 2:2 1 Th 3:9 1 Th 3:11 1 Th 3:13 2 Th 1:11 2 Th 1:12,

**Our Father** 2x - 2 Th 1:1, 2 Th 2:16

**THOUGHT** - How encouraging to the saints at Thessalonica to know Paul (et al) were continually praying for them. I once had a lady who prayed Col 1:9-14 daily and it was a source of great encouragement to me. Do you have anyone who prays daily for you? Suggestion - Challenge your accountability partner (you do have one don't you?) to pray Col 1:9-14 for you daily as I have done with my partner for whom I pray the same prayer daily. You can substitute one of Paul's other prayers to give you some variation (see Ro 1:9–10; 2 Cor. 13:7, 9; Eph. 1:15–17; 3:14–21; Phil. 1:4, 9–11; Col. 1:3, 9–11; 1 Thess. 1:2; 3:10, 11–13; 5:23; 2 Ti 1:3; Philem. 4, 6). Don't just pray "Lord bless him (or her)," but make specific spiritual requests using God's Word as your template. Using His Word will assure you are more likely to be in His will. And as John says "This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything **according to His will**, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him." (1 John 5:14-15+) This mode of praying will lead to praying with power and effectiveness! **Steven Cole** adds that "It is significant that in writing to new believers who were going through persecution, Paul never writes, "I pray that your persecution will end soon." Rather, his prayers are focused on their growth in godliness and on the furtherance of God's kingdom and glory through their perseverance in persecution."

**TWO PRAYER SATURATED EPISTLES** - As an aside you might want to review all of the many times Paul prays or alludes to prayer in these two short epistles to the Thessalonians - 2 Th 1:11; 1 Th 1:2; 1 Th 2:13; 1 Th 3:9–13; 1 Th 5:17; 1 Th 5:23; 1 Th 5:25; 2 Th 1:3; 2 Th. 1:11–12; 2 Th. 2:13; 2 Th 2:16–17; 2 Th. 3:1–2; 2 Th. 3:5; 2 Ths. 3:16:

**Steven Cole** observes that "In our text, Paul prays that God will do what it is certain that He will do, namely, that He will be glorified in these believers when Jesus returns. In Philippians 1:6+, Paul wrote, "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus." So, if Paul was confident that God would perfect those whom He called to salvation, why did he pray for that very thing? This is the mystery of interaction between God's sovereignty and our responsibility. Why pray, if God has predestined everything? Why witness, if God has already chosen who will believe? It's really no different, though, than the request in the Lord's Prayer, "Your kingdom come." God has predestined that Christ's kingdom will come. But He tells us to pray that it will happen. Hasn't the Lord promised that He will build His church? Yes, but when we serve Him, we should pray that He will use our efforts to build His church. Frequent prayer should undergird and permeate all that we do for the Lord (Ps. 90:17).

**David Guzik** has a good word on a **worthy walk** - God gives Christians a high calling, mentioned in the previous sentence. The calling is to see Him glorified in us at His coming. Paul rightly prays that the Thessalonians may be counted worthy of this calling, and he shows ways to fulfill this calling.. We live worthy of His call when we fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness, living lives touched by His goodness, and displaying His goodness.. We live worthy of His call when we fulfill ... the work of faith with power, believing on Jesus and seeing His work done all around us by faith. We live worthy of His call when the name of our Lord Jesus Christ is glorified in us. We understand that this means more than the name of our Lord Jesus as a word, but also as a representation of His character.. We live worthy of His call when we are glorified in Him, when He alone is our source of glory and exaltation, and who we are in Jesus is more important than who we are in anything else.

In praying that God would **count them worthy**, he is essence is asking God to enable them to walk worthy just as he had prayed for the saints at Colossae

For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that **you will walk in a**

**manner worthy of the Lord**, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; (Col 1:9-10+)

**Walking worthy** is another way to describe the saint's progressive sanctification in which he or she is growing more and more like Christ, the only one Who is truly Worthy (cf Rev 5:12+). Cole adds that "It's important to keep in mind that being counted (or, "made," ESV) worthy is a result of God's effectual call to salvation, not the cause of it. The point is, we don't walk worthily to obtain or merit salvation, but rather because God has graciously saved us."

Paul again alludes to a **worthy walk** again in Ephesians

Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to **walk in a manner worthy of the calling** with which you have been called, (Eph 4:1+)

As **John MacArthur** explains "God takes sinners, **worthy** only of death (Rom. 1:32), and makes them **worthy** of His kingdom by imputing Christ's righteousness to them (2 Cor. 5:21). But Paul prayed that the Thessalonians would also prove **worthy** in practice through Holy Spirit sanctification, that they would "**walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls [them] into His own kingdom and glory**" (1 Th. 2:12; cf. Eph. 4:1; Col. 1:10). As they become more like Jesus Christ, Christians become more deserving to bear His name. One important way God makes believers more worthy of their calling is through suffering (2 Th 1:5)."

**Robertson** says that ([hina](#)) is "Common after [proseuchomai](#) (Col. 4:3; Eph. 1:17; Phil. 1:9) when the content of the prayer blends with the purpose (purport and purpose)." (Word Pictures)

**Robertson** says **calling** ([klesis](#)) "can apply to the beginning as in 1 Cor. 1:26; Ro 11:29, but it can also apply to the final issue as in Phil. 3:14; Heb. 3:1. Both ideas may be here. It is God's calling of the Thessalonians." (Word Pictures)

**THOUGHT** - The daily habit of saintly George Müller of Bristol was to spend the first part of every day getting his own soul "happy in the Lord," as he put it. His procedure was simple. He would read a small portion of Scripture and meditate upon it until the truth that it revealed burned into his soul. He would then turn that truth into prayer. He would relate it to his own needs and the needs of others and carry the truth of it back to God in praise, worship, thanksgiving, petition, and intercession. That seems to be what Paul did here. The wondrous revelation concerning the coming day of glory needed to be returned to God at once in prayer for his beloved Thessalonians. (John Phillips)

In a similar passage Paul writes "so that you would **walk in a manner worthy** of the **God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory**. (1Th 2:12+) Later in this letter Paul reminds them "It was for this **He called you** through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.(2Th 2:14)

**Pray** ([4336](#)) ([proseuchomai](#) from **pros** = toward, facing, before [emphasizing the direct approach of the one who prays in seeking God's face] + **euchomai** = originally to speak out, utter aloud, express a wish, then to pray or to vow. Greek technical term for invoking a deity) in the NT is always used of prayer addressed to God (to Him as the object of faith and the One who will answer one's prayer) and means to speak consciously (with or without vocalization) to Him, with a definite aim (See study of noun [proseuche](#)). **Proseuchomai** encompasses all the aspects of prayer -- submission, confession, petition, supplication (may concern one's own need), intercession (concerned with the needs of others), praise, and thanksgiving.

**Count worthy** ([515](#)) ([axioo](#) from **axios** = of weight) means basically to think meet or right, to esteem, count or reckon worthy or deserving and in this passage means to regard as worthy. Compare to [kataxioo](#) in 2 Th 1:5

**Calling** ([2821](#)) ([klesis](#) from **kaleo** = to call. See also [kletos](#)) means a call and was used for an invitation to a banquet. In the NT the word is used metaphorically of the call or invitation to come into the kingdom of God with all its privileges. In other words it is the divine call by which Christians are introduced into the privileges of the Gospel. God's invitation (**klesis**) to man to accept the benefits of His salvation is what this calling is all about, particularly in the gospels. It is God's first act in the application of redemption according to His eternal purpose (Ro 8:28 = "to those who are called according to His purpose."). A distinction is made between God's **calling** and men's acceptance in Mt 20:16). **Klesis** - used 11x - Ro 11:29; 1 Co. 1:26; 1 Co. 7:20; Eph. 1:18; Eph. 4:1; Eph. 4:4; Phil. 3:14; 2 Th. 1:11; 2 Ti 1:9; Heb. 3:1; 2 Pet. 1:10.

#### **Related Passages:**

2 Timothy 1:9+ Who has saved us and called us with a holy **calling**, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,

Romans 8:30+ and these whom He predestined, **He also called**; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

1 Peter 5:10+ After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, **Who called you** to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.

**And fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power** - **Desire** has the sense of "good pleasure," "May the Thessalonians find delight in goodness, a worthy and pertinent prayer." (ATR) **Fulfill** is the idea of to complete the specific things mentioned (desire for goodness, work of faith). They (as is every saint) were in a "race" so to speak and Paul's desire was that they finish well and so to that end they prayed that every desire of goodness would be fulfilled and that every work of faith would be achieved. Paul wanted these saints (indeed all saints of all the ages) to be able to say when they crossed the finish line "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;" (2 Ti 4:7+). **With power** describes the manner in which God can fulfill the two petitions (fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith). The only way to accomplish this is not natural power but supernatural power (see [dunamis](#)), ultimately calling for continual dependence upon the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.

**Work of faith** is repeated from the first letter (see comments there)...

1 Th 1:3+ constantly bearing in mind your **work of faith** and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father,

This prayer for completion or "finishing well" reminds me of Paul's words to Archippus "Say to Archippus, **Take heed** ([present imperative](#)) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it." (Col 4:17+)

**Steven Cole** on **every desire for goodness** writes that "The ESV has, "every resolve for good." But such resolve stems from inner desire. The Greek scholar, J. B. Lightfoot (Notes on Epistles of St. Paul [Baker], p. 106) translated it, "delight in well-doing." In other words, serving the Lord ("desire for goodness") should not be a duty that you do grudgingly out of guilt, while you'd really rather be doing other things. Rather, it should be a delight: You serve Him joyfully from the heart. Psalm 100:2 puts it, "Serve the Lord with gladness."

**Martin** on **fulfill every desire** ("every good intention") - The verb ([pleroo](#)) connotes bringing something to its fullest expression and so is a request for God to bring to maturity the faith (**ED**: compare progressive sanctification) that was already operative in the Thessalonians (cf. 1 Thess 3:10) (Ibid)

**Robertson** on **fulfill every desire** - Yes, in purpose, but the wonder and the glory of it all is that God begins to count us worthy in Christ before the process is completed in Christ (Ro 8:29f.). But God will see it through and so Paul prays to God.

**Robertson** on **work of faith** - Paul prays for rich fruition of what he had seen in the beginning. Work marked by faith, springs from faith, sustained by faith.

**MacArthur** on **work of faith with power** - Paul sought for them what he wanted for the Philippians: that they would be "filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God" (Phil. 1:11). That happens only through the filling of the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18+; cf. Zech. 4:6) and the rich indwelling of the Word (Col. 3:16+).

**Steven Cole** on "the work of faith with power." - Genuine faith results in good works (Eph. 2:8–10; James 2:18–20). The fact that the works come from faith shows that we must rely on God for His power in everything we do to serve Him. Work hard, but at the same time, rely on God to work in and through you. We see this interplay between our labors and God's power in several of Paul's letters: Philippians 2:12–13+: "So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure." Colossians 1:29+: "For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me." 1 Corinthians 15:10+: "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me." So, labor and strive in serving the Lord, **but** do it according to His power working in and through you.

**Warren Wiersbe** - **ILLUSTRATION** on power- When I travel, I carry an electric razor that can store up the energy and run for perhaps two hours without any outside source of power. It is especially useful when I visit the mission fields. While preaching for a week at a summer conference, I noticed that my razor was losing power. In fact, one morning it operated so slowly that I was convinced it was broken. Then by evening, it had picked up speed again. A few minutes investigation revealed the problem: I had plugged the razor into a socket that was controlled by a wall switch. When my wife had the desk lamp on, my razor was storing up power; when the light was off, the razor received no power. That incident taught me a spiritual lesson: it is easy (by force of habit) to

trust a source of power without checking to see if the switch is on. Paul was praying that his friends might “have the switch on” and, by their faith, receive the power needed to endure suffering and glorify God.

**THOUGHT** - In our average modern prayer meetings, we pray that sister so-and-so might recover from her illness or that brother what’s-his-name would be able to get a better job or that Dr. Sawbones would be able to find a suitable assistant. It’s not that it’s wrong to pray for things like that, but most of our prayer requests are for such things. Paul rarely records a prayer for physical or material things. If we individually and collectively adopted Paul’s plan, or George Müller’s plan, our prayers would soar. Probably, too, they would cease to be so boring. (John Phillips)

**Fulfill** (complete) (4137)(**pleroo**) means to be filled to the brim (a net, Mt 13:48, a building, Jn 12:3, Acts 2:2+, a city, Acts 5:28+, needs Phil 4:19+), to make complete in every particular, to cause to abound.

**Desire** (Good pleasure, well pleasing) (2107)(**eudokía** from **eu** = well, well off + **dokeo** = to seem, to think, to have an opinion) means good will or pleasure. Eudokia speak of that which pleases.

**Goodness** (19)(**agathosune** from **agathos** =benevolent, profitable, benefiting others) describes active goodness, virtue, excellence or beneficence. It is high moral character reflected in to being good in both nature and effectiveness. **Agathosune** finds its fullest and highest expression in that which is willingly and sacrificially done for others. It is moral and spiritual excellence manifested in active kindness. **Agathosune** describes a positive moral quality characterized especially by interest in the welfare of others. **Agathosune** refers to active goodness as an energetic principle. It is the generosity which springs from the heart that is kind and will always take care to obtain for others that which is useful or beneficial. Thayer says that **agathosune** is found only in Biblical and ecclesiastical writings.

**Faith** (4102) see discussion above on **pistis**. Uses in Thessalonians - 1 Thess. 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:8; 1 Thess. 3:2; 1 Thess. 3:5; 1 Thess. 3:6; 1 Thess. 3:7; 1 Thess. 3:10; 1 Thess. 5:8; 2 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 1:4; 2 Thess. 1:11; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Thess. 3:2;

**Power** (1411)(**dunamis** from **dunamai** = to be able, to have power) power especially achieving power. It refers to intrinsic power or inherent ability, the power or ability to carry out some function, the potential for functioning in some way (power, might, strength, ability, capability), the power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature. And as used here and most often in the NT **dunamis** describes supernatural power, Holy Spirit power. **Dunamis** - 4x in Thessalonian epistles - 1 Th 1:5, 2 Th 1:7, 2 Th 1:11, 2 Th 2:9.

**2 Thessalonians 1:12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

NET 2 Thessalonians 1:12 that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

NLT 2 Thessalonians 1:12 Then the name of our Lord Jesus will be honored because of the way you live, and you will be honored along with him. This is all made possible because of the grace of our God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

ESV 2 Thessalonians 1:12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

NIV 2 Thessalonians 1:12 We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

GNT 2 Thessalonians 1:12 πως νδοξασθ τ νομα το κυρ ου μ ν ησο ν μ ν, κα με ς ν α τ, κατ τ ν χ ρ ι ν το θεο μ ν κα κυρ ου ησο Χριστο .

KJV 2 Thessalonians 1:12 That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

YLT 2 Thessalonians 1:12 that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and Lord Jesus Christ.

ASV 2 Thessalonians 1:12 that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

CSB 2 Thessalonians 1:12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified by you, and you by Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

NKJ 2 Thessalonians 1:12 that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

NRS 2 Thessalonians 1:12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

NAB 2 Thessalonians 1:12 that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, in accord with the grace of our God and Lord Jesus Christ.

NJB 2 Thessalonians 1:12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you and you in him, by the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

GWN 2 Thessalonians 1:12 That way the name of our Lord Jesus will be honored among you. Then, because of the good will of Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, you will be honored by him.

- **The Name:** 2Th 1:10 Joh 17:10 1Pe 4:14
- **and you in Him:** Ge 18:18 Ps 72:17 Isa 45:17,25 Joh 17:21-26 Php 3:9 Col 2:9,10 1Pe 1:7,8
- **According to the grace:** Ro 1:7 1Co 1:4 2Co 8:9 13:4 Tit 2:11 Rev 1:4
- 2 Thessalonians 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **THE SUPREME PURPOSE OF PAUL'S PRAYER**

**So that** - Purpose clause. Finally the summum bonum, the highest good, the greatest goal of the prayer was that the **Name of our Lord Jesus** would be **glorified**. "The words "in order that" (**so that**) imply the purpose of Paul's prayer with its desired result (v. 12). The "every desire for goodness" and "the work of faith with power" of verse 11 should lead to the outcome that "the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you" (v. 12)." (Stallar)

**The Name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified in you** - Did you catch that? Paul is praying for what he has already assured them would transpire when the Lord Jesus returned **to be glorified in His saints!** (2 Th 1:10) But now we are to live in a way that brings glory to His Name. If people know we are Christ followers, we should live like Christ, relying as He did on the indwelling sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit (see [The Holy Spirit-Walking Like Jesus Walked!](#)). And when we do this, we give a proper opinion (aka "glorify" [endoxazomai](#)) to the world regarding **the Name of our Jesus Christ**. The NLT catches the sense of this verse "Then the name of our Lord Jesus will be honored because of the way you live."

**Matthew Henry** - Why the apostle prayed for these things (v. 12): That **the name of the Lord Jesus may be glorified** this is the end we should aim at in every thing we do and desire, that God and Christ in all things may be glorified. Our own happiness and that of others should be subordinate to this ultimate end. Our good works should so shine before men that others may glorify God, that Christ may be glorified in and by us, and then we shall be glorified in and with him. And this is the great end and design of the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ, which is manifested to us and wrought in us.

**Stallar** writes "Probably the best summary of the intended thought is that "to glorify the name of the Lord is to show the world what the person of the Lord is like." (Ibid)

**Martin** adds that "Christlike behavior is more important than words of praise in the glorifying of the Lord. For praise from a life transformed by the power of the Spirit rings true and sweet, but godless living makes a mockery of praise." (NAC-2 Th)

**William MacDonald** on **be glorified in you** - This means that they would give an accurate representation of Him to the world, and thus bring glory to Him. Then they, too, would be glorified in Him. Their association with Him, their Head, would bring honor to them as members of His Body.

**Stallar** on **in you** - The demonstration of the Lord's glory and greatness through His people is a mystery manifested to the saints, a display of riches from God, and a certain expectation described as "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). One of the first groups ever to hear the hopeful message that Christ would be glorified in them (especially in an ultimate sense when Jesus returned) was the Thessalonians. In fact, the fulfillment of this promise should remind the reader of Jesus' statement to the Father about his disciples, "I have been glorified in them" (John 17:10).

**John Phillips** "We shall come with Him, straight from the parousia, with the judgment seat behind us and the apocalypse before us. Every spot, every wrinkle, and every such thing will be gone. We shall be His Bride, fit indeed to sit with Him in heavenly places,



able to bask in the fierce light that beats upon His throne. He is to be glorified in His saints." (Exploring 2 Thessalonians)

**And you in Him** - This clearly speaks of the intimate union between Christ and believers, between Christ and His church. It speaks of the oneness we have as the result of covenant (see [The Oneness of Covenant](#)), for in the new covenant we are now supernaturally one with Christ. He is in us and we are in Him.

**Stallar on you in Him** - On one hand, the lives of the Thessalonians were to demonstrate and would display the greatness of the Lord Jesus. His perfect majesty and character would be made known through their own work of faith. On the other hand, the status of the Thessalonians would be revealed through Christ. Just like Christ, they, too, would be honored and elevated through Him.

**Ray Stedman** - Paul is saying, "Hold fast. Keep steady. Remain faithful. You have the resolve to do so in the desire given you by the Spirit, you have the faith to do so in the basis of fact revealed in the Scripture, and you have the power to do so since God himself dwells in you." All this, "according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." Granted that it may sometimes be hard. Some of you are going through difficult times. It is not easy to stand for Christ in your family when perhaps some members are against you. It is not easy to be loving, winsome and warm toward those who are cruel and caustic toward you at work. This can be a tough, brutal, ruthless world; Scripture faces that. But what we are constantly reminded of is that the Lord Jesus is now being glorified when you hold steady, when you do not give up, when you do not allow yourself to fall into evil practices, but are able to say no and walk away from them. That is when Jesus is being glorified, says the apostle, and for which he prays. And, says Paul, you also are being glorified! Inner changes are taking place in your life that you cannot even see. Others can see them better than you, but there are changes taking place. When the Lord Jesus shows us off before the whole world at the time of the unveiling of his presence, that glory that he has been shaping within us will blaze forth to such a degree it will make the whole universe gasp! What a hope! What a motivation to keep on keeping on! ([Sermon](#))

**According to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ**- The word **according to** does not mean out of, but in proportion to His infinite grace. In his benediction Paul had prayed for **grace** to (for) the saints at Thessalonica (2 Th 1:2). The Source of **grace** is the Father and the Son, more evidence that the Son is God and is co-equal with His Father.

**Guzik** - This great work of living worthy of His calling can only happen according to the grace of God. It happens by His power, favor, and acceptance in work in us, moving along our will and cooperation.

**Steven Cole** - This looks at our motive for serving the Lord. The aim of knowing and serving the Lord is to glorify the name of the Lord Jesus. To "glorify" the Lord means to make Him look as good as He really is. "Name" refers to all of the Lord's attributes and character. Regarding our service for the Lord, Peter writes (1 Pet. 4:10–11): "As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." So the aim of Paul's prayer is that, as Leon Morris (p. 211) puts it, "The Thessalonians will be such a bright and shining testimony to the reality of their salvation that the Savior will be seen to be the wonderful Being He is."

**Grace** (favor) ([5485](#)) see preceding discussion of [charis](#)

**Father** ([3962](#)) see preceding discussion of [pater](#)

**Lord** ([2962](#)) see preceding discussion of [kurios](#)