

2 Thessalonians

Chapter 2

The Coming Of The Lord

1-2

2 Thess. 2:1 Now we request [ask] you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him,

1. "Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"
 - a. Paul was about to impart to them vital information in regard to the coming of the Lord.
 - b. There was some false and faith shaking teaching on this subject at Thessalonica.
2. "and our gathering together to Him" - This refers back especially to the time the saints would be raised and ascend to meet Christ in the air. (1 Thess. 4:13-18).
 - a. Paul emphasized in his first letter to them that the coming of Christ would be sudden and unexpected. (1 Thess. 5:1-6).

1 Thess. 5:1 Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you.
1 Thess. 5:2 For you yourselves know full well that the day of **the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.**
1 Thess. 5:3 While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape.
1 Thess. 5:4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief;
1 Thess. 5:5 for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness;
1 Thess. 5:6 so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober.

- b. Some had misunderstood Paul or had become confused and disturbed by what others were saying and teaching.
- c. It is not clear just how Paul clear teaching was twisted or misunderstood to teach the Lord had already come.

The Day Of The Lord Had Not Come

2 Thess. 2:2 that you not be quickly shaken [unsettled] from your composure [minds] or be disturbed either by [through] a spirit or a message [speech] or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.

1. "that you not be quickly shaken from your composure [minds] or be disturbed either by a spirit"
 - a. The idea that the Lord had already come had "quickly shaken [unsettled]" these Christians.
 - b. "spirit" has reference to teaching done by false teachers.
 - c. Teachers are sometimes called "spirits" who were under the influence of either the Holy Spirit or the devil who is the chief of the evil spirits.
 - d. John had warned his readers not to believe "every spirit [teacher]," but to test them. (1 Jn. 4:1,2).

- e. Paul had instructed them to “examine” the scriptures. (1 Thess. 5:21).
2. “or a message or a letter as if from us”
 - a. Some falsely claimed divine revelation and might even write a letter claiming to be from Paul.
 - b. Many or most brethren would be ready and eager to receive what Paul had to say.
 - c. False teachers were fully aware of this vulnerability on the part of the Thessalonians.
 - d. False teachers quickly recognize and exploit the weaknesses of the weak and unlearned.
 - e. False teachers disguise themselves as a wolf in sheep’s clothing or as “servants of righteousness.” (Matt. 7:15; 2 Cor. 11:5).
 3. “to the effect that the day of the Lord has come” - The words “has come” come from the Greek perfect tense and mean the false teachers were arguing the Lord had already come and perhaps had come invisibly or in some spiritual sense.
 - a. Some argued “the day of the Lord” was already present.
 - b. It is not certain exactly what they meant by this, but it was greatly disturbing these brethren.
 - 1) They had been taught when that day came they would ascend to meet Jesus in the air, but this had not happened.
 - 2) Paul and others had taught elsewhere that Jesus’s enemies would be destroyed when He came again (1 Cor.15:24-27; Acts 2:35), but these brethren were constantly being persecuted by the enemies of Christ. (2 Thess. 1:4).
 - 3) Those alive at His coming would ascend to meet Him in the air and be with Him “forevermore.”
 - 4) The dead in Christ would be raised from the dead before the ascension of the living into heaven. (1 Thess. 4:13-18).
 - 5) Paul had also taught Christians that they would have a new spiritual body at Christ’s coming. (1 Cor. 15:51-57; Phil. 3:21).
 - c. We do not know how many of them held this false doctrine or exactly what was being taught.
 - d. The context strongly indicates it involved serious matters that was shaking the faith of this church.
 - e. Paul reacted quickly to this false teaching and boldly exclaimed the Lord had not already come and His coming was not near.

Events Preceding The Coming Of The Lord

3-12

2 Thess. 2:3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come unless the apostasy* [falling away, rebellion] *comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,*

1. “Let no one in any way deceive you” - “No one” is literal and would include men or angels.

a. The words “in any way” are also significant.

b. One is reminded of Paul’s warning in Galatians 1:6-9 in regard to those who would change or pervert the gospel.

Gal. 1:6 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel;

Gal. 1:7 which is *really* not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

Gal. 1:8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!

Gal. 1:9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!

2. “for *it* [the day of the Lord] *will not come* unless the apostasy [falling away, rebellion] comes first” - See “the day of the Lord” (1 Thess. 5:2).

- The definite article “the” is used before the word “apostasy.”
- Paul was not speaking of “an apostasy,” but rather “the apostasy.” He was speaking of a specific apostasy not meaning it was the only one that would ever occur.
- The word “apostasia” [ah pah stah see ah] means “apostasy, a falling away, a rebellion” and is used in Acts to describe the departure from the Mosaic system. (Acts 21:31).

Acts 21:31 and they have been told about you, that you are teaching all the Jews who are among the Gentiles **to forsake** Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs.

- Paul used the noun “apostasy” here in 2 Thessalonians, but used the verb form in 1 Timothy to describe a great apostasy. (1 Tim. 4:1-3).

1 Tim. 4:1 But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful [misleading] spirits and doctrines [teachings] of demons,

1 Tim. 4:2 by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron,

1 Tim. 4:3 *men* who forbid marriage *and advocate* abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.

Note 1 Tim. 4:1-3: “later times” denotes the Christian age. (Heb. 1:2; Acts 2:17). These things were a threat at that time. The Christian age is the third and last of the three ages - The Patriarchal Age, the Mosaic Age, the Christian Age.

a. The “apostasy” in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 had not come, but it would come.

b. The “apostasy” would precede the coming of the Lord, but no date was given for either the apostasy or the Lord’s coming.

3. “and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction” - This was a future event and his identity was not known by these brethren.

a. “the man of lawlessness” denotes one who was lawless and ignored God’s laws and lived by his own laws imposed on others.

1) “Lawlessness” is from “anomia” [ah nah **mee** ah].

2) It means “a lawless person, one who ignores God’s law and the laws of others.

b. “the son of perdition [destruction]” was earlier used to describe Judas Iscariot. (Jn. 17:12).

1) “apoleia” [ah poh **lay** ah] means “destruction, eternal, ruin, perdition.”

2) This word is used several times in the New Testament. (Matt. 26:8; Mk. 14:4; Acts 25:6; Matt. 7:13; Acts 8:20).

c. In John 17:12 and 2 Thessalonians 2:3 it means one who is destined to doom, eternal misery in hell.

1) Judas was destined for doom, eternal misery because of his betrayal of Christ and his failure to repent.

2) “The man of lawlessness” was destined for the same doom because of his great wickedness.

2 Thess. 2:4 who [the man of lawlessness] opposes and exalts himself above [over] every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple [shrine] of God, displaying [claiming, showing] himself as being God.

1. “who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship” - He makes himself God and seeks to be worshiped. “opposes and exalts” are present participles denoting continuous action - not a single act.

a. This could mean He demands to be treated as Deity or takes the prerogatives of Deity.

b. It could also mean he demands others follow his laws and he tolerates no other power or authority.

c. It could have both meanings.

2. “so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God”

a. “Seat” has the idea of reigning, exercising his authority “in the temple of God.”

b. There is a lot of uncertainty in regard to the meaning of “the temple of God.”

c. “The temple of God” is not heaven. (Rev. 3:12; 7:15; 11:19; 14:17).

Rev. 3:12 'He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name

Rev. 7:15 "For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them.

Rev. 11:19 And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

Rev. 14:17 And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle.

1) “The man of lawlessness” posed no threat to the Omnipotent God, and certainly could not enter heaven without God’s permission.

2) Finite man and even the devil are no match for the Almighty God.

- 3) Later Paul revealed the Lord would easily destroy this finite man.
- d. It is not the church sometimes called “the temple of God.” (1 Cor. 3:16, 17; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21).
- e. Some have thought it might refer to God’s temple that was still standing in Jerusalem.
- 1) This letter was written about A.D. 52 and the physical temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70 by the Roman army.
 - 2) It is true the physical temple was still standing, but there are problems with this theory.
 - 3) The physical temple of God in Jerusalem has long been destroyed, but Jesus has not come.
 - 4) The Greek word “temple” used here is never used by Paul for the physical temple in Jerusalem.
 - 5) Here he used the word “naos” [nah **ahs**] meaning “shrine, temple.”
 - 6) Paul used this word 8 times in his writings, but never used it of the Jewish temple. (1 Cor. 3:16, 17; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21; 2 Thess. 2:4).
 - 7) The temple, as Paul has elsewhere used it, refers to Christians collectively or to the body of the Christian. (1 Cor. 3:16,17 [church] 1Cor. 6:19-21 [body of the Christian]).
 - 8) “hieron” [hee eh **rahn**] is most often used of the physical temple in Jerusalem (Matt. 24:1), and “naos” for the most holy place in the temple.
- f. Some believe it might be used in a figurative sense meaning “the man of lawlessness” takes the position belonging to God alone.

2 Thess. 2:5 Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?

1. “Do you not remember that while I was still with you” - This was about a year or perhaps less before the writing of this second epistle to them.
2. “I was telling you these things?” - The words “I was telling” come from the imperfect tense in Greek indicating he had told them more than once in the past when he was present with them.
 - a. Norlie translates “I mentioned this to you repeatedly”
 - b. These brethren had more information on this subject than what is being written in this letter.
 - c. They had an advantage in knowing more than we do about what Paul was talking about in this passage.
 - d. This is indicated by the following verse and the words “you know.”

2 Thess. 2:6 And you know what restrains [hinders, hold back] him [the man of lawlessness] now, so that in his time he will be revealed.

1. “And you know what restrains him now” - They knew what was restraining “the man of lawlessness,” but Paul does not give this information in the epistle.

- a. Whatever was restraining “the man of lawlessness” was some undefined entity present at that time as indicated by the words “you know” and by the word “already at work.” (2 Thess. 2:7).
 - b. This indicates that this person [the man of lawlessness] was on the horizon, but the text does not reveal how far in the future that he would appear.
 - c. It is possible Paul was talking about the distant future and what might occur at that time.
 - d. This is possible, but it is strange the Thessalonian believers would be concerned about the distant future.
 - e. But since on one knows except God when Jesus will come [not even Jesus], this may have been of grave concern to them. (Matt. 24:36). They were expecting the Lord - not later.
 - f. Some roots of “the man of lawlessness” were already present and known by these readers and perhaps other believers.
2. “so that in his time he will be revealed” - His time had not come.
 - a. God would let this man be revealed.
 - b. He would be a great threat and test to believers.
 - c. The context does not make it clear how extensive his threat would be - to this local church or to the whole brotherhood of believers.
 - d. Most believe “the man of lawlessness” would be a threat to the whole brotherhood.
 - e. This may be true, but Paul did not make that claim. He was very vague.

2 Thess. 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains *will do so* until he is taken out of the way.

- It should be observed that in verse 6 the restraining is referred to with an impersonal neuter “what,” but here it is referred to with a personal “he who.”
 - It is not entirely clear if “he who now restrains” is a person, a power, a line of persons, a movement, etc.
1. “For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work” - This referred to the secret lawless power “already at work.”
 - a. “Mystery” is from “musterion” [moo **stay** ree ahn] meaning “mystery, secret.”
 - b. It has not been disclosed clearly what is meant.
 - c. For some reason Paul is not clearly revealing “the mystery of lawlessness.”
 - d. Paul may have avoided being too plain because this would likely lead to retaliation from the evil forces “already at work.”
 - e. This might be Rome or some other evil force.
 2. “only he who now restrains *will do so* until he is taken out of the way” - Knox translates “until he is removed from the enemy’s path.”

- a. The identity of the one restraining is not specified.
- b. Some believe it was the Roman empire that held developing Catholicism in check.
- c. Catholicism did not exist in the 1st century, but some of its teachings were beginning to be taught.
- d. The idea is the evil would be restricted until the restraining power was removed and then it would escalate.

2 Thess. 2:8 Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay [consume, destroy] with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance [radiance, splendor] of His coming;

1. “Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth” - The words “breath of His mouth” reveals how easily Jesus would destroy this fierce enemy.
2. “and bring to an end by the appearance [radiance] of His coming” - “The man of lawlessness” would be utterly destroyed by the Lord’s coming.
 - a. If this refers to the 2nd coming of Christ, it means “the man of lawlessness” would be present when the Lord comes at the end of time.
 - 1) This could mean he has not yet been revealed.
 - 2) It could also mean he has been revealed, but once revealed he would be a threat for a very long time, that is, to Christ’s coming.
 - b. Some have thought it refers to a judgment of God on “the man of lawlessness” not associated with the end of time.
 - c. The Bible speaks of more than one coming of Christ, that is, a judgment on Jerusalem or other wicked forces or persons. (Rev. 2:5, 16, 22, 23; 3:11).

Rev. 2:5 'Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place--unless you repent.

Rev. 2:16 'Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.

Rev. 2:22 'Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds.

Rev. 2:23 'And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.

- d. Though there is more than one coming of the Lord, the context certainly suggests Paul was speaking of the 2nd coming of Christ. (2 Thess. 2:1). “and our gathering together to Him”

2 Thess. 2:9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity [operation] of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders,

1. “that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan” - “Activity” is from “energeia” [eh **neh**r gay ah] meaning “activity, operation.”
 - a. Some believe “the man of lawlessness” is Satan.

- b. He is not Satan, but his coming is “in accord with the activity of Satan.”
 - c. He was acting as an agent of the devil who wanted to promote the wickedness of the devil.
2. “with all power and signs and false [lying] wonders” - These words are used of the miracles of Jesus and His apostles. (Acts 2:22, 43; 4:30; Heb. 2:4).
- a. These alleged miracles would not be real, but are lying wonders - fake miracles.
 - b. After the death of the apostles and the death of the ones they had laid their hands on, miracles ceased.
 - c. Deceivers most often make false claims of miracles to deceive and control their victims.

2 Thess. 2:10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.

- 1. “and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish” - Many of the perishing would be deceived by this lawless one.
 - a. The Greek “for those who perish” is a present participle meaning “those who are perishing.”
 - b. Those who do not love the truth are easy prey for Satan.
- 2. “because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved” - Moffatt translates “since they refuse to love the Truth that would save them”
 - a. The deception was easily brought about because the perishing did not have “the love of the truth” in their hearts.
 - b. God permits those who do not love the truth to be deceived and allows them to believe whatever is false when they reject the truth.
 - c. In Romans 1 Paul speaks of God giving up on those who rejected clear evidence of Him and pursued wickedness. (Rom. 1:18-31). “God gave them up.” (Rom. 1:24, 26, 28).

Identity Of The Man Of Lawlessness

- 1. **Many people believe “the man of lawlessness” refers to the development of Catholicism and the rise of the papacy.**
 - a. This did not come along for years after the writing of this epistle, but some of its teachings were beginning to develop.
 - 1) Catholicism did not suddenly appear, but it was a gradual apostasy from the faith.
 - 2) Some of these early roots are expressed in 1 Timothy 4. (1 Tim. 4:1-3).

1 Tim. 4:1 But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,
 1 Tim. 4:2 by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron,
 1 Tim. 4:3 *men* who forbid marriage *and* *advocate* abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.

3) Many of the teachings and practices of Catholicism match what Paul warned against in 1 Timothy 4 and 2 Thessalonians 2.

- Forbidding its clergy to marry and implying marriage is an inferior state.
- All kinds of claims of false miracles
- Moving away from the priesthood of all believers teaching that only certain ones are priests.
- Popes allowing themselves to be called the vicar of Christ, that is, the infallible substitute of Christ on earth and allowing themselves to be called “Our Lord God the Pope.”
- The pope allowing Himself to be worshiped and claiming infallibility when speaking officially, that is “ex cathedra.” This is when he speaks with papal authority from his chair.
- Teaching the worship of angels, Mary and certain others such as Peter and others declared to be saints.
- Giving indulgences to sin for a price.
- Souls can be prayed out of Purgatory for money,
- Setting aside the word of God for man made traditions.
- At times persecuting and killing those who did not embrace it.

4) The mighty Roman empire did keep Catholicism somewhat in check, but after it failed the restraints were removed.

- b. We cannot be sure Paul had Catholicism in mind, but this apostate religion certainly has many similarities to what Paul warned against.
- c. This has led many scholars to contend Catholicism best fits the brief description Paul gave of “the man of lawlessness.”
- d. Even if this passage was not directly referring to Catholicism, it describes it and condemns it.

2. Others hold “the man of lawlessness” refers to the anti-Christ.

- a. It is believed the antichrist will come not long before Christ’s coming and will make havoc on Christians and anyone else who is not in agreement with him.
- b. The Bible teaches there is more than one antichrist.

1) John warned against the antichrist and indicated there was more than one. (1 Jn. 2:18,22; 4:3 2 Jn.7).

1 Jn. 2:18 Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now **many antichrists have appeared**; from this we know that it is the last hour.

1 Jn. 2:22 Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is **the antichrist**, the one who denies the Father and the Son.

1 Jn. 4: 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of **the antichrist**, of which you

have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.

2 Jn. 7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. **This is the deceiver and the antichrist.**

- The antichrists had already appeared in John's day.
 - "Last hour" denotes their appearance created a crisis among believers - not that the end of the world had come.
 - 2) The antichrists are associated with the denial of Jesus coming in the flesh.
 - 3) Many, in every century, have opposed Christ and His teachings.
 - Denial of the humanity of Christ was a very serious matter.
 - This would lead to a rejection of the virgin birth, to the physical death of Christ on the cross, a denial of the bodily resurrection and a host of other errors.
3. Others contend "the man of lawless refers to Nero or the line of Roman emperors who brought severe persecution to the church.
- a. Some emperors claimed to be Deity and demanded to be worshiped.
 - 1) Some emperors were much worse than others.
 - 2) Some believe the more moderate of the emperors may be the restraining power Paul indicated held back the worse of the emperors.
 - b. Christianity was first viewed by the Romans as a legal religion because they regarded it as an extension of Judaism.
 - c. Judaism was a legal religion.
 - d. Christianity was later declared illegal when it was determined it was not a part of Judaism.
 - e. Under this 4th empire of Daniel's vision the Roman emperors severely persecuted the church. (Dan. 2; 7:23-37).
 - f. Some believed Paul was vague about "the man of lawlessness" being the Roman emperors because of the fear that this would bring retaliation from this wicked system.
 - g. A great weakness of this theory is the Roman empire fell in about A.D. 476, but Paul indicates Christ would destroy "the man of lawlessness" at His coming.
 - h. If it refers to the Roman Empire, the coming of Christ in the text has reference to His judgment on Rome.
4. Because Paul is so vague and used apocalyptic [symbolic] language it is difficult to be dogmatic about any interpretation of "the man of lawlessness."
- a. We may form strong opinions, but they are opinions!
 - b. We can be sure, however, that all Christ's enemies will be destroyed at His coming.

- c. If He chooses, He can destroy evil forces now by bringing judgment on them.
- d. This will be easy for the One who is Omnipotent and is coming with all His angels.
- e. This is easy for the Lord now, if He chooses, to bring judgment on any person or persons.
- f. God has brought about the destruction of many evil men and nations throughout the ages.

2 Thess. 2:11 For this reason [not loving the truth] God will send upon them [those perishing] a deluding influence [a working of error] so that they will believe what is false,

- 1. “For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence” - “deluding influence” is literally “an operation of error”.
- 2. “so that they will believe what is false” - If men refuse to believe “the truth,” God lets them believe a lie.

2 Thess. 2:12 in order that they all may be judged [condemned, doomed] who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure [delighted] in wickedness.

- 1. “in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth” - One must believe “the truth” to be saved. (Jn.8:32; Jas. 1:18).
- 2. “but took pleasure in wickedness”
 - a. Many hate anything good, and delight in pursuing their evil passions.
 - b. Philips translates “have made evil their playfellow.”

Thanksgiving And Admonition

13-16

2 Thess. 2:13 But we should [ought] always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

- 1. “But we should [ought] always give thanks to God for you” - They felt an obligation to give God thanks for these loyal brethren.
 - a. Christians should constantly offer prayers of thanksgiving to God.
 - b. TCNT “it is our duty always to thank God”
- 2. “brethren beloved by the Lord” - “Beloved by the Lord” means “dear to the Lord.”
- 3. “because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation”
 - a. Lit. “God chose you first-fruit to salvation”
 - b. The Holy Spirit had sanctified them because of their “faith in the truth.”
 - c. Moffatt “because God has chosen you as the first to be reaped for salvation.”
- 4. “through sanctification [setting apart] by the Spirit and faith in the truth” - Saving faith must be “in the truth.”

- a. The divine side is described “through sanctification by the Spirit.” The TCNT renders this “through the purifying influence of the Spirit, and your belief in the truth.”
- b. The human side of salvation is described as “faith in the truth.”

2 Thess. 2:14 It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. “It was for this He called you through our gospel” - See Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 4:15.
 - a. “Our gospel” denotes the gospel they had boldly and lovingly preached.
 - b. “Our gospel” was the gospel of God and Christ.
 - c. It was the gospel given to them by God and was not to be changed. (Gal. 1:6-9).
 - d. The death, burial and resurrection of Christ are the heart of this gospel. (1 Cor. 15:3,4), but not the whole gospel.
 - e. The gospel includes all that the Lord has commanded and all His promises.
2. “that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” - They had been called that they “may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

2 Thess. 2:15 So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions [inspired teachings] which you were taught, whether by word of *mouth* [orally] or by letter from us.

- “word of *mouth*” is literally “word [speech]”
1. “So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions”
 - a. They were not to panic, but were to “stand firm and hold to the traditions.”
 - b. “Traditions” was not the traditions of men (Matt. 15:9).
 - c. “Traditions” referred to the inspired teaching delivered to them orally or in letter from the apostles and other inspired writers.
 - d. It is God’s word that is our one and only source of truth and guidance. (2 Tim. 3:16,17; 2 Pet. 1:3).
 2. “which you were taught, whether by word of *mouth* or by letter from us”
 - a. Some teaching had come to them when Paul and Silas were present with them.
 - b. Some had come from Timothy.
 - c. Some was imparted to them through the letters he wrote to them.

Prayer For The Thessalonian Brethren

16-17

2 Thess. 2:16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and [a] good hope by grace,

1. "Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father"
2. "who has loved us" - Both the Father and the Son love us. (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8; Jn. 15:13).
3. "and given us eternal comfort [encouragement] and good hope by grace - "eternal comfort" is everlasting, unending consolation."
 - a. It is by God's amazing grace that we have encouragement and hope.
 - b. Without God's unmerited favor we would be nothing.
 - c. "Good hope by grace" denoted a well-founded hope that cannot fail or disappoint.
 - d. It is "by grace" that one has this hope [assurance] of eternal life.

2 Thess. 2:17 comfort [encourage] and strengthen [establish, fortify] your hearts in every good work and word.

1. "comfort [encourage] and strengthen [establish, fortify] your hearts"
2. "in every good work [deed] and word"
 - a. NEB "and fortify you in every good deed and word."
 - b. Williams translation has "and strengthen you in every good you do or say."

"Scripture taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®,
© Copyright 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation
Used by permission." (www.Lockman.org)