

BOOK OF SECOND THESSALONIANS

CHAPTER 1

This letter is a continuation of Paul's first letter to these saints with an urgency to be ready for the first trump rapture when Christ comes for His bride. There may have been a falling away by some of the saints that warranted a second letter from Paul. He wrote this letter as a letter of great encouragement and a call to stand fast specifically in what he had taught of the Word of God.

VERSE 1

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

There is one true church and it is in Christ Jesus. There is a oneness and a unity in the spirit that all high calling saints have. It is not about us, but rather about Christ and the bridal message God gave to Paul.

VERSE 2

Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Peace is a result of grace. There is no peace in the flesh, in religion, in the law, or in self-works. The only peace we will ever have is in the grace of God, in knowing that He is for us, and that He will always be faithful. He is so faithful He will even make us fit to be part of His bride if we surrender to Him totally and let Him will and do of His good pleasure. Thanks be to God for His marvelous grace.

VERSE 3

We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith grows exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other abounds:

There was no love in hypocrisy or discrimination in these saints; they just loved with the love of God and it abounded in them in every direction. In Matthew 24:12, Jesus foretold that the love of many would wax cold. This is true of many people today. But Christians can rejoice knowing the coming of the Lord is very near.

VERSE 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.

Growing faith

Their faith grew exceedingly, and their love for one another abounded. Faith and love are two wondrous bridal qualities. The bride is a testimony of faith and love. Faith and love are also known as spirit and truth - the sufficient witness for the bride that all the fullness of God dwells in her. To have faith and love and spirit and truth is to grow up in Christ in all things.

Patience and faith in the tribulations

In order to be patient in our tribulations and persecutions, we need to trust God more and more. He will give us more patience. God has a plan in all the tribulations and persecutions He allows in our lives. We need to trust Him and His plan and let Him make us the masterpiece He wants us to be. We should allow the Holy Spirit to stir up the gift within us and to keep the spiritual fire in our hearts burning brightly.

VERSE 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.

To be counted worthy of the kingdom may not always mean Christians have to suffer. The thief on the cross didn't suffer for Jesus at all, yet Christ promised him that he would be with Him in paradise that very day. All children of God are heirs of God, but the *joint-heirs* with Christ will suffer jointly with Him. 'Worthy of the kingdom' is not to be confused with an actual kingdom, but it means to be worthy of the right, or authority, to jointly rule the kingdom of God for which we suffer. These sufferings are the glorious and joyous sufferings for Christ's sake.

VERSE 6

Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

This is one of the many sweet benefits of Christ's love for us. It is a righteous thing for God to take care of these things, and He closely watches over His own. He loves us. We are the apple of His eye, and He gave us His only Son to die a horrible death on the cross to save us. The very God of very God is the lover of our souls. Judgment always comes to those who go against God's children.

VERSE 7

And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,

We need to rest in the Lord and be not troubled with those that would harm us. We shouldn't get all worked up with things people do to us, because such things are in God's hands. We shouldn't want to retaliate, but rather rest in the Lord. Those going against us mean it for evil, but God means it for our good. However, those who raise a hand against us are going against God also because He loves and protects us.

VERSE 8

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

Flaming fire

We can't even imagine what this is going to be, and this is just the first part of it. Those who will be involved in this are those who do not know Christ or His gospel.

Know not God

A lot of people and a lot of religions claim to know God, but none can know God or gain access to Him except through Christ Jesus.

John 14:6

Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

By Christ Jesus we believe in God. Everything we do pertaining to God has to be done through Jesus. The scriptures make it plain that there is no other way. Since Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, we need to stand and withstand in the gospel of Christ.

VERSE 9

Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power;

Punished with everlasting destruction

Those who reject Christ will be punished with everlasting destruction and cast into the lake of fire for all eternity. This is addressed in Revelation 20:11-15.

From the presence of the Lord

This is the key. Part of the everlasting destruction for those who reject Christ is eternal separation from God and Christ Jesus. This is an even worse punishment than the lake of fire, because separation from God is the most horrible separation. To be separated from God and Christ means absolute eternal darkness that will continue forever. Jesus cried out most earnestly on the cross when God had to turn away from Him, when all the sins of the world were heaped on His precious head. No doubt the separation from God was the worst part of the cross experience for Jesus.

VERSE 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.

This verse speaks of two different companies of saints and shows separation between them:

1) Glorified in His saints

Christ will be glorified and magnified in these certain ones. These are the joint-sufferers noted in Romans.

Romans 8:14

For as many as are lead by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

This is about the overcoming saints who glorify Him by their lives and have experienced holiness. The word saint means 'holy one.' Christ will be glorified in these holy ones. There is a battle going on with these saints because they (and we) are fighting the good fight of faith. We want to win Christ as our bridegroom.

2) Admiring saints

This refers to those who just get to heaven by the skin of their teeth. There is little or no intimacy at all in their relationship with Christ. They are believers in who just admire Him; they don't glorify Him. Admire means 'admiration or awe.' Those who admire Him will be found among the innumerable multitude spoken of in Revelation chapter 7 who will be standing before the throne waving palms. The bride will be in the midst of the throne next to Christ, her bridegroom.

Our testimony was believed

The key in Paul's day, and even now, is how much of the gospel do we believe? The more we believe, the more will be produced in us to desire the results God wants for us.

VERSE 11

Wherefore also we 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:

Count you worthy of this calling

Count means 'judged worthy of this reward.' Calling means 'the high calling of God.' This is the vocation we are to walk worthy in. This is not speaking of being worthy of salvation because these saints were already born again in Christ Jesus. He that wills to know will know of the bridal truth, and the path we need to travel to reach our Bridegroom. All of this stems from the great work Jesus accomplished on the cross. We have an invitation to qualify to be like Christ, and to rule and reign with Him. The Holy Spirit is needed to attain this unspeakably wonderful prize of God's high calling. Trust the Holy Spirit to keep the fires burning in us so that we can rise up and look up and not miss this glorious opportunity.

Fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness

The bride will allow God to do the work necessary in her life that will make her the masterpiece He wants her to be. This will fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness. We need to submit fully to God's plan for us and He will certainly make us worthy of the calling.

The work of faith with power

We can have faith, but the work of faith with power is believing faith; the high calling of God faith. This is so that our Lord Jesus may be glorified in us.

VERSE 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.

Paul wrote to Christians who were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they have Paul's gospel message. These are the ones who are willing to go without the camp and suffer His reproach.

To summarize:

There are three ingredients to bring in the jointly-ruling company, the proof of being counted worthy of the bridal calling:

1) The fulfilled works of His good pleasure of all His goodness.

We have to be willing for Him to do of His good pleasure in our lives. We need to be vessels that know that Christ in us is the hope of glory who say, "Thy will be done."

2) The complete work of faith.

This is faith working in Christ's dynamic power that transforms us.

3) The name of Jesus Christ be glorified in us.

We were made to display His glory to others. He will be glorified in His saints.

CHAPTER 2

VERSE 1

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him,

We beseech you

Paul sweetly pleaded with these saints the evidence of two monumental bridal truths: 1) the coming of the Lord and 2) gathering together unto Him.

The coming of the Lord

We need to long for and love His appearing. We have been called to Paul's high calling message in Christ Jesus, and we need to be ready to meet Him in the air when the first trump sounds.

The coming of the Lord is not just one time. He will come a number of times over the seven-year tribulation period. The first appearing will be to for the purpose of Him gathering His bride unto himself. Some of the times he comes, He will come in judgment.

Matthew 24:27

For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shines even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Lightning refers to judgment.

Gathering together with Him

The oneness and the unity of the Spirit in love must be present in the bride, and this is what God is calling us to.

Hebrews 10:25

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.

1 Corinthians 15:23

But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming.

The saints will be raised in order according to rank.

VERSE 2

That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letters from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

Apparently some false teachers had come in and persuaded (or at least tried to persuade) these saints that Christ had already come. Some of the saints were shaken, confused, and fearful when they heard this and believed it. Paul had to warn some who weren't standing firm. This was at a time about two years after they first heard the message from Paul.

We cannot be complacent about the Word of God and allow someone to mislead us. Our eyes must stay fixed on Christ, not on the messengers. If our eyes are fixed on the messengers we don't have a vision of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We need to put our confidence in Jesus, and keep our eyes on Him. We are tossed to and fro when we open ourselves up to every wind of doctrine.

2 Peter 3:16

As also in all his epistles speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which that they are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

We are in the time of itching ears that lead to confusion and a troubled mind. We must stay with the Word of God. A 'prosper and be in health' doctrine will tickle your ears, but it robs us of what God really wants for us. This Church Age is the time to adhere to Paul's bridal message and run the race to attain Christ Jesus as Bridegroom.

By word, by letter

These deceivers attack God's Word by distorting it and turning it into a lie. In chapter 3 we will see how Christian brethren left the traditions of Paul's gospel, and distorted the gospel to fit their own agenda.

Galatians 1:8

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

Stand and withstand in the gospel, and be not troubled and shaken as those who don't know the Word of God.

VERSE 3

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

Let no man deceive you

Some of these Thessalonian saints had been deceived into believing that Christ had already come and all hope was gone.

That day shall not come

Paul told them that before the day of the Lord comes there would be a falling away first. This falling away has already begun, and it will continue and get worse until that man of sin, the antichrist, is revealed. There are those today who preach and teach that there will be a great revival in the world. That simply is not scriptural. There will be no great revival before the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, before He sets up His kingdom. Hopefully many people in these last days will awaken to the things of the Lord. An awakening could happen, but scripture says nothing about a revival, but of a falling away. According to Matthew 24:6-8, this falling away is expressed as the beginning of sorrows, not a revival.

That man of sin

The falling away will culminate in that man of sin: the antichrist, the son of perdition. All the downhill trends we are witnessing now will eventually bring forth and reveal the antichrist.

VERSE 4

Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

The antichrist usurps the place of Christ. He is a fraud and a counterfeit. He will exalt himself and oppose all that is called God and all that is worshipped. When he sits in the temple pretending to be God it will be in the middle of the tribulation, three and one half years into it. The last three and a half years of the tribulation is called the Great Tribulation, i.e. Jacob's trouble. Revelation 13:1-7 shows us the antichrist.

VERSE 5

Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

Scripture has been very plain as to what will happen and when it will happen. Paul reminded them that he had told them about these things when he was with them. People today need to wake up to what the scripture tells us.

VERSE 6

And now ye know what withholds that he might be revealed in his time.

What 'withholds' are the saints of God that are holding back the forces of evil and keeping the antichrist from being revealed. Because of the righteousness they have through Christ Jesus, Satan has not yet been allowed to come forth fully.

VERSE 7

For the mystery of iniquity does already work: only he who now lets will let, until he be taken out of the way.

The mystery of iniquity

The mystery of iniquity is already here, but the tribulation and the antichrist are being held back because Christ's bride is still on the earth. God won't allow the enemy to come forth fully until His bride has been taken from the earth.

This mystery of iniquity includes all the operations of Satan which have been in the world since the Church Age began. There is a teaching about the wheat and the tares in the book of Matthew. The wheat represents the children of God, and the tares represent the unbelievers.

Matthew 13:30

Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

The wheat and the tares have been growing together. The tares are the counterfeit. This is called a mystery because it is hidden. Men don't see all the wickedness, but it becomes more and more apparent as time goes by. Paul told these saints back then that the mystery of iniquity was already at work. It is working even more today. Much is covered up by "religiousness" so it is not easy to see. It takes people acquainted with God's Word to know and understand the mystery of iniquity.

Only he who now letteth

Letting means 'hindered.' The 'he' is not the power of the Holy Spirit as some have said. The 'he' here is referring to the full-overcoming saints of God. This can't be the Holy Spirit because He will not be taken out of the world. He will be with Israel throughout the tribulation and the Millennial Age. The saints of God, the righteous ones, will be taken away. They are holding back

the forces of evil. The more of God's light that shines through His saints, the more spiritual darkness there will be when the saints are taken away to heaven. Those saints who do not go at the first trump rapture still have a certain amount of light and will still hold back those evil forces enough to keep evil from taking over fully. When all the saints are taken to heaven to be with Jesus, then the way will be wide open for the antichrist to set up his kingdom.

Taken out of the way

Saints will be taken up to heaven and removed from the pathway of Satan. Then he will take over and bring in all his evil for the last 3 ½ years of the great tribulation.

VERSE 8

And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming:

That wicked be revealed

Once all the saints are in heaven with Jesus, the wicked will be revealed. The wicked mentioned here is the false prophet, who will be very much in conjunction with the antichrist. They will eventually have to appear before Christ for judgment, and He will cast both of them in the lake of fire.

Whom the Lord shall consume

Judging by how much wickedness is going on around us, we are at a time when Christ could come at any moment, and the antichrist could be revealed. The wicked ones actually think they will get away with their wickedness and so they continue in it. But they will not get away with anything as they will have to come face to face with the KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS. It is apparent in our world that men (especially world leaders) want all the attention on them. They don't want to rule just a country, they want to rule the world. God will destroy these men with two things:

1) The Spirit of His mouth which is the Word of God.

Revelation 19:15-16

15) And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16) And He has on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS.

Christ will consume them with the Word.

2) The brightness of His coming.

The bride is the light of Christ's life. She is His glory.

Revelation 21:10-11, 23

10) And He carried me away in spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.

11) Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

23) And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

Christ is all the power because He is the light. Everything comes from Him, but His bride receives all His glory. Christ and His bride will rule jointly in judgments and all things, because they are one.

VERSE 9

Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

It will be a scary thing for people when the power of Satan is manifested in the false prophet and the antichrist. We think we have seen some pretty wicked things, but what is coming when the devil is given full power will be worse than anything we have ever seen. Once his power is not held back, planet Earth will become a very terrible place to be.

VERSE 10

And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

Deceivableness of unrighteousness

The unrighteous will be deceived tremendously in their unrighteousness. The unrighteousness that works in them that perish is a complete departure from God. There is total spiritual darkness in them because they refused to receive the light of God's Word.

Received not the love of the truth

All Christians have eternal life, but those who perish are not born again and will have eternal death. They didn't receive Christ as Savior who would have saved them from that eternal death, or also known as the lake of fire. Had they received the love of the truth they would have been spared the eternal punishment coming on all unbelievers. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, and there is no salvation in any other but Him. When they reject Christ there is no chance for them. God isn't willing that any should perish. He made every provision for everyone to be saved. The choice is ours whether we choose to live with Jesus forever, or spend eternity in the lake of fire.

VERSE 11

And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

For this cause

Because they rejected the truth, God will send strong delusion to them, and they will believe all the lies spoken by the antichrist and false prophet.

They should believe a lie

If men reject the truth they will believe a lie. Every truth, such as being filled with the Holy Spirit as evidenced by speaking in tongues, that is rejected leaves the person who is rejecting it open to believe a lie. We need to embrace all truth, not just some truth. The Holy Spirit leads us into all truth. If he is rejected, that person has believed a lie. We see the same principle in the book of Romans.

Romans 1:25

Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

VERSE 12

That they might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

These are the unbelievers who have rejected Christ and believed Satan's lies, therefore they are damned. God is very clear in telling us in His Word about hell and the lake of fire. These places are for those who never accept the truth. They refuse to believe that Christ died to save them. The wicked not only reject Christ, they take pleasure in doing so. These Christ-rejecters will absolutely ruin the earth. That is why God will create a new earth.

VERSE 13

But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

We are bound

We Christians are bound together to give thanks to God.

Brethren beloved of the Lord

This is saying brethren who are much loved by Almighty God. We are beloved of God because He chose us before the foundation of the world. Almighty God loves the likes of you and me so much that He sent His Son to die so we could spend eternity in heaven with Him.

Chosen to salvation

This is God's provision. From the beginning God has always wanted mankind to be saved. We are treasures to Him, and chosen to salvation. We have been bought by the precious blood of Jesus, and we are precious to our heavenly Father and to Christ Jesus because of it. How can we not realize what an unspeakably wonderful gift He gave us?

Salvation comes two ways:

- 1) Through the sanctification of the Spirit.
- 2) Through the belief of the truth.

Anyone who ever received anything from God received it as a direct result of believing on Jesus.

VERSE 14

Whereunto He called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Whereunto

Whereunto means wherefore and far more exceeding. The level of attaining the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ goes far beyond being saved. This speaks of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus Paul wrote of in Philippians 3:14.

He called you

We have been called to hear and believe Paul's gospel. The opportunity to win Christ as Bridegroom is offered to all, but only a few will run to attain that wondrous prize of God's high calling. Most are not willing to suffer for His sake.

Obtaining the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ

A provision was made that we Christians attain the greatest glory, which is Christ's very glory. Only a few will attain that prize, but all Christians will have glory to some degree. Everybody in heaven will have some measure of glory, but anything apart from the attainment of Christ's glory is not THE glory.

VERSE 15

Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

Therefore

Since we have God's great mercy, since we are chosen, and since we are called and beloved, we should stand fast for what God wants us to have. He wants us to have it far more than we want to have it. The entire trinity is involved in our attaining the high calling prize in Christ Jesus.

Stand fast

This means to stand firm and not be moved.

Philippians 1:27

Only let your conversation be as it becomes the gospel of Christ; that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.

This is the oneness, the unity of the Spirit. We are different people, but we are one in Christ. We have His mind, and we move in the Word of God.

Hold

This word 'hold' can be found in a vital passage in Revelation chapter 3:

Revelation 3:11

Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

Traditions

The word tradition used here is translated 'ordinances' in other places. This is not the ordinances of the law they were to turn away from. There are two church ordinances:

- 1) Water baptism
- 2) The Lord's supper (communion)

Some include a third ordinance that concerns women's head coverings.

VERSE 16

Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which has loved us, and has given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,

Consolation

This is the reward that is coming with absolute certainty through God's wonderful grace. Christ will have this reward with Him at His appearing. The reward is never described, because there are no earthly words to describe the reward that will be ours. The exceeding riches of His grace for us will never end. His grace is so great we may not fully know the depths of it until we are with Him.

Good hope through grace

This good hope is always through His grace, and this grace is the only thing that will establish us to stand like pillars, and become like the tree planted by the water.

VERSE 17

Comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work.

God, of course, is most certainly able to do this.

CHAPTER 3

Paul expresses an urgency in this chapter for these saints to be ready for the coming of the Lord. The time to get ready is always NOW.

VERSE 1

Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you;

Pray for us

Paul requested prayer throughout his epistles. He asked many of the churches to pray for him. He always sought the prayers of the saints he ministered to; he coveted their prayers and greatly appreciated them. Praying in the will of God makes everything possible.

The Word of the Lord have free course

Paul didn't pray for a great following, or that they set the world on fire or double their assemblies. He prayed for the Word of God to have free course. The word course means 'to run.' This is a wonderful prayer because if we pray for the Word of the Lord to have free course, we are praying for God's Word to convert people and make a difference in their lives. Also, those who are already saved and filled with the Holy Spirit will be fed more and more of God's truth in love.

As far as Paul's ministry, 'free course' for the Word of God would mean the Word would be glorified in them when they are giving out the Word in their ministry. Just because someone has the truth it doesn't mean it is glorified in them, or that they are running to attain Christ as bridegroom. We need to let the Word of God grow in us and expand. When we finally realize how much we are loved, His light starts to shine in us and we begin to be vessels of His love.

Be glorified

Paul is talking about the Word of God being glorified. In the Psalms we find God has placed His Word above His name:

Psalms 138:2

I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy loving-kindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy name.

This is why we put such emphasis on scripture today, and the glorifying of God's Word above all things.

As it is with you

By His grace we are running for the prize. We want to win Christ as bridegroom and jointly rule and reign with Him. We are trusting in His faithfulness and grace to make us run this race and finish with a full joy.

VERSE 2

And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.

Unreasonable and wicked men

Unreasonable and wicked men can be Christians. These are those who possess the negative traits of being unreasonable and wicked because they are yielding to the flesh. Many Christians who went against Paul concerning the truth would have to be classified as wicked men. They were wicked and unreasonable in their conduct.

Paul had to flee to Berea to get away from these wicked and unreasonable men. They sought to do him harm because of the doctrine he preached. Some of the wicked in Thessalonica followed him there intending to kill him. The churches that loved Paul's gospel the most were in cities where the Christians were persecuted the most. Even in the most corrupt places, if there was someone who had a heart for God, He would send Paul to preach the truth to them. Consider how God put Joseph in an evil pit, and then sent him to Egypt. God did this to magnify how much He is for us, and to show us the lengths He will go to prepare us for the throne. Many trials and tribulations were in Joseph's life, but the end result was worth all God put Him through.

All men have not faith

This means that all men do not believe truth. Faith only comes by the truth of God's Word. What causes the wicked men to be so unreasonable is their lack of faith. There is one faith, and that faith is in Christ Jesus.

VERSE 3

But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil.

The Lord is faithful

Paul asked by prayer to be delivered from wicked and unreasonable men, but it is the Lord who is faithful. Paul was not depending on these men letting up, but rather on the faithfulness of the Lord. The Lord is always faithful. There are two things He promises to do:

- 1) Establish us.
- 2) Keep us from evil.

Both of these are the responsibility of the Lord. This can be compared to a scripture in the book of Jude:

Jude 24

Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

Even though there was a disturbance going on around Paul, he knew God would keep him. He had peace because peace is about what is going on within us, not what is going on outside of us. The Lord is faithful and He will perform the good work He has begun in us. He will establish us and keep us from evil. He always does it in that order. The changes will come as He establishes us more and more in His Word. This will keep us from evil by convicting us in our hearts to let Him will and do of His good pleasure in us. If we neglect or depart from the truth, evil will seep back into our lives.

VERSE 4

And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

The Lord touching us is a very personal thing. Paul always put his confidence in the faithfulness of the Lord to touch these saints, and us as well. Our confidence should be in the Lord, not in people. We must place our confidence in the Lord for us to do and will to do the things He commanded. We take our burdens to Him and leave them there, and we can trust Him to take care of whatever it is.

God is the potter and we are the clay. He touches us when He makes us into something beautiful: His masterpiece. He is the faithful one. The touch He touches us with is grace. Grace is His wonderful love.

VERSE 5

And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

The Lord direct your hearts

This is directing hearts into the love of God and the basis for overcoming and receiving any kind of reward.

2 Timothy 4:8

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.

This is speaking to those who love His appearing, not those working for His appearing. The Lord has to direct us because we are but sheep. Sheep need to be led. They follow after their shepherd. God directs us and leads us to His love.

Into the love of God

The main reason some Christians will not qualify for the bride is because they left their first love. Love is the basis for becoming a full-overcoming saint, and love is the basis for going on with Christ and winning the crown with a full joy.

God's great love was all put in His Son, and because He so loved the world He gave us His Son Jesus to die for everyone. He loves everyone and He is not a respecter of persons. We should pray for and seek that agape love, the love causes us to endure the temporal trials and tribulations we face every day and teaches us to soar like eagles in the heavens with Him. Because of His love for us Jesus was able to endure the cross to save us. That beautiful love toward us is ours forever.

Patient waiting

God's love will cause us to be patient and to patiently endure the daily trials. Through His undying agape love for us all things are possible for our lives. The love of God is the only thing that will change us to be like Jesus, and to wait for Him patiently.

VERSE 6

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walks disorderly, and not after the traditions which he received from us,

We command you brethren

Command means 'order.' Paul is like a general with his troops. He is praying, commanding them in the name of Jesus.

Every brother that walks disorderly

Disorderly means, 'out of rank.' Those who are disorderly fell out of rank and stopped following Paul's message. There was a division in some of the saints as Paul told the bridal saints to withdraw from those brothers who were walking disorderly. Paul didn't want these faithful bridal saints to slip in their steadfastness. He wanted them to stay away from the brothers who walked away from the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We are to love those who have walked away, have compassion for them, and pray for them. A little leaven leavens the whole lump, and compromise always leads to surrendering the crown of the high-calling Philadelphia saints.

We are to withdraw ourselves from every brother who does not apply himself to spiritual things. We shouldn't think ourselves so holy that we separate ourselves from everyone. If we do, it will make us a small vessel. We need to run in the race despite all the negative circumstances around us, and we need to pray for our weaker brethren.

Traditions

These are not traditions passed down by the Jews, the elders, or cultures that were nailed to the cross of Christ. These traditions are the Word of God passed down through Paul's gospel.

Paul tried to dissuade the Jews from the law and vain traditions, to no avail in most cases. He finally turned his attention to the Gentiles, the ones God sent him to preach to.

VERSE 7

For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

How ye ought to follow us

The word 'ought' is the choice of yielding that we have to follow. There is a choice to yielding. We are without excuse because God made provision for us to win Christ. All we have to do is believe. If we let Him, God will perform the good pleasure of His will in us. We should hold fast to what we have that no man take our crown.

Behaved not disorderly

The bride will have a deep love for the truth and be orderly. Paul always stayed in rank and was not disorderly among them. If we don't follow Paul as we ought, we become disorderly among the brethren. Paul did everything in his life by the grace of God, and he surrendered to the will of God. We must surrender our lives to the Lord and let Him perform in us the things that will win the crown. When we fall away from Paul's bridal teaching we are out of rank. God has divinely called us to His high calling message and we need to stay in communication with Him every day. This will prevent us slipping from rank and keep us running with joy. We will finish with the full joy that is only found in Christ Jesus.

VERSE 8

Neither did we eat any man's bread for naught; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be charitable to any of you;

Eat any man's bread for naught

Paul was careful to note that he and his fellow-laborers were not freeloaders, and they had no intention of taking anything from the saints. Paul's intent was always to give them the gospel, not take of their substance.

Wrought with labor and travail

Paul worked and travailed night and day so that he wouldn't be chargeable to them. Paul told the Corinthians that he robbed them by not teaching them more of the principles of giving. This giving was for their benefit and blessings more than for Paul.

VERSE 9

Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

This power is the right to expect something from those ministered to. Paul took nothing from them in order to make an example for them to follow.

VERSE 10

For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

Paul commanded them like a good leader to work, to eat, and to not be a burden to anyone. If we don't work we need to find something to do, and not be afraid of work. No working/no eating applies to all who are capable of working and do not do so.

VERSE 11

For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

This is once again speaking of the disorderly who occupy themselves with mischief. They are nothing but busybodies. When people don't work and they have nothing to occupy their time they get into trouble. These busybodies meddle in other people's business and things that don't concern them.

Being a busybody can take a saint out of rank. There is something very negative about being a busybody. That is why God warns us about it. Idle hands and idle minds are the devil's workshop. When the devil has us busy with his devices we will become tattlers and meddlers, and this causes discord among the brethren which God hates. We are to be occupied with the coming of the Lord and staying in the first rank.

VERSE 12

Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

This is a direct rebuke. Quietness means 'mind your own business.' Paul told them to stop the foolishness and tend their own garden.

1 Thessalonians 4:11

And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you.

VERSE 13

But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.

The encouragement here is to focus on our own walk. We need to be diligent and to attend upon the Lord without distraction. We have to pull out all the bad roots from our garden and not try to pull roots from someone else's garden. We need to live a testimony for Christ so maybe others will see it and want that kind of life also. We should ask the Lord to search us to see if there be any wicked way in us. This is between each individual and the Lord. If we live by grace we will be an effective testimony for the Lord.

VERSE 14

And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

This is the process of how to deal with a brother or sister in the Lord who is being disorderly. Being disorderly comes when we don't hold fast to the Word of God in Paul's letters. This is the turning away from the invitation to become Christ's bride.

1) Note them.

We should approach our disorderly brother in love without compromise. They are still part of the body.

2) Admonish or warn them.

If what we tell them is not received, we are called to love them, but have no fellowship with them.

3) Convert them to shame.

This means we convict them to repent.

All of these actions are designed to help our brother to see the error of his ways. They all should be done in love, in the spirit of helping our brother to see that what he is doing is contrary to the Word of God.

VERSE 15

Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

We may have to separate from someone because of what they are doing, but we should not alienate them. An alienated person may never be won back. Praying for them, having the right attitude, and helping them when they need it will leave the door open if they want to come back. We are not to treat them as enemies, but lift them up as brethren.

VERSE 16

Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.

The Lord of peace

This is the Lord of peace himself and not a substitute. Jesus is the prince of peace. He is first the Lord of peace; then He gave us peace.

By all means

'By all means' is whatever it takes to give us peace. God is more than able to do that in all manner of life. God's arms are not short. He can reach us anywhere, any time we need Him. He is like a salve that works for everything in our lives, spiritually, physically, and mentally.

VERSE 17

The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.

The salutation

Paul was consistent in all of his epistles, which was of the Holy Spirit. Paul wrote the salutation himself and didn't leave it to a scribe.

Mine own hand

The hand speaks of personal attention because Paul cared from his heart. He had compassion and the love of God in his heart, and he passed it on to others. We need to have the same kind of love and compassion for everyone, especially for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

VERSE 18

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Paul's letters always ended this way because he was the apostle to the Gentiles in this grace age. His main message is the grace of God. Paul's letters begin in grace, continue in grace, and end in grace. It has to all be grace or nothing will be profitable or have any effect. Grace came only through God's undeserved gift of love, and only through this divine love can anything be profitable for us. His precious Word will always be good for us. We should have hearts overflowing with thanksgiving because we did nothing to deserve or earn His deep, inexhaustible love. It is always freely given, and always will be because He loves us so much.

Amen!!! Praise you Lord!!!