

# 2 Thessalonians

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Translation.....	2
Introduction.....	6
CHAPTER 1.....	8
CHAPTER 2.....	34
CHAPTER 3.....	68
Resources.....	95

## ***Translation***

2 Thess. 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church [royal family] of the Thessalonians [which is] in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ [positional truth].

2 Thess. 1:2 Grace to you and prosperity from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thess. 1:3 We [Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy] are obligated [as supergrace believers] to continually thank [express gratitude] God concerning you, brethren [members of the royal family], whenever the occasion is fitting and proper, because your doctrine [intake, metabolization and application of the Truth] is growing abundantly and your virtue love is increasing beyond measure [advanced impersonal love], each one of you all towards another of the same kind [fellow believers].

2 Thess. 1:4 So that as a result we ourselves [Paul's missionary team] boast about you [your spiritual momentum] in the assemblies of God [outside the geographical area of Thessalonica] concerning your patient endurance [faith rest technique] and doctrinal application [utilization of other spiritual problem-solving devices] during all kinds of persecutions [outside pressures in life] and tribulations [sufferings] which you [personally, individually] are continually enduring [suffering for blessing],

2 Thess. 1:5 Which [sufferings] are evidence of the righteous [accurate] evaluation of God [which determines blessings in time and for eternity], so that you may be considered worthy of the Kingdom of God [by showing the Lord that you are living experientially to the high standards of your position in the kingdom], on behalf of which [variable status in the Kingdom of God] you are also suffering,

2 Thess. 1:6 Since it is just in the judgment of God [divine policy] to return affliction [distress & suffering] to those [reversionists & unbelievers] who put pressure on [trouble, antagonize] you.

2 Thess. 1:7 And to you [positive believers] who are receiving unjust pressure [distress & persecution], be relaxed with us [Paul, Silvanus & Timothy] in the future revelation [at the 2nd Advent] of the Lord Jesus from heaven accompanied by His mighty angels [anticipating the strategic victory in the angelic conflict],

2 Thess. 1:8 In the sphere of a flaming fire [baptism of fire: burning of the tares], inflicting punishment [eternal] upon those [unbelievers] who do not acknowledge God and who do not accept the gospel of our Lord Jesus,

2 Thess. 1:9 Who will suffer punishment, eternal [perpetual] agony away from the face of the Lord [outer darkness] and away from the glory [shared happiness] of His power,

2 Thess. 1:10 When He shall return to be glorified [honored] by His saints [during the millennium] and to be admired by all those who believed in that day [during the tribulation]. Because our

testimony was believed by you [Thessalonian believers],

2 Thess. 1:11 For that reason [out of responsibility for your spiritual welfare] we also continue to pray on every occasion concerning you, that our God may consider you worthy [due to the doctrine in your soul] of your calling [positional truth: election] and might fill up your deficiency [experiential truth] with every beneficial thing [categorical doctrines that you need to advance to the next stage of the spiritual life], generously and doctrinally produced in the sphere of [divine] power,

2 Thess. 1:12 In order that the character [nature, person] of our Lord Jesus might be glorified in you [by your supergrace status], and you in it [residence and function inside the sphere of divine power], according to the grace [norms & standards] of our God, even the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thess. 2:1 Now, I am urgently requesting you, brethren [members of the royal family], concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ [at the rapture] and our assembling [gathered together in the air] around Him,

2 Thess. 2:2 That you stop being so quickly agitated [hypersensitive due to reactor factors] as a result of your thoughts [wrong understanding] nor be alarmed [emotionally upset], neither by [demonic] spirit nor by [false] doctrine nor by [forged] letter alleged to be from us, on the pretext that the Day of the Lord [emphasis on the tribulation] has arrived and is in progress at this very moment.

2 Thess. 2:3 Do not allow anyone to deceive you, not under any circumstances [demon spirits, false doctrine, forged letter, etc.], because [the Day of the Lord will not come] not until the rebellion has come first [general apostasy of the church] and the man of lawlessness [personification of wickedness: the Antichrist], the son of perdition [indwelt by Satan, destined for hell], has finally been revealed,

2 Thess. 2:4 Who opposes [as an enemy] and exalts himself [with presumptuous pride] above everything declared and maintained according to God [divine viewpoint], with the result that he displays [exhibits] himself as an object of worship in the [Tribulation] temple of God, proclaiming that he himself is God [presents himself as the messiah].

2 Thess. 2:5 Don't you remember that when I was still face-to-face with you, I taught you these things [eschatological doctrines]?

2 Thess. 2:6 Therefore, now you should know beyond a shadow of a doubt [due to the repetitive nature of Paul's teaching] the reason why it [the rapture] is continuing to hold back: so that he [the Antichrist] might be revealed in his own appointed time [at the close of the Church Age].

2 Thess. 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness [intensification of rebellion and iniquity at the end of the Church Age] is already operating [working powerfully in this dispensation]. He alone [the Holy Spirit] is restraining [lawlessness] at the present time and will continue to restrain [lawlessness] until

He removes Himself from the midst [of the world].

2 Thess. 2:8 And at that time [after the rapture and the removal of the Holy Spirit], the lawless one [the Antichrist] shall be revealed, who the Lord Jesus shall consume [put to death] by the breath [Word] of His mouth and shall destroy [dethrone his powers of evil and lawlessness] by the sudden appearance of His coming [at the 2nd advent],

2 Thess. 2:9 Whose coming [appearance of the Antichrist on earth] is according to the [indwelling] power of Satan in the sphere of all kinds of supernatural power and miraculous signs and lying wonders [events],

2 Thess. 2:10 And in the sphere of every kind of wicked deception [spiritual delusion] towards those [engaged in false religion] who are perishing, against those who did not embrace the love of the truth [gospel doctrine] with the result that they might be saved.

2 Thess. 2:11 And because of this [rejection of gospel doctrine], God will send them a powerful delusion with the result that they will believe his [the Antichrist's] lie [false teaching],

2 Thess. 2:12 In order that everyone is judged who did not believe the truth [gospel doctrine] but instead took delight in wickedness.

2 Thess. 2:13 But as for us [believers], we are obligated to continually thank God always concerning you, brethren [members of the royal family] loved by the Lord, because God chose you [divine election] from the beginning [eternity past] for the purpose of salvation [positional truth] by means of the sanctification of the Spirit [initial placement into Christ] and belief of the truth [gospel doctrine],

2 Thess. 2:14 Into which [salvation] He called you [by divine election] through our [the apostle's] good news [gospel preaching], with reference to the possession of the glory [resurrection life] of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thess. 2:15 Consequently, therefore, brethren [members of the royal family], stand fast under pressure and hold fast to the categories of doctrine which you were taught either by word [orally] or by our letter [non-face-to-face writing].

2 Thess. 2:16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, Who loved us and gave us eternal encouragement and perfect confidence in the sphere of grace [eternal security],

2 Thess. 2:17 Comfort the mentality of your souls and stabilize them in the sphere of all production [ambassadorship function] and beneficial doctrine [priestly function].

2 Thess. 3:1 Finally, brethren [members of the royal family], keep on praying for us [Paul, Silvanus & Timothy], so that the Word of the Lord [Bible doctrine] might continue to make progress [enable

the communicators to charge forward into the spiritual battle] and keep on being glorified [honored in the hearer's spiritual life] even as it has been in the past and continues to be with you,

2 Thess. 3:2 And that we may be delivered from dangerous [reversionistic believers] and evil [wicked unbelievers] men, since doctrine is not correctly understood or applied by everyone.

2 Thess. 3:3 But the Lord is faithful [dependable], Who shall stabilize and protect you [through Bible doctrine] from the evil one [Satan].

2 Thess. 3:4 Moreover, we have confidence in the Lord regarding you, that you will both do and continue to do that [application of Bible doctrine] which we have repeatedly commanded [strict orders for living the spiritual life].

2 Thess. 3:5 And may the Lord [Holy Spirit] direct [guide into correct application] the mentality of your souls into the virtue love of God [the Father] and into the patient endurance of Christ [two important problem-solving devices].

2 Thess. 3:6 Now, we command you, brethren [members of the royal family], in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ [appealing to divine authority], that you withdraw yourself [separate mentally or physically] from every brother [Christian] who makes it a habit to walk idly and unruly [in monetary reversionism] and not according to the tradition [doctrinal teachings] which you received from us.

2 Thess. 3:7 For you yourselves know how advantageous it is to follow our example, because we did not behave inappropriately among you [abusing our authority by taking your hard-earned money],

2 Thess. 3:8 Neither did we eat anyone's bread without paying [we weren't moochers], but instead we worked in weariness and hardship night and day, so that we would not be a burden on any of you [weigh you down financially],

2 Thess. 3:9 Not because we don't have the authority [we have the right to collect a grace offering for our work], but so that we might give ourselves to you as an example [pattern] for to follow [imitate].

2 Thess. 3:10 For even when we were with you face-to-face, we gave strict orders to you, that if anyone [believer] did not want to work for a living [refused to obtain and hold down a job], let him not even eat [maybe starvation will encourage him to get a job].

2 Thess. 3:11 For we hear now and then that some [fellow believers] are walking among you in a lazy and unruly manner, not working for a living [thumbing their nose at customary life], but are busy at doing nothing [sponging off others and interfering with their business].

2 Thess. 3:12 Now to those who are of this type [lazy and unruly believers], we give strict orders as well as encouragement in the Lord Jesus Christ [authority orientation], that they return to working

for a living with quietness [resume their disciplined, routine life in virtue love], with the result that they are eating their own bread [no longer a burden on family and friends].

2 Thess. 3:13 But, as for you, brethren [hard-working, charitable believers], do not become discouraged by doing what is honorable in life [work is your full-time Christian service and potential mission field].

2 Thess. 3:14 Moreover, if anyone does not obey our doctrine [rejects apostolic authority] through this letter [which eventually becomes part of the canon of Scripture], take note of [mark as a troublemaker] and do not associate [socialize] with him, in order that he might become ashamed [change his direction in life].

2 Thess. 3:15 However, do not consider him [the lazy and unruly believer] as an enemy, but admonish him [with doctrinal rationales] as a brother [fellow Christian].

2 Thess. 3:16 Now, may the Lord of peace [tranquility] Himself give you that peace through all [doctrine] in every circumstance. May the Lord be with you all.

2 Thess. 3:17 This greeting is by my hand, Paul, which is my official signature on every letter [compare it to the forged signatures you have seen]. I am in the habit of writing in this manner [dictating the rest to an amanuensis].

2 Thess. 3:18 May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

## ***Introduction***

Second Thessalonians is primarily a letter of correction – correction concerning persecution (chapter 1), concerning prophecy (chapter 2), and concerning practice (chapter 3). Again Silas and Timothy are linked with Paul not because they were co-authors of the letter, but because they had shared the ministry in the city. (C. Ryrle) From a statement Paul makes in this epistle (“Nor by letter as from us”), it would seem that someone had forged his name to a letter and sent it to the believers at Thessalonica. Probably some of the enemies of the grace of God had done this evil thing in an attempt to upset and tear down the work Paul had been used of the Lord to begin there: so the second epistle was written to assure the Christians that they were not in the Great Tribulation period (the Day of the Lord), and that they would certainly be delivered “from the hour of temptation that shall come upon the whole world.” Christians are not the children of wrath. We are not appointed unto tribulation, but unto salvation – full and complete. (O Greene)

The occasion of 2 Thessalonians was the receipt of the news that the Thessalonians had received a spurious letter, apparently an intentional forgery, teaching them that they were already in the Day of

the Lord and its awful judgments. The Thessalonians, on the basis of the forged letter, wondered whether they were in this time of trouble, in contradiction to Paul's teaching that the church would be translated before the Day of the Lord began. Paul is, accordingly, writing this letter to straighten out their misunderstanding. Paul's answer, in a word, is that this predicted time of trouble which begins the Day of the Lord was still future. The persecutions they were undergoing were the normal persecutions that can be experienced by all Christians throughout the church age. (J. Walvoord) There is also the possibility for Christians to have the peace of God, the experience of peace. Paul is reminding the Thessalonians that though they were in trouble and persecution they were, nevertheless, the recipients of God's wonderful grace and His satisfying peace. (ibid)

In his letter (1 Thessalonians 4:17), Paul had referred to "we which are alive and remain." Apparently, some people had seized upon the phrase and taken it to mean that Christ would return in Paul's lifetime, and the idea had taken root ... The Thessalonian church was agog with excitement. Some people were filled with fanatical expectation and even gave up their jobs in anticipation. Others will filled with fearful apprehension. After all, terrible things were to happen. In spite of the positive assurances in Paul's letter that the church would not go through the Great Tribulation, some people were still not convinced. So Paul had to write a second letter. We can be glad he did because he deals with some fascinating details about end-times events that are mentioned nowhere else in the Bible. Besides giving us a vivid description of the Antichrist, he tells us that the Day of the Lord will not come until after two events take place: an apostasy in the church and an apocalypse (an unveiling) in the world. (J. Phillips)

While 1 Thessalonians emphasized the return of Christ for His church in what we call the Rapture, 2 Thessalonians emphasizes the return of Christ to the earth the second time, when He returns in judgment and sets up His kingdom here upon this earth. You see, at the Rapture, the emphasis is not upon His coming to earth, because He doesn't come to the earth. He makes it clear that "we shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air." We shall be snatched away or raptured to meet Christ in the air. However, the revelation of Christ is when He returns to the earth to set up His kingdom. In the time gap between these two events will be the Great Tribulation Period. (J. McGee) It is a remarkable factor in personal experience that some Christians are perfectly willing to trust God about eternity, but the little problems of today and tomorrow seem too big to commit to the Lord. It is, of course, unreasonable and ridiculous to trust God about eternal things and not to trust Him about temporal things, but that is human nature. (J. Walvoord)

It is a pitiable thing when a Christian's present state is lower than it was when he was first converted. This was true of the believers at Ephesus when the Lord had to say to the church there, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. 2:4). But it was otherwise with the Thessalonian believers. Some time had elapsed since they were converted, but their faith was growing and they were abounding in love. They were passing through a time of great suffering, tribulation, and bitter anguish for Christ's sake, but the grace of God was wonderfully evident in their lives. Their enemies could not understand how they could be so joyous and peaceful in spite of the persecutions that they were enduring. Unbelievers, who wondered how these Christians could continue in holy, happy unity, surely said, "How is it that they do not seem to be moved by our effort

to upset them? They go right on rejoicing, returning love for hatred, kindness for malice, and praying for those who persecute them. We do not understand.” (H. Ironside)

The apostle received a good report of the Thessalonians, and is enabled to express his joy and thankfulness to God that their faith grew exceedingly, and the love of every one toward each other abounded. But many of the Thessalonians were neglecting their secular business and living idle and useless lives, conceiving that there was no use of working in a world which was so soon to be destroyed, or of performing the duties belonging to a state of things which was so soon to terminate. (P. Gloag) The Thessalonians are still unable to distinguish between the rage of man and the wrath of God. Their continued trial and persecution leads them to conclude that God is against them instead of for them. The kingdom of God, which was proclaimed among them, is to be introduced with divine judgments. The day of the Lord, in which it will be set up, opens with an unparalleled display of divine indignation. They still persist in imagining that this day had begun, especially as, in some way, this was represented to be the apostle’s teaching. In reply Paul and his fellow workers define these dreaded judgments as those which befall only on those being unacquainted with God and who do not obey the evangel, especially on such as their persecutors. (A. Knoch)

The Christians in Thessalonica were still baby Christians when Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians. They were being persecuted, as we saw in the first epistle. They were suffering for the gospel’s sake, and it was easy for them to believe they had entered the Great Tribulation Period, and that all of the believers (not only the dead) had missed the Rapture. Paul attempts to allay their fears by writing this epistle and stating definitely that “our gathering together with Him” is yet future (2 Thess. 2:1), and that “the day of the Lord” has certain forerunners which must first come: the apostasy and the “man of sin” must come first. Therefore they could reasonably believe they were not in the Great Tribulation. Paul says that the outward organization of the professing church is going to go into total apostasy. He will not find the faith on the earth when He comes again. The organized church will be in total apostasy. This is confirmed in the Revelation. In the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter the church has been removed from the earth, and nothing is left but an empty shell of an organization that has a form of godliness but denies the power of it. That same organization is the great harlot in chapter 17 of Revelation, which is about as frightful a picture as you will find in the Word of God. (J. McGee)

## **CHAPTER 1**

**LWB 2 Thess. 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church [royal family] of the Thessalonians [which is] in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ [positional truth].**

**KW 2 Thess. 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the [local] assembly of Thessalonians in God our Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ.**

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

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Paul introduces himself to the Thessalonians with almost the same greeting he used in his previous letter, 1 Thessalonians. He is not alone; he is accompanied by Silvanus and Timothy. Paul's mention of them "in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" is a reminder of positional truth, their membership in the royal family of God.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

Paul, Silas, and Timothy: the evangelist, the teacher, and the pastor. They were God's Big Three for invading the European continent for Christ and changing the course of history. Paul was commander in chief. He took the lead, made the decisions, set the pace, engaged the foe, and did the preaching ... No general, invading a new continent at the bidding of his king, would have wanted better staff officers or companions in arms than Paul had in these two men. No veterans could have wanted a better commander in chief ... Paul was an intellectual genius, blessed with sound common sense, a heart of gold, a will of iron, and a deathless vision of a lost and dying world desperately in need of Christ. (J. Phillips) Silvanus, known in The Acts by the shorter name of Silas, was a man of prominence in the early church. He was called a "prophet," that is, an inspired teacher. (C. Erdman)

**2 Thess. 1:1** Paul (Nom. Absolute) and (connective) Silvanus (Nom. Absolute; Silas) and (connective) Timothy (Nom. Absolute), to the church (Dat. Address; royal family) of the Thessalonians (Poss. Gen.) which is (ellipsis) in God (Loc. Sph.) our (Gen. Rel.) Father (Dat. Ind. Obj.) and (connective) the Lord Christ Jesus (Loc. Sph.).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:1** Παῦλος καὶ Σιλουανὸς καὶ Τιμόθεος τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ Θεσσαλονικέων ἐν θεῷ πατρὶ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:1** Paulus et Silvanus et Timotheus ecclesiae Thessalonicensium in Deo Patre nostro et Domino Iesu Christo

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 1:2** **Grace to you and prosperity from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 1:2** [Sanctifying] grace and [tranquilizing] peace from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

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

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

An entire treatise could be written on each one of the words “grace” and “peace,” or they can be simply accepted as a customary greeting (salutation) addressing both Gentiles (grace) and Jews (peace) in the Christian community. It is a spiritual elaboration on the traditional Latin “pax vobiscum” (peace be with you) used by the Romans.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

As in so many places in the NT epistles, Jesus Christ is placed on an equal level with God the Father. God is the Father of Christians individually, a revelation given first by Jesus Christ. A church is an assembly of individuals who are in Christ by faith in His atoning death and therefore the children of God. (M. Couch) Peace comes, not from some psychological gyrations you go through, or through the counsel of a psychiatrist, but it comes from a supernatural source – from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. It is supernatural. (J. McGee)

**2 Thess. 1:2** Grace (Subj. Nom.) to you (Dat. Adv.) and (connective) prosperity (Subj. Nom.; peace) from God (Abl. Source) the Father (Gen. Appos.) and (connective) the Lord Jesus Christ (Abl. Source).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:2** χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:2** gratia vobis et pax a Deo Patre nostro et Domino Iesu Christo

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 1:3** We [Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy] are obligated [as supergrace believers] to continually thank [express gratitude] God concerning you, brethren [members of the royal family], whenever the occasion is fitting and proper, because your doctrine [intake, metabolization and application of the Truth] is growing abundantly and your virtue love is increasing beyond measure [advanced impersonal love], each one of you all towards another of the same kind [fellow believers].

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 1:3** We have a sense of personal obligation to be constantly thanking God at all times concerning you, brethren, even as it is fitting and proper [to do so], because your faith is growing wonderfully and the divine and self-sacrificial love of each one of you all for one another exists in great abundance,

<sup>KJV</sup> **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;

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

The Greek word “pantote” (always) combined with “kathos” (in as much as) is an idiom for “whenever the occasion arises.” We are obligated (Customary Present tense) to express our

gratitude to God whenever (Iterative Present tense) the occasion arises. This doesn't mean we spend our entire day thanking the Lord for everything on earth. It means there will be occasions throughout the day when it is fitting and proper to do so – such as during our prayer before meals, our quiet times during the day, during Bible study, etc. We can even thank Him when we are driving our car, standing in line at the grocery store, or brushing our teeth. We can offer thanks for His mercy and blessings any time we have the urge. This is part of our priestly function as supergrace believers.

Paul, however, narrows his expression of gratitude to God for the Thessalonian believers. He has received a report that their intake, metabolization and application of the Word of God is growing abundantly (Progressive Present tense). They were making splendid progress in the spiritual life. He also heard that their virtue love was increasing beyond measure (Progressive Present tense). They were successfully exercising advanced impersonal love in their daily relations with fellow believers. That means they were maintaining a relaxed mental attitude towards their friends and neighbors both in and out of their assemblies. They were avoiding arguments and debates; they were avoiding mental and verbal sins towards their brothers and sisters in the Lord. Every time Paul hears a report on the status of the Thessalonian believers, it is good news – and he is constrained to thank God for their continued spiritual growth.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

Instead of stunting their growth, as trouble often does, it has made them stronger. Suffering has not spoiled their characters ... The phrase on multiplying love is a most unusual construction for the NT. It is as if Paul began a phrase that he could find no end for – he just had to keep going! The wording is somewhat awkward but is appropriate because of the emotional feelings the apostle is displaying. (M. Couch) It is one thing to trust the Lord; it is something else to have a true love for the brethren. (J. Walvoord) Christian leaders are not always as quick to acknowledge the pluses in the lives of their people ... Faith can be understood either subjectively as trust, or objectively as the body of teaching, the faith. A better grasp of “the faith” leads (or should lead) to a greater trust in the One with Whom the faith is concerned. (D. Williams)

The work of the evangelist does not end when he closes his campaign, makes his final appeal, picks up his check, and leaves town. God lays on him an obligation to pray for his converts ... Paul thanked God for growth unstunted. Growth is evidence of life. Nobody expects a pebble to grow. Vigorous growth is evidence of vigorous life. The thing that struck the apostle about his Thessalonian converts was their growth in the faith. Developing faith is a direct result of occupation with the Word of God, of specific answers to prayers, and of increasing personal knowledge of and confidence in the Lord Jesus. (J. Phillips) History would tell us that the numbers of those coming to Christ was exploding, with pockets of the faithful scattered throughout various cities, villages, and ethnic communities and speaking in different languages. (M. Couch)

Faith grows by means of what it feeds on. This is in harmony with a law of all growth. Nothing can come from nothing. If a child is not fed it will surely die, certainly it will not grow. Growing plants

take nourishment from air and soil. Faith will not grow by our wishing it to grow, nor by any manipulation with it. Yet people, so to speak, take out their faith and try to do something with it in order to improve it. The great mistake is to think of increasing our faith by any consideration of the faith itself. We must forget our faith and look at Christ, and then our faith will grow unconsciously. We have too much introspection. An intelligent consideration of the grounds of faith, especially a study of Christ, reading of Scripture, prayer, etc., help faith to grow. (W. Adeney) We have as much dependence on the grace of God for increasing the grace we have as for planting grace when we had it not. (M. Henry)

**2 Thess. 1:3** We are obligated (ὀφείλω, PAI1P, Customary; owe it as a debt, inward conviction, as supergrace believers) to continually thank (εὐχαριστέω, PAInf., Iterative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; express gratitude) God (Dat. Adv.) concerning you (Adv. Gen. Ref.), brethren (Voc. Address; members of the royal family), whenever the occasion (temporal) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Customary) fitting and proper (Pred. Nom.), because (causal) your (Gen. Poss.) doctrine (Subj. Nom.; intake, metabolization, and application of the truth) is growing abundantly (ὑπεραυξάνω, PAI3S, Progressive; increasing beyond measure) and (continuative) your (Poss. Gen.) virtue love (Subj. Nom.) is increasing beyond measure (πλεονάζω, PAI3S, Progressive; superabundantly, advanced impersonal love,), each (Gen. Spec.) one (Subj. Gen.) of you (Adv. Gen. Ref.) all (Gen. Measure) towards another of the same kind (Reciprocal Acc.; fellow believers),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:3** Εὐχαριστεῖν ὀφείλομεν τῷ θεῷ πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν ἀδελφοί καθὼς ἄξιόν ἐστιν ὅτι ὑπεραυξάνει ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν καὶ πλεονάζει ἡ ἀγάπη ἐνὸς ἐκάστου πάντων ὑμῶν εἰς ἀλλήλους

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:3** gratias agere debemus Deo semper pro vobis fratres ita ut dignum est quoniam supercrescit fides vestra et abundat caritas uniuscuiusque omnium vestrum in invicem

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 1:4** So that as a result we ourselves [Paul's missionary team] boast about you [your spiritual momentum] in the assemblies of God [outside the geographical area of Thessalonica] concerning your patient endurance [faith rest technique] and doctrinal application [utilization of other spiritual problem-solving devices] during all kinds of persecutions [outside pressures in life] and tribulations [sufferings] which you [personally, individually] are continually enduring [suffering for blessing],

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 1:4** So that we ourselves take pride in and boast about you in the assemblies of God concerning your fortitude and faith in all of your persecutions and tribulations which you are enduring,

<sup>KJV</sup> **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:

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

Paul and his missionary team are always using the Thessalonian believers as an example for other assemblies in the mission field. They point to their successes in the spiritual life, boasting about them when the occasion arises (Iterative Present tense). Paul points specifically to their successful use of the faith rest technique, since they have been highly successful in remaining patient when the going gets tough. Paul also points to their successful application of other spiritual problem-solving devices, such as impersonal love, the application of doctrinal rationales, enforced and genuine humility, and personal love for Jesus Christ. The Thessalonian believers have consistently applied Bible doctrine during a host of persecutions and tribulations. They have continued to endure these pressures of life (Durative Present tense), converting adversity into an opportunity to apply doctrine.

Paul even adds a personal pronoun (your), left untranslated due to its awkward sound in the English, to point to this pressure and suffering as being directed to them individually. There are many forms of group pressure and group sufferings, but Paul is pointing to the personalized categories here. Each believer has his own trials and tribulations to go through; you are not alone in your suffering. The Lord knows our strengths and weaknesses and “tailors” our pressure tests to build character. In other words, each of us will be called to apply spiritual problem-solving devices (Biblical truth) to different circumstances in life. No two believers have the same set of problems; no two believers have the same capacity for passing spiritual momentum tests. The problem-solving devices are the same for everyone, but the application of them to daily life is personalized. You may fail in situations where I successfully apply doctrine correctly, and vice versa.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

With the advance of the gospel, other “churches of God” have come into being. The sum total of such local churches makes up “the churches of God;” they are also called “the churches of Christ” in Romans 16:16 or “the churches of the saints” in 1 Corinthians 14:33. (F. Bruce) The persecution of the believers at Thessalonica was first instigated by the Jews, who hired bullies and bravados to do their dirty work for them (Acts 15:5). They had some Christians hauled into court and accused of high treason. Not content with that, they followed the missionary trail to Berea and stirred up the mob there as well. Nor had their hatred and malice subsided. When Timothy went back to visit Thessalonica, the persecution was still going on. It was continuing even as Paul sat down to write his second letter ... The word “persecutions” points to the malicious hostility of others. The word “afflictions” underlines the agony of body and anguish of mind endured by those being persecuted. (J. Phillips) Paul was not above praising one church to other churches, to provoke them to good works. (A. Robertson)

Whereas the “faith” of verse 3 is general, here the reference is more particularly to the faith which enables them to remain steadfast under persecution and other forms of trial. (F. Bruce)

“Tribulations” is a broader word than “persecutions” and includes any trouble which a Christian might have. The manifest token of the righteous judgment of God is the endurance and faith of the Thessalonians in the midst of persecutions. Not suffering itself but the attitude of faith and constancy in suffering. (C. Ryrie) Paul is exceedingly thankful in his own heart that the believers are patient during the persecutions and tribulations through which they had been and were passing. (O. Greene) Christians have burdens and cares and sometimes would like to get rid of them. It is possible to become impatient with a situation. The person who is patient “remains under” and he keeps carrying the load that is given him, and adjusts himself to the circumstances in which he is required to live. He regards his lot as something that God has given him. (J. Walvoord)

The apostle never flattered his friends, but he took pleasure in commending them, and speaking well of them, to the glory of God and for the excitement and encouragement of others. (M. Henry) The Thessalonians did not react to discomfort the way many Christians do, by running away from their uncomfortable situations. Instead they viewed their circumstances as God’s will and determined to brace up under the pressure. Their attitude was not to endure by force of their own strength, however. They had faith in God; they looked to Him for grace sufficient to bear up and accepted their circumstances as conditions which He was allowing for His glory. (T. Constable) The Thessalonians are not to fear that they are holding a forlorn outpost. Neither man nor God overlooks their courage. Their founders and friends at a distance are watching with pride their resolute faith, while in God’s sure process of providence that faith has a destiny of its own, since it is bound up with His eternal designs. (W. Nicoll)

**2 Thess. 1:4** So that as a result (result) we (Subj. Acc.) ourselves (Acc. Gen. Ref.; Paul’s missionary team) boast (ἐγκαυχάομαι, PMInf., Iterative, Result; speak proudly) about you (Dat. Adv.; your spiritual momentum) in the assemblies (Loc. Place) of God (Gen. Rel.; outside the geographical area of Thessalonica) concerning your (Poss. Gen.) patient endurance (Obj. Gen.; fortitude, steadfastness, faith rest technique) and (connective) doctrinal application (Obj. Gen.; faithfulness in utilizing other spiritual problem-solving devices) during all kinds of (Dat. Measure) personal (Poss. Gen.); your: doesn’t need to be translated) persecutions (Loc. Sph.; pressures of life) and (connective) tribulations (Loc. Sph.; sufferings) which (Dat. Ref.) you are continually enduring (ἀνέχω, PMI2P, Iterative & Durative),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:4** ὥστε αὐτοὺς ἡμᾶς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐγκαυχᾶσθαι ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τοῦ θεοῦ ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑπομονῆς ὑμῶν καὶ πίστεως ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς διωγμοῖς ὑμῶν καὶ ταῖς θλίψεσιν αἷς ἀνέχεσθε

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:4** ita ut et nos ipsi in vobis gloriemur in ecclesiis Dei pro patientia vestra et fide in omnibus persecutionibus vestris et tribulationibus quas sustinetis

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 1:5** Which [sufferings] are evidence of the righteous [accurate] evaluation of

**God [which determines blessings in time and for eternity], so that you may be considered worthy of the Kingdom of God [by showing the Lord that you are living experientially to the high standards of your position in the kingdom], on behalf of which [variable status in the Kingdom of God] you are also suffering,**

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 1:5** Which [fortitude and faith] are a plain indication of the equitable adjudication of God to the end that you are considered worthy of the kingdom of God for the sake of which you also are suffering,

<sup>KJV</sup> **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:

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

The suffering experienced by the Thessalonians in verse 4 and the various categories of suffering we experience in our Christian walk are both related to growth in the spiritual life. Believers can only grow through testing, which hopefully results in suffering for blessing (forward momentum) rather than suffering and having to pass the same tests over-and-over again (lack of momentum) until we get it right. If we do not experience testing as believers, then we have something to worry about indeed. We might not be believers at all! If we are true believers, however, God is faithful to test us, to send suffering our way so we may utilize the doctrine in our soul to pass the test and grow spiritually. The fact that we are suffering is evidence (proof) that He loves us, cares for us, and wants us to grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. He uses suffering not only to enable us to utilize doctrine and grow spiritually in the temporal realm, but He also uses suffering to evaluate us for our future status during the Millennium.

The Greek word “krisis” refers to an evaluation, a judgment by God on how we are doing in His designed plan. We are constantly being tested and evaluated by God. When we pass momentum tests and continue to grow, we are blessed in our life on earth; we will also receive an increasingly blessed status (or level of honor coupled with responsibility) during our reign with Christ during the 1,000 year Millennium. All believers will reside with Jesus Christ during His Millennial Reign. Some of us will reign with Him, while others watch. There will be no equality between believers during the Millennium. Some of us will be responsible for almost nothing; others will reign over galaxies. This level of honor/responsibility is determined by our spiritual walk on earth. What we do in our Christian life gives us either blessings or cursings in return. We either move forward in the Christian life, receiving blessings in time, or we move backward in the Christian life, receiving divine discipline. There is no straddling the fence. The adjunctive “also” means we suffer not only to show the Lord that we can utilize His divine assets to live experientially in the Kingdom of God according to the divine standards inherent in the honored position in the Kingdom of God we obtained at the new birth (fixed), but we ALSO handle suffering (tests) because that is the measuring stick the Lord uses to determine our future (variable) status during the Millennium and eternity future.

As we move forward in the Christian life (short term), two things happen that are not experienced in the “here and now”: we will receive additional rewards in eternity (eternal term) and we will obtain a position of greater honor and responsibility during the Millennium (long term). The Lord determines the level of these rewards by constant evaluation of our performance on earth. What better way to evaluate our performance than by sending us tests that require us to utilize the Bible doctrine in our soul? The more Bible doctrine in our soul, the more of the “mind of Christ” we have to operate with. The more Bible doctrine in our soul, the more we think like Him and are conformed to His image. The more we think like Him, the more we are able to endure suffering by utilizing His Word in the filling of the Spirit. There is no better way for the Lord to assess our spiritual progress than to probe the contents of our soul for Bible doctrine, the mind of Christ. The standard of thought and performance required by us is divine perfection, which is why we go through some tests over-and-over again. God does not evaluate us on a “bell curve.” His standards for evaluation conform to His absolute righteousness, so His evaluation is 100% accurate. It is impossible to cheat on His periodic examinations.

We must be considered “worthy” by the standards set in the Supreme Court of Heaven (Culminative Aorist tense) to “inherit” the Kingdom of God. We “enter into” the Kingdom of God by virtue of our becoming Christians at the new birth. We inherit the Kingdom of God by virtue of our experiential sanctification on earth after we become Christians. All believers will reside with Jesus Christ during the Millennium, but only “winner” or “partaker” believers will reign with Him. The continual evaluations given to us by the Lord determine whether we will merely “reside” with Him or “function” (reign) with Him during this 1,000 year reign on earth. The infinitive points to our passing tests (suffering for blessing) as God’s intended result for our life on earth. He does not send us trials and tribulations just to entertain Himself; He wants to see us utilize doctrine and grow by them. He wants us to attain supergrace status and beyond, so that we will be blessed on earth, reign with Him during the Millennium, and parlay these privileges and rewards into eternity. Why do we have to suffer? Because how we handle suffering (Durative Present tense) is the criteria the Lord uses to determine our future status in the Kingdom of God. To use accounting terms – our residence in the Kingdom of God is “fixed” by the new birth, but our function in the Kingdom of God is “variable” according to how we handle suffering.

But what is the Kingdom of God, you might ask? “Basileus” has a variety of meanings other than simply “kingdom”: royal wisdom which is the norm of knowledge; knowledge of ideas as a royal art, and the man who has it is the royal man; a concrete sphere of power; the dominion of the wise; royal dignity; dominion of the rule of the wise man; the being, nature, state, dignity and power of the king; world power; a legitimate possessor or representative of the kingdom; the power of God; fellowship of those thus minded; royal power. That is a few uses of the Greek word from the TDNT. The “natural man” is the non-Christian, pictured as “living in the world” and typified by Egypt. The “natural man” does not enter into the kingdom of God. The natural man lives in the Kingdom of Satan. The “carnal Christian” enters into the kingdom of God, but does not inherit it. The “carnal Christian” is pictured as living a life of struggle in the wilderness, typified by the Exodus generation. The “spiritual Christian” enters into the kingdom as well as

inherits the kingdom. The “spiritual Christian” is pictured as living a victorious spiritual life. He is typified as winning the battle and crossing over the Jordan River into the promised land. The kingdom of God is our promised land. Will we see it from a distance, or will we cross the river and begin living there? What I am trying to convey is that there is a positional (residence) and an experiential (function) side to the Kingdom of God as well as a temporal and eternal side.

Unbelievers live in the kingdom of Satan, often called “cosmos diabolicos” or the world system. Jews will live in the future Kingdom of Heaven on earth during the Millennium. Believers will live in the Kingdom of God with Jesus Christ, and some will actually reign there with Him. The kingdom of Satan began at the Fall and ends at the Great White Throne Judgment when Satan is bound forever and cast into the Lake of Fire. There is a 1,000 year “half-time show” during the Millennium when Satan’s kingdom is in “recess.” He is temporarily bound and prevented from interfering with the Millennial Reign of Christ. The Kingdom of Heaven is earthly; its sphere of activity does not extend to the heavens or into the universe. It is primarily related to Israel’s earthly glory which was rejected during the 1<sup>st</sup> advent. It is the fulfillment of God’s promises to Israel: to be converted, restored to the land, and to reign over the nations. It is God’s will on earth as it is in heaven, as the Disciple’s Prayer states. The Kingdom of God extends to the heavens and the universe. The Kingdom of Heaven is a subset, to a great degree, under the larger umbrella of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God are NOT identical. God is not throwing around different theological terminology (and Greek words) just to confuse us.

There are so many uses of the word “kingdom” that it has confused theologians and believers alike for centuries. I like the pictorials of this topic created by Clarence Larkin in 1918. The Kingdom of God, in his drawings, extends from eternity past to eternity future. It includes everything that happens in time - whether on earth, in heaven or the universe - and everything in eternity. It is also spiritual and is entered into by the new birth. The Kingdom of Heaven is limited to time – from the departure of Christ at the resurrection to the Rapture – and is limited to events on earth. Within the Kingdom of Heaven, because it comprises events on earth, is the Church Age – also called the “kingdom in mystery.” Some charts show the Kingdom of Heaven extending its umbrella over the Tribulation, Millennium and Perfect Kingdom, which I have no problem with at this time. The Tribulation which begins immediately after the Rapture, however, is sometimes separated from the Kingdom of Heaven and called the Kingdom of Antichrist. Following the Tribulation is the 1,000-year Millennial Kingdom. The Perfect Kingdom is a period on earth after the Millennial Kingdom when the Kingdom of Heaven merges into the Kingdom of God and “God becomes all and in all.” Charts don’t answer all of the questions posed by the different kingdoms, but they do relay a simple truth: If you don’t study the kingdoms with a dispensational framework you will be hopelessly lost when studying the Gospels.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

The worth of a man before God is decided by whether he comes into contact with the message of

Christ and is obedient to it: (Matt. 10:38) “He who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.” This is especially evident in the use of the adverb “axios” in exhortations demanding the right manner of life to accord with the gospel of Christ (Phil. 1:27), the Lord (Col. 1:10), or our calling (Eph. 4:1). It describes the value of human actions. (DNTT: E. Tiedtke) Just as Christ’s suffering is not an end in itself, but a means to a great end, namely, perfection, so also in the case of His people. The essential goal for which the Christian suffers is that of the kingdom of God. Compared with the hope of “eternal glory,” a Christian’s present period of suffering shrinks to “a little while” (1 Peter 5:10). In Romans 8:18 Paul emphasizes that the sufferings of the present time bear no comparison with future glory, so that even suffering may be regarded as a precious gift (Phil. 1:29, 1 Peter 2:19) from “the God of all grace, who has called us to His eternal glory.” (DNTT: B. Gartner) 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. (C. Ryrie)

The “dikaia krisis” will be revealed in the fact that the persecuted will be accounted worthy of the “basileia” and their persecutors will receive appropriate retribution ... Those who are invited by God to His kingdom must reflect whether they can really accept the invitation. (TDNT: Schrenk) In the tribulation which is suffered by him the believing Christian takes up the divine judgment executed on Jesus Christ. The “thlipsis” which the Christian necessarily undergoes as eschatological sufferings consist of afflictions of different kinds, eg. imprisonment, derision, poverty, sickness, material suffering, inner stress, sorrow, anxiety, fear, pressures. (TDNT: Schlier) According to Philippians 1:29, suffering is not a privilege of the apostle or a select few, but is of the very essence of Christianity as such. All the same, it is a privilege, a special grace which surpasses even the grace of being able to believe in Christ. (TDNT) A kingdom denotes a sphere of rule in which everything is in submission to the reigning monarch. So the kingdom of God denotes the sphere over which God rules as sovereign. We may be sure that this sphere far surpasses the comprehension of our finite minds. (E. Miller) God will vindicate these believers for their suffering. This judgment might take place in the lifetime of the suffering Thessalonians. Part of the judgment could be temporal in the form of vengeance on the pagans who were tormenting the church. Judgment certainly refers also to the future when, before the Great White Throne judgment, the Lord will heap punishment on the tormentors of the righteous. (M. Couch)

We must be faithful when suffering. In passage after passage the NT writers invest human suffering with high dignity. It is through suffering with Christ that we are trained and equipped to join the great company of the metachoi [partakers: winners, supergrace believers]. An eternal honor is being achieved for those who persevere in suffering ... One day, the Scriptures affirm everywhere, the struggle of fallen man will finally come to an end. This consummation will not be achieved by social engineering or by the successful implementation of any human ideology. Rather, it will be accomplished by a supernatural intervention of God in history, the second coming of Christ. Finally, history will achieve a worthy outcome – the kingdom of God. Page after page of Scripture speaks of this glorious future and the possibility that those who are Christ’s servants now can achieve positions of honor in that future glory then. These positions of honor are an important aspect of the believer’s future inheritance. (J. Dillow) While we may not be able to understand completely how the authority

of God is maintained in so vast a sphere as over the “universe” and for “eternity,” we do read of “ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands and thousands of angels.” It is through them (thrones, dominions, principalities) that He administers His will throughout His vast realm. (E. Miller) Statistics show that the 30<sup>th</sup> century was the greatest period of Christian martyrdom, more than any other time in history. (M. Couch)

It is evident that a man can enter into the land, but not obtain the inheritance there and never enter rest. The former was available to all Israelites on the basis of a promise, but the latter came only to those who obeyed and won the victory. In the parallel to which the writer to the Hebrews alludes, all Christians enter into the kingdom at the time of spiritual birth. But not all Christians finish their work. A Christian enters the kingdom when he is born again. But entering Canaan pictures the decision by a person who already is a Christian to trust God for victory, submit to His lordship, and engage in the spiritual battle necessary to finish our course as victors and, as a result, enter into rest ... The future kingdom is the subject of hundreds of passages in the OT. It is a glorious reign of servant kings which extends to “all the works of His hands.” This may suggest that one day mankind will rule the galaxies! The lion will lay down with the lamb, universal righteousness will reign, there will be no war. Disease will be abolished, and the world of Satan will be placed under the rule of the Servant King and His companions, Heb. 1:9. (J. Dillow) Once God’s purposes with the church are complete, prospects will again brighten for the establishment of the earthly kingdom. The church age is a parenthesis in the time line of God’s dealings with this world. The rapture of the church will clear the way for God to resume His dealings with the nation of Israel, dealings that He suspended (Romans 11) soon after Pentecost. (J. Phillips)

There will be distinctions in heaven, and God does show partiality. He is, however, justly partial. In the kingdom there will be those who are great and those who are least (Matt. 19:30, 5:19). There will be authority granted over varying numbers of cities (Luke 19:17-24). Some will have responsibility for many things, and others will have responsibility for nothing (Matt. 25: 20-30). Only the overcomers will achieve a share in the reign of Christ and have authority over the nations. (J. Dillow) It is evident that the Kingdom of Heaven, as Matthew uses the term, concerns only the earth. Its sphere of rule does not penetrate into the heavens nor into any part of the universe. The Kingdom of God, on the other hand, is universal in sphere. It includes the three heavens and reaches out to the utmost bounds of the universe, far beyond the limits of the Kingdom of Heaven. It is therefore a much broader term ... The sphere of the Kingdom of God is universal. Space in the comprehension of man is as limitless as God is limitless in time. His kingdom extends to the farthest reaches of the works of His hands. Since our word “universe” denotes the greatest expanse of space in our vocabulary, we shall use this word to describe the sphere of rule covered by the expression Kingdom of God. (E. Miller) The Jews will administer the earthly empire under Christ as He sits enthroned in Jerusalem “on the throne of His father David.” We will reign with Christ on high from the heavenly Jerusalem. In view of this fact, Paul introduces here the thought of the kingdom of God and points to the judgment seat of Christ. (J. Phillips)

What is the purpose of this great future? The design of this glorious reign of the metochoi (partakers) is to deliver the world from the results of sin and to fill it with blessing and glory! These metachoi

are not ruling for themselves but for others. How are such rulers developed? It is only through undergoing the trials of sin and suffering that true compassion can emerge. This is the theme of Hebrews 2 where our great High Priest is said to have learned obedience by the things He has suffered, and He is leading many sons along a similar path to glory. Indeed the kingdom has been postponed and delayed for several thousand years precisely for this purpose, to raise up a body of rulers who will sustain it with dignity, purity, compassion, and selflessness worthy of the Messiah Jesus. If the metachoi are to enjoy these unspeakable privileges, they must be trained in obedience, suffering, temptation, and trial just as their Captain was. Their constant contact with evil and trial now uniquely fits them for their future positions. We may view the present world as the training ground for the aristocracy of the future kingdom, the ruling class of the world to come. (J. Dillow) When the Lord returns finally to establish the kingdom, He will reign first in His David character and subdue all of His foes; then He will reign like Solomon in glory and splendor as the Prince of Peace. (J. Phillips)

God determined to crush the rebellion on earth in order to bring the whole earth back into the Kingdom of God. This is the purpose for the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Though Satan is in violent opposition to this purpose, nevertheless, by the time the Kingdom of Heaven will have run its course Satan will have been evicted from his position of usurped authority and sealed to his final doom in the Lake of Fire; the rebellion will then have been crushed and sin put away with divine finality; and then when the last enemy – death – is destroyed the Kingdom of Heaven, having fulfilled its mission, will be turned over to the Father and the whole earth will again be in the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. 15:24-28). Satan does everything in his power to counterfeit the real in order that he might hinder the purposes of God for the Church in the world. (E. Miller) What does it mean to be “worthy” of the kingdom of God? It has nothing to do with an entrance exam; rather, it has to do with a final exam, an exam to determine where we will fit in the kingdom. The word used has to do with fitness. We do not get into either the kingdom or the church by our own merit. We get into the kingdom by birth, by virtue of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. We get into the church by baptism, by virtue of the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit. We are put into both the church and the kingdom supernaturally at the moment we are saved. In view here is the judgment seat of Christ. (J. Phillips)

Paul is referring to Christ’s coming to establish His kingdom. When He comes to take His church home to glory, the earth is not judged. The church is taken out of the world very quickly – in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye – and is taken to heaven. Christ also goes back with the church to heaven. It is not His purpose to judge the wicked then. (J. Walvoord) It is not God’s purpose that, by suffering, we should be made worthy to enter His kingdom, but that, having entered by grace, we should be counted worthy to be there. This is just another way of saying that suffering is part of the package of being a Christian. (D. Williams) We must be faithful when suffering. In passage after passage the NT writers invest human suffering with high dignity. It is through suffering with Christ that we are trained and equipped to join the great company of the metochoi. An eternal honor is being achieved for those who persevere in suffering. (J. Dillow)

The wicked become more insolent through occasion of prosperity, as if no punishment of their

crimes awaited them; just as Dionysius, when making a prosperous voyage, boasted that the gods favoured the sacrilegious. In fine, when we see that the cruelty of the wicked against the innocent walks abroad with impunity, carnal sense concludes that there is no judgment of God, that there are no punishments of the wicked, that there is no reward of righteousness. Paul, however, declares that as God thus spares the wicked for a time, and winks at the injuries inflicted upon His people, His judgment to come is shown us as in a mirror. The present disorderly state of matters is a demonstration of the judgment, which does not yet appear. (J. Calvin)

**2 Thess. 1:5** Which are (ellipsis; sufferings) evidence (Pred. Nom.; proof) of the righteous (Descr. Gen.; just, true, accurate) evaluation (Obj. Gen.; judgment) of God (Abl. Source; the perfect plan of God includes blessing the believer through suffering in time and preparing him for reigning in the millennium), so that (purpose) you (Subj. Acc.) may be considered worthy (καταξιώω, APInf., Culminative, Intended Result; value, appreciate, "partakers" or "winners" according to the doctrine in your soul) of the kingdom (Obj. Gen.; royal power) of God (Descr. Gen., Spec., Source; supergrace status) on behalf of which (Gen. Appos.) you are also (adjunctive) suffering (πάσχω, PAI2P, Static & Durative; to determine your variable status in the Kingdom of God, the Millennium and eternity future),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:5** ἔνδειγμα τῆς δικαίας κρίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ εἰς τὸ καταξιωθῆναι ὑμᾶς τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ ὑπὲρ ἧς καὶ πάσχετε

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:5** in exemplum iusti iudicii Dei ut digni habeamini regno Dei pro quo et patimini

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 1:6** Since it is just in the judgment of God [divine policy] to return affliction [distress & suffering] to those [reversionists & unbelievers] who put pressure on [trouble, antagonize] you.

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 1:6** Since it is just in the sight of God to return affliction to those who are afflicting you.

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

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Verse 5 can be considered a parenthesis, with the thoughts in verse 4 continuing here. Paul commends the Thessalonians for patiently enduring the trials and tribulations that continually come their way, as opposed to taking matters into their own hands. The last thing this verse does is give us permission to get revenge for mistreatment. In other words, rather than seeking retribution against those reversionists and unbelievers who trouble us, it is divine policy to relax

and let God take care of matters. It is a just and righteous thing for God to repay (Culminative Aorist tense) distress and suffering to those who are troubling the Thessalonian believers. It is not our job to “get even,” but instead to relax and let the Lord take care of our antagonists.

The Lord can either take care of matters immediately (Static Present tense) or he may allow the perpetrators to fill up their cup of wrath by giving them apparent success in their persecutions - just before He really “lowers the boom” on them (Iterative Present tense). It’s also up to Him to decide when to return trouble upon those who are troubling us. He might avenge us quickly or let our antagonists continue to apply pressure to us in order to prompt us to utilize the doctrine in our soul to pass momentum tests. If the Lord repays our antagonists with distress every time they bother us, we do not get the “opportunity” to apply doctrine and grow spiritually. Ultimately, the justice of God will make things right, but this may not happen during our life time.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

This verse anticipates the Great White Throne judgment ... By far, the majority of wrongs are never righted in this life. Our sense of justice, quite apart from divine revelation, tells us that there has to be a Day of Judgment. The other side of the coin is just as positive. Every day, deeds of care and compassion go unnoticed and unacknowledged. Still less are they rewarded down here. There has to be a judgment day ... The judgment seat of Christ is just that – a judgment seat. Rebukes and rewards will be in evidence. Our standing will not be called into question, but our state will be reviewed. God’s salvation is free; His rewards have to be earned. (J. Phillips) God does not as yet avenge the wicked, while it is, nevertheless, necessary that they should suffer the punishment of their crimes. Believers, however, at the same time, understand by this that there is no reason why they should envy the momentary and evanescent felicity of the wicked, which will ere long be exchanged for a dreadful destruction. (J. Calvin)

The Thessalonians are told that their roles and those of their persecutors will be reversed at the Advent of Christ; their persecutors will receive the judgment which their conduct deserves, while they themselves will enjoy relief and reward. (F. Bruce) We are to love our enemies, bless them that curse us, and pray for them that despitefully use us, but in His own time God will deal with those who have persecuted His church. (H. Ironside) Paul comforts them with the knowledge that those who are persecuting them will be recompensed by God when Christ returns. When Jesus comes, he will take vengeance on the wicked by tormenting them just as they had tormented the saints. (R. Morey)

We must distinguish between “sin” and “sins.” Sin has to do with what we are; sins have to do with what we do. God has already dealt with the root of sin. He expects us, in cooperation with His indwelling Holy Spirit, to deal with the fruit of sin ... God’s dealings with sinners are beyond our ability to trace. Those who seem to escape all retribution for their misdeeds often pay for them in ways that we do not discern. The time is coming, however, when all sinners will face their sin and guilt, especially their crowning guilt of rejecting Christ, at the Great White Throne. (J. Phillips) Rewards and punishments in this world are unequally distributed. But this state of things shall be

rectified. Christ shall recompense the wicked tribulation, and He shall recompense to the righteous rest ... A right-minded man is indignant at wrong, and delights in the retribution that falls upon wrong-doers. (P. Gloag)

**2 Thess. 1:6** Since (conj.; if it is true that, if perhaps) it is (ellipsis) just (Pred. Nom.; righteous, true) in the judgment of God (Dat. Ind. Obj.) to return (ἀνταποδίδωμι, AAInf., Culminative, Result; pay back, retribution) affliction (Acc. Dir. Obj.; trouble, pressure, distress, suffering) to those (Dat. Disadv.; reversionists & unbelievers) who put pressure on (θλίβω, PAPtc.DMP, Static & Iterative, Substantival; trouble) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:6** ἕπερ δίκαιον παρὰ θεῶ ἀνταποδοῦναι τοῖς θλίβουσιν ὑμᾶς θλίψιν

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:6** si tamen iustum est apud Deum retribuere tribulationem his qui vos tribulant

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 1:7** **And to you [positive believers] who are receiving unjust pressure [distress & persecution], be relaxed with us [Paul, Silvanus & Timothy] in the future revelation [at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent] of the Lord Jesus from heaven accompanied by His mighty angels [anticipating the strategic victory in the angelic conflict],**

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 1:7** And to you who are being afflicted, there is a surcease from this stress and strain [due to your persecutions] in the relaxing anticipation of the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of His power in a fire of flame,

<sup>KJV</sup> **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,

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Paul particularly addresses those believers who are positive towards the Word of God and who are (because of their positive volition) receiving unjust pressure (Latin: tribulation) from various antagonists. If you are positive towards Bible doctrine, you will receive outside pressure from some quarter, particularly people. Are you going to start an argument or seek revenge from every person who distresses you? That is the opposite methodology outlined in the Word of God. We should be utilizing two problem solving devices: impersonal love and the faith rest technique. Utilizing impersonal love means we maintain a relaxed mental attitude towards those who antagonize or persecute us. Utilizing the faith rest technique means we keep a loose, relaxed mental attitude rather than revenge motivation.

Impersonal love helps us excuse those who try or persecute us. The faith rest technique enables us to wait for the Lord to set things straight in His own time. Paul asks us to rest with him, as well as Silvanus and Timothy. When they are persecuted, they don't retaliate; they sit back and

rest (chill out) in the doctrine that the Lord Jesus Christ will return at the 2<sup>nd</sup> advent and will render justice where it is needed. He will return with His mighty (powerful) angels to celebrate the strategic victory in the angelic conflict. By anticipating this future event, we are better able to avoid revenge motivation, knowing that the Creator of heaven and earth is taking care of the world and hearing our grievances. By resting in His promises, we can make sure we do not allow the outside pressure of adversity to become inside stress in our soul.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

With this verse and the next, Paul describes Christ coming from heaven to bring judgment and retribution. This coming should not be mistaken for the Rapture in which the Church saints are resurrected and the living saints are transformed and taken by the Lord to glory. Instead, in verses 7-8, Paul is saying that He deals out retribution to those who have not obeyed the gospel, and such dealings will take place during the seven years of tribulation ... Jesus is not now seen by earthlings in His glory, but He will be. But first the Rapture of the Church, followed by the Tribulation, and then the revealing of Him as the earthly King and Judge ... This host is apparently His own company of angels who constitute His special forces when He returns. They must not be ordinary angels for they are called “mighty.” (M. Couch) Rest in company with us, who are writing to you, and who like you have been exposed to suffering. (C. Ellicott)

The verb “rest” means relief from tension or slackening of pressure as one would take down a taut bow string. 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. And Paul includes himself in those who are being persecuted and who enjoy this rest “with us.” (C. Ryrie) We must study and rightly divide the Word of Truth. The “rapture” will be secret and unannounced; Jesus will descend in the air above us, and the Church will be caught up out of the world. When Jesus comes in the Rapture He will come to make up His jewels (Mal. 3:17). The “revelation” is the time when He will come with His mighty angels, every eye shall see Him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. At that time, His feet will stand on the mount of Olives. Jude 14, 15 describes this as the time when He comes with tens of thousands of His saints, and He will come to execute judgment. (O. Greene)

Paul did not pray that the troubles facing his converts might cease. He urged them to relax, but how? The word we find in his opening greeting, grace, tells them how. (J. Phillips) There will be rest for the saints when the Lord Jesus Himself is revealed in a dual role, as the judge of the ungodly and the source of the glory which will then be seen in believers. (F. Bruce) If the Rapture had occurred in Paul’s lifetime, the enemies of the Thessalonian believers would have been judged shortly (seven years) thereafter, at Christ’s second coming. (T. Constable) Present suffering for Christ will result in heightened service for Him in the life to come. (R. Wilkin)

**2 Thess. 1:7** And (continuative) to you (Dat. Ind. Obj.; positive believers) who are receiving unjust pressure (θλίβω, PPPTc.DMP, Descriptive, Substantival; trouble, distress, persecution), be (ellipsis) relaxed (Compl. Acc.; loose, rest, relaxed mental attitude) with us (Gen. Assoc.; Paul, Timothy & Silvanus) in the

**future revelation** (Loc. Time: Future Anticipation; at the 2<sup>nd</sup> advent) **of the Lord Jesus** (Poss. Gen.) **from heaven** (Gen. Place) **accompanied by His** (Poss. Gen.) **mighty** (Descr. Gen.; powerful) **angels** (Gen. Assoc., Manner; anticipating the strategic victory in the angelic conflict),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:7** καὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς θλιβομένοις ἄνεσιν μεθ ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ἀπ οὐρανοῦ μετ ἀγγέλων δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:7** et vobis qui tribulamini requiem nobiscum in revelatione Domini Iesu de caelo cum angelis virtutis eius

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 1:8** In the sphere of a flaming fire [baptism of fire: burning of the tares], inflicting punishment [eternal] upon those [unbelievers] who do not acknowledge God and who do not accept the gospel of our Lord Jesus,

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 1:8** Alloting full justice to those who do not know God and do not obey the good news concerning our Lord Jesus,

<sup>KJV</sup> **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:

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

One of the ways divine retribution will occur is that unbelievers will be burned as tares by a flaming fire. This is the baptism of fire, in which divine justice and punishment is inflicted (Dramatic Present tense) upon those who do not acknowledge God (Intensive Perfect tense) and do not accept (Static Present tense) the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Unbelievers will burn in the Lake of Fire with Satan and the fallen angels who followed him in his rebellion against God. There will be no legitimate complaint from any person who ends up in the Lake of Fire, because all those who end up receiving eternal punishment will have refused to acknowledge God and will have rejected Jesus Christ.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

The Day of the Lord is described by an OT prophet in Malachi 4:1 as “the day ... burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble.” (F. Bruce) The Lord’s living foes will be assembled before Him when He comes. Many of them will be at Megiddo. More will be arraigned in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. As, at the Rapture, living saints are gloriously changed and caught up to be with Christ, so now living sinners will be grievously changed and hurled headlong from His presence. As the dead in Christ will rise to be bathed in the glory of the parousia and to participate in the splendor of the apocalypse, so the wicked dead, when their time comes, will be raised only to be convinced, sentenced, and hurled into eternal ruin in what the Bible calls “the lake of fire.” (J. Phillips)

The context is His second coming, not the Rapture. This is full and complete punishment and vindication ... Lightfoot believes that two classifications are meant here. One would be the Gentile who by his natural depravity refuses God; and the other is the Jew who distinctly and specifically has rejected the gospel and his own promise. (M. Couch) “Fire” as used in the Scriptures denotes divine anger and majesty. “Flame” is fire in motion, leaping and blazing – denoting the fast-moving judgment of Almighty God. According to 2 Peter 3:10, this world will one day melt with fervent heat, the world and its works will be burned up – and contrary to the teaching of the liberals and modernists, this will be literal fire – not symbolic. (O. Greene)

**2 Thess. 1:8** In the sphere of a flaming (Descr. Gen.) fire (Loc. Sph.; baptism of fire: burning of the tares), inflicting (δίδωμι, PAPTc.GMS, Dramatic, Modal) punishment (Acc. Dir. Obj.; retribution, full justice) upon those (Dat. Disadv.; unbelievers) who do not (neg. particle) acknowledge (οἶδα, Perf.APTc.DMP, Intensive, Substantival; know) God (Acc. Dir. Obj.) and (connective) who do not (neg. particle) accept (ὑπακούω, PAPTc.DMP, Static, Substantival) the gospel (Obj. Gen.) of our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus (Poss. Gen.),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:8** ἐν πυρὶ φλογός διδόντος ἐκδίκησιν τοῖς μὴ εἰδόσιν θεὸν καὶ τοῖς μὴ ὑπακούουσιν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:8** in flamma ignis dantis vindictam his qui non noverunt Deum et qui non oboediunt evangelio Domini nostri Iesu

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 1:9** Who will suffer punishment, eternal [perpetual] agony away from the face of the Lord [outer darkness] and away from the glory [shared happiness] of His power,

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 1:9** Who are such that they shall pay the penalty of everlasting ruin and death in [their] separation from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

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

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Unbelievers will suffer extreme punishment (Predictive Future tense) as their reward for refusing to acknowledge the Lord and refusing to accept the gospel of Jesus. This extreme punishment will not be temporary. This extreme punishment will not have an end. This extreme punishment will be perpetual, eternal agony away from the face of the Lord in outer darkness. This extreme punishment will be perpetual, eternal agony away from the grandeur, the splendor, the shared happiness of His might and power. Why do I emphasize the word “eternal” as lasting forever? Is it because I can’t wait to see unbelievers suffer? No, I emphasize the word “eternal” here

because if there is no eternal punishment then there is likewise no eternal life. The Greek word for “eternal” is the same. If the unbeliever is annihilated and ceases to live eternally, then the believer is also annihilated and ceases to live eternally. See Matthew 25:46.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

In the time of His vengeance, He will be quite able to handle His enemies Himself. It is fitting that He should execute His own judgment upon a world that spat in His face, plowed His back, crowned Him with thorns, nailed Him to a cross, and has blasphemed Him ever since. The word for “vengeance” means literally “that which issues out of justice.” It has to do with the execution of justice, the maintenance of right. This is not mere revenge or vindictiveness. It is not personal rage striking back in passion. This is righteous retribution ... The doom here is terrible beyond all thought. The use of the word “eternal” here shows that the punishment in view is not temporary but forever. The purpose of such punishment is retribution with no thought of reclamation. The wicked, then, at the Lord’s return, will be handed over to eternal ruin. Who can imagine the horrors that will accompany the dissolution of their personality, the gnawings of conscience, the torments of memory, the anguish of guilt, and the terrible knowledge that their doom is deserved, hopeless, and unending? (J. Phillips)

Destruction here is not, as some wrongly presume, implying annihilation but eternal separation from God. As the life that God gives the righteous is called “eternal life,” so the lost receive “eternal punishment.” Not only will the lost not experience the presence of the Father and of Jesus, but they will be eternally banished from the glory of His power. “Ischus” implies His warlike power and strength. (M. Couch) “Everlasting destruction” is not annihilation but separation from the presence of God and the manifestation of His power. (C. Ryrie) The wicked will be banished from the manifestation of His power in the glorification of His saints. (P. Gloag) The contention that “aionios” may in this context mean something less than “everlasting” has not the slightest validity ... The adjective occurs in the NT in the three following senses only: without beginning or end, without beginning, without end. The teaching of the eternal punishment of the wicked is by no means restricted to the words of Christ. To name but a few other instances, the apostle Paul spoke of it in John 3:36 and John spoke of it in Revelation 14:11. (R. Kuiper)

The word for “destruction” means “ruin.” The picture is not of obliteration but of a ruin of human life out of God’s presence for ever. There is no stronger Greek expression for eternity than this one. (J. Piper) For Paul, God’s judicial wrath as it terminates on the finally unrepentant, according to His sovereign predestination, is for them absolute and unmitigated. Divine wrath and justice are not merely penultimate (and no more than metaphorical) expressions of His ultimately all-embracing love. It is unnecessary, and it weakens the biblical concept of the wrath of God, to deprive it of its emotional and affective character. Wrath in God must not be conceived of in terms of the fitful passion with which anger is frequently associated in us. But to construe God’s wrath as consisting simply in His purpose to punish sin or to secure the connection between sin and misery is to equate wrath with its effects and virtually eliminate wrath as a movement within the mind of God. Wrath is the holy revulsion of God’s being against that which is the contradiction of His holiness. (R. Gaffin)

The punishment of the wicked will be neither temporary nor will it be annihilation, but it will continue throughout eternity and those being punished will be conscious. (T. Constable)

Having held the glory of God in contempt through ingratitude and distrust and disobedience, unbelievers are sentenced to be excluded from the enjoyment of that glory forever and ever in the eternal misery of hell. (J. Piper) It will be destruction from the Almighty, more terrible than the consuming fire which consumed Nadab and Abihu, which came from before the Lord. (M. Henry) All who are cast into the Lake of Fire will be eternally separated from God. As the first death is the separation of the soul from the body, so the second death will be the eternal separation of the soul from God – “punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.” We are aware that the enemies of God’s truth have sought to tamper with this word rendered everlasting and eternal. But their efforts have been entirely futile. The difference between things temporal and things eternal in this verse is as great as the difference between things “seen” and the things “not seen.” None but one who really knows God can begin to estimate what it will mean to be eternally banished from the Lord, forever separated from the Fount of all goodness! (A. Pink)

**2 Thess. 1:9** Who (Subj. Nom., Qualitative) will suffer (τίνω, FAI3P, Predictive) punishment (Acc. Dir. Obj.), eternal (Acc. Extent of Time; perpetual, neverending) agony (Acc. Appos.; ruin, destruction) away from the face (Abl. Separation; person) of the Lord (Poss. Gen.; outer darkness) and (connective) away from the glory (Abl. Separation; splendor, grandeur, shared happiness) of His (Poss. Gen.) power (Adv. Gen. Ref.; might),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:9** οἵτινες δίκην τίσουσιν ὄλεθρον αἰώνιον ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ κυρίου καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς δόξης τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:9** qui poenas dabunt in interitu aeternas a facie Domini et a gloria virtutis eius

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 1:10** When He shall return to be glorified [honored] by His saints [during the millennium] and to be admired by all those who believed in that day [during the tribulation]. Because our testimony was believed by you [Thessalonian believers],

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 1:10** Whenever He comes to be glorified in His saints and to be marveled at in all those who believed, because our testimony to you was believed on that day.

<sup>KJV</sup> **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.

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

The Lord Jesus Christ will return (Culminative Aorist tense) to the earth to be glorified (Futuristic Aorist tense) by His saints during the millennium. During the 1,000 year millennium,

He will rule and reign over the earth (on David's throne in Israel) and over the heavens. He will also be admired with wonder by those who became believers (Futuristic Aorist tense) during the tribulation. The phrase "in that day" refers to the future tribulation period. And because many Thessalonians believed (Culminative Aorist tense) the testimony of Paul, Timothy and Silvanus, they will pray for them in the next verse. The sentence structure and cutoff is most unfortunate, as the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of this verse actually belongs to the first portion of verse 11.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

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. (J. Phillips) His glory will be seen here on earth only when He comes. His glory will not be displayed in the world when the rapture takes place and He carries the redeemed away into heaven. In heaven, we will certainly see the glory of His deity. His earthly glory, although certainly related to His deity, has to do with His glorification when He comes as the reigning King, the Son of David. This verse, then, is continuing to describe the second coming of Christ when His glory is established with His reign on earth ... The believers will be overjoyed. All the longings and expectations of seeing Jesus and His glory will have to come to pass. All the tears that have been shed washed clean the path for this moment. "That believed" carries a sense of past tense because it looks back to the time when the redeemed trusted God. (M. Couch) His marvelous attributes are displayed in the believers. (J. Lightfoot)

The second coming of Christ will be a time of glorification of Christ as well as a time of retribution. (C. Ryrie) When He comes back to establish His kingdom, however, the Scriptures make it quite clear that He will judge the world in perfect righteousness. When He comes back He will be accompanied by the saints. The event will be such a tremendous spectacle that it will impel worship and admiration on the part of all who believe. (J. Walvoord) Such a hope should strengthen any believer who might be buckling under the pressure of persecution by unbelievers. This glimpse into the future undoubtedly encouraged Paul's readers and it should encourage believers in their trials today. (T. Constable) Christ will not have this glory for Himself individually; but it will be common to all the saints. This is the crowning and choice consolation of the pious, that when the Son of God will be manifested in the glory of His kingdom, He will gather them into the same fellowship with Himself. (J. Calvin)

**2 Thess. 1:10** When (temporal) He shall return (έρχομαι, AASubj.3S, Culminative, Temporal, Deponent) to be glorified (ένδοξάζομαι, APInf., Futuristic, Purpose, Deponent; honored) by His (Poss. Gen.) saints (Dat. Ref.; during the millennium) and (continuative) to be admired (θαυμάζω, APInf., Futuristic, Purpose, marveled at) by all those (Dat. Ind. Obj.; tribulation believers) who believed (πιστεύω, AAPtc.DMP, Futuristic, Substantival) in that (Dat. Spec.) day (Loc. Time; during the tribulation). Because (causal) our (Poss. Gen.) testimony (Subj. Nom.) was believed (πιστεύω, API3S, Culminative) by you (Gen. Adv.; Thessalonian believer),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:10** ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐνδοξασθῆναι ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ καὶ θαυμασθῆναι ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ὅτι ἐπιστεύθη τὸ μαρτύριον ἡμῶν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:10** cum venerit glorificari in sanctis suis et admirabilis fieri in omnibus qui crediderunt quia creditum est testimonium nostrum super vos in die illo

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 1:11** For that reason [out of responsibility for your spiritual welfare] we also continue to pray on every occasion concerning you, that our God may consider you worthy [due to the doctrine in your soul] of your calling [positional truth: election] and might fill up your deficiency [experiential truth] with every beneficial thing [categorical doctrines that you need to advance to the next stage of the spiritual life], generously and doctrinally produced in the sphere of [divine] power,

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 1:11** To which end also we are praying always for you, namely, that our God may count you worthy of the station in life to which He has called you, and fulfill every delight [you Thessalonian saints have] in goodness and every work that finds its source in faith with power,

<sup>KJV</sup> **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:

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

Since Paul, Silvanus and Timothy originally preached the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Thessalonian believers, they feel responsible for their spiritual welfare. They are not the kind of missionaries who preach and leave, never to see or care for their converts again. So for this reason, they continue to pray (Iterative Present tense) for the Thessalonians whenever the occasion is appropriate. They pray that God may evaluate each believer and consider him worthy (Constative Aorist tense) of his divine election or divine calling. They also pray that if there is a doctrinal deficiency in the life of any Thessalonian believer, that the Lord might fill up this deficiency with everything that is lacking (Constative Aorist tense). In other words, the intended result of their prayers is that the Lord will somehow provide every category of doctrine necessary for the spiritual growth of the Thessalonian believers to live up to their positional status.

The necessary and beneficial building material for every Christian is Bible doctrine. Since Paul cannot be present physically, he prays that somebody will fill the gap and teach them whatever they need to hear to move on to the next stage of their spiritual life. Maybe they need to hear eschatology, or maybe pneumatology, or maybe ecclesiology. Every believer has some doctrinal category that he is deficient in, some category that keeps him from passing the next momentum test. Paul isn't taking inventory of every believer's life. He doesn't know what each of them need personally. So he prays that the Lord will provide all of their needs. He prays that these deficient doctrines be generously provided by God and that they result in spiritual production in the lives

of the listeners. And the only way this can be accomplished by the believer is by utilizing correct protocol, by residing and functioning in the sphere of divine power.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

The apostle is developing a continuous thought and he has not yet finished with it. He is developing his thought, progressing from glory to what is happening now on earth, moving from positional truth (“your calling”) to experiential truth (“God may count you worthy”) of that calling. God’s calling here is regarded by Paul as that sovereign decree that brings the elect to salvation ... The believer, in his or her experience of living out the Christian life, should be always aware that he or she was sovereignly called by the grace of God into the family of the redeemed. The believer then is to be continually living up to his or her position of divine election and calling in Christ ... The walk of the Christian may be flawed and imperfect, yet the believer’s eternal life is certain because of the completeness of the Lord’s election and salvation and by his justification through faith in Christ. Regardless, the walk of the believer needs the assistance of prayer ... Confession of sins is vitally important to restore fellowship ... This power is of course the power given by the Spirit of God; it is not human ability. (M. Couch) The “work of faith” is that which marks, characterizes, and evinces the vitality of the faith. (C. Ellicott)

The future glorification will be mutual – that is, between Jesus, the Head of the Church, and the members who make up the bride. It will be an honor to the Head to have such members “without spot or wrinkle or any such thing;” and it will be a distinct glory and honor to the members to be members of the Head, “the firstborn among many brethren.” This will be love perfected. Each will see its own joy and pride and honor in the other. The Head of the Church will glory in the spotless bride, and the Church will glory in the bridegroom, the Lord Jesus. (O. Greene) Future things are not made known to satisfy our curiosity, but with the purpose of presenting practical truth upon which we can base our lives. This is the point Paul makes here. He has reviewed their sufferings, and how God is able to take care of them. He has discussed how the wicked will be punished in due time. Then he makes a practical application. If this is our destiny, if there is glory ahead, if we are to be in the very presence of our glorious Savior, what an exhortation it constitutes to live for Christ right now! In verse 11 Paul is praying always for them that this may be fulfilled in their lives. (J. Walvoord)

The aim of the prayer is that He may be able to count or declare the Thessalonians worthy of their high calling as Christians. This will be done only if in turn the believers fulfill all the good pleasure of goodness. Walking worthy, then, involves resolving to do good. (C. Ryrie) The question raised by this petition is, What sort of Christians have we now become? Have we “become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13)? Have we, in terms of Paul’s metaphor, built upon the foundation which is Christ (1 Cor. 3:11)? For Christians this will not be a matter of life or death, but it will entail an assessment of how they have done and will have a bearing on their future glory. (D. Williams) The believer’s production encompasses far more than just the overt fulfillment of Christian responsibilities – giving, prayer, witnessing, service in the local church. These legitimate demonstrations of Christian service, when properly motivated, are the result of

spiritual growth, not the cause. Integrity comes first; service demands integrity. True thinking creates true motivation; true motivation creates true action. Christian production is the coordinated, interlocking function of all the gates in the divine dynasphere empowered by God the Holy Spirit. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

**2 Thess. 1:11** For that reason (Acc. Purpose; out of responsibility for their spiritual welfare) we also (adjunctive) continue to pray (προσεύχομαι, PMI1P, Iterative, Deponent) on every occasion (Temporal adv.; always) concerning you (Gen. Adv.), that (purpose) our (Gen. Rel.) God (Subj. Nom.) may consider you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) worthy (ἀξιόω, AASubj.3S, Constative, Intended Result; due to the Bible doctrine in your soul) of your (Poss. Gen.) calling (Adv. Gen. Ref.; election: positional truth) and (continuative) might fill up your (ellipsis: Poss. Gen.) deficiency (πληρώω, AASubj.3S, Constative, Intended Result; experiential truth) with every (Acc. Measure) beneficial thing (Acc. Dir. Obj.; categorical doctrine), generously (Gen. Manner) and (connective) doctrinally (Gen. Manner) produced (Adv. Acc.) in the sphere of power (Loc. Sph.),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:11** εἰς ὃ καὶ προσευχόμεθα πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν ἵνα ὑμᾶς ἀξιώσῃ τῆς κλήσεως ἧς ἠμῶν καὶ πληρώσῃ πάσαν εὐδοκίαν ἀγαθωσύνης καὶ ἔργον πίστεως ἐν δυνάμει

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:11** in quo etiam oramus semper pro vobis ut dignetur vos vocatione sua Deus et impleat omnem voluntatem bonitatis et opus fidei in virtute

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 1:12** In order that the character [nature, person] of our Lord Jesus might be glorified in you [by your supergrace status], and you in it [residence and function inside the sphere of divine power], according to the grace [norms & standards] of our God, even the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 1:12** In order that the Name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you and you in Him, in accordance with the grace of our God, even the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>KJV</sup> **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.

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

The ultimate aim of their prayers (Culminative Aorist tense) is that the character, nature and Person of our Lord Jesus might be glorified (Potential Subjunctive mood) in each Thessalonian believer by their attaining supergrace status. The only way any of us glorify the Lord is by reflecting His glory by our progressive spiritual growth. We reflect His glory when we are filled with the Spirit and Bible doctrine. If your thinking is not saturated with the Word of God, you are not glorifying God. If your application of doctrine to daily life is not consistent according to grace standards, you are not exhibiting the character and nature of our Lord Jesus.

Paul and his companions also pray that each Thessalonian believer might continue to reside and function inside the sphere of divine power. The combination of these two is what this rather clever “He in you” and “you in it” parallel is supposed to communicate - reciprocal glorying. The only way “He in you” and “you in Him” is by “you in It,” with “It” being a reference to the Holy Spirit. Both phrases are accomplished according to the grace norms and standards of God. I could go either way on this, translating it as either “in Him” or “in It.” There are no works involved here, only grace. It is also worth noting that the ascensive conjunction points to the deity of Christ.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

Lord Jesus Christ! Lord emphasizes His power; Jesus emphasizes His person; and Christ emphasizes His position. No wonder Paul saw in this name the guarantee that all of God’s purposes concerning Him and us will be fulfilled. (J. Phillips) Paul depicts God as actively and continually putting forth His energy in believers to ensure the accomplishment of their task. In the Lord’s mysterious providence He has designed a plan whereby He would use limited and weak clay to accomplish His work. He certainly does not need us ... The honor is not self-generated, but is given to us by our relationship with Him. It is also a recognition that they were right and wise to follow Him. (M. Couch) Believers must suffer in order to have this glorification. (R. Wilkin)

As we face our lives, in different walks of life, in different opportunities for service, is it true of us, as it was of these Thessalonian believers so long ago, that our lives are the means of bringing glory to the Savior? Are we really manifesting Christ as His trophies of grace, that we belong to Him and that He belongs to us? (J. Walvoord) In the Bible the name stands for the person named, his character, conduct, reputation, and everything else about him. In praying thus, Paul was asking that God would fully glorify Jesus Christ in these saints. (T. Constable) The believer’s graces redound to Christ’s glory, and His glory as Head, reflects glory on them - reciprocal glorification. (R. Jamieson)

**2 Thess. 1:12** In order that (purpose) the character (Subj. Nom.; nature, person) of our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus (Poss. Gen.) might be glorified (ἐνδοξάζομαι, APSubj.3S, Culminative, Potential, Deponent) in you (Loc. Sph.; by your supergrace status), and (continuative) you (Subj. Nom.) in it (Loc. Sph.; residence & function inside the sphere of divine power), according to the grace (Adv. Acc.; norms & standards) of our (Gen. Rel.) God (Abl. Source), even (ascensive) the Lord Jesus Christ (Gen. Appos.).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:12** ὅπως ἐνδοξασθῆ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐν αὐτῷ κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 1:12** ut clarificetur nomen Domini nostri Iesu Christi in vobis et vos in illo secundum gratiam Dei nostri et Domini Iesu Christi

## CHAPTER 2

**LWB 2 Thess. 2:1** Now, I am urgently requesting you, brethren [members of the royal family], concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ [at the rapture] and our assembling [gathered together in the air] around Him,

**KW 2 Thess. 2:1** Now, I am requesting you, brethren, with regard to the coming and personal presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, even our being assembled together to Him,

**KJV 2 Thessalonians 2:1** Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him,

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Paul changes topic from his concern for their experiential sanctification to their correct understanding of the rapture of the church. He urgently requests (Static Present tense) that they pay attention to what he has to say about the return of the Lord Jesus Christ in the air to gather together His bride. He will return in the air and will summons all believers to join Him there. We will meet Him there, grouped by rank (Latin: congregated) in an orderly fashion. Our God is a God of order, not chaos. When the rapture occurs, we will assemble in clear, recognizable order by rank. What do I mean by rank? The Lord will place us in orderly sections according to the spiritual status we have attained on earth.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

The teaching that the Church would go through the Tribulation was already being advanced by certain teachers whom Paul opposed in this passage. It is sometimes assumed that in the early apostolic period only pure and accurate doctrine was taught. Nothing could be further from the truth. Paul had to write his Epistle to the Galatians to correct the error of legalism. He wrote most of 1 Corinthians to correct doctrinal and moral errors in the Corinthian church. It seems quite clear that most of the heresies that later emerged in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries had their small beginnings in the apostolic church. (J. Walvoord) Paul begs his readers not to be thrown into consternation or kept in a flutter of excitement over that matter of the Parousia or coming. “Our gathering together” fits with the Rapture, certainly not the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming, though some think that two distinct comings are in view here: The coming would be referring to His kingdom reign and the gathering together would be referring to the Rapture. (M. Couch)

The subversion of the Thessalonians had been done swiftly. Satan does not let any grass grow under his feet. No sooner is he checked by Paul’s first epistle, in which the whole rapture question is spelled out, than he counters with another error. If Paul was right that the Rapture preceded the Great Tribulation, and if they were already in the Great Tribulation, then they had missed the Rapture –

and that was something about which to wail. If the false teachers were right and the Rapture followed the Great Tribulation, and if that dreaded event had already begun, doom and gloom, terrors and horrors unimaginable, lay ahead. That, too, was something about which to wail. Neither view offered any comfort. Paul pleads with his friends not to be so gullible, so swiftly moved from the truth. (J. Phillips) Paul did not hesitate to teach prophecy to young converts. The topic of the passage is clearly stated; it concerns the coming of Christ and in particular that aspect of it which involves our gathering together to meet Him. (C. Ryrie)

**2 Thess. 2:1** Now (transitional), I am urgently requesting (ἐρωτάω, PAIIP, Static) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.), brethren (Voc. Address; members of the royal family), concerning the coming (Adv. Gen. Ref.) of our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus Christ (Poss. Gen.; at the rapture) and (connective) our (Poss. Gen.) assembling (Obj. Gen.; gathered together in the air, grouped by rank) around Him (Acc. Place),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:1** Ἐρωτῶμεν δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀδελφοί ὑπὲρ τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου [ἡμῶν] Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἡμῶν ἐπισυναγωγῆς ἐπ' αὐτόν

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:1** rogamus autem vos fratres per adventum Domini nostri Iesu Christi et nostrae congregationis in ipsum

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 2:2** **That you stop being so quickly agitated [hypersensitive due to reactor factors] as a result of your thoughts [wrong understanding] nor be alarmed [emotionally upset], neither by [demonic] spirit nor by [false] doctrine nor by [forged] letter alleged to be from us, on the pretext that the Day of the Lord [emphasis on the tribulation] has arrived and is in progress at this very moment.**

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 2:2** Not soon to become unsettled, the source of this unsettled state being your minds, neither be thrown into confusion, either by a spirit [a believer in the Christian assembly claiming the authority of divine revelation and claiming to give the saints a word from God], or through a word [received personally] as from us or through a letter falsely alleged to be written by us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come and is now present.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:2** That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Paul urges the Thessalonian believers to stop being so quickly unsettled and confused (Constative Aorist tense) by the strange things they are hearing in public forums. Some of them have not only become agitated due to their own hypersensitivity (losing their minds), but they have reacted to the point of becoming unduly alarmed (Dramatic Present tense). Some have entered “emotional revolt of the soul” due to their inability to think under pressure. They were

not thinking with their ordinary, sober mind – their reasoning faculty. They were emotionally upset, highly troubled that they had missed the rapture. Many of them think they are in the Great Tribulation, because of the persecution they are suffering. These false notions had been coming at them from three quarters: by demon spirit, by false teachers and by forged letters.

Satan had unleashed all the forces he could muster against these new believers in Thessalonica. His plan was to steal the blessings and peace that come from the doctrines of the rapture, tribulation and 2<sup>nd</sup> advent away from them. He was quite successful in making many believers think the Day of the Lord had already arrived (Dramatic Perfect tense) and that they were going through it at this very moment. He wanted to destroy their spiritual momentum by inducing a state of perpetual fear; and he wanted to sow seeds of doubt against the promises of God that told them unequivocally that believers in Jesus Christ would not go through the tribulation. We have some of these same forces, demonic and human, actively working among us today.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

The expression, “the day of the Lord,” is found many times in Scripture. It is a period of time in the history of redemption when God will deal finally with sin and with sinners. It includes the closing events of this age, especially the Great Tribulation, the end-time judgments and the glorious millennial reign of Christ. (J. Gerig) It describes a state of jumpiness or of worry. Just as some are easily thrown off balance, so others can fall into a state of constant fretting. Paul wants neither of these states in his converts. (C. Ellicott) The intellectual element in “nous” is the prominent one ... Some of them may have been deceived by spiritual hallucinations which they mistook for true revelations. (J. Lightfoot) Paul gives the Thessalonian believers good, sound Bible teaching to help them keep their equilibrium and mental composure, thus enabling them to be effective soul winners. (O. Greene)

Since receiving the first letter, many had evidently become confused as to the order of events. Either traveling false teachers or the Judaizers of the city had sown doubt, claiming that they could prove the Messiah’s coming by all of the OT passages. With subtle propaganda, they preyed on the fears of the new converts concerning the darkness of the Day of Judgment and convinced them that this day of the Lord’s wrath had come. Paul’s present letter was written to correct the views of the false teachers and to re-establish the Thessalonian church in their hope, dispelling the fear that gripped them. (M. Couch) A forged letter had deceived the Thessalonians. The word for “letter” is the usual word for epistle. We have examples of this kind of thing in our own day. The Mormons are deceived by a false book that is widely distributed, cleverly advertised, and utterly a lie. (J. Phillips)

They were losing their minds, their reasoning ability was shaken in regard to this particular subject. This came as a shock to the mind and then left them in the greatest mental agitation. Note that Christians are to keep their heads against error and fanatic notions. (Lenski) Paul does not deny that the day of the Lord may be near. He asserts that it is not imminent. Certain events must take place before it arrives. (J. Lightfoot) Pneuma is not referring to the Holy Spirit as might be assumed, but probably refers to some ecstatic utterances, a false religious prophetic teaching, or demonic

prophesies given by some of the charlatans so prevalent in Thessalonica. If the last is in view, Paul could be referring to spirits as demons. (M. Couch) He said in effect, "I did not write such a letter." The letter, if it was written, must have been a forgery. The teaching that they were then in the Day of the Lord is therefore labeled as false doctrine and their fears of being in this awful period are shown to be groundless. (J. Walvoord)

The "Day of the Lord" is defined as being the day when God will be exalted and man abased. It occurs in connection with words such as wrath and vengeance. It refers to the time when God will overthrow Israel's foes. It will be a time of darkness and judgment. To Israel's foes, it will be "that great and terrible day." It will climax in the setting up of the millennial kingdom and end, a thousand years later, with the dissolution of the heavens themselves. The "Day of Christ" is imminent; the "Day of the Lord" can come only after numerous other things have prepared the way. The Day of Christ is for the church; the Day of the Lord is for the world. The Day of Christ is primarily a day of joy; the Day of the Lord is primarily a day of judgment. Everything that Paul is now about to reveal is true of the Day of the Lord; none of it is true of the Day of Christ. (J. Phillips)

The "Day of the Lord" is the period of time predicted in the Scripture when God will deal directly with human sin. It includes the tribulation time preceding the 2<sup>nd</sup> advent of Christ as well as the whole millennial reign of Christ. It will culminate in the judgment of the Great White Throne. The Day of the Lord is therefore an extended period of time lasting over 1,000 years. (J. Walvoord) Believers were behaving like ships that have become the victim of waves and winds and are being blown hither and thither. The truth of God is sane and never unbalances the mind. (M. Couch) In the present passage "mind" stands for the whole mental balance of the man, the regulative intellectual faculty. (C. Ellicott) Epictetus uses "aposaleusthai" for the unsettling of the mind by sophistries. (W. Nicoll) "Do not be terrified out of your senses all at once." (J. Knox)

New Christians tend to be gullible because they are not yet grounded in the truth of God's Word. But all Christians can be misled by impressive personalities and spectacular appeals. The antidote to poisonous heresy is a good strong dose of the truth which Paul proceeded to administer ... Apostasy is a revolt, a departure, an abandoning of a position once held. This rebellion, which will take place within the professing church, will be a departure from the truth that God has revealed in His Word. True, apostasy has characterized the church almost from its inception, but Paul referred to a specific distinguishable apostasy that will come in the future. Some interpreters have taken this "departure" as a reference to the Rapture of the church (e.g., E. Schyler English: *Rethinking the Rapture*, New York: Loizeaux Brother, 1954), but this is not too probable. (T. Constable)

It is interesting that there is always a group of super-duper saints who seem to think they get direct information from the Lord. They don't think they need to study the Word of God; they imagine they get their information directly through dreams or visions or special revelations. Now, friend, I admit that it is much easier to pick up all your information in a telephone conversation than it is to go to school or take up the Bible and study it, but it won't be coming straight from God. (J. McGee) The present tense should be noted as pointing to a continued state of agitation following upon a shock received. (R. Earle) Two words are used to describe the unsettling effect of the teaching. It drives

men from their sober sense like a ship from its moorings and also produces a lasting state of disturbance. (P. Cousins)

**2 Thess. 2:2** That you stop (neg. particle) being so quickly (Adv. Manner) agitated (σαλεύω, APInf., Constativē, Purpose; unsettled, confused, hypersensitive due to reactor factors) as a result of your (Poss. Gen.) thoughts (Abl. Separation; improper thinking, wrong understanding) nor (neg. conj.) be alarmed (θροέω, PPInf., Dramatic, Purpose; emotionally upset, troubled, emotional revolt of the soul), neither (neg. conj.) by spirit (Abl. Means; demonic) nor (neg. conj.) by doctrine (Abl. Means; false) nor (neg. conj.) by letter (Abl. Means; forged) alleged to be (adv.) from us (Gen. Source), on the pretext (adv.) that (conj.) the Day (Subj. Nom.) of the Lord (Gen. Spec.; tribulation, 2<sup>nd</sup> advent) has arrived and is in progress at this very moment (ένίστημι, Perf.AI3S, Dramatic).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:2** εἰς τὸ μὴ ταχέως σαλευθῆναι ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ νοῦς μηδὲ θροεῖσθαι μήτε διὰ πνεύματος μήτε διὰ λόγου μήτε δι' ἐπιστολῆς ὡς δι' ἡμῶν ὡς ὅτι ἐνέστηκεν ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου·

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:2** ut non cito moveamini a sensu neque terreamini neque per spiritum neque per sermonem neque per epistulam tamquam per nos quasi instet dies Domini

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 2:3** Do not allow anyone to deceive you, not under any circumstances [demon spirits, false doctrine, forged letter, etc.], because [the Day of the Lord will not come] not until the rebellion has come first [general apostasy of the church] and the man of lawlessness [personification of wickedness: the Antichrist], the son of perdition [indwelled by Satan, destined for hell], has finally been revealed,

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 2:3** Do not begin to allow anyone to lead you astray in any way, because that day shall not come except the aforementioned departure [of the Church to heaven] comes first and the man of lawlessness is disclosed [in his true identity], the son of perdition,

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:3** 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;

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Some of the Thessalonian believers were rattled. Don't forget this was a new church with neophyte believers. They had been taught basic Bible doctrine and were making progress in the spiritual life. They were evangelistically excited and were facing persecution from prior friends and neighbors. They had exercised virtue love towards each other and were becoming a tight group of believers. But they weren't seasoned, mature believers by any stretch of the imagination. When anyone clever presented a twist on true doctrine, they didn't know enough to successfully refute the errors. Some of them were concentrating on what was going on around them, rather than what Paul had taught

them. Paul steps in here to correct the errors they have embraced (Latin: seduced) and to end the apprehension some of them have that they missed the rapture and are under judgment in the Day of the Lord. He warns them to let nobody deceive them (Subjunctive of Prohibition) under any circumstances, in fact, using a double negative for emphasis. Why is he warning them? Because he has already heard reports about three erroneous sources that some of them have embraced: demon spirits, false eschatological doctrine, and the contents of a forged letter with Paul's signature on it. The nature of the false teachings: that they were living in the Day of the Lord under judgment.

Paul reminds them that the Day of the Lord will not come until (Temporal Subjunctive mood) the apostasy comes first (Ingressive Aorist tense). The word "aphistemi" means to withdraw, depart, stand aloof or remove either spatially or from the context of a state or relationship or from fellowship with a person (TDNT). It also means to separate oneself or to go away, i.e., Christians will depart from their fellowship or relationship with the world at the rapture, so this could be a reference to the rapture. The word "apostasia" means to depart or defect from the truth (rebellion) and be an apostate in the religious sense (TDNT). There is already a form of rebellion going on within the Christian church, a rebellion against Bible doctrine, so this could be a reference to a general but heightened rebellion before the Day of the Lord begins. So which is it? Is Paul talking about a departure (the rapture) or about a rebellion (the apostasy). Is one of the two things that must happen before the Day of the Lord begins the rapture or the apostasy? Theologically, both must happen before the Day of the Lord begins. Etymologically, it is not as easy a question as you might think. First, the word "apostasia" (apostasy) is not a translation, but a transliteration; the word "departure" or "rebellion" would be a good translation.

Nevertheless, since we use the word "apostasy" so frequently in Christian circles, what does it mean? An apostasy means to turn away from something you once believed, so it does not refer to unbelievers. In this respect, it is the same concept as the word "reversionism." You can't turn around and go in the opposite direction of something - if you never held a position on something to reverse direction or turn away from. Unbelievers, by definition, never believed in God, so they can not turn away from something they never adhered to in the first place. Believers, however, can rebel against the very God who saved them, and live a life completely contrary to what is taught in Scripture. There are candidates for this classification of sorry believers all over the place! This is a concept not taught in most Christian circles. If somebody quits going to church and starts living a life of continual sin, the explanation has historically been that this person was never a believer in the first place. This is a grossly incorrect theory based on a deficient understanding of experiential sanctification. Can a believer in Christ turn away from God in disobedience? Yes, he can. Can a believer in Christ engage in worshipping other gods? Yes, he can. Can a believer in Christ lose his salvation? No, he cannot.

My conclusion is that the translation "departure" as a reference to the rapture is strained in this verse. I do believe the rapture must occur before the Day of the Lord begins, but this is not a proof-text for that timeline. As a teacher once reminded us in Bible college, "It might be true, but it isn't the truth." It is true that the rapture is a departure; it is true the rapture must occur before the Day of the Lord begins. But it is not the truth that it is being taught to us in this verse. There is far more etymological

support for the translation “rebellion” as a general departure from Bible teaching in the end times. This general rebellion from the Truth is predicted in many passages of Scripture. The translation “rebellion” also fits better with the word “lawlessness” that comes next in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the verse. The idea is that a “general rebellion” within the church sets the stage for the “man of lawlessness” who will be able to deceive millions without anyone questioning his thoughts, motives or actions. There will be so little doctrine understood by believers just prior to the rapture, that the unbelievers who knew them will have nothing to recall when they are gone. Unbelievers who rarely heard Bible doctrine in any forum (personal sharing or public communication) will be predisposed to believe a lie and follow a liar. The stage is then set by a general rebellion against establishment truth and the Gospel of Christ; the main actor (Antichrist) walks onto the scene and fools everyone. This main actor is the personification of wickedness and destruction, doomed by sovereign decree to the Lake of Fire.

The man of lawlessness (wickedness and destruction) must be revealed (Culminative Aorist tense) before the Day of the Lord begins. It is quite possible that he has been born already and lives among us in our generation. He might be sitting on a lawn chair at the camp site just adjacent to me! But if he is alive today, we certainly don’t know who he is and it doesn’t behoove us to speculate. His goal in life is not known to us yet. He might be in school; he might be in business; he might be in a government job preparing for his eventual rise to the top. He might not be here for another 1,000 years. Nobody knows for sure. But the Day of the Lord will definitely not begin until he is brought forward (Subjunctive of Result) and empowered by Satan to do his dirty deeds. He is also called the “son of perdition,” which means he is indwelt by Satan and is destined to hell. You could tie him up and preach the gospel to him for weeks on end, but he will never change his mind. His future purpose and end result is sealed by sovereign decree. When the Holy Spirit is removed from the earth, he will be infused with satanic power and will come forward on the world scene with all the cunning and artifice that his father, the devil, has accumulated and practiced for thousands of years. A world without Jesus Christ, without Bible doctrine, without the restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit, and without the witness of Church Age believers will believe anything the Antichrist says and follow his lead to their final doom.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

As in the OT, so also the NT reckons with signs and wonders worked by false prophets and pseudo-messianic figures, by whom men will be seduced into apostasy from God. (NIDNTT: O. Hofius) Before Christ returns, there will come a period of apostasy, in which the “man of lawlessness” (Antichrist) will gain the upper hand. (NIDNTT: G. Finkenrath) The word “apostasy” implies that the opposition contemplated by Paul springs up from within rather than from without. (J. Lightfoot) Apostasy is the decisive turning away from a religious position and stance once firmly held. It differs from ordinary unbelief in that it involves turning away from a position of belief. (T. Schreiner) What we call apostasy today is the total desertion of principles of the faith, forsaking the tenets of historic Christianity ... Without being dogmatic, it would appear from a rather thorough analysis of the word “apostasy” that the contextual usage of it by Paul would lead us to believe that he meant “departure” concurring with “our gathering together to Him” or the rapture. (J. Gerig) The

characteristic thought of the Bible is that God rules. Thus the word is appropriate for a rebellion against His rule. (L. Morris)

Where can the truth be found? The test is this: Is it the Word of God or the additions of men? The moment we accept the word of man instead of, or in addition to, the Bible, we are being led astray. Ask this question when confronted with a questionable movement: Is it based solely and exclusively on the Bible, or is it based upon the Bible PLUS something – additional revelation or vision, dreams or voices, or the discoveries of additional documents? Anything added to the Word of God as we have it in the 66 books of the Bible, brands it as false and dangerous. (M.R. DeHaan) The “apostasy” is a revolt, a departure, an abandoning of a position once held. This rebellion, which will take place within the professing church, will be a departure from the truth that God has revealed in His Word. True, apostasy has characterized the church almost from its inception, but Paul referred to a specific, distinguishable apostasy that will come in the future ... Some interpreters have taken this “departure” as a reference to the Rapture of the church (e.g., E. Schuyler English), but that is not too probable. Some scholars believe that this apostasy will consist of people turning from God’s truth to worship the Antichrist, who will set himself up in God’s temple and claim to be God (vs. 4). If this is so, then the judgments of the Day of the Lord will occur in the second half of the seven-year period preceding Christ’s second coming. (T. Constable)

In Luke 21, Matthew 24 and Mark 13, the last days, says Jesus, will be characterized first of all by the multiplication of false doctrines and deceptive cults. How significant and how arresting this warning in the light of the amazing increase in new and exotic sects and cults and isms and religious fantasies. Never before has there been such confusion of tongues, such a babel of strange voices in the world. And no matter how fantastic, fanatical and evidently Satanic these movements, they do not lack for followers. (M.R. DeHaan) It is amazing how gullible some of the saints are when a new deceiver pulls off some stunts in religion. (A.T. Robertson) An incomplete statement must be filled out in this verse in order to finish the thought, a category of omission called ellipsis. The introductory injunction “Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way” is followed by the statement “for [that day will not come] until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed.” Brackets are often used to show the omitted clause supplied. (W. Kaiser, Jr.) When the church departs, many people will be glad to see us go. The liberals will be glad to get rid of us. (J. McGee) The Church must be reduced to an unsightly and dreadful state of ruin, before its full restoration be effected. (J. Calvin)

What is referred to in the ellipsis where a whole clause is omitted in a connected passage is the Day of the Lord, mentioned in the previous verse. The great apostasy, which is the subject of many prophecies, must precede the Day of the Lord. But it does not precede the Day of Christ. Hence the saints in Thessalonica might well be troubled if the Day of the Lord had set in, and they had not been previously gathered together to meet the Lord in the air in the Day of Christ, as had been promised. This is not the popular teaching, but it is the truth of God. Popular theology is very different. It says, “That day cannot come until the world’s conversion comes.” The Scripture says it cannot come until the apostasy shall have come. Popular theology says the world is not good enough yet for Christ to come. The Scripture teaches that the world is not yet bad enough! (E.W. Bullinger) Of all the signs

recounted in Matthew 24, the one that heads the list is deception of the last days. To impress upon us the importance of this sign, it is mentioned three times at the head of the list. In Mark 13 and again in Luke 21 - the question of the disciples concerning the when and the what of Jesus' coming - Jesus gives as the very first sign to look for, the increase of deception and false cults and isms of the latter days. (M.R. DeHaan)

The disappearance of theology from the life of the Church, and the orchestration of that disappearance by some of its leaders, is hard to miss today but, oddly enough, not easy to prove. It is so prevalent, for example, in the shift from God to the self as the central focus of faith, in the psychologized preaching that follows this shift, in the erosion of its conviction, in its strident pragmatism, in its inability to think incisively about the culture, in its reveling in the irrational ... It is emancipating contemporary evangelicals to form casual alliances at will with a multitude of substitutes for this orthodoxy ... The fuel for this new practical virtue comes not from the Bible but from the popularized nostrums of psychology, not from the older practices of self-examination and the pursuit of holiness, but from the newer concerns for psychological wholeness and happiness in an age of affluence. This drastically reduced theological vision has nothing to do with the task that has engaged the church for most of its life. As Tocqueville observed, there has always been a tendency in the American soul to think of religion in terms of its utility rather than its truth ... Management by technique has come to replace management by truth. It is not truth that is wanted but technique ... The result is practical atheism. (D. Wells)

It is an atheism that reduces the church to nothing more than the services it offers or the good feelings the minister can generate. In other words, where professionalism is at work, there the ministry will typically be deprived of its transcendence and reduced to little more than a helping profession. The kind of sentimentality it offers, they declare, "has become the most detrimental corruption of the church and ministry" today. All we have left is sentiment, a saccharine residue of theism in demise. It is the kind of sentimentality that wants to listen without judging, that has opinions but little interest in truth, that is sympathetic but has no passion for that which is right. It is under this guise of piety that pastoral unbelief lives out its life ... Less than half of modern model sermons are explicitly biblical, and a significant number are not discernibly Christian at all. They could have been given by a secular psychologist in a setting like the Rotary Club. Only 19.5% are grounded in or related in any way to the nature, character, and will of God. Are they anthropocentric or theocentric? The overwhelming proportion of the sermons analyzed - more than 80 percent - were anthropocentric. It is as if God has become an awkward appendage to the practice of evangelical faith, at least measured by the pulpit. (D. Wells)

When we think of the weak, inefficient, ineffective preaching that is being perpetrated on a patient, trusting public, we marvel that the Christian religion has stood up under it without being annihilated. If our faith had not been divine in its origin and essence it would have collapsed long ago ... If preaching, like the ministry, is now defined by the needs of the Church rather than the fabric of truth in the Bible, should this be a surprising discovery? A genuinely biblical and God-centered ministry is almost certain to collide head-on with the self-absorption and anthropocentric focus that are now normative in so many evangelical churches ... If the self-orientation in the Church has reordered the

nature of theology, and the rise of the religious consumer has reordered its function, then no amount of management or psychology is going to resolve the issue ... Divorced from the holiness of God, our gospel becomes indistinguishable from any of a host of alternative self-help doctrines. Divorced from the holiness of God, our public morality is reduced to little more than an accumulation of trade-offs between competing private interests. Divorced from the holiness of God, our worship becomes mere entertainment ... Theology is not dying because the academy has failed to devise adequate procedures for reconstructing it, but because the Church has lost its capacity for it. And while some hail this loss as a step forward toward the hope of a new evangelical vitality, it is in fact a sign of creeping death. (D. Wells)

In Matthew 24 Jesus relates signs that have a direct connection with the end: the universal hatred, affliction, and killing of the Jews; a universal tendency to defection, betrayal, and hatred; the prevalence of false prophets and the deceiving of many by their teaching; the abounding of lawlessness and crime; a degenerating of human affection and love. It will be the heyday of cults and false religions. The growing strength of error and apostasy heralds the nearness of the end-time. The departure from biblical and evangelical Christianity is an end-time sign. (J. Gerig) Since the reference here is to a world-wide rebellion against divine authority at the end of the age, the ideas of political revolt and religious apostasy are combined. (F. Bruce) Even as He is now spiritually present in His church, to be personally revealed more gloriously hereafter, even so the power of Antichrist is now secretly at work, but will hereafter be made manifest in a definite and distinctive bodily personality. (C. Ellicott) Some have understood this “departure” to be the departure of the church itself – that is, the rapture. If so, it would definitely place the rapture before the tribulation. Most expositors have understood it as doctrinal departure, that is, apostasy. (J. Walvoord)

What is the apostasy? Apostasy is the departure from professed principles. It is a fact verified from history that an apostasy has been going on throughout this present age. There are many antichrists. As the age advances and draws to its close there is an increase in apostasy. Our days witness this. In this passage we read of “the” apostasy, something different from “an” apostasy. It reveals the fact that the age ends with a complete turning away from revealed truth ... Here we must call attention to the fact that while there is an on-sweeping apostasy in Christendom, there is also a corresponding Jewish apostasy, or rather infidelity. The greater part of Jewry no longer believes in the law and in the prophets. The Messiah and the glorious future is looked upon as a delusion. One of them said years ago – the Messiah we love is the dollar – Jerusalem we do not want, Washington is our Jerusalem. The Antichrist will be accepted by the infidel Jew as their Messiah. Jew and Gentile will then fulfill, through satanic delusion and power, what is written in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Psalm. Gentiles rage, people imagine vain things and finally there is a confederacy “against the Lord and against His anointed,” the Christ. (A. Gaebelein) Apostasia does not mean merely disbelieving, but rather an aggressive and positive revolt. (C. Ryrie)

Some commentators have thought the apostasia could refer to the Rapture in the sense of “the departure.” But almost all scholars agree it has to do with religious or spiritual departure. Some think the apostasy actually comes about when the rebellion with the “lawless one,” the Antichrist, comes on the scene. Though this view is remotely possible, it still does not negate the idea of an apostasy at

the end of the Church dispensation. The NT is clear that such a departure takes place. Though a distinct period of apostasy is coming, both Paul and John point out that the spirit of apostasy is always present. Since apostasy is now with us in this Church Age, no one knows how much more intense it must become before Christ returns for His own. That indicators are now present in no way removes the hope of an imminent return of the Lord. The final apostasy will be an intensification of denials. (M. Couch) The apostasy will only be from within the Church and not from without. (J. Lightfoot) The revolt is also cultural and social. The Church simply falls in line with what is going on in the world. Signs are evident that, coupled with the explosion of communication and the rapid development of technology, humanity will feel it is divine and needs no other God. A vacuum will be created for the son of destruction. He will be a superhuman personality who will be hidden from view until the right moment, and then he will be suddenly manifested. (M. Couch)

Some scholars contend that the word should be translated “depart,” that “there must be a physical departure first.” They say we should take this literally, in the ordinary sense of a person’s departing. If so, then this would be an express declaration that the departure, the rapture of the church, must take place first. However, other people contend that there must be a theological departure from the faith first, that the word refers to a widespread apostasy that will take place before the coming of the Man of Sin. The verse foretells, in other words, a global and final rebellion against God. If we take this to be the meaning, then Paul indicates that the last days will be marked by a falling away from the truth, a turning away from God, abandonment of the Christian faith and the Judeo-Christian ethic. With the rise of atheism, communism, and humanism and the spread of false, oriental religions, this seems to be a marked feature of the current age. The media are the tool and ally of all those subversive forces in our society favoring unbridled permissiveness. Bible reading and prayer have been banned from schools, but every form of moral deviation can be espoused there. The soul-destroying dogma of evolution is accepted as a matter of course, and the Christian view of creation is refused a hearing. Many churches have become liberal, cold, and spiritually dead. Satanism is on the rise. The stage is being set for the coming of the Man of Sin. Far from being pre-Rapture, Holy Spirit revival on the horizon, all we see is an encroaching apostasy. (J. Phillips)

The emphasis on an apostasy from within takes on added significance in the light of recent developments in the church world. There was a day when the Bob Ingersolls railed and ranted against Christianity. Now this opposition comes from within the church. When teachers of theological seminaries in America tell their ministerial students that God is dead, and when a prominent denominational leader declares that it is a sin to believe in individual salvation, it would seem that “The Apostasy” has come ... Again we should note the application to the present day. Never before has there been such a spirit of lawlessness in the United States as we are witnessing now. It stalks our streets and ravages our university campuses. Apostasy in the church and lawlessness in the land – these are two dominant features of American life today. (R. Earle) The apodosis to the conditional clause (“that day will not come”) has to be supplied. (F. Bruce) The organized church which is left down here on earth will totally depart from the faith. But I think the period known as the Laodicean church is the period we are in right now. When the true believers are gone, it will get even worse. It will finally end in total apostasy. (J. McGee)

There must be a “falling away” first. Many have interpreted this to mean the apostasy, and I agree that it does refer to that. But I think it means more than that, as a careful examination of the Word will reveal. The Greek word that is here translated as “falling away” is apostasia. The root word actually means “departure or removal from.” Paul says that before the Day of the Lord begins there must first come a removing. There are two kinds of removing that are going to take place. First, the organized church will depart from the faith – that is what we call apostasy. But there will be total apostasy when the Lord comes, and that cannot take place until the true church is removed. There will be total apostasy because of two things: (1) the organization of the church has departed from the faith – it has apostasized and (2) there has been another departure, the departure of the true church from the earth. The departure of the true church leads into the total apostasizing of the organized church. From the viewpoint of the earth the removal of believers is a departure. From the viewpoint of heaven, it is a rapture, a snatching or catching up. I think the world is going to say at that time, “Oh boy, they are gone!” They think that fellow McGee and other Bible teachers are a nuisance, and they will be glad when they are gone. The world will rejoice. They do not realize that it will be a sad day for them. They think they will be entering into the blessing of the Millennium, not realizing they are actually entering into the Great Tribulation Period, which will be a time of trouble such as the world has never seen before. (J. McGee)

**2 Thess. 2:3** Do not (neg. particle) allow anyone (Subj. Nom.) to deceive (ἐξαπατάω, AASubj.3S, Constative, Prohibition; seduce wholly, lead astray) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.), not under any (Acc. Spec.) circumstances (Acc. Manner; demon spirits, false doctrine, or forged letters), because (causal; the Day of the Lord will not come) not until (conj. combined with neg. particle) the rebellion (Subj. Nom.; apostasy of the church) has come (έρχομαι, AASubj.3S, Ingressive, Temporal, Deponent) first (adv.) and (continuative) the man (Subj. Nom.) of lawlessness (Descr. Gen.; the personification of wickedness: the Antichrist), the son (Nom. Appos.) of perdition (Descr. Gen.; destined for hell, indwelt by Satan, the son who is due destruction and punishment), has finally been revealed (ἀποκαλύπτω, APSubj.3S, Culminative, Result);

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:3** μή τις ὑμᾶς ἐξαπατήσῃ κατὰ μηδένα τρόπον ὅτι ἐὰν μὴ ἔλθῃ ἡ ἀποστασία πρῶτον καὶ ἀποκαλυφθῇ ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:3** ne quis vos seducat ullo modo quoniam nisi venerit discessio primum et revelatus fuerit homo peccati filius perditionis

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 2:4** Who opposes [as an enemy] and exalts himself [with presumptuous pride] above everything declared and maintained according to God [divine viewpoint], with the result that he displays [exhibits] himself as an object of worship in the [Tribulation] temple of God, proclaiming that he himself is God [presents himself as the messiah].

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 2:4** He who sets himself in opposition to and exalts himself above everyone and everything that is called a god or that is an object of worship, so that he seats himself in the inner

sanctuary of God, proclaiming himself to be deity.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:4** Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

The Antichrist, literally meaning “against Christ,” opposes (Gnomic Present tense) everything that is attributed to God (Latin: adversary). He also exalts himself with overweening pride (Gnomic Present tense) above everything that is declared and maintained (Durative Present tense) according to God. He doesn’t present his ideas and his person as on a par with God, but rather as superior to God. In other words, his ideas and actions are more just, correct and desirable than what God has produced over the course of time. The Antichrist is the enemy of Bible doctrine and establishment principles from the Word of God. He hates everything that comes from God as a source, both thoughts and actions, and fights it with every shred of his being. He will eventually exhibit himself (Culminative Aorist tense) as an object of worship in the Tribulation temple of God in Jerusalem. He will proclaim himself (Dramatic Present tense) to be God, presenting himself to be the longed-for messiah. All inhabitants on the earth will be required to worship him or die.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

He will create an eclectic religion and spiritual domination that will unite all belief systems into one. At first he will not do this by brute force but through subtle salesmanship and persuasion ... In these words we note Antichrist’s intrusion into the special dwelling place of God, his usurping session there, and his blasphemous and ostentatious assumption of deity. The wildest excesses of pride and audacity cannot exceed this. (M. Couch) The description of the millennial temple is given in detail in Ezekiel 40-48. The Messiah Jesus will grant that this temple be built after the Jews have fully returned from their worldwide scattering. Although this will take place at the end of the Tribulation, the Jews began, in various stages, returning to the promised land – Eretz Israel (land of Israel) – throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a migration accelerated by World Wars I and II. (H. Hoehner) It is revealed that the Jews before the end of the Jewish age will return to Palestine and rebuild the Temple, the Tribulation Temple in which the man of sin will sit boasting of divine prerogatives and demanding divine worship. (C. Feinberg)

The Antichrist is the opponent. He is diametrically opposed to Christ and to all that He represents. His aim is to undermine all divine authority in human life and society on this earth. The Judeo-Christian ethic is already being vilified by the anti-Christian, humanistic, and atheistic forces in our society. We can expect that the opposition will increase ... The Antichrist’s personal charisma and charm will doubtless be very great. No wickedness is so insidious as that which is cloaked by a magnetic, attractive, and forceful personality. He will undoubtedly be a man of vast intellect with an easy command of languages, the arts, and the scientific disciplines. He will be a wily politician. He will be thoroughly bad, evil through and through, Satan’s spawn, demon inspired, the seed of the serpent, a man of sin. The world today is moving rapidly to meet him. (J. Phillips) It is evident from

this passage that, at the time of the end, there will be a temple of God. That this should be elsewhere than Jerusalem seems impossible. So we may look, not only for a return of the Jews to their own land, but also for a restoration of their ancient ritual and a rebuilding of their temple. (A. Knoch)

Satan is not content with supreme political position. He insists on having the place reserved among all mankind for the supreme object of worship. He demands religious veneration. More exactly, he insists that no god nor anything bearing the name of God, nor any object of worship whatever should be allowed pride of place. The Man of Lawlessness must be first of all. The climax to all this is the explicit claim to deity. He is to sit in the temple proclaiming himself to be God. (L. Morris) In the tribulation days man will not be without religion, for the Man of Sin will furnish his own brand to the world and require people to accept it on penalty of death. The Man of Sin will endeavor to take the first place over the true God, any and all false gods, and anything else that man worships. Furthermore, his religious system will be connected with the temple so that he will himself sit in the temple demanding to be worshipped. This is the abomination of desolation spoken of in Daniel 9:27. (C. Ryrie) "Naos" is properly the shrine, the inner sanctuary, as opposed to "hieron" which would include all the outer buildings. (J. Lightfoot) Antichristian tendencies produce different antichrists. These separate antichrists shall hereafter find their consummation in an individual exceeding them all in intensity of evil. (R. Jamieson)

**2 Thess. 2:4** Who (Subj. Nom.) opposes (ἀντίκειμαι, PMPTc.NMS, Gnostic, Substantival, Deponent; as an enemy) and (continuative) exalts himself (ὑπεραίρω, PPPTc.NSM, Gnostic, Substantival; overrun by pride) above (comparative) everything (Acc. Dir. Obj.) declared and maintained (λέγω, PPPTc.ANS, Durative, Attributive; asserted) according to God (Adv. Acc.; divine viewpoint), with the result that (conj.) he displays (καθίζω, AAInf., Culminative, Result; exhibits, seats) himself (Acc. Dir. Obj.) as an object of worship (Acc. Appos.) in the temple (Loc. Place; tribulation) of God (Poss. Gen.), proclaiming (ἀποδείκνυμι, PAPtc.AMS, Dramatic, Modal; exhibiting) that (subjective opinion) he himself (Acc. Appos.) is (εἰμί, PMI3S, Descriptive) God (Pred. Nom.; presenting himself as the true messiah).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:4** ὁ ἀντικείμενος καὶ ὑπεραιρόμενος ἐπὶ πάντα λεγόμενον θεὸν ἢ σέβασμα ὥστε αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καθίσει ἀποδεικνύοντα ἑαυτὸν ὅτι ἔστιν θεός

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:4** qui adversatur et extollitur supra omne quod dicitur Deus aut quod colitur ita ut in templo Dei sedeat ostendens se quia sit Deus

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 2:5** Don't you remember that when I was still face-to-face with you, I taught you these things [eschatological doctrines]?

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 2:5** Do you not remember that while I was still with you I kept on telling you these things?

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:5** Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Paul is somewhat amazed that they have forgotten so much of what he had taught them when he was in Thessalonica. Even though he communicated the correct order of end time events to them on several occasions (Iterative Imperfect tense), he obviously didn't repeat them often enough since they had them all fouled-up now! With a bit of sarcasm, he asks them (Interrogative Indicative mood) if they don't remember that he taught them these doctrines before (Historical Present tense). Some of them did not retain (Latin: retention) the important truths Paul had spoken about.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

Theology, once acclaimed “the Queen of the Sciences,” today hardly rises to the rank of a scullery maid. It is often held in contempt, regarded with suspicion, or just ignored. Many devout, knowledgeable people in the pews, who lack theological training, simply ignore theology. Not so with Paul ... The more Biblically minded, not particularly unthinking multitude who sleep through the sermon, but chiefly the pastors and the authors of popular devotional books, are mostly inconsistent. They have a poor grasp of logic and therefore with their firm hold on some fundamental doctrine they also hold, preach, and write the wildest heresies. This indigestible mixture is regularly decorated with the ersatz whipped cream of fluffy nonsense. (G. Clark)

Doubtless, Paul grounded his converts in “the apostles’ doctrine.” He gave them crash courses in theology, pneumatology, ecclesiology, angelology, and even eschatology. He considered a good grounding in Bible prophecy as good a preparation for godly, victorious living as anything else. He reminds them that he was not telling them anything new. (J. Phillips) Paul did not regard prophetic truth as too deep or unimportant or controversial for new Christians. He believed it was a vital part of the whole counsel of God, so he taught it without hesitation or apology. (T. Constable)

**2 Thess. 2:5** Don't (neg. particle) you remember (μνημονεύω, PAI2P, Static, Interrogative Ind.) that (conj.) when I was (εἰμί, PMPTc.NSM, Historical, Temporal) still (adv.) face-to-face with you (Acc. Assoc.), I taught (λέγω, Imperf.AIIS, Iterative; communicated) you (Dat. Adv.) these things (Acc. Gen. Ref.; eschatological doctrines)?

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:5** Οὐ μνημονεύετε ὅτι ἔτι ὦν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ταῦτα ἔλεγον ὑμῖν

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:5** non retinetis quod cum adhuc essem apud vos haec dicebam vobis

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 2:6** Therefore, now you should know beyond a shadow of a doubt [due to the repetitive nature of Paul's teaching] the reason why it [the rapture] is continuing to hold back: so that he [the Antichrist] might be revealed in his own appointed time [at the close

**of the Church Age].**

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 2:6** And now you know with a positive assurance that which [namely, the departure of the church, the saints being assembled together to the Lord] is preventing his being disclosed [as to his true identity] in his strategic, appointed time,

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:6** And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

If the Thessalonian believers check their memory carefully for what Paul previously taught them, they should remember (Potential Subjunctive mood) beyond a shadow of a doubt (Intensive Perfect tense) the reason why the rapture has not yet occurred. The rapture is restraining itself (in a manner of speaking) from occurring (Durative Present tense) at this very moment because there is a reason for it to hold back (Latin: be detained). The reason why the rapture has not occurred yet is so that the true identity of the Antichrist might be revealed (Culminative Aorist tense) in its own appointed time at the close of the Church Age. God's timing for all these events is perfect and pre-set. Nothing is deviating from His plan at the moment and nothing will deviate from His plan in the future. The rapture cannot occur until it is time for the Antichrist to be disclosed to the world at large. And the rapture cannot occur until it is time for the Church Age dispensation to end. There is a debate on the use of the neuter instead of the masculine for that which restrains or holds back. It can represent, in my opinion, either the Holy Spirit or the personification of the rapture event. The Holy Spirit is so intricately tied to the departure of the saints, that either option fits the context.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

Since there is a restraining, resisting force in the world to the revelation of the Antichrist, we could well believe that such force is nothing less than the true Church of Jesus Christ. As long as the Church is in the world, Antichrist will not be made known, since the Church's presence holds back, detains, restrains and hinders the making known of the real identity of this arch-enemy of God. The true Church, the salt of the earth, the light of the world, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, is a withholding and restraining force to the flood-tides of evil which will come simultaneously with the revelation of the Antichrist with his satanic enduement for world reign in the end-time. (J. Gerig) The neuter is used here – “the restraining thing.” In the next verse, Paul makes clear that the One who is holding back the final development of lawlessness on this planet is the Holy Spirit. (J. Phillips)

The man of lawlessness will be revealed only as and when God permits. He is not to be thought of as acting in complete independence. Throughout this whole passage the thought of God's sovereignty is dominant. Evil is strong, and will wax stronger in the last times. But God's hand is in the process. Evil will not pass beyond its limits. God's purpose, not that of Satan or his henchmen, will finally be seen to have been effected. (L. Morris) Paul is saying that although those in the Thessalonian church had arrived at this conclusion, he is implying by the context that the knowledge had not been

internalized ... To designate “the restraining” as some powerful force or ordinary person who is hostile to God is contradictory, because the restrainer or restraining influence is limiting Satan, not helping or cooperating with him. The Holy Spirit seems to be the only One who has the divine power to restrain the forces of evil. (M. Couch)

Who is it, after all, that really restrains sin? The answer found in the Bible is that God is the one who restrains sin. In Genesis 6:3 it is declared that the Spirit of God was restraining sin in the days of Noah. In the book of Job it is recorded that Satan wanted to afflict Job, but God had built a hedge about him. Satan testified that he was restrained by God from trying Job. It would not be possible for any believer to do any work for God if it were not for God’s protecting hand. It is God who restrains. God may use varying means. He may use the government which maintains a certain amount of law and order. In the end, it is God who does it. It is God who provides protection for the Christian. More specifically, in this present age it is the Spirit of God who provides protection. The Spirit will return to heaven at the rapture. If the Spirit of God indwells the church and the church is taken out of the world, then the Spirit of God will also be taken out of the world. This does not mean that the Spirit will not continue working in the world in some way; but it will mean a reversal of Pentecost. Just as the Spirit came on Pentecost, so He will leave when Christ takes the church out of the world. The very removal of both the church and the Spirit from the world will release the world to sin as it never has before. The net result will be that evil will be manifested beyond anything known in the history of man. (J. Walvoord)

**2 Thess. 2:6** **Therefore** (inferential), **now** (logical, maybe temporal) **you should know beyond a shadow of a doubt** (οἶδα, Perf.AI2P, Intensive, Potential Ind.; because of the repetitive nature of Paul’s teaching) **the reason why it** (Subj. Acc.; the rapture) **is continuing to hold back** (κατέχω, PAPtc.ANS, Durative, Purpose; suppress, restrain): **so that** (Purpose) **he** (Subj. Acc.; the Antichrist) **might be revealed** (ἀποκαλύπτω, APInf., Culminative, Puurpose) **in his own** (Poss. Gen.) **appointed time** (Loc. Time; at the close of the Church Age).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:6** καὶ νῦν τὸ κατέχον οἶδατε εἰς τὸ ἀποκαλυφθῆναι αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ καιρῷ

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:6** et nunc quid detineat scitis ut reveletur in suo tempore

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 2:7** **For the mystery of lawlessness [intensification of rebellion and iniquity at the end of the Church Age] is already operating [working powerfully in this dispensation]. He alone [the Holy Spirit] is restraining [lawlessness] at the present time and will continue to restrain [lawlessness] until He removes Himself from the midst [of the world].**

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 2:7** For the mystery of the aforementioned lawlessness is now operating. Only He [the Holy Spirit] who is holding [the lawlessness] down, [will do so] until He goes out from the midst [of humanity].

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:7** For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way.

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

The “mystery of lawlessness” is the intensification of rebellion and iniquity at the end of the Church Age. This is another way of describing the general apostasy occurring on the earth in verse 3. The Antichrist is the “man of lawlessness” while this is a general state of lawlessness expressed and lived by those who are alive on earth just prior to the arrival of the Antichrist on the world scene. The “mystery” of lawlessness is the form of supernatural, demonic power that comes directly from the source of Satan. Concentrated wickedness is a sphere of power that unbelievers and cosmic believers choose to live in by their own volition. In the arrogance complex, they are subtly tricked into believing Satan’s lies. In the hatred complex, they willingly rebel against the things of God in utter contempt. This period of lawlessness was already in operation (Dramatic Present tense) during the early days of the Church Age when Paul was alive and has been increasing in scope and intensity to this very day.

The only thing which keeps this world from being totally engulfed in lawlessness is the restraining ministry which the Holy Spirit has been constantly providing (Durative Present tense) throughout the centuries. Humans are not able to withstand satanic influences on their own. The Holy Spirit must assist believers to live in the sphere of divine power rather than succumb to Satan’s wiles. The Holy Spirit must also continue to restrain Satan’s activity on earth, or unbelievers will kill each other off without self-control. Fortunately, His restraining ministry on earth will continue right up to the moment decreed by God (Temporal Subjunctive mood) when He will remove Himself (Culminative Aorist tense) from the earth. Then all hell will break loose. And no, the restrainer is not Satan. Why would he or his forces try to restrain his own plan of action? “A house divided against itself cannot stand.”

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

“He who restrains now until He be gone.” The meaning is clear, with the completed Church brought into the presence of the Lord, the Restrainer will be gone – and then the apostasy and the lawless one, and then the full manifestation of the mystery of lawlessness, and then the serpent’s wrath, the serpent’s final hiss and final work, for he knows his time is short. (Rev. 12:12) Then the Holy Spirit after having finished His work in connection with the body of Christ, begins His work with the remnant of Israel. Their eyes are opened. It dawns upon them that the long-expected King is about to come. When the man of sin appears they refuse his lying signs and wonders, they refuse him worship. They have to suffer persecution and many of them will be killed. On the one hand, the Holy Spirit, the Restrainer will, as He did in OT times, be with this godly remnant of Jews, sustain them in their work and those of the Gentile nations who believe their witness will also be under His power and guidance so they can overcome. On the other hand, He will permit the power of the serpent to do its utmost in God-defiance and lawlessness till the hour of defeat arrives. (A. Gaebelien)

The Holy Spirit is going to move out of the way, He is not going to be taken out of the way. The Holy Spirit is present in order to save the lost during the Tribulation, but He will no longer restrain sin; His restraining activity will but cease. (M. Couch) There is a change from the neuter to the masculine. This suggests that the Restrainer can be spoken of as a thing or a person. The Holy Spirit can be spoken of in both neuter and masculine genders. The only One who can restrain Satan and his angels is the Holy Spirit. Nothing can happen, prophetically, until a change occurs and the mighty power that is now restraining Satan and his minions is removed. (J. Phillips) While interpreters differ over who this one is, it seems certain to be the Holy Spirit since He is the restrainer of sin in the OT. Also, He is in the immediate context and is a member of the Godhead, which would be required to withstand Satan to such a degree. (R. Lightner) The apostasy is restrained by the presence of the saints. When we are taken out of the midst by our assembling with Christ in the air, then the apostasy and all its terrible train of afflictions will deluge the earth with fire. (A. Knoch)

The Holy Spirit of God is the only Person with sufficient (supernatural) power to do this restraining. Some object to this being the Holy Spirit on the grounds that “to katechon” in verse 6 is neuter (“what is holding back”). But this is no problem for two reasons: (a) The neuter is sometimes used of the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-14). (b) In this verse the words are masculine: (ho katechon), “the One who holds it back.” How does He do it? Through Christians, whom He indwells and through whom He works in society to hold back the swelling tide of lawless living. How will He be taken out of the way? When the church leaves the earth in the Rapture, the Holy Spirit will be taken out of the way in the sense that His unique lawlessness-restraining ministry through God’s people will be removed (Gen. 6:3). The removal of the Restrainer at the time of the Rapture must obviously precede the Day of the Lord. Paul’s reasoning is thus a strong argument for the pre-tribulational Rapture: the Thessalonians were not in the Tribulation because the Rapture had not yet occurred. (T. Constable)

On the one hand, Satan favors sweetness and light and prosperity for all – a chicken in every pot. Personally, he is the most beautiful creature ever created; he is eloquent, smart, entertaining, personable, persuasive – just the kind of company you would enjoy. His attacks often come in the guise of this calm, engaging, drawing-room type of attractiveness. He knows that life depends on how people think, and he sponsors ‘good’ anti-God thought ... But Satan does not appear always as an angel of light. The dark side of his strategy calls for terror, violence, confusion. If he cannot control mankind by one tactic, he always has another. No depravity or treachery is beneath him. The rules of the angelic conflict call for each man to exercise his self-determination on the earth until God removes him. But Satan never plays by the rules unless doing so happens to further his own ends. He is the original murderer, determined to destroy man’s volition if unable to control it. The justice of God must restrain him. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

**2 Thess. 2:7** **For** (explanatory) **the mystery** (Subj. Nom.) **of lawlessness** (Adv. Gen. Ref.; intensification of rebellion and iniquity at the end of the Church Age) **is already** (temporal) **operating** (ἐνεργέω, PMI3S, Dramatic; working powerfully in this dispensation). **He** (Subj. Nom.) **alone** (adv.; the Holy Spirit) **Who**

is restraining (κατέχω, PAPtc.NMS, Durative, Substantival; lawlessness) at the present time (temporal) will continue to restrain (continuation of the thought expressed in the Durative Present tense; lawlessness) until (conj.) He removes Himself (γίνομαι, AMSubj.3S, Culminative, Temporal, Deponent) from the midst (Abl. Separation; of the world).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:7** τὸ γὰρ μυστήριον ἤδη ἐνεργεῖται τῆς ἀνομίας· μόνου ὁ κατέχων ἄρτι ἕως ἐκ μέσου γένηται

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:7** nam mysterium iam operatur iniquitatis tantum ut qui tenet nunc donec de medio fiat

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 2:8** And at that time [after the rapture and the removal of the Holy Spirit], the lawless one [the Antichrist] shall be revealed, who the Lord Jesus shall consume [put to death] by the breath [Word] of His mouth and shall destroy [dethrone his powers of evil and lawlessness] by the sudden appearance of His coming [at the 2<sup>nd</sup> advent],

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 2:8** And then shall the lawless one be disclosed [in his true identity], whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth and render inoperative by the sudden appearance of His personal presence,

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:8** 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:

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

After the rapture of the Church and the removal of the Holy Spirit from the earth, the Antichrist shall be revealed (Predictive Future tense) to the world. After his seven-year power grab on the earth, the Lord Jesus will put him to death (Predictive Future tense) by the breath of His mouth, i.e., by a mere word spoken by the sovereign and just Lord. The Lord Jesus will also destroy (Predictive Future tense) the usurped reign of the Antichrist on earth by His sudden appearance at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent is the Lord's strategic victory in the angelic conflict. He will destroy the demonic power source of Satan and kill his number one emissary. "Brightness" refers to a glorious manifestation of the Lord, a visible manifestation of His hidden deity.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

The return of the Lord at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent will mean much more besides the defeat of the serpent and its seed. It will end all infidelity; it will be a complete vindication of His Person as it will be a vindication of the Bible as the infallible revelation of God; it will demonstrate that His Word is true from the beginning. And more than that the victorious Seed of the woman, the Son of Man coming in His glory, will solve all the problems with which humanity is wrestling today. He will institute the government of righteousness and peace. (A. Gaebelein) Destruction of the Antichrist will be the sole

prerogative of the Christ, the very One he has vilified so long and whose people he has so terribly persecuted. His day is over. His doom is upon him. A sword from the Lord's mouth slays the armies mobilized at Megiddo (Rev. 19:21). Evidently, all that the Lord has to do is speak! (J. Phillips)

The brightness of the Lord's coming will reveal the tarnish, the tinsel, the grotesqueness, the tawdry shoddiness, the uselessness, the shame, the crime and guilt, and the cheapness of Satan's imitation Christ and the importance of Antichrist's phony kingdom. (J. Phillips) "Will slay" does not mean the Antichrist will be annihilated out of existence. This diabolical individual is very human with a soul and spirit that will be judged and eternally punished. He is thrown into the Lake of Fire where he is joined later by the lost of all generations to experience the fires of torment forever and ever. The Lord but speaks and the doom of the Antichrist is sealed. His breath is sufficient to bring forth this judgment. Antichrist and all his evil will be brought to a climax so that he and all his forces of rebellion might be destroyed. (M. Couch) John bears testimony that this program of introducing the man of sin had already begun to operate in his day (1 John 4:3). The Satanic program has continued through the age, but has been kept in check by the Restrainer. (J. Pentecost)

Satan will be swift to seize the initiative once the obstacle that he has fought and feared so long is mysteriously and supernaturally removed. (J. Phillips) The Word of God which is the two-edged sword that proceeds from His mouth shall consume the Antichrist. It was the Word of God that created this universe. The Lord Jesus Christ is the living Word of God. Today we have the Bible, which is the written Word of God. The written Word is about the living Word, and it is alive and potent. When the Lord Jesus returns, He comes as the living Word of God. (J. McGee) The very breathing of the glorified Jesus will slay the lawless one like the blast of a furnace. (T. Constable) The central truth of the passage under discussion is that, though Satan would long ago have consummated his evil program for his cosmos world, and have brought forward its last human ruler, there is a Restrainer who restrains to the end that Satan's program shall be developed and completed only at God's appointed time. (L. Chafer)

**2 Thess. 2:8** And (continuative) at that time (temporal; after the rapture and the removal of the Holy Spirit), the lawless one (Subj. Nom.; the Antichrist) shall be revealed (ἀποκαλύπτω, FPI3S, Predictive), whom (Acc. Appos.) the Lord Jesus (Subj. Nom.) shall consume (ἀναιρέω, FAI3S, Predictive; put to death) by the breath (Instr. Means; Word) of His (Poss. Gen.) mouth (Abl. Source) and (continuative) shall destroy (καταργέω, FAI3S, Predictive; end his usurped reign on earth, dethrone the powers of evil and lawlessness) by the sudden appearance (Instr. Means; strategic victory) of His (Poss. Gen.) coming (2<sup>nd</sup> advent),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:8** καὶ τότε ἀποκαλυφθήσεται ὁ ἄνομος ὃν ὁ κύριος [Ἰησοῦς] ἀνελεῖ τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ καὶ καταργήσει τῇ ἐπιφανείᾳ τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:8** et tunc revelabitur ille iniquus quem Dominus Iesus interficiet spiritu oris sui et destruet inlustratione adventus sui

**LWB 2 Thess. 2:9** Whose coming [appearance of the Antichrist on earth] is according to the [indwelling] power of Satan in the sphere of all kinds of supernatural power and miraculous signs and lying wonders [events],

**KW 2 Thess. 2:9** The coming and presence of whom [the man of lawlessness] is according to the operation of Satan in the sphere or miracles demonstrating power and attesting miracles and miracles of a startling, imposing, amazement-wakening character which deceive,

**KJV 2 Thessalonians 2:9** *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

The appearance of the Antichrist on earth (Gk: parousia; Latin: advent) is according to the indwelling power of Satan. He will be empowered to perform all kinds of miraculous signs and lying (Gk: pseudo) wonders. There is a Holy Trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. There is an unholy trinity of Satan, the Antichrist and the False Prophet. There is nothing original about Satan, except sin. He apes, he counterfeits everything the Lord does. His man, the Antichrist, has his parousia just like Jesus Christ has His parousia. The Lord will return with true miraculous deeds, so Satan must give his man the ability to provide lying miraculous deeds. The Lord's ministry was attested by startling miracles, so the Antichrist must produce some kind of spectacular signs.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

He is literally a masterpiece of Satan who gives him his power, his throne, and his great authority. There is no explanation for the success of this person apart from his satanic origin, strategy, power and influence. (J. Gerig) The Restrainer gone, the false messiah would have every opportunity to deceive the multitudes by spurious miracles, signs, and wonders, which were to authenticate his coming (parousia), just as real miracles accompanied the 1<sup>st</sup> advent of Christ and were supposed to guarantee the genuineness of every divine manifestation. (C. McCown) The counterfeit character of the Antichrist, which has been alluded to before, is still further enforced here. He too like the true Christ has an Advent; he too works in obedience to a superior power; he too has his miracles and signs. (J. Lightfoot) Miracles emphasize the inherent power behind the works he will perform. Signs refer to the fact that they will have significance. Wonders indicate the attitude of awe that they will evoke when people behold them. (T. Constable)

As the Tribulation moves forward in its intensity, demonic deception accelerates. The evil seduction is so great that even those in the Tribulation who have accepted Christ are susceptible to being fooled. Antichrist as the masterpiece of Satan will be endowed with extraordinary qualities. The Devil will tax his prodigious abilities to the utmost in making this great adversary ... as potent for mischief as possible ... And how easy it is for Satan, with his vast knowledge and resources to delude thousands with his simulations of the miraculous! (M. Couch) Satan not only regains his lost dunamis but also bestows the same kind of power on his protégé, the Antichrist. The Antichrist will

be invincible. He will bring the whole world under his sway for a limited time. (J. Phillips)  
Counterfeit in no way impugns the genuineness of the miracles; rather does it mean false, for the teaching of the signs is a falsehood. (P. Cousins)

**2 Thess. 2:9** Whose (Poss. Gen.; the Antichrist's) coming (Subj. Nom.; appearance on earth) is (εἰμί, PMI3S, Static) according to the power (Adv. Acc.; indwelling) of Satan (Abl. Source) in the sphere of all kinds of (Dat. Spec.; types, categories) supernatural power (Loc. Sph.) and (connective) miraculous signs (Loc. Sph.) and (connective) lying (Descr. Gen.; false, untrue) wonders (Loc. Sph.; events),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:9** οὗ ἐστὶν ἡ παρουσία κατ' ἐνέργειαν τοῦ Σατανᾶ ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει καὶ σημείοις καὶ τέρασιν ψεύδους

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:9** eum cuius est adventus secundum operationem Satanae in omni virtute et signis et prodigiis mendacibus

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 2:10** **And in the sphere of every kind of wicked deception [spiritual delusion] towards those [engaged in false religion] who are perishing, against those who did not embrace the love of the truth [gospel doctrine] with the result that they might be saved.**

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 2:10** And whose coming and presence is in the sphere of every kind of wicked deception geared to [the gullibility of] those who are perishing, [this gullibility being] caused by the fact that they did not accept the love for the truth to the end that they might be saved.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:10** And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

The appearance of the Antichrist on earth will also be in the sphere of every imaginable category of wicked deception. This wicked deception is geared specifically for those who are spiritually deluded, those who are engaged in false religion and are perishing because they believe a lie. This wicked deception is tailor-made for those who did not welcome (Ingressive Aorist tense) the love of gospel doctrine so that they might as a result be saved (Culminative Aorist tense). In short, all Church Age believers are absent from the earth and are with the Lord Jesus in heaven. There will be a host of unbelievers still alive on earth who will believe the gospel and become Christians during the Tribulation. There isn't anything the Antichrist can do about their eternal destiny; all he can do is have them tortured and murdered. But there are an endless number of deceitful traps he can use to ensnare those who reject the gospel of Jesus Christ – and he will use them with great success. They will be completely “done in” by his spiritual delusion. They will follow him to their spiritual death.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

The Christ of modernism is the complete denial of the supernatural Christ of the Bible. These denials are crystallized in powerful movements. They are found in all evangelical denominations and their leading educational institutions. Instead of diminishing, these denials increase. They threaten now to sweep everything before them. There is but a small remnant which is true and faithful to the true Christ, the Son of the living God. (A. Gaebelein) Refusal of the truth lays one open to all kinds of error, where those who reject the knowledge of God have their understanding darkened and are given over to a reprobate mind. (F. Bruce) Signs appeal to the intellect; wonders appeal to the imagination. Satan can, and does, perform miracles. The signs that the Antichrist will perform will be spectacular and will convince the world. (J. Phillips)

A vast number of people will be fooled by blatant wickedness. The great, lost crowd of the world is not sad about rejecting the gospel. They do it willingly and gladly. Spiritually, people become futile in their speculations and they profess themselves wise but become fools. (M. Couch) The thought is that by means of all this deceit this unrighteousness palms itself off as righteousness. As all this power, these signs and wonders are necessary, so all this deceit is necessary to make the Antichrist appear as the true exponent of Christ, rightfully sitting in the sanctuary of God ... The people of earth will be buying into a diabolical and satanic system, a religious philosophy that they will hope is correct. They will do this only for personal survival because they cannot buy or sell or survive without the mark of the Beast on their right hands or on their foreheads. (Lenski)

For Paul, God's judicial wrath as it terminates on the finally unrepentant, according to His sovereign predestination, is for them absolute and unmitigated. Divine wrath and justice are not merely penultimate (and no more than metaphorical) expressions of his ultimately all-embracing love. It is unnecessary, and it weakens the biblical concept of the wrath of God, to deprive it of its emotional and affective character. Wrath in God must not be conceived of in terms of the fitful passion with which anger is frequently associated in us. But to construe God's wrath as consisting simply in His purpose to punish sin or to secure the connection between sin and misery is to equate wrath with its effects and virtually eliminate wrath as a movement within the mind of God. Wrath is the holy revulsion of God's being against that which is the contradiction of His holiness. (R. Gaffin)

**2 Thess. 2:10** And (continuative) in the sphere of every kind of (Dat. Spec.) wicked (Descr. Gen.; unrighteous, evil) deception (Loc. Sph.; spiritual delusion) towards those (Dat. Disadv.; engaged in false religion) who are perishing (ἀπόλλυμι, PMPTc.DMP, Descriptive, Substantival), against those (Adv. Gen. Ref.) who (Acc. Appos.) did not (neg. particle) embrace (δέχομαι, AMI3P, Ingressive, Deponent; receive, accept, welcome) the love (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of the truth (Adv. Gen. Ref.; gospel doctrine) with the result that they (Acc. Appos.) might be saved (σώζω, APInf., Culminative, Result, Articular).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:10** καὶ ἐν πάσῃ ἀπάτῃ ἀδικίας τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις ἀνθ ὧν τὴν ἀγάπην τῆς ἀληθείας οὐκ ἔδέξαντο εἰς τὸ σωθῆναι αὐτοῦς

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:10** et in omni seductione iniquitatis his qui pereunt eo quod caritatem veritatis non receperunt ut salvi fierent

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 2:11** And because of this [rejection of gospel doctrine], God will send them a powerful delusion with the result that they will believe his [the Antichrist's] lie [false teaching],

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 2:11** And because of this God sends them a deluding influence resulting in their believing the lie,

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:11** And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

For those who reject gospel doctrine during the Tribulation, God will send them (Futuristic Present tense) a strong, supernatural delusion (Latin: error) so that they will end up believing (Culminative Aorist tense) the lie (Latin: mendacity) of the Antichrist. What is the “lie” of the Antichrist? It is belief in notion that the Antichrist is the real messiah and that his gospel is the true gospel. The Holy Spirit regenerates our human spirit, enabling us to believe in the truth and become Christians in heaven. God the Father sends a strong delusion to all unbelievers so they end up believing the Antichrist and join Satan in hell. The seed of the woman, those related to Christ, go to heaven. The seed of the serpent, those related to Satan, go to hell. It’s that simple.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

A power is set in operation within them which makes them prone to embrace error or be led astray. The same process of judicial blinding is traced in Romans 11, where Paul, quoting Isaiah 29:10, tells how God has given unbelieving Israel “a spirit of torpor, to prevent eyes from seeing and ears from hearing.” Here God sends “a working of delusion” in the sense that to be misled by falsehood is the divine judgment inevitably incurred in a moral universe by those who close their eyes to the truth ... By “the lie” is apparently meant the denial of the fundamental truth that God is God; it is the rejection of His self-revelation as Creator and Savior, righteous and merciful Judge of all, which leads to the worship due to Him alone being offered to another, such as the “man of lawlessness.” (F. Bruce)

It is not unbelief but faith that will be the snare of the last days. “God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.” They will embrace it with zeal and a fanaticism equal to or exceeding that with which people embrace humanism, communism, or Islam. (J. Phillips) It is a solemn fact that when one continuously rejects the truth, persistent rejection of truth will destroy the sense of truth, and the result will be fatal error. One cannot be exposed to truth, reject that truth, and remain the same ... God makes Satan His instrument in punishing those who follow lies instead of truth. Because these peoples refuse to love truth, and thereby automatically love untruth, God sends them lies for their portion. (O. Greene) Satan will be free as never before to delude, deceive, and

destroy. He will make particular use of religion, his ace trump, promoting human works instead of God's grace. This deluding influence threatens the very fabric of our nation. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

**2 Thess. 2:11** And (continuative) because (causal) of this (Acc. Gen. Ref.; rejection of gospel doctrine), God (Subj. Nom.) will send (πέμπω, PAI3S, Futuristic) them (Dat. Disadv.) a powerful (Acc. Measure; strong, supernatural, operative) delusion (Obj. Gen.; error, demonic lie) with the result that they will believe (πιστεύω, AAInf., Culminative, Result) his (Acc. Poss.; the Antichrist's) lie (Dat. Ind. Obj.; false teaching),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:11** καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πέμπει αὐτοῖς ὁ θεὸς ἐνέργειαν πλάνης εἰς τὸ πιστεῦσαι αὐτοὺς τῷ ψεύδει

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:11** ideo mittit illis Deus operationem erroris ut credant mendacio

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 2:12** In order that everyone is judged who did not believe the truth [gospel doctrine] but instead took delight in wickedness.

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 2:12** In order that they all might be judged who did not believe the truth but took delight in wickedness.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:12** That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

God will send a powerful delusion so that everyone is judged (Culminative Aorist tense) who does not believe in (Ingressive Aorist tense) the truth, i.e., gospel doctrine. Instead of believing the gospel, they take pleasure in (Ingressive Aorist tense) wickedness and unrighteousness (Latin: iniquity). Instead of believing in Christ, they follow Satan and his representative on earth, the Antichrist. Instead of pursuing righteousness and virtue, they pursue unrighteousness and iniquity.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

Moral corruption has no sympathy for the lofty thirst for truth of a pure soul. Hence it may be concluded that indifference to truth is a sign of moral evil. The corrupt life is a false life, and its departure from truth reveals the baseness of the character beneath. This is why the rejection of the truth is culpable. The penalty of rejecting the love of the truth is incapacity to know truth from error. Truth is too precious a pearl to be cast before swine. They who do not love it shall not have it. Liars become incapable of knowing truth. The habit of indifference to truth so grows upon some people that the whole idea of truth becomes obscure and meaningless to them, and they ask with Pilate, half bewildered, half scornful, "What is truth?" God save us all from this hideous doom! (W. Adeney)

Man's total incapacity does not absolve him from full responsibility. The reason that he is culpable is that he has willingly allowed himself to degenerate to the point of total incapacity. Man now takes pleasure in unrighteousness. He is not incapacitated against his will. His bondage to sin is embraced willingly. (A. Custance) The wages of scar tissue are threefold: strong delusion, which is actually a synthesis of blackout of the soul and hardness of the heart; second, the slide into Christian degeneracy that results in reverse-process reversionism; and third, intensified divine punishment eventuating in the sin unto death ... The rejection of spiritual reality often brings moody, neurotic, psychotic, and even psychopathic behavior. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

**2 Thess. 2:12** In order that (purpose) everyone (Subj. Nom.) is judged (κρίνω, APSubj.3P, Culminative, Purpose) who did not (neg. particle) believe (πιστεύω, AAPtc.NMP, Ingressive, Substantival) the truth (Dat. Disadv.; gospel doctrine), but instead (contrast) took delight in (εὐδοκέω, AAPtc.NMP, Ingressive, Substantival) wickedness (Dat. Disadv.; unrighteousness).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:12** ἵνα κριθῶσιν πάντες οἱ μὴ πιστεύσαντες τῇ ἀληθείᾳ ἀλλὰ εὐδοκήσαντες τῇ ἀδικίᾳ

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:12** ut iudicentur omnes qui non crediderunt veritati sed consenserunt iniquitati

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 2:13** But as for us [believers], we are obligated to continually thank God always concerning you, brethren [members of the royal family] loved by the Lord, because God chose you [divine election] from the beginning [eternity past] for the purpose of salvation [positional truth] by means of the sanctification of the Spirit [initial placement into Christ] and belief of the truth [gospel doctrine],

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 2:13** But as for us, we have a sense of moral obligation to be giving thanks to God always concerning you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you out [from the rest of mankind] for salvation, this choice being within the sphere of the setting-apart [the setting-apart work of the Spirit and a belief in the truth] also He summoned you through our good news,

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:13** But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

Paul now contrasts the ultimate plan of the believer with that of unbelievers. Paul, Silvanus and Timothy are obligated (Customary Present tense) to continually thank God concerning the Thessalonians. The Thessalonian believers, like all other believers, are loved by the Lord (Intensive Perfect tense). As a matter of fact, they were loved before time. They were loved before time

because God chose all believers (Dramatic Aorist tense) from the beginning, in eternity past. He loved us and chose us for the purpose (and end result) of salvation by means of the sanctification of the Spirit and belief in gospel doctrine. God never fails in His purpose or plan. Every believer was indeed elected by the Lord in eternity past. Every believer, in God's perfect timing, is regenerated and placed into union with Christ by the positional sanctifying ministry of the Holy Spirit. Every believer is brought into this relationship with Jesus Christ through belief in the truth, i.e., gospel doctrine. Obviously, the future destiny of believers is a far cry better than the future for unbelievers. You were loved and elected to salvation before time – think about it.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

The Thessalonians are beloved because of the Lord's intimate calling and choosing of them for salvation. He made them His own by a sovereign act of wooing them to Him by the Holy Spirit. "Aireo" generally expresses the sovereign call of the Lord or His predestination. In the present instance the reference would seem to be to the eternal choice or purpose of God. (M. Couch) The simplest definition of true sanctification is that it means to set apart as holy to God. When a person is coming to Christ there must be a work of the Spirit in his heart before he can come. That is the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit enables a person lost in sin to understand the truth of the gospel. (J. Walvoord) The initial divine choice dates back to the dim ages of an awful antiquity. In the beginning was the Word. In the beginning God chose His people for Himself. Salvation is not after-thought coming in to redeem the failure of creation. It was all planned from the first. (W. Adeney)

The sanctification of the Spirit is the objective side. It implies a spiritual change of nature. The Spirit applies the salvation, and regeneration is His first work. Sanctification is the evidence as well as the fruit of election. As the Spirit is the agent, the truth is the instrument of salvation. The truth must be believed in order to become salvation. It might appear as if the belief of the truth ought to precede the sanctification of the Spirit. But there cannot be faith without the operation of the Spirit, while, on the other hand, the sanctification is through the truth. The two are inseparably joined together. Nothing but divine power can save the soul. The sanctification of the Spirit is the sphere in which the life of election moves and energizes. (T. Croskery) Election is an act of God, and not the result of the choice of the elect. Election refers to the choice of specific individuals and not of classes. These individuals become a class of believers because they are elect; they do not become elect because they are believers. Election is to salvation and not to mere external privileges. (T. Nettles)

Some who have trouble with the doctrine accept the word but try to reduce its force by arguing for what they call "conditional election." This means that God bases His election of an individual on foresight, foreseeing whether or not a particular individual will have faith. This destroys the very meaning of the word, of course, for such election is really not election at all. It actually means that men and women elect themselves, and God is reduced to a bystander who responds to their free choice. If election is based on what God foresees an individual might do, what could he possibly foresee in a spiritually dead sinner other than rejection of the gospel? To suppose that God could see something that is impossible apart from His determining is irrational. On the other hand, to suppose

that faith actually could be there denies the doctrine of man's radical depravity. (J. Boice) The apostle's thanksgiving covers the whole work of salvation from the eternal choice of God to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ in the world to come. (J. Denney)

Common faith is the possession of all men: faith in the word of a friend, in the laws of nature, in the witness of one's own senses (what one hears and sees as being real). But saving faith is entirely a work of God and beyond man's natural ability. Election is first: faith with respect to the truth of God comes as a consequence. So "as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed" (Acts 13:48) and no others. (A. Cushman) Paul consistently taught that the initiative in salvation comes from God, not man. The means God uses to effect salvation is the work of His Holy Spirit who sets aside chosen individuals for lives of holiness and separation from sin. The Holy Spirit regenerates, indwells, and baptizes Christians into the body of Christ. (T. Constable) The grace of God does not find men fit to be elected, but makes them so. (Augustine) The Holy Spirit is the Sanctifier, in that He sets believers apart for God, unites them to Christ, and reproduces the likeness of Christ in their lives, in view of the day when they are publicly to share Christ's glory. (F. Bruce)

Believers are those who "were ordained to eternal life" (Acts 13:48), who were "predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph. 1:11). And does not He who works all things also create the ability to repent and believe the gospel through the miracle of regenerating grace (John 3:8; 1 John 5:1)? If not, God's plan is not all inclusive, especially with regard to the means of applying salvation, and this would mean that the God of heaven and earth could not be God, and that He could not do whatsoever His hand and His counsel predestinated before to be done (Acts 4:28). God forbid! But Paul writes to the Thessalonian believers that he is bound to give thanks to God for them because God has chosen them. The election of God is unconditional from man's standpoint and particular in design from God's standpoint. It was designed only for those who "were ordained to eternal life," those chosen "to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." (G. Long)

**2 Thess. 2:13** But (adversative) as for us (Subj. Nom.; believers), we are obligated (ὀφείλω, PAIP, Customary) to continually thank (εὐχαριστέω, PAInf., Iterative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) God (Dat. Ind. Obj.) always (adv.) concerning you (Gen. Adv.), brethren (Voc. Address; members of the royal family) loved (ἀγαπάω, Perf.PPtc.NMP, Intensive, Attributive) by the Lord (Gen. Rel.), because (causal) God (Subj. Nom.) chose (αἰρέω, AMI3S, Dramatic; divine election) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.; believers) from the beginning (Gen. Time; in eternity past) for the purpose of salvation (Acc. Purpose; positional truth) by means of the sanctification (Instr. Means) of the Spirit (Subj. Gen.; initial placement into Christ) and (connective) belief (Instr. Means) of the truth (Obj. Gen.; gospel doctrine),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:13** Ἡμεῖς δὲ ὀφείλομεν εὐχαριστεῖν τῷ θεῷ πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν ἀδελφοὶ ἡγαπημένοι ὑπὸ κυρίου ὅτι εἶλατο ὑμᾶς ὁ θεὸς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐν ἀγιασμῷ πνεύματος καὶ πίστει ἀληθείας

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:13** nos autem debemus gratias agere Deo semper pro vobis fratres dilecti a Deo quod elegerit nos Deus primitias in salutem in sanctificatione Spiritus et fide veritatis

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 2:14** Into which [salvation] He called you [by divine election] through our [the apostle's] good news [gospel preaching], with reference to the possession of the glory [resurrection life] of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 2:14** Into which [the setting-apart work of the Spirit and a belief in truth] also He summoned you through our good news, resulting in your acquisition of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:14** Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

God called the Thessalonian believers into salvation (Dramatic Aorist tense) through the gospel preaching of the apostle Paul and his missionary team. This calling is known as divine, unconditional election. Part of that election includes our guaranteed possession of the resurrection life of our Lord Jesus Christ. As part of the bride of Christ, we share in His eternal life and glory. We will receive our resurrection body as part of unconditional election. We will possess this portion of His glory without any contribution on our part, i.e., free grace. We are later offered as part of experiential sanctification the opportunity to add to this guaranteed glory a measure of rewards and decorations which we may wear over our naked resurrection body. This additional measure of glory can be attained by living the supergrace life on earth. In this verse, however, Paul is speaking strictly about positional sanctification and sharing eternal life with the Lord.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

The extraordinary thing is that this plan was formulated before the world began. Each of us is special by foreordination, elected to a role, a life work, and a course of life divinely adjusted to make end products out of us as God sees fit, those end products representing our “apprehension” in Christ towards which we, like Paul, are constantly being inclined by His grace. We were deliberately planned for, even though we were hewn out of the same lump as the non-elect, yet singled out with the divine purpose always kept strictly in view. (A. Custance) The contingent nature of sharing in the future glory of Christ is implied in this verse. (J. Dillow) The process of consummating the work of salvation is more like an obstacle course than a downhill ride to the finish line. (T. Schreiner) Christ's sheep hear His voice. This is the effectual call of God. Christ's sheep were known from eternity, and they are effectually called by means of the gospel of Jesus Christ. (W. Best) When applied to the Church, sanctification means that God has created a new species of spiritual royalty, set apart for the maximum glorification of Jesus Christ: Each believer is in union with the King of Kings forever. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

This may mean either (a) in order that we might obtain the glory, or (b) in order that He might adopt us into, invest us with, the glory. The three stages here enumerated are (1) the predestination on the part of God – eilato, (2) the historical fulfillment of that purpose – ekalesen, and (3) the glorious consummation – eis peripoiesin doxes. (J. Lightfoot) As God’s purchased possessions, they will be granted this matchless privilege. They do not earn it or in any way acquire it for themselves. It is accomplished solely by God. (M. Couch) I am glad God chose me before I got here, because if He had waited until I got here He never would have chosen me. (C. Spurgeon) God’s faithfulness and love make divine triumph the unquestionable outcome. (T. Schreiner) God did not choose certain persons to eternal life because He foreknew that they would believe in Christ. God decreed that certain men would be saved through faith in Christ. Faith, then, is a fruit of election, not a condition. (R. Kuiper) All believers in heaven receive a resurrection body, but only the few receive special rewards. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Calling may be distinguished from regeneration, yet it is closely associated with it. Calling is the Divine summons, which appeals to the principle of life that causes the will to act. Regeneration occurs independently of understanding, but calling is associated with understanding. Calling that is effectual, presupposes life. He that is called must be able to hear and come to Christ, and he is made able in regeneration. The faculty (spiritual ability) of faith is implanted in regeneration, while its exercise is brought forth in conversion. Men by nature have not the faculty or ability; it is the gift of God. Calling is the gracious work of the Spirit, whereby He causes the regenerated man to embrace the Lord Jesus freely as He is offered the gospel. What would you think of a woman who said she was going to have a baby when she was not even pregnant? This is a perfect analogy of the person who says that calling precedes regeneration. This calling, therefore, is not a calling of persons who are unregenerate because they have no hearing ear. (W. Best)

**2 Thess. 2:14** Into which (Acc. Gen. Ref.; salvation) He called (καλέω, AAI3S, Dramatic) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.; by divine election) through our (Poss. Gen.; the apostle’s) good news (Abl. Means; gospel preaching), with reference to the possession (Acc. Gen. Ref.) of the glory (Obj. Gen.; resurrection life) of our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus Christ (Poss. Gen.).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:14** εἰς ὃ ἐκάλεσεν ὑμᾶς διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἡμῶν εἰς περιποίησιν δόξης τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:14** ad quod et vocavit vos per evangelium nostrum in acquisitionem gloriae Domini nostri Iesu Christi

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 2:15** Consequently, therefore, brethren [members of the royal family], stand fast under pressure and hold fast to the categories of doctrine which you were taught either by word [orally] or by our letter [non-face-to-face writing].

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 2:15** So then, brethren, be constantly standing firmly, and be holding fast to the teachings which were delivered to you to be passed on to others, which you were taught either

orally or through our letter.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:15** Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

Because of who they are in Christ, Paul commands the Thessalonian believers (Imperative mood) to stand fast under pressure (Iterative & Durative). They need to pass these tests one after another to build momentum, and they need to stretch that momentum into a consistent walk that enables them to attain supergrace. Paul also commands them to remember their positional salvation and to hold fast to the categories of doctrine which they were previously taught (Constative Aorist tense). This is a command to hold to the traditional teachings they received from Paul orally as well as non-face-to-face through the First epistle to the Thessalonians. Sometimes it is better to hang on to the tried-and-true (Latin: traditions). In the midst of false teachers, demonic spirits and persecution, this is one of those times. When an acknowledged teacher of the Word is present, they are commanded to pay attention to the speaker with strict academic discipline. When an acknowledged teacher is not present, they can read and reread Paul's letters and grow by that means. After all, many of these circulated letters later became part of the canon of Scripture.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

I have heard speakers in Christian college chapels advise the students not to learn too much, but rather be devout or pious or something other than academically proficient. They quote phrases such as, "Do the truth," and suggest that we need not know it. They stress overt action rather than internal cerebration. Well, all men are obligated to obey God's commands, and we must "do the truth" so far as the truth can be done. Just how we can "do" the Trinity is a puzzle ... A theory of ethics, a knowledge of good and evil, of right and wrong, does not stand independent of all else. Ethics is based on theology. The knowledge of God comes first. Theology is indispensable ... Phrases such as "God does not give us information, He gives us Himself," is an anti-Christian subterfuge. (G. Clark) Oral inspiration was necessary then, until the canon of the written Word should be complete. When the canon was complete, the infallibility of the living men's inspired sayings was transferred to the written Word, now the sole unerring guide, interpreted by the Holy Spirit. Nothing has come down to us by ancient and universal tradition save this, the all-sufficiency of Scripture for salvation. Therefore, by tradition, we are constrained to cast off all tradition not in, or provable by, Scripture. (R. Jamieson)

Tradition in the scriptural sense of the word may be either written or oral. It is a synonym for "teaching," implying on the part of the teacher a confession, that he was not expressing his own ideas, but delivering or handing on a message that he had received from heaven. (J. Lightfoot) Christians are in constant danger of being swept downstream by the currents of ungodly culture. They are also prone to let the truths they enjoy with God grow cold. The Thessalonians were in danger of loosening their grip on the apostles' teachings which they had received in person from the

missionaries and from their letters. They were in danger of slipping backward in their Christian experience because of the pressures of their trials and the daily negative influences of the world, the flesh, and the devil. (T. Constable) The term “tradition” in this context requires that it be taken here to mean the whole of that doctrine in which they had been instructed. (J. Calvin) “Paradosis” refers to matters of both doctrine and discipline. (C. Ellicott)

The Thessalonians had moved away doctrinally from the firm foundation of truth on which Paul had placed their feet. The word “traditions” has been much abused because it has come to mean human teachings and religious practices that often contain a great deal of error interwoven with truth. The word used is “paradosis,” meaning something that has been delivered from one person to another. The Holy Spirit supernaturally protected these (Paul’s) oral traditions from any admixture of error. All of them were written down before the last of the apostles died, and they contain all that is needed for faith and practice. (J. Phillips) An important conclusion has been reached as the apostle ties together for the Thessalonians God’s eternal calling to salvation with how they are to live presently in time. Paul is again connecting positional truth with experiential truth, and returning to practical application. (M. Couch)

**2 Thess. 2:15** Consequently (causal, illative; following on the preceding declaration of the gracious purpose of God), therefore (inferential), brethren (Voc. Address; members of the royal family), stand fast under pressure (στήκω, PAImp.2P, Iterative & Durative, Command) and (connective) hold fast to (κρατέω, PAImp.2P, Iterative & Durative; take hold of, seize) the categories of doctrine (Acc. Dir. Obj.; traditional teachings) which (Acc. Gen. Ref.) you were taught (διδάσκω, API2P, Constative) either (conj.) by word (Abl. Means; orally) or (conj.) by our (Abl. Source) letter (Abl. Means; non-face-to-face writing).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:15** ἄρα οὖν ἀδελφοί στήκετε καὶ κρατεῖτε τὰς παραδόσεις ἃς ἐδιδάχθητε εἴτε διὰ λόγου εἴτε δι' ἐπιστολῆς ἡμῶν

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:15** itaque fratres state et tenete traditiones quas didicistis sive per sermonem sive per epistulam nostram

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 2:16** Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, Who loved us and gave us eternal encouragement and perfect confidence in the sphere of grace [eternal security],

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 2:16** Now, our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father who loved us and who gave us everlasting encouragement and a good hope, this gift having been given us in [His] grace,

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:16** Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,

## TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul begins to summarize the important concepts in this chapter with a transitional conjunction. He begins this sentence with the comforting fact that God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ loved us (Constative Aorist tense) before time began. They provided eternal encouragement, comfort and salvation as well as perfect confidence in the sphere of grace and mercy. This eternal encouragement and perfect confidence (combined with grace) is another way of presenting the doctrine of the eternal security of the believer. Our salvation is eternal, having no end, and is grace-oriented, meaning we did not deserve it nor accomplish it in our own power. Since the Father and Son accomplished this positional sanctification for us, Paul prays that the Thessalonian believers will now use their position in Christ as a launching pad to grow experientially.

## RELEVANT OPINIONS

In the wish-prayer which brings this section of the letter to a close, the writers again bespeak divine encouragement and confirmation for their friends in Thessalonica, that in the hope imparted to them by God's grace they may act and speak as befits His children in their pagan environment. (F. Bruce)

**2 Thess. 2:16** Now (transitional, adversative) may our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus Christ (Subj. Nom.) Himself (Nom. Appos.) and (connective) God (Subj. Nom.) our (Gen. Rel.) Father (Nom. Appos.), Who (Nom. Appos.) loved (ἀγαπάω, AAPtc.NMS, Constative, Substantival, Articular) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) and (continuative) gave (δίδωμι, AAPtc.NMS, Constative, Substantival) us (ellipsis) eternal (Acc. Extent of Time) encouragement (Acc. Dir. Obj.; comfort, salvation) and (connective) perfect (Complementary Acc.; sound) confidence (Acc. Dir. Obj.) in the sphere of grace (Loc. Sph.; kindness & mercy),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:16** Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς καὶ [ὁ] θεὸς ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν ὁ ἀγαπήσας ἡμᾶς καὶ δοὺς παράκλησιν αἰωνίαν καὶ ἐλπίδα ἀγαθὴν ἐν χάριτι

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:16** ipse autem Dominus noster Iesus Christus et Deus et Pater noster qui dilexit nos et dedit consolationem aeternam et spem bonam in gratia

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 2:17** Comfort the mentality of your souls and stabilize them in the sphere of all production [ambassadorship function] and beneficial doctrine [priestly function].

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 2:17** Encourage your hearts and stabilize them in the sphere of every good work and word.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:17** Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

## TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul prays (Voluntative Optative mood) that the Father and Son combine to comfort the mentality of the souls of the Thessalonians (Constative Aorist tense) while they are facing persecution and false teaching. He prays that They stabilize the Thessalonians (Constative Aorist tense) in the sphere of production and doctrine. This is a prayer, therefore, that the Lord will assist the Thessalonians in both their priestly and ambassadorial spiritual functions. This is a prayer for continued experiential sanctification. “All” production is a way of extending their sanctification into every area of the believer’s life. “Beneficial” doctrine is a way of selecting only those true, traditional doctrines that they have heard before – as opposed to the eschatological heresies being spread around Thessalonica at that time.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

Optative is sometimes called the mood of “wishing,” and this phrase might be better described as emphatic contingency. These optatives are voluntative in force, and this is why the prayer is referred to as a wish-prayer. (M. Couch) The content of the gift is hardly “comfort” in our sense of the term. “Eternal” encouragement is particularly appropriate in this context where the thought is so much of the troubles of the last days. (L. Morris) It is rather deceitful (to yourself and to others) to talk about how much you love the coming of the Lord, if you do not study His Word. (J. McGee)

**2 Thess. 2:17** **Comfort** (παρακαλέω, AAOpt.3S, Constative, Voluntative; encourage) **the mentality of your** (Poss. Gen.) **souls** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **and** (continuative) **stabilize** (στηρίζω, AAOpt.3S, Constative, Voluntative) **them** (ellipsis) **in the sphere of all** (Dat. Measure) **production** (Loc. Sph.; ambassadorship function) **and** (connective) **beneficial** (Dat. Adv.) **doctrine** (Loc. Sph.; priestly function).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:17** παρακαλέσαι ὑμῶν τὰς καρδίας καὶ στηρίζαι ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ καὶ λόγῳ ἀγαθῷ

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:17** exhortetur corda vestra et confirmet in omni opere et sermone bono

## **CHAPTER 3**

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 3:1** Finally, brethren [members of the royal family], keep on praying for us [Paul, Silvanus & Timothy], so that the Word of the Lord [Bible doctrine] might continue to make progress [enable the communicators to charge forward into the spiritual battle] and keep on being glorified [honored in the hearer’s spiritual life] even as it has been in the past and continues to be with you,

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:1** Finally, be praying, brethren, for us, to the end that the word of the Lord might be spreading rapidly and be continually glorified, even as it is doing in your case,

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:1** Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you:

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Paul begins to sum up this short epistle by switching from his teaching on eschatology to matters of practical, experiential living. He commands them (Imperative mood) to keep on praying for his missionary team and their leaders (Iterative Present tense). He wants their prayers to assist the communicators of the gospel and Bible doctrine in making bold progress (Durative Present tense) in their presentation of the Truth (Purpose Subjunctive mood). The Greek word he chooses for this progress is a military term for charging into battle against the enemy. He also wants their prayers to ensure that the Word of God continues to be honored and glorified (Durative Present tense) by those that hear it. Paul wants the gospel message to be heard and believed (Result Subjunctive mood), and overall Bible doctrine to change the lives of the hearers (Latin: clarification) just as it has in the Thessalonian believers.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

Paul uses “adelphos” in the plural as a warm family greeting. (M. Couch) We never arrive at the place in our Christian life and ministry where we no longer need people to pray for us, just as we never arrive at a degree of holiness where we can no longer be tempted. The greatest of all of the apostles solicited prayer from his converts. (J. Phillips) I am sure of this: if we prayed more for God’s messengers, we would criticize them less. Some people are constantly finding fault with servants of Christ. From the standpoint of these critics, His messengers never do exactly the right thing. It is easy to get into a criticizing mood. But when we are bearing up God’s servants in prayer, the spirit of criticism gives way to one of loving helpfulness. (H. Ironside) The allusion may be to the applause given to the victors in the foot-races which constituted so considerable a part of the Grecian games. This personification of the Word of the Lord is a favorite figure with the apostle. (P. Gloag) He is saying here that the Word of God enables the believer to walk before the wicked world. The Word establishes a believer in his walk. (J. McGee)

The Word is the entire body of truth about God, but it focuses on the knowledge of Christ and the gospel ... Glory means his preaching may have its power and efficacy for renewing men after the image of God ... The Thessalonians are the great proof of the power of the gospel. They apparently received the Word quickly and also began to grow rapidly in the faith. They were almost unmovable when persecution overtook them, and other Christians throughout the regions heard of their faith. (M. Couch) The average layman does not realize how much a preacher of the gospel is dependent upon the prayers of God’s people. Whenever an evangelist or a Bible teacher attempts to expound the Word of God, he is not only contending against failure on the part of those who listen, but against the unseen powers of darkness. He is engaging in a spiritual warfare. All the powers of hell are arrayed against him. There is a battle on, spiritually, whenever one tries to do something for his Lord. No one can win the battle alone. There never

has been a preacher used of God who was not supported by God's people in prayer. (J. Walvoord)

Paul did not assume that because God is sovereign in grace, therefore prayer is unnecessary. On the contrary, he understood that since salvation is entirely due to God's grace, for that very reason prayer is absolutely essential. Prayer is the heart's surrender to the will of God. Those who believe most strongly in the sovereignty of grace ought to be most persistent in asking God to do what only He can do, and that is to save sinners. (J. Boice) This is one way by which the communion of saints is kept up, not only by their praying together, or with one another, but by their praying for one another when they are absent one from another. And thus those who are at great distance may meet together at the throne of grace; and thus those who are not capable of doing or receiving any other kindness may yet this way do and receive real and very great kindness. All the forces of hell were then, and still are, more or less, raised and mustered to oppose the Word of the Lord, to hinder its publication and success. We should pray, therefore, that opposition may be removed, so that the gospel may have free course to the ears, the hearts, and the consciences of men. (M. Henry)

**2 Thess. 3:1** **Finally** (Ind. Nom.; henceforth, from now on), **brethren** (Voc. Address; members of the royal family), **keep on praying** (προσεύχομαι, PMImp.2P, Iterative, Command, Deponent) **for us** (Gen. Adv.; for Paul, Silvanus and Timothy), **so that** (purpose) **the Word** (Subj. Nom.; doctrine) **of the Lord** (Poss. Gen., Abl. Source) **might continue to make progress** (τρέχω, PASubj.3S, Durative, Purpose; enable the communicators to charge forward, running into the spiritual battle) **and** (continuative) **keep on being glorified** (δοξάζω, PPSubj.3S, Durative, Result; honored, exalted) **even as** (comparative) **it has been in the past and continues to be** (ellipsis) **with you** (Acc. Assoc.),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:1** Τὸ λοιπὸν προσεύχεσθε ἀδελφοί περὶ ἡμῶν ἵνα ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου τρέχη καὶ δοξάζεται καθὼς καὶ πρὸς ὑμᾶς

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:1** de cetero fratres orate pro nobis ut sermo Domini currat et clarificetur sicut et apud vos

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 3:2** **And that we may be delivered from dangerous [reversionistic believers] and evil [wicked unbelievers] men, since doctrine is not correctly understood or applied by everyone.**

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:2** And that we may be delivered from the men who act in an improper and unbecoming manner and who are in active opposition to that which is good; for all do not possess the Faith [the Christian system of belief].

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:2** And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all *men* have not faith.

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

Paul also commands (or entreats) the Thessalonian believers to pray that the missionary team might be delivered (Culminative Aorist tense) from dangerous (Latin: inopportune, hindrances) and evil (Latin: malicious) men. Paul is referring to two categories of men: reversionistic believers and wicked unbelievers. Both categories of men are attempting to destroy Paul's ministry. Wicked unbelievers are trying to destroy the furtherance of the gospel message so there will be no increase in the number of Christians. Reversionistic believers are trying to corrupt the teaching of accurate doctrine, especially eschatological, because they have some hidden agendas of their own. Paul's explanation for his request for prayer is in the form of a warning.

Everyone that listens to the gospel message is not a Christian. Everyone that listens to Bible doctrine does not necessarily understand it or apply it properly to life. Paul doesn't want them to be jumpy, always looking over their shoulder at their fellow believer to see if he is a true believer or if he is a believer in reversionism. But he is warning them not to be so gullible. There are those who profess to be believers in Jesus Christ who are not; there are also believers who are following false doctrine who are destroying their lives and the lives of those around them. The word of warning is for the Thessalonian believers to be spiritually discerning. The request is for protection from God - that the missionary team is delivered (Latin: liberated) from the nefarious deeds of men.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

Satan is a skilled player on life's chessboard. He knows how to move his men to check the advance of the gospel. But he is no match for the Holy Spirit. Prayer can annul even his formidable advantages. (J. Phillips) Now when he says, "For all men have not faith," that is really "the faith." All men do not have "the" faith. That is, they do not hold the doctrines as the apostles taught them. The foundation of the church rests upon the doctrine which the apostles have given to the church. That is what we should teach and preach. If we really love His appearing, we will prove it by our relationship to the Word of God and by our walk through this life. (J. McGee) Among those who boast of the name of Christians there are many that are treacherous. (J. Calvin)

The Word of God needs to be exalted today. Pray that people will exalt the Word of God in their own lives. It troubles me and it worries me to see that even those who claim to believe the Word of God give so little attention to it. Pray that if people profess to believe the Word of God, they will get into it and find out what it says ... Paul asks for prayer that he "may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men." Did you know that there are wicked persons in the church? A pastor needs to be delivered from such folk. (J. McGee) "Wicked" labels them as capable of outrageous and harmful acts against others. "Evil" speaks of persons not only themselves

thoroughly corrupted, but intent on corrupting others and drawing them into their own slide toward perdition. (EBC: M. Couch)

**2 Thess. 3:2** And (continuative) that (result) we may be delivered (ῥύομαι, APSubj.1P, Culminative, Result, Deponent; rescued) from dangerous (Descr. Gen.; reversionistic believers) and (connective) evil (Descr. Gen.; wicked unbelievers) men (Abl. Separation), since (explanatory; for) doctrine (Subj. Nom.) is not (neg. particle) correctly understood or applied (ellipsis) by everyone (Gen. Disadv.).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:2** καὶ ἵνα ῥυσθῶμεν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀτόπων καὶ πονηρῶν ἀνθρώπων· οὐ γὰρ πάντων ἡ πίστις

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:2** et ut liberemur ab inportunis et malis hominibus non enim omnium est fides

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 3:3** But the Lord is faithful [dependable], Who shall stabilize and protect you [through Bible doctrine] from the evil one [Satan].

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:3** But the Lord is faithful [in the sense of trustworthy and dependable], who shall stabilize you and shall protect you from the pernicious one [Satan].

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:3** But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

Paul asks for prayer, but he also knows that the Lord is faithful and dependable to meet his needs. The Lord will stabilize and protect us (Predictive Future tense) from the wiles and strategies of Satan. Does He do this without any requirements from us? Sometimes the sovereignty of God takes over and helps us through a difficult time. Sometimes He helps us in answer to our prayers or the prayers of others. But most of the time He helps us by providing us with Bible doctrine and the opportunity to apply it to our daily lives.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

In truth, an ongoing protection is rendered for the child of God, but the Lord may remove it for certain purposes. His temporal protection is real, but it is not guaranteed forever ... The people of God do not perpetuate themselves. He perpetuates. His faithful guardianship gives persistency to His people. (PCH: M. Couch) A faithful Lord watching over faithful believers will win an assured victory over Satan, regardless of his schemes or power. (O. Greene) How can you as a believer be established? By coming to the Word of God and letting it have its influence in your life. The Lord operates through His Word. The Word of God will keep you from evil. (J. McGee) The process of consummating the work of salvation is more like an obstacle course than a downhill ride to the

finish-line. (T. Schreiner) The supergrace believer is protected from evil because he has maximum doctrine in his soul. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

**2 Thess. 3:3** But (adversative) the Lord (Subj. Nom.) is (εἰμί, PMI3S, Descriptive) faithful (Pred. Nom.; dependable), who (Nom. Appos.) shall stabilize (στηρίζω, FAI3S, Predictive; strengthen) and (continuative) protect (φυλάσσω, FAI3S, Predictive; guard) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.; through Bible doctrine) from the evil one (Abl. Separation; Satan).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:3** πιστὸς δὲ ἐστὶν ὁ κύριος ὃς στηρίζει ὑμᾶς καὶ φυλάξει ἀπὸ τοῦ ποιηροῦ

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:3** fidelis autem Dominus est qui confirmabit vos et custodiet a malo

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 3:4** Moreover, we have confidence in the Lord regarding you, that you will both do and continue to do that [application of Bible doctrine] which we have repeatedly commanded [strict orders for living the spiritual life].

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:4** Now, we have come to a settled persuasion in the Lord regarding you, that the things which we are commanding you are also doing and will continue to be doing.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:4** And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

Paul has confidence in the sovereignty of God, in our intercessory prayers, and in our continued application of Bible doctrine in our daily lives. Paul gives the Thessalonian believers his confidence in the Lord that they will consistently apply doctrine (Iterative Present tense) on a regular basis and will continue to do so in the future (Durative & Futuristic Present tense). “That which” Paul has repeatedly commanded (Iterative Present tense) the Thessalonians to do is to follow the strict orders and precisely correct protocol for living the Christian life. He is confident they will follow through because he knows they will be obedient (properly oriented) to his spiritual authority. He is encouraging them to persevere in experiential sanctification in spite of their trials and tribulations.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

In faithfulness God fulfills all His promises; this is the basis of our confidence in Him. God honors doctrine in our souls and provides divine logistics to support us on earth during our period of spiritual growth. Thus we are able to continue in history and continue in the grace apparatus for perception no matter what the historical climate happens to be. Even in a period of national decline and destruction, God faithfully takes care of us: Death cannot touch the believer until God is ready

to take him home. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

**2 Thess. 3:4** Moreover (inferential), we have confidence (πείθω, Perf.AI1P, Intensive) in the Lord (Loc. Sph.) regarding you (Acc. Gen. Ref.), that (conj.) you will both (connective) do (ποιέω, PAI2P, Iterative) and (connective) continue to do (ποιέω, PAI2P, Futuristic) that which (Acc. Dir. Obj.; application of Bible doctrine) we have repeatedly commanded (παραγγέλλω, PAI1P, Iterative; strict orders).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:4** πεποιθήαμεν δὲ ἐν κυρίῳ ἐφ' ὑμᾶς ὅτι ἃ παραγγέλλομεν [καὶ] ποιεῖτε καὶ ποιήσετε

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:4** confidimus autem de vobis in Domino quoniam quae praecipimus et facitis et facietis

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 3:5** **And may the Lord [Holy Spirit] direct [guide into correct application] the mentality of your souls into the virtue love of God [the Father] and into the patient endurance of Christ [two important problem-solving devices].**

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:5** And the Lord direct your hearts into the love which God is as to His nature and into the endurance and fortitude of the Christ.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:5** And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

This is a verse pointing to the doctrine of the Trinity. Paul uses the Voluntative Optative mood as a wish-prayer that the Lord (Holy Spirit) might guide the Thessalonian believers (Constative Aorist tense) into the correct application of two basic problem-solving devices. Both of these problem-solving devices, virtue (impersonal) love and patient endurance (faith rest) are related to the attributes of God – the first emphasizing the Father and the second emphasizing the Son. Since the Godhead share divine essence, the Father, Son and Spirit possess all the divine attributes. On many occasions, one Member of the Godhead is emphasized in connection with a particular attribute, but that does not mean the other Members of the Godhead do not possess the same attribute.

By consistently applying these problem-solving devices to our daily life, we arrive yet closer to sharing these divine attributes. As mentioned many times before, “kardia” should be translated as the “mentality of the soul,” not the internal organ known as the heart. It is sometimes called the “right lobe” of the brain, where objective thinking hopefully occurs. The problem-solving devices are utilized by thinking; the attributes of God are shared by thinking. When we utilize the problem-solving devices of virtue love and patient endurance, the divine attributes associated

with them are imparted to us in the filling of the Spirit.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

It may be asked whether the genitive is subjective (God's love for you) or objective (your love for God). Pauline usage would point to the former usage. (F. Bruce) We love because He first loved us. (1 John 4:19) There is the same ambiguity with patience, though the subjective idea, the patience shown by Christ, is the one usually accepted rather than the "patient waiting for Christ" in the objective genitive. (A.T. Robertson) You can manifest that love by the power of the Spirit, because only the Spirit of God can make God's love real to us. Love is a fruit of the Spirit. (J. McGee)

God did not intend for us, after we have learned the precious truth that Christ is coming back, to sit with starry eyes and folded hands and look up to the heavens. That is not what He wants us to do. He wants us to face the challenge of each day recognizing that it might be the last day before Christ comes. We should make every day really count for the Lord. Christ should be first in the day. We should do things that He wants us to do. This is a practical point of view. (J. Walvoord) They use the expression "the love of God," not only of that which is external to us of the divine attribute itself, but also of that same principle as imparted to us and so reflected back on its author, as "love towards God:" And that these senses are so combined and interwoven, that it is very seldom possible, where the expression occurs, to separate the one from the other. (J. Lightfoot)

**2 Thess. 3:5** And (continuative) may the Lord (Subj. Nom.) direct (κατευθύνω, AAOpt.3S, Constative, Voluntative: Wish-Prayer; guide you into correct application) the mentality of your (Poss. Gen.) souls (Acc. Dir. Obj.) into the virtue love (Prep. Acc.) of God (Subj. Gen.) and (connective) into the patient endurance (Prep. Acc.; faith rest) of Christ (Subj. Gen.).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:5** Ὁ δὲ κύριος κατευθύναι ὑμῶν τὰς καρδίας εἰς τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ εἰς τὴν ὑπομονὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:5** Dominus autem dirigat corda vestra in caritate Dei et patientia Christi

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 3:6** Now, we command you, brethren [members of the royal family], in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ [appealing to divine authority], that you withdraw yourself [separate mentally or physically] from every brother [Christian] who makes it a habit to walk idly and unruly [in monetary reversionism] and not according to the tradition [doctrinal teachings] which you received from us.

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:6** Now, we command you, brethren, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother [Christian] who orders his behavior in an insubordinate manner [having an insufficient inclination to disciplined work], and who does not order his behavior according to the teaching which you received and which was delivered by us for you to pass on to others.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:6** Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

Paul now commands (Static Present tense) the Thessalonian believers by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ to separate mentally and sometimes physically (Customary Present tense) from reversionistic believers. Yes, this is a command to separate not from unbelievers, but from idle and unruly believers. The adverb “atakos” can refer to the specific type of behavior exhibited by lazy, indolent believers who refuse to hold down a job to support themselves and their family. This includes by definition those who embrace and live according to socialist or communist philosophies, which are inherently lazy and thieving by principle. It also refers in a general sense to reversionistic believers, particularly those who reject work and live off the work of others, i.e., welfare state. In other words, stay away from believers who are not interested in working for an honest living and studying Bible doctrine.

Stay away from believers who make it a habit (Iterative Present tense) to live outside the doctrinal teachings of the Word of God which Paul, Silvanus and Timothy previously taught (Ingressive Aorist tense). The Greek verb “stello” meaning “withdraw,” combined with the Ablative of Separation for “brother,” means we are to separate ourselves from this category of believer. If we are strong enough spiritually, we can separate from him mentally; if we are not strong enough spiritually, we must separate from him physically. This is not a request; this is a command. Just because we meet someone who is a Christian does not mean they are positive towards the Word of God. We must discern whether they live according to the truth or whether they are in carnality or reversionism. Who we socialize with is an important matter.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

“Tradition” must imply systematic and definite teaching; and we see here again that a clear code of ethics was part of the apostolic catechism. (C. Ellicott) We are not to associate with a believer whose life is disorderly. The idea is that we keep aloof from him. It is an effective way of letting him know that his conduct is unacceptable. There is little enough such discipline exercised in the church today, which, perhaps, explains its lack of power. (J. Phillips) In view of the nearness of the Parousia (as they thought) they were refraining from doing any work. They would find such conduct all the easier in view of the Greek idea that labor was degrading. It was a menial occupation, fit for slaves only, not for free men. But this kind of conduct could not be overlooked as due to ignorance of the obligations of Christian discipleship. (L. Morris) It is probable that the evils previously alluded to had advanced among some members of this Church to a still more perilous height. (C. Ellicott)

Work, in some form or other, is a necessity for us; without work, life soon becomes dreary, full of restlessness and dissatisfaction. To have nothing to do is far from enviable; it is full of ennui and

weariness. Time is a priceless talent, given us that we might work out our own salvation; to waste it day after day, to “kill” time, as the saying goes, is a miserable misuse of the good gifts of God. Mental labor is the lot of some, manual labor of others. God has ordered our lot and appointed our work. (B. Caffin) God’s purpose for our lives on earth requires that we mentally separate ourselves unto Him. As we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, we renew our minds with the Mind of Christ. Simultaneously we separate ourselves from satanic distractions that would swerve us away from God’s plan. Impersonal love, which depends on the subject, never the object, is the requisite attitude toward anyone or anything that would prevent us from fulfilling our spiritual destiny. Impersonal love obeys the divine commands to avoid reversionism, perversion, emotionalism, negative volition, marriage to an unbeliever, distracting social life, and crime. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

We should not shirk our work. He who does not work has no right to eat. And if anyone goes about as a busybody, seeking his food from his friends, we should avoid him, yet treat him with all the grace necessary to correct his disorderly conduct. (A. Knoch) This is a command, not a suggestion. When Paul wrote the church earlier, he told them to “warn those who are idle.” (1 Thess. 5:14) Apparently this warning had not been heeded. Now Paul prescribed harsher discipline. Second-degree discipline involved the orderly separating of themselves from the lazy and the disorderly. (T. Constable) If they profess themselves to be Christians, they are above all others intolerable, inasmuch as they are, in a manner, the pests and stains of religion. (J. Calvin) Doctrinal misconception always results in practical misconduct. (C. Ryrie) Work is a Divine order, not repealed by Christianity, but lifted up to higher blessing and dignity. The idle man ought, therefore, to be allowed to suffer the effects of his idleness. (T. Croskery)

**2 Thess. 3:6** **Now** (transitional), **we command** (παραγγέλλω, PA1IP, Static) **you** (Dat. Adv.), **brethren** (Voc. Address; members of the royal family), **in the Name** (Loc. Sph.) **of our** (Gen. Rel.) **Lord Jesus Christ** (Poss. Gen.), **that you withdraw** (στέλλω, PMInf., Customary, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; mentally and physically) **yourself** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **from every** (Gen. Spec.) **brother** (Abl. Separation; Christian) **who makes it a habit to walk** (περιπατέω, PAPtc.GMS, Iterative, Substantival; order his behavior) **idly and unruly** (Adv. Manner; lazily, disorderly, in reversionism) **and** (adversative) **not** (neg. particle) **according to the tradition** (Adv. Acc; doctrinal teachings) **which** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **you received** (παραλαμβάνω, AAI2P, Ingressive; learned, accepted) **from us** (Abl. Source; Paul, Silvanus or Timothy).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:6** Παραγγέλλομεν δὲ ὑμῖν ἀδελφοί ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ στέλλεσθαι ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ παντὸς ἀδελφοῦ ἀτάκτως περιπατοῦντος καὶ μὴ κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν ἣν παρελάβετε παρ ἡμῶν

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:6** denuntiamus autem vobis fratres in nomine Domini nostri Iesu Christi ut subtrahatis vos ab omni fratre ambulante inordinate et non secundum traditionem quam acceperunt a nobis

**LWB 2 Thess. 3:7** For you yourselves know how advantageous it is to follow our example, because we did not behave inappropriately among you [abusing our authority by taking your hard-earned money],

**KW 2 Thess. 3:7** For you yourselves know perfectly well how it is a necessity in the nature of the case for you to emulate us, that we did not act in an insubordinate manner among you,

**KJV 2 Thessalonians 3:7** For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

Paul reminds the Thessalonian believers that he, Silvanus and Timothy are good role models (Latin: imitate) for the Christian way of life. Jesus Christ is, of course, our perfect role model. But it is also advantageous for them (Gnomic Present tense) to follow the lead (Latin: opportunity) of the apostle Paul and his missionary team. Paul could say this because neither he nor any member of his team ever took financial advantage of the Thessalonians (Gnomic Aorist tense). They worked every day to provide for their own needs, and then witnessed and taught doctrine in the evenings. They did not pull rank and demand a wage or salary. They did not sit back and take a percentage of Thessalonian incomes for teaching them the Word of God. All contributions were done on a grace-gift basis. There was no socialistic, welfare state in existence. None of Paul's team quit his job to wait for the rapture to occur. Inappropriate behavior in this context is related to being lazy and idle, being a sponge off the work of others. Living off the "government dole" or friends and family when you are able to work is a disgraceful thing in God's eyes.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

Here his "ought" is a strong expression. It is often translated "must." The imitation of the apostles is not optional, but Paul regards it as imperative on the converts ... Truly, what the disorderly persons were doing was the very opposite of what the missionaries had done. The latter had been preaching the gospel and working at a trade besides! The former did not do a stitch of real work in either direction. They were loafers and spongers! Instead of being a help they were a hindrance to the progress of the gospel. (NIC: M. Couch) Birds of a feather flock together: You will be like the crowd you run around with. Believers need to be very careful about the company they keep and the people with whom they associate. (J. McGee)

The missionary party had been an example of self-discipline. They knew how to keep rank among themselves. There had been no vying for position, no insubordination, and no disorderly conduct. Moreover, they had exercised the greatest propriety in their dealings with their contacts and converts. They could say, "Follow us, and you won't go wrong." (J. Phillips) Not that he expected them to be a clone of himself; rather, there were so few Christian examples that it was necessary that

they should follow the few that they had. (D. Williams)

**2 Thess. 3:7** For (explanatory) you yourselves (Subj. Nom.) know (οἶδα, Perf.AI2P, Intensive) how (adv.) advantageous it is (δεῖ, PII3S, Gnostic; proper) to follow our (Acc. Poss.) example (μιμείομαι, PMInf., Customary, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb, Deponent), because (causal) we did not (neg. particle) behave inappropriately (ἀτακτέω, AA11P, Gnostic; lazy, idle) among you (Dat. Assoc.),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:7** αὐτοὶ γὰρ οἴδατε πῶς δεῖ μιμείσθαι ἡμᾶς ὅτι οὐκ ἠτακτήσαμεν ἐν ὑμῖν

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:7** ipsi enim scitis quemadmodum oporteat imitari nos quoniam non inquieti fuimus inter vos

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 3:8** Neither did we eat anyone's bread without paying [we weren't moochers], but instead we worked in weariness and hardship night and day, so that we would not be a burden on any of you [weigh you down financially],

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:8** Neither did we eat bread at the hand of anyone gratis. But we engaged in manual labor for our livelihood in weariness and hardship night and day, in order that we might not be a burden to any one of you,

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:8** Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Paul reminds the Thessalonian believers that not only did they not ask for money, but they didn't even eat (Gnostic Aorist tense) another person's bread without paying first. None of Paul's team were moochers; they paid their own way. None of them were waiting for social security. None of them were asking for handouts while waiting for the rapture to carry them away. Instead, they were all working (Customary Present tense) just like all of us work every day. Their jobs weren't stereotypical government jobs, either - where five of them stood around while one worked. They all worked night and day (long hours) in weariness and hardship (tough and tiresome). The fact that they often worked night and day would explain why they were weary - they were putting in a lot of overtime. The work they did, whatever skill they possessed, was either mentally or physically exhausting - or both.

Why is Paul emphasizing a self-sufficient (actually, God sufficient) attitude as an example of how Christians should be? He did not want any of his missionary team to be a financial burden (Gnostic Aorist tense) on anyone else. He did not want to weigh anyone down financially when he was still able to work to support himself. And he isn't just recommending this philosophy for evangelists, pastors, teachers and missionaries. He is using their example for all the Thessalonian

believers and for all of us living today. This is a command from Paul and it is addressed to “the brethren” – all members of the royal family of God. If we are able to work, we should provide for our own support. It is unacceptable behavior for a Christian to live off the work of others when he is able to work himself. It is also imperative for believers to set aside money to provide for their own retirement, so they don’t become a burden to family, friends or fellow taxpayers in their later years.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

The apostles refused to weigh down the Thessalonians with their daily needs. They were in Thessalonica to bless the people with the truth of the gospel. Money or financial issues, at least in this instance, would cloud the pure presentation of the grace of God ... Paul was not saying that they never accepted a gift or a meal from others, but that they were self-supporting. They earned the bread they ate. (M. Couch) “To eat bread” is evidently a Semitism. It means not simply “get a meal,” or even “meals,” but rather “get a living.” Paul does not mean that he had never accepted a hospitable invitation, but that he had not depended on other people for his means of livelihood. (L. Morris) That is not what I taught you. I would not be dependent on you. I paid my own way. I provided my own food. Now I have set you an example. You should be providing for your own things. You should not be living at the expense of others. (J. Walvoord) They did not leech off others. (T. Constable)

There was a social security system under the Mosaic Law, but it, too, was based on work. Farmers, when reaping their harvest, were obliged to leave the corners of their fields unreaped, along with the gleanings, or what the scythe left behind at the first sweep through the fields. This was for the poor. The government did not put its hand into the pocket of a hardworking citizen to put money in the hand of a lazy wastrel who had no taste for work. Work was made available. He could follow the reapers and glean what was left. There was no need for anyone to starve. Likewise, in the NT, provision was made for the genuine widow (1 Tim. 5:4-13), but beyond that, social welfare was up to the family. (J. Phillips) People who refuse to work because they are religious may call it grace – but according to Paul, it is not grace, but rather, disgrace. In Paul’s churches, no work, no bread – and that is the way it should be for able-bodied men. Give us men who are willing to work and serve, thereby proving to the world that Christianity does not make one a sissy. Lazy, trifling church members who expected the church to feed them were a disgrace to the church, and Paul admonished the believers to withdraw from them and have no fellowship with them. (O. Greene)

**2 Thess. 3:8** Neither (neg. adv.) did we eat (ἐσθίω, AAI1P, Gnostic) anyone’s (Poss. Gen.) bread (Acc. Dir. Obj.) without paying (Adv. Manner; for free, they weren’t moochers), but instead (contrast) we worked (ἐργάζομαι, PMPTc.NMP, Customary, Modal, Deponent) in weariness (Loc. Sph.; tiresome) and (connective) hardship (Loc. Sph.; physically or mentally tough) night (Gen. Time) and (connective) day (Gen. Time), so that (purpose) we would not (neg. particle) be a burden (ἐπιβαρέω, AAInf., Gnostic, Purpose; weigh them down financially) on any (Acc. Spec.) of you (Gen. Disadv.),

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:8** οὐδὲ δωρεὰν ἄρτον ἐφάγομεν παρά τινος ἀλλ ἐν κόπῳ καὶ μόχθῳ νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐργαζόμενοι πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐπιβαρῆσαί τινα ὑμῶν·

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:8** neque gratis panem manducavimus ab aliquo sed in labore et fatigatione nocte et die operantes ne quem vestrum gravaremus

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 3:9** **Not because we don't have the authority [we have the right to collect a grace offering for our work], but so that we might give ourselves to you as an example [pattern] for to follow [imitate].**

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:9** Not because we do not have a right [to be financially supported in our work by you] but in order that we might give ourselves to you as a pattern for you to emulate.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:9** Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

Paul and his missionary team had the authority (Static Present tense) to collect a grace offering to pay for their living expenses, but they voluntarily chose to work to pay their bills instead. You might be thinking, “Why would they want to do that?” I can’t wait to stop working! Believe me, I’ve had days like that myself. But Paul wanted to give (Constative Aorist tense) himself to the Thessalonian believers as an example to follow (Customary Present tense). He worked in leather making tents to show them that it was just and honorable for a Christian to work (Purpose Subjunctive mood) for his living. He wanted those believers who had quit their jobs because they thought the rapture was going to occur any moment to imitate him and go back to work (Result Infinitive). Apparently there were also some believers who were rather lazy and mooched off others instead of supporting themselves. Paul is about to squash that erroneous *modus vivendi*.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

There is nothing intrinsically wrong in receiving money for laboring in the harvest field. Paul, however, bent over backward to put to rest the lie that he made merchandise of his converts and that it paid him to be a preacher. It was his avowed intention to set an example of hard work. (J. Phillips) Some have adopted the philosophy that the world owes them a living. This is not found in the Bible. The attitude of the Bible is just the opposite. The attitude of the Bible is that the world owes the Christian nothing, but that we owe the world something. (J. Walvoord) A young couple who had been in my classes when I taught at a Bible institute were inclined towards fanaticism. They thought they were super-duper saints, way out ahead of everyone else. But their exam papers were graded Cs or Ds, because they didn’t really know the Word, although they affected to be very spiritual. Incidentally, I don’t think a person can be truly spiritual and be ignorant of the Word of God ... If the Lord has called you to go to the mission field, He will raise up support for you – the Lord will lay

your needs on the hearts of certain folk who will pray for you and support you financially. (J. McGee)

His manual labor was the more notable because he realized that it was not necessary. He knew that he had the right to be supported by his converts. It was the teaching of his Master and his own deep conviction that those who preach the gospel have the right to receive remuneration for their labor. However, he waived that right to strengthen the force of his example. (C. Erdman) Paul, as an apostle, had the right of maintenance from the Churches among whom he laboured. This right of support he insists upon in the 1<sup>st</sup> epistle to the Corinthians. But for the sake of his converts, to give them an example of diligent working, and to remove every impediment to the progress of the gospel, he often waived his rights. (P. Gloag) Here the apostle notes that it was certainly fitting that the missionaries could have asked for support while serving and ministering to the Thessalonians, but Paul sets this aside in order that no false accusation might be made. (M. Couch)

**2 Thess. 3:9** Not (neg. particle) because (explanatory) we don't (neg. particle) have (ἔχω, PAI1P, Static) the authority (Acc. Dir. Obj.; we could have collected a grace offering), but (adversative) so that (purpose) we might give (δίδωμι, AASubj.1P, Constativ, Purpose) ourselves (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to you (Dat. Adv.) as an example (Compl. Acc.; model, pattern, type) for you (Acc. Adv.) to follow (μιμέομαι, PMInf., Customary, Result, Deponent; imitate).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:9** οὐχ ὅτι οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν ἀλλ ἵνα ἑαυτοὺς τύπον δώμεν ὑμῖν εἰς τὸ μιμεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:9** non quasi non habuerimus potestatem sed ut nosmet ipsos formam daremus vobis ad imitandum nos

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 3:10** For even when we were with you face-to-face, we gave strict orders to you, that if anyone [believer] did not want to work for a living [refused to obtain and hold down a job], let him not even eat [maybe starvation will encourage him to get a job].

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:10** For even when we were with you, this we kept on charging you, that if, as is actually the case, anyone does not desire to work for his livelihood, let him not be eating.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:10** For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Paul is not going to mince words when discussing lazy believers. When he was in Thessalonica (Historical Imperfect tense) addressing them face-to-face, he gave them strict orders (Dramatic Imperfect tense) about those who refused to obtain and hold down a job. If anyone among them refused to work for a living (Customary Present tense), let him starve to death (Concessive

Imperative). The imperative from Paul can also be translated as a prohibition that nobody gives this believer anything to eat. The principle is quite obvious: if a believer refuses to work, do not have any compassion on him. He is choosing to live a despicable lifestyle and is responsible for his own negative decisions. By turning away from such a believer, perhaps eventual hunger will bring him to his senses and he will find a job.

If you violate Paul's strict command, you are not doing this lazy believer any favors. You are enabling his pathetic condition to continue. Grace giving is for those who cannot support themselves, not for those who thumb their nose at work and sponge off others. Paul's strict orders: If they think they are too good to work, let them starve to death. Now for those who are elderly or infirm, the church is authorized to assist them. In America, there is also assistance available to them as a result of taxpayer revenue. This is not, however, an excuse for those who are able to work to live like leeches off a welfare system. Socialism and the welfare state are satanic institutions and are not encouraged by the Word of God.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

The moral corruption, the licentiousness and the intellectual sterility of a class of lewd would-be authors and artists is the ransom mankind must pay lest the creative pioneers be prevented from accomplishing their work. Freedom must be granted to all, even to base people, lest the few who can use it for the benefit of mankind be hindered. The first thing a genius needs is to breathe free air. After all, it is not the frivolous doctrines of the Bohemians that generate disaster, but the fact that the public is ready to accept them favorably. (L. Mises) We are offered the "arithmetic of happiness," the felicific calculus, now coated over with new paint as the economics of welfare. Socialism and the welfare state seek to restore the lost unity of members of the mystical body of God without the faith which causes it. (Bertrand de Jouvenel) He that will not work according to his faculty, let him perish according to his necessity. (Carlyle)

An unwillingness to work may have been a social weakness, and the new Christians carried it over into their way of living as children of God. Because the matter was so important, Paul had to be adamant in his orders ... Any Christian not helping to bear the burden became a detriment to the well-being of the whole church ... "No work, no eat" was a maxim among the Jews, Barnes writes, "and is founded in obvious justice, and is in accordance with the great law under which our Creator has placed us ... "The law here laid down by the apostle extends to all who are able to work for a living, and who will not do it, and binds us NOT to contribute to their support if they will not labour for it ... In no possible circumstances are we to contribute to foster indolence." (M. Couch) The loving thing to do for those drones was to let them go hungry so that they would be forced to do right and go to work. No Christian who is able but unwilling to work should be maintained by others who labor on his behalf. (T. Constable)

The implication in the letters is that these disruptive persons were perfectly capable of supporting themselves but refused to accept that responsibility, busying themselves instead by meddling in other persons' affairs, compounding the problems they were creating. (D. Williams) I fear that some

of our leaders in the United States are responsible for making beggars of people who only a few years ago were willing to work untiringly to support themselves and their families. Our leaders have played Santa Claus for so long that instead of helping the people they have caused them to become habitual beggars! (O. Greene) Labour is the law of God; idleness is the parent of many crimes and is productive of misery. (P. Gloag) Some of the reasons which make it positively wrong for the charitable to support the idle should be well weighed by those persons who are more kind-hearted than reflective. (W. Adeney) It is refusal to work that is reprobated here. (F. Bruce)

**2 Thess. 3:10** **For** (explanatory) **even** (ascensive) **when** (temporal) **we were** (εἰμί, Imperf.A11P, Historical) **with you face-to-face** (Acc. Assoc.), **we gave strict orders** (παραγγέλλω, Imperf.A11P, Dramatic; took charge, commanded) **to you** (Dat. Adv.), **that** (purpose) **if** (protasis, 1<sup>st</sup> class condition, "assumes it is true") **anyone** (Subj. Nom.; believer) **did not** (neg. particle) **want** (θέλω, PAI3S, Customary) **to work for a living** (ἐργάζομαι, PMInf., Customary, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb, Deponent; refused to obtain and hold down a job), **let him not even** (neg. conj.; stop) **eat** (ἐσθίω, PAImp.3S, Customary, Prohibition & Concession).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:10** καὶ γὰρ ὅτε ἡμεῖς πρὸς ὑμᾶς τοῦτο παρηγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν ὅτι εἴ τις οὐ θέλει ἐργάζεσθαι μηδὲ ἐσθιέτω

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:10** nam et cum essemus apud vos hoc denuntiabamus vobis quoniam si quis non vult operari nec manducet

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 3:11** **For we hear now and then that some [fellow believers] are walking among you in a lazy and unruly manner, not working for a living [thumbing their nose at customary life], but are busy at doing nothing [sponging off others and interfering with their business].**

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:11** For we hear that certain ones are ordering their behavior in an insubordinate manner among you, not working for a living, but are busying themselves about everybody else's business.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:11** For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

Paul hears reports from time-to-time (Iterative Present tense) about some believers in Thessalonica that are conducting themselves (Customary Present tense) in a lazy and unruly manner. They have either personally distorted or have heard distortions of the doctrine of the rapture and have decided they don't need to work anymore. They have become idle, totally useless to anyone. They have rejected the normal modus vivendi that most of us have to exercise

– that of obtaining and holding down a job so we can pay our bills and provide for adequate retirement (Customary Present tense). As the Latin word implies, they have become a form of nihilist – not doing anything of benefit to themselves or anyone else. Paul even uses a play on words to portray them as not only not working, but working hard at not working (Modal Participle). The words “among you” might even mean they found a way of living in your home even though they are not contributing to daily expenses.

They are “working around” others, which means they have adjusted their “lack of work schedule” to fit in with your “work schedule.” They have inserted themselves into the life of a fellow believer who is working – perhaps doing a chore for him here and there, like cooking or shopping – ultimately becoming busybodies (Latin: curious agents). Not only are they mooching off others, but they are hanging around their working friends and are interfering with their ability to work. It is quite plausible that they are sponging off their working friends during the day, and are then poking fun at their working friends because they are still working - instead of joining them in doing nothing while waiting for the rapture. They hang around the house, stir up trouble when they get bored, perhaps dabble in some useless pursuit - but are ready for dinner and a party when you come home from work exhausted from your day’s activities.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

The vain arrogance of the literati and the Bohemian artists dismisses the activities of the businessmen as unintellectual money-making. The truth is that the entrepreneurs and promoters display more intellectual faculties and intuition than the average writer and painter. The inferiority of many self-styled intellectuals manifests itself precisely in the fact that they fail to recognize what capacity and reasoning power are required to develop and operate successfully a business enterprise. The emergence of a numerous class of such frivolous intellectuals is one of the least welcome phenomena of the age of modern capitalism. Their obtrusive stire repels discriminating people. They are a nuisance. It would not directly harm anybody if something would be done to curb their bustle or, even better, to wipe out entirely their cliques and coteries. Some of them pass their time in night clubs and other places of amusement, bet and gamble, feast and revel, and indulge in expensive debauchery. Other amateurishly busy themselves with painting, writing, or other arts. Thus, most of them are idle and useless people. (L. Mises)

What a graphic picture of the lazy man, folding his arms and settling back to do nothing to contribute to the well-being of the community, content to coast along on the efforts of others. Paul was clearly indignant. Love, compassion, and a helping hand should indeed be extended to the poor, the disabled, the aged, and the infirm - but not to the able-bodied person who feels that society owes him a living. (J. Phillips) The tendency to mind other people’s business might simply be an example of the principle that “Satan finds some mischief still/For idle hands to do;” it might, however, be a symptom of that religiosity which must always be prying into the private lives of others ... busybodies instead of busy, neglecting their own business to mind other people’s, minding everybody’s business but their own. (F. Bruce) The first persecution at Thessalonica had been fostered by a number of fanatical loungers in Acts 17:5. (Moffatt)

We may conjecture that they were trying to do one or both of two incompatible things, namely, to get their living from others, and to persuade those others to share their point of view about the 2<sup>nd</sup> advent, and so persuade them to stop working also. (P. Cousins) Evil has increased to such an extent, that idle bellies occupy nearly the tenth part of the world, whose only religion is to be well stuffed, and to have exemption from all annoyance of labor. But what does the Holy Spirit say, on the other hand, by the mouth of Paul? He pronounces them all to be irregular and disorderly, by whatever name of distinction they may be dignified. (J. Calvin) These theological deadbeats were too pious to work, but perfectly willing to eat at the hands of their neighbors while they piddled and frittered away their time in idleness. (A.T. Robertson)

**2 Thess. 3:11** For (explanatory) we hear now and then (ἀκούω, PAI1P, Iterative) that some (Subj. Nom.; fellow believers) are walking (περιπατέω, PAPtc.AMP, Customary, Modal; conducting themselves) among you (Dat. Assoc.) in a lazy and unruly manner (Adv. Manner; idle, useless, disorderly), not (neg. particle) working for a living (ἐργάζομαι, PMPtc.AMP, Customary, Modal & Attributive, Deponent), but (contrast) are busy at doing nothing (περιεργάζομαι, PMPtc.AMP, Descriptive, Modal, Deponent; busybodies).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:11** ἀκούομεν γάρ τινας περιπατοῦντας ἐν ὑμῖν ἀτάκτως μηδὲν ἐργαζομένους ἀλλὰ περιεργαζομένους·

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:11** audimus enim inter vos quosdam ambulare inquiete nihil operantes sed curiose agentes

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 3:12** Now to those who are of this type [lazy and unruly believers], we give strict orders as well as encouragement in the Lord Jesus Christ [authority orientation], that they return to working for a living with quietness [resume their disciplined, routine life in virtue love], with the result that they are eating their own bread [no longer a burden on family and friends].

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:12** Now, these we command and exhort, we beg of them, please, in the Lord Jesus Christ, that in quietness they be working for their living and be eating their own bread.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:12** Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Paul changes his address from the hard-working Thessalonian believers to lazy and unruly believers. He gives strict orders as well as encouragement (Iterative Present tense) to them in the Lord Jesus Christ. The locative of sphere is meant to return them to correct authority orientation in the Lord. Those that need enforced humility are commanded to return to work. Those who

know they are in the wrong and are easily entreated are encouraged to return to work. Paul is trying to exercise authority and restraint at the same time, depending on the mental and emotional state of his listeners. He would rather be nice about the matter, but that obviously isn't working with some of them because he finds himself telling them to get back to work again – having already done so once before in his first letter to the Thessalonians.

His purpose for commanding some and encouraging others in the Lord is so they will realize how serious this matter is and will resume their former jobs (Customary Present tense) like the rest of their fellow believers have. And instead of being busybodies and troublemakers, he asks them to return to work with quietness, resuming their disciplined, routine life in virtue love. The intended result of his command and encouragement is that by resuming their former working life, they will once again be eating (Customary Present tense) their own bread instead of being a burden on family and friends. “Eating their own bread” is a reference to all of man's needs, not just the food he eats. This is also a stern condemnation to those who rely on socialism and the welfare state to meet their needs, rather than an honest day's work.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

If the Creator of the universe – Who could have come in a chariot of fire and commanded twelve legions of angels to smooth His path, having been born in the lap of luxury, and been carried through life on flowery beds of ease – if He chose rather to work and toil, why should we think that we ought not to work, and work hard? The Christian is not to be ever on the lookout for a handout. He does not sponge off others. He rolls up his shirtsleeves and gets to work to “bring home the bacon,” as we put it today. (J. Phillips) Stop fussing, stop idling, and stop sponging. (F. Bruce) Ordinary lives are commonplace; they do not present opportunities for showy action; there are few emergencies, little excitement in them. The lives of most of us are, by God's appointment, ordinary and commonplace; it is the discipline for eternity which he has provided for us. The quiet, faithful performance of those common duties is the best preparation for the coming of the Lord. (B. Caffin)

Do not make a big noise about it, either. Just quietly do the right thing, provide your own livelihood and eat your own bread. Do not expect someone else to feed you. (J. Walvoord) The prevalent restlessness about the approach of the day of the Lord so filled their minds that it seemed hard to attend to less exciting matters. In view of an event so awful, the little details of daily occupation seemed trivial and insignificant. The whole course of life, with all its complex interests, might any moment be abruptly checked by the sudden coming of the Lord. It was hard to descend from the contemplation of a topic so absorbing to the little duties of work and everyday life. But the apostle commands us, and that with the greatest earnestness. It is just in those little duties that our responsibility chiefly lies. It is in the small matters of daily life that the battle between good and evil is fought out for each individual soul. (B. Caffin)

This doesn't sound very spiritual, does it? It doesn't sound very theological. But it certainly is practical. It would solve a great many problems in the average church if the busybodies, the troublemakers, would work with quietness and do something constructive. (J. McGee) In the

experience of these saints they are walking carnally (1 Cor. 3:3) and pampering their flesh with laziness. They were a disgrace to the local assembly and to the larger body of Christ as well. (M. Couch) It is not enough that they should not be disorderly, they must also work - and that too “with quietness” for their own maintenance. (Milligan) It is scandalous for those who profess and call themselves Christians to lead idle lives and look to others for support if they themselves have opportunity and strength for working to maintain themselves and to help others who are less fortunate. (F. Bruce) “In the name of” becomes an assertion of authority. (D. Williams)

**2 Thess. 3:12** Now (transitional) to those (Dat. Adv.) who are of this type (Dat. Appos.; lazy and unruly believers), we give strict orders (παραγγέλλω, PAI1P, Iterative; command) as well as (ascensive) encouragement (παρακαλέω, PAI1P, Iterative; request, appeal, beg) in the Lord Jesus Christ (Loc. Sph.; authority orientation), that (purpose) they return to working for a living (ἐργάζομαι, PMPTc.NMP, Customary, Purpose, Deponent) with quietness (Gen. Attend. Circum., Manner; resume their disciplined, routine life in virtue love), with the result that they are eating (ἐσθίω, PASubj.3P, Customary, Result) their own (Poss. Gen.) bread (Acc. Dir. Obj.; no longer a burden on family and friends).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:12** τοῖς δὲ τοιούτοις παραγγέλλομεν καὶ παρακαλοῦμεν ἐν κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ ἵνα μετὰ ἡσυχίας ἐργαζόμενοι τὸν ἑαυτῶν ἄρτον ἐσθίωσιν

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:12** his autem qui eiusmodi sunt denuntiamus et obsecramus in Domino Iesu Christo ut cum silentio operantes suum panem manducent

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 3:13** But, as for you, brethren [hard-working, charitable believers], do not become discouraged by doing what is honorable in life [work is your full-time Christian service and potential mission field].

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:13** But, as for you, brethren, do not become weary and lose heart in doing good.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:13** But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Paul changes his address to the quiet, disciplined, hard-working believers in Thessalonica. He knows that it is tough to do what is honorable day-after-day. He knows it is possible (Potential Subjunctive mood) for us to work ourselves to exhaustion and to be discouraged by others who seem to have it easy in life. He implores them to not become discouraged (Ingressive Aorist tense) by going to work every day to provide for their own food, clothing, shelter and other needs (Customary Present tense). Our job is our full-time Christian service, and on occasion, may even be (Instrumental Participle) our mission field.

## **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

For though the idle and lazy should not be relieved, yet the helpless poor should not be neglected. (J. Gill) The shortcomings of one person or group are no excuse for the failure of another. As Christians we are called to do what is right. (D. Williams) No matter what may be the conduct of others, do not fail in doing the fair and noble thing. Persevere in your honorable course. Do not tire in the path of duty. (C. Erdman) Although there are many that are undeserving and abuse our liberality, we must not on this account leave off helping those who need our aid: let not the sloth of those disorderly persons hinder or damp your charity. (G. Gloag) When other Christians take easy paths of irresponsibility and seem to prosper in them, it is easy to get discouraged and be tempted to join them. Though one may tire in doing what is right, he should never tire of doing what is right. (T. Constable)

**2 Thess. 3:13** But (contrast), as for you (Nom. Gen. Ref.), brethren (Voc. Address; quiet, disciplined, hard-working believers), do not (neg. particle) become discouraged (ἐγκακέω, AASubj.2P, Ingressive, Potential) by doing what is honorable in life (καλοποιέω, PAPtc.NMP, Customary, Instrumental).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:13** Ὑμεῖς δὲ ἀδελφοί μὴ ἐγκακήσητε καλοποιοῦντες

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:13** vos autem fratres nolite deficere beneficientes

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 3:14** Moreover, if anyone does not obey our doctrine [rejects apostolic authority] through this letter [which eventually becomes part of the canon of Scripture], take note of [mark as a troublemaker] and do not associate [socialize] with him, in order that he might become ashamed [change his direction in life].

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:14** And, if, as is the case, anyone is not obeying our word in this letter, be taking special notice of this person and do not have any association with him, in order that he may be put to shame.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:14** 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.

## **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Paul also commands (Imperative mood) the Thessalonian believers to mark any man as a troublemaker (Customary Present tense) who does not obey the doctrine contained in this letter. Paul knows that any new believer in Thessalonica that rejects his apostolic authority is going to cause trouble among the other neophyte believers. He also knows that this letter he is writing is going to eventually become part of the canon of Scripture. Not only does he command them to mark this man publicly, but he also tells them not to socialize with him in any way (Infinitive of Prohibition). There is a method in Paul's seeming madness. He hopes the arrogant, self-absorbed

believer will become ashamed (Ingressive Aorist tense) of his bad behavior and will change his direction in life (Potential Subjunctive mood). When confronted with the social rejection of his Christian friends and family, maybe his guilt and remorse would cause him to submit to the authority of the Word of God, go back to work, and recover his spiritual life.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

Since this word or instruction is found written in Paul's letter, and carries such authority, the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture is alluded to. What the apostle writes must be heeded because it is not just the word of a man, but the Word of God. (M. Couch) The idler among them was to be a marked man, even as the greater offender; the whole sentiment of the Church was to be brought to bear against his idleness. They were not to have free intercourse or companionship with him. They were not to admit him into their privacy. They were not to invite him to their houses, to contribute to his support, or in any way to show him countenance in his disorderly course. They were to do this with a disciplinary end in view, to shame him out of his idleness. It was a shame for a man, being able-bodied, to be idle and to throw himself as a burden upon others. (R. Finlayson)

The apostle does not wish to leave the individual in a state of rejection, but he is seeking a spiritual response. (M. Couch) The immediate reason for excommunication was to disassociate the church from any appearance of condoning and encouraging disorderly behavior. The hope was that the brother, thus isolated from the Christian community, would see his behavior in its proper light and would be ashamed of himself. The goal was to bring him to his senses, to make him realize that his behavior was not acceptable. (J. Phillips) We should not pick as our associates and friends those who despise and disobey the Word of God. Have your fellowship with those who are in obedience to the Word of God and who are living according to its standards. (J. Walvoord) The faithful were not to have social contact with an idle person till he repented. (T. Constable)

**2 Thess. 3:14** **Moreover** (continuative), **if** (protasis) **anyone** (Subj. Nom.) **does not** (neg. particle; refuses to) **obey** (ὕπακούω, PAI3S, Customary; rejects apostolic authority) **our** (Poss. Gen.) **doctrine** (Dat. Disadv.) **through this** (Acc. Spec.) **letter** (Abl. Source; which eventually becomes part of the canon of Scripture), **take note of** (σημειώω, PMImp.2P, Customary, Command; mark as a troublemaker) **and do not** (neg. particle) **associate with** (συναναμίγνυμι, PMInf., Customary, Prohibition; socialize) **him** (Dat. Ind. Obj.), **in order that** (purpose) **he might become ashamed** (ἐντρέπω, APSubj.3S, Ingressive, Potential; change his direction in life).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:14** εἰ δέ τις οὐχ ὑπακούει τῷ λόγῳ ἡμῶν διὰ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς τοῦτου σημειούσθε μὴ συναναμίγνυσθαι αὐτῷ ἵνα ἐντραπήῃ·

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:14** quod si quis non oboedit verbo nostro per epistulam hunc notate et non commisceamini cum illo ut confundatur

**LWB 2 Thess. 3:15** However, do not consider him [the lazy and unruly believer] as an enemy, but admonish him [with doctrinal rationales] as a brother [fellow Christian].

**KW 2 Thess. 3:15** Yet, stop considering him as an enemy but be admonishing and warning him as a brother [Christian].

**KJV 2 Thessalonians 3:15** Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother.

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Paul commands the positive believers in Thessalonica to avoid those fellow believers who refuse to work, reject the authority of the Word of God, and who behave in an unruly manner. But he does not want them to treat any believer as an enemy (Imperative of Prohibition). Instead, he commands them to warn the unruly believer and admonish the believer who refuses to work (Imperative of Command) with the appropriate doctrinal rationale. That doesn't mean we force ourselves on another believer. Paul hopes their shame will draw them to speak to those believers who continue to work for their own living, and learn why they continue to do so. By treating them as brothers who have misunderstood some important doctrines, perhaps we can turn them around and they can recover from their errors. If we treat them as enemies, what chance do we give them to change their ways? Even if they are confused, lazy and unruly, they are still members of the royal family.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

Paul wants to make sure no one is mistreated. Though judgment and punishment are painful in the experience of the believer, such wounds are meant for the good. (M. Couch) The person in question is still to be regarded as a true believer, though temporarily under discipline. (F. Bruce) When there is a real moral issue and your brother refuses to obey the teaching of the Word of God, then there must come a separation. You cannot follow him and follow the Word of God at the same time. (J. Walvoord) Do not shun him in contemptuous silence, but tell him why he is so avoided. (W. Nicoll)

**2 Thess. 3:15** However (adversative), do not (neg. particle) consider (ἡγέομαι, PMImp.2P, Static, Prohibition, Deponent; regard, conclude) him (ellipsis) as an enemy (Comparative Acc.), but (contrast) admonish (νουθετέω, PAImp.2P, Customary, Command; warn, instruct) him (ellipsis) as a brother (Comparative Acc.).

**WHO 2 Thessalonians 3:15** καὶ μὴ ὡς ἐχθρὸν ἠγείσθε ἀλλὰ νουθετεῖτε ὡς ἀδελφόν

**VUL 2 Thessalonians 3:15** et nolite quasi inimicum existimare sed corripite ut fratrem

**LWB 2 Thess. 3:16** Now, may the Lord of peace [tranquility] Himself give you that peace through all [doctrine] in every circumstance. May the Lord be with you all.

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:16** Now, the Lord of the peace himself give you [that] peace [which He himself has] always in every way. The Lord be with you all.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:16** Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord *be* with you all.

### **TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS**

The Lord both possesses and is the ultimate source for all peace, prosperity and tranquility. Paul prays that the Lord will give (Potential Optative mood) the Thessalonian believers that same peace which He possesses. Will the Lord just drop it on our heads without any requirement from us? He might, but not very often. The Lord sends peace, prosperity and tranquility as a reward for following His plan. The Lord provides peace to those who love His Person and His Word. If He “dropped” peace on all believers without exception, what purpose would there be in all the commands related to experiential sanctification? If we are consistent in our intake, metabolism and application of Bible doctrine, the peace of the Lord in every circumstance in life will become ours. The phrase “through all” is one important factor often overlooked in this verse. Those who espouse the “give me peace with no strings attached” philosophy pretend that this phrase doesn’t exist at all.

It is my contention that the means of attaining this peace from the Lord is “through all the doctrine in your soul.” If you don’t have the Word of God circulating in your thoughts, you don’t have any true peace. The Optative mood, in my estimation, is the Potential Optative, meaning there is a requirement on our part before that peace arrives. It is also possible, however, that this is a Voluntative Optative – in essence, another wish-prayer. And Paul is indeed expressing both a wish and a prayer for the Thessalonians at the end of this letter. So which is it? Is it a mere wish (Voluntative) prayer, or is there an implied condition being expressed (Potential) by the combination of the optative mood and the instrumental of means (referring to Bible doctrine). I don’t believe this is a proof-text verse for Bible doctrine being a requirement for peace, but you will find the two intimately connected in many other passages of Scripture.

### **RELEVANT OPINIONS**

Peace refers to the deep tranquility of a soul resting on God. (C. Ellicott) We must bear in mind that peace in the Bible is not simply the absence of strife. It means prosperity in the completest sense, and its association here with the Lord is a reminder that such a state comes only as the gift of God. (L. Morris)

**2 Thess. 3:16** Now (transitional), may the Lord (Subj. Nom.) of peace (Poss. Gen., Abl. Source; prosperity, tranquility) Himself (Nom. Appos.) give (δίδωμι, AAOpt.3S, Constative, Potential) you (Dat. Adv.) that peace (Acc. Dir. Obj.; prosperity, tranquility) through all (Instr. Means; doctrine in your soul) in every (Dat.

Measure) circumstance (Loc. Sph.; way). May the Lord (Subj. Nom.) be (ellipsis) with you (Gen. Rel.) all (Gen. Measure).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:16** Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ κύριος τῆς εἰρήνης δώη ὑμῖν τὴν εἰρήνην διὰ παντὸς ἐν παντὶ τρόπῳ ὁ κύριος μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:16** ipse autem Dominus pacis det vobis pacem sempiternam in omni loco Dominus cum omnibus vobis

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 3:17** **This greeting is by my hand, Paul, which is my official signature on every letter [compare it to the forged signatures you have seen]. I am in the habit of writing in this manner [dictating the rest to an amanuensis].**

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:17** The greeting [1:1,2 was written] by my hand, the hand of Paul, which [circumstance, namely, that I wrote it personally, whereas the rest of the letter was dictated to a secretary] is the mark of genuineness in every letter. In this manner am I in the habit of writing.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:17** The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

Paul signs his full, official name to the end of this letter and calls attention to his signature for comparative purposes. There have been a lot of forgeries going around Thessalonica, so Paul wants them to have a clearly written example of his signature to compare the forgeries to. He also reminds them that it is his customary method of writing (Customary Present tense), by dictating the bulk of the letter to an amanuensis (secretary) and then signing his name to authenticate its contents at the end. By signing his name to a letter, Paul is guaranteeing his agreement with the contents of the entire letter. The use of the word “greeting” at the end of the letter makes some commentators think Paul wrote the introductory greeting to the letter and then signed his name at the end. But you can greet someone anywhere in a letter, and do it as many times as you wish for personal emphasis. The important thing is that the Thessalonians know this letter came from Paul and they have his clear, readable signature by which to prove the other letters are forgeries.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

It was no uncommon thing in ancient letter-writing for the sender, having dictated the bulk of the letter, to write the last sentence or two in his own hand. This is the best explanation of the change of script at the end of several papyrus letters which have been preserved. This practice would help to authenticate the letter ... Paul, it appears, regularly used an amanuensis when sending a letter. The fact that Paul expressly adds his autograph and signature shows that, whether he was directly responsible for the wording or not, he approves of the substance and underwrites it with his apostolic

authority. (F. Bruce) It is evident that the apostle did not pen his own epistles. To avoid forgery, however, he wrote the greeting himself and, in this case, signed his own name. (A. Knoch) So I write, so I sign: this is a specimen of my handwriting, by which to distinguish my genuine letters from forgeries. (W. Nicoll)

**2 Thess. 3:17** This (Nom. Spec.) greeting (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis) by my (Dat. Poss.) hand (Instr. Means), Paul (Poss. Gen., Abl. Source), which (Nom. Appos.) is (εἰμί, PMI3S, Descriptive) my (ellipsis) official signature (Pred. Nom.; mark, sign) on every (Dat. Measure) letter (Loc. Place; for comparative purposes). I am in the habit of writing (γράφω, PAI1S, Iterative & Customary) in this manner (Adv. Manner; dictating the rest to an amanuensis).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:17** Ὁ ἀσπασμὸς τῆ ἐμῆ χειρὶ Παύλου ὃ ἐστὶν σημεῖον ἐν πάσῃ ἐπιστολῇ· οὕτως γράφω

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:17** salutatio mea manu Pauli quod est signum in omni epistula ita scribo

<sup>LWB</sup> **2 Thess. 3:18** **May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.**

<sup>KW</sup> **2 Thess. 3:18** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

<sup>KJV</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:18** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen. <The second epistle to the Thessalonians was written from Athens.>

### ***TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS***

Paul starts and finishes his letters with the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. His final wish-prayer is that all his converts who became Christians by grace will come to know the grace of God experientially.

### ***RELEVANT OPINIONS***

In spite of all our experiences of trial and trouble, when the Lord is on our side we have more than anyone else. It is far better to be a Christian in trial and difficulty than not to be a Christian and have all the luxuries and comforts that the world can offer. (J. Walvoord) He loves them all; he longs for the restoration of those who were living disorderly, for the continual progress and sanctification of the whole Church. And so he prays for grace. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ can convert the erring; that same grace can comfort and confirm the faithful. (B. Caffin)

**2 Thess. 3:18** May the grace (Subj. Nom.) of our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus Christ (Poss. Gen., Abl. Source) be (ellipsis) with you (Gen. Accompaniment) all (Gen. Measure).

<sup>WHO</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:18** ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν

<sup>VUL</sup> **2 Thessalonians 3:18** gratia Domini nostri Iesu Christi cum omnibus vobis amen

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