

## 2Thessalonians, Chapter Two, Lesson Three

HAVING FAITH IN THE TRUTH 2Thessalonians 2:13-17

### STIMULATE

\*\* Please open your Bibles to 2Thessalonians, chapter two. In our last study we saw that the world around us lives each day under the influence of the mystery of lawlessness (the system is hopelessly corrupt), and by doing so they will continually ...

- 1) be in opposition to Christ (V.6-7)
- 2) trust in demonic power (V.9)
- 3) deceive, like the one who deceives them (V.10)
- 4) base all of their actions in wickedness (V.10)
- 5) reject the truth (V.10 and 12)
- 6) derive their pleasure from wickedness (V.12)

\*\* Understanding that this is the perspective held by the unsaved people around us, how were we to view them and what is to be our impact upon their lives?

**First** - We must view them as our gracious God does, exhibited by the apostle Peter when he said, “The Lord...is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.” We too should not desire for any man to perish! (2Peter 3:9)

**Second** - We must preach the gospel of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 20:18-21)

\*\* Hopefully we are becoming more aware of our calling to share God’s precious saving truth with the lost who live around us in our community.

### MOTIVATE

\*\* In this chapter we have learned the importance of “**Remembering the Truth**” and the reality that the corrupt world around us spends their lives “**Rejecting the Truth**”. But is there something more? Is mankind supposed to go beyond merely remembering that there is a truth by which we should live? For the answer, let’s read the passage before us from verse 13 to 17 and listen to the apostle Paul describe what it means to live your life “**Having Faith in the Truth**”.

Read passage (V.13-17)

Opening Prayer

### *Having Faith in the Truth*

### INVESTIGATE

**V.13** \*\* How do we know that Paul is shifting his attention away from the wicked system which he had been speaking of in our study together last week?

He begins our study for today with “But, we should always give thanks to God for you...” Paul uses the word “but” as a transition from one subject to another.

\*\* Who had Paul just been talking about?

Specifically, “those who perish” (V.10), sinful man who lives his entire life “**Rejecting the Truth**” and taking “pleasure in wickedness” (V.12).

\*\* After expressing his thankful heart for the believers in Thessalonica, Paul describes these people from two different perspectives. From his own and then from God’s. First, how does Paul feel about them? What word does he use that describes his perspective of their intrinsic value?

He calls them his “brethren”. From the Greek word adelphos, this term is one of endearment; and became common in its use to describe the closeness of the relationship which can only be experienced by two brothers or sisters in Christ. Paul would use this term 25 times in his two letters to the Thessalonians.

\*\* Second, how does God feel about these believers?

“...beloved by the Lord...” All Christians are loved by a gracious God, who has the authority and expressed will to deliver them from sin unto eternal life in Christ Jesus.

cf. 1Thessalonians 1:4, Colossians 1:13-14

\*\* How often did Paul say that we are obligated to be thankful for one another?

“...we should always give thanks to God for you...”

Remember what we learned in 2Thessalonians 1:3, we are obligated by God, for His glory sake, to give thanks for one another. cf. Romans 1:8, 1Corinthians 1:4

\*\* Still here in verse 13, why should we direct our thanks to God for each other? What has He done for us according to the apostle Paul?

“God has chosen you...for salvation” This is possibly the single most definitive verse in Scripture for the case of the Doctrine of Election. cf. Ephesians 1:4, 2:10, 1Thessalonians 5:9, Philippians 4:3, Revelation 13:8, 3:5

\*\* What was the timing of this choosing by God?

“...from the beginning...” cf. 2Timothy 1:8-9

\*\* As we look further into this verse, what two fold method does God use to accomplish our salvation?

1. “...through sanctification by the Spirit...” “hagiasmos” literally means “setting apart” from a sinful lifestyle unto living for God.

We saw this together in 1Thessalonians 4:7 and 5:23. cf. 1Peter 1:1-2

2. “...faith in the truth.” Clearly, Paul is saying that Christians are to live “**Having Faith in the Truth**” as opposed to those we saw last week who spend their lives “**Rejecting the Truth**”.  
cf. V.10, 12

\*\* Some have suggested that what Paul has in mind with this two fold approach to our salvation is, “God’s part and man’s part”. God, on His part sanctified us for salvation; while we, on our part, placed our faith in the truth. On the surface that is true, but from where did we get the faith to believe the truth?

That was a gift from God, so that our entire salvation is totally of Him and for His glory.  
cf. Ephesians 2:8, Philippians 1:29 and 2Peter 1:1

\*\* If we are those, who by God's sovereign choice, live by "**Having Faith in the Truth**"; what impact should that reality have upon our confidence to live for Christ in the face of persecution?

We should "overwhelmingly" conquer our foes. All see - Romans 8:31-39

**V.14** \*\* Back in our passage for today, according to verse 14, why did our gracious God call us into His kingdom?

"...that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." What an amazing concept!

cf. John 17:5 - Christ as God

John 17:17 - "sanctify them in truth"

John 17:20 - "for those also who believe"

John 17:22 - Glory..."I have given to them"

\*\* Before we leave this verse, what personal note does Paul interject regarding how God had called them?

"...through our gospel..." Not only did God love them, but so did Paul as he personally identifies with the gospel truth he had shared with them. cf. 1Thessalonians 2:8

**V.15** \*\* What do you suppose is the purpose of the first two words here in verse fifteen?

"So then..." Paul is saying, "In view of all that has been said, do this!"

\*\* Alright then, what two things are we as brethren to do, which will prove that we live each day by "**Having Faith in the Truth**"?

1. "...stand firm..." cf. 1Corinthians 16:13, Philippians 1:27. 4:1

2. "...hold to the teaching..." cf. Romans 6:17, Colossians 2:8

\*\* We should be willing to live each day "**Having Faith in the Truth**". For the Thessalonians, what were their two sources of teaching for understanding God's precious truth?

1. "...word of mouth..." - the apostle teaching them in person. cf. 2Thessalonians 2:5

2. "...by letter from us..." - a direct reference to these two letters he had sent through Timothy.

**V.16** \*\* As the apostle reflects upon the lives of his students, his beloved Thessalonians, what does it cause him to do on their behalf?

He begins to pray for them. That should always be the fruit of our loving concern for one another, that we go to the Lord and ask Him to bless our brothers and sisters in Christ.

\*\* In this brief prayer, Paul mentions what God has done for us as Christians and also what he would like for God to yet do. First, what things has God already done?

1. He has loved us!

2. He has given us eternal comfort!

3. He has given us eternal good hope!

Just a footnote: All of that was by His “**grace**” - **God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense!**

**V.17** \*\* And second, what things does he want God to do for us?

1. He wants God to comfort our hearts today. cf. 2Corinthians 1:3-4

2. He wants God to strengthen our hearts today. cf. Ephesians 3:14-16

Even though our eternal state is secure, we need both God’s comfort and strength to live each day “**Having Faith in the Truth**”.

\*\* According to Paul, what is the environment for us to receive God’s comfort and strength? What are we doing at the time that God comforts and strengthens us?

We are doing “...every good work and word.” We are preoccupied in serving Him, while he comforts and strengthens us in the process. cf. Ephesians 2:10

\*\* Remembering that this is a actual letter, and that Paul was very concerned for the spiritual stability of these Thessalonians, how does “**Having Faith in the Truth**” relieve their concerns?

By trusting in the truth of God’s word, the events of our day cannot shake us. Whatever He would have us experience, will only be used for building us up; which is why we can consider it all joy! cf. James 1:2-4 (trials - peirasmos, literally an experiment, a trial or test).

“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

## **EXTRICATE**

\*\* How do we know from this letter that the apostle was concerned about the Thessalonians maintaining their spiritual composure?

In 2Thessalonians 2:2 Paul said he was writing them so “that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or disturbed...”

Paul wanted them “**Having Faith in the Truth**” so that they would be able to stand firm and hold fast!

## **DELINEATE**

\*\* Let’s list from today’s passage the individual ways in which Paul encouraged his readers to live each day while “**Having Faith in the Truth**”.

1. He gave thanks to God for them. (V.13)

2. He reminded them that they are beloved by the Lord. (V.13)

3. He reminded them that God had chosen them.(V.13)

4. He reminded them that God set them apart.(V.13)

5. He reminded them that he was personally involved in their lives (our gospel). (V.14)

6. He encouraged them to stand firm on the truth.(V.15)

7. He encouraged them to hold onto the truth.(V.15)

8. He prayed for them to be comforted and strengthened by God Himself. (V.17)

## **EVALUATE**

\*\* While I am sure that the recipients of this letter were encouraged and strengthened to live each day “**Having Faith in the Truth**”, the more relevant question becomes; are we so encouraged and strengthened?

When we meet each week and learn more of God’s precious truth, we should also be strengthened to live everyday by “**Having Faith in the Truth**”. If we were to so live, we would find that our every “work and word” would produce glory for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”.

## **ACTIVATE**

\*\* One way of strengthening our walk with the Lord, is to practice what we preach. However, in order to do that we must first be faithful to preach or proclaim God’s saving truth.

Looking back over the list of ways with which Paul had encouraged these Thessalonians, let’s commit to being available for God to use us to encourage others with these same truths; to the end result that we will stand firm while “**Having Faith in the Truth**”

Closing prayer