

- *What do you do — and, how to pray when persecution breaks in? When opposition & enemies hound you, oppress you, and oppose you, what do you do?*

### ***The Situation / Context of Paul & the Thessalonians***

- The background of 1-2 Thessalonians is Acts 17 (Paul's 2nd missionary journey)
- Much of the news that Paul hears of this young and growing church is good (cf. 1 Thess).
- The majority of the saints continue to grow & remain steadfast amidst persecution.
- But false teaching and bad doctrine concerning end times had crept in.
- It caused confusion theologically, bad decisions practically & opposition externally.
- So, Paul writes 2 Thessalonians. It's an “occasional letter” [a particular occasion sparked the writing of the letter.]
- 2 Thessalonians is primarily a letter of CORRECTION. Correction concerning:
  1. persecution (ch.1)
  2. prophecy / day of the LORD (Ch.2)
  3. practice / godly living (ch.3)
- Most scholars agree that Paul wrote this book from Corinth (from his 18-month visit to Corinth on his 2nd journey = Paul, Silas and Timothy were all together in Corinth (Acts 18.5; compare with 2 Thess 1.1).

But 2 Thessalonians 1, though Paul corrects them about “persecution”, the chapter is full of comfort, encouragement & commendation. And the chapter is bathed in the context of prayer (it is bookended with prayer: 1:3-4 & 1:11-12).

**THESIS — In this wonderful section of 2 Thessalonians 1 we will draw out some important big picture exhortations for us from Pastor Paul as he prays for the believers:**

1. Thank your God (3-4)
2. Trust your God (5-10)
3. Implore your God (11-13)

### **I. THANK YOUR GOD! (3-4)**

Paul thanks God...

For the saints:

For their enlarged faith:

**2 Thessalonians 1:3-12 — “Thanking, Remembering, Praying: All With An Eye Toward the Glory of Christ!”**

For their mutual love:

For their steadfast endurance:

**II. TRUST YOUR GOD! (5-10)**

2 Thessalonians 1:5-10, though richly theological and full of end-times (*eschatological*) doctrine, it is a side note, a long parenthesis.

v.5-10 —it’s like a “BY THE WAY”—let me comment on this “you’re enduring affliction/persecution (v.4b):

**Saints!** — you are suffering, but re-capture a Long-Term Perspective; See things through God’s Lens; See what God will do Long-Term with your Persecutors. TRUST GOD. ENDURE. PERSEVERE! HOPE!

♣**Trust his plan \*now\* by clinging to his promises for the future!**

- **vv.5-10 — God’s Judgment revealed at the 2nd coming**

1. It is Righteous (5)
2. It is Certain (7 - when he will be revealed; v.10)
3. It is Retri-butive (8) (punishment, repayment)
4. It is Deserved (8b)
5. It is Eternal (9a)
6. It is Hopeless (9b)
7. It is Avoidable (10b — believe!)

**III. IMPLORE YOUR GOD! (11-12)**

God, fulfill your work in us:

God, be glorified in us (and us in Christ):

- NOTE the repeated theme of Christ’s Glory
  1. Jesus will be *revealed* in Glory (1.7); Mat 24.30
  2. Jesus will be *glorified* in his people (1.10)
  3. Unbelievers will be *excluded* from his glory (1.8-9)
  4. Jesus will be *glorified* in us (1.12)
  5. We will be *glorified* in HIM (1.12b!)

**“Verses 3-12 says should ultimately drive us and give us a resolve to live our lives from day to day for Christ’s great glory.” (Greg Beale)**

- **The glory of Christ!** >>> The Glory of Christ is the...
  1. Worth of Christ Intrinsically
  2. Beauty of Christ Experientially
  3. Union with Christ Salvivically
  4. Return of Christ Triumphantly
  5. Delighting in Christ Everlastingly

***Implore that God would work in us a yearning for His glory!***

In suffering & affliction, Paul’s prayers for the saints teach us a lot! Paul does *not* want us to look **INWARD** (self-introspection), nor **OUTWARD** (fears/worries abounding), **BUT UPWARD** (to Christ, His glory, His return, His justice, His grace & power).

When we look inward we get depressed!

When we look outward we get distressed!

When we look upward we find sweet rest! **Look upward to Christ, His righteous judgment! Glory in Him.**

Other refuge have I none, I helpless, hang on Thee;  
 Leave, oh leave me not alone, Support and comfort me.  
 All my trust on Thee is stayed, All help from Thee I bring;  
 Cover my defenseless head In the shadow of Thy wing.

Thou, O Christ, are all I want, Here more than all I find;  
 Raise the fallen, cheer the faint, Heal the sick, and lead the blind.  
 Just and holy is Thy Name, I am all unrighteousness;  
 False and full of sin I am; Thou art full of truth and grace.

## COME PEOPLE OF THE RISEN KING

Come, people of the Risen King,  
Who delight to bring Him praise;  
Come all and tune your hearts to sing  
To the Morning Star of grace.  
From the shifting shadows of the earth  
We will lift our eyes to Him,  
Where steady arms of mercy reach  
To gather children in.

**Rejoice, Rejoice! Let every tongue rejoice!**  
**One heart, one voice; O Church of Christ, rejoice!**

Come, those whose joy is morning sun,  
And those weeping through the night;  
Come, those who tell of battles won,  
And those struggling in the fight.  
For His perfect love will never change,

And His mercies never cease,  
But follow us through all our days  
With the certain hope of peace.

Come, young and old from every land –  
Men and women of the faith;  
Come, those with full or empty hands –  
Find the riches of His grace.  
Over all the world, His people sing –  
Shore to shore we hear them call  
The Truth that cries through every age:  
“Our God is all in all

## THERE IS A REDEEMER

There is a redeemer  
Jesus, God's own Son  
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah  
Holy One

**Thank you, Oh my Father**  
**For giving us Your Son**  
**And leaving Your Spirit**  
**'Til the work on Earth is done**

Jesus my redeemer  
Name above all names  
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah  
Hope for sinners slain

When I stand in Glory  
I will see His face  
And there I'll serve my King forever  
In that Holy Place

### **JOHN OWEN on the Glory of Christ** (some choice quotes):

- The revelation made of Christ in the blessed gospel is far more excellent, more glorious, and more filled with rays of divine wisdom and goodness, than the WHOLE CREATION and the just comprehension of it (if attainable) can contain or afford.
- We are to be stirred up to diligence in the duty here — a continual contemplation of the glory of Christ, in his person, his office, and his grace.
- The contemplation of the glory of Christ will carry us cheerfully and comfortably INTO death and THROUGH death.
- One of the great privileges and advancements of believers' both in this world and to eternity, consists in their beholding of the GLORY OF CHRIST.