

"What Do I Do When Things Go Wrong?"

2 Thessalonians
September 15, 2013

III We must pay much closer attention to living with self discipline under God's word, (2 Ths. 1: 1-3: 18)

A. The wrath of God is a very present reality for those who do not believe the gospel, (vs. 1: 1 - 12)

2. The Gospel Produces The Real Fruit Of Steadfastness & Endurance In The Life Of The Believer, (vs. 4)

Message Emphasis: Many do not understand that suffering is a normal part of living in the faith of Christ. We must not seek to avoid or minimize suffering but rejoice over God's providences when they come.

4.1) Boasting About Ourselves Is Wrong; Boasting About Christ Is Necessary ...accept suffering & boast in Christ; not me
Our Text Says, **"We Boast (Pres.Act.Inf) About You"- 1)** "So although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the one who did the wrong, nor for the sake of the one who suffered the wrong, but in order that your earnestness for us might be revealed to you in the sight of God. **2)** Therefore we are comforted. And besides our own comfort, we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all. For whatever boasts I made to him about you, I was not put to shame. But just as everything we said to you was true, so also our boasting before Titus has proved true. **3)** And his affection for you is even greater, as he remembers the obedience of you all, how you received him with fear and trembling. I rejoice, because I have complete confidence in you." (2 Corinthians 7:12-16, ESV)

- 1) Christ centered "Boasting" does not focus on us but God's purposes - "For I wrote to you out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you." (2 Corinthians 2:4, ESV)
- 2) Christ centered "Boasting" must be founded upon the truth of the Gospel - "...[love] does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth." (1 Corinthians 13:5-6, ESV)
- 3) Christ centered "Boasting" cannot be counterfeited; it must be genuine

I will not boast in anything No gifts, no powr's, no wisdom But I will boast in Jesus Christ His death and resurrection

• **Genuine Faith In Christ "Hopes" For What Is Not Seen** ...faith is not existential ...faith must go beyond senses to be faith
Our Text Says, **"For Your Steadfastness & Faith" - 1)** "And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. **2)** For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience." (Romans 8:23-25, ESV)

- 1) The test of genuine faith is trusting in the Spirit of Christ though we do not see the end result - "Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2, ESV)
- 2) The test of genuine faith produces "real" patience in "unreal" circumstances

In Christ alone my hope is found; He is my light, my strength, my song; This cornerstone, this solid ground, Firm through the fiercest drought and storm. What heights of love, what depths of peace, When fears are stilled, when strivings cease! My comforter, my all in all—Here in the love of Christ I stand.

• **Genuine Faith In Christ "Establishes" Us To Endure Patiently** ...Christ does not guarantee no suffering ...He gives grace
Our Text Says, **"In All Your Persecutions & Afflictions" - 1)** "You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. **2)** As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. **3)** You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful." (James 5:8-11, ESV)

- 1) Being "established" in faith recognizes the seriousness of the situation at hand - "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers." (1 Peter 4:7, ESV)
- 2) Being "established" in faith follows the examples give to us by God - "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (Matthew 5:12, ESV)
- 3) Being "established" in faith sees God's hand at work & trusts in God's promises

Behold Him there the risen Lamb, My perfect spotless righteousness, The great unchangeable I AM, The King of glory and of grace, One in Himself I cannot die. My soul is purchased by His blood, My life is hid with Christ on high, With Christ my Savior and my God!

***** The Question Is Not What Must I Do? Rather, What Must I Do To Be Saved? *****

Message Directive: Look to Christ for the salvation of your soul; ONLY by His Spirit can you truly understand Christ's divine purpose for suffering.

"Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other." (Isaiah 45:22, ESV)

"Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." (Romans 5:3-5, ESV)

3. The Gospel Produces The Real Evidence That The Believer Is Accepted Before God, (vs. 5)
 4. The Gospel Provides The Real Standard By Which God Will Repay Each Person, (vs. 6 - 7a)
 5. The Gospel Promises The Real Proof Of Christ's Sovereignty At His Appearing, (vs. 7b - 8)
 6. The Gospel Promises The Real Judgment Of Those Who Do Not Believe In Christ, (vs. 9)
 7. The Gospel Promises The Real Glorification Of Christ When He Confirms The Testimony, (vs. 10)
 8. The Gospel Prepares The Real Faith Within The Life Of Every Believer, (vs. 11)
 9. The Gospel Prepares The Real Grace Within The Life Of Every Believer, (vs. 12)
- B. The wrath of God is a very present reality governed by the ordained decrees of God, (vs. 2: 1 - 17)
- C. The wrath of God is a very present reality that must be avoided even in its temporal aspects, (vs. 3: 1 - 18)