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*God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.*

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## 2 Thessalonians 1.

(2013)

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The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

***Teach it, don't demand it.***

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*Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man. As to such I neither claim special knowledge or perfect understanding.*

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## 2 Thessalonians 1.

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### Topics.

- Paul boasts of the Thessalonians to the churches.
- The church, Christ's body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.
- The great faith of the Thessalonians.
- When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.
- Jesus will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.
- The wrath of God.
- Jesus will return and be glorified in his saints

**INTRODUCTION:** this letter from the apostle Paul (1:1; 3:17) was probably written shortly after his first letter to the church in Thessalonica. He had been boasting of them to other churches, telling of their faith and their love for each other in the face of persecution. Paul reminded them that God will repay their persecutors and that they should not become "shaken in mind or alarmed," fearing that, "The Day of the Lord" (2:2) was at hand and admonished them not to be idle, commanding them that, "If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat" (3:10).

**NOTE:** for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

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### Paul Boasts of the Thessalonians to the Churches.

2 Thess. 1:1-4 ----- <sup>1</sup>Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: <sup>2</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>3</sup>We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. <sup>4</sup>Therefore we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions that you are enduring.

**Thessalonica:** was a city of Macedonia in Asia Minor.

**NOTICE:** Paul's introduction, "To the church in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (v1) there is in the secular global world today a mindset that the church is a Sunday meeting in a religious building and some confusion amongst brothers and sisters in Christ between whether it's God's Spirit or Christ Spirit that fills the church and those who belong to it. Paul's words, "The church is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (v1) shows that the church is global and that it is both God's Spirit and Christ's Spirit working amongst those who believe. The following notes may help bring some clarity to those who have been influenced by religious tradition.

Paul in his letter to the Ephesians wrote: -

- God put all things under Christ's feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him (God) who fills all in all (Ephes. 1:22-23).

Clearly showing that Christ is the Head of the church and has dominion, rule and authority over all things in the church and the words: -

- Which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all (Ephes. 1:23).

Shine a spotlight on the following two truths: -

1. All those who trust in Christ form the body of Christ (the church).
2. It is God's Spirit (also called the Holy Spirit) that fills Christ's body (the church).

**NOTE:** God's Spirit and Christ's Spirit are in perfect unity, perfect love and perfect harmony in mind will and purpose therefore the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ though separate can be viewed as being identical in character.

To attempt to dissect down to microscopic detail the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ as a spiritual surgeon with a scalpel is (I think) to do God and the Lord an injustice since there is nothing in prayer we can say to Christ that God does not hear neither is there anything we say to the Father that the Son is not also listening to and there is nothing we can hide in deed or action from either God or the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the reason God's Spirit and Christ's Spirit though separate can be seen as being identical especially in prayer since they are united together in perfect love, mind and purpose and not only does God and Christ dwell in the heart of every brother and sister who belongs to the family of Christ by faith and God's grace, but those in Christ have fellowship with both the Father and the Son (1 John 1:3).

**A torch its light and God and Christ:** if we were to attempt to explain the Spirit of God and of Christ in simple material terms (howbeit very limited) the Spirit of God and of Christ could be likened to a golden torch its light and its batteries. The torch gives brilliant light that dispels darkness and allows all who walk in its light to clearly see, but without batteries the torch has no power since they are the source of its light. Thus Christ could be likened to the torch and God to the batteries since God is the source of all life, but the batteries without the torch or the torch without the batteries cannot give light.

This is another reason we should not try to dissect in microscopic detail God's Spirit from Christ's Spirit or Christ Spirit from God's Spirit, but always allow a certain amount of mystery since they are together united in perfect unity, perfect love and perfect mind will and purpose. Added to this there is nothing the Father wouldn't do for us that Christ wouldn't also gladly do, nor is there anything that Christ would do for us that the Father would not also be pleased to do.

**But this is not the end of the wonder and glory of the Father and of the Son  
there is another great insight we gain from the words, ALL in ALL.**

Paul wrote a similar statement in his letter to the Corinthians "God has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when it says, "all things are put in subjection," it is plain that he is accepted who put all things in subjection under him. When all things are subjected to him then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him that God may be ALL in ALL (1 Cor. 15:27-29). These verses also clearly show that God has exalted Christ as the Head above all things, but they also tell us something more and that is; "When all things are subjected to Christ then he will also be subjected to God so that God will be, ALL in ALL. The phrase, God will be ALL in ALL in this context lifts the mind of the ardent Bible student at lightning speed and transcends it forward in time to the glorious and majestic vision of a godly man on the isle of Patmos who wrote: -

- I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more and I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the *dwelling place of God is with man. he will dwell with them* and they will be his people, and *God Himself* will be *with them as their God*. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "*Behold, I am making all things new*" (Rev. 21:1-5).

This is the splendour, the glory the wonder and the climax of God's promise to Abraham made many thousands of years ago and the inheritance of all who are children of Abraham by faith and brothers and sisters of Christ. Is there any other religion on earth that proclaims such a glorious eternal hope? (This author has not found one).

The Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in sharp clearness proclaims that the stunning splendour of this glory is not dependent on our abilities and talents or our lack of them since God in His wisdom has made salvation to eternal life and everlasting glory available to all, not by our own self-effort, but through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and God's grace.

Can there be any better news than this, "I think not" thus the reason the Gospel of Christ is called the Good News.

### **The Church, Christ's Body, the Fullness of Him who fills All in All.**

The word church in the following verse, "The church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all (Eph. 1:23-22) should never be limited to the established religious institutions, denominations or church buildings though they may form a part of the body of Christ they are not the only part. There are many individual Christians in all countries of the world who meet in coffee bars, social outings and mostly their own homes to give thanks to Christ and share their discoveries of God's word and their spiritual experiences with Him. Many of these people are helping others and simply manifesting the reality of their faith to the people that come into their lives.

God is not limited to any one pattern or organisation; He is far too creative for that. Jesus church is global and is manifested in a vast variety of ways across the face of the earth. In many third world countries church is held outside under a tree (for shade) with its members sitting on the dusty ground often with dogs, chooks and other animals roaming around.

It is also important to be aware that the word church does not embrace everyone simply because they confess to be Christians. When the Bible uses the term church it primarily refers to those who belong to Christ and those who do the will of his Father. The will of God in this context is, loving your neighbour as yourself" (Matt. 22:37-39) (Mark 12:28-31) In the New Testament this is called the, royal law (James 2:8) and means, do-good to others." Those who deliberately harm or use people, especially those who belong to Christ for their own selfish gain and greed, sexually, financially, emotionally and spiritually are referred to by Christ himself as workers of iniquity (Matt. 7:21-23).

The Bible teaches that some will be cast out of God's Kingdom which means not everyone who confesses to know Christ is part of his church there are those in his present Kingdom who he calls wicked servants. They use his name and his Gospel for their own selfish gain and line their own greedy pockets with the wealth and riches of this world by making merchandise of those who do belong to Christ. Nevertheless Jesus knows those who are his and those who are not and will not only reject anyone who uses his message of grace, mercy, compassion and love for their own selfish gain, but when he returns will deny them entry into his eternal Kingdom. (Matt. 8:12) (Matt. 22:13) (Matt. 25:30).

Jesus said: -

- I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. (John 10:14) (John 10:26-27).

Building God's church is not about financing opulent mega million dollar buildings, but rather it is about people gathering together to share their faith in any place they are able, nevertheless a building maybe required for practical purposes (i.e., the size of the congregation etc.), but if it is built using guilt and borrowing such vast amounts of money that not only the oversight of that church, but also the congregation are put under financial oppression it is not in the will of God.

Building God's House (temple) is about becoming more Christ like, and living in the will of God. New Testament Christianity is fluid and not restricted to a particular building or even a special day. The Christianity Christ taught is so exciting and real, it cannot be contained. It has no limitations and overflows into every moment of a Christian's life, thus the New Testament church is global, moving and manifested in the lives of all those who are faithful and who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.

**The global family of God:** since the Bible was written in an entirely different culture to ours and the body of Christ is a global family filled with people from different nations, countries, cultures, backgrounds, knowledge, levels of education, hurts and troubled pasts, because of this there is always going to be certain amount of Scripture we will all understand differently. Paul in the book of Romans tells us to avoid those who cause divisions contrary to the doctrine that he taught the brothers and sisters in Rome, but in the context of his letter the doctrines he has in mind are: -

1. Doctrines contrary to the teaching that salvation is by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ contrasted to works of the law, self-effort and keeping religious customs and traditions etc.
2. Doctrines contrary to the truth that Jews and Gentiles who accept Christ become one nation in Christ, contrasted to them being two separate nations.
3. Doctrines contrary to godly behaviour and that lead people away from the Lord Jesus Christ.

These are the three major topics Paul has focused on in his letter to the brothers and sisters in Rome and the doctrines he has in his mind when he says be careful of those who cause divisions and create obstacles.

Naturally within the global family of Christ there are many varied understandings of many Scripture, but not all teachings are important to know to be saved to eternal life nor does one have to have perfect understanding of every teaching of the Bible to know Christ and be in union with him. No-one has to be a walking Bible encyclopaedia to be in the family of Christ and saved to eternal life, but should any teacher proclaim a message of works and self-effort to be saved or teach that Jews and Gentiles are two separate groups/nations in Christ, or teach doctrines that lead people away from godly behaviour and from Christ Paul says they should be avoided (Rom. 16:17-19).

**NOTE:** though the visible global church in many regions has not presented a good reflection of Christ to the secular world, it should always be remembered that there are literally hundreds of thousands of humble Christian brothers and sisters in Christ spending their time helping the poor and the less fortunate, but sadly this type of news does not attract the attention of global T.V. news media since there is no profit to be made in good news.

The body is the reflection of Christ on earth and therefore should be walking in his Spirit of love, kindness and compassion.

### **The Great Faith of the Thessalonians.**

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy are absolutely thrilled at the Thessalonian brother's sister's faith for the following three reasons: -

1. Their faith is growing and maturing not only in the face of persecution and hardship but also in love, in contrast to the Corinthian brothers who Paul could not address as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ who he had to feed on milk (teaching regarding godly behaviour) and not on solid food (prophecy, promises and revelations and such like things), because they were where still of the flesh; meaning they were full of jealousy and strife and behaving only in a human way boasting and exalting each other and acting in a merely human manner (1 Cor. 3:1-4).

It appears Paul considered it pointless to teach solid food to brothers and sisters who still lived in the flesh (self, ego and pride etc.) and a worldly manner dishonouring the name of the Lord and the Christian faith.

2. The love (compassion, kindness, mercy, forgiveness and grace) the Thessalonian had for each other was increasing as they grew in the Lord.
3. The Thessalonians endured persecution and hardship in contrast to others who turned away and give up their faith.

Other than knowing the Lord Jesus Christ (by the Spirit) Paul's greatest thrill in life was to hear of brothers and sisters in Christ who remained faithful to the Lord regardless of hardships, persecution and troubles. The Good News of the Gospel is not about success, prosperity and wealth (as some teach), most of those who lived during the time of the early church had none of these rather the focus of Christ's message is about spiritual life now and eternal life to come, and about knowing the Lord in such an intimate manner that his love surpasses anything this materialistic world can give.

### **When the Lord Jesus is Revealed from Heaven with His Mighty Angels.**

2 Thess. 1:5-9 ----- <sup>5</sup>This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering— <sup>6</sup>since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, <sup>7</sup>and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels. <sup>8</sup>in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. <sup>9</sup>They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,

Because of the Thessalonians stand for Jesus Christ they are under great persecutions and afflictions. The righteous judgment of God has the following two aspects: -

1. God will repay those who afflict or persecute whoever stands for the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Those who stand firm in the Lord (especially under affliction and persecution will be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God and resurrected to everlasting glory.

**Jesus will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels:** God's ultimate judgement on mankind will come when the Lord returns with his mighty angels in flaming fire inflicting vengeance on those who do deny God and who do not obey the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**The wrath of God:** the wrath of God is eternal destruction meaning eternal death this is the wonder and glory of God's love, those who humble themselves and live their lives in faith in God and the Lord Jesus Christ will receive eternal life, whereas those who deny God and live to please self are destined to eternal death (meaning eternal extinction). The dead who died in unbelief do not go to a place called hell that is full of demonic evil creatures whose sole purpose is to cruelly and brutally torture for all eternity those who supposedly have been sent there.

This doctrine is not only a gross misunderstanding of Scripture, but portrays God as an extremely sadistic being since not even the secular world would inflict such brutal and cruel torture on a human being for their entire life let alone for all eternity. This insulting doctrine was no-doubt perpetuated in the early years of the church by religious leaders to scare the naïve into the church and has been adopted and perpetuated by their followers from generation to generation through tradition and religious institutions and organisations.

**For further information see the title: -**

- Hell or the Grave (Final destination of humans without Christ).
- In, Death (ON WEBSITE MENU).

### **Jesus will Return and be Glorified in His Saints.**

2 Thess. 1:10-12 ----- <sup>10</sup>when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed. <sup>11</sup>To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfil every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, <sup>12</sup>so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The following awe-inspiring words of Paul are absolutely fabulous, “When Christ comes to be glorified in his saints” (v10) everyone who faithfully follows the Lord Jesus Christ by faith has his Spirit dwelling deep within their inner being. Even though Christ’s Spirit is unseen in the human heart and trapped in a corrupted and fallen body controlled by self, ego and pride the glory and majesty of it will be revealed for all to see when the Lord Jesus Christ returns and our corruptible body puts on incorruption, and our mortal body puts on immortality (1 Cor. 15:42-54).

When this majestic world changing event takes place the Spirit of Christ dwelling in the heart of the faithful who love him will be manifest outwardly for all to see in brilliant light.

**Brothers and sisters in Christ will marvel at Christ’s coming:** even though every faithful and devoted brother and sister in Christ has within their heart a glorious excitement of the Lord’s return and a tremendous joy of being gathered together with the Lord to eternal life in everlasting glory.

Paul states: -

- All those who have believed in him will marvel (v10).

Christ’s return will be so spectacular that no-matter what expectations we have of this world changing and awesome event we will all be amazed and overwhelmed as we gaze in breathtaking awe upon this event that will by far surpass everything that has happened in the history of mankind.

**Another stunning fact:** Paul says all of this is possible, because Silvanus, Timothy and by extension the apostles testimony was believed (v10) if no-one had believed the apostles testimony nothing of what Paul is saying about the return of Christ could happen it almost seems by the tone of Paul’s writing that he is absolutely astonished and overwhelmed at the magnitude of the growth of the Gospel from just a few men.

**Paul’s Prayer:** Paul prays that God would make the Thessalonians worthy of His calling by keeping the promises they have made to do-good and that they would perform every work of faith they had said they would do. This prayer has two purposes: -

1. So the Thessalonians would be glorified in or by the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. So that the Lord Jesus Christ would be glorified by them.

Paul finishes his prayer for the Thessalonians with the words, “According to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ” (v12) because everything is covered and achieved by and through the grace of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, without grace the entire human race would be doomed to destruction.

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End