

Passage: 2 Thessalonians 1

Aim: To learn that everything we are and have comes only by the grace of God.

"We can't help but thank God for you, because your faith is flourishing and your love for one another is growing" – 2 Thessalonians 1: 3

Step 1: PRAY

Step 2: Read the passage out loud.

Step 3: Write down your initial thoughts on what the passage is saying.

- Key words
- Who is speaking
- Major themes
- Repeated words
- Promises about or made by God

Step 4: Read Devotional

The intended audience of this letter was to the Thessalonian Christians who were facing persecution. The letter previous 1 Thessalonians was given to them as a sign of encouragement. This letter followed to clarify a few misunderstandings and to explain further.

Verses 3-4 focus on giving thanks to God. These people's faith was flourishing, and this was because of the work of the Holy Spirit within their lives. We also see the importance of the Christian community. Brothers and sisters in Christ are able to walk alongside and pray and speak words of encouragement to each other and learn by their faithful examples.

Verses 5-10 shift focus to the suffering endured. Paul challenges the people to see their circumstances from God's perspective and an opportunity to demonstrate what an honor it is to speak of God's gospel message. Trials are momentary opportunities for believers to show love to their enemies. Often, I need to change my mindset and pray that the Holy Spirit is able to give me God's perspective and demonstrate love when I don't think I am capable.

The last 2 verses in this chapter is probably one of my favorite prayers. Prayer for others creates an avenue through which God delights to deliver His love and accomplish His will. Paul prays for 3 main things in this:

- 1) To preserve in faith despite overwhelming opposition.
- 2) To multiply their fruitful desires and deeds through the power of the Spirit.
- 3) To magnify the glory of the Lord Jesus through those who overcome evil with good.

This is a prayer that I pray for you. That you are able to live a life that is "worthy of His calling". That is not to mean that every day and ever moment you will be perfect but that you are able to grow in your faith and respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Step 5: Application

Here are some questions to apply the passage to your life. Mediate on them and allow the Holy Spirit to point out things in your heart.

- 1) Do you have a strong Christian community? Are you able to ask for prayer and pray for others as a way of encouragement and deepening the Church of God?
- 2) In what ways are you successful in having a Godly perspective on difficult situations and in what ways do you need to continually ask for guidance?
- 3) With whom can you care for and pray these words for them to preserve and be fruitful in their deeds?

Thank you for investing in your spiritual life and if you have any questions or would like to chat, I would love to hear from you! You can reach me (contact info in church directory, or ask office) and I would love to pray for you!