



## *Women's R&R Bible Study 2024-2025*

"YOUR WORDS WERE FOUND, AND I ATE THEM, AND YOUR WORD WAS TO ME THE JOY AND REJOICING OF MY HEART."

JEREMIAH 15:16

### **LIVING IN HOPE LESSON 6**

Before we begin 2 Thessalonians, reflect a bit on lessons 1-5. What was your favorite chapter in 1 Thessalonians? Why? Are there any changes in your life as a result? Can you be ready to share some of those thoughts with your group?

Okay, time to jump into 2 Thessalonians. Here we go! May God continue to speak to our hearts about being ready at any moment to be with Him.

The book of 2 Thessalonians was definitely written by Paul. Some think that this and the first letter were only written a few weeks apart, most likely when Paul was still in Corinth. It seems Paul was again writing to clear up some false doctrines that had been taught to the Thessalonians. Some believe that Paul may have heard about some false teachings through the "grapevine," so to speak. Most others believe that whoever brought them his first letter stayed around a while, made some observations, and brought back another report, which moved Paul to write this second letter. It seems that the Thessalonians had some wrong teaching concerning the return of Christ. Many seemed to think that, because of their persecution, the Day of the Lord had come upon them, and they were living in the Great Tribulation period. Even though Paul warned against this in his first letter, they were "sponging" off other people by quitting their jobs. They had a few doctrinal errors that caused some errors in their practical living.

It's also important to note that both 1 and 2 Thessalonians deal with the Lord's return, but from a different view. Irving Jensen points out that in 1 Thessalonians, the first phase, or the rapture, is the main subject. In 2 Thessalonians, attention is focused on the second phase, or the Day of the Lord. Although both letters contain commendations of the believers in

Thessalonica, here in 2 Thessalonians, Paul seems to want to give them some doctrinal and practical corrections as well.

**Memory Verse of the Week:** “Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith and power ...” 2 Thessalonians 1:11

1. Read the first chapter, marking any repeated words or phrases you find. What is your first impression of this chapter? What is the main thought of this chapter?
  
2. Read verses 1-4 again. Observe the facts. Who is writing? To whom? How are the greetings the same in both letters? And differences?
  
3. Read verses 5-10. Observe the facts. What’s the main thought of this section?
  
4. Read verses 11-12. Observe the facts. What’s the main thought of this section?
  
5. Read 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 4:1, 9-10. Were Paul’s prayers answered, according to 2 Thessalonians chapter one?
  
6. In 1 Thessalonians, Paul talked about the persecution they were experiencing. Was it over? (How do you know?)

The word “persecution” usually refers to attacks or hostile actions of others made on a believer because of his Christian stand or beliefs. “Tribulation” or “affliction” are broader terms and usually include any trouble a Christian may have, including various forms of injury to body and mind as a result of persecution. The believers in Thessalonica were familiar with persecution. Their church was born in persecution (Acts 17:1-9) and seemed to grow in spite of the continued tribulation (1 Thessalonians 1:6, 2:14, 3:1-3).

**7.** Was Paul proud of them? Why?

In verse 3, Paul said that **“it is fitting”** to give thanks for them. This phrase means “and rightly so” or “no more than you deserve.” He also says that he is “bound.” That means he felt compelled to praise them.

**8.** How can seeing the growing faith in others encourage you to grow? Can you name a specific person whose faith has encouraged you?

**9.** The verb “growing exceedingly” describes the growth of that which lives, like seeds, flowers, etc. Spend some time thinking about the growth process of a seed. How do we compare? Describe your own growth.

The word “abound” means “to overspread as a fire or a flood covers everything in its path.” (Charles Ryrie)

**10.** Using the above definition, what does it mean for love to abound? Who should it overflow on?

**11.** Does your love spread like a fire on a path? Can you describe the path of your love? (Is it spreading, or is it contained?)

- 12.** In 2 Thessalonians 1:1-10, what does Paul say is the reward for their suffering?

**The church in Thessalonica was a great church! William Barclay said that three things mark a vital church:**

- a. A faith that is strong
- b. A love which is increasing
- c. A patience that endures

Even though the faith of the Thessalonians was growing, it seems that some of the Thessalonians were getting discouraged and beginning to question God's righteousness. Why was all this happening to them? Ever wondered that?

- 13.** How was their endurance evidence, or proof, of the righteousness of God?
- 14.** Why is it a "righteous thing" for God to repay with tribulation? What does that mean?
- 15.** How is retribution different from revenge?
- 16.** Who is promised punishment? What will it be? Will the Thessalonians experience this punishment?

Paul tells the believers that the attitude they had while they endured these persecutions proved that God is who He says He is. They are the **"manifest evidence"** or **"token."** Verse 5 tells us that attaining the Kingdom of God is not a result of human effort but is only due to the grace of God.

The word “rest” in verse 7 means relief from tension or slackening of pressure. This word is used to describe slackening a taut bowstring.

- 17.** Why is this word “rest” so significant in terms of what the Thessalonians were going through?
  
- 18.** How does knowing that God is just and that He will right every wrong, enable us to rest also?
  
- 19.** What does the word “just” mean? Read the following Scriptures. What do they say about the justice of God?
  - A.** Deuteronomy 32:4
  - B.** 1 John 1:9
  - C.** Revelation 15:3
  - D.** Zephaniah 3:5

Why does Paul suddenly get so serious about retribution, and paint such a vivid picture of hell? Why was it so important for the Thessalonians to understand that every wrong would be made right?

I think that we all have wondered why things happen like they do. Why do the unjust prosper? Why do the godly have to be the ones who suffer? Sometimes we can get discouraged and lose heart when life doesn't seem fair. Have you ever had a friend who tried to encourage you by reminding you that God sees everything, and nothing will go unnoticed? This is what Paul is doing in this section. He is emphasizing the power of God to remind the Thessalonians that no matter how powerful their opponents seemed to be, God was more powerful! He was in control! He knows what's going on, and they would be punished.

- 20.** Describe the picture of hell Paul paints for us.

What Paul is talking about is a good example of reaping what man sows. Divine retribution is absolutely inevitable. God is not seeking

revenge. There is nothing vindictive in the thought or acts of God. It has been said that “Punishment is the other half of sin.” Because He is just, we must expect Him to right the wrongs. He cannot look the other way because He is just. He can not accept sin because He is holy. Those who have not accepted Christ will be punished for their unbelief and their disobedience. The phrase “shall be punished” in verse 9 literally means “shall pay the penalty.” Penalty is from the same root word as righteous, meaning that it is not vindictive punishment, but deserved consequence. God does not hold a grudge against people. He sent His son to die for them on the cross. If they choose to reject Him, He must judge them because He is true to His Word.

**21.** Read the following Scriptures. What do you learn about hell?

- A.** Matthew 13:42
- B.** Matthew 25:30-46
- C.** Matthew 8:12
- D.** Revelation 19:20
- E.** Matthew 23:14
- F.** 2 Peter 2:4

Everlasting destruction tells us that hell is as eternal for the unbeliever as Heaven is for the believer. Hell will be thrown into the everlasting lake of fire at the final judgement. It is not annihilation as some try to teach, but permanent banishment from the presence and power of God. Being separated from God forever has to be the worst part of hell.

The word “revealed” comes from the word “apokalypis” and means an uncovering of something once concealed. The world won’t see Jesus come for His bride at the rapture, but the whole world will see Him when He comes to judge the soul of man (Matthew 24:27-30, John 5:22,27).

**22.** As we look at hell, what are your thoughts? Is your picture of hell different than has been discussed?

The thought of hell is quite sobering. On one hand, I think of those whom I love that have still chosen to reject Christ, and I almost can't bear it. It gives me a greater passion to share with them. On the other hand, it makes me very thankful that I have a place reserved for me in Heaven (1 Peter 1:4), that I will see Him face to face (Revelation 22:4), and that I will live with Him forever. I can't believe that God paid the penalty for my sin so that I could have eternal life. What a **"Reason to Rejoice!"**

There is not only judgment at His Second Coming, but there is glorification. Charles Ryrie said that "Paul is making the astounding claim that the glory of the Lord will be mirrored in believers." His glory will be revealed in and through His saints, which refers to all Christians.

**23.** Read Colossians 3:4. What does "appear with Him in glory" mean?

Those who have believed the Gospel message and have trusted in Jesus as their Savior will be gathered around Christ on "that day," rejoicing with Him. Phillips translates verse 10 this way: "To those whom He has made holy His coming will mean splendor unimaginable. It will be a breath-taking wonder to all who believe."

**24.** What will accompany Christ when He returns? (Read Matthew 13:39, 42, 47-50)

**25.** What application do you see for yourself in these 10 verses?

**26.** Man will reap what he sows. Is this statement an encouragement or a scary thought to you? What have you been sowing? (Read Hosea 10:12-13.)

**27.** In verse 11, what is the “therefore” there for?

**28.** How can Christ be glorified “in” us today?

**29.** How is that a privilege and a responsibility?

**30.** Is the Lord glorified in how you live your life?

**It is only by God’s grace that we can identify with Christ in His suffering,  
as well as His glory. It is in His name that all glory and honor are due.  
He’s our “Reason to Rejoice!”**