



2 Thessalonians 1:1-5
A Model Church in a Depraved Culture
From Sermon 4.24.22

Read *2 Thessalonians 1:1-5*

Review from Sunday's sermon: We finally arrive at 2 Thessalonians. The context, author, and theme have not changed. It's believed 2nd Thessalonians is written only about 3 months after 1st Thessalonians. But, since Timothy's last report, the persecution of believers in Thessalonica had grown. God the Holy Spirit has Paul continue to commend them (therefore encourage them) for faithfulness. The topic will quickly transition back to The Day of the Lord and End Times doctrine. These short, concise epistles are rich resources for us today—striving to be a model church in a depraved culture.

1. From Study Guide Question #1 (page 64): Read *1 Thessalonians 3:11-13*. What did Paul pray that God to grant this baby church? For God to direct their path, to increase in love, establish their hearts, holiness, looking to Christ's return.

1a. What key words and terms, *from this week's key passage*, describe how God answered the prayer? Various possible answers. But, include: Paul's thanksgiving, growing faith, abounding love, patience, endurance, evident salvation, rejoice in suffering.

2. If outline point #1 could be the title of the lesson, what are the four traits or qualities of any healthy, authentic church? Increasing Faith, Abounding in Love, Holy Endurance, Kingdom Mindedness.

2a. What traits does the Bible never mention, concerning a healthy, biblical church? Size, membership, campus, buildings, programs, favor in the community, tolerance, compromise.

3. Share an experience you've had with a church that thrived in one or more of these qualities or, instead, was greatly lacking in one or more of these qualities. Various personal responses

4. What are the only 2 ways to increase in post-salvation* faith? The Word and Trials
See *Romans 10:17 & Matthew 8:23-27*

[*Note: the original faith in Christ that is required for salvation is a gift from God. There is nothing you can do to increase that type]

5. How does holy endurance differ from daily, physical perseverance? Some problems are universal, timeless to all mankind: illness, death, financial needs, relationship issues, natural disasters, crime, war...others are unique to faithful Christians for standing on the truth of the Word. See 1 Peter 4:12-16

6. Study Guide Question #11 (page 67). How does a Christian develop the kind of Kingdom mind-set displayed by the Thessalonians? Various answers. Evaluate, test, filter our loves, priorities, & responses thru Scripture. If found worldly, repent & "put off". Am I tied to the world or the Word?
What steps can you take to become more eternally focused? See also *Philippians 3:12-14*. Prayer. Specific study in The Word. Study those who succeeded in faith, even at great cost.