



David Chadwick | March 9, 2025

Message Title: “God’s Justice Will Happen”

Scripture: 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12

Context

- The first letter by Paul to the Thessalonians had been sent:
1 Thessalonians
- Soon thereafter (we don’t know how long), Paul sends a second letter:
2 Thessalonians
- It addresses different content than the previous letter
- But it is content that is important for us to understand

2 Thessalonians 1:1-2

1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Paul’s normal salutation: almost word for word greeting in **1 Thessalonians**
- The letter is from Paul, Silvanus (Silas), and Timothy
- Notice the “in God” theology again (like in **1 Thessalonians**)
- Notice again that Jesus is God and co-equal in Paul’s mind
- The twin gifts the gospel of Jesus gives:
 1. Grace
 2. Peace (peace with God and the peace of God/his presence)

2 Thessalonians 1:3-5

3 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. **4** 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. **5** 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

- Paul “ought”/must/is bound to give thanks for the Thessalonian church
- His warm affection and admiration for them
- But especially in these areas:
 1. Their **FAITH** growing abundantly
 2. Their increasing **LOVE** for one another
 3. Their **PERSEVERANCE** amidst persecution produces purification

Paul boasts about the Thessalonian church to other churches. Why?

- The way they had endured steadfastly amidst persecution
- This faithful endurance proves they are in God’s kingdom
- Example: When you squeeze a tube of toothpaste
- They underwent terrible persecution but were still standing
- How do you know someone is a Christian? They’re a Christian tomorrow
- The church in Nigeria today (70 beheadings recently); North Korea, Iran, India, and other predominantly Muslim countries

Verses 6-10 will focus on three words:

- Repay
- Relief
- Retribution

2 Thessalonians 1:6

6 since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you,

- God (!!!) will REPAY persecutors with the same kind of affliction with which they have afflicted Christians
- It's just for God to do so
- God's love and justice are not contradictory
- The law of the universe: karma, the Jewish Law, lex talionis (justice in like kind to crime)
- Our criminal justice system: you get what you deserve
- For example: the Epstein and Diddy files made public and if not...
- God repays sinners with his justice
- No one gets away with anything
- If God is God, it must be that way
- The persecuted here will be REPAID accordingly in heaven for their pain here as will their persecutors

2 Thessalonians 1:7-8

7 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 **8** 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.

- God will give RELIEF to the persecuted
- The word "relief" in our present American justice system – when it seems people get away with crimes
- The Lord Jesus will be revealed/"apokalypsis" in his return with his mighty angels
- In flaming fire: **Revelation 1:14**
14 The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire,
- Afflicting vengeance on those:
 1. Who don't know God (those who have never heard): **Romans 1:18**
18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. People suppress truth by:
 - Conscience
 - Creation

2. Those who don't obey the gospel (those who have heard but never obeyed gospel's commands - tares: pretend Christians)

2 Thessalonians 1:9-10

9 *They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, **10** 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.*

- There will be RETRIBUTION: **John 5:30**
30 *"I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.*
- The sheep and goats/wheat and tares are separated
- The wicked will suffer eternal (aion in Greek) destruction/ruin
- No annihilationism
- Preached with a tear in my eye: the bad news must be preached first
- Paul gives two major characteristics of hell:
 1. Never in God's presence
 2. Never in God's power
- When he comes, "on that day" (the day of the Lord for judgment)
- The faithful on earth will be glorified in resurrection bodies
- We will marvel at what Jesus has done in all our lives
- We will marvel at how our testimony helped others to believe and changed their lives
- No one can ever argue with your changed life
- Share your testimony with others (**Acts 1:8**)

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

11 *To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, **12** 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.*

- Paul's final prayer for the Thessalonians
- "Always"
- May they resolve:

1. To be worthy of God's high calling
 2. To do good works of faith by Jesus's power
- SO THAT Jesus's name might be glorified
 - Definition of "glorified": to render a good opinion of
 - The Christian's call: to make Jesus's name look good
 - Not my name...or Mohammed, Buddha, Moses, Confucius, etc
 - And you living out your life in Jesus: make Jesus proud of you!
 - This is the Christian life: Union life! In Christ. Him living in and through you
 - According to Jesus's grace (that beautiful, unique word again!)

Application:

There will be a day of judgment for all:

1. Either you're judged by God based on your works/karma/the Law
2. Or by the grace of Jesus

Once again, here is the gospel of grace:

1. The Bad News
2. The Good News
3. Your choice

Please make sure you've given your life to Jesus: wholly, completely, in every possible way

The urgent and primary task of the church: evangelism (especially if the bad news is true)