

## STEADFASTNESS WHILE WAITING FOR THE COMING OF CHRIST

Introduction to 2 Thessalonian Series  
HFC Expositor's Group  
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**Overview:** The Thessalonians had remained strong in the Lord despite persecution (2Th 1:3-4). But it is apparent from this letter that **misunderstandings** about the Lord's coming were present in the church. Some of the members were being troubled by **false reports** (2Th 2:1-2); others had stopped working, (2Th 3:11-12).

**Paul's purpose** in writing this epistle, therefore, is three-fold: 1) To **encourage** them in their **steadfastness** under persecution, 2) To **correct** their misunderstanding about the imminence of the Lord's return, and 3) To **instruct** the congregation on what disciplinary action to take toward those who refused to work

**Theme of the Letter:** In correcting their misunderstanding about the return of Christ, Paul explained that the Lord will not come right away (2Th 2:1-3). Therefore, they needed to **continue with steadfastness**.

**Thesis:** Paul's greeting appeals to the same assurances for God's "end times" people as his first letter. These men (P,S,T) were calling for steadfastness in the hope of **Christ's return**.

**Eschatology:** All doctrine in the NT is essentially eschatological in nature. The writers understood that the end times had already begun in the first century. (Incarnation, Resurrection, Ascension, etc) E.g. Paul understood eschatology not only as a futurology, but as a "**psychology**" for the present. This is a **mindset for living** for the church in its **present** salvation and kingdom **expectation**.

**2 Thessalonians 1:1-2** 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.

### FOUR GREETINGS FILLED WITH ASSURANCE

#### I. SHARING THE MISSION: ONGOING DISCIPLESHIP.

- A. Paul included Silas and Timothy as sharing in the ongoing ministry of church planting and **discipleship**.
  1. "We:" 20 times in the letter.
  2. "Us:" 7 times in the letter.
- B. Paul qualified his second letter with the same parameters as his first. Namely, because of their union with God in Christ, the content of the letter could be offered and received because of **grace and peace**.
- C. Although Paul writes as a team, his **apostolic** authority was the signature of the letter. (1:1, 2:5, 3:17)

#### II. THE TEAM REUNITED AT CORINTH: ORIGINS OF THE LETTER.

**Acts 18:1-5** After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. 2 And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them, 3 and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade. 4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.

5 When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus.

**Acts 18:11-12** And he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

12 But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him before the tribunal,

- A. Paul's journey to Corinth provided the context for 1 and 2 Thessalonians. Acts 18 helps us establish a **date** for this writing.
- B. Gallio was the Roman Proconsul in 51-52 A.D. (20 years +/- after the Resurrection) The **Resurrection** was still fresh on Paul's mind.
- C. Paul would later use the Macedonian churches "giving to the Jerusalem need" as an example of "**grace giving**" for the Corinthians. (2 Cor 8-9)



Despite the **hostile** environment the new believers experienced in Thessalonica, they were holding fast to the word that was preached to them, and news of their devotion to Christ was becoming well-known throughout Macedonia (1 Thessalonians 1:7-8). They must **continue!**