

## Who wrote the book?

## 1 THESSALONIANS overview

After Paul started the church in Thessalonica, he wrote this first letter to the believers there within just a few months of leaving. In Acts, Luke recorded that Paul preached for three Sabbath days to the Jews in the local synagogue ([Acts 17:2](#)).

## Where are we?

Paul wrote his first letter to the Thessalonian church from the city of Corinth around AD 51, just a few months after having preached in Thessalonica on his second missionary journey. Upon leaving Thessalonica under duress, Paul, Silas, and Timothy travelled to Athens by way of Berea. But after a short time in Athens, Paul felt the need to receive a report from the newborn church in Thessalonica, so he sent Timothy back to serve and minister to the new believers there. Paul wanted to check on the state of the Thessalonians' faith, for fear that false teachers might have infiltrated their number. However, Timothy soon returned with a good report, prompting Paul to pen 1 Thessalonians as a letter of encouragement to the new believers.

## Why is First Thessalonians so important?

Everyone would like to have some insight into what their future holds. How much more so when it comes to the end of the whole world? First Thessalonians provides Christians with the clearest biblical passage on the coming rapture of believers, an event that will inaugurate the seven-year tribulation. Christ shall lift His people from the earth (called rapture). The dead in Christ shall rise first, while those still living will follow close behind. All believers will meet Jesus in the air to begin an eternity spent with the Lord ([1 Thessalonians 4:16–18](#)). Those left shall go through the horrors of the tribulation period.

## A basic idea of this letter!

Impressed by the faithfulness of the Thessalonians in the face of persecution, Paul wrote to encourage the Christians in that community with the goal that they would continue to grow in godliness. Paul knew that the people had been exposed to errant teaching from those in opposition to the way of Jesus Christ and what He had done for mankind on the cross. And Paul also understood that unless the young church continued to mature in its faith, the danger would only increase over time.

With that in mind, Paul taught the people that any spiritual growth would ultimately be motivated by their hope in the ultimate return of Jesus Christ. Paul was never interested in simply telling people to pull themselves up by their bootstraps, for he knew that what ultimately inspired change was a life of consistently walking in the power of God's Spirit. And so to a group of young Christians with questions and uncertainties, Paul offered the hope of Christ's return, providing both comfort in the midst of questions and motivation to godly living. Being found each day in Christ by the Power of the Holy Spirit through the Work of Christ on the cross.

## How do I apply this?

Do you ever feel as though your Christian faith has grown stale, that you are withering on the vine when you would rather be flourishing in His service? Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians is the perfect remedy for such a feeling. Its focus on Christ's return provides water for the thirsty soul today, encouraging growth in maturity by providing hope in the midst of suffering or uncertainty.

Paul's specific, practical instruction for this process of sanctification can be applied directly to our current circumstances. By clinging to our hope in Christ and believing He did die on that Cross for "us" rising to glory three days later. ([1 Thessalonians 4:3–7](#); [5:12–23](#)) makes it clear that every Christian should expect to grow in holiness over the course of his or her life through Grace by faith and that is a God given gift not of our own but given by The Holy Spirit. Be encouraged ask God to aid you in the area of trust and He shall.

## THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE 1 Thessalonians

Lord's Words Red Old Testament reference blue man's words pink

**1:1** Paul, Silas and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you.

**1:2** We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers.

**1:3** We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

**1:4** For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you,

**1:5** because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.

**1:6** You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.

**1:7** And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.

**1:8** The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it,

**1:9** for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,

**1:10** and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

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### Chapter 2

**2:1** You know, brothers and sisters, that our visit to you was not without results.

**2:2** We had previously suffered and been treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in the face of strong opposition.

**2:3** For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you.

**2:4** On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts.

**2:5** You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness.

**2:6** We were not looking for praise from people, not from you or anyone else, even though as apostles of Christ we could have asserted our authority.

**2:7** Instead, we were like young children among you. Just as a nursing mother cares for her children,

**2:8** so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.

**2:9** Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.

**2:10** You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed.

**2:11** For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children,

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**2:12** encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

**2:13** And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.

**2:14** For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of God's churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus: You suffered from your own people the same things those churches suffered from the Jews

**2:15** who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out. They displease God and are hostile to everyone

**2:16** in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. In this way they always heap up their sins to the limit. The wrath of God has come upon them at last.

**2:17** But, brothers and sisters, when we were orphaned by being separated from you for a short time (in person, not in thought), out of our intense longing we made every effort to see you.

**2:18** For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, did, again and again—but satan blocked our way.

**2:19** For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?

**2:20** Indeed, you are our glory and joy.

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## Chapter 3

**3:1** So when we could stand it no longer, we thought it best to be left by ourselves in Athens.

**3:2** We sent Timothy, who is our brother and co-worker in God's service in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith,

**3:3** so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. For you know quite well that we are destined for them.

**3:4** In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as you well know.

**3:5** For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith. I was afraid that in some way the tempter had tempted you and that our labours might have been in vain.

**3:6** But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has brought good news about your faith and love. He has told us that you always have pleasant memories of us and that you long to see us, just as we also long to see you.

**3:7** Therefore, brothers and sisters, in all our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith.

**3:8** For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord.

**3:9** How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you?

**3:10** Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.

**3:11** Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you.

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**3:12** May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.

**3:13** May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

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## Chapter 4

**4:1** As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more.

**4:2** For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.

**4:3** It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality;

**4:4** that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honourable,

**4:5** not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God;

**4:6** and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister. The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before.

**4:7** For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.

**4:8** Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

**4:9** Now about your love for one another we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other.

**4:10** And in fact, you do love all of God's family throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more,

**4:11** and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you,

**4:12** so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

**4:13** Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope.

**4:14** For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

**4:15** According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.

**4:16** For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

**4:17** After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

**4:18** Therefore encourage one another with these words.

**5:1** Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you,

**5:2** for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

**5:3** While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labour pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

**5:4** But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief.

**5:5** You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.

**5:6** So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober.

**5:7** For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night.

**5:8** But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.

**5:9** For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**5:10** He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.

**5:11** Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

**5:12** Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you.

**5:13** Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.

**5:14** And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

**5:15** Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.

**5:16** Rejoice always,

**5:17** pray continually,

**5:18** give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

**5:19** Do not quench the Spirit.

**5:20** Do not treat prophecies with contempt

**5:21** but test them all; hold on to what is good,

**5:22** reject every kind of evil.

**5:23** May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**5:24** The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

**5:25** Brothers and sisters, pray for us.

**5:26** Greet all God's people with a holy kiss.

**5:27** I charge you before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers and sisters.

**5:28** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

## Who wrote the book?

## 2 THESSALONIANS overview

Just because Paul visited a city, preached the gospel for weeks or even months, and founded a church by guiding converts to the faith, this did not protect the new church from scheming heretics. In fact, the immaturity of any new church presented a perfect target for those who meant to mislead and distort the truth. Paul, worried about his friends and their troubles with false teachers and wrote this second letter to the believers at Thessalonica in the hope of encouraging their young but growing faith.

## Where are we?

Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians from Corinth in AD 51 within months of writing the first letter. Since the subject matter of the second letter has a number of content similarities to the first, it is possible Paul received a second report from the city detailing continuing questions or problems regarding the end times. Several of Paul's references indicate that some in Thessalonica were deliberately misleading these new believers, even to the point of false teachers forging letters to make them look as if they had come from Paul (2 Thessalonians 2:2). The apostle, therefore, took extra care in this letter to make sure the Thessalonians understood not only his views on the end times but also what his handwriting looked like, so they would be able to identify letters as authentically his (Thessalonians 3:17).

## Why is Second Thessalonians so important?

Second Thessalonians distinguishes itself by the detailed teaching it presents on the end times. False teachers had been presenting fake letters as if from Paul and telling the Thessalonian believers that the day of the Lord had already come. This would have been especially troubling to them because Paul had encouraged them in his previous letter that they would be raptured (Taken away) before the day of wrath came upon the earth. So Paul explained to them that this future time of tribulation had not yet come because a certain "man of lawlessness" had not yet been revealed (2 Thess 2:3). Comparisons with other passages in Daniel, Matthew, and Revelation reveal this man to be none other than the Antichrist. But Paul encouraged the Thessalonians not to worry, because the Antichrist would not come until a mysterious restrainer—the Thessalonians apparently knew his identity—was to be removed from earth (2 Thess 2:6–7). The identity of this restrainer has been heavily debated, but it is without doubt the followers of Christ empowered by the Holy Spirit...being the Church.. When the believers leave the earth (raptured), all who remain will find out who the 'man of lawlessness is' and shall experience the wrath of the tribulation.

## A basic idea of this letter!

The apostle Paul, in concern for the Thessalonian believers who were trying to stand firm in their faith under pressure from false teachers, taught the Thessalonians in this letter that their hope in Christ's future return should serve as an encouragement to them in their suffering, motivating them to live responsibly for Him. Paul always connected his teaching on Jesus with the practical growth he expected to see as a result of such a deeply held faith.

## How do I apply this?

Discipline and self-control are two qualities that quickly slip away in a society so focused on the material that its people forget the spiritual realities that should dictate their lives. Fat with financial and material success, many people today have descended into an unruly and lazy existence that possesses little care for others, especially of the kind that might conflict with our personal, fleshly desires. How does your daily life come into conflict with God's desire for you to live well and serve others?

Paul knew that hope in Christ would encourage perseverance in godly living. And hope is exactly what we lack today, one of the great roots of this gradual slip into increased self-centredness. As you read the words of 2 Thessalonians, allow them to rekindle your hope and fan into flame your desire to live in God-honouring, industrious ways.

## THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE 2 Thessalonians

Lord's Words Red Old Testament reference blue man's words pink

**1:1** Paul, Silas and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

**1:2** Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**1:3** We ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love all of you have for one another is increasing.

**1:4** Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring.

**1:5** All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering.

**1:6** God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you

**1:7** and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels.

**1:8** He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

**1:9** They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might

**1:10** on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marvelled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

**1:11** With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may bring to fruition your every desire for goodness and your every deed prompted by faith.

**1:12** We pray this 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.

### 2 Thessalonians

### Chapter 2

**2::1** Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers and sisters,

**2:2** not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by the teaching allegedly from us—whether by a prophecy or by word of mouth or by letter—asserting that the day of the Lord has already come.

**2:3** Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.

**2:4** He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshipped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

**2:5** Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things?

**2:6** And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time.

**2:7** For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way.

**2:8** And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming.

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**2:9** The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with how satan works. He will use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders that serve the lie,

**2:10** and all the ways that wickedness deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

**2:11** For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie

**2:12** and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

**2:13** But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you as first fruits to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

**2:14** He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**2:15** So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.

**2:16** May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope,

**2:17** encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.

## 2 Thessalonians

## Chapter 3

**3:1** As for other matters, brothers and sisters, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honoured, just as it was with you.

**3:2** And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil people, for not everyone has faith.

**3:3** But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one.

**3:4** We have confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we command.

**3:5** May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.

**3:6** In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.

**3:7** For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you,

**3:8** nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, labouring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you.

**3:9** We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate.

**3:10** For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat."

**3:11** We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies.

**3:12** Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat.

**3:13** And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good.

**3:14** Take special note of anyone who does not obey our instruction in this letter. Do not associate with them, in order that they may feel ashamed.



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**3:15** Yet do not regard them as an enemy, but warn them as you would a fellow believer.

**3:16** Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.

**3:17** I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand, which is the distinguishing mark in all my letters. This is how I write.

**3:18** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.