

“The Fully Developed Disciple!”
The Message Of 2 Thessalonians

Introduction:

1. Finished 1 Thessalonians - Written To A Young Church Planted By The Apostle Paul Himself Probably Not More Than A Year Earlier - To Encourage Them To Persevere Through Affliction & Persecution!
 - One Of The Greatest Encouragements & Comforts Was The Return Of Jesus Christ - Something Mentioned In Every Chapter!
 - Probably Just A Few Months After 1 Thessalonians Was Written, Paul Heard How The Christians Were Doing!
 - Some Things Positive! Other Things Were Negative!
 - Especially Concerning What Paul Taught Them About The Return Of Jesus Christ!
 - There Was Some Real Misunderstanding About That Important Doctrine, That Created Some Serious Issues In The Church!
 - So, Paul Writes A Second Letter To Them!
 - To Compliment Them About The Positive & To Challenge Them About The Negative!
2. The Key Verses To Understand The Message Of 2 Thessalonians Is:
 - 1:11-12 - “Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: / That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ!”
 - The Reason Paul Wrote 2 Thessalonians Was Because He Wanted Those Christians To Become:
 - “Fully Developed Disciples!” – Completely, In Every Area Of Their Christian Life! To Be Sure That They Continue To Grow & Increase & Not To Slip In Any Area!
3. How Do You Become A “Fully Developed Disciple?”
 - 4 Dimensions Found In This Letter!
 - You Need To Assess & Be Growing In Each One!
 - It Is Not Enough To Be OK In One Or Two, But Lacking In The Third And Fourth! The Thessalonians Soon Learned This!

* First Dimension:

1. *The Character Of Your Faith!*

- In 2 Thessalonians, Paul **Commends** The Christians Because Of The:
 - Character Of Their Faith!
 - In Some Areas Of Their Life And Walk, They Were Growing!
 - What Paul Had Written To Them In His First Letter, The Lord Used To Cause Them To Grow! They “Received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God!” (1:2:13)
 - In Spite Of The Persecution & Opposition, They Had Grown! How?
- In Faith!
 - 1:3a - “We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly!”
 - They Had Learned To Trust In The Lord During Those Difficult & Dangerous Times!
- In Love!
 - 1:3b - “And the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth!”
 - Their Love For One Another Was Strong Before – It Had Become Even Stronger! They Needed Each Other!
- In Patience!
 - 1:4 - “So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure!”
 - Because Of Their Faith & Love, They Were Able To Be Patient & Endure!
- This Kind Of Character Is Vital!
 - Without Faith, Love & Patience, You Can Never Withstand The Storms Of The World That Will Come Upon & Against You! **IE:** What Is Inside Matters! Tree In The Storm!
 - Are You Growing In Your Character?

- Only Comes Through A Close, Personal Walk With The Lord Jesus! Continuous Prayer & Continuous Praise! Only Through This Can You Grow!
- But Your Growth Cannot Stop Here!
 - Just A Part Of The **Fully** Developed Disciple!
 - There Is Also A:

*Second Dimension:

2. **The Confidence Of Your Faith!**

- In 2 Thessalonians, Paul **Comforts** The Christians Because Of The:
 - Confidence Of Their Faith!
 - Another Area Of Their Growth!
 - The Patience & Endurance That Paul Saw In Them Was A Strong Evidence Of Their Trust & Love For The Lord!
 - They Were Confident In:
- The Retribution Of The Lord!
 - 1:6 - “ Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you!”
 - They Could Be Patient & Endure, Because They Were Confident That The Lord Himself Would Bring Justice!
 - They Didn’t Have To “Fight For Their Rights” – **They Could Quietly, Patiently Wait Upon The Lord!**
 - Romans 12:19 - “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord!”
- The Rest Of The Lord!
 - 1:7a - “And to you who are troubled rest with us!”
 - They Could Be Patient & Endure, Because They Were Confident That The Lord Himself Would Give Them Rest!
 - From All Their Labor & Persecution!
- The Return Of The Lord!
 - 1:10 - “When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day!”
 - They Could Be Patient & Endure, Because They Were Confident That The Lord Himself Would Return!
 - And The Lord’s Return Is Again The Major Theme In This Book!
 - They Knew He Was Coming! They Just Misunderstood Some Things About His Coming!
- This Kind Of Confidence Is Vital!
 - Without This Kind Of Confidence, You Can Never Live For & Serve The Lord With The Focus & Fervency That Is Required!
 - Are You Growing In Your Confidence?
 - Only Comes Through A Constant Focus On & Desire For The Lord! Is He Your Central Focus Daily? Matthew 6:33 - “But seek ye first the kingdom of God!” **IE:** Camera Focus / Out-Of
 - But Your Growth Cannot Stop Here!
 - Just Another Part Of The **Fully** Developed Disciple! There Is Also A:

* Third Dimension:

3. **The Conviction Of Your Faith!**

- In 2 Thessalonians, Paul **Corrects** The Christians Because Of The:
 - Conviction Of Their Faith!
 - Here Was An Area They Needed To Grow In!
 - They Knew Jesus Was Coming Again – They Just Misunderstood & Misapplied Paul’s Teaching! And There Were Some False Teachers That Were Misinterpreting & Misrepresenting Paul’s Teaching!
 - They Needed To Grow In The Doctrine Of Christ’s Return!

- So, To Grow In Their Convictions, Paul Said:
- Don't Be Disturbed By False Teaching!
 - 2:2 - "That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand!"
 - Don't Faint In Your Confidence In The Lord Because Of Your Misunderstanding Of The Truth! How Easy This Is!
- Don't Be Deceived By False Teaching!
 - 2:3 - "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition!"
 - Don't Follow Those Who Are Leading You Astray – Away From God's Word!
- Don't Disregard The Truth!
 - 2:5 - "Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?"
 - Don't Forget What Has Been Taught! Hebrews 2:1 - "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip!"
- Don't Depart From The Truth!
 - 2:15 - "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle!"
 - Don't Fall Away From The Truth! Proverbs 4:13 - "Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life!"
- This Kind Of Conviction Of The Truth Is Vital!
 - Without Consideration & Conviction Of The Truth, You Can Never Grow! You Will Remain On The Milk Of The Word & Never Graduate To The Meat! **IE:** Baby Food - "Graduates"
 - Are You Growing In Your Convictions?
 - Only Comes Through A Careful Reading & Study Of The Word Of God!
 - But Your Growth Cannot Even Stop Here! There Is Also A:

* Fourth Dimension:

4. ***The Conduct Of Your Faith!***

- It Has Been Said: "Doctrine Without Practice Is Not Good Doctrine; Practice Without Doctrine Is Not Good Practice!"
- Paul Agreed – In 2 Thessalonians, Paul ***Confronts*** The Christians Because Of The: Conduct Of Their Faith!
 - There Were Some That Followed After The False Teachings About The Lord's Return – And It Showed In Their Conduct!
 - The Church Needed To Deal With:
- The Disorderly!
 - 3:6 - "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us!"
 - They Were To ***Separate*** From The Disorderly – Those Who Did Not Live According To God's Word!
- The Dawdlers!
 - 3:11 - "For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies!"
 - They Were To ***Scold*** Those Who Became Lazy, Because They Misunderstood The Truth Of Christ's Coming!
- The Diligent!
 - 3:13 - "But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing!"
 - They Were To ***Stand*** In The Truth! Persevere!
- This Kind Of Conduct Is Also Vital!
 - James 2:20 - "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?"
 - ***Without Proper Conduct That Comes From Proper Convictions, There Can Be No Spiritual Growth!***
 - Are You Growing In Your Conduct? How Can You Tell?
 - Are You Looking More Like Jesus Christ?

- 1 John 2:6 - "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked!"

Conclusion:

1. ***This*** Is What A Fully Developed Disciple Of Jesus Christ Looks Like!
 - Growing In ***All*** Areas / Dimensions Of The Christian Life!
 - "Leaving No Stone Unturned!"
 - In Character / In Confidence / In Conviction / In Conduct!
2. Are You A Fully Developed Disciple?
 - This Is What Paul Wanted Them To Become! This Is What The Lord Wants You To Become!
 - What Areas Are You Letting Slide & Slip?

* "Take Time To Be Holy!"

***Grace Baptist Church
Stephen Elmer, Pastor
4245 North 200 West
Greenfield, IN 46140
317-326-2362
pastor-elmer@hotmail.com
www.sermonaudio.com/wordofgrace
www.growatgrace.org***