

## THE BIG READ (14)

### Jesus in 2 Thessalonians

#### A. Introduction

1. Every book of the Bible has one dominating theme – Jesus is the Christ.

“Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, ‘This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.’”  
(Luke 24:45-47)

Jesus is the Christ who will suffer and die.

Jesus is the Christ who will rise from the dead on the third day.

Jesus is the Christ who will forgive the sins of all who repent.

Jesus is the Christ who will be preached to the nations.

2. After the four Gospels that tell the story of Jesus’ earthly life, and Acts which traces the spread of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome, the remainder of the New Testament is made up of epistles or letters that were sent to individual Christians or churches.

These letters address specific situations in the lives of believers and through them we are taught how to live as God’s people.

3. 2 Thessalonians is the second of two letters written to the church at Thessalonica.

Shortly after writing the first letter from Corinth in AD51, Paul felt the need to write another letter to this church.

#### B. Why did Paul write this letters?

1. The big reason why Paul wrote this letter is that some false teaching had arisen in the church – a rumour saying that Jesus had already returned – and this had led to discouragement and disobedience within the church.

“Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord had already come.” (2 Thessalonians 2:1-2)

2. This misunderstanding about Jesus’ return had brought discouragement into the church.

Why? Because of their present circumstances.

“Therefore, among God’s churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring.” (2 Thessalonians 1:4)

“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. God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well.” (2 Thessalonians 1:5-6)

If the rumour that Jesus had returned was true, why were they still being persecuted?

3. This misunderstanding about Jesus’ return had brought disobedience into the church.



3. In chapter 1 Paul encourages the persecuted Christians in the church in Thessalonica with the truth that Jesus will return.

He says that those who are persecuting them will get what they deserve.

"God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you." (2 Thessalonians 1:6)

"He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power." (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9)

He says that they will be rewarded.

"...and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well." (2 Thessalonians 1:7)

And this will happen when Jesus returns.

"This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels." (2 Thessalonians 1:7)

4. In chapter 2 Paul addresses the particular misunderstanding about Jesus' return by teaching them that Jesus will not return until a certain event has taken place.

"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 Thessalonians 2:3)

This man of lawlessness will oppose God.

"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 Thessalonians 2:4)

This man of lawlessness will deceive people.

"The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing." (2 Thessalonians 2:9-10)

This man of lawlessness will be defeated.

"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. 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." (2 Thessalonians 2:8)

5. Then in chapter 3 because Jesus is yet to return, Paul says to the idle Christians get working.

"We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busy-bodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right." (2 Thessalonians 3:11-13)

"If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother." (2 Thessalonians 3:14-15)

They are to follow Paul's teaching.

"For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." (2 Thessalonians 3:10)

They are to follow Paul's example.

"For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, 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. We did this, not

because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow." (2 Thessalonians 3:7-9)

#### **D. Jesus in 2 Thessalonians**

##### 1. Jesus is going to destroy His enemies.

"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." (2 Thessalonians 2:8)

Christ will defeat the lawless one.

##### 2. Jesus is going to judge all people.

Christ will punish – those who have troubled Christians; those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel; those who have not believed the truth but delighted in wickedness.

"He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you." (2 Thessalonians 1:6)

"He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power." (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9)

"...so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness." (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12)

Christ will save His people.

"You will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering ...and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well." (2 Thessalonians 1:5-6)

"...on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marvelled at among all those who have believed." (2 Thessalonians 1:10)

"Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him." (2 Thessalonians 2:1)

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

##### 3. So...

Do not be alarmed.

"...we ask you, brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying the day of the Lord has already come." (2 Thessalonians 2:1-2)

Stand firm.

"So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter." (2 Thessalonians 2:15)

Spread the Word.

"Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honoured, just as it was with you." (2 Thessalonians 3:1)

Get working.

"Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat." (2 Thessalonians 3:12)