



Finer Grounds Bible Study

1 & 2 Thessalonians

Lesson 10: Introduction to 2 Thessalonians

Who is ready to start our study of 2 Thessalonians?! This week we will spend our time going over the background information for this letter so that you are better equipped as we begin the verse by verse study next week. Be sure that you take the time to read through 2 Thessalonians at least once this week; it's only 3 chapters so it will only take a few minutes of your time.

Think back to our study of 1 Thessalonians, what were the biggest struggles of the Thessalonian congregation?

Read 2 Thessalonians 1:3-4. Had the Thessalonians heeded Paul's advice from his first letter? How so?

What persecutions and afflictions were the Thessalonians enduring?

Letters that come in sets like this such as, Corinthians, Timothy, Peter, and John, give us an opportunity to peek into a small portion of the growth and changes in these congregations and people they were written to. It had to be wonderful for Paul to hear about the progress

that the Thessalonians were making. This isn't entirely a letter of sunshine and roses though, there was a major issue that the Thessalonian congregation was struggling with which Paul will very pointedly address. They once again were having trouble understanding the concept and timeline of Jesus's return.

What was the misunderstanding and worry they had about Christ's return from the previous letter?

It seems as if the Christians in Thessalonica listened to Paul's message and understood that they would see their loved ones in heaven; however, now they had another problematic misunderstanding.

According to 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2, what was the new issue that they were misinformed about?

They believed that the day of the Lord was at hand. Some translations say "has come" but a more literal translation is "at hand." It seems as if they thought Jesus was coming in the next few days or weeks. This was the cause of a huge problem within the congregation.



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According to 2 Thessalonians 3:11, what were some in the congregation doing (or not doing)?

This is a little understandable. If I thought Jesus was coming tomorrow, work probably wouldn't be my top priority. Why work when Jesus is almost here!? This misunderstanding was leading to laziness and those unwilling to work. In turn, these members were becoming a burden on the congregation. Paul's major purpose in writing this letter was to clear up this false teaching and encourage discipline for those who were refusing to support themselves.

There are several key words and phrases in 2 Thessalonians. Marking these will help us see Paul's emphasis more clearly.

Key Words:

- Faith
- Affliction/Persecution/Suffering
- Any reference to Christ's coming
- Truth
- Unruly/Undisciplined
- Example/Model

What do we learn about each of these words from 2 Thessalonians?

- **Faith:**

- **Affliction/Persecution/Suffering:**

- **Any reference to Christ's coming:**

- **Truth:**

- **Unruly/Undisciplined:**

- **Example/Model:**

By now you probably have a good grasp of the overall thrust of this letter. As we dive into the text there will be many verses that can be difficult to understand. It is vital as we encounter these, that you keep Paul's main purpose of writing in mind. It will greatly help us in dissecting some of the trickier passages. Keeping your main focus where Paul's was will help you to not get lost in the weeds. I can't wait for you to join us next week as we dig into chapter 1!