

NOT ALL HAVE FAITH

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5
Hebrews 11:1-12
Hebrews 11:23-40



18 April 2021

We Are Living in Dangerous Times

PAUL: PRAY for US (2 Thessalonians 3:1-2a)

- Paul, the greatest missionary of all times, asked the saints of Thessalonika to PRAY for him, Silvanus, and Timothy.
- PRAYER IS ESSENTIAL. PRAYER FOR OTHERS IS ESSENTIAL.
- “pray” is in the present tense to indicate that Paul is asking the church at Thessalonika to “continue to” pray for him.
- Paul understood that WITHOUT God he could do NOTHING (John 15:5)
- Paul understood his DEPENDENCY on God.
- What did Paul ask prayer for:
 - ① That the Word of God would spread quickly.
 - “to have *free course*” means “to run quickly like a runner.”
 - Paul had a PASSION for the spread of the Gospel - see Eph. 6:19; Colossians 4:2-4.
 - ② That the Word of God “be glorified.”
 - to “be glorified” means that the Word of God would receive the honour and majesty that it deserved. (See Acts 13:44-49)
 - “just as it is with you” – see 1 Thessalonians 1:5-6, 9
 - ③ That Gospel messengers would be delivered from *unreasonable and wicked* (evil) men.
 - Throughout his ministry Paul was faced with OPPOSITION and PERSECUTION. (2 Corinthians 4:7-12; **11:22-33**)
 - Paul was not concerned for personal safety (see Acts 20:22-24) but that people might hear and believe the Word of God.

Not All Have Faith! (2 Thessalonians 3:2b)

- There are DIFFERENT kinds of faith. Which one do you have?
- What is FAITH? Taking GOD at His WORD! Believing what God says in His Word.

• FAITH is:

- Hebrews 11:1 - *substance, evidence* of things not seen.
- believing God’s Word despite circumstances. (Hebrews 11:13)
- believing God despite the UNKNOWN. (Hebrews 11:7)
- believing God for the IMPOSSIBLE. (Hebrews 11:17-19; Gen. 18:14; Jeremiah 32:27; Matthew 19:26; Luke 1:36-38)
- believing God’s Word though it we never tested it (Hebrews 11:28)

• The NECESSITY of FAITH:

- Without faith it is IMPOSSIBLE to please God. (Hebrews 11:6)
- Those who are “in the flesh” – not born-again cannot please God. (Romans 8:8)
- Those who “without faith” are numbered among cowards, the vile, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and liars. (Revelation 21:8)

• Where does FAITH come from?

- ① GRACE: (Ephesians 2:8; Romans 12:3)
 - Meditate on this: Faith is a GIFT (an undeserved one) of God. (See Acts 18:27)
- ② From hearing the Word of God. (Romans 10:17)
- ③ God’s working. (Colossians 2:12; Eph 1:19; Phillip 2:13; Heb 13:21)
- ④ From a NEW HEART. (Romans 10:10; Ezekiel 11:19-20; 36:26-27)

• FAITH COMES FROM GOD AS A GIFT! – A *pure gift!*

• What Is A Gift?

- “something given willingly to someone without any cost but costing the giver.”
- A gift is given freely. It is not given because of something the receiver does.
- A gift is given to specific persons. We do not give gifts to everyone. The giver decides to whom He will give a gift.
- The giver gives whatever he/she desires to give.
- The giver is sovereign in his/her gift giving.
- A gift is GIVEN – not offered.

• A Perfect Gift

- Something that someone desperately NEEDS but cannot afford it themselves.
- Something that is USEFUL.

• The Father’s Gifts

- God **gave** His Son. (John 3:16)
 - Born sinners we are born CONDEMNED with God’s wrath abiding on us. (John 3:18, 36)
 - God gave His Son to propitiate His anger toward US! (1 John 4:10)
- God **gave** us ETERNAL LIFE. We were “dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1-3, 4-5) and what we **NEEDED** was LIFE. (Romans 6:23; 1 John 5:11)

- ▶ God **gave** us HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS. Our righteousness is nothing but “filthy rags”. (Romans 5:17-18; Isaiah 64:6; 61:10; Philip 3:9)
 - Only those who are as righteous as God are allowed into heaven. (Matthew 5:48)
 - By His gift of RIGHTEOUSNESS He **freely** justified me. (Romans 3:24)
- ▶ God **gave** His Holy Spirit to enable us to obey His commandments. (Ezekiel 36:26-27; Acts 2:38; 10:45; Eph 1:13-14; 4:30; 2 Cor 1:22)
- ▶ God **gave** us FAITH. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
 - Faith does not come from within but from without. It is GIVEN. (Galatians 3:23, 25)

• **FAITH does many things for us:**

- ★ It opens the eyes of my understanding to the things of GOD I **could not** understand and thought were foolishness. (1 Cor 2:14; 1 John 5:20)
- ★ FAITH is belief. MEDITATE on this! Faith is a gift of God.
- ★ FAITH enlightens my mind, inflames my passions (love), and moves my will. (Hebrews 11:3-40)
- ★ FAITH enables me to KNOW GOD. And I know that I know God because I keep His commandments by the gift of His Holy Spirit. (Matthew 16:17; John 17:2-3; 1 John 2:3-4; Ezekiel 36:26-27)
- ★ FAITH causes me to **TRUST** God. (Isaiah 26:3-4; Proverbs 3:5-7; Jeremiah 17:7-8; John 14:1-3)
- ★ FAITH causes me to WORK the works of God. (1 Thess 1:2-3; James 2:14-26; Ephesians 2:10)

• Look at the order in 2 Thessalonians 2:13 —

- ❶ God’s choice.
- ❷ Sanctification by the Holy Spirit (regeneration).
- ❸ Belief in the truth (faith).

• **FAITH IS NOT THE CAUSE OF REBIRTH – IT IS A CONSEQUENCE OF IT!**

Stewards of God’s Gifts (Matthew 25:14-30; Hebrews 4:13)

- The Father gives His gifts to be USED.
- He gives us HIS SON and we are OBLIGATED to walk just as He walk. (1 John 2:6; John 13:34-35; Ephesians 4:32; Philippians 2:5-8)
- He gives us ETERNAL LIFE (we were DEAD in our trespasses and sins) that **begins** the moment we believe (John 5:24) to LIVE a NEW LIFE. We now are “slaves of holiness and righteousness”. We now live according the will of God. (Romans 6:4, 19; Hebrews 12:14; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:17; 1 Peter 4:1-2; Matthew 7:21; 12:50)
- He gives us RIGHTEOUSNESS and expects/demands His children to NOT sin and live righteous lives. (1 John 2:28-3:10)
 - ★ We are obligated to walk as Christ walked. (1 John 2:5-6)

- He gives us His Holy Spirit and expects us to “be led by the Spirit” and to “walk in the Spirit”. (Romans 8:14; Galatians 5:16,18)
- He gives us FAITH and expects us to “walk” or “live” **by** faith – not the ways of the world. (2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 10:38; Galatians 2:20; 3:11; Romans 12:1-2; Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17)
- We are **given** faith as “newborn babies” and the Father expects our faith to **grow**. (2 Thessalonians 1:3)
- We are to **diligently ADD to our faith**: virtue (excellent living), knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and agape love. (2 Peter 1:5-8)
 - ★ (vv. 8-9) “IF these things are yours **and** abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his sins.”

The Faithful Lord (2 Thessalonians 3:3-4)

- Our FAITH must be in a FAITHFUL God – not our own faith!
- Paul has confidence in the LORD – not the Thessalonians because He has seen God’s work in them.
- Paul understood that spiritual strength (establish) and protection comes from God for His own. (See 2 Timothy 4:16-18)
- God would (will) protect His own from Satan. God will finish what He has started. (Philippians 1:6)
- Notice Paul’s confidence in the Thessalonian’s DOING – NOT words.
- Paul expected the Thessalonians to obey him!
- **JESUS CHRIST EXPECTED THE SAME THING!** (Matthew 28:20)

Paul Prays for Straightness (2 Thessalonians 3:5)

- Paul prays for the Thessalonians as he asked them to pray for him.
- Paul’s prayer is that the LORD will “make straight” (removal of all and any obstacles) into the love of God. Love=Obedience (1Jn 2:5; 5:2-3; 2Jn 6)
- Paul understands when one knows God’s love more completely the more that person will love, obey, and surrender to God.
- Paul also prays that the Thessalonians would more understand the “steadfastness” or “endurance” of Christ.
- **QUESTION:** How patience is God (Christ) with US?

Serious Questions to Ask

- ❶ Do you have a saving faith? Do you have a working faith? (James 2:14-26)
- ❷ Are you **faithful steward** of the gifts God gives you?
- ❸ Are you praying faithfully for your brothers and sisters? Do you believe that prayer is **necessary**?