

2 Thessalonians 1.5-12

In this chapter Paul encourages the Thessalonian believers through

1) Praise vs. 3,4 2) Promise vs. 5-10 3) Prayer vs. 11,12

COMMON CRITICISM - God is not fair / just = no power? no love?

Believers in Thess.- Given lives to God / faith / loving / serving / helping

PEOPLE OF CITY RESPONDED WITH HATRED AND SUFFERING
opposed, ridiculed, boycotted, harassed, imprisoned, tortured, and killed

WHERE IS GOD NOW?

2 Farmers / 1 Xtian, 1 unbeliever / Believer witnessed to unbeliever often

Unbeliever - Big harvest, Great profits, no problems

Believer - Sickness in family, small harvest, no profit

Unbeliever "I thought you said it paid to be a Christian!"

Believer "It pays, but God's pay day is not according to our timetable"

WHERE IS GOD WHEN BELIEVERS ARE HAVING PROBLEMS?

PAUL'S ANSWER - v. 5 "evidence God's judgment is right"

JESUS - "suffering is pathway to glory" / Road to Kingdom thru Cross

PAUL - "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God"

Acts 14.22

someone read - Philippians 1.28,29 // Hebrews 12 "sons are disciplined"

PERSECUTION PROVES GOD IS DOING SOMETHING!

Light of Gospel penetrating the dark hearts of sinners / they are angry!

IT TAKES SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT TO SEE GOD'S VIEWPOINT

WE SEE INJUSTICE // PROCESS OF GOD'S PERFECT JUSTICE

PAUL'S INSIGHT - Sees believers success - Gives thanks to God for them

Sees believers suffering - Thanks God for His perfect justice

Gen 18.25 ABRAHAM "The Judge of all the earth will do right"

Three Questions about God's FINAL Justice -

1) When will it happen? 2) Who will be punished? 3) How will be punished?

1) WHEN? v. 7 "when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven" // v. 10

// 1 Thess 4.16 "the Lord himself will come down from heaven"

Coming will be - PERSONAL - VISIBLE - GLORIOUS - POWERFUL

"blazing fire with his powerful angels" // 1 Thess 3.13 "his holy ones"

2) WHO PUNISHED? v. 8 "not know God / disobey the gospel"

Terrible FUTURE facing the UNBELIEVER // WILLFUL REJECTION

MANY TIMES GOD'S JUSTICE IS GIVEN IN FORM OF THEIR SIN

PHARAOH - drowned Hebrew babies / was drowned w/ armies in Red Sea

HAMAN - made gallows to hang Mordecai / was hung there w/ his sons

ADVISORS OF KING DARIUS - had Daniel sent to lions den / ate them!

JEWISH LEADERS crucified Jesus to save their city from Rome / lost all

A HOLY GOD CANNOT LEAVE SIN UNPUNISHED / JUSTICE

3) WHAT WILL JUDGMENT BE? v. 9 "shut out from presence of God"

"everlasting destruction" / a fire that burns forever / HORRIBLE

THOUGHT

CUT OFF FROM ALL GOODNESS AND LIGHT - no restraint of sin

GOD WANTS SINNERS TO BE SAVED / GAVE HIS SON / NO MORE!

To reject the salvation given by God in Christ is UNFORGIVABLE

NOW IS TIME OF MERCY- OPPORTUNITY TO REPENT & BE SAVED

PRAYER OF PAUL - vs. 11,12 - God's Promise affirmed by Our Prayers

NEVER NEGLECT PRESENT DUTY BECAUSE OF FUTURE PROMISE
instead the future hope should cause us to be faithful now

Paul prays for:

1) 11a "God may count you worthy" CHARACTER BE HOLY FOR GOD

TRIALS - REVEAL WHAT A PERSON IS LIKE -

we do not even know our own hearts / trials will show what we are like
just like fire refines gold

WORTHY LIFE IS A GIFT OF GRACE / NOT A SELF ACHIEVEMENT

2) 11b "power may fulfill every good purpose" WALK WITH GOD

GOOD CHARACTER SHOULD LEAD TO GOOD CONDUCT

that you will shine the light of Christ in you and others will see & praise
God

MOST STRIKING FEATURE IN THIS CHAPTER - Glory of Christ

1) 1.7 "Jesus will be revealed in glory" - GLORIOUS COMING OF X

Awe inspiring - Majesty of God seen across all the skies - ALL WILL SEE

2) 1.10 "Jesus glorified in his people" - WE SEE IT AND SHARE IT

He will be glorified in us and we will be glorified in us / WE ARE IN HIM

Concept - we are like LIGHT BULBS - power of X enters - shine ALWAYS

LIKE GLORY SHOWN IN JESUS AT TRANSFIGURATION / Rom 8.18

HEAVEN - we bow down in worship and GIVE HIM ALL THE GLORY

3) Those reject Jesus will be EXCLUDED FROM HIS GLORY v. 8,9

GREAT TRAGEDY - people made by God, in His image, for Him
will spend ETERNITY - separated from HIS GLORIOUS PRESENCE

HEAVEN - filled with His glory / HELL - far from His glory

4) Jesus is to be glorified in us now v. 12 / PROCESS BEGINS NOW

John 17 - Jesus prays v. 22 "I have given them the glory you gave me"

DO WE HAVE THE EYES OF FAITH TO SEE GLORY OF X NOW?