

2 THESSALONIANS: PAUL'S REVELATION ABOUT THINGS TO COME
SESSION 5 | 2 THESSALONIANS 2:15-3:5

2 THESSALONIANS 2:13-17 | PAUL'S THANKS AND PRAYER FOR THE THESSALONIANS

- Verses 13-14 – included on session 4
- Verse 15 –
 - The Thessalonians are told to **stand fast to traditions which ye have been taught**.
 - The word **traditions** is translated as *ordinances* in [1 Corinthians 11:2](#).
 - Paul says that he was **zealous of the traditions of my fathers** in [Galatians 1:14](#).
 - In [Colossians 2:8](#) Paul warns against **the traditions of men**.
 - The Pharisees asked Jesus why the disciples **transgress the tradition of the elders** by not observing ceremonial hand-washing ([Mat. 15:2](#)).
 - In this same book, Paul will chastise those who walk **not after the tradition which he received of us** ([2 Thess. 3:6](#)).
 - In summary, there is tradition that is by revelation (both Pauline and pre-Pauline) and there are traditions “of men.”
 - Paul instructs the Thessalonians to continue in the traditions **whether by word, or our epistle**.
 - The pronoun **our** appears to only go with **epistle**, thus it would look as if Paul is telling the Jewish believers at Thessalonica to *continue in the law* AND in the Pauline revelation, thus giving support to our “overlap” theory of transition.
 - This interpretation aligns with the election of the Thessalonians in verse 13, and their **obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ** in verse 14, which glory is obtained at the Second Coming and is a promise to the Jewish nation and not the Body of Christ.
- Verses 16-17 –
 - The word **now** (v. 16) is a conjunction, not a time word.
 - Paul explains that we have an **everlasting consolation and good hope** that comes **through grace**. While the Thessalonians may not live to see the Kingdom, they can take comfort in the grace of the Pauline message.
 - Paul prays that God would **comfort** and **stablish** the Thessalonians in **every good word and work** (v. 17).

2 THESSALONIANS 3:1-5 | PAUL'S REQUEST FOR PRAYER AND CONTINUED PRAYER FOR THE THESSALONIANS

- Verse 1 –
 - The **word of the Lord** is likely the **dispensation of the grace of God which is given me** ([Eph. 3:2](#)), though it is not explicit.
 - Two evidences that Paul speaks of the *mystery* now revealed is that he prays it would have **free course** and that he says that the enemy of this is the men who **have not faith** (v. 2).
 - Since the Old Testament message of law *did have free course* and was not solely based on faith, one could conclude that the grace message is in view.

- The words **free course** are translated (with the interpretation **free**) from the Greek word τρέχω [trecho], which means “to run.” In English, a *trechometer* measures the distance traveled (like your “trip” measurement on your car’s odometer). Paul’s wants **the word of the Lord** to *run the distance*.
- Paul also wants **the word to be glorified, even as it is with you**.
 - Once again, the dispensation of the law had much glory in that day. Some historians even argue that orthodox Judaism was growing tremendously during the mid-first century as the Gentile world was abandoning pagan mythology and searching for theological answers. Judaism held answers!
 - However, Judaism did not know of the mystery. Paul’s prayer was that the dispensation of the grace of God would be glorified. In our day, it seems his prayer was not answered.
- Verse 2 –
 - Paul’s primary prayer was for the **word of the Lord** (v. 1), but, secondarily, he prays for personal deliverance.
 - Those who were hindering the **free course** (v. 1) had three characteristics:
 - They were **unreasonable** - Paul uses the word ἄτοπος [atopos], literally “having no place.” Their doctrines were built in their own minds rather than in revelation from God.
 - They were **wicked** - The Greek word is translated *wicked* or *evil* except twice, where it is *malicious* and *grievous* (in both occasions speaking of *things* rather than *men*).
 - They did not have **faith** - Faith is the essential to the dispensation of the grace of God.
- Verse 3 –
 - It is possible that the last phrase of verse 2, **for all men have not faith** should be the beginning of this sentence, concluding with the contrast **But the Lord is faithful**. Regardless, the emphasis becomes the faithfulness of the Lord.
 - Because **the Lord is faithful** Paul is confident on the Thessalonians behalf, that He **shall stablish** and shall **keep...from evil**.
 - The word **evil** is the same as translated **wicked** in verse 2.
 - The word **stablish** sometimes translated with this more archaic word and sometimes with the more currently accepted *establish*. (For more information, see *The King James Bible in America: An Orthographic and Textual History* by Bryan Ross).
- Verse 4 –
 - This is a simple yet amazing statement when the origins of the assembly at Thessalonica are considered. Recall that the Scripture says that those in Berea **were more noble than those in Thessalonica** ([Acts 17:11](#)). We can rejoice that there were at least a few that *were noble*!
 - Paul was confident that these noble Thessalonians **both do and will do** Paul’s commands. The word **command** is παραγγέλλω [parangello], which is *along-side a message* by etymology and *command* or *charge* by usage. The word is used in verse 6, with an actual command.
- Verse 5 –
 - Paul prays that the Thessalonians would have both **the love of God** and **the patient waiting for Christ**.
- I prefer the marginal note of the KJV translators, who also suggested “the patience of Christ.” The Greek word **Christ** is in the genitive, which speaks to *possession* rather than the dative, which would suggest *direction*.