

THE SECOND TIME AROUND

Saturday, November 1

Reading: 2 Thessalonians 1-3

2 Thessalonians 1:7 *This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with His powerful angels. **8** He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. **9** They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His might **10** on the day He comes to be glorified in His holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you. **11** With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of His calling, and that by His power He may bring to fruition your every desire for goodness and your every deed prompted by faith.*

While still in Corinth, the apostle Paul received word that the church in Thessalonica was still struggling. The situation had gotten worse. Persecution was intensifying. And false teachers had infiltrated the church claiming to be speaking with Paul's authority. They were teaching that the Day of the Lord had already come (2:1-2). This had greatly upset the church, particularly since they were still experiencing persecution. Some worried that this persecution was the coming judgment Paul had taught them about. On top of this, there were unruly people causing problems within the church body. All this made it necessary for Paul to write a second letter to these struggling saints.

In his first letter, Paul had talked about the faith, hope, and love of the Thessalonian believers (1 Thess. 1:3). As he begins his second letter, he only mentions their faith and love (2 Thessalonians 1:3). It appears that through continued persecution and confusion brought by the false teachers, the Christians had lost hope in their daily lives. Paul wrote to encourage them and answer some of the problems that were disheartening them.

Many of the issues he addressed in his first letter are repeated and expanded in this second letter. The two major themes of this letter are connected. Paul begins with a more detailed description of Christ's return and the Day of the Lord (chapters 1-2). He then gives them some practical application for how to live in light of the Day of the Lord (chapter 3).

As you read through Paul's second letter to this struggling church, notice his emphasis on:

1. Prayer
2. The Coming of Christ
3. God's Love and Grace
4. The Believer's Call to Good Works

OUTLINE:

The Revelation of Christ	2 Thessalonians 1
The Rebellion of Antichrist	2 Thessalonians 2
The Responsibility of Christians	2 Thessalonians 3