

**TOUGH TIMES, A TOUGHER FAITH**  
**The II Thessalonians Series #2**  
August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025

**TEXT:** II Thessalonians 1:5-12

**CONSIDER THIS:** Would you like a faith like the Thessalonian Christians had, a tough faith when times are tough? Do what they did – remember God's promises and believe God keeps His promises. Remember that with every tough circumstance comes an opportunity to glorify Christ, and God will honor that for all eternity.

**I. THERE IS A GOOD PURPOSE**

**KEY:** Suffering and affliction is not caused by God, but it is permitted by God, and for good reasons. Remembering that is the key to contentment (see Philippians 4:12-13) when facing tough times.

A) God is 100% in control (1:5). This text is expressing in strong terms that God is in control and everything He permits is for a good purpose.

Christian, your true **FAITH** in God is demonstrated when you trust the goodness of His character and the wisdom of His plan, even when you don't have immediate answers about the hardship you are facing.

B) The steadfast faith of the Thessalonians was evidence that their suffering did not stop them from trusting God (1:3-4). Today's text (1:5-12) reveals more of God's plan and purpose.

**II. JUDGEMENT (JUSTICE) IS COMING**

**KEY:** The suffering/afflictions that Christians experience are temporary, and their rewards are eternal. The pleasures of sin the world experiences are temporary, but the judgement of God is eternal.

A) To "be worthy" of the kingdom of God (1:5,11) does **not** mean it is earned as a reward. It is a way of describing how the Christian who endures hardship for Christ is actually imitating Christ (Philippians 3:8-10).

- B) Read 1:6-9. There is comfort in knowing that God's justice will triumph. The language here is NOT teaching that we should delight in the death of the wicked (see Ezekiel 33:11). Paul prayed for those who afflicted him (see Acts 26:24-29; Romans 10:1 and Steven's testimony in Acts 7:59-60).

**Q:** But what about the language of inflicting vengeance and punishment?

**A:** "Vengeance" in 1:8 is connected to the Greek word "righteous". God's vengeance is not vindictiveness, it means to dispense full **justice** upon criminals. "Punishment" in 1:9 is connected to the same Greek word for righteous.

**NOTE:** 1:9 describes Hell and it does so by saying that it is a place "away from the presence of the Lord." No common grace, ever! See Acts 14:16-17. The sad irony of Hell is it will be filled with people who are getting exactly what they wanted in this life = for God to stay out of their lives!

- C) The Thessalonians were also strengthened and comforted by Paul's teaching that, in the end, they will be vindicated for choosing Christ and enduring suffering for His Name.  
**This is His promise.**

*I'd rather have Jesus than man's applause; I'd rather be faithful to His dear cause; I'd rather have Jesus than worldwide fame. I'd rather be true to His holy name... Than to be the king of a vast domain or be held in sin's dread sway. I'd rather have Jesus than anything this world affords today.*

### III. THE JOY OF GLORIFYING CHRIST (1:10-12)

- A) Another promise that encouraged the Thessalonians to face TOUGH TIMES WITH A TOUGHER FAITH was to know that they were glorifying Jesus Christ. Paul prayed that by the grace of God they would embrace this truth.

**KEY:** Endurance bears testimony that God, in His grace and for His glory, is sustaining you. Your faith and desire to endure, though enabled by God, is something for which He will reward you.

- B) Christian, to glorify and exalt Jesus Christ with your life is the single greatest accomplishment and achievement possible in the universe!  
(Matthew 5:14-16; Philippians 1:20-21). Lean into it!

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