

# What we do while waiting on the Rapture

## 1 Thessalonians 2

Before we get into our study,  
let us take a look at some Questions and Answers.

And I love and ask for your questions on The Rapture

for these questions indicate that you do believe in The Rapture.

? #1 When we die do we go to meet the Lord?

**Absolutely**

2 Corinthians 5:8

<sup>8</sup> **we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.** (Greek preposition) **face to face with the Lord** (so, the second we die we are face to face with JESUS CHRIST in the throne room of God.)

Also **Philippians 1:23**

<sup>23</sup> **But I am hard-pressed from both *directions*, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for *that is very much better*; to be face to face with Jesus is much better**

? #2 Are we in our Resurrected body at this time when we die and go to be with the Lord?

**No, we receive our Resurrected bodies at The Rapture**

? #3

Then how are we face to face with the Lord if not in our Resurrected Bodies?

**The Lord has not told us this. Some believe that our soul and spirit are in an interim body. But we are not told in the bible what state we will be in at this time. But we can be assured that God has all this worked out for His Glory and our good.**

? #4

When do we receive our Resurrected bodies?

**At The Rapture. When Christ comes and meets the Church in the Air.**

Last week, we studied **Suffering, Instruction and The Rapture** where we saw in chapter 1, verses 9-10 that we should live each day in anticipation of meeting the Lord in the air at The Rapture.

There is also a 'HOPE' of The Rapture in 1 Thessalonians 1:3:

<sup>3</sup> **steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus in the presence of our God even Father.**

If taken individually this refers to our departure from earth, but if taken co-operatively it refers, of course, to The Rapture.

We now move to chapter 2 and remember the fundamental purpose of 1 and 2 Thessalonians is what we are to be doing while to meet the Lord in the air at The Rapture. And as far as our mission it is to give the gospel to everyone God puts in our paths. No, not everyone will believe in JESUS CHRIST to whom we witness, but that is not our responsibility, that is between them and the Holy Spirit. Our responsibility is to tell them about eternity, about JESUS CHRIST.

Also, there are no chapter breaks in Paul's letters.

Verse 1 of chapter 2 extends from the first part of the report concerning Paul and these believers in Thessalonica in verses 9-10.

<sup>9</sup> **For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you... now**

# Witnessing

**Principle # 1** You have to go where there are unbelievers.

1 Thessalonians 2:1

<sup>1</sup> **For you yourselves know, (first hand), brethren, (believers, a number of those believed the gospel) that our coming to you (for your advantage) was not in vain, (many believed.)**

**Principle:** The believer must go where the unbelievers are – That is generally outside of the local church. In some places Paul went there was not much positive response to the gospel, but in Thessalonica, many came to believe in JESUS CHRIST as Savior.

**Principle # 2** The gospel must be presented in spite of opposition.

1 Thessalonians 2:2

<sup>2</sup> **but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition.**

Here is the **ANGELIC CONFLICT**. Satan does all he can to prevent the gospel from being presented. And know that he does not care about preachers, evangelist, etc., who have great crowds but who are not proclaiming the true gospel. Satan does not care about those like Joel Osteen, or Pope Francis, they are not proclaiming the Gospel so he actually increases their numbers.

<sup>2</sup> Note what happened to this Paul and Silas.  
**We had already suffered** (this is an Aorist Participle and the action of the Aorist Participle precedes the action of the main verb..) **to proclaim to you the gospel** (So before Paul even got to Thessalonica) **And been mistreated** (KJ) **shamefully entreated** (This is the way our Lord was treated)

## Luke 18:31

- 31 **Then He** (Jesus Christ) **took the twelve aside and said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished.**
- 32 **“For He** (that is JESUS CHRIST Himself) **will be handed over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon,**
- 33 **and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him; JESUS CHRIST** (will be mocked, shamefully treated, spit upon, scourged and then killed, but:) **and the third day He will rise again.”**
- 34 **But the disciples understood none of these things, and *the meaning of this statement was hidden from them, and they did not comprehend the things that were said.***

## 1 Thessalonians 2:2

- 2 **we had the boldness** (this word reveals how we should present the gospel—it means frankness in speaking. You are more concerned with presenting the gospel than you are being politically correct.)

In Romans 1:16 Paul says:

- 16 **for I am not ashamed of the gospel** (why not?) **for the gospel is the power of God for salvation to anyone who believes.**

## 1 Thessalonians 2:2

<sup>2</sup> **we had the boldness in our God** (our boldness is before man, but the source of our Boldness is God, God the Holy Spirit.)

How do we know this is God the Holy Spirit?

It does not say so here.

Look at Acts 4:31

<sup>31</sup> **And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.**

<sup>2</sup> **we had the boldness in our God** (God the Holy Spirit) **to speak** (infinitive of results of being Filled with the Holy Spirit) **to you** (for your advantage and people please don't take this lightly when I say – *for your advantage*.)

If you have a daughter, you would be wise in training her to listen when a young man says things to her;... is it for her advantage or his?

And the same thing when you listen to a politician,  
or salesman or preacher.

Paul speaks to them for their eternal advantage...and that my dear people is why you want to do while you eagerly waiting, anticipate meeting the Lord in the air. You want to be speaking to others **for their advantage!** **And for their advantage for ALL ETERNITY!**

2 **to speak to you the gospel of God**

The Gospel in the New Testament has some 11 descriptions or designations to it.

But they are all referring to the **same Gospel; the same message!**

Each title develops some extended understanding of this Gospel

1	Gospel of Promise
2	Gospel of the Kingdom
3	Gospel of God
4	Gospel of His Son
5	Gospel of Christ (coming up in 1 Thessalonians 3:2)
6	Gospel of Jesus Christ
7	Gospel of the Glory of Christ
8	Gospel of our Lord Jesus (coming up in 2 Thessalonians 1:8)
9	Gospel of Grace
10	Gospel of Salvation
11	Gospel of Peace

We are noting **Gospel of God**, here in 1 Thessalonians 2:2, but it will come up again in 2:8-9.

### **Gospel of God**

This title of the Gospel is given more than any other title of Gospel; (one other has just as many refers) but none more than Gospel of God;

This title of the Gospel emphasizes “The fact that God the Father is **author** of the gospel, and God is the **source** of the gospel.”

The Gospel is called the **Gospel of God** for it refers to three aspects of the **Glory of God**.

the gospel **CONTAINING** the Glory of God

the gospel **REVEALING** the Glory of God

the gospel **GIVING** or conveying the Glory of God

## 1 Thessalonians 2:2

<sup>2</sup> **but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition.**

Don't speed-read over that adjective... “**much** continually mounting opposition.”

The Greek word Paul uses here is a word from the Olympics – to struggle, to compete!

Satan tried desperately to cut Paul off at Philippi, but Paul went on in boldness proclaiming the Gospel of God in spite of Satan's angelic opposition which included Physical Suffering and Humiliation.

And so Paul and Silas were cruelly treated but they kept on Proclaiming the gospel.



**Principle # 3** The negative reception of the gospel today should not defeat you from giving the gospel tomorrow

**Principle # 4** The Gospel must never be compromised nor distorted,

## 1 Thessalonians 2:3

<sup>3</sup> **For our exhortation** (this Greek word refers to an act of exhortation, encouragement, comfort **PARAKLESIS** we have seen that the word used for the ministry of the Holy Spirit is **PARACLETOS** referring to the ministry of the Holy Spirit in John 14:16)

## John 14:16

<sup>16</sup> **“I JESUS CHRIST will ask the Father,** (God the Father) **and He will give you another Helper,** (margin of NASV **PARACLETOS**) **that He** (Holy Spirit) **may be with you** (every believer) **forever;**

So Paul uses the Greek word for encouragement, comfort and exhortation.

Now here is the point as one Lexicon states it: “all of Scripture is actually a **PARAKLESIS**, *an exhortation, admonition or encouragement for the purpose of strengthening and establishing the believer in the faith.*” ...and then it references...

## Romans 15:4

<sup>4</sup> **For whatever was written in earlier times** (Old Testament Scripture) **was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.**

Confidence in the Faithfulness of God.

<sup>3</sup> **For our exhortation** (of the gospel of God) **does not come** (you will note that Paul describes this in the negatives:) **from**

This is that same preposition that we saw in 1:10: *out from heaven, out from the dead and out from the wrath*; here it means that his gospel did not come out from:

<sup>3</sup> **error or impurity or by way of deceit;**

**from error** (not incorrect from God's perspective, not distorted but without error)

**or impurity** (defilement: adding works to it, adding some performance system to simple faith in JESUS CHRIST. Paul's gospel was pure)

**of deceit** (of fraud – Paul's gospel was honest!)

**Principle # 5** The gospel is entrusted to you to give to the world

4 **but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts.**

**Here we learn four things about God:**

- 1 God gives the approval not man.
- 2 God entrust with the gospel.
- 3 We are to witness to please God not man.
- 4 God examines our hearts; don't worry about man judging you, we have a much higher judge than man.

4 **But just as we have been approved by God** (the Greek word *approved* means to be tested, and when God tests, He tests for approval, as opposed to when Satan tests... Satan tests for failure.)

It is so important for every believer to realize that the only approval that counts with God... is from God, not from man.

Look at **2 Corinthians 3:4**

4 **Such confidence we have through Christ toward God.**

- 5 **Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as *coming* from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,**
- 6 **who also made us adequate *as* servants of a new covenant, not of the letter (the Law) but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.**

So God test and approves, and our adequacy to give the gospel is from God not from man. Every one of you are “adequate before God” to give the gospel. And while we wait to Meet The Lord In The Air we should be giving the gospel to others.

- 4 **but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel,** (Every believer has received a *deposit* of something that is valuable – the Gospel – and we are to put that precious treasure of the Gospel out to work, not us working but the Gospel working.)

This is the Principle we saw in our study of the parable of Five Talents in Matthew 25, where the one who received five talents and one the one who received two talents, *put the money to work*. You might recall that “they did not work,” they put “God’s word out” and let the Word of God work. And that is what we have going on here.

- 4 **so we speak,** (communicate the gospel) **not as pleasing men,** (praise of man is one of the strongest motivations from our souls.)

## John 12:42-43

42 **Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing *Him*, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue;**

43 **for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God. but God who examines our hearts.**

It is one thing to critic what Joel Osteen and Pope Francis say, but it is another thing entirely to judge their motivation, to judge their hearts.

We all have been guilty of trying to take God's place in judging why someone does something or says something.

This is the place of God!  
He will judge righteously and  
He (God) alone has all the facts.  
Leave judging another person's heart up to God.

**Principle # 6** The gospel should never be given out to receive flattery or praise or excessive wealth from man.

Also in verse 5-6 Paul list three pitfalls to avoid in giving the gospel

5 **For we never came with**  
**(1) flattering speech, as you know, nor with**  
**(2) a pretext for greed — God is witness**

6

**nor**

**(3) did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority.**

Now, in case you are wondering why so much emphasis on giving the gospel? Because, people, this is what we should be doing while eagerly waiting for The Rapture, or to be taken up to MEET THE LORD IN THE AIR.

Remember 1 and 2 Thessalonians are instructions for every believer during the Church Age who suffers in the cause of Christ in giving out the gospel.

5

**For we never came with flattering speech** (you know why he did not come with *flattering speech*? Because all have sinned and fallen so far out of the Glory of God. Paul did not flatter the Jews nor the Gentiles. He was Pure in his presentation.)

**nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness—**

(I like the thundering KJ here) **nor a cloak of**

**covetousness** (Paul did not use his coming and presenting the gospel as a gimmick to get more money out of them.)

In various places Paul has well taught that a pastor or missionary deserves to be properly paid for his services. He gives gold and has the right to get beans in return.

Money should never be an issue with an unbeliever, and no offering should be taken in an evangelistic meeting. Don't confuse unbelievers or even new believers with the issue of money. The issue is the offering on the cross, not some offering plate passed around.

In the meeting of a local church the offering is a part of worship for the Spirit-filled Believer.

- <sup>5</sup> Notice Paul adds  
**God is witness, (in the first part of verse 5,) we never came with flattering speech, as you know** (now in dealing with his motives...God is his witness, God judges the hearts, the motivations of man.)
- <sup>6</sup> **nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority.** (So as to be a burden to them.)

“Glory seeking in presenting the gospel” is one of the big pitfalls to be avoided by every believer. To make reports on how many people you have witnessed to is an example of this for it often inflates the ego and quickly moves into approbation lust, and often leads to competition with others.

**Principle # 7** You should care so much for those you are witnessing to realizing that you are presenting to them a way to avoid eternal damnation and to receive Eternal Life with JESUS CHRIST.

7 **But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing *mother* tenderly cares for her own children.** (To tenderly care means to feed the child, keep the child warm. Paul does this by the teaching of the Word of God, starting with the gospel.)

**Principle # 8** Instead of taking Paul gives.

8 **Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you (for your advantage) not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us.**

### **Having so fond an affection for you**

This is the only time this verb is used in the New Testament, and it is rare in classical Greek.

The best way I know how to convey what Paul is saying is by illustration.

*Have you ever cared so much about someone, you prayed before you went to them with the gospel and you probably sat close to them? A mother to her child, a father to his son; to someone you really love? OK, compare that to witnessing to a stranger in a store.*

Well, what Paul is saying here is that we should care about every individual so much, care about where they will spend eternity.



**Another example:** *I could go to another assembly of believers and teach them, but I am afraid that it does not compare with the fond affection that I have for each of you here. I care so much that you grasp what I am teaching. I pray for you and for my teaching as I study, that God the Holy Spirit will open my eyes for you.*

Then I pray before coming here to teach you, that the Holy Spirit will speak through me to you, His knowing what you need to hear and how you need it presented. Ok, this is what Paul is saying here.

<sup>8</sup> **Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you (for your advantage) not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us.**

Instead of taking from them money or flattery or numbers... he was giving to them from his own soul.

What was in his soul?

—THE GOSPEL FROM GOD—

The Gospel that Reveals the Being of God

<sup>9</sup> **For (as an example of verse 8) you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day (Paul was a tent maker) so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.**

**Labor** is what a man does, while the word **hardship** is the word *travail* which is what a woman does.

Paul **labored** to the point of pain so that he would not have infringe upon these people, and to keep the issue very clear.

**DO YOU, WILL YOU, BELIEVE ON JESUS CHRIST ALONE  
BY FAITH ALONE  
AS YOUR PERSONAL SAVIOR.**

**THIS IS ALL PAUL CARED ABOUT  
WITH THESE PEOPLE IN THESSALONICA.**

## THE GOSPEL

*gospel* comes from the Old English word *godspell* = god, good + spell, story  
*godspell* is a translation of the Latin word *evangelium* which is a transliteration of the  
 Greek word *evangelion* meaning **good news or glad tidings**

THE GOSPEL	SCRIPTURE	SUMMARY
<i>The Gospel of</i> <b>Promise</b>	Acts 13:23 & 32-33; Gal. 3:22; Eph. 3:4-6; 2 Tim. 1:1; I John 2:25	The word 'Gospel' is not in the Old Testament ~ The Gospel was given in the form of The Promise
<i>The Gospel of</i> <b>Kingdom</b>	Matthew 4:23, 9:35, 24:14; Luke 16:16	By this title, Jews would know how to enter the Kingdom
<i>The Gospel of</i> <b>God</b>	Mark 1:14-15; I Thess. 2:2, 7-9; I Tim. 2:5; 2 Cor. 11:7; I Pet. 4:17; Titus 1:2-3; Rom. 15:15-16	The source of The Gospel ~ The author of The Gospel
<i>The Gospel of</i> <b>His Son</b>	Rom. 1:9	The Person of The Gospel ~ The Limitation of The Gospel
<i>The Gospel of</i> <b>Christ</b>	Rom. 15:19; Gal. 1:6-7, Gal. 2:16 & 21, 3:13-14 & 22; Phil. 1:27-28; I Thess. 3:2	The Gospel will be found only in The Promised Messiah
<i>The Gospel of</i> <b>Jesus Christ</b>	Mark 1:1	Now The person of The Gospel is identified ~ The One who is The Son of God, who is The Christ
<i>The Gospel of</i> <b>The Glory of Christ</b>	2 Cor. 4:3-4	The Glory of Jesus Christ is that He is The Good News from God ~ He is The Way to God the Father
<i>The Gospel of</i> <b>Our Lord Jesus</b>	2 Thess. 1:8	This God-Man is also our Lord who takes us to our Lord God the Father = Gospel
<i>The Gospel of</i> <b>Grace</b>	Acts 20:24; Rom. 4:16, 11:6; Eph. 2:8-9	Most of these Titles have identified The Persons of The Gospel ~ This title makes it clear that this Gospel is not by any works of man
<i>The Gospel of</i> <b>Salvation</b>	Eph. 1:12-13	This title reveals the result of The Gospel ~ There is no other way
<i>The Gospel of</i> <b>Peace</b>	Eph. 2:14-18, 6:15; Isa. 52:7; Rom. 5:1	By this Gospel we have Eternal Peace with God

