

2nd Thessalonians

Introduction to the Book

- The Second Letter to the Thessalonians
 - Authorship
 - Two verses within this letter attribute the authorship to the Apostle Paul [2 Thess 1:1; 3:17].
 - As stated in 2 Thess 1:1, Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy contributed to the content of this letter as well.
 - However, 2 Thess 3:17 clearly indicates that Paul was the primary author of this letter.
 - In the 2nd and 3rd centuries, 2nd Thessalonians was attributed to Paul by many of the church fathers.
 - Only the extreme, higher critics of the 19th century questioned this epistle as being Pauline.
 - Conclusion: The Apostle Paul wrote this letter to the Thessalonians.
 - Place and Date of Writing
 - Almost all conservative scholars believe that 2nd Thessalonians was written from Corinth.
 - This conclusion is based upon two things...
 - There is no record that Paul, Silvanus and Timothy were together after the gathering at Corinth [Acts 18:5].
 - 1st Thessalonians was written from Corinth and this letter was likely written soon thereafter given that it addresses related topics.
 - Given that the situation in Thessalonica is so similar to that which was addressed in 1st Thessalonians, it was likely written less than 12 months later.
 - This would put the date of writing of this letter at 53-54 A.D.
 - This, then, is the third of the Pauline epistles.
 - Occasion and Purpose
 - There is evidence in this letter that Paul had received news about the situation in the church at Thessalonica.
 - It is likely this news was delivered by a messenger who had taken 1st Thessalonians to the church and had returned to Corinth.
 - It is also possible that others who had news about the church had informed Paul, Silvanus and/or Timothy.
 - However it happened, some news was good and some was bad.
 - Good: The Thessalonians were growing in their faith and remaining faithful to the Lord in the midst of persecution.
 - Bad: False teaching regarding the Day of the Lord was causing confusion and concern amongst the believers in Thessalonica.

- In view of this news, Paul was moved to write this epistle, encouraging the Thessalonians and correcting doctrinal errors.
- Outline
 - Salutation and Greeting [1:1-2]
 - Thanksgiving, Encouragement and Prayer [1:3-12]
 - Thanksgiving [1:3-4]
 - Encouragement [1:5-10]
 - Prayer [1:11-12]
 - Correction of Doctrinal Error [2:1-12]
 - Rapture versus Day of the Lord [2:1-2]
 - Rapture before Man of Lawlessness [2:3-5]
 - The Restrainer [2:6-7]
 - The Lawless One Revealed [2:8-10]
 - The Deluding Influence [2:11-12]
 - More Thanksgiving, Encouragement and Prayer [2:13-17]
 - Thanksgiving [2:13-14]
 - Encouragement [2:15]
 - Prayer [2:16-17]
 - Exhortations [3:1-15]
 - Pray for the Apostles [3:1-2]
 - Continue in the Lord [3:3-5]
 - Correct the Undisciplined [3:6-12]
 - Continue Doing Good [3:13]
 - Admonish the Disobedient [3:14-15]
 - Conclusion [3:16-18]