

2 Thessalonians Devotionals

Read 2 Thessalonians 1

To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Thessalonians 1:1-2

My church in high school was full of kind people, but absent from the power of God's Word. Our pastor didn't believe the Bible was infallible and as a result led our church to install uncalled and unqualified leaders, including brand-new believers and those living an openly homosexual lifestyle. After our family left, I kept in contact with many close friends from that church. A few years later when I asked how the church was doing, one of their members told me about their beautiful new addition to the church. There was no indication of any work God was doing in him, their congregation, or the lost.

Churches can often misidentify the source of their strength: buildings, finances, traditions. What a church truly needs can only come from God. Paul doesn't simply extend grace and peace, but an invitation for the church to fully live in the grace and peace of God. It's the kind of grace that lets a church try again when a ministry area is lacking. It's the kind of peace that allows a church to push forward on what is clear (the gospel) while seeking clarity in other areas (staff, finances, etc.) Every good and perfect gift comes from the Father (James 1:17). That's not a priority of earthly gifts and needs, but the greater gifts of grace and peace that can only come from God our Father through a relationship to His Son, Jesus. **What does your church need? Where does it seek fulfillment of that need? Pray today that your church discovers both of those answers. The first takes a little more work as Jesus reveals every church has unique needs and issues (Revelation 2-3). However, the supply for every one of those needs comes solely through the God who has created the church and gave Himself up for her.**

Read 2 Thessalonians 2

[May our Lord Jesus Christ and God our Father] comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word. 2 Thessalonians 2:17

Kolton Wong is the second baseman for the St. Louis Cardinals, and one of the smoothest fielders I've ever seen at the position. A large contract a few years ago clearly put too much pressure on Kolton and he began falling apart with every error, landing on the bench due to his inability to function after mistakes. In 2018 the team hired a new manager who went directly to Kolton and said, "You're my second baseman. Play through the mistakes." While he has made some errors in 2019, he's pushed through them to remain a frontrunner for the Gold Glove, an award for being the best fielder at his position.

An obedient heart must be a comforted heart. We all have moments of error in choosing sin over the righteousness God has saved us for. How can a Christian reset when he knows work or words have dishonored his God? We repent and trust that the love of God ensures the comfort of God, not because of our goodness, but due to His grace! Knowing we don't simply belong to a Christian club, but to the family of God, brings a realization of how much we're loved by our

Father. So how do we bounce back from sinful mistakes? We believe the grace of God and allow His grace to comfort and establish us for every good work and word. Don't simply try to live a different type of behavior on your own. **Confess your error and draw close to the God of all comfort who will empower you and establish you for the comeback! Guilt is not a tool of the Lord and will bring you no good results. So don't dwell on the past failures, but seek your future opportunities with the Lord and for His Kingdom!**

Read 2 Thessalonians 3

As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good. 2 Thessalonians 3:13

A personal trainer had been married to his wife since they met in college. Both of them enjoyed a physical lifestyle, though the wife didn't work in the training field. After several years of marriage, the husband took on a new female client and they eventually began having an affair and the trainer left his wife for the new woman. As I read this story, the writer of the piece made a ridiculous statement: "As he trained the woman, they couldn't help it that they fell in love." Firstly, a man should be very wary of high interactions with a woman who's not his wife (also called the "Billy Graham rule" as Graham never was alone with a woman, even in an elevator). Secondly, temptation is not an invitation to do as one pleases. Certainly, this man may have not initially planned to cheat, but over time he let his guard down.

Paul closes out this letter with the same old reminder to a new group of believers. Paul has spoken to the Romans and Corinthians on how to handle a believer who repeatedly refuses repentance. At the same time, he calls us to not grow weary in doing good. You've seen this in your own life: an increase in prayerlessness, missing church occasionally turns into a habit of sleeping in, a sin once resisted now is viewed as impossible to overcome. Paul must have had the same experiences, knowing the good he ought to do, but failing to do so at times. **Where do you grow weary in doing good? Is there some sin that you know to resist, but now you give in knowing Jesus' grace will still cover you? Growing weary in doing good comes when we forget how good godliness is! You know how your life goes when your prayer life is close to God. You know how guilt has no home in your heart when you prepare for the temptations and resist them (1 Cor 10:13). Today, there is some place you're growing weary in doing good; don't give up! Your growth with God will translate into blessings and understandings that will have to be put on hold if we choose disobedience and self. Be open and honest with God with your weariness and seek His power and partnership to keep on going!**