

2 Thessalonians 1:3-12 Hope in the Glory of Christ

Hope in our enjoyment of the glory of Christ in the future fuels our perseverance through the trials of Christ in the present.

1) We are graced by God to grow in faith and to increase in love through tribulations (1:3-5a).

- a) Graced by God—v. 3a *“We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing . . .”* It is proper to give thanks to the one responsible for the outcome.
- b) Perseverance involves growth in faith and love through tribulations.
 - i) To grow in faith—v. 3b *“your faith is growing abundantly”*.
 - ii) To increase in love—v. 3c *“the love of every one of you for one another is increasing”*
 - iii) Through tribulations—v. 4b *“your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions that you are enduring”*
- c) Grace-filled suffering is the soil of Christian growth in this inaugural era of the Kingdom of God.
 - i) Inaugural Kingdom/Millennial Kingdom/Tribulation—Christ has begun to reign, and He will continue to reign until all His enemies are under His feet (1 Cor. 15:25; Rev. 1:9). This era of the Kingdom of God is characterized by conflict because of opposition from the rulers of this world. In this era, the saints share in the Messianic woes/tribulation, in anticipation of sharing in the Messianic glory.
 - ii) One gift of God in this tribulation is present evidence of our future hope.—v. 5a *“This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God”*
 - (1) *“This”* refers to the saints’ perseverance through suffering.
 - (2) *“The righteous judgment of God”* refers to the final judgment.
 - (3) Every increase in love and steadfast growth in faith adds to the evidence for the final judgment and of our eternal enjoyment of the glory of Christ.

2) Hope in our enjoyment of the glory of Christ in the future fuels our perseverance in the present (1:5-10).

- a) Christ’s glory will be displayed in righteous vengeance upon unbelievers (1:6, 8-9).
 - i) Unbelievers are *“those who afflict you”* (v. 6); *“those who do not know (acknowledge) God (v. 8); “those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus”* (v. 8).
 - (1) Hostility to the Church/Saints
 - (2) Hostility to the authority of God and His Christ (cf. Psalm 2)
 - ii) Christ’s vengeance is righteous: *“God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you”* (v. 6)—*lex talionis*. *“Inflicting vengeance (justice) on those . . .”* (v. 8)
 - iii) Christ’s vengeance highlights His glory:
 - (1) Eternal: *“They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction”* (v. 9a)
 - (2) Holy separation: *“away from the presence (face) of the Lord”* (v. 9b)
 - (3) Beauty/Majesty: *“from the glory of His might”* (v. 9c); cf. *“revealed from heaven with His mighty angels”* (v. 7b)
 - iv) Mitigated delight in the display of Christ’s glorious justice.
- b) Christ’s glory will be displayed in righteous vindication of believers (1:7, 10).
 - i) Believers are *“His saints . . . who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed”* (v. 10).
 - (1) Set apart by God for God
 - (2) Submission to Christ through the Word of His Apostles
 - ii) Christ’s vindication is gracious: *“according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ”* (v. 12b).
 - iii) Christ’s vindication of the saints highlights His glory:
 - (1) Lord of Peace: *“to grant relief”* (v. 7a)
 - (2) Lord of Glory: *“when He comes on that day to be glorified in His saints”* (v. 10a); *“that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him”* (v. 12)
 - (3) Lord of Beauty/Majesty: *“when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels”* (v. 7b); *“to be marveled at among all who have believed”* (v. 10b)
 - iv) Unmitigated delight in the display of Christ’s glorious grace.
- c) This glorious hope in Christ sustains us in the present conflict. How should we then live?

3) Therefore, let us live and pray with that glorious goal in view (1:11-12).

- a) Knowing the necessity and grace of perseverance (Matt. 24:13)

- b) Prayerfully—v. 11a “To this end we always pray for you”
- c) Worthy of His calling—v. 11b “that our God may make you worthy of His calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by His power”
 - i) Desiring what is good
 - ii) Working through faith by His power
- d) For the glory of Christ—v. 12 “so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him”
- e) Expectantly (Matt. 25:13)