

1 & 2 THESSALONIANS

Following Jesus While Waiting for His Return

PART 3: IN THE MEANTIME

It's difficult to keep an eternal perspective in the midst of ongoing trials. In 2 Thessalonians, Paul corrects some of the false beliefs circulating about the second coming and at the same time reminds believers that Jesus will judge all unfairness appropriately in due time.

WIN

To remember Jesus will be the ultimate judge, so there's no need for us to assume that role today

CONNECT

Take a few minutes to discuss the following questions as a group:

1. Do you sometimes catch yourself forming opinions about others before getting to know them well? Can it be challenging for you to withhold judgment instead of giving people the benefit of the doubt? What makes you say that?
2. What motivates people to judge other people?

Ask if anyone was able to read through 2 Thessalonians and also if anyone was able to memorize the verses from last week.

LEARN

Before watching the video together and discussing the questions provided, we suggest taking a few moments to pray. Here's a simple prayer you can use:

Heavenly Father, Thank you for giving us grace and peace. May we look to give grace and peace to those around us. Amen.

After praying, watch the video for Part 3.

APPLY

Discuss the following questions as a group:

1. How can the idea of God's justice and judgment bring comfort to those facing persecution? How can this perspective help us navigate difficult circumstances? Is there currently a situation in which you're tempted to judge someone but need to lean on the knowledge that Jesus will take on the role of judge one day?
2. Read **2 Thessalonians 2:1–2**, where the Thessalonians were troubled by false teaching about Jesus's second coming. Is there an area in your life that typically causes you anxiety, where you are "easily unsettled" or "alarmed"? If so, what area is it?



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3. Read **2 Thessalonians 3:11–13**. On the spectrum between “idle” and “proactive,” how would you describe your faith in action? What makes you say that?
4. How can we respond when we encounter individuals who seem to be “idle” or not contributing within the faith community? How can we balance grace and accountability in such situations?
5. Read **2 Thessalonians 3:16–18**. In Paul's 13 letters, he longs for **grace** and **peace** for the readers. We all need both of them, but when you see those two words, which do you currently wish you had more of? What makes you say that? How does Paul's hope for the Thessalonians remind you where both grace and peace are ultimately found?

WRAP UP

Even though Paul was with the Thessalonians for a short while, the relationship he established with them would impact generations upon generations. Paul was able to fully give his heart to these new converts, while at the same time offer them clear instruction. Whether it was offering clarity in practical areas such as sex and work or clarifying confusion around the second coming of Jesus, Paul demonstrated both grace and truth in his two letters to them.

PRAY

We suggest ending your group with prayer, asking that we would experience the same grace and peace Paul wanted for the Thessalonians.

TO MEMORIZE

Try to memorize these passages:

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself
and God our Father, who loved us
and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement
and good hope, encourage your hearts
and strengthen you in every good deed and word.
2 Thessalonians 2:16–17

Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace
at all times and in every way.
2 Thessalonians 3:16

