"THE BLESSINGS OF TRIBULATION"

2 Thessalonians 1:1-5

6-3-2026

INTRODUCTION: V. 1 – 2

***Realize that hardship, trouble, persecution, trials, and any other form of Tribulation can <u>benefit</u> you!**

What happens when we successfully endure Tribulation?

I. We <u>GROW</u> in our faith and love (v. 3)
(God can use tribulations to <u>expand</u> [increase] His grace in us)

II. We <u>SHOW</u> others a model to follow (v. 4)
(God can use tribulations to <u>exemplify</u> [exhibit/display] His grace in us)

III. We <u>KNOW</u> that we are citizens of God's Kingdom (v. 5)
(God can use tribulations to <u>certify</u> [confirm] His grace in us)

"THE BLESSINGS OF TRIBULATION"

2 Thessalonians 1:1-5
6-3-2026



INTRODUCTION: V. 1 – 2

***Realize that hardship, trouble, persecution, trials, and any other form of Tribulation can <u>benefit</u> you!**

What happens when we successfully endure Tribulation?

I. **We _____ in our faith and love (v. 3)**
(God can use tribulations to _____ [increase] His grace in us)

II. **We _____ others a model to follow (v. 4)**
(God can use tribulations to _____ [exhibit/display] His grace in us)

III. **We _____ that we are citizens of God's Kingdom (v. 5)**
(God can use tribulations to _____ [confirm] His grace in us)

"THE BLESSINGS OF TRIBULATION"

2 Thessalonians 1:1-5

6-3-2026

INTRODUCTION: V. 1 – 2

I and II Thessalonians are known as the eschatological epistles of Paul.

"All of II Thes. centers around the truth of the second coming of Christ." (Hiebert, p. 263)

The Thessalonian church suffered intense oppositions for their faith (SEE: I Thes. 2:14, 3:2-4; II Thes. 1:4-5).

The persecution grew so bad for the poor Thessalonians that they thought they were living in the Tribulation and that the Day of the LORD was at hand (2:2); such a prospect caused confusion (2:2) and caused others to quit working so as to spend their time waiting for Christ's return (3:5-13).

V. 1

"Paul" - the Apostle with the help of Silas and Timothy was used of God to plant the church at Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-14). These missionaries were then forced to leave the church and found it difficult to get back into Thessalonica because of Satan's hindrances (I Thes. 2:180. Eventually Timothy was sent to find out how the church was going, and the report he brought back to Paul was thrilling! He reported how their faith had kept them faithful through all sorts of tribulation and how they grew in the Lord (I Thes. 3:1-8).

Silvanus is a variant name for Silas who began travelling and working with Paul on his second missionary journey (Acts 15:22-18:5).

"In God our Father" - Every church, like that of Thessalonica, belongs not to man or men, nor to a denominational headquarters, but belongs to God and is *"in God"* == meaning that the saved people are related to God, joined to God and safe in God.

A Biblical church belongs to the Father and the Son. The triune Godhead possesses, controls, fills, empowers, directs and protects the Bride of Christ.

"And the Lord Jesus Christ" - An indication of the Deity of Christ

The Church (saved saints) is not only in God the Father but also in God the Son. You see, to be in Christ is to be in God, and vice-versa. To have Christ is to have God; to not have Christ is to not have God.

V. 2

"Grace to you" - God's grace (unmerited kindness and favor) is not only needed by the lost but also by the saved. We are dependent on God's grace to save us and to keep us; to give us eternal life and to empower us for daily life.

"And peace" - peace is a result of grace. Paul's order is always grace before peace (cp. Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; Ro. 1:7; Phm. 1:3; cp. I Pet. 1:2) - perhaps because no one can experience the peace of God until they first have the grace of God.

The peace of God is the serenity, calmness of soul, and blessed comfort that God gives to His own by grace.

NOTE: Such peace would be especially needed by a church (like Thessalonica) that was in a "pressure cooker" filled with the heat and difficulty of Tribulation.

NOTE: Not only is *"God our Father"* the source of grace and peace but *"the Lord Jesus Christ"* is as well. How can Jesus be the One who gives grace and peace? Reason: He is equal in essence to the Father, and anything the Father gives, He gives <u>through</u> His Son. Christ is the means by which we tap into all of God's blessings!

Persecution should not come as a shock to God's people, since Jesus warned us *"in the world ye shall have tribulation"*

Jesus said: Matthew 5:11 - *"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."*

Paul said: Phil. 1:29 - *"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake."*

Peter said: I Pet. 4:12 - *"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you."*

The question is this: Can anything good come out of tribulation? Is it really beneficial?

We can defeat Satan and gain victory over his attempts to defeat us by persecution, when we instead see the good benefits caused by such trouble and <u>praise God</u> for it!

***Realize that hardship, trouble, persecution, trials, and any other form of Tribulation can <u>benefit</u> you!**

What happens when we successfully endure Tribulation?

I. We GROW in our faith and love (v. 3)
(God can use tribulations to expand [increase] His grace in us)

"We are bound" - we are obligated; we owe it to God.

The reason why god must be thanked is because He is the One who granted the Thessalonians their salvation,a nd He is the One who is active in their sanctification.

Do you ever thank God for what He does in the lives of others?

"As it is meet" - It is appropriate, fitting, a worthy act of appreciation (Ps. 92:1 - *"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High"*)

"Because" - Paul's reason for thanking God always (even after someone's salvation) is because of the great work God does in those who belong to Him.

The Apostle thanks God specifically for 2 things that the Lord gave to the Thessalonian Christians: He thanks God for their

1) *"faith"*
and
2) *"charity"* (love)

While tribulation does cause one's true colors to show, such afflictions don't have to dampen our faith or dry up our love; these virtues can actually be enhanced by such hardship.

"Your faith" - One's faith is the crux of the Christian life. The quality of your Christian life can be measured by the greatness of your faith.

Paul had previously been very concerned about the faith of the Thessalonians and was comforted to hear how strong it remained (I Th. 3:2-7, 10).

"Groweth exceedingly" - their faith had grown abundantly; literally - over and beyond normal [average] proportions.

1) Your faith is not static (it has the potential for change)

2) Your faith should never level off or go down, but should increase

   "Faith, like a muscle, must be exercised to grow stronger. Tribulation and persecution are God's ways to strengthen our faith" (Wiersbe, p. 125).

3) Your faith can grow even in adverse circumstances

   In fact, rarely does one's faith grow without hardships, trials, oppositions, etc.

"An easy life can lead to a shallow faith. The great men and women of faith in Hebrews 11 all suffered in one way or another" (Wiersbe, p. 125)

I believe one of the reasons why God allows trials is to refine our faith (I Pet. 1:7 - *"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."*)

Another reason is to show us the genuineness of it (Ja. 1:2-3 - *"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience."*)

"A faith that cannot be tested cannot be trusted" (Wiersbe, p. 125)

How can tribulation increase our faith?

1. Tribulation reminds us of the Bible truth that we have an adversary (I Pet. 5:8)

2. Tribulation shows us our desperate need for God's help (strength and power)

3. Tribulation drives us into the Arms of our Heavenly Father

4. Tribulation helps us see things in perspective and live for things above (not temporal but eternal)

5. Tribulation helps us see God's faithfulness as He gives comfort and deliverance

"Charity" - (agape - sacrificial, giving love)

The love was reciprocal (a mutual, unselfish giving one toward another).

Each member (***"everyone"***)

All members loved each other ***("you all")***

"Charity . . . aboundeth" - their love increased

This word "abound" means to increase or become greater in quantity.

How does love grow in quantity?

It's easy to understand how love can grow in quality (it becomes more unselfish, more unconditional, more sacrificial, etc.).

But how can love grow numerically in quantity?

1) You express it more often
2) You express it to more people

How can love increase in the midst of persecutions and tribulations?

*Tribulation creates needs and needs provide opportunity for others to meet their needs

(One of the "curses" of an affluent society is that there exists fewer opportunities to tangibly show that you care for someone)

When no one is hurt, no one is needed to help.

When no one is needy, no one is needed to give.

When no one is suffering, no one is needed to comfort.

(EX: When someone is ill or suffering material need, that is a golden opportunity to let them know you care)

I believe one of the reasons why God allows trials in people's lives (misfortunes, physical injury, sickness, and accidents, losses etc.) is to give us a chance (a chance we would not ordinarily have) to come to the rescue, to come to the aid -- to simply come! And offer practical help (I Jn. 3:18 - *"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.")*

II. We SHOW others a model to follow (v. 4)
(God can use tribulations to exemplify [exhibit/display] His grace in us)

"So that" - with the result that

The tremendous expansion of the Thessalonians' faith and love in the heat of battles (in the midst of fiery trials) gave Paul and His associates an opportunity to testify and glory in what God was doing in their lives.

Whereas Paul help up the churches of Macedonia for their sacrificial giving (II Cor. 8:1-6) and the church at Corinth for their ambitious zeal (II Cor. 9:2) to provoke others to do the same, he now holds up Thessalonica as a model of endurance under pressure.

"In the churches of God" - As Paul traveled to various churches, he held up the Thesslonian church as a model of endurance and faith.

"Patience" - the ability to remain under or bear up under pressure without caving in, blowing up, or giving up.

"Faith" - Full dependance (reliance, trust) ont he Word of God, and the faithfulness of God.

"<u>All</u> your persecutions" - There was no persecution too great that could shake their faith or crumble their endurance.

"Persecutions" - This word means to <u>pursue</u> someone with the intent of doing them injury. It means to hunt down, causing the pursued to flee.

"Tribulations" - This word refers tot he intense <u>pressures</u> that come upon someone when they experience affliction and trouble.

III. We <u>KNOW</u> that we are citizens of God's Kingdom (v. 5)
(God can use tribulations to <u>certify</u> [confirm] His grace in us)

"Which is" - An implied reference to the unjust persecution and tribulation that is

wrongly fired at God's people by the unsaved.

The point is this: Their unjust treatment of you will show God's judgment of them to be just. Their wrongs will vindicate God's righteous judgment of them.

"Manifest token" - clear evidence; plain proof; undeniable indication

When God judges those who have mistreated, abused, tormented, betrayed, etc., His people, the evidence brought up against them will be undeniable!

God's severe yet righteous judgment to fall upon the "Beast" (Antichrist) worshippers (Rev. 14:9-11) will be a great incentive for God's people to remain patient through severe Tribulation (Rev. 14:12-13).

This mistreatment endured by God's people will not only condemn those who did it, but it will confirm those who received it.

In other words, God may allow you to receive persecution for your faith with a goal (*"eis")* toward you being proven worthy or declared worthy of the Kingdom of God (SEE: I Peter 4:12-14).

Your endurance of unjust suffering is God's way of showing you that you indeed are worthy (via God's grace) to enter His heaven!

Paul is not teaching us that enduring suffering will earn you eternal life, but that enduring suffering will demonstrate that you have eternal life.

Your faithfulness will demonstrate your worthiness to receive what is already yours.

CONCLUSION: