

2 THESSALONIANS: THERE'S STILL HOPE



Week One: 2 Thessalonians 2:13-3:5

A Note to the Parents/Teachers

The flow of this letter seems to be: 1) You've shown great love & faith in the midst of persecution, 2) Don't lose hope - Jesus is still coming back, and 3) So keep working! This part of Paul's letter is sort of like a bridge between parts 2 and 3. It's a reminder that God is faithful and that we are called to partner with Him.

- **Big Idea:** God is faithful even when we are not, but He wants us to partner with Him.

Starter

- **Game:** Play 'Simon Says'. Tell the kids this is what following Jesus is like - we listen to his Spirit speak to us and his word (the Bible) and we follow his words. We have a part to play!

OR

- **Watch** this video from the Bible Project on Covenant (partnership between humans and God): <https://youtu.be/8ferLIsvImI>

Sing Together

My Hope Is In the Lord - <https://youtu.be/tJePCzTaQo4>

Story

Paul wrote to the Thessalonian church a reminder about Jesus returning to the earth. He wanted them to know that they hadn't missed him. He is still going to come back and it will be obvious when he does, because he will radically change everything. All of the bad will be wiped away, including those who fight against Jesus as King, and all things will be made right. Everyone who trusts in him and follows Jesus as their King will be restored with renewed bodies that never hurt or die and will live with him forever in joy.

Paul wanted to encourage them that because they believed this truth, they would certainly be some of the ones who get to live with King Jesus forever. He wanted them to know that God is faithful, and He does not give up on His people or His promises to them.

So, he wrote to remind them that God had already saved them from the **penalty** of their sin, that He would come one day to save them from the **presence** of all sin in the world, and in the meantime, He wanted them to partner with Him to fight against the **power** of their sin. There are big words for these three ways God has saved us, is saving us, and will save us from sin. They are called *justification*, *sanctification*, and *glorification*.

Justification means we are no longer guilty of our sin because of what Jesus has done for us in his death and resurrection. This is salvation. Glorification means one day Jesus will return and make us perfect with him and do away with all of the brokenness in the world. This is also part of God's salvation. Until that day comes, we have the promise of sanctification. This means God is working to help us become more and more like Jesus. His Spirit works with us to help us not live in sin anymore.

But, even though this is the work of God in us, He wants us to partner with Him to do it. It's like when your mom or dad ask you to help them bake cookies, or build something in the garage. The reality is, your parents are there to do the main work and make sure the job gets done right, but they let you have a part in it. That's how God wants to partner with us. We can trust that His Spirit is doing the real work, but we have a responsibility to join Him by resisting our sin and finding joy in Jesus above all else.

[Dialogue Questions - you may use some or all]

- Why do you think God allows us to partner with Him?
- What does it look like to partner with Him in our sanctification?
- If we mess up, who is still there to make it work?

Breakout Time

- **Prayer:**
God, thank you for saving us through Jesus. Thank you for letting us come alongside you and learn to be more like Jesus. Thank you for your Spirit.
- **Color:**
Use the coloring page attached.
- **BLESS Activity:**
For kids to do during the week
Because this Story is true, we want to be faithful to live in it. We ask the Spirit to help us to *Bless, Listen, Eat, Speak*, and *Sabbath* (rest & celebrate) in ways that tell the good news of God's Story.

This week, focus on the **Sabbath** rhythm. Take some time to celebrate what God has done in your life! Ask your parents/family how you can celebrate God's goodness and salvation as a family.

BUT THE LORD is
with you
and He
will strengthen
AND
PROTECT
you from the evil one

2 Thessalonians 3:3