

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

2 Thessalonians: Comforting Troubled New Christians With Correct End Times Theology

Part V: Assuring New Converts Of Surely Gaining God's Peace At All Times And In Every Way By Grace (2 Thessalonians 3:16-18)

I. Introduction

- A. In our era of great economic, political, social and even at times spiritual uncertainties, believers in general and new converts to Christ in particular often find gaining sure peace in their experience a difficult goal.
- B. In his three-verse conclusion to 2 Thessalonians, Paul summarized how all believers can assuredly gain God's peace in every way of their experience, and we view that section of Scripture for our edification:

II. Assuring New Converts Of Surely Gaining God's Peace At All Times And In Every Way By Grace.

- A. In 2 Thessalonians 3:17 ESV, Paul took the pen from his "secretary" to whom he was dictating the epistle, and wrote the conclusion, "the sign of genuineness in every letter", showing the letter was truly from him.
- B. This bit of information has huge ramifications in the context, for the statements of 2 Thessalonians 3:16 and 3:18 are thus backed by a man with the following enormous spiritual credentials:
 - 1. The 2 Thessalonians 3:16, 18 remarks are from one who had seen and was sent by Christ, 1 Cor. 9:1-2:
 - 2. This man's call by Jesus was undeniable: he had initially tried to destroy the Christian faith, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9:1) only to have Jesus in His heavenly glory confront him on the road to Damascus and convert him, Acts 9:2-19; 1 Tim. 1:12-17.
 - 3. Subsequently, Paul (formerly Saul) was fully dedicated to Christ as was often proved by his actions:
 - a. Paul's epistles to the Thessalonians were written after he had evangelized them in Acts 17:1-10a.
 - b. Accordingly, that evangelization had occurred **after** (1) Paul had risked his life to witness for Christ in Damascus and later in Jerusalem (Acts 9:20-25, 26-30)! (2) Paul had agreed to minister at Antioch in Syria under Barnabas, teaching the Christians there with such an impact that it became the first place the believers in Christ were called "Christians," Acts 11:25-26! (3) Paul had gone with Barnabas back to Jerusalem with a financial gift for needy believers, Acts 11:27-30, and was there to witness Peter's miraculous release from prison before returning to Antioch with Barnabas, Acts 12:1-25. (4) Since then, Paul had been a pioneer missionary, planting churches and suffering greatly for the faith, even to the point of being stoned and left for dead before God miraculously raised him up to continue his ministry, Acts 13:1-14:18, 19-20. (5) Paul had even defended the Gospel of justification by faith alone before the first Church Council (Acts 15:1-18), a gathering of the apostles and other Christian leaders in Jerusalem who confirmed his stand, Acts 15:19-35.
- C. So, one with impeccable credentials and a sterling track record relayed in 2 Thessalonians 3:16 and 18 in view of the certainty of these remarks via 2 Thessalonians 3:17 the following priceless truths:
 - 1. The Lord of peace can Himself give us peace at all times and in every way, 2 Thessalonians 3:16a NIV.
 - 2. This provision is in concert with the continual presence of the Lord in our lives, 2 Thessalonians 3:16b.
 - 3. Such comprehensive peace is available in the sphere of God's grace, 2 Thess. 3:18, and we explain this from 2 Timothy 1:1-2:1: since 2 Timothy 2:1 shows the matters discussed in 2 Timothy 1 were in the sphere of God's grace, we know the following: (1) For peace, we must rest in the security of the position God assigns us in the Church, 2 Tim. 1:1a. (2) For peace, we must also trust God's will in our lives, 1:1b. (3) For peace, we must rely on God's authority that directs us to serve Him there, 2 Tim. 1:3a. (4) For peace, we must use the spiritual gift God gave us to serve Him effectively, 2 Tim. 1:6. (5) For peace, we must rely on the Holy Spirit for power (2 Tim. 1:7) (6) to handle persecution (2 Tim. 1:8a), (7) to rely on God's call of us to our ministry (2 Tim. 1:8b), (8) to rely on God's purpose and grace in that call (2 Tim. 1:9a), (9) to rely on God's eternal plan for us (2 Tim. 1:9b) (10) and to trust His plan was set for our good before the start of time, 2 Tim. 1:9c. (11) For peace, we must trust the power of Christ's Gospel that we give (2 Tim. 1:10), (12) and follow Paul's example to serve well, 2 Tim. 1:13. (13) For peace, we must rely on the Holy Spirit to keep our theology sound, 2 Tim. 1:14!

Lesson: *We believers are assured that 2 Thessalonians 3:16-18 in its widest Scriptural context reveals we can enjoy God's peace at all times and in every way as we function in the sphere of His grace.*

Application: *May we comprehensively avail ourselves of the grace of God to enjoy His peace in living.*