

## 2Thessalonians 2:13-17

These verses are a conclusion for 2:1-3. Both:

1. Encouragement – 2:13-14
  - we have security
  - we have divine love
  - we do not need to fear the lawless one
2. Corrective – 2:15

These verses are a contrast to what went before in 2:8-12

**2:13 – “But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.”**

- This verse focuses on the purpose in the mind of God.
- “But” presents the following contrasts between 2:13-14 with 2:8-12 :
  - “you” (2:13) **vs.** “those” (2:10)
  - “loved by the Lord” (2:13) **vs.** “God sends them a powerful delusion” (2:11)
  - “chose you” (2:13) **vs.** “they perish” (2:10)
  - “chose you to be saved” (2:13) **vs.** “those who are perishing.” (2:10)
  - “sanctifying” (2:13) **vs.** “delighted in wickedness” (2:12) AND “every sort of evil”(2:10)
  - “sanctifying work of the Spirit” (2:13) **vs.** “in accordance with the work of Satan” 2:9)
  - “belief in the truth”(2:13) **vs.** “refused to love the truth”(2:10) AND “believe the lie”(2:11)
  - “the truth” (2:13) **vs.** “the lie” (2:11)
  - “share the glory” (2:14) vs. destroyed in glory (2:8)
- “we ought always to thank God for you”
  - 2 Thess. 1:3...so this is the second thanksgiving
  - Paul and his team were thanking God for Thessalonians faith and conversion
  - “ought” indicates there was compelling evidence and logical reasons for Paul and his ministry team to thank God for the Thessalonians.
- “loved by the Lord”
  - This is a source of encouragement compared to those deceived by the Lord and destroyed by the Lord.
- “because” (*hoti*)
  - Paul begins to list the reasons he is compelled to thank God:
- “from the beginning” OR “firstfruits”
  - “from the beginning” (*ap’ arches*) – good evidence, but not used by Paul elsewhere
  - “firstfruits” (*aparchen*) – common in Paul with substantial MSS evidence. The change occurs also in Rev. 14:4 and Rom 16:5. This would mean these Thessalonians were the first of many to believe.
- “God chose you to be saved”
  - “chose” is *heilato* in the Greek
    - *Heilato* is not used like this anywhere else in the New Testament, but it is used in:
      - Philippians 1:22 – “If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two....”
      - Hebrews 11:25 – “He (Moses) chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.”
      - Deuteronomy 26:18 in the Septuagint used of God’s selection of Israel.
    - *Heilato* is aorist middle and means “to take for one’s self”

- *Heilato* does not refer to divine election, but instead refers to:
    - God making a selection of something preferred
    - God making a decision because it is preferred
- “through the sanctifying work of the Spirit
- “through belief in the truth”
  - The necessary human response
  - 2 Thess. 1:10, “This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.”
- Trinity in 2:13 –
  - “thank God”
  - “loved by the Lord (Jesus)”
  - “sanctifying work of the Spirit”

**2:14 – “He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

- This verse focuses on the manifestation of God’s purpose in the Thessalonians
- “called you to this through our gospel”
  - The call in history came through hearing the gospel
  - “to this” refers to the full plan and scope of salvation
  - “our gospel” is from:
    - 1 Thessalonians 1:5, “Our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction.”
    - Romans 1:16, “I am not ashamed of the Gospel because it is the power of God for salvation.”
- “that” indicates God called you through the preaching of the Gospel so you could be in the glory of Jesus Christ.
- “you might share in the glory”
  - “share” is *peripoiesis*
    - *Peripoiesis* is used in 1 Thess. 5:9 as “receiving” salvation or “acquiring” salvation
    - Here we are “receiving”, “acquiring”, or “sharing” in the glory on the day Jesus is revealed in his glory.
    - Colossians 3:4, “When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”
    - 1 Peter 1:7, “These have come so that your faith...may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.”

**2:15 – “So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.”**

- “So then”
- “Stand firm” this is countering the “shaken” and “alarmed” of 2Thes.2:2
- “Hold to the teaching” (or, “Hold to the traditions”)
  - “teaching” is *paradoseis* means “traditions” and refers to the Christian teaching handed down to Paul by the apostles of the Lord and revealed to Paul by the Lord. *Paradoseis* is the authority that is outside the teacher themselves and found in the authoritative source documents, traditions and teachings of the faith.
- “Teachings we passed on to you by:
  - “Word of mouth” – personal verbal teaching or sermons
  - “Letter” – most likely First Thessalonians

Note: no “prophecy” is mentioned as the source of stability or necessary to “stand firm”.

Paul’s view of prophecy seems to be:

1. Test it (1 The. 5:19-22)
2. Do not reject the concept or the practice (1 Thes. 5:19-22)
3. Do not focus on it or depend on it for a source of stability (2 Thes. 2:15)
4. It is a source of encouragement, etc. (1 Cor. 12:3)

**2:16 – “May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope,”**

- Paul describes Jesus and God the Father as:
  - Those who loved us and acted on that love
  - Gave us a reason for eternal confidence in that relationship with them by giving us:
    - “eternal encouragement”
    - “eternal good hope”
- Paul asks that the eternal God and the historical Savior would:
  - “encourage” the Thessalonians to do their “good deeds and words”
  - “strengthen” the Thessalonians in executing their “good deeds and words”

**2:17 – “encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.”**

- “strengthen” is *sterizo* and means “to set up, fix firmly, establish”
  - Also used in 2 Thess. 3:3 – “But the Lord is faithful, he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one.”
  - Also used in 1 Peter 5:10 – “And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong (*steridzei*), firm (*sthenwsei* - “to strengthen, make strong”) and steadfast (*eimeliwsei* - make foundation).