

I want to start off giving you a little bit of history about me so that you can take hold of what I am about to say. I have not always been a Christian. Growing up we moved around a lot. By the time I was seven, I had already lived in 4 different states and visited almost every state from California to Connecticut. It was a week before Christmas, just two days after my seventh birthday, and I was diagnosed as a type 1 diabetic. I had to spend a week in the hospital and I was discharged on Christmas Eve. I remember vividly, waking up the next morning, Christmas morning, thankful that I was not in the hospital. Then I had the cruel reminder of how difficult life was going to be when I was reminded that I still had to have an insulin shot. Dealing with diabetes is still difficult today. The reason I tell you this is because, this affected my outlook on life, and at that time, formed an improper view of God. I viewed Him as angry, and bitter. It carried on into my teenage years and eventually I lost all belief in Him. Fortunately, God did not give up on me, even though for a season, I had given up on Him. I didn't come to know Him fully until I was twenty-one which radically changed my perception in life in general, but I have never regretted the decision that I made to follow Him since.

Today we are returning to 2 Thessalonians 1:5-12. Last week Pastor Steve talked about the rest found in Christ, the rest from persecution, the relief from temptations. Pastor Steve got to talk about the hope within the midst of those things which afflict us. This is not going to be the same message as last week. I'm going to be honest, I struggled as I meditated on this passage. When I was reading this passage, in all honesty, it made my heart weep.

## **2 Thessalonians 1:5-12**

**5 This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering— 6 since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, 7 and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels 8 in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will suffer the punishment of eternal**

**destruction, away from[b] the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, 10 when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed. 11 To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, 12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

In verses 7 & 8, you'll notice that there are three key prepositional phrases throughout the text.

The first is "from heaven" which implies that he descended. This stands to reason because in the book of Acts Jesus ascended to heaven.

The second is "with His mighty angels". The word "mighty" used here is the Greek word "*dunamis*" which is where the word dynamite is derived from.

This explains the power of these angels. These powerful angels are his servants, and how he will distribute his judgment.

**In Jude 1:14-15 ...Enoch...prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."**

The angels serve two purposes in this section of passage. The first is to gather all those who have given their life to Christ to bring them to the relief of glory. The second purpose is to administer the judgment of Christ, to gather the unbelievers.

The last prepositional phrase is "in flaming fire." This is not a fire like a campfire that will eventually burn itself out. This is like Moses and the burning bush in Exodus. It is an all consuming fire, the fire of God's holiness.

Verses 7-9 paint the picture of what it will be like when Jesus returns a second time.

Verses 7-9

**...and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels 8 in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from[b] the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,**

Inflicting vengeance, suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His might.

An example of what this means in the bible of what it would be like is in Luke 16, the parable of Lazarus and the rich man. There was a literal chasm between the Rich Man who was in torment and Lazarus who was carried to be by Abraham's side.

The one thing that really sticks out to me is in the latter part of verse 9.

**away from[b] the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,**

What must that feel like? To some, it may not seem like it would be that big of a deal. "Separation, I can handle that."

Jesus truly felt that pain. Jesus, prior to his crucifixion, was beaten. He was lashed with bone fragments and shards that when they connected with the skin, would stick and penetrate the flesh. It would rip the flesh away as it was pulled away. Then He was publicly humiliated, stripped and paraded through town, carrying the instrument that would be the tool of his demise. After all that, His words in Luke 23:34 were

**34 And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.**

But then, there was anguish.

**Matthew 27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”**

The separation was unbearable for Him was an ultimate sacrifice. Prior to taking on the sin of the world, He was in constant contact with God the Father. And at that moment, it stopped. That moment of silence must have seemed like an eternity for somebody who has lived all of eternity.

To give you an idea of what that silence must feel like. I want to tell you about a place. One of my math professors would be extremely proud of the fact that I had picked up something he said so many years ago. He said that there was a place in Minnesota that was the quietest place on earth. It's in a chamber in Orfield Laboratories. It's so silent that the background noise is measured in negative decibels. That means, it is indiscernible to the human ear.

The longest that a person has ever been able to stay in the chamber was only a total of 45 minutes. They say after a few minutes, you can hear your own heart beat because your ears adapt to silence, longing for sounds. You start to hear your lungs, you hear the gurgle of your stomach. You are the only sound that you hear. People can't even stay in the room more than 30 minutes without a chair, because they get so disoriented. The feeling of isolation and being totally alone is overwhelming, unbearable and ultimately leads to madness. Imagine it for an eternity.

I know what you are thinking, where is the hope in this message?

Hebrews 9:27-28 says

**27 And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, 28 so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.**

In 2 Thessalonians 1 the hope is found in verses 11 and 12.

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 **11 To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, 12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

*We as Christians are saved and don't need to worry about the coming judgment for our own lives, but how will we live our lives, what actions will we take, so those in our circles don't face the coming judgment?*

*So how do you get from living in verses 7-9 and verses 11-12. Verse 10.*

**10 when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.**

Believing and trusting in Him who saved us is the key.

He will not come to deal with sin. He already did and he does not need to do it again, and that is why we eagerly await him. If you have already given your life to Him, you have the assurance that it is completed. You don't have to worry about your salvation because the price was paid. How you use your life for Him does make a difference for others.

Look at the Great Commission.

**Matthew 28:19:20 ...Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in[a] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the**

**Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”**

### Application

**Believe** - If you have not given your life to Christ please consider it. I would love to be able to talk to you after service. Not to try to pressure you, but so that I could tell you of the things that I have seen God do.

**Be Bold** - Do not be afraid to share your beliefs. If people were to talk about you would they know what you stood for? Being bold does not mean that you have to stand on the corner telling people that they will suffer God's judgment, but rather they know where you stand

### Be Loving -

I told you the story of my life at the beginning so that you would know why my heart aches for those who don't know Christ. I was one of them. And if someone hadn't loved me enough to build a relationship and show how much they cared, I would still to this day, be lost. Evangelism is not about what you say but rather the heart you say it with. You don't have to have a theology degree, been to seminary, read 50 books on evangelism and apologetics. You just have to be real. The world outside these walls is tired of perceived Christianity that you have to be able to have it all together to be considered a Christian. If you are young, the world needs to know that you accept them. The cancel culture that is so prevalent today is looking for a reason to say goodbye and good riddance. The world needs to know your zeal, your passion for Christ so that they can feel the reality of the Risen Savior. If you feel like you are no longer young, the world needs your wisdom now more than ever. Everything was upended for them two years ago. The economy is in a mess. You have the opportunity to show how you have endured, why you have hope, and how you persevered throughout. No matter what we do though we need to make sure that we

do it with the same grace and love that God has given us. We need to do this not so that this church body can grow larger but so that Christ's church can grow stronger. It's our calling, So on that day, when Christ returns for judgment, His Church will be ready.

Isaiah 40:5

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
and all flesh shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."