

Thursday, July 28, 2022 ▫ Read 2Thessalonians 3:1-5

Questions from the Scripture text: With what word does v1 begin? What does the apostle call them? What does he ask them to do? For whom? What does he say is doing the running? What are they to pray would happen to the Word among the apostolic team? Among whom else is the Word of the Lord being glorified? From what men do they ask to be delivered (v2)? What do unreasonable and wicked men not have? Who, however, is faithful (v3)? What two things will He do for the Thessalonians? What does the apostolic team have concerning them (v4)? In Whom is this confidence? About what are they confident? Into what two things does the apostle pray/pronounce that the Lord would direct their hearts (v5)? Whose love? Whose patience?

What is the main issue in Christian life and ministry? 2Thessalonians 3:1-5 looks forward to the second serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these three verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **God glorifies His Word in our lives and ministries by using it to direct our hearts in that persistent love that keeps obeying Him, despite all efforts of men and demons to dissuade us.**

The battle for obedience. Not all have faith. This statement in v2 is obvious enough (especially in light of 1:8) that he is almost certainly referring to those in the church (as the man of sin himself is "in the temple of God" in 2:4). What do these unreasonable and wicked men do? They attempt to prevent the apostolic team from preaching the Word as they have been called to do (v1). In this, they are like the evil one (end of v3), who attempts to prevent believers from doing what God's Word commands (end of v4). There is a battle on for proclaiming the Word. There is a battle on for obeying the Word. And if we are not on the right side of this battle, then we are on the wrong side of it.

By Whom the battle is won. Believers exert themselves in the Christian life, so it is important for us to be reminded that we are not the ones who win the battle. It is by the Lord that His Word runs swiftly, and by the Lord that His Word is glorified. This is why v1 is a prayer request.

It is by the Lord that hearts persevere in that love of God that produces obedience (cf. 1Jn 5:1-5). This is why v5 is a benediction/prayer request. Further, by the parallel, we discover that this love *for* God comes *from* God, just as our steadfastness comes from Christ. We do not have these in ourselves; they must come from Him. Not all have faith (v2), but those who do have faith get it from the faithful God (v3). Obedience comes from the heart, and it is the Lord Who directs the believer's heart (v5).

Through what He wins the battle. Sadly, I've heard people who love learning and obeying the Bible be accused of idolizing the Bible. Well, if glorifying the Bible were wrong, God Himself would be guilty, according to v1, and that wonderful statement we often quote from Psalm 138:2, "You have magnified Your Word above all Your Name." God glorifies His Word by making it the means through which Christian life and ministry advances.

How are you battling for the Word to be proclaimed and heard? How are you battling to obey the Word? How does your prayer life reflect that God must win these battles? How do your Bible-reading and preaching-hearing habits reflect that God has appointed His Word as the means by which He wins?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for the fellowship that you gave the Thessalonians and the apostolic team in the battle for the Word to be proclaimed, heard, believed, and obeyed. Forgive us for when we are not aware of that battle or participating in it ourselves. Make Your Word to run, and direct our hearts into love from You and steadfastness from Christ, so that Your Word may be glorified in us through Jesus Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP46 "God Is Our Refuge and Our Strength" or TPH244 "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Second Thessalonians chapter 3, verses 1 through 5. These are God's words. Finally, Brethren pray for us that the Word of the Lord may run and be glorified just as with you. And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men for not all have faith. What the Lord is faithful.

The will establish you guard. You from the evil one. And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you. Both that you do and will do the things we command you. Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patients of Christ. So far the reading of God's inspired and an air into art.

This is a prayer request at first, he was asking that they would be delivered from unreasonable, and wicked men. And then he turns and tells them that the Lord is the one who establishes in guards. Them from the evil one. So there are evil and wicked men. From whom we need deliverance and there's the evil one from whom.

We need to deliverance and when the evil and wicked men prosper against the, the apostle, and the team with him, Then the word does not run the word of the Lord does not run. So there are There are unbelievers in the implication is that they're unbelievers in the church is obvious verse 2 that not all have faith.

He's been talking about persecution and how the persecuted are gonna suffer. The vengeance of Christ. Since chapter 1. So when he says for not all have faith and it's implied, he means not all in the church have faith. And those who in the church, who are unbelievers, obviously, they are not going after this Trinitarian work of redemption of conversion of sanctification that he has been talking about at the end of chapter 2, that he is urging the Thessalonians on in and encouraging them.

That the father, the son and the Spirit are sustaining and helping them in. He's not just doing that for the Thessalonians where he is of course and Sylvanus and

Timothy are that's what they are after to see this work of conversion and sanctification that God does through His Word which they are to hold fast to.

Like we've been hearing in the previous passages but what happens when there are unbelievers in the church is, they're not interested in the same things as God, genuine conversion and growth in the knowledge of Christ, the hope of Christ, the fellowship and health of the Spirit holding fast to the Word.

They may say that they are but the things that they are The things that they want to do in the church are lesser things and if they are not on the same page in the mission, the church they certainly aren't on the same page of the method because they don't have spiritual life, They're dead, and their sin, and they're unbelieving and so whatever they do, especially when they try to serve or to lead in the church, the unconverted man gets in the way of the Word running.

So he says, finally brethren Pray for us that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified just as with you. And that we may be delivered from unreasonable. They never make sense and wicked men. They never do, right? They can't think right, they can't do right? Why?

Because they don't proceed from the origin. The starting point of faith in Jesus Christ for not all have faith. Well, that's what the opposition from with other men within the church is like, what about the opposition of the evil one?

But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one. And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, both that you do and will do the things that we command you. So it's the same thing. It's a battle for obedience, maybe the Thessalonians don't have the same level of presence of unbelievers in their church as Paul Silas.

And Timothy are facing in the church that they are in, but they still have their own remaining sin and the evil one, who wants to provoke that remaining sinfulness and fleshliness from our original nature. The devil is real and those who are like him one-third of the original angels, they are real.

They're strong and so is your remaining flushliness. So you're in a real battle and as anyone who's in a battle can tell you. If you're in battle and you don't know it, you are in trouble and there are many who profess to know Christ and they are not battling against sin.

And there's There are two possibilities One. They're self-deceived. So their professing a falsely or the other. They are in trouble because they are under attack and they are in a battle and they don't know it and they're not fighting. So there's a battle for obedience who wins the battle.

Well does the Lord who wins the battle? That's why on Paul's and he wants them to pray for him, but he tells them tripoli times. Sorry, I said Tripoli and it sounded like the

By setting in the Middle East, but the Lord is faithful. Okay? So not all have faith, but the Lord is faithful. Number one, and we have confidence in the Lord, and now may the Lord. Okay? So it's the Lord is doing it. But in whom is he doing it?

What's he talking? He's talking about the Thessalonians, obedience. The Lord is faithful. Who will establish you and guard. You, we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, both that you do and will do. Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God. So who does it the Lord or the Thessalonians?

Well, in one sense. The answer is, yes, we're commanded to do it and we must do it. But another sense the answer is just the Lord. Because even though we are commanded to do it both the willing and the working, have to come from him because we don't have the will to do it from within ourselves and we don't have the ability to do it from within ourselves.

So one of the most active forceful urgent commands in the Bible with with regard to sanctification is followed by exactly that same thing in Philippians. Chapter 2 when he says work out your own salvation with fear and trembling four, it is God who works in you both to will, and to work according to his good pleasure.

So, there is a battle and the Lord is the one who must win. It Now. Does he win it? Well, if we have been paying attention the last two weeks, we've heard the end of verse 13, through sanctification by the spirit and belief. In the truth. We heard in verse 15, stand fast, and hold the traditions, which you were taught, which ones whether by word or are epistle.

And now he says, and talking about what would happen where he is and saying that he wants what he wants it to happen there, just like it's happening happened. Already in Thessalonica. Pray for us that the Word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified just as with you.

So it is the word. That is the Lord's appointed means for winning this battle of bringing men to faith and of growing them and holiness That sounds a whole lot. Like the morning sermon from this past Lord's day. The Lord has decided as chosen to exalt his word and that doesn't surprise us because he also refers to his son as the Word and the word made flesh.

So One of the things that I have heard people say about people who think that God gives us the method and God gives us the message, we shouldn't stray from the Bible. And there's not wisdom in men. And whenever we become over clever, we mess it up so forth.

I've heard them. Say you idolize the Bible. You're a Bible. Idolater. Well, If that were a thing, then I would be in good company because the psalmist says in Psalm 138 verse 2, you have exalted your word above all your name, God displays many things about himself and many different ways, but he is exalted, the knowledge of him in the making himself, known his name above all the rest of the way he makes himself known.

He is exalted his word and not only the psalmist by the Spirit, but hear the apostle by the Spirit. Did you catch? What is being glorified? Maybe we should have said who, because often we have a. What question with a who answer? This is a who question with a?

What answer you catch who is being glorified in verse 1 Brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified. God, glorifies His Word. And so you can't esteem the word to idly. You can esteem your own ideas about the word to highly. You can esteem your own self-deceiving impressiveness with yourself and how how firmly you think you cling to the Word and how conscientious you think you are and how nobody else does.

You could do that too highly. You can this, you can idolize yourself and use the word as an excuse for it. Chicken artist steam, the Word of God to highly One of the purposes that for God, deciding to use his word, to bring us to faith and His word to grow us.

So that his word would be glorified. And I guess it is a whole question of who answer because he has given us His word in the words of Scripture. But he tells us that the Spirit takes what is Christ's and he gives it to the apostolic writers to the prophetic writers.

It is an expression of the word himself who John chapter 1 tells us is the second person of the Trinity. So there's a battle for obedience. If you're not battling, you're either unconverted or in trouble. Those are the only two options. Number two. The Lord is the one who wins the battle, even though you are fighting in

it, but you can have hope and confidence in him, and you must not depend on yourself.

And number three, The means by which he wins. The battle is His Word. So don't just be devoted to the practice of, you know, your devotional time and our family worship time and attending. Well, upon the means of grace of the Lord's day, be devoted to hoping in God, that he will use those things, interacting, with God, as you read his word, or as you hear his word read or taught that you would be asking him to work in you and to use the word that he would glorify, the word you are hearing by making it effective in you, because that is the reason he chose to do it.

Through the Word is to bring his word glory for the Lord. Jesus is the Word made flesh

Our Father, we thank you for giving us this portion of your word. We thank you that even this portion has reminded us that you use your word to give us faith and to grow us in holiness. And we pray. Lord, that your spirit would help us. We thank you Father Son and Holy Spirit that you as our Triune God, our Holy committed to doing this work in us.

We are unable to do any good thing to stand against wicked, men or the evil one, but Lord help us to remember that we're in the battle. So that as we fight the battle, we would look to you to win the battle. And especially whenever we attend upon your word, we asked that your spirit would be bringing to our minds to our hearts as we need it throughout each day.

The portion of your word that as most appropriate to that moment, Thank you, Lord, for hearing our prayer. And we know that you do because we ask it in the name of the word made flesh, even Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, Amen.