

1Thessalonians 12-02-24b

Let's pick up our study now in 1 Thessalonians chapter 2. You probably didn't think we'd be in chapter 2 this quick, but we are. Let's read this, for you yourselves know brethren that our coming to you was not in vain, but even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict. For our exhortation did not come from error or uncleanness, nor was it in deceit.

And of course, this is answering some of the accusations made by these ne'er-do-wells and synagogue types that are jealous and disinterested in the gospel of Christ and want to preserve the old traditions and keep the old ways and keep the old crowd coming to the synagogue. Well, it's interesting the emphasis that we have seen thus far in this letter, because over and over again Paul is reminding the Thessalonians, remember how it was when we came. Remember the reception that you gave to the gospel that we brought.

We thank God for you, mentioning you in our prayers, remembering your work of faith, your labor of love, and the steadfastness or patience of your hope. Right? There was a lot going on. It was very distracting.

There was a lot of static and conflict and resistance. We don't have much of that, typically, certainly not here in our community in Plano, Texas. There's not people out here picketing or shouting through bullhorn saying, you Christians, get out of the neighborhood.

You're cluttering up the area. We don't like your faith. We don't like your God.

We like things the way it was before you came, and we just don't have that. We don't hardly even know what that's like. But imagine if we did.

Imagine if, when you tried to come to Bible class, there were a bunch of people outside hollering and yelling, picketing, calling the cops. There's press and media out there. Oh, look at these rabble, look at these troublemakers, and we're not causing any trouble.

It's the people resisting us who are causing the trouble, and they're turning around and accusing us of causing trouble, right? Paul and Silas didn't cause trouble. The Thessalonian believers did not cause trouble. It was the Judaizers and the men from the synagogue who hired thugs and muggers and criminals to come and make trouble, and they create all of this stir and dissension and strife.

They get Jason locked up and put in jail for no good reason. What did Jason do? He opened his home to let some people stay there. He made them breakfast.

He gave them a place to sleep, and he got in all kinds of trouble, and these people are out there, and it's so frustrating. It's so embittering and so angering when people accuse you of something

that they themselves are manifestly responsible for and guilty of, and this is the essence. This is the heart of evil.

This is its ugly death mask face. This is its hateful, disintegrating nature. It takes what is good and tries to tear it down and rip it up and stomp it into the ground.

Here's the Lord Jesus. Look what happened to him when he came. Did he cause any trouble? Did he create any dissension? No, but they all kinds of riots and arrests and flogging and crucifixion.

Why? Because other people accused Jesus of what they themselves were doing. They caused the trouble. They created the strife.

They threw a monkey wrench into the works, and they accused the Lord Jesus of it. This goes back to Satan's fall in heaven. Everything was fine in heaven.

All of the angels working smooth machinery, whatever that prehistory was like. It was all going great. All of the angels are unfallen and perfect.

God in his heaven. His glory is shining. His work is going forward.

There is a whole history of the angelic civilization that we have no knowledge of at this time. We'll find out later, but Satan decides he doesn't like it. He gets jealous of the fact that the angels are coming to God, and he's the guardian angel of the throne room, and he's got to let them in, and he thinks he can do a better job.

Kind of reminds you of Absalom. Remember when men were coming in to see David and have their cases judged, and Absalom is standing at the gate saying, you know what? I can do a better job than my father. Why don't you just stop here and let me do it? He is jealous of his father's power.

Lucifer was jealous of God's godhood, if you can imagine, and so he caused trouble. He started fomenting rebellion. He started recruiting followers.

He got a third of the angels. It's his tale that sweeps the stars out of the sky. So just remember, this is the essence of evil, to accuse you of what it is doing.

It's from the very beginning. It is the lie. This is why we're encouraged to not let our good be spoken of as evil.

We have to let our light shine so that men will glorify God the Father. But this is what happened in Thessalonica. These people created trouble and then accused the Christians of being the cause of it.

Well, Paul says, in spite of that, we give thanks to God because of your work of faith, your labor

of love, and the steadfastness, the patience of your hope. And it's that hope that we talked about in the first session tonight. This is what we want to cultivate.

We want to nurture it. We want to treasure it. We want to help it along and have it grow because this is where our joy comes from.

Well, you can look at some of the other letters that Paul writes to see how sort of unique this is. Let me just give you some excerpts. When he's writing to the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians, he says, I give thanks to God always for you because of the grace of God which was given to you in Christ Jesus that in every way you were enriched in him with all speech and all knowledge, even as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you so that you're not lacking in any spiritual gift.

The work of the Holy Spirit among the Corinthians was especially evident. This was sort of the standout thing. This is why in 1 Corinthians, he's got to write to them about the proper function and exercise of these spiritual gifts because spiritual gifts were just popping like popcorn in Corinth.

And people were speaking in tongues and had to get healing and a prophecy and it started just all going haywire. Everybody started trying to prophesy at once. Everybody was just not having the discipline to use the gifts in a way that would be edifying and building up for the group.

They began to get enamored and infatuated with their own gift and Paul has to write a long letter. 1 Corinthians is a long book helping them get straightened out and he says, look, the control you need over these gifts is love. Get that whole love chapter.

1 Corinthians 13, you remember that? Love suffers long, love is patient, love is kind, love does not vaunt itself, does not puff itself up. Paul starts out saying I could have every kind of special gift there is and if I don't have love, it's empty, it's worthless, it's useless. You've got to bring these things under control in the sphere of love.

Love is a big issue for the Corinthians. You look at the Colossians. We always thank God.

This is Colossians chapter 1. We thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ when we pray for you in Colossae because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Sound familiar? We thank God because of your faith and your hope and your love. Of this you've heard before in the word of truth, the gospel which came to you, the whole world sees it and is bearing fruit and growing.

So among yourselves from the day you heard and understood the grace of God in truth as you learned from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant and so from the day we heard of it we have not ceased to pray for you asking that you may be filled with knowledge. When Paul is thanking God for the faith hope and love of the Colossians who got their gospel from Epaphras he says my

prayer when I think of you is knowledge. You need knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding to lead a life worthy of the Lord.

You notice that is not the tack he's taking here in Thessalonians. The reason we're surveying these other letters is why the letter to the Thessalonians? Well in Corinth here's a group that has got the power of the Holy Spirit but they've forgotten what it's there for. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are there so that you can love one another effectively and meaningfully and be a blessing to each other.

Remember Corinthians is where you find out about the Lord's Supper. And what is the Lord's Supper? You're sharing a meal. Don't elbow each other out of the way and grab for yourself.

It's metaphorical. It's emblematic. It pictures the whole problem.

They had a lot of the power of God, a lot of the resources of God. They had the bread, they had the meal, they had the people, but they had lost respect for the body. They weren't respecting and honoring the body of Christ, which is one another.

These things have to be subordinate in love. Well in Colossae they had their faith and they had their hope and they had their love. They're on the right track, but it's the emphasis is, when Paul prays, that you may lead a life that is worthy, that you'll have the wisdom and the knowledge to make the right decisions and engage in the right actions, establish the right priorities and goals, to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.

May you be strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy. They had an initial enthusiasm, but their momentum seems to have been slowing down a little bit. He says, you know, you need some patience, you need some knowledge, you need that understanding so that you can walk this worthy walk.

He doesn't worry about the Thessalonians having a worthy walk, does he? He says, you're receiving it with joy and in much affliction and you remember what it was like when we were all being persecuted and there's a lot of persecution going around. And so the emphasis in Thessalonica is not, you need more love, it's not, you need more wisdom. What is it? Well, we're about to see in chapter 2, he's going to get around to his point.

And you can find this by reviewing some of the other opening clauses such as the Philippians, where he also talks about, let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you stand firm in one spirit. They were starting to kind of fall apart. They weren't standing firm.

They weren't staying united and that was kind of the danger or the threat in Philippi. More about Philippi in this verse. Look at chapter 2, verse 1. For you yourselves know, brethren, that our

coming to you is not in vain, but even after we had suffered beforehand and were spitefully treated at Philippi as you know.

What happened in Philippi? Well, we find again by turning back to Acts, you remember the Thessalonian experience, we saw that in Acts chapter 17, and but if you go back to chapter 16, this is what happened in Philippi. I think I said 19 in the first session, but it was 17. There's something else in 19.

When Paul comes in chapter 16 of Acts to Derbe and Lystra, and there's Timothy, which gives his thing, and then in verse 6, when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. Now, it isn't always time to give the gospel. There are people who will try to tell you there's a lot of this going around in the modern church.

It's never wrong. Walk up to somebody in a restaurant, accost someone at the airport, corner them in the restroom, any place you find them. The more awkward it feels, the more right it is.

No, it's not. Listen to the guiding ministry of the Holy Spirit. That's why he indwells us.

That's why he fills us. That's why he is there to bring the word of God to our mind. Be ready always to give an answer, it says.

It doesn't say be ready always to tackle somebody and beat them over the head with a bible. Notice, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word. This seems kind of strange.

Here, I'm an apostle. I've got the word. Here's an opportunity to preach it.

The Holy Spirit says don't preach. How many times did Jesus heal someone and he said tell no man? What's the whole purpose of a healing miracle? It's to authenticate the message. Here's Jesus giving the message.

He says tell no man and a lot of them disobeyed and told every man and it created a lot of problems for the Lord Jesus. That wasn't what was needed. It isn't the time.

It isn't the place in Asia. By the way, when is Asia going to get the word? Have you ever read chapter two and three of Revelation? To the seven churches which are where? Who's the guy that's going to preach the word in Asia? Well, among others, it's going to be John. Paul will eventually get his chance, but John says the Lord Jesus Christ himself sends letters to the seven churches in Asia.

It's not the time. It's not the messenger at this moment. We have to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit and it's a real thing.

If you're supposed to speak and if you're doing what you're supposed to, you're prepared. You're

walking in the light. You'll know when to speak and you'll know when to hold your peace.

Jesus said don't worry about what you're going to say. It will be given to you in the hour. If you need to say something, it'll be given to you what to say.

So just pray, relax, be ready always to give an answer and let God pick the times and places. The Holy Spirit forbade it. After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them.

They keep bumping into the boundaries of the will of God. Not supposed to go to Asia. Not supposed to go to Bithynia.

By the way, do you remember a place where Bithynia is mentioned? Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to the pilgrims of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. Remember that? First Peter chapter one verse one. God's got a time.

God's got a messenger. God's got a message and it'll get there. This isn't the time for Asia.

It isn't the time for Bithynia for Paul. Spirit did not permit them. So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.

Remember, Paul was going to leave his cloak at Troas and ask for it later. A vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man in Macedonia stood and pleaded with him saying, come over to Macedonia and help us.

This would be the prompting of the Holy Spirit, would it not? Notice he doesn't have Agabus coming and wrapping towels around him saying, you know, beatings and arrest and travail await you in Macedonia and he's going to bullheadedly go there anyway, does he? There's a man saying, come here. Very clear leading of the Spirit. After he'd seen the vision, immediately we saw it to go to Macedonia.

This is we, by the way, who's writing Acts. You young ones in the back, who wrote Acts? You're not a young one in the back. You're an old one in the back.

Y'all remember who wrote the book of Acts? Who wrote the third gospel? Say it out loud. Third gospel. There you go.

He's the author of Acts. Good job. So now look at this.

Look at this. I'm making sure you're paying attention. After Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia.

Now if Paul sees the vision of the man of Macedonia saying, come over here, and then the book of Acts says we went to Macedonia, who does that mean went with him? Who went with Paul to Macedonia? Who wrote the third gospel? I can't hear you. Luke. Luke.

So who's going to Macedonia with Paul? Good. Pay attention. This is important, by the way, because he's going to stop saying we before this chapter is over.

Luke is going to fall out of the caravan. He's going to fall off the trip. He's not in the station wagon when Paul pulls out.

Therefore, sailing from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace. Next day came to Neapolis. From there to Philippi.

What does Paul say in chapter 2 of Thessalonians? We had trouble in Philippi. Well, this is the story of their visit to Philippi right before they went to Thessalonica. Now you say, that was a long time ago.

Some old grisly apostle went these places. If you want to be ready when the Lord Jesus comes back, if you want to have that anticipation, you've got to know these things. You might wind up standing in line next to the apostle Paul.

He's going to say, boy, I'll never forget that day in Philippi. Do you want to be able to say, oh, yeah, I remember that from Bible class? Or are you going to say, Philippi, where's that? So this is important. We came to Philippi, which is the foremost city of that part of Macedonia.

A man from Macedonia says, come over here. Paul says, we're going to Macedonia. Luke says, I'm coming with you.

Now, they're in Philippi. On the Sabbath day, we went out of the city to the riverside where prayer was customarily made. Apparently, there's not a synagogue.

Or at least they haven't found one yet. But somebody says, well, there's a lot of people who do some praying to this God you're talking about down by the riverside. You'll find some interested people down there.

They go where there are interested people. He didn't go to the marketplace. He didn't go to the steps of the temple of Diana or Athena or anybody else.

He went to where people interested in God were, right? Pay attention. Holy Spirit says, don't go to these other places. Go here.

There's going to be interested people. Find them. Talk to them.

So they go to the riverside. We sat down and spoke to the women who met there. Women were not greatly esteemed.

This wasn't the trendy thing to do. Go find the women and talk to them. This would be like going to a fancy restaurant that's owned by three or four Hollywood stars and spending your time

talking to the waiters.

There's Arnold Schwarzenegger and two or three other guys all up here that own the restaurant. And you're back there talking to the help. But that's what Paul did.

He went to this big town in Macedonia, Foremost City. It's got a lot of prominent citizens. He went down to the river and he's talking to some women who are down there praying.

A certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira who worshipped God. She's already a God worshipper just like the people in Thessalonica.

You already know about God. You're already interested in looking. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.

Now, is this lightning bolt from heaven? God just looked in the city of Philippi and said, here is a woman. BAM! And opened her heart to the word of God. Why is her heart open? Because she is seeking.

She is praying. She is interested. Instead, I was thinking, you know, this whole eclectosyn and the elect and so on.

It really ought to be select. God selects those people who are looking for him, who are interested, who are motivated. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.

When she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, if you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay. And this is kind of a sneaky way of making them come because what she's saying is, if you don't come to my house, I'm going to assume that you don't think I'm really a believer in God. If you think I'm a believer in God, then you need to come stay at my house.

Well, they can't refuse, or they're impugning her faith. So this is sort of a thing done with a smile, and they stay there. Now, it happened as we went to prayer.

A certain slave girl possessed with the spirit of divination, you may remember this story, pesters Paul for days on end. All this demon ever does is follow them around yelling, These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation. Over and over, day after day.

Well, Paul eventually gets annoyed with this because he's trying to preach and teach, and there's this demon-possessed girl screeching in the background, These men are from the Most High God. These men are going to save you. And Paul says, well, if you shut up, I can get on with it.

But he won't. So Paul finally gets fed up. And that's what the Greek says here.

But Paul, greatly fed up, turned and said to the spirit, I command... Notice, this spirit's been ranting for days. Paul says one sentence. I command you in the name of the Lord Jesus, get out of her.

And he came out that very instant, that very hour. But then her master saw that this spirit is gone. See, they let her rant.

She's been spending all of her time down there bugging Paul, and they were fine with that. But as soon as Paul makes her quit, and of course the demon is gone, well now they're all upset. So they see that their hope of profit is gone.

They seize Paul and Silas, drag them into the marketplace to the authorities, brought them to the magistrates. Here's that evil again. These men being Jews exceedingly trouble our city.

They teach customs which are not lawful for us being Romans to receive or to observe. This is the most bilious, hypocritical nonsense. It's a bunch of made-up, trumped-up... They didn't care what Paul was teaching.

The only reason they heard any of it is because they were down there laughing, watching this girl screech at them day after day. So the multitude rose up against them, and the magistrates tore off Paul and Silas's clothes, stripped off their shirts, so to speak, and commanded that they be beaten with rods, with switches. And when they had laid many stripes on them, this means the flesh is laid open and bleeding.

They've got massive cuts all over their backs that have been inflicted with these sharp branches. They've been just beaten, beaten, and beaten repeatedly. Their backs are open wounds and bleeding profusely.

They threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. Having received that charge, he put them in the inner prison. That's the dark part of the prison, no windows, bars within bars, and put them in the stocks.

When it says he put their feet in the stocks, these stocks actually have five holes. One hole for each leg, a hole for each arm, and a hole for your head. So you're extremely uncomfortable.

This Greek word for stock means a five-holed stock. So at midnight, notice they've been in there all afternoon, all evening, and at midnight, of course, you can't really sleep too well in this stock thing. So they are praying and singing hymns to God.

Evening and morning and at noon will I pray and cry aloud. The fact that you're in prison with your back laid open in a stock doesn't stop Paul and Silas from having their evening prayer meeting. So at midnight, they are praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners are listening to them.

The implication is the prisoners are enjoying this. Evidently, they were good singers. Maybe they had a little harmony, songs were interesting, had some doctrinal content to them, had some meaningful lyrics to them, so that when they sang, the prisoners were interested.

It wasn't, you know, kumbaya, my lord, kumbaya, endlessly, all night long. They sang songs, and the other prisoners were listening. So, suddenly, there's a great earthquake.

Foundations of the prisoners are shaken. All the doors are open. The chains are loosed.

The keeper of the prison wakes up, sees that all the prisoners have probably escaped. So he grabs a sword and says, I'm going to kill myself, because they will torture me to death for losing the prisoners. And Paul and the other prisoners call with a loud voice saying, do yourself no harm.

We're all still here. We didn't leave. He called for light, ran in, fell down trembling before Paul in silence, brought them out, said, sirs, what must I do to be saved? Now, why does he say this? Where did the jailer, where did the Philippian jailer get the information to ask this question? Well, he was asleep at midnight, but he wasn't asleep when they first got locked up.

They were singing and praising God and praying off and on all evening long. The Philippian jailer heard this, kind of shook his head, went to bed, wakes up, sees that they haven't left, connects the fact that they are still there with their faith, connects that with what he heard them saying and singing earlier. There is a testimony.

And he doesn't just ask this question out of the blue. He knows exactly what he's asking. What must I do to be saved? So they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, you and your household.

Notice, he didn't just say, oh, okay. Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. He didn't just say, wow, I'm sure glad you're saved.

How about some ointment for these cuts? Before they even got their wounds treated, he's still teaching. It's important that they have the word of the Lord. Then he took them that same hour of the night and washed their stripes.

Paul is still teaching while they're bathing his wounds. Immediately, he and his family were baptized and then they're probably in a fountain out in the courtyard or something. And then it says when they had come back in to his house, he set food before them and he rejoiced having believed in God with all his household.

He received the word with joy. What must I do to be saved? How can I be delivered from the wrath to come? Is this Jesus going to come back for me? Yes. Joy, the very same thing that happens in Thessalonica, very same thing that ought to happen in our souls.

When it was day, the magistrates, and you have this story where they want to kind of sneak him out quietly and Paul says, no, I want the magistrates to come and set us free because we are Romans and that scares them all and he kind of teaches them a lesson. So, they went out of the prison and entered the house of Lydia and when they had seen the brethren, they encouraged them and they departed. Luke doesn't leave Philippi.

And as I've told you before, it's my theory that Luke stuck around in Philippi. I think it's possible that maybe he and Lydia ended up getting married. Lydia, the seller of purple, doesn't say she's got a family or a husband or anything else.

She's got her own business. She's independent. Luke is traveling along with Paul city after city after city.

And it doesn't say much about Lydia other than the fact that she's there and she just seems to stick out in the story. And then when Paul and everybody else leave, Luke doesn't leave. Luke stays there.

Good-looking lady, seller of purple, believer in the Lord Jesus, hospitable, loves the Lord. Luke says, you know, this is a good place to settle down. Stop this traveling.

That's what I think. We'll find out. But that's the story of Philippi.

Notice the treatment at the hand of these people. Paul reminds the Thessalonians. He says, look, don't think that this rabble and this ruckus and this riot and this persecution and this conflict and this resistance is some unique black mark that happened just in your town.

You remember what happened in Philippi. What does Peter say? Do not think that the fiery trial you face is unique. It's common.

All God's people will suffer persecution. We shouldn't get worried or think there's something wrong with us if we hit a rough patch. It is commonplace.

Paul reminds the Thessalonians this, you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain. Even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold. We didn't let that discourage us.

What's he saying by implication? You see that ill treatment and beatings and all didn't slow us down. Why? Because God was with us and God delivered us and God manifested his power in that situation. When we got locked up and persecuted, God sent an earthquake.

God broke the chains and opened the doors and people were saved as a result. You in Thessalonica facing these difficulties and these Judaizers, God is with you. You are the church in God.

Remember that in chapter one? You are the church in God. God is with you. Don't let them make you timid.

Don't let them make you faint. Don't let them dampen your joy. God is with you.

You remember what happened to us in Philippi? Keep it in mind. We were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict. The joy and the power are when the word of God is spoken.

When they are praying in the word of God and in the spirit. When they are singing in the word of God and in the spirit. When they are preaching and teaching the word of God in power and in the spirit.

That's when God is present. That's when people rejoice to receive it. That's when God's plan moves forward.

If there is any lack of interest and enthusiasm and excitement in our lives when it comes to the things of God, we just need to stop and get back to the hope. Get back to the recognition and the expectation of the Lord Jesus returning. He is going to come back.

We will be with him. Are we ready? Can we get prepared? Can we be pleasing in his sight? We don't want to be ashamed at his coming, as Paul says in another letter, that you be not ashamed at his coming. How embarrassing it would be if we'd been off flugelreiten around somewhere and not doing what we're supposed to.

We want to be ready. We want to be useful. We want to be able to serve with skill and with effectiveness.

We want to bear fruit. We want to reflect his glory. We want to wear that white robe.

We want to enter fully in. When Jesus is picking a team to do something new in the days of the kingdom, we want him to pick us, because we're ready. We're knowledgeable.

We're enthusiastic. We're a genuine help. Well, the way to do that is to spend a little time every day reviewing, reminding ourselves.

What was that Bible class about last Friday? What was that memory verse? Let me run through that one more time. Lord Jesus might come back tomorrow. Lord Jesus might be back next week or next month.

I've got a little time to get ready. And how exciting it's going to be when we leave this life with its conflict and its evil and its disappointments and its disintegration and its downward trend and its politics and its economic strife and all of the stuff that people are just swamped in. And be with the Lord Jesus where righteousness is at home.

What a great thing. If that doesn't light your fire, you need to dry your wood out. So how do we do that? It's all tied up in hope.

Got to be looking ahead. How real is the return of the Lord Jesus? The more real it is, the more excited you're going to get. And the more interesting the things in the Word of God are because they all reveal Jesus Christ.

They enable us to time travel. They enable us to see what's going to happen before it happens. Everybody loves that.

Now physicists would love to be able to see what's going to happen before it happens. We don't need physics. We've got the Word of God.

It's a more sure word of prophecy than anything they can put on a scale or drip into a test tube. So this is what Paul is reminding the Thessalonian believers of. He says don't let the conflict throw you.

You saw what happened to us at Philippi. You heard about that. You heard what happened in your town.

Hey, we are still going. We've been to Berea. We've been to Athens.

We've been to Corinth. We're continuing our trip and everywhere that we go people are talking about you and the kind of reception you gave us. Also the kind of reception the other people gave us.

And how your faith and your hope and your love are shining forth. Great job. Well done good and faithful servant.

That's what we hope to hear from the Lord Jesus ourselves. Well, we'll pick up here in chapter 2 verse 3 next week. Father, thank you for the truth of your word.

Thank you for the life that you have given us in the Lord Jesus. the tremendous resources, the capacity for life, for love and for happiness and the anticipation of the soon return of the Lord Jesus to take us to himself to bring us forward into those future ages and future kingdoms where there is so much to do and so much to see and so much to appreciate about you and about the Lord Jesus himself. We pray that our study this night will enliven and refresh each soul that we will be motivated and encouraged to live the life that the Lord Jesus has made possible for us through his work on the cross.

We pray it in his name. Amen.