

2Thessalonians 12-08-10a

It is August the 10th 2012. We're in the book of 2nd Thessalonians. We pick up in chapter 1 beginning at verse 5 and we were off to kind of a roaring start and then we sort of slammed into a pole here at verse 5 and I can tell you now we're not going to make verse progress because there's something extremely important in this verse that we'll need to cover so we'll we will be in this verse chapter 1 verse 5 2nd Thessalonians For the first session tonight, and it will become apparent why? As soon as we begin, but let's open with a word of prayer Father, thank you for the many ways you have expressed your grace and faithfulness toward us.

We rest in provision and in blessing because of the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you for him. We thank you for everything that we possess through him we thank you for our standing and our opportunities and our potential and we pray that as we study the truth of your word together that God the Holy Spirit will minister it to our hearts in a way that will be effective that we will be ready pupils that we will see the pertinence and the applicability of these things to our daily lives the goal being to reflect your glory in the glory of the Lord Jesus.

We ask these things in his name. Amen 2nd Thessalonians Paul After his introduction and greeting says we are bound to thank God always for you verse 3 brethren as it is fitting because your faith grows exceedingly and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure This is the verse we explored in some detail and at some length last week and what a wonderful encapsulation To help us see what's going on in our lives when we hit some challenge when there's a rough patch when circumstances are not taking us down the river in the middle carrying us along. We don't have to row and we don't have to use a boat motor and we don't have to raise the sail We're just life is carrying us downstream and we're making great progress then all of a sudden we hit white water We hit rapids.

We start hitting rocks and waterfalls and we start having to figure out what to do Well, this tells us We need patience and faith in our persecutions and tribulations. We know the difference between Faith and patience, right? What's the difference? Faith has as its object the Word of God the truth of God things that we have learned things We know as truths promises principles doctrines characteristics of God The plan of God the purposes of God the character of God all of these things are targets for trust We treat them as realities God will not suffer the righteous to be moved All things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to his purpose The Lord will keep us in perfect. Peace when our mind is stayed on him He will it will be given to us if we need to come up with something to say in a time of trial or a time of witness and we have inner resources and that's Faith and by exercising that faith, whatever the test is, whatever the circumstance when we meet it with faith when we approach it from the perspective and the standpoint of Being believers in the Lord Jesus Christ being children of God Finding the way to use what God has given us to reflect his glory in that situation we Lay hold of we take possession

of God's righteousness It is written in books in heaven as it were it is stored up like treasure in heaven.

It is Tracked with an accounting process in heaven. We may think it comes and goes and stuff that happened a few years ago For us to get older even a few weeks ago. We tend to forget God is not unrighteous to forget It tells us your work of faith your labor of love and the patience of your hope God does not forget These things accrue they prepare us.

They are a part of our future We build into the invisible unseen future kingdom of God in the present with these small consistent moments of faith Doing the will of God under pressure So we know what faith is. What is the patience the testing of your faith produces patience? What is patience? This is really our endurance, isn't it? We can keep it up You've got the Olympics going on this week and you can see that in many sports not only do you need strength and not only do you need skill and Not only do you need endurance But you have to have the experience and the training to know when to use which attribute and patience gets into this area a 400 meter runner Has a lot of strength has endurance has the skill to run But you've got to know when to conserve your strength and when to pour on the gas when to start your kick If you burn your energy too early you fade in the home stretch or fade before the home stretch Nothing more embarrassing than being sent off from home as an Olympic athlete and you're on Worldwide television and the gun cracks and you start off and oh you're going great guns And then pretty soon you're the last guy Seven seconds after everybody else you finally cross, you know, you're not even in the camera angle Well, what happened to Sam I thought he was an Olympic it, you know or You're you're doing your sport and you fail you disqualify you step on the line. You you cross the board on the broad jump you and Is this the the highlight reel the videotape or the whatever it is a video file? You're gonna show your kids and grandkids later on.

Oh, yes. I was in the 2012 Olympics here. I am scratching here.

I am disqualifying here. I am falling on my face You don't want to fail you don't want to To not understand the way to use your skills your strength the resources that you have And and many times even though you've got strength You've got to hold it in check, even though you've got a burst of power. You've got you've got to wait for it You've got to be skilled.

You've got to be smart. You have to run a smart race It's not always the time to to power up But my point is patience we're talking about faith and Patience faith is great. The strength the power in patience is in the object, right? It's in faith rather the the object of faith is the Word of God promises principles doctrines the character of God the grace of God The plan and purpose of God the Lord Jesus Christ as the full expression of God, right? We aim our faith at that the merit of faith the power of faith the enduring Eternality of faith is in the object.

We connect with something well beyond ourselves through faith. What about patience? Patience is running the smart race Sticking with it finding consistency beautiful high diving Performance by

this Chinese gal every dive no splash Flawless perfection consistency every time she she had done Oh 25 or 30 points beyond the net the silver medalist in the total of her dives because she's patient She's consistent. She is Diligent to do things exactly right every time.

That's what patience is we need faith and we need patience in the midst of trouble tribulation and Persecution people testing, right? So we saw that last time and the reason I'm reviewing that is these terms are coming up again before we leave verse 5 which says The patience and faith and all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure You bear up under you persevere in you don't give up. You're not crushed. You don't throw in the towel You don't pick up your marbles and go home You stick with it you endure and this is manifest evidence it is a proof it is a demonstration of God's judgment being right.

It says righteous judgment but What it really means is God is right to Doki Madzo to account to reckon you worthy of the kingdom You may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God for which you also suffer now Hands up everybody that loves to suffer Suffering where is it sign me up. I want to be number one on the line. You got some suffering.

That's me I am mr. Suffering my favorite thing Nobody enjoys suffering. So here's my question and this is the reason we've got to slow down a little in verse 5 Worthy of the kingdom of God on account of which for which with a view toward which you suffer Why are we suffering? for the kingdom of God Okay, we're suffering for the kingdom of God. We're operating in faith and patience and all that and We're going to be worthy as we suffer for the kingdom of God, okay, so The reason for the suffering is the kingdom, right? This makes sense.

Do you see that in verse 5 the reason for suffering is The kingdom we are suffering on account of with a view toward the kingdom What kingdom kingdom of God What is the kingdom of God if this is why we're having to persevere and Endure and be patient and be faithful in the midst of tribulation and persecution It would be helpful to know what it is, right? What's the goal? Why this suffering? the suffering seems to be Described as persecution and tribulation requires patience and endurance and and faith, right? so Of all of the terms I've mentioned which one do we probably understand the least? Kingdom of God and that's what it's all for. So my question is what is the kingdom of God? take a moment in your notes and write down what the kingdom of God is and Then tell me and we we can save the next 15 or 20 minutes of class What is the kingdom of God? It's why we're suffering. It's why we need patience and faith It's why we have to endure.

So what is it exactly? I would guess If you were gonna write something down if we all we're gonna write something down. What would we say? Well kingdom of God, that's that's what comes after human history after this life it's when we're raised and we're in a glorified body and we're with the Lord Jesus, right and Then what what else? We start getting kind of weak on our knowledge of the kingdom of God. Don't we what else do we know? Yeah, well, let's see.

I think there might be two kingdoms. I think the Jews and the Israelites the Old Testament people they've kind of got an earthly kingdom and I think we're kind of We are suffering for this kingdom would be helpful to know what it is So I have tried to put together a few observations of What the Word of God tells us about the kingdom? one of the first things is There is more information than what might appear in other words if you go to your Strong's concordance and say well Let me just look up every passage that mentions kingdom This isn't necessarily going to get us where we need to be because there are some synonyms. There are some expressions including References to the kingdom of God that all talk about the same thing, but they don't all necessarily use the word kingdom There is a concept that is sometimes described as the kingdom of God Other times there's different language use so we want to get all of these so that we can get the maximum Illumination on what it is that we are suffering for Because the next question is well if I have to suffer for this thing do I want it? people get cosmetic surgery and The doctor says well, let me tell you, you know, there's going to be some it's going to be some pain for this You know where we can we can do liposuction and get rid of this Problem around your waist, but I just need to tell you there's going to be some discomfort.

There's gonna be some bruising There's gonna be a recovery period We can fix this problem that you've got We can sew this thing up. We can repair it. We can remove it.

We can replace it. But here's the Required amount of suffering and we we decide Well, do I want open-heart surgery? Do I want him to crack open my chest with a big? Rib spreader and go in there and start stripping veins out of my legs and sewing them into my Upper chest area and is it worth it? Well, if you want to live most of the time people will say yes, but you want to know what what am I suffering for? all right, and I'm going to I'm going to just state some things and Give the scripture rather than going to the scripture and extracting the things which is our more usual practice But in the interest of time, I'm going to state them and then we'll go to the passages. So first of all Here is some of the language associated with the kingdom of God Inheritance Inheritance is something that takes place something that Exists in the kingdom of God You can quickly deduce this by asking yourself this question.

Can I think of any place in scripture where it talks about? the people of God the Saints the faithful Inheriting and they're not in the kingdom. Is there any such thing as inheritance? That's not in God's kingdom well Of a positive nature. Maybe I should say there's inherit the wind there's inherit the smoke that rises from the lake of fire but in terms of a of an inheritance that you would want that inheritance is associated with God's kingdom always Look at the example of the Israelites in the Old Testament Where did the twelve tribes find their inheritance their? Possession this is a second term associated with the kingdom possession to possess the kingdom to possess inheritance these Concepts are all linked.

They are part and parcel of one another future inheritance future possession Future entrance into and participation in God's kingdom. These are closely related closely connected concepts. So

when we go to passages that talk about inheritance that talk about entrance into the kingdom that talk about Possession in the future after death and resurrection all of these pertain secondly First point if you want to try to make some sort of sense out of it is sort of vocabulary What is the vocabulary for the kingdom of God? Well, it includes these concepts secondly There are two types or two levels the kingdom of inheritance of Possession there are certain things that everybody has think about sons in an Israelite Context Old Testament Israelite context all sons qualify for some inheritance basically sort of a standard division of a certain portion of their father's estate if you will remember the the parable of the prodigal son there were two sons and One son goes to the father and says give me my portion.

I Want to go do something with it now Well, it's not the whole thing The father's not out there on the curb with a can of pencils and his brother's not sitting there destitute There's he gets a portion the the young the young son gets it gets a portion The other son has a portion the father still has possessions so just by virtue of being a son there is a certain kind of inheritance the Analogy in the spiritual realm is all of us by virtue of being sons of God As many as received him to them gave he power authority to become sons of God There is a basic inheritance package Everyone is going to be resurrected. Everyone is going to receive a resurrection body Everyone is going to enter into eternal life. Everyone is going to Enter into the eternal future everyone who is saved is going to see the kingdom of God Right and there will be some Modicum some basic level of possession Okay, there's there's sort of a minimum go forward into the future package.

That's one inheritance There is a second type of inheritance The first one is is unconditional if you're saved you receive it Salvation guarantees it it's kind of like positional truth It's it's just standard It's like if you buy a certain model of car the most basic model comes with four tires seats steering wheel a hood Tail lights right then there are options and if you if you can Afford them if you can can choose them if you if you were qualified to get them you can have a whole lot more than the basic and this is a Conditional inheritance and The Bible tells us what the conditions for this Enhanced and Much greater and grander inheritance what those conditions are it tells us for example If you go to Titus chapter 3 just a few pages over from Thessalonians here first 2nd Timothy then Titus chapter 3 verse 7 Paul is talking here to Titus and he says in verse 5 not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy He saved us not by works of righteousness, which we have done. We are talking about the basic Rescue from a lost hopeless Condition in darkness transfer into the kingdom of light. We're talking about eternal salvation here, right? Not by works of righteousness, which we have done but according to his mercy he delivered us he saved us and We have the washing of regeneration and the the renewal of the Holy Spirit.

That's basic salvation, right? And that Holy Spirit he poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, right? In order that having been justified by his grace We should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. That's your basic Vanilla, everybody gets it Inheritance make sense you can see in the context. He's not talking about Anything other than by grace you have

been saved through faith and this is what it entails.

This is the result You've been cleansed. You've been regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit's poured out on you This is the the indwelling and the sealing and the filling and the gifting ministry at salvation It's that's the basic package similarly if you turn to back in the other directions to Galatians Chapter 3 verse 29 There is neither Jew nor Greek.

There's neither slave nor free There's neither male or female for you are all one in Christ Jesus And if you are Christ's if you belong to Christ, this would be the definition of salvation, right? You're saved you belong to Christ Conditioned on nothing saved you're his possession. If you are Christ, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise There is a basic heir Package now, let's think about Abraham. How many sons did Abraham have? Careful now, how many sons did Abraham have? 19 right? Who's the firstborn son of Abraham Ishmael? Who's the second born son? Who where's the other 17 come from remember Keturah? Never after Sarah died That's where a lot of your Arab nations come from 17 sons with Keturah Sons and grandsons you can sort it out later It's over in Genesis, but lots of sons all of them get an inheritance, but Abraham sends them places They all get an inheritance, but who gets the inheritance? Isaac He is the firstborn Gets the firstborn package all inherit all get something but Isaac gets that Firstborn blessing that even though Ishmael is the firstborn he misses Esau and Jacob Two sons does Esau get an inheritance? Yes, is it anything like the inheritance that Jacob gets? No But he gets an inheritance He's not destituted.

He just it's not nearly so grand He just gets the basic son inheritance instead of the firstborn, even though he is the firstborn Ephraim and Manasseh You have many examples the twelve sons of Jacob does Reuben get the firstborn package? No, does he get the priesthood? No, does he get the double portion? No Who gets the double portion? That was originally Scheduled for Reuben who gets the double portion? Joseph who gets the rulership? Who Judah who gets the priesthood? Levi Gets gets scattered down through so even though there is a Common inheritance. Is there any son of Jacob they got no inheritance at all? Reuben went up and defiled his father's bed Simeon and Levi, you know Hocked the animals and murdered the defilers of Dinah and so on they still all get some inheritance But special parts go to those who have earned it. Why does Judah get the rulership? Portion, why is it ratchet down to son number four? Offered himself in place of Benjamin remember His nobility his father decides based on what the sons did Who should get what? They're all sons and they all inherit but the father gets to decide After they have demonstrated what kind of men they are who's going to get what? different kind of inheritance so We're still in 2nd Thessalonians chapter 1 verse 5 the kingdom of God For which you also suffer with a view toward this kingdom you suffer Why? It is bound up in inheritance it is bound up in possession It is bound up not in the basic inheritance package, which is unconditional and we already have but in that inheritance, which the father will determine based on what kind of sons and daughters we turn out to be It is apportionment of spoils.

It is share in Bounty and it is conditioned on certain things this is What we suffer for if you don't if

you're content with the basic package you're content to be in the rear with the gear Way back way beyond out of sight of the throne Unable to even see God for all of the heads that are in the way All you have to do is opt out But if we have a view toward God's kingdom if we love God if we are the called according to his purpose if we Have his words and keep them because we love him There is an above and beyond inheritance package it is fulfilled and delivered and Remains as a possession in the kingdom of God so when suffering comes when difficulty comes when persecution comes What's on the line? We tend to think oh this hurts. I want this to end Well, it's very short-sighted. Isn't it? That's kind of like Esau.

Ooh, my tummy hurts. I'm hungry I want this to end got any food Oh Trade away my inheritance trade away my double portion blessing trade away my firstborn status. No problem.

I've got pain I want it to end. I'll take the first solution that comes along We can't make this mistake Look at the trouble God has gone to in setting up the universe setting up the planet setting up the human race Putting us in the church age Christ on the cross redemption reconciliation propitiation canon of scripture presence of the Spirit of God the all of the things that God has done to bring us to the point where he can turn us loose and Face us with challenge with the objective of the kingdom What will we choose in terms of an unseen promise? faith substance of things hoped for Evidence of things not seen if you are going to succeed in a time of suffering For the kingdom of God you need faith and you need patience makes perfect sense, doesn't it? This is exactly why we're here. All of this has been set up Millennia 14.5 billion years of history in the universe has been set up to bring you and me to this point It's a whole reason God has done everything that he's done and he's asking us To be faithful to be patient to lay hold of that for which we were laid hold of Christ died for us in order that he could deliver us out of this present evil age Give us opportunities and potentials and gifts and a kingdom and an inheritance in a possession that it that transcends this earthly life We're never going to get it if we can't remember that that's why we're here if we don't see that we suffer for the kingdom of God well, we've just now kind of gotten our our Ducks lined up here.

We have figured out What the kingdom of God phrase here is talking about and we know that it is this Optional and conditional inheritance that is in view. Well now that we've got that figured out. What can we do? What do we need to know to lay hold of it? Well, we've got a whole page of Truths from Scripture here that we're going to see on that very topic When we come back from the break and this is what Paul has in his mind when he writes this letter Why is he talking about the coming of the Lord in his first letter to the Thessalonica? Why does he very soon start talking about the return of the Lord again in this second letter to Thessalonica? because It is at the return of the Lord that all of this will come to pass That's the end of the game.

That's the finish line of the race Whatever we're going to do we do before that time because right now determines what the kingdom of God is going to look like to you and to me what our level of possession and Inheritance and opportunity and service is going to be in that kingdom what's the

point of talking about the the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout if Where it's going to be a point of failure We fell off our little BMX bicycle and tripped everybody else and and there is no gold there is no silver There is no bronze. There's only we're you an Olympic athlete. I don't want to talk about it Heaven forbid the Lord Jesus comes back and we are ashamed at his coming How many places have we seen it be not ashamed that is coming Not everybody is going to be happy.

Not everybody is going to say oh Praise God the Lord Jesus is back. There are going to be people running the other way It's going to be like the Israelites at Mount Sinai stop the thunder and lightning. I don't get this Instead of being Moses Viewing the glory of the Lord coming down with a face that glows in the dark truth and Love and the character of God transmitted from glory to glory.

That's where we want to be There's plenty of the other kind of believer. God doesn't need any more People at the back of the pack any more people that fell down and didn't even finish We are not of those who fall back on to perdition We want to inherit we want to Lay hold of that kingdom. That's why we suffer.

Well, we'll see the details when we come back