



PRECEPT
UPON
PRECEPT®

English Standard Version

2 Thessalonians

SO YOU WON'T BE DECEIVED
ABOUT HIS COMING

PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT®

English Standard Version

2 THESSALONIANS

SO YOU WON'T BE DECEIVED ABOUT HIS COMING

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HELPFUL STUDY TOOLS

ARTHUR, KAY; ARTHUR, DAVID; DE LACY, PETE

How to Study Your Bible

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1994/2010

The New Inductive Study Bible—English Standard Version

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2013

Greek Word Study Tools

Commentaries on 2 Thessalonians

RECOMMENDED COMMENTARIES

GUTHRIE, DONALD

The Pastoral Epistles. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries

Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990

MORRIS, LEON

Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: 1 and 2 Thessalonians

Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990

THOMAS, ROBERT L.; EARLE, RALPH; HIEBERT, E. EDMOND

The Expositor's Bible Commentary: 1, 2 Thessalonians, 1, 2 Timothy, Titus

Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996.

WALVOORD, JOHN F., ZUCK, ROY B., AND DALLAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures

Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1983-c1985

RECOMMENDED SOFTWARE

Logos Bible Software

Powerful search engines and up to 4,000 electronic Bible study resources (commentaries, lexicons, Bible dictionaries etc.) make it fast and easy to do simple and complex searches of multiple sources, then pull materials together for orderly presentation—excellent for word and topical studies based on English or original Hebrew and Greek. Available at www.logos.com.



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PRECEPT
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2 Thessalonians
Lesson 1, Overview

LESSON ONE

Overview

THIS LESSON INCORPORATES Observation Worksheets on 2 Thessalonians, located in the Appendix
Cross-references

Time is short. How wise you are, Beloved, to choose to study God's Word now.

DAY ONE

Every book of the Bible is a revelation from God given at a specific time to a particular person for a divine purpose. Whether or not the author knew he was being supernaturally inspired by God Almighty to record God's mind, heart, wisdom, and instruction in what would be called the Holy Bible, we really do not know. However, we do know we have a compilation of sixty-six different books, all inspired by the Spirit of God and without error, written over a period of 1600 years by approximately forty men. This knowledge is enough. However, to plumb the depths of God's Book is the task of a lifetime.

This study will help you to move forward in your God-appointed task so that when your Lord appears, you will be found a workman approved unto God. If you are a child of God, you have the Holy Spirit, your resident teacher. He will lead you and guide you into all truth, so make prayer an integral part of your study.

1. If you have never studied a Precept Upon Precept course before, read the chapters entitled "The Rule of Context—Context Rules!" and "Getting the Big Picture" in *How to Study Your Bible*.

The purpose of this first lesson is to discover the context of the book of 2 Thessalonians. This lesson lays the foundation for all the other lessons. Since context rules in interpretation and Scripture must be interpreted in light of its context, the first step in our study is to begin with the **Overview**, the view of the entire book, to discover the context. Understanding the context will help in the interpretation of unclear, obscure, difficult to understand parts of a book.

We'll begin the process for discovering the context by looking at the people.



2. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:14, 17, then write out what type of literature this is and who the author of this book is.

3. Since 2 Thessalonians is a letter, the place to begin your study is with the author because he is the first person mentioned in this book. Therefore, the first thing you want to do is identify what the book tells you about the author. Then as you evaluate these facts, the context of 2 Thessalonians will begin to unfold.

To do this, read 2 Thessalonians and mark with a specific color or colored symbol each mention of the author's name along with the pronouns, such as "I," "my," "we," and "us," that refer specifically to him.

Use the Observation Worksheets, located in the Appendix, for every assignment. These Observation Worksheets are the text of 2 Thessalonians from the New American Standard Bible printed double-spaced and are just what they say: work-sheets. We encourage you to do your work on them, and at a later date you might want to transfer some of your study notes to your Bible.¹

4. Before you begin this assignment, read all of the directions.
 - a. Using your marked Observation Worksheets, read all three chapters of 2 Thessalonians again. As you read, look carefully at every place you marked the author and see if it answers one of the following **5 Ws and an H** (who, what, when, where, why, how) kinds of questions that uniquely describe the author.
 - b. If one of the questions is answered, then using the same color you used to mark the references to the author, write the answer in the appropriate chapter column on the "People in 2 Thessalonians" chart, located at the end of the lesson. Or if you don't have a pen in that color, simply highlight what you wrote in the same color you used on your Observation Worksheet.

¹ *The New Inductive Study Bible* is ideal for this. It is the best study Bible on the market because it doesn't tell you what the text means. Rather, it gives you instructions for studying each book of the Bible in addition to many other valuable study aids.



Who is the author?

What does he say about himself?

What are his circumstances?

What is his relationship to the recipients? **How** does he feel about them?

When in his life is he writing?

The following is an example of how to list the answers on the chart:

PEOPLE IN 2 THESSALONIANS

Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3
1:1 Paul 1:3 gives thanks to God for them 1:4 Boasts about them		

As shown in the illustration, be brief in your answers. Use words from the text and record the verse that your answer came from. By the way, if you will train yourself to use words right out of the Bible, you will find that you are putting into your mind and heart the very Word(s) of God which are spirit, life, and truth, that which sets you apart, sanctifies you.

As you go through 2 Thessalonians, you will notice that some questions will be answered in more than one place in the text and some verses may answer more than one of the questions. On the other hand, some of the references you marked in the first assignment may not answer the questions. If they don't answer any of the **5 Ws and an H** questions, don't record them on the chart.



5. Evaluate the answers you listed on your “People in 2 Thessalonians” chart. On the “2 Thessalonians at a Glance” chart, located on page 17, note what these facts tell you about the times in which this book was written. These facts give you the **historical setting** of 2 Thessalonians. The historical setting is a description of the times in which the letter was written.

As you continue to observe 2 Thessalonians, you will complete this At a Glance chart. By the end of this week you will have this chart all filled out and with it you’ll have not only a visual tool that helps you see the book of 2 Thessalonians at a glance, but you’ll have a good grasp of the context of 2 Thessalonians. You will be amazed and thrilled by what you are going to see on your own.

6. Again evaluate the facts you listed on your “People in 2 Thessalonians” chart and see if you can answer the following questions. (It may be too early in your study for you to see the answers to some of these questions.)
 - a. Why do you think Paul wrote this letter?
 - b. Do you see any words (including their synonyms) which are repeated in each individual chapter? A synonym is a word that has the same meaning as another word within a particular context.
 - c. What seems to be Paul’s central message to the Thessalonians?



7. In your observations of Paul today, what have you learned about Paul that you could personally model in your own walk with the Lord?

DAY TWO

Today as we continue to look at 2 Thessalonians as a whole, our study will continue to focus on the people mentioned in the book. As we said before but it bears repeating, when looking for the obvious, people are easy to see.


1. Read all three chapters of 2 Thessalonians and mark on your Observation Worksheets every mention of the recipients. Use a different color from what you used to mark the author. Also be sure to mark all the pronouns for the recipients, such as *you*, *your*, *who*, and any synonyms, like *brothers* and *beloved*.
2. Read 2 Thessalonians again.
 - a. Now write in the appropriate column on the “People in 2 Thessalonians” chart the answers to the following **5 Ws and an H** kinds of questions that **uniquely** describe the recipients:
 - Who** are the recipients?
 - How** are they described?
 - What** are their circumstances?
 - What** event happened that caused Paul to be concerned about them?
 - What** is their relationship to Paul? Have they ever seen him, been with him, or heard from him before this letter?
 - b. Follow the same guidelines you used when you did this process for the author. Use the same color you used to mark the recipients on your Observation Worksheets and use words directly from the text.

Look for just the **obvious** facts that uniquely describe the recipients.



The following is an example of how to record the facts on the chart:

PEOPLE IN 2 THESSALONIANS

Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3
<p>1:1 Paul 1:3 gives thanks to God for them 1:4 Boasts about them</p>  <p>1:1 Church of the Thessalonians 1:3 Brothers 1:3 Faith is growing, love is increasing 1:4 Have steadfastness and faith in enduring persecutions and afflictions</p>		

3. Evaluate your chart and answer the following questions:

- a. Did you see anything about the Thessalonians that would help you discern the historical setting of 2 Thessalonians? If so, add this to your “2 Thessalonians at a Glance” chart under the heading “Historical Setting.”

When you marked the text and listed the answers to the **5 Ws and an H** kinds of questions about the author and the recipients, you discovered certain facts about the historical setting of 2 Thessalonians. Do you realize what has just happened? So many times people think that the **only** way to understand the historical setting of a book is to read commentaries about the Bible, but they aren’t aware that careful observation of the text can reveal this to you. What a blessing this is for people in other countries and language groups who do not have commentaries in their language or easy access to them if they do exist.

- b. What words or topics does the author emphasize in each chapter?



4. Can you see from the text **when** Paul wrote this letter to the Thessalonians? Before or after what? Read 2 Thessalonians 2:5, 15 for clues.

5. Can you tell from the text what happened that might have prompted Paul to write this letter? If so, note your answer below.

6. In light of this event, why do you think Paul ended this letter the way he did (2 Thessalonians 3:17)? (You might want to check 1 Corinthians 16:21; Galatians 6:11; Colossians 4:18.)

7. Why do you think Paul wrote this letter? Or to put it another way, what was the author’s purpose for writing 2 Thessalonians? Record this information under “Purpose” on the “2 Thessalonians at a Glance” chart.

DAY
THREE

1. As you do this assignment, read all the instructions before you begin.

In 2 Thessalonians Paul communicated with the Thessalonians in three primary ways. Paul exhorted the Thessalonians, he addressed their problems, and he gave them instructions. Therefore, today read your Observation Worksheets on 2 Thessalonians and do the following:



- a. Using a different color or a colored symbol, mark the **exhortations** (encouragements) that Paul gives the Thessalonians. Then using the same color-code, list these exhortations on the “Exhortations, Problems, Instructions” chart, located on page 16. Think about the context of this letter and ask yourself why each exhortation is given, what is its purpose.
- b. Using another color or colored symbol, mark the **instructions** (commands) Paul gives the Thessalonians. Then using the same color, list these instructions on the “Exhortations, Problems, Instructions” chart. Again think about the context as you list each instruction and think about why that particular instruction is given.
- c. Also mark, using still another color or colored symbol, any **problems** the author addresses. Using that same color, list these on the “Exhortations, Problems, Instructions” chart. Think about how Paul’s exhortations and instructions relate to these problems.

The following is an example of how to list these things on the chart.

Since this book is not printed in color, we have distinguished between the categories as follows:

Exhortations = regular type, no box

Problems = boxed in type

Instructions = underlined type

EXHORTATIONS, PROBLEMS, INSTRUCTIONS

Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3
1:3 Thanks God for their faith and love 1:4 Speaks proudly of their steadfastness and faith in the persecutions and afflictions they endure	2:2 Ask regarding coming of Lord not be shaken or alarmed	<u>3:1 Pray for us</u>

- 2. Now, take time to review and evaluate what you have listed on the “Exhortations, Problems, Instructions” chart. Look for any key words (important descriptive words) and their synonyms which are repeated several times in the book. Mark these key words and their synonyms in distinctive ways or colors on this chart. They will help you discover the topics the author addresses.



3. Evaluate the chart again and list below the topics that are addressed in 2 Thessalonians. Be sure to record the chapter and verse location of each topic.

4. Review your “Exhortations, Problems, Instructions” chart, then identify the following and record your insights on your “2 Thessalonians at a Glance” chart:
 - a. Paul’s purpose for writing 2 Thessalonians
 - b. The summary statement of Paul’s main message to the Thessalonians regarding the topics (subjects) covered in this book. Record this in the space provided for the book theme. Be sure to notice how many times Paul refers to things that he had taught them before.

**DAY
FOUR**

Second Thessalonians is divided into three chapters. These chapter divisions are not divinely inspired; rather, they are man-made divisions, as are the verse divisions. While the chapters, and sometimes the verses, are not always divided in the best way, still they serve to help us identify where specific truths are located by chapter and verse.

Therefore, we are going to honor these chapter divisions as we identify the theme for each chapter that best summarizes the chapter and supports the theme of the book.

1. Read only chapter 1 looking for the theme (main topic) of that chapter.
 - a. As you consider the theme, refer back to your “Exhortations, Problems, Instructions” chart. Evaluate those facts listed in the column for chapter 1.



- b. Which topic is emphasized in chapter 1? How could you summarize what Paul is saying to them in this chapter and also relate to the theme and purpose of 2 Thessalonians?
 - c. When you have determined the theme, write it in the column for chapter 1 on your “2 Thessalonians at a Glance” chart.
2. Following the same process, read chapter 2 and chapter 3, one at a time, and identify the theme (main topic) of each chapter. Then write each in the appropriate column on your “2 Thessalonians at a Glance” chart.

Fill in any other information necessary to complete your “2 Thessalonians at a Glance” chart.

Did any particular thing you read in 2 Thessalonians speak to your heart in a special way this week? Record it below. Make sure you note why or how it spoke to you.

Have you ever been shaken or alarmed when you have heard varied teachings about events that are still to come? Or do these not alarm you because you know and understand the Word of God? Such knowledge puts a firmness in your stance when you hold fast to truth, doesn't it? Second Thessalonians is a book that is going to cement you in truth and keep you from being shaken or alarmed. How the church of Jesus Christ needs to take heed to the message it contains!



**DAY
FIVE**

Because 2 Thessalonians is second—not first—it’s obvious this isn’t the first time Paul has written to these people. To help you gain a better insight into the recipients and possibly confirm what you saw as the theme and the purpose of 2 Thessalonians, compare the following cross-references and see what you can glean about the Thessalonians, their relationship to Paul, their circumstances, and the mutual topics covered in 1 and 2 Thessalonians. Record your insights next to each reference.

The Thessalonians

2 Thessalonians 1:3

1 Thessalonians 1:3

1 Thessalonians 1:8

Paul’s Relationship to the Thessalonians

2 Thessalonians 1:10

1 Thessalonians 2:13



Suffering

2 Thessalonians 1:7

1 Thessalonians 2:2

1 Thessalonians 3:4

The Day of the Lord

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11



A Life That's Not Idle, Work

2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

1 Thessalonians 2:9

1 Thessalonians 4:10b-12

1 Thessalonians 5:12-14

Well, Beloved, you are on your way, and we rejoice over you. We have only five more weeks to go, and what a great and enlightening five weeks it will be. Just remember that whenever you seek to study the Word of God, the enemy is there with all his subtle devices to keep you from putting on your armor and sharpening your one and only offensive weapon, the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. So determine in your heart that you are going to finish this study and do it as to the Lord. You won't be sorry.



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2 Thessalonians
Lesson 1, Overview



PEOPLE IN 2 THESSALONIANS

Chapter 1	
Chapter 2	
Chapter 3	



2 Thessalonians

Lesson 1, Exhortations, Problems, Instructions

EXHORTATIONS, PROBLEMS, INSTRUCTIONS

Chapter 3	
Chapter 2	
Chapter 1	



2 THESSALONIANS AT A GLANCE

Book Theme:

Chapter Themes

Author:

1

Key Words:

2

Purpose:

3

**Historical
Setting:**



2 THESSALONIANS 1

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

PAUL, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

- 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3 We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing.
- 4 Therefore we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions that you are enduring.
- 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 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.



2 THESSALONIANS 2

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

- NOW concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers,
- 2 not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.
 - 3 Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,
 - 4 who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.
 - 5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?
 - 6 And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time.
 - 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way.
 - 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.
 - 9 The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders,
 - 10 and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.



- 11 Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false,
- 12 in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.
- 13** But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.
- 14 To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 15 So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.
- 16** Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace,
- 17 comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.



2 THESSALONIANS 3

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

- FINALLY, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you,
- 2 and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men. For not all have faith.
 - 3 But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one.
 - 4 And we have confidence in the Lord about you, that you are doing and will do the things that we command.
 - 5 May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.
 - 6 Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us.
 - 7 For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you,
 - 8 nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you.
 - 9 It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate.
 - 10 For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat.
 - 11 For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies.



- 12 Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.
- 13 As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good.
- 14 If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed.
- 15 Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.
- 16 Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all.
- 17 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the sign of genuineness in every letter of mine; it is the way I write.
- 18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.