



## Suffering Saints

*By Jeff Bedwell on March 25, 2021*

### **TODAY'S READING:** 2 Thessalonians 1

Paul wrote this second letter to the Thessalonian believers to clear up some misunderstandings regarding the coming day of the Lord and to encourage them, even in their challenging circumstances.

These believers were undergoing a time of persecution and affliction because of their walk with the Lord. Paul was seeking to encourage them to stand firm in their suffering. He commended their faith and their increasing love for one another. Their lives were an example, a testimony, to other believers who were being impacted because of their example (vv. 3-4).

We all make choices during times of trial and suffering, whether that suffering is connected to our living out of our faith or whether it is suffering that comes from living in a world that has been broken by sin. We do not always get to choose our suffering, but we get to choose the way we walk through it. We can choose to keep looking to God, trusting Him even when we do not fully understand. Or we can choose to see our suffering as "proof" that God does not care, is not there or cannot do anything. We can choose to give and receive love, or we can choose to cut ourselves off from others in our pain. Our choices will impact our lives and the lives of others around us.

Paul reminded these suffering saints that this present moment and present suffering were not the last words. Jesus Christ, who was giving them the grace to endure, would return one day and when He did justice would be guaranteed (vv. 5-10).

Paul ended this chapter reminding them of his prayers for them (vv. 11-12). Prayer, our own and others praying on our behalf, is a powerful strengthener in our dealing with suffering. J.I. Packer wrote insightfully about praying during suffering. He wrote, "If you ask, 'Why is this happening?' no light may come, but if you ask, 'How am I to glorify God now?' there will always be an answer." In the midst of suffering, let us look to, trust in and seek to glorify God!

**PRAYER:** "Father, I do not always understand the suffering that comes into my life or the lives of others. Help me to make choices and pray prayers that glorify You, strengthen me and

bless others."

**TOMORROW'S READING: 2 Thessalonians 2**

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