



No Rest For The Wicked



Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 192–196.



Rest

(vv. 7a, 10)

2 Thessalonians 1:7 (NKJV)

and to give you who are troubled **rest** with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,

2 Thessalonians 1:10 (NKJV)

when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

2 Thessalonians 1:1–12 (NKJV)

1 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 are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other,

4 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,

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5 which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer;
6 since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you,
7 and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,
8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

11 Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power,

12 that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- God will **recompense** tribulation to the lost, but **rest** to the saved.
- 2 Thessalonians 1:7 should be treated as a parenthesis: *“to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you (**and to you who are troubled, rest with us**) when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed.”*
- The saints receive their rest when the Lord returns in the air and catches us up to be with Him.

- The word **rest** means **“relief, release, not under pressure.”** It is the opposite of **“tribulation.”**
- The word describes the releasing of a bowstring.
- In this life, God’s people are pressured, “*pressed out of measure*”, and under the burdens of trial and persecution.

2 Corinthians 1:8 (NKJV)

For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, **of our trouble** which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life.

- When we see Christ, we will be released.
- We need not fear fiery wrath and judgment, **for God has already judged our sins at Calvary.**

1 Thessalonians 1:10 (NKJV)

and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

1 Thessalonians 5:9 (NKJV)

For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

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What Kind Of Future Is There For The Lost?

- They face punishment and eternal judgment (*2 Thes. 1:9*), while the saved shall enjoy the rest and glories of heaven.
- The lost shall be separated from God, while the saved “*shall see His face*”.

What Kind Of Future Is There For The Lost?

Revelation 22:4–5 (NKJV)

4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.

5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.

What Kind Of Future Is There For The Lost?

- Some cultists have tried to dilute the meaning of “*everlasting destruction*,” saying it means either temporary suffering or total annihilation; but both ideas are false.
- The phrase means “*eternal judgment*,” no matter how men try to twist it or avoid it.

Matthew 25:41 (NKJV)

“Then He will also say to those on the left hand,
‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting
fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

- Paul encouraged his friends with praise and promise; and he had a third encouragement.

The Encouragement of Prayer

(2 Thes. 1:11–12)

2 Thessalonians 1:11–12 (NKJV)

11 Therefore we also **pray always for you** that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power,

12 that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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- Paul prayed for his converts (*1 Thes. 1:2; 3:10*).
- His “*wherefore*” in 2 Thessalonians 1:11 means, “*And because of all I have just said*”—the return of Christ to be glorified in the saints, and to judge the lost.
- The future prospect of glory motivated the apostle to pray for the saints.

- We must never neglect a present responsibility because of a future hope.
- On the contrary, the future hope must encourage us to be faithful today.
- There were three concerns in Paul's prayer.

Their Worthiness

(v. 11a)

- In 2 Thessalonians 1:5, Paul had stated that he wanted them to be worthy of the kingdom when they entered glory in the future. But here he emphasized their present situation.
- God's calling was in grace and love, and Paul desired that they might live up to that calling.

**Trials Do Not Make A
Person; They Reveal
What A Person Is
Made Of. When Our
Faith Is Tried, We Are
Revealing Our Worth.**

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1 Peter 1:6–9 (NKJV)

6 In **this** you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,

7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

9 receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

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Their Worthiness

(v. 11a)

- God certainly knows our hearts even before we are tried, but *we do not know our own hearts*, and others do not know what we are worth.
- We need to pray that God will build our worth and make us more valuable Christians because of the trials we have endured.

Their Walk

(v. 11b)

2 Thessalonians 1:11 (NIV)

That by His power He may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act promoted by your faith.

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Their Walk

(v. 11b)

- Character must lead to conduct. Paul prayed that they might have a resolute will, empowered by God, to do what He wanted them to do.
- Obedience and service do not spring from human talent and efforts, but from God's power as we trust Him.

Their Walk

(v. 11b)

- Paul had linked faith with *love* (2 Thes. 1:3) and *endurance* (2 Thes. 1:4), and here he linked it with *power*.
- If we believe God, we will receive His power in our lives.
- We cannot be victorious in tribulations if we only trust ourselves; but we can be victorious through trusting Him.

Their Witness

(v. 12)

- Jesus Christ will be glorified in His saints when they return with Him (*2 Thes. 1:10*); but He should also be glorified in our lives today.

Their Walk

(v. 12)

- Unbelievers blaspheme His name (*1 Peter 4:12ff*), but believers bless His name and seek to glorify it.
- The amazing thing is that the believer who glorifies Christ is likewise glorified *in Christ*, “glorified in you, and you in Him” (*2 Thessalonians 1:12b NIV*).

- How can this be done? “According to the grace of our God and Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thes. 1:12).
- Grace and glory go together, as do suffering and glory.

Psalm 45:2–3 (NKJV)

2 You are fairer than the sons of men; Grace is poured upon Your lips; Therefore God has blessed You forever.

3 Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, With Your glory and Your majesty.

Psalm 84:11 (NKJV)

For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold From those who walk uprightly.

Romans 5:2 (NKJV)

through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

2 Corinthians 8:19 (NKJV)

and not only that, but who was also chosen by the churches to travel with us with this gift, which is administered by us to the glory of the Lord Himself and to show your ready mind,

1 Peter 5:10 (NKJV)

But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.

- As we receive His grace, we reveal His glory.

- “ ‘*There is no peace,*’ saith the Lord, ‘*unto the wicked*’ ” (Isa. 48:22).
- No rest for the wicked! But there is rest for those who trust Christ and seek to live for His glory. For the Christian, the best is yet to come.
- We know that “*the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*” (Rom. 8:18).