

**OBTAINING AND KEEPING THE GLORY OF CHRIST**  
**(2 Thessalonians 2:13-17)**

**I. God's choosing.**

- A. Paul felt morally obligated to pray for them.
  - 1. This is the meaning of the word bound.
  - 2. Paul felt an emotional attachment to these brethren because of his teaching them the gospel.
  - 3. Not only that, he did not have time to stay with them and ground them in the truth because of the persecution.
  - 4. He knew that he could not be there in person but that he could offer up prayers to God on their behalf.
  - 5. Not being there left prayer and writing to them as the greatest weapons he could use for them.
- B. He lets them know that they are beloved of God.
  - 1. Notice the definition of beloved: "to love, indicates a direction of the will and finding one's joy in something."
  - 2. Paul was letting them know that God was directing His will toward them and that God found joy in them.
  - 3. The wonderful thing about being a Christian is that God's will and thought is directed toward us and that the God of the universe finds great joy in us being His children.
  - 4. In times of difficulty, this love of God, knowing we are in His thoughts and that He has joy in us, should help us make it to the other side of these times.
- C. Paul then uses some phraseology that has been twisted and perverted for centuries.
  - 1. Paul lets them know that they had been chosen since the beginning of time for salvation.
  - 2. Let me plainly say that the Bible plainly teaches the doctrine of election.
  - 3. The doctrine of election that it teaches is a general doctrine of election for a specific group of people - namely Christians.
  - 4. The New Testament does not teach a specific doctrine of certain individuals being elected to salvation and certain others not being elected to salvation.
  - 5. How do we know this you may ask.
  - 6. We know that God does not elect certain individuals to salvation and certain individuals to destruction because that would make God a respecter of persons, which He most definitely is not (Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11).
- D. The group that has been chosen since the beginning is seen in this verse.

1. It is the group that has been sanctified by the Holy Spirit through that group's belief in the truth of the gospel.
  2. There are two parts to election - God's (sanctification by the Spirit) and man's (belief in the truth).
  3. Any person that is sanctified has become such through their faith in and obedience to the truth of God's word.
  4. The word and the Spirit are both involved in the sanctification process (John 17:17; Titus 3:5).
  5. This would be the case because the word is the Spirit's sword (Ephesians 6:17)
- E. Belief here is a synecdoche, or a part put for the whole.
1. All that is involved in obedience to the truth is meant by the word belief.
  2. True belief encompasses obedience to that which is believed, thus it usually the word that is used as the part for the whole.

## II. **God's calling.**

- A. The wonderful thing about the choosing of God is that all are called to be chosen through the gospel.
1. God wants all men to be saved as Paul would later tell Timothy (1 Timothy 2:4).
  2. God showed this through having Jesus issue the Great Commission to go into all the world and preach the word.
- B. This calling goes out when the gospel is preached.
1. It is not some mysterious better-felt-than-told experience.
  2. It is not some still, small voice in the night.
  3. It is not some miracle.
  4. It is the simple preaching of the New Testament gospel that calls men to Christ.
- C. When men answer that call allowing themselves to be sanctified by their belief in the truth, they obtain the glory of Christ.
- D. We become adopted sons of God and joint heirs with Christ (Ephesians 1:5; Romans 8:17).

## III. **Christian's standing.**

- A. Once the glory of Christ has been obtained it must be kept.
- B. It is obtained through becoming a Christian and it is kept by remaining a Christian.
- C. We remain a Christian by standing fast in the gospel.
1. There are so many things pulling us away from the gospel.
  2. There is the world and its attractions.
  3. There are false doctrines and simple apathy.
- D. We stand fast in the gospel when we hold to the traditions which the apostles have taught us through their inspired writings.

1. Tradition is not a bad word as long as it is not man-made traditions that are being followed.
2. When something is taught from God's word and there is truly is scripture to back it up then it is not bad or wrong.
3. There is nothing wrong with being a traditionalist as long as those traditions are biblical.

**IV. The Godhead's giving.**

- A. The Godhead loves their people greatly.
- B. They show this love through the grace they have given us.
  1. Unmerited favor is the definition of grace.
  2. It is something that is given out of love for the one receiving the gift.
- C. Without this giving of grace there is no way we could obtain or keep the glory of Christ.
- D. The simple fact is God wants us to obtain and keep it.
- E. The grace allows us to be consoled by God and have a good or true hope.
  1. We receive consolation, which means encouragement to virtue, through God's word and His providence.
  2. We have a true, not false, hope of heaven that keeps us going and maintaining that glory we have obtained.
- F. Without this giving of grace man would be hopeless and unconsolable.

**V. Paul's wishing.**

- A. I say wishing because this passage is written in Greek in what is described as the optative mood.
  1. This is defined as a "mood of strong contingency; the mood of possibility. It contains no definite anticipation of realization, but merely presents the action as conceivable."
  2. According to Barnhart, this mood is the ordinary form of the verb used in the expression of a wish.
- B. Paul's strong wish is that, based on the consolation and good hope given by God, that these brethren be comforted and strengthened in every good deed they did.
- C. As noted in the definition of the optative mood, it is based on the act being conceivable.
  1. The only way this act is conceivable is by the Thessalonians being faithful.
  2. Christ will always comfort and strengthen His brethren.
  3. We must always be faithful in our words and actions and Christ will do His part.
- D. Paul's strong wish for them then is that they be faithful in order to receive the comfort and strength they need.