

## 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12; “Paul’s Encouragement” July 9, 2023

### I. Welcome & Background

A. Good morning! Ohaiyogozaimasu! Welcome to Calvary Chapel Iwakuni.

1. It’s great to be here with you all as we gather together to praise and worship our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2. *Welcome any new faces and those streaming online.*

B. Before we continue any further, let’s go ahead and dismiss our elementary aged children to their Sunday School classrooms.

1. As well as the bible English class (Second Service)

C. Last week we finished off our study of Paul’s first letter to the church in Thessalonica and so today we will continue our march through the NT by starting our study through Paul’s second letter to the church in Thessalonica.

1. 2 Thessalonians is a very small epistle. It only has three chapters to it and a total of 47 verses. But within this small book there are truths and promises that were of great importance to the church in Thessalonica, and as we’ll see, are of great importance to us as well.

D. Now, normally whenever we come to a new book in our study through the NT, we take some time to lay out all the background information regarding the book.

1. We’ll do the same today, but we’ll do so rather quickly seeing as how we just covered the background surrounding the book of 1 Thessalonians and not much has changed regarding the book of 2 Thessalonians.

2. The who of the book is the same.

a. The author who wrote the letter is the apostle Paul. The opening verse of the book clearly identifies him and the second to last verse of the book also identifies Paul as the author.

- b. The audience whom Paul wrote to is the same as well. Paul is writing to the church in Thessalonica. From our study of 1 Thessalonians we discovered that the church in Thessalonica was a young church, a church that was started after Paul visited with them for just a few weeks.
  - i. Paul only had a few weeks with them because after three weeks of preaching in the local synagogues, a group of Jews who were not persuaded by Paul's preaching stirred up the city and caused an uproar in the city.
  - ii. The church decided it was best for Paul to flee under the cover of night and they sent him on his way to the next city along his missionary travels.
  - iii. But the persecution and opposition against the church did not stop simply because Paul left. It continued on and on, as both Jews and Gentiles came against them and their new found faith in Jesus Christ.
  - iv. So the church was very young and they experienced a great amount of persecution, and yet despite these things, the church in Thessalonica was a model church to all the other churches throughout the regions of Macedonia and Achaia.
  - v. In Paul's first letter he mentioned time and time again the faith, love and hope that prevailed within the church despite all the things that were going against them.
- 3. The when and where are believed to be the same as well.
  - a. It is believed that Paul wrote this letter within a few months up to a year from when he sent his first letter.

- b. It is also believed that he wrote the letter from the same place where he wrote his first letter, from the city of Corinth.
- c. Most of this is based upon the fact that Paul, Silas, and Timothy are mentioned at the very beginning of both letters.
- d. The only time the scriptures indicate that Paul, Silas, and Timothy were all together in one place after their time in Thessalonica was when they were together in Corinth for about 18 months during Paul's second missionary journey.
- e. Paul's travels during his second missionary journey after visiting Thessalonica had him going to the city of Berea. The same people who caused trouble for Paul in Thessalonica heard about him doing ministry in Berea and came and caused the same sort of problems against him there. And so Paul was sent out alone via the sea to the city of Athens.
- f. Silas and Timothy eventually rejoined with Paul in Athens and that is when Paul decided to send Timothy back to the church in Thessalonica to check in on them and to make sure they were doing ok and continuing in their new faith.
- g. From Athens Paul made his way to Corinth and then eventually was reunited with both Silas and Timothy. When Timothy arrived, he shared the good news of how the church was doing great despite all the things stacked up against.
- h. Timothy also shared with Paul about how some of the believers were concerned about some loved ones that had passed and what would become of them in light of the coming of the Lord. Would they miss out on the glorious future and blessings associated with the return of Christ? Did they miss out simply because they died before Christ returned?

- i. And it was after hearing the update from Timothy and hearing about some of the questions the church had about the coming of the Lord and how it impacted those who had passed that Paul decided to sit down and write his first letter to the church in Thessalonica.
  - j. It is believed that Timothy was sent back to Thessalonica to deliver Paul's first letter and then subsequently returned to Paul again who was still in Corinth.
  - k. After some time, word about some other difficulties the church was experiencing came to the ear of Paul while still in Corinth and so he sat down and wrote this second letter to the church in Thessalonica to address those issues.
4. This brings us to the what, and the why, and the how of the book of 2 Thessalonians. Why did Paul write this letter? What was his main purpose in doing so? How is the book structured or outlined?
- a. Paul wrote this letter to encourage the church in Thessalonica, to explain a few things more thoroughly, and to exhort the church in some areas that needed to be addressed. It is a letter that deals with encouragement, explanation, and exhortation.
  - b. The church needed encouragement because they continued to face great opposition and persecution. So, Paul wanted to encourage them and does so in the opening chapter.
  - c. The church needed further explanation on matters pertaining to "the Day of the Lord" that he mentioned in his first letter.
    - i. It would seem based upon the content of this letter that there were some who had come under the impression that because of all the persecution they were facing that they were in fact living in

and experiencing “the Day of the Lord”. That they “day of the Lord” had come, and they were experiencing the wrath of God that is associated with “the Day of the Lord”.

- ii. There were some who were teaching this within the church and spreading these false teachings regarding “the Day of the Lord. There is even a hint within this letter that suggests there could have been a false letter penned and submitted to the church as if from Paul, stating that they were living in and experiencing “the Day of the Lord”.
  - iii. Paul wrote this letter to assure those in Thessalonica that “the Day of the Lord” had not come and that what they were experiencing was not the wrath of God and great tribulation that is associated with “the Day of the Lord.”
  - iv. He further explained certain things that must come to pass prior to “the Day of the Lord” as evidence and proof that they were not living in this season of God’s wrath. This is all found in chapter 2.
- d. The church needed exhortation regarding matters pertaining to those who were being disorderly in the church.
- i. One of the main issues was that there was a group of believers in the church that had quit working and let go of all their responsibilities believing that “the Day of the Lord” was at hand.
  - ii. That Christ’s return was going to happen at any moment. And so, they simply stopped working and were living off the benevolence and support of others within the church.
  - iii. Paul exhorted those people to get back to work and stop taking advantage of the kindness and generosity of the church. While the return of

Christ for His church could come at any time, they still had a responsibility to do their part to support themselves and work if they were physically capable.

iv. The fact that Christ could return at any time was no excuse to quit work and simply wait around for Him to come. They needed to continue faithfully working and being busy about all that God had called them to while they actively waited for the Lord.

v. These are things that are covered in the third and final chapter.

5. And so there you have the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the book of 2 Thessalonians.

E. And with that, we'll turn to our text for us this morning.

1. We're going to look to cover the entirety of chapter 1, and so if you haven't done so already, go ahead and open up your Bible to the book of 2 Thessalonians.

2. And once you are there I'd like to invite you all to rise to your feet in honor of God and His Holy Word.

3. Our study this morning is going to be entitled "**Paul's Encouragement**" and our text is going to be all of chapter 1, from verse 1 all the way down to verse 12.

4. I'm going to read our text from my Bible, do your best to follow along in your own. Paul writes the following at the opening of his second letter to the church in Thessalonica... (*R & P*)

II. 2 Thessalonians 1:1-2; Intro & Outline;

A. Here in our first two verses, we have the very familiar greeting that Paul liked to use in many of his letters to the churches.

1. He started off introducing himself and his travel companions who helped form the church in

Thessalonica; Silvanus (also known as Silas) and Timothy.

- a. Silas had joined Paul at the onset of his second missionary journey. Prior to him joining Paul, he was a prominent member of the church in Jerusalem and was actually sent by the church in Jerusalem to deliver the decision of the Jerusalem council to those in Antioch.
  - b. Timothy joined Silas and Paul soon after the beginning of the second missionary journey. One of the first places Paul visited on his second missionary journey was Timothy's hometown of Lystra. This was a city Paul had visited on his first missionary journey and it was during that time that Timothy came to faith in Christ. When Paul came back through, he asked Timothy to join with him and Silas.
2. After introducing himself and his companions, Paul addressed the church using nearly the exact same wording as he did in his first letter.
- a. The only difference between his address in 1 Thessalonians and the one here in 2 Thessalonians is the word "our" instead of the word "the" when referring to God the Father.
  - b. In 1 Thessalonians Paul wrote, "To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:" (**1 Thes. 1:1b**)
  - c. Here in 2 Thessalonians, its "To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:" (**2 Thes. 1:1**)
  - d. A reminder from the very get go of our relationship with the Lord, how through faith in Jesus Christ we have become part of God's family and have been adopted as children of God. He is God our Father.

3. Paul then went to his traditional refrain that he used in nearly all of his letters, stating, “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”
  - a. Paul used this exact greeting in 10 of the 13 letters that are attributed to him. The three books that don’t have this same exact greeting are 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy and Titus. In those particular letters Paul adds the virtue of mercy, along with grace and peace. Otherwise all of Paul’s letters share this same greeting.
  - b. Paul always started off by speaking about the grace of God and the peace of God that we have from our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.
  - c. Paul wrote these two words side by side often, but always in this order. Nowhere in the Bible will you see mentioned peace before grace.
    - i. And I believe Paul does so purposefully. Because you cannot really know the peace of God until you have experienced the grace of God.
    - ii. It’s all about God’s grace. Without it, we would have nothing. We would still be hopelessly lost in our sins and without any hope of redemption or a right standing before the Lord.
    - iii. It’s only because of God’s grace that we can enter into a loving and intimate relationship with the Lord and have peace with God and know the peace of God.

B. In the rest of Paul’s opening chapter, he takes some time to encourage the church. And he does so in three different ways.

1. If you are a note taker or outliner, I’ve taken the liberty of breaking up our portion into three sections, each dealing with a different way in which Paul encouraged the church in Thessalonica.
  - a. In verses 3-4 Paul encouragement involved praise.



- b. In verses 5-10 his encouragement involved promises.
- c. And in verses 11-12, his encouragement involved prayer.

2. Praise, promises, and prayer. Let's dive into the first bit of encouragement Paul shared in verses 3-4 **involving praise**.

### III. 2 Thessalonians 1:3-4; Paul's Encouragement Involved Praise

A. Paul starts off his encouragement by reminding the church in Thessalonica how they always thank God for them.

- 1. in his first letter to the church in Thessalonica he exhorted them to give thanks in everything for it was God's will to do so. (**1 Thes. 5:18**)
- 2. And here Paul is practicing what he was preaching. He writes how he and his companions are bound to thank God. The wording here suggests that it was something they felt was owed to them, something that they were indebted to do.
- 3. Whenever they thought of the church in Thessalonica their thoughts went instantly to praise and thanksgiving for all that God had done and was continuing to do in and through them. Their praise was fitting, or your translation may read that it was right, or rightly so.

B. And here in these verses we see four things that stand out as to why Paul gave thanks to God always for them and why this praise was fitting.

- 1. Number 1, we see that Paul thanked God for the church's **growing faith**.
  - a. The phrase "grows exceedingly" is one word in the Greek and it speaks of something that increases beyond measure, something that grows more and more and more. Something that flourishes.

- b. It is a compound word in the Greek. The root word “auxano” [owx-an-o] means to grow, or to increase, or to spread. It’s used 22 times in the NT in connection with the growth of plants, babies, and even spiritual growth.
  - c. But the word here is “huperauzano” [hoop-er-owx-an-o], the prefix “huper” stands as an intensifier. This isn’t just growth, or increase, this was exceeding growth, this was a growth beyond measure.
  - d. This is the one and only time this word is ever used in the NT and it was used to describe the faith of the believers in Thessalonica.
  - e. Our faith in the Lord is not meant to be a static thing. It isn’t something we should treat as though we have it or we don’t have it.
  - f. It is something that is either increasing or decreasing. As believers in the Lord, our faith should continue to grow day by day. We should never stop growing.
  - g. We should desire to continue to grow our faith day by day, drawing closer and closer to the Lord with each passing day.
  - h. None of us have arrived, none of us are a completed work, if that were so, God would have called us home to be with Him. God still desires to do a work in you and through you, He still desires to see you grow more and more into the image of His Son Jesus Christ.
  - i. And so, let’s look to the Lord and allow Him to continue to mold and shape and grow our faith in Him.
2. Number 2, we see that Paul praised the Lord not only for their growing faith, but also for their **abounding love**.

- a. This was actually an answer to Paul's prayer from his first letter. Paul prayed, "And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you." (**1 Thes. 3:12**)
  - b. And here we see that Paul's prayer had been answered. They were abounding in love toward one another.
  - c. The love of God ought to be the defining characteristic of all who call upon the name of Jesus Christ and follow Him.
  - d. Jesus said, "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (**Jn. 13:35**)
3. Number 3, Paul praised the church for their **enduring patience**.
- a. The persecutions and tribulations they had encountered when the church was first started continued on and on.
  - b. The wording here suggests that the church was under constant pressure, they were being harassed, pressed, and crushed from these outside influences.
  - c. And yet despite this constant attack, they did not give up. They persevered. These tribulations were working in them, producing in them perseverance as described in Romans 5:3. (**Rom. 5:3**)
  - d. Patience and perseverance only come through trials and tribulations. There is no other way.
    - i. That is why James writes, "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. (**James 1:2-4**)

- e. Instead of running and hiding from the persecution, or giving up on their faith in Christ, the Thessalonians stood strong in their faith. And their patience grew.
  - f. Often times when we face difficulties, trials, or tribulations, we go to the Lord and pray for Him to get us out of those situations, to remove us from those challenges. But in doing so, we are asking God not to work in us, not to grow us, not to mature us and perfect us.
    - i. That work of maturing and perfecting comes through the trials and tribulations and difficulties. God uses them for our own good, for our own development and growth.
  - g. Paul praised God for their enduring patience that came as a result of the many trials, tribulations, and persecutions that they faced.
    - i. Can we do the same? Can we praise God for the difficulties? The trials? The tribulations? Trusting and knowing in faith that God is using them to grow us, to mature us, to mold and shape us more and more into the image of His Son Jesus Christ? I pray we can. I pray we will patiently endure and allow God to have His way in us.
4. The fourth and final thing I wanted to note is a little more subtle, but it is there. Paul praised God for the church's **powerful testimony**.
- a. Paul and his companions boasted of the church in Thessalonica among the other churches of God.
  - b. Our suffering and trials and tribulations not only are used to help ourselves grow, but they can also be used to help others grow as well. Suffering through trials and tribulations and difficult seasons enables us to comfort others who are going through similar times.

- c. Paul states the following in 2 Corinthians, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ about in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ.” (2 Co. 1:3-5)
- d. And so, the powerful testimony of the church was being spread throughout all the other churches as they heard of how they continued in faith despite the persecution, despite the difficulties; they persevered, they grew in their faith, they abounded in their love and their testimony was used to strengthen and encourage others.
- e. God doesn’t waste our trials and sufferings. He uses them for our glory and He uses them to encourage and comfort others. He takes us through the fire to purify us, to strengthen us, to mold and shape us, and He wants to use our testimony to strengthen and mold and shape others as well.
- f. What is your testimony? What has God brought you through, that He may use to encourage, strengthen, and edify others in the body of Christ? We all have a testimony of how God has worked in our lives, let’s share it with those around us that we may encourage them and perhaps comfort them concerning the work God is doing in and through them.

C. Well, after spending some time praising God for the Thessalonians, Paul’s encouragement took on a different form. Read with me verses 5-10 as we look at Paul’s encouragement and how it **involved promises**.

#### IV. 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10; Paul’s Encouragement Involved Promises

- A. In this section Paul addressed the persecutions and tribulations that they Thessalonians were facing and spoke of different promises they could count on.
- B. I would like to note four promises that are alluded to in this section. These were promises that the Thessalonians could be encouraged by as they faced these difficult seasons.
1. Number 1, we see that there is a **promise of reward** for the Thessalonians.
    - a. Verse 5 speaks of how the persecutions and tribulations the Thessalonians endured were evidence of the righteous judgment of God and how they were used to prove the Thessalonians worthiness of the kingdom of God.
    - b. God was just in allowing these tribulations and persecutions because they were used to produce perseverance, character, and hope in the Thessalonians. They became evidence of their worthiness of the kingdom of God.
    - c. Now, we need to understand something very important here. Suffering and enduring trials and tribulations are not ways we become worthy of God's kingdom. Suffering for the Lord does not earn us the right to be part of God's kingdom and assure us our place in heaven.
    - d. Our worth is not in ourselves, but in Christ. We are worthy because we have placed our hope and faith in Christ. He is worthy. And because He is worthy, and we have placed our faith in Him, we have been counted worthy of the kingdom of God.
      - i. The idea of being counted worthy is not that we are "seen as worthy", but rather "reckoned as worthy", as in a judicial decree. God has declared us worthy of the kingdom based upon our faith in

Christ. But He uses trials and tribulations to prove or show evidence of our worth.

- e. Our place in God's kingdom is assured because of Christ and what He did for us, the pain and the suffering He endured on our behalf.
  - f. What this is saying is not that our suffering makes us worthy, but rather that our suffering is proof, or evidence, of the fact that we are worthy of the kingdom of God.
  - g. Those who have placed their faith in Christ will persevere, they will endure persecutions and come out stronger and more refined.
  - h. The trials and tribulations and persecutions merely expose what is there already.
  - i. And so, Paul seeks to encourage the Thessalonians by reminding them of the promise of their worthiness in God's kingdom.
2. Number 2, we see here a promise of **recompense** on behalf of the Lord.
- a. In verse 6 Paul describes how it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who troubled the Thessalonians.
  - b. God is just. Deuteronomy 32 states, "He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He." (**Dt. 32:4**)
  - c. God will act with complete justice. He will see to it that those who persecuted His children will answer for their deeds.
    - i. "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life." (**Gal. 6:7-8**)

- d. We live in a reaping and sowing world. God will see to it that justice is served. It may not be immediate, it may not even be on this side of eternity, but inevitably justice will be administered. This is a promise that ought to comfort and encourage us. We can trust God to be just in all his doings.
3. Number 3, we have here a promise **of rest** that is to come.
    - a. The Thessalonians were experiencing all sorts of difficulties, but Paul assured them that one day they would enter into rest.
    - b. God would repay with tribulation those who persecuted the Thessalonians and at the same time give to the Thessalonians rest.
    - c. The troublers which once plagued the Thessalonians will be no more. They will be dealt with justly by the Lord. And when God deals with them, the Thessalonians will be able to enter into rest.
    - d. The rest that is alluded to here looks forward into the future and is connected to the day when the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed and He will be glorified in us as mentioned in verse 10.
    - e. Which leads to our fourth promise.
  4. Fourth and finally Paul alludes to the promise of Christ's **return**. Jesus is going to come back.
    - a. And when He does we will enter into rest. There will be no more trials, no more tribulations, no more heartaches, no more distresses. We will enter into our rest in the Lord. Christ will be glorified in us and admired by all who believe.
    - b. But it won't be so for those who didn't put their faith in Christ. When Christ returns He will do so with vengeance. He will come to administer the justice of God.



- c. Paul singles out two types of people that Jesus will be bringing his vengeance upon:
  - i. He will bring it upon those who do not know God. The word “know” here speaks of experiential knowledge. It speaks of knowing someone or something intimately, not just knowing about something or someone.
  - ii. He will bring His vengeance upon those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has given a way for all to escape His vengeance and righteous judgment; it is through faith in His Son. Any and all who are put their hope and faith in the gospel of Christ will be spared the judgment of God when Christ returns to this world.
- d. In verse 9 Paul describes the punishment that will befall all who do not know God and have not obeyed His gospel. They will be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and form the glory of His power.
  - i. Despite what some want to believe, the punishment of the wicked will be neither temporary nor will it be annihilation, but it will continue throughout eternity and those being punished will be conscious. It is eternal death as opposed to eternal life.
- e. Many people have thoughts and mental pictures of hell as a place of darkness and burning flames which is a scary site to consider.
- f. But the most scary thing about hell is not the endless destruction, nor the flames. David Guzik in his commentary wrote the following, “It isn’t the fire that makes hell what it is. In the fiery furnace, the three Jewish young men were completely comfortable, as long as the Lord was with them in the fire. What truly characterizes hell is that there,

people are from the presence of the Lord, in the sense of being apart from anything good or blessed in God's presence. From the presence of the Lord sums up the Bible's understanding of hell. Nothing must be said more about its horrors, other than hell will be completely devoid of God and every aspect of His character, except one: His unrelenting holy justice."

- g. That is the scariest thing about hell. God is love. Hell is loveless. God is light. Hell is complete darkness. God is gracious and kind and merciful. But there will be no grace, kindness, or mercy in hell.
- h. Completely void of God's presence. That is a scary thing to consider.

C. Paul wraps up his encouragement through **a prayer** he offers on behalf of the Thessalonians in verses 11 & 12. Read it with me.

## V. 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; Paul's Encouragement Involved Prayer

A. Paul wrote to encourage the Thessalonians.

1. He started his encouragement by praising God on their behalf for all the wonderful things God was doing in them and through them.
2. Then He encouraged them by reminding them of certain promises of God's future work.
3. And here in these final verses Paul's encouragement involved him praying for them.

B. Paul prayed to God for four things pertaining to the Thessalonians.

1. Number 1, Paul prayed God would count them **worthy of His calling**.
  - a. This carries the same notion as it did previously in verse 5. That they would be reckoned worthy,

judged worthy, deemed worthy based upon God' calling upon their lives.

- i. God's calling for us all is the same. "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son" (**Rom. 8:29a**)
- ii. We are all called to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. God has called us to be like Christ, to follow in His example left for us. This calling is a gradual lifelong process that will be completed when we see Christ face-to-face.
- iii. 1 John 3 states, "Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure." (**1 Jn. 3:2-3**)
- iv. One day we will see the Lord face to face and God's work in us will be complete, but until the day we push forward allowing God to mold and shape us more and more into the image of His Son.

2. Number 2, Paul prayed that **God would fulfill all the good pleasure** of His goodness and the work of faith with power.

- a. Basically Paul was praying that God would grant to the Thessalonians the power to accomplish all the good things that their faith prompted them to do.
- b. That as they walked by faith and were sensitive to His leading and guiding, that God would empower them to do all that was laid upon their hearts according to their faith.
- c. Philippians 2:13 tells us that "it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure." (**Phil. 2:13**)

- d. Paul was praying for God's empowerment upon the Thessalonians that they would be able to do all that God prompted them to do.
3. Number 3, Paul prayed that Christ would be glorified in them and that they would be **glorified in Christ**
    - a. This prayer was that God's glory might be manifest in and through the Thessalonians, both immediately in their daily lives, but also at the revelation of Christ as spoken of in verse 10.
    - b. The ultimate goal of all believers ought to be to glorify Christ through our actions, our words, our thoughts, and our motives. When we live to glorify Christ, Christ is glorified in us.
  4. Number four, and last of all, but certainly not least of all, Paul prayed for the means by which all these things can be accomplished. Paul prayed that all these things would happen **according to the grace of God**.
    - a. How can we be counted worthy of His calling? By God's grace alone.
    - b. How can we be empowered to do all the things God prompts us to do in faith? By God's grace alone.
    - c. How can we glorify Christ and have Christ glorified in us? Only by the amazing grace of our God.
    - d. By God's grace alone are we able to live our lives for Him.
    - e. May we all be encouraged this morning that whatever we are going through, whatever we are facing, whatever mountain is before us, God's grace is sufficient to meet the need.