**Everlasting Consolation**

*2 Thessalonians 2:16-17*

**Introduction**

1. In **2 Thessalonians 2:16**, Paul speaks of an ***“everlasting consolation”*** (“eternal comfort” – NASB) that God has lovingly extended to us.
2. This “everlasting consolation” in conjunction with, and relation to the “good hope” is continually working toward our comfort and establishment in the good words and works of God.
3. In His infinite wisdom, God knew we would constantly need a source of comfort due to our very nature as men, and due to the climate of life under the sun. Thus, He provided an “everlasting” (constant, unending, consistent, ever-present) “comfort.”
4. The Need for Everlasting Consolation (Especially regarding Paul’s audience – Thessalonians)
5. Ignorance
   1. Ignorance can be troublesome. We are inquiring creatures, and the inquiring mind WANTS TO KNOW.
   2. Knowledge can be very comforting; thus, a lack of knowledge can be disconcerting.
   3. **1 Thessalonians 4:13-14** – Ignorance causing brethren discomfort concerning loved ones who had died.
      1. **(v. 13)** – lack of knowledge concerning what happens after death, and where those who have died will be in the judgment caused sorrow like non-believers who don’t have hope.
      2. **(v. 14)** – knowledge and belief in Christ’s resurrection erases that troubled mindset.
      3. **(vv. 15-18)** – The knowledge of the coming of Christ, and the resurrection on that day of those who sleep in Jesus comforts those who are left behind.
   4. The NT writers knew ignorance to be troublesome and problematic. Thus, they wrote to eradicate that problem:
      1. Negative – I DON’T WANT YOU TO BE:
         1. **1 Thessalonians 4:13; 1 Corinthians 12:1; 2 Corinthians 1:8** – ignorant.
         2. **1 Corinthians 10:1** – unaware.
      2. Positive – I WANT YOU TO:
         1. **1 Corinthians 11:3; Philippians 1:12; Colossians 2:1** – know.
      3. **1 John 5:13** – written that you may know.
      4. **2 Peter 1:12** – not be negligent to remind you though you know.
6. False Doctrine
   1. False doctrine is indeed damaging. To the one who is not learned in the truth, false doctrine can be very troublesome.
   2. Need for edification to grow to maturity because of false doctrine – **Ephesians 4:14** – being tossed to and fro is not a comforting state.
   3. The Thessalonians were troubled by false doctrine – **2 Thessalonians 2:1-3a**
      1. Shaken – *saleuō*; from 4535; to waver, i.e. agitate, rock, topple or (by implication) destroy; figuratively, to disturb, incite. (Strong)
         1. **Cf. Acts 16:26** – used to refer to what the earthquake did.
         2. The Thessalonians were “shaken” like an earthquake.
      2. Spirit – claim of inspiration. (Spirit of prophecy)
      3. Word – verbal.
      4. Letter – written.
      5. “as if from us” – i.e. it is not from us, but claims the same validity as if it were, i.e. truth. IT ISN’T.
      6. Day of Christ come? – led to believe by false teachers that the day had come, and they were troubled because they weren’t with Him. Had they missed it?
7. Persecution
   1. Persecution can be very troubling. I’m doing good, but I am being treated poorly for it?
   2. **2 Thessalonians 1:4-7** – Persecution, tribulation, suffer, trouble you (IT IS TROUBLING), troubled.
   3. Paul could not endure not knowing the state of the Thessalonians’ faith after persecution, so he sent Timothy – **1 Thessalonians 3:1-5** – don’t be shaken! But the exhortation not to be shows the TENDENCY TO BE SHAKEN.
8. Faintheartedness
   1. **1 Thessalonians 5:14** – Paul calls the brethren to comfort those who are “fainthearted.”
      1. This is not a flaw in character.
      2. Feebleminded is one definition of such, but the call is not for REPROOF of those who are lacking character, but COMFORT for those who are going through hardship.
   2. **2 Corinthians 4:16** – Do not lose heart!
   3. **Galatians 6:9** – growing weary while doing good. (Is it worth it? Will I ever see the reward?) (Need of comfort/consolation)
9. The False Source of Everlasting Consolation
10. Error (False Doctrine)
    1. What is ironic is that the same matter which shakes some is a source of comfort for others. THE DIFFERENCE IS THE DESIRE.
       1. Those who desire truth will tend to be shaken by strange doctrines.
       2. Those who desire temporary pleasure, and an easy way will be comforted by error.
    2. **2 Peter 2:18-19** – promise of liberty (YOU CAN DO WHAT YOU WANT – NO CONSEQUENCES) – not true comfort – slaves of corruption.
    3. False doctrine is the work of Satan, who wants us to feel comfortable in sin. False doctrine always promotes sin, for it is bred from sin.
       1. Truth is sometimes hard to hear, so people turn to error for comfort – **2 Timothy 4:3-4**
11. Sin
    1. **1 Thessalonians 3:5** – temptation during persecution.
       1. Being persecuted for righteousness may bring temptation to turn to sin so as to avoid further persecution.
       2. Those who persecute us for doing good want us to do evil. (**cf. 1 Peter 4:4** – they think it strange you don’t run with them)
    2. Paul says SIN IS NOT THE ANSWER TO YOUR TROUBLED SPIRIT!
12. The True Source of Everlasting Consolation
13. Jesus Christ, and God the Father
    1. **2 Thessalonians 2:16** – the “everlasting consolation” comes from them.
    2. **2 Corinthians 1:3-4** – The God of all comfort who comforts us.
    3. But through what medium do they extend comfort. How, or with what, do they comfort us?
14. The Call to Salvation and Glory in the Gospel
    1. **2 Thessalonians 2:13-15** – the preceding verses to the mentioning of “everlasting consolation” regard the work of the gospel in the lives of the Thessalonians.
       1. Chosen for salvation through the calling of the gospel:
          1. **Ephesians 1:3-6** – spiritual blessings in Christ.
             1. Predestination to adoption/salvation is LOCATIONAL.
             2. IN CHRIST we are chosen for salvation.
          2. **Romans 1:16** – gospel is the power of God to salvation. (Those chosen before time began for salvation are those who obey the gospel – anybody can do so.)
          3. **Galatians 3:26-27** – the faith we have produced by gospel puts us in Christ when we are baptized. THUS WE HAVE SALVATION.
          4. Through sanctification by the spirit and belief in truth – set apart for salvation when we believed and obeyed the Spirit’s teaching in the truth.
             1. This is a continual matter. It has a beginning, but must not stop.
             2. **2 Thessalonians 2:15** – HOLD FAST
       2. Called for the obtaining of glory:
          1. The call to salvation is a call to glory. BEING GLORIFIED WITH CHRIST.
          2. **Colossians 3:1-4** – you will appear with Him in glory.
          3. The hope of the Thessalonians – **2 Thessalonians 1:9-10** – Jesus will come to be glorified in His saints, and such glory we will also partake of. (**cf. 1 Peter 5:10-11** – called to His eternal glory) (THAT “GOOD HOPE BY GRACE”)
    2. The gospel message brings such “everlasting consolation” to those who believe it and are faithful to it.
       1. This “everlasting” means it will always exist, and persist. There is nothing that can take it away, and there is no situation too severe that we cannot be comforted by it. (**cf. Romans 8:35-39** – what can separate us from the love of Christ?)
       2. **Cf. Philippians 4:4, 11-13** – always able to rejoice, always content in Christ
15. *Everlasting* Consolation
16. Such consolation on earth is had because it looks to the time of eternity with God where there will be no discomfort or troubles.
17. This consolation is enjoyed on earth, but extends to heaven where it is consummated in the eternal presence of God where nothing troublesome remains – **cf. Revelation 21:1-7**

**Conclusion**

1. God has graciously given us “everlasting consolation” through the truths found in His gospel.
2. All that is offered in Christ possesses power to endure and overcome anything this life throws at us.
3. There are countless times and situations which weigh us down with worry, heartache, and pain, but God continually offers comfort.