

This is the second letter that Paul wrote to the Thessalonian people. The first letter contained much information about the Lord coming for His bride, the church. He continues that topic in this second letter as well. How close is the end? What will happen? Who or what should we be looking for? Paul has a concern that they, and you, understand these events. II Thessalonians will help us understand more of the details of that special day.

DAY ONE

We have been blessed to have easy access to the Word of God, and we sometimes take that for granted. Have you ever stopped to think about how His word came to us? Men, inspired by God, guided by the Holy Spirit, wrote the words God breathed to instruct us and teach us how to live. Then there were thousands who gave their lives to protect those words and bring them to us today. God desires us to know His heart and every word that was penned has a purpose, and if we seek, through the Holy Spirit, God's truth, He will reveal it to us.

This is why it is important to study the Word of God inductively. It takes time, patience, and prayer. We begin with observation — lots of observation. Once we have taken the time to properly observe Scripture, then we can move into interpretation and application. In our world of instant gratification, much of the church would much rather read a book written by some other person that tells us what the Bible says and how we are to apply it to our lives. We are entrusting our spiritual well being to someone we don't know. They may be right, but they may also be wrong. If you desire to be a workman that doesn't need to be ashamed, you need to know how to study so you can accurately handle God's Word. That means that you and I have the responsibility to take the time to thoroughly observe God's Word.

As you begin your study of II Thessalonians, you need to be diligent to do a thorough observation. That means starting with an overview of the book as a whole, so you can set the context of the book and some of the more difficult passages. You will spend this week becoming familiar with II Thessalonians. You are going to look for things like:

- 1) **Who** is the author of II Thessalonians, and what do we learn about him?
- 2) **Who** are the recipients, and what do we learn about them?
- 3) **When** was this book written?
- 4) **Why** did the author write what he did? What was his purpose?
- 5) **What** did he write about? What is the main theme of the book?

This is like a puzzle. You start a puzzle by finding the corner pieces. They are easy to find, and they set the parameters of your puzzle. Then you move to the edges. They are also easy to find, and they build the frame of your puzzle this is the context of your book. Think of finding your author and recipients and information you can glean about them as finding your four corner pieces. As you discover the setting of when the book was written, the purpose of why it was written, and the main themes of the book, you have now constructed the framework of the book. All the teachings of the book are held within the context of the framework that was created.

Are you ready to begin? Then let's dig in.

1. Be sure to begin each day of your study with prayer. Ask God to open your mind and your heart to hear truth and give you a teachable spirit.
2. You have been given II Thessalonians observation worksheets. These are worksheets. You will be marking them and recording information on them as you study. Let's start by reading through the three chapters of II Thessalonians. After you have read it straight through, write your impressions of the book.
3. Read through the book again, this time mark every reference to the author as well as any pronouns that refer to him. I underline the author in blue in my study, but you can mark it anyway you want. After you have finished, go back and read through the book and record anything that you learn about the author on the "Observation" pages on page 7.
4. On page 10 you will find "II Thessalonians At a Glance" chart. Record the name of the author(s).
5. Have you learned anything about the author that you might be able to personally apply to your life? How might this help you in your walk with the Lord?

DAY TWO

1. Start by reading straight through the book of II Thessalonians again. Repetition is the key to learning. You are becoming more familiar with the book as a whole, every time you do this.
2. Today you are going to read through the book again. This time you are going to mark all the mentions of the recipients and pronouns that refer to them. I underline the recipients in green.
3. When you have completed marking the recipients, read through the book again and record all that you learn about the recipients on page 7.
4. On page 10 record the name of the recipients on "II Thessalonians At a Glance" chart.
5. Let's talk about the historical setting. Have you seen anything that would indicate what was going on at the time that this book or letter was written that may help you determine the setting? This could be mentions of rulers, a time of persecution, before or after they had gone someplace or had a specific experience. Make any notes on the "Observations" chart on page 8.
6. Summarize your information of when this was written and record it on page 10.
7. You may have noticed after reading II Thessalonians about five times now that certain words have occurred over and over again. These are key words. Key words play an important part to showing the purpose of the writing. If you would remove these words you would lose the meaning of the text. Record some of those words below.

DAY THREE

Today you are going to look for and mark key words. You are looking for words that are mentioned in various chapters since you are looking at the book as a whole. If the word is used several times in one chapter only, you don't want to include that word now. You will be completing chapter studies later at which time you can mark those. Any mention of the Godhead is a key word. Sometimes it can become overwhelming to mark them as you complete this overview of the entire book. You can mark these when you complete your chapter studies instead of now, but it is entirely up to you. I mark God with a purple triangle, Jesus with a red cross, and the Holy Spirit with a purple dove. Keep your markings simple and if you can't think of a symbol that will help you recognize the word, using boxes, circles, and triangles work. Use a different color and shape for each word so they stand out.

1. Yesterday you wrote down a couple of words that were repeated throughout the book. Start by marking those. I take an index card and write on the top - "Key Words - (name of the book)". Then write the word or phrase that you are marking along with the symbol you decided to use so that you are sure to mark it the same every time. You may be able to read through the book and mark a couple of words at a time, or you may want to only mark one word at a time and read the book once for every word that is marked. As you read and mark one word, you will begin to see others popping up as well. Record those here and go back and mark them as well. With patience and diligence work through this assignment. Remember it is setting the context of your book and it will help you discover the purpose of this letter.
2. Now that you marked your key words, you are going to go back and look at each one (the should be easily distinguishable with their individual markings) and make a list about what you learn about that word. Include chapter and verse in which the information was found. These lists are important because it shows the teaching on each of these topics. You can keep your lists on separate pieces of notebook paper, or on a list in your computer.

DAY FOUR

You need to understand the purpose of the letter. What was on the author's heart that he desired to share with his readers? Sometimes authors tell you plainly, "I am writing this because . . ." Look at John 20:30-31; I John 5:13; and Luke 1:3-4.

Other times the author is not so clear in his purpose. When the purpose is not clearly stated, there are several things you can watch for to determine the reason for writing. Key words, instructions, warnings, exhortations can all lead us to the author's purpose. Follow these steps carefully and complete one step before moving on to the next. Remember that completing a thorough observation of the text is the most important and critical step in correctly interpreting and applying what you learn. Be diligent, and you will be blessed.

1. Read through II Thessalonians and watch for any exhortations (encouragements) that the author gives. This is where the author becomes a cheering section of sorts. Underline these or number them in a specific color (but not blue or green since you already underlined with those colors). Record these exhortations on page 8.
2. Now read through the book again and look for any instructions (commands) that the author may give. Underline these or number them. Record these on page 8.
3. Read through II Thessalonians again, this time watch for any problems that the author may address. Underline these or number them. Record these on page 9.
4. Have any other key words appeared as you have done your work? If so, list them here and go back and mark them. Write your key words on the "At a Glance" chart on page 10.
5. Now record the main topics or subjects that the author covers on page 9.
6. What are the main themes that are covered in this book? You can record those on page 9.
7. Look at your "Observation" sheets and see if you can determine the purpose for which this letter was written. You can record this on page 9 and page 10.
8. Look at the topics that are covered in each individual chapter, and see if you can find the main idea of that chapter. If you can find the main idea of the chapter, then give the chapter a title based on your observations. Try to use words directly out of a verse for your title, if possible. Record these chapter titles on the "At a Glance" chart on page 10.

9. Did anything you have read in this book, touch your heart in a special way? Is there anything that you didn't understand? Are there questions that you have? Record them here.

DAY FIVE

1. Read through II Thessalonians one last time for this week. Is it beginning to feel like an old friend? It should be. Is there anything that you haven't completed in the first four days? Is so take the time to do that now.
2. As stated at the beginning of this lesson, this is the second letter that was written. Read through I Thessalonians and answer these questions.
 - a. What was the relationship between the author and the recipients?
 - b. Why did the author write the first letter?
 - c. Are any of the same topics covered in both letters?

Observations of II Thessalonians

Author:

Recipients:

Setting (when written):

Exhortations (encouragements):

Instructions (commands):

Problems:

Key Words:

Topics:

Themes:

Purpose for writing:

II Thessalonians At a Glance

Book Title:

Author:

Chapter Titles:

When Written:

Purpose:

1
2
3

Key Words: