

January 11, 2026
I Thessalonians 2:13-20
The Supernatural Power Of The Gospel On The Battlefield Of Life

Principles And Practical Application

“The worst feature of unbelief is not its own damnation but its efforts to frustrate the salvation of others.” *R. C. H. Lenski* Paul’s failure to return did not come from a lack of desire or trying. There was a satanic hindrance. The existence of a personal and supernatural devil is undeniable.

Satan succeeded in frustrating Paul’s plans to return but this by no means that Satan hindered God’s plans. This happened only because it was in accord to God’s plan. “Satan has brought many a martyr to his death, and God permitted it.” *R. C. H. Lenski*

The Word of God is from God Himself, therefore it is not subject to debatable human wisdom. “It is the power of God at work in the believers that validates the gospel message and distinguishes the people of God.” *Michael Martin*

Paul puts the blame right on Satan. Why? This was opposition to the will of God. This kind of opposition is ultimately led by the evil one. “Wherever the ungodly cause trouble, they are fighting under the banner of Satan, and are his instruments for harassing us.” *John Calvin*. God permitted this but He is not responsible for it or any other sin. This is an ongoing struggle, don’t be surprised if you run into one yourself.

Often a new believer will suffer attack and think that God’s blessing has departed from him. Paul countered this lie of Satan and reminded the Thessalonians that they were suffering as did: Jesus, the prophets, Paul and company, and those in Judea. Paul points out that such opposition comes from all sides, in varying ways, and degrees.

Application:

“Someone has said that the gospel is not the kind of message that man would invent if he could, nor is it a message that he could invent if he would.” *Author unknown* Soteriology/salvation is a God thing. It is not by reason but by revelation of Himself that God saves men. Consider this, there was no reasoning going on between God and Paul when God struck him blinded to his knees on the road to Damascus. It’s a God thing and He chooses to use us jars of clay to get the whole Word out to the whole world. There will be opposition but “You are from God, little children, and you have conquered them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.” *1 John 4:4*. (CSB)