

Preface To The Second Epistle Of Saint Paul To The Thessalonians

(1546 and 1522)

In the First Epistle, Paul had solved for the Thessalonians the question of the Last Day, telling them that it would come quickly, as a thief in the night. Now it is wont to happen that one question always gives birth to another, because of misunderstanding; and so the Thessalonians understood that the Last Day was already close at hand. Thereupon, Paul writes this epistle and explains himself.

In chapter 1, he comforts them with the eternal reward that will come to their faith and their patience in afflictions of every kind, and with the punishment that will come to their persecutors in eternal pain.

In chapter 2, he teaches that before the Last Day, the Roman Empire must pass away and Antichrist rise up before God in the Church, and seduce the unbelieving world with false doctrines and signs until Christ shall come and destroy him by His glorious advent, first slaying him with spiritual preaching.

In chapter 3, he gives some admonitions, especially that they shall rebuke the idlers, who will not support themselves by their own labor, and if they will not reform, that they shall avoid them; and this is a hard rebuke to the clergy of today.