

*2 Thessalonians 2:16-17*

*“May our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who loved us and by His grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.”*

Have you ever felt you have moved past the gospel now that you are a Christian? It is easy for those of us who have been in the church for an extended period of time to consider the gospel as an academic reality in our lives. At some point we realized we needed a Savior and came to Christ for the pardon for our sins. But that was then and now we have moved on in our faith to other issues and ministries. So the gospel is placed on the shelf, even given a place of honor, but remains only a reminder of our salvation collecting dust.

The gospel is so much more than a reminder of what God has done in the past. It is by the gospel that we enter into relationship with God through the work of Jesus Christ. It is by the gospel that we are now able to share an intimacy with God, just as the Father shares with the Son and the Son shares with the Spirit. It is by the gospel that we enter into personal fellowship, not an intellectual database, with God. Based on the firm foundation of the gospel, we now have a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ so He can minister to us in an intimate way as we face uncertain days and situations.

It is that relationship with God which sustains us after we come to Him for salvation since we are now children of God through the work of Jesus Christ. Asaph came to understand this when he saw the unrighteous seeming to prosper even though they have spent their lives shaking their fist at God. He realized they did not know God now and won't know God then. He understood what Paul teaches in 2 Thessalonians 2, namely that they will spend eternity apart from God's glory. What profit is there for a person to win the whole world and yet forfeit their soul in the end?

Asaph is able to come to his senses, but he does not merely rest on truth. Asaph uses the truth as a platform to build into his relationship and move closer to God. Psalm 73:23-26 *“Yet I am always with You; You hold me by my right hand. You guide me with Your counsel, and afterward You will take me into glory. Whom have I in heaven but You? And earth has nothing I desire besides You. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”* That is the stability that comes from intimacy with God. All of this comes from the gospel by which we have relationship with God. So take the gospel off the shelf and put it into practice, God knows how much we need stability in the uncertain times in which we live.