

2 Peter 3:15-16

*“Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.”*

I get a chuckle when I read Peter telling us Paul writes things that are hard to understand. After all Peter has his fair share of obscure texts that cause many people to scratch their head. But Peter is bringing out the same truth Paul does when it comes to people twisting texts they do not like, wanting to understand in a literal sense so they can avoid changing their thinking and their lifestyle.

Some will say, “I cannot understand how a God of love can send anyone to hell.” What they really mean is: “I do not want to believe in a literal hell because it would mean there is a consequence for my sin. I do not want to pay the price for how I actually live my life. Therefore I do not believe there is a hell and any passage in Scripture that states there is a hell must be too vague, too obscure or inconsistent with other passages of Scripture.”

So what might someone find “hard to accept” about Paul’s writings in 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians? 2 Thessalonians 2:10-11 *“They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie.”* We want believe there will always be time to get “serious” about Jesus Christ. After all, you think, “When I see the things Paul describes happening I know it will be time to take the Bible more seriously.” But when the truth is continually rejected, what makes you think you will not jump in with the man of falsehood who is more than willing to take you further down the path you have already shown is the desire of your heart?

If you are not ready to follow Jesus today, understand the marriage you are entering into. The deceiver wants followers and will tell you what you want to hear. And you will listen because you want to hear what requires nothing of you. You have chosen to reject the truth of the gospel and to believe the lie. So in the end you are not dragged off against your will down the path of disbelief, but rather you pursue willingly what your heart truly desires. The path which gives you what you want will take you to where you deserve. I pray we all consider the cost of God sending His Son to pay for our sins. What do you plan to do with that today? Grace is the free gift of God that will cost your life that you might have eternal life.