

**Be Encouraged****based on 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17**

All his life, Paul was a faithful follower of God. He was a Pharisee, so he knew all about God's ways and laws. When he was a young man, he was known as Saul. Then he did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God. But Saul had an amazing experience on the road to Damascus. Jesus came to him in a vision. From then on, Saul traveled from country to country to tell people the good news about Jesus. In time, he became known as Paul. With his friends Timothy, Silas, and others, he began churches in many cities.

Travel was difficult and returning to a city where a church was begun wasn't always possible. So Paul wrote letters, lots of letters. Some of those letters are in our Bible, in the New Testament. There are two letters to the church in Thessalonica. The people are called Thessalonians, so the letter is to the Thessalonians. In the second letter to the Thessalonians, Paul encouraged the believers in Jesus there. Here is part of that letter:

*My dear friends, God loves you. We always thank God for you. God chose you from the beginning to be among the first believers after the resurrection. You are God's because you have the spirit of God and you believe in the truth. God called all of you through the good news of Jesus that we brought to you. Through this you have received glory.*

*So my dear friends, stand firm and hold on to what we taught you when we visited you and when we wrote to you. Through Christ Jesus God has given us comfort and hope. May God encourage you and give you strength in every good thing you say and do.*