"Encouragement for Times of Stress and Affliction" 9/12/10
2 Thessalonians 1:1-12

Studies in 2nd Thessalonians- "Encouragement for a Faith-full Church"

Rocky Mountain National Park- TREES grow only on one side because of the wind

"Good timber **does** not **grow** with ease; the **stronger** the **wind**, the **stronger** the **trees**."

POINT 1- We should be encouraged because of our POSITION Vv. 1-5

A. Our position is rooted in having God as our FATHER
(Matt 6:9; Romans 8:16-17; contrast synagogue- church)

B. Our position is evidenced by God's FAITHFULNESS
(faith, love; John 13:35; Acts 5:41; 14:22; Phil 1:29; James 1:2-12)

Testing is where the strength of our faith is demonstrated.

Going *God wants you to ask yourself whether He can boast of you?*
Deeper *(see Matthew 13:21)*

POINT 2- We should be encouraged because of God's PROMISES Vv. 6-10

A. The promise of God reveals to us the dispensing of JUSTICE
(1 Peter 4:17- "do not obey"; Rev 14:11; Matt 25:41, 46; Rev 20:10)

B. The promise of God reveals to us the dispensing of GRACE
(they get trouble, we get rest; Matt 13:43; Daniel 12:3)

Going *God wants us to keep our focus on His promises!*
Deeper *(see Matthew 14:28-30)*

POINT 3- We should be encouraged because of our PURPOSE Vv. 11-12

A. The purpose we have is to walk WORTHY
(Gal 5:16; Eph 4:2; 5:3; 2 Cor 5:7; Eph 4:2; 5:2; 1 John 2:6)
H.S. humility purity faith gentleness love

B. The purpose we have is to be a good WITNESS

"And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." (Colossians 3:17; cf. Rom 2:24)

Going *God wants us to make changes in order to be a good witness!*
Deeper

The exposed trees have thicker trunks and structural roots than sheltered ones, and the structure of their wood is altered. Exposed trees have wood in which the cellulose fibres are wound at a larger angle to the axis of the cell. The cells themselves tend to wind around the trunk of the tree rather than running parallel to it, a condition known to foresters as 'spiral grain'. All these changes help to make the tree more stable. The reduction in height reduces the drag on the tree, while the thickening of the trunk and roots strengthens them. The changes in the wood, meanwhile, tend to make it more flexible, so the tree can reconfigure more efficiently away from the wind. Trees growing in windy areas even have smaller leaves, and this further reduces drag as well as water loss.