**II Thessalonians 1:8-9**

II Thessalonians 1:8-9 reads “In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;”

Here are some things we can learn from this passage …

First there is a burning h-e-l-l. This is a place where God will take vengeance on the wicked with “flaming fire.” They will be “punished with everlasting destruction” according to this text.

Second, we must “know” God in order to avoid this everlasting destruction. What does it mean to “know” God? Knowing God is more than just knowing about God. I know about Vice President Pence, but I do not know Vice President Pence. I have never met him. I don’t know what he is like, or how he approaches things personally. So if we know God, that means we have learned and accepted from His word what He is like and how He approaches things. I would say the phrase in Acts 8:37 is equivalent here – “If thou believest with all thine heart.” II Thess 1:8 requires that we “know” God and that means we believe in him with all our heart.

But even that is not enough to avoid being lost. The verse mentions another condition we must meet to be saved in addition to knowing God. And that is we must “obey … the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Right away then we should be able to see that salvation is not by faith only. This verse requires faith, but in addition to faith, it clearly also requires obeying the gospel. If we want to avoid being lost, we must both know (believe in) God, and obey the gospel.

But what does it mean to “obey the gospel”? I Pet 1:22 puts it this way “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth.” Obeying the gospel, obeying the truth – same thing. How do we obey the truth. John 17:17 says “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” So obeying the truth simply means obeying God’s word.

Notice the following passages that also make our salvation contingent upon obeying God, and not just believing only …

**Hebrews 5:9 And being made perfect, he (Jesus) became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.**

**Matthew 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven**

**James 2:24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.**

**Rev 22:14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.**

**II Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.**