

# First Thessalonians

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A Verse-By-Verse Study

## Introduction

- Paul was on his Second Missionary Journey
- We read a little about the beginning of this church in Thessalonica:

*Act 17:1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews:*

*Act 17:2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,*

*Act 17:3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.*

*Act 17:4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.*

*Act 17:5 But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.*

*Act 17:6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;*

*Act 17:7 Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus.*

*Act 17:8 And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.*

*Act 17:9 And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go.*

- Paul was still at Corinth when the letter to the Thessalonians was written.
- Many of the Greeks and some Jews believed Paul's preaching.

- But the Jews had prejudice against Paul and hated him.
- The Jews tried to tear down the character and ministry of Paul
- Paul defends his character and his ministry in 1 Thess. 2:3-10.
- Because of the confusion of the enemies of the Gospel, much comfort was needed for this young church.
- One of Paul's reasons for writing was to comfort these people.
- Six-fold purpose of Paul's writing to this church:
  1. To express his gratitude for the news of their spiritual condition.
  2. To defend himself against the enemies of the Gospel.
  3. To express the necessity of a complete break from the heathen.
  4. To strengthen the leaders of that young church.
  5. To shed light upon the doctrine of the return of Jesus Christ.
  6. To warn them of the wrong interpretation of Christ's return.
- Quoting Berlin Hisel:

“In many ways this church is the most excellent one set forth in the New Testament. We hope this message and study of this (first) chapter will tell us why. Chapter one tells us how this church was born.”<sup>1</sup>

Bro. Hisel gives a title to each chapter of this book:

- Chapter 1: An Excellent Church
- Chapter 2: An Excellent Pastor
- Chapter 3: An Excellent Ministry
- Chapter 4: An Excellent Walk - Part One
- Chapter 5: An Excellent Walk - Part Two

### **1 Thess. 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus,**

- Paul was the inspired writer of this letter.
  - Paul is mentioned here without any title.
  - Sometimes he addresses himself as *Paul an apostle*, or *Paul, a servant of*

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<sup>1</sup>Hisel, Berlin, *New Testament Bible Studies Volume Two*, First Baptist Church, Harrison, Ohio, pg. 1

*Jesus Christ* and others.

- Some believe the reason he mentions himself without any title is because the elders in the Thessalonian church were young and might think Paul of being proud by using the name *apostle*, or that Paul considered himself to be the *chiefest of sinners*.
- This is hard for me to believe, since Paul spent much of his ministry vindicating his apostleship, though he knew he was not worthy of that ministry.
- Silvanus we know elsewhere as Silas.
  - The term “Paul and Silas” is mentioned four times in Acts 16 and 17.
  - The two names Paul and Silvanus are used together four times in the New Testament – 2 Cor. 1:19; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1; and 1 Peter 5:12.
- Timothy, the young man, many believe may have been Paul’s *amanuensis*, or his secretary, who took down the words as Paul dictated them to Timothy.

### **1:1b unto the church of the Thessalonians**

- This church was made up of both Jews and Gentiles.
- They were incorporated into a local church with its independent authority and was watched over by Paul as an apostle.
- Notice 1 Thess. 5:12 *And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;*

### **1:1c which is in God the Father**

- This church was “in God the Father,” because each member of this church was chosen of God – Notice verse 4 *Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.*
- They were also distinguished from the assembly of heathens who were in the *faith of idols*.

### **1:1d and in the Lord Jesus Christ:**

- They were also in the Lord Jesus Christ, because he is their head.
- They were all chosen *in him* before the foundation of the world – Eph. 1:4 *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*

- They were *in the Lord Jesus Christ*, being members of his body, the church – 1 Cor. 12:27 *Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.*
- They were *in the Lord Jesus Christ*, because this church is HIS CHURCH.

**1:1e Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

- This is a natural and often-said salutation by Paul.
- He often uses the two words *grace* and *peace* to comfort his readers.
- But he always notes that this grace and peace are from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, not from Paul or another apostle or preacher or from anyone else.

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**1 Thess. 1:2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;**

- Paul gives thanks for ALL of the members of this church.
- Gill says “Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, greater or lesser believers, officers or private Christians . . .”
- He is not thanking the church members, but he is thanking God for them.
- No doubt, he is thanking God for their spiritual gifts, for the graces given to them by God, and for the glory to God that is attributed to their willingness to serve God.
- He thanks God ALWAYS, or every day or at least whenever these people enter his mind, which was often, no doubt.

**1 Thess. 1:3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;**

- Paul remembers often three things about the ministry in Thessalonica:
  - Their work of faith
  - Their labor of love
  - Their patience of hope
- We will look in detail at these three things in the rest of this chapter.

- These remembered things are not to the glory of men, but they are *in our Lord Jesus Christ*, and they are *in the sight of God and our Father*.
- We must all remember that, whatever we do for the Lord, it is to be done to glorify Jesus Christ and to know that every one of us will give an account of himself to God (Romans 14:12).

### **1 Thess. 1:4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.**

- 2 Thess. 2:13 *But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:*
- This is not an election, or a calling, to a church office or to a ministry but an election *to salvation*.
- They must KNOW this, for without their knowledge of this, they will be discouraged and will turn to earthly things rather than owing all work and praise to God always.
- These brethren here are called *beloved*, because it is God who elected them by his divine will and his eternal love.

### **The Work Of Faith, 1:5-6**

#### **1 Thess 1:5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power,**

- The Gospel came to this church *in power* (dunamis).
- When the Gospel came to them, it was given to them with the power to execute its obedience.
- It did not come *in word only*, but *in power*.
  - The Gospel came to them in the power of God.
  - Remember Romans 1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*
- But it did come in word:<sup>2</sup>
  - In the word written - the Bible
  - In the word preached - Preachers
  - In the word apprehended - Hearers truly hear and are saved

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<sup>2</sup>Biblical Illustrator

- It was not a “say-so” Gospel but a “do-so” Gospel.
- This Gospel came with a mission and a commission from God.
- The Gospel came to them mixed with faith, which faith encouraged, even prompted to good works, for faith without works is dead – James 2:17, 20, 26
- The word from Paul became the *ingrafted word* (James 1:21) and dwelt *richly in them* (Col. 3:16).

**1:5b and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance;**

- The Gospel was preached to them by the power of the Holy Ghost, for the Holy Ghost is needed to complete the work that he begins in every believer.
- Paul speaks of the Holy Ghost when he says in Phil. 1:6 *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*
- But the power is not only in the deliverance of the Gospel but in the application of the Gospel in the hearts of those who receive it.
- He works effectually in the heart to bring faith to those who believe out of darkness into his marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9).
- The Holy Ghost also gives *much assurance*.
  - The Gospel, when believed, brings much assurance to those who truly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - And, when doctrine has as its foundation the Gospel, then believers can with assurance believe all doctrines that they learn as they grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

**1:5c as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.**

- What manner of men were these men who preached the Gospel to them?
- They were men who did not use enticing words of man’s wisdom, but they spoke with power and assurance the true Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- And they left the work of the heart to the Holy Ghost and did not endeavor to persuade by philosophy or logic to bring men’s minds under the power of God in order to bring them into the kingdom.
- They were simple men with simple but true words and preached the Gospel to them, and that Gospel by the power of the Spirit of God won over their hearts

to the true things of God and demanded obedience and gave assurance and grace and peace in their hearts.

### **1 Thess. 1:6 And ye became followers of us,**

- This labor of love included being followers of Paul and his brethren.
  - They followed in the Gospel, receiving it and teaching it.
  - They followed in submitting and performing the ordinances, baptism and the Lord's supper.
  - They also followed in suffering for the name of Christ.

### **6b and of the Lord**

- So, as we follow those who teach us and lead us into righteousness from the word of God, we actually are following the Lord, not the man, but God.
- They became followers of Paul and his brethren, because God used these men as messengers of the Gospel of Christ, not because they were divine.
- Only God is divine, and ultimately Christ is our leader in spiritual life.

### **6c having received the word in much affliction,**

- The hearers at Thessalonica received the word, not of men, but of God.
- The *affliction* here may refer to the trouble that was caused as recorded in Act 17:5 *But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.*
- It is commendable here that others had heard Paul's words of the Gospel and had fallen away from the truth but these Thessalonians received the word.

### **6d with joy of the Holy Ghost:**

- Not only did they receive the Gospel, but they received it *not of men, but of God.*
- They also received it *with joy of the Holy Ghost.*
- When the word of God opens a person's heart and gives by his grace the faith to believe and to be born again, there is great joy in the heart.

- This was not a carnal joy but a spiritual one.
- This joy was not simply in their being born again but in their willingness to serve the Lord Jesus with joy.
- The work of Christ should make us rejoice.
- 1 John 5:3 *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.*
- So, in these two verses (5 and 6) we notice the *Work of Faith*.
- It is a work that is prompted by faith and a work that is controlled by faith and perseveres by faith.
- Three verses in the New Testament attest to the fact that we are to *live by faith*.
  - Romans 1:17 *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*
  - Galatians 3:11 *But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.*
  - Hebrews 10:38 *Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*
- Today let us have a *work of faith* in our individual lives and in our church so that we may rejoice in the Lord.
- We have seen in verses 5-6 the *Work of Faith*.
  - The work of faith was in Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to bring to Gospel to Thessalonica.
  - The work of faith was in the hearts of those who heard the Gospel there, which work was the work of the Holy Spirit to bring them to faith in Christ.
  - And the work of faith was in the hands of those believers, who carried the Gospel on to others who were in darkness and needed the Gospel to bring them into the light of Christ and his salvation and into Christ's kingdom.

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## **The Labor of Love, 1:7-9**

### **1 Thess. 1:7a So that ye were ensamples**

- Paul and his company were ensamples (examples)
  - All leaders in the work of the Gospel should be examples of believers to believers.



- 1 Tim. 4:12 *Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*
- If we are weak and unfaithful to our witness of the Gospel, it may mean that we are allowing people to despise our youth, or even our weakness.
- Even though Timothy was a young man, Paul instructed him to be strong and to not allow his youth to keep him from being bold with the Gospel.
- The power is in the Gospel and not in the preacher of the Gospel.
- Paul told the Corinthians in 2 Cor. 4:1 *Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we **faint not**;*
- Paul told the Galatians in Gal. 6:9 *And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we **faint not**.*
- Paul told the Ephesians in Eph. 3:13 *Wherefore I desire that ye **faint not** at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.*

### **7b to all that believe**

- One believer should be an example to other believers.
- Believers come in many sizes, shapes, and backgrounds.
- If we are not examples to other believers, many weak believers may lack the boldness to be witnesses of the Gospel and fail in their effectiveness in the work of the Lord.
- When we get caught up in worldliness, we become weak in our witness for the Lord and are also weak examples for others who could otherwise be great witnesses of the Lord.
- So, then, we are to be a witness not only to the lost but also examples to other believers that the Gospel may be effective in the world around us to snatch people *out of the fire*, as it were.

### **7c in Macedonia and Achaia.**

- Macedonia is in Greece, so the Gospel has spread from Jerusalem throughout Judea, Samaria, and is now being spread throughout *the uttermost*, or into the entire world.
- These two names (Macedonia and Achaia) are two large areas in Greece.

### **1 Thess. 1:8a For from you sounded out**

- A sound went out from Thessalonica that the entire world needed to hear.
- It did not come first from Thessalonica; it first came from Jerusalem and also to Philippi before it came to Thessalonica.
- But it sounded out as the sound of a trumpet, not as an *uncertain sound* as mentioned in 1 Cor. 14:8 *For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?*
  - In Israel under the law there were certain sounds that came from the trumpet.
  - There was a sound of gathering together, a sound of battle and war, a sound of joy, a sound of celebration, of mourning, etc.
  - **ILLUS:** At a funeral a man dressed in a soldier's uniform stood by to play TAPS on the bugle. After I finished my part at the grave-side, this man with the bugle was to play it; but he just stood there. I wondered what was wrong. Then another man went over to the bugler, and they were checking the bugle. Finally, the man said he could not play TAPS today. Later, I found out that the man could not play a bugle but only pushed a button to play a recording that was inside the bugle, but it would not work.
  - But this was a certain sound, one that could not be mistaken due to its clarity and beauty.

### **8b the word of the Lord**

- By *the word of the Lord* is meant mainly The Gospel, because it was the Gospel that they needed first before any work could be done or any spiritual growth could be known, or any church could be established.
- This is the *word of the Lord*, because the Lord is
  - The author of it.
  - The subject of it.
  - The dispenser of it. By grace. We speak it, but God is the one who makes it effective in our hearts.

### **8c not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place**

- Not only in “Philippi, Berea, Athens, and Corinth, and other cities and towns in those countries, but also in other parts of the world” (Gill).
- It is the job of all those who witness the Gospel of Christ to spread it around the world. That is the purpose and meaning and work of the churches of the

Lord Jesus Christ.

- Mark 16:15 *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*
- *Every place* means the Gospel is to go to all kinds of people without exception.

### **8d your faith to God-ward is spread abroad;**

- The faith of those who receive the Gospel is *God-ward*.
  - God-ward, because God is the object of our faith.
  - God-ward, because it is God who makes the Gospel effective in our hearts and in our lives.
  - God-ward in both our words and our deeds. People need to see the Gospel in both ways: our words, and our deeds.
  - Remember James said, *faith without works is dead*.

### **8e so that we need not to speak any thing.**

- It seems here that Paul was saying he did not need to continually encourage the church at Thessalonica to preach the Gospel.
- It seemed to be a wont (or a natural-like occurrence, or a habit) of these people to continually and often preach the Gospel to people around them.
- The Gospel is *good news*, and it needs to be proclaimed to everyone in the world.

### **1 Thess. 1:9a For they themselves shew of us**

- *They themselves*, meaning the people at Macedonia.
- *Show of us*, or “about us” (the apostles)
- In other words, not only did the Thessalonians preach the Gospel to others but also witnessed how graciously and effectively and godly the apostles’ words came to them.

### **9b what manner of entering in we had unto you,**

- Paul and his company came to Thessalonica with many difficulties.
- They came along with the contentions of the unbelieving Jews.
- They came with many reproaches and persecutions.

- They came preaching with boldness, sincerity, and affection.
- They came NOT with flattering words, covetousness, or vain glory.
- But they came with POWER that was embedded in the Gospel, which power God used to save many souls.
- They also came with great success owing to God himself, because they received the word of God with readiness, cheerfulness, and reverence.

### **9c and how ye turned to God from idols**

- This is true repentance.
- Once the grace of God with his own power had influenced the hearts of unbelievers in Thessalonica, they, under the influence of the power of God the Holy Spirit, turned to God.
- They turned from idols. When a person believes, he turns from his old life to a new life.
  - He turns from worshiping dead idols to worshiping the living God.
  - He turns from himself to God himself.
  - He turns from condemnation to justification.
  - Idols no longer mean anything to him but are considered *dumb idols* (Heb. 2:18; 1 Cor. 12:2).
  - So, when they turned from idols, in what direction did they turn, and to what did they turn?

### **9d to serve the living and true God;**

- To Serve
  - The word here for *serve* is Greek DOULOS and means *slave*.
  - So they turned from serving their idols and being the slaves of the idols to being slaves of someone else.
  - Unbelievers are imprisoned to the world and are slaves of the world and of the devil.
  - Believers are prisoners of Christ and are bound by his love and his promises and by the great blessed hope that is given to every believer.
- The Living And True God
  - Those who believe in Christ are turning from the dead to the living.
  - Those who believe in Christ are turning from falsehood to truth.
  - The Bible speaks 24 times of the *living God*.

- So, God is not dead.
- And he is the God of the living, not of the dead – Mark 12:27 *He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.*
- The Bible speaks five (5) times of the *true God*.
  - Jeremiah 10:10 *But the LORD is the **true God**, he is the **living God**, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.*
  - 1 John 5:20 *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. **This is the true God**, and eternal life.*

## **The Patience of Hope, 1:10**

### **1 Thess. 1:10a And to wait**

- The believers at Thessaonica must learn one more lesson—to wait.
  - Romans 8:25 *But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.*
  - When we **wait**, we are also to **watch**— Mark 13:35 *Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:*

### **10b for his Son from heaven,**

- We are not waiting for anyone else but for Jesus himself.
- Acts 1:11 *Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? **this same Jesus**, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*
- This same Jesus will come from heaven, because that is where he went when he resurrected from the dead.
  - Acts 3:21 *Whom the heaven must receive **until the times of restitution** of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*

### 10c whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus,

- The pronoun *he* here refers to God the Father, who raised Jesus from the dead.
  - Acts 2:32 *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.*
  - Acts 3:26 *Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities*
- Jesus was raised **from the dead**.
  - This means that Jesus was really dead, unlike some of our liberal theologians like to say, that he just swooned or was in a trance.
  - Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and resurrected three days later.
- So, the subject of our HOPE is this Jesus of Nazareth, who can save a soul from sin and deliver a soul to heaven to be with him eternally.

### 10d which delivered us

- Jesus Delivered Us
  - The Greek for *delivered* is the word RHOOMAI, which means “to draw or rescue, as one being rescued from a dungeon or a cistern” with no hope of living unless an outside source comes to the rescue.
  - Col. 1:13 *Who hath **delivered** us from the power of darkness, and hath **translated** us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*
  - 2 Cor. 1:10 *Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;*
    - He has delivered us from the **Penalty** of sin.
    - He is now delivering us from the **Power** of sin.
    - He will later deliver us from the **Presence** of sin.

### 10e from the wrath to come.

- There is a wrath to come, and salvation by the Gospel of Jesus Christ has delivered all believers from the wrath that is to come upon the whole world.
  - There is a great warning in Matt. 3:7 *But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?*
  - There is a present wrath revealed from heaven – Romans 1:18 *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*

- There is a wrath to come – Romans 2:5 *But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;*
- But God did not appoint us to wrath
  - 1 Thess. 5:9 *For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,*
  - Rev. 6:17 *For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*
- This is our **Patience of Hope.**
  - We have hope only in Christ, and we should wait for it.
  - The Lord is coming in his own time, but it could be at any time.
  - Let us wait; let us hope; let us watch, and let us pray.

End 3-4-2020

## Chapter 2

### The Work Of Faith, 2:1-8

**1 Thess. 2:1 For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:**

- Resuming Paul's thought as recorded in 1 Thess. 1:9 *For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;*
  - Paul is rehearsing his going in to the people of Thessalonica, that it was not in vain.
  - In other words, Paul and his company's efforts in evangelizing those people had **much fruit**. This was for several reasons, to which we will be directed soon in these verses.
  - His entrance to these folks was not just a physical entrance in which the people would like him as a person, but it was also an entrance as a man who brought the good news of Jesus Christ, not in vain.
  - His entrance was effective, fruitful, and ongoing, not in vain.

**Thess. 2:2a But even after that we had suffered before,**

- Paul and his company had suffered much before they came to Thessalonica.
- This shows the boldness of Paul; because, if he had not endured previous suffering, or if he had been disabled by his beatings, or if he had died, he would not be able to come to Thessalonica.

**2b and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi,**

- Sufferings due to the masters of a girl, who was a diviner – Acts 16:16 *And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:*
- Acts 16:37 *But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison;*

**2c we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God**



- Even through suffering and persecution did Paul and his company have much boldness in God to speak the gospel of God to those at Thessalonica.
- They spoke the true Gospel of Jesus Christ, a divine message, or a message from God.
- The degree of boldness in Paul is stated in Philippians 1:20 *According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.*

## **2d with much contention.**

- Acts 18:5-6 *And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. 6 And when **they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment,** and said unto them, *Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.**
- Many people contend, or argue against, the true Gospel of Christ.
- They write long sermons and books and commentaries to contend with the pure Gospel as taught in the Bible.
- But Paul and his company were bold to overcome these opposers and blasphemers.

## **1 Thess. 2:3a For our exhortation,**

- Paul's exhortation, or his encouragement to the Thessalonians included doctrines that would put confidence in the hearts of the hearers of Paul's Gospel.
- He taught them of justifying grace.
- He taught them doctrines of comfort.
- He taught them of righteousness.
- He taught them of the fullness of Christ's salvation.
- He also exhorted them to exercise the grace of God to further the Gospel.

## **3b was not of deceit**

- In order to be "not in deceit," the things that Paul taught them had to be the

truth and no wavering from the pure truth of the Gospel.

- There could not be any imposture to deceive the people.
- The message of Paul was one that worked in the lives and hearts of the hearers and brought them to the truth, not Paul's truth, but God's truth.

### **3c nor of uncleanness,**

- Paul's Gospel was not one which allowed himself or his hearers the freedom to continue in sin and still have and enjoy the grace of God.
- Those who practiced uncleanness, or sin, were not truly the sons of God.
- But Paul taught a Gospel that would prompt and encourage **good works** and a clean life.
- Titus, Chapter 2, gives us a list of things that will be expected in our lives if we are truly the children of God. He gives a short recap of these in 2:11-12
- Titus 2:12 *Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;*

### **3d nor in guile:**

- Their exhortation, or their preaching, was not done in guile, or by handling the word of God craftily, which means that they did not color the words of God to fit a contemporary culture or attitude.
- They preached the simple and powerful, clear word of God so it would fit the real need of the hearers.
- We do not need to filter the word of God to please the hearing ears but preach it as it is to people who need it straight, fresh, and simple and clear,

### **1 Thess. 2:4a But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak;**

- Paul and his company were *allowed of God*, or approved of God, or even ordained of God to be put in trust with the Gospel.
  - Not because of any merit on Paul or any who were with him, but by the determined counsel of God, chosen by God to be used in the furtherance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
  - To be trusted with the Gospel is a very high honor, which trust has with it great benefits and blessings but also great responsibilities.

- *even as we speak* refers to the freshness, simplicity, purity, and power of the way it was delivered by Paul and his company (especially Silas and Timothy) to the Thessalonians (and also to all others to whom Paul preached).

#### **4b not as pleasing men, but God,**

- If Paul, Silas, and Timothy were to please men, they would need to change the message and the meaning of the Gospel.
- They were not willing to do that, as many have done then and now in our day.
- But they were determined to please God in their preaching of the Gospel, for it is actually God's Gospel, not man's.
- Seven times in the New Testament the Gospel is called "the gospel of God."
  - Rom. 1:1; 15:16; 2 Cor. 11:7; 2 Thess. 2:2, 8, 9; 1 Peter 4:17

#### **4c which trieth our hearts.**

- It is God whom they wanted to please.
- For it is God who *trieth our hearts*.
- Paul told young Timothy:
  - 2 Tim. 2:15 *Study to shew thyself **approved unto God**, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*
- So, in order to be approved of God, or pleasing to God, Paul had to **study**.
  - Every preacher of God's word must study.
  - He must please God and be approved of God.
  - He must preach boldly, confidently, clearly, and without guile or deceit.

#### **1 Thess. 2:5a For neither at any time used we flattering words,**

- Flattery has been the ruin of many states and people as well as churches.
- This flattery could refer to self-flattery for the benefit of Paul, or it could be flattery upon the hearers of his Gospel.
- Sometimes we call these word *flowery words*, words which make a person feel wonderful, or words that build up an ego above its proper level, or give a false assurance.
- Paul says that he and his company did not at any time use flattery.

#### **5b as ye know,**

- *as ye know* seems to indicate that it does not take much learning or awareness to detect flattery in a person.
- The Thessalonians would know quickly if Paul and his company had used flattery. It was used in civil and political matters often.

### **5c nor a cloke of covetousness;**

- Covetousness is *self-interest*, doing everything for self.
- Paul was not a taker but a giver.
  - Romans 9:3 *For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:*
  - 1 Corinthians 9:19 *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.*
  - 2 Corinthians 11:7 *Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?*

### **5d God is witness:**

- Paul here calls God as a witness of his true intentions.
- 2 Corinthians 12:15 *And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.*
- A person must be very careful calling on God as a witness, because one day all things that are hidden will be revealed, and judgment will be given.
- So, the Gospel must be preached without covetousness, or self-interest.

### **1 Thess. 2:6a Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others,**

- There is honor due to the preachers of God's word.
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 *And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; 13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.*
  - 1 Timothy 5:17 *Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.*
    - *double honor* – The honor of working for themselves and having the wherewithal to live of their own means, but also the honor of receiving

offerings from the churches.

- Philippians 4:16 *For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.*
- But that honor is not to be *sought for glory*.
- The church at Thessalonica needed to know that Paul did not seek glory from them, neither from other churches or other people.

### **6b when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.**

- As the apostles of Christ, they could have burdened the Thessalonian church with a requirement to supply their needs, leaving Paul and his company without any obligation to support themselves; and that would not have been wrong or unscriptural. They were apostles.
- But Paul's company worked with their own hands to support themselves so they would not be burdensome to this new church.
- 1 Thessalonians 2:9 *For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.*
- As we have already noticed, when Paul was at Thessalonica, the people at the Philippian church sent necessities to Paul and the apostles, which was also right and scriptural.
- 1 Corinthians 9:14 *Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.*

### **1 Thess. 2:7 But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:**

- So, instead of coming into Thessalonica intrusively, bluntly, and perhaps even harshly, demanding this and that; they came in *gently*.
- They treated the new believers as a nurse nurses her own children.
- This nurse as a mother who is tender, who cuddles the babes in her arms, brings them carefully to her bosom to nurse them, condescends to the lowest level of human life in order to please them, playfully laughs with them, but firmly teaches them and corrects them.
- This is the very way in which Paul comes to Thessalonica.
- This is a *work of faith*.

**1 Thess. 2:8** So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

- First, Paul, Silas, and Timothy imparted the Gospel to them.
- But they were willing to impart their own souls, their own lives, their own work, effort, and even their own afflictions, because they loved these people as a mother loves her child.
- This is a *work of faith*.

### **The Labor Of Love, 2:1-9-18**

**1 Thess. 2:9a** For ye remember, brethren, our *labour* and *travail*:

- Two words are used here that are important: labor, and travail.
- The word for *labor*
  - This is the Greek word KOPOS and means to TOIL.
  - It is a little strong than WORK (*ergan*) as in the work of faith.
- The word for *travail*
  - The word is Greek MOCHTHON, and Robertson says the word is stronger than the word for TOIL.
  - So, this is more than a WORK of faith. It is an extension of the work of faith on a stronger scale and a more intense application.
- Paul was intense in his execution of love and in the exercise of physical and spiritual work (hands and heart) for the people in Thessalonica.

### **9b for labouring night and day,**

- This laboring is the word ERGAN, which is simply a work done, not necessarily a hard, intense work, but one which designates his communion with Thessalonica in helping and encouraging the saints there.
- He does this night and day, showing again his dedication to this particular work.
- Preaching and teaching and doing manual labor in the daytime, perhaps; and praying and studying in the night time, or *visé vera*.

**9c because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.**

- Paul desired to be free of covetousness regarding these saints.
- He did not want them to owe him anything but to love him and to listen to his message of truth.
- So, he worked a personal job so he would not be chargeable to them.
- So, he preached the Gospel to them without charge.

**1 Thess. 2:10a Ye are witnesses, and God also,**

- Notice here the two witnesses of Paul's endeavors.
- The saints at Thessalonica were a witness of his goodness and dedication to them.
- But God also was a witness of his work.
  - John 5:36 *But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.*
  - 1 John 5:9 *If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.*
- So, it is one thing (and a good thing) when we have a witness of man of our good work for the Lord, but it is a greater thing to have the witness of God concerning the work that we do for him.

**10b how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves**

- *Holily* means "in the way of holiness." Paul always strived to be holy in his conversation, his character and way of life.
- *Justly* means "to be right." This would indicate being righteous before men, because we cannot be righteous before God in our work, only in God's grace.
  - Every preacher and pastor is under strict scrutiny, or under inspection by those around him.
  - Whether we know it or not, people are looking.
- *Unblameably* means "to so live that a person cannot be blamed with character or actions that would make void the precious message that we preach."

**10c among you that believe:**

- Paul was actually concerned with “you that believe” rather than either the Jewish or Gentile world, although the testimony before them is pretty important, also.
- As we have already noticed, Paul told Timothy to be an example of the believers.
  - 1 Timothy 4:12 *Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*
- Other believers need to see in you an example of a believer both in heart and hand, because faith prompts action.
- In this book, Paul is pointing his words to believers so that he can teach them and encourage them so they can be bold in preaching the Gospel and can be confident in their faith in Christ and the work of their church.

**1 Thess. 2:11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,**

- Here Paul goes into a more detailed description of his work among the believers in Thessalonica. He mentions three areas of work.
- First he says, “we exhorted”
  - He exhorted them to flee the wrath to come.
  - He exhorted them to believe in Christ as the only Savior.
  - He exhorted them to their duties to Christ through the church.
  - He exhorted them to continue in the faith.
  - He exhorted them to abide in and continue in the doctrines of the true faith.
- He “comforted” them
  - By preaching the pure Gospel to them, which Gospel freed them from their sins and prepared their hearts in justification to serve Christ Jesus.
  - By encouraging them that, though they have afflictions and persecutions, God will be with them and help them.
  - By expressing to them the coming of Christ to reward his children, the great gain that comes through death or the very coming of Jesus Christ.
- He “charged” them
  - He charged them in public and in private from house to house.
  - He charged them regarding their sin, that they should be faithful.
  - He charged them to preach the Gospel to every creature.
  - . . . and many other things, no doubt.



- Paul did all of this (exhorting, comforting, and charging), not with meanness and arrogance, but with the tender love of a father with his children.
- Thus, Paul was very successful, along with his company, to penetrate the hearts and minds of the Thessalonians to be built up in the faith and to carry on the work of the Gospel to other places.

### **1 Thess. 2:12a That ye would walk worthy of God,**

- Now Paul, along with his company, is charging them to “walk worthy of God.”
- Now, we know that no one is worthy of God.
- But our work can be worthy of God if it is done through faith by the grace of God.
- They are to walk in a straight line toward the coming kingdom of Christ.
- They are not to waver in their walk but to walk in imitation of Christ as he walked while here on earth.

### **12b who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.**

- Called you
  - They were worthy, because God called them.
  - He called them to eternal life, an effectual call by the Holy Spirit to be born again by God’s grace.
  - 1 Thessalonians 1:5 *For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost,*
  - They were called unto righteousness (or righteous living) to serve the Lord Christ.
  - They were called into his kingdom.
- Unto his kingdom
  - This is the kingdom of the grace of God, which at this time is a spiritual kingdom and resides in the hearts of all believers and is made up of all who believe in Christ.
  - It is the “kingdom of his dear Son.” Colossians 1:13 *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*
  - This kingdom cannot be moved and leads to that coming kingdom, a physical kingdom on earth in which Christ will be King and Lord.
  - Notice: Romans 8:30 *Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also*

*called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

- And glory
  - This is the glory of Christ as we know him to be in our hearts.
  - This is the glory in which we shall see Jesus in his coming kingdom.
  - Notice: Luke 21:27 *And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.*
  - This is the glory that Jesus had with his Father before the foundation of the world and the glory which was returned to him after he had humiliated himself by setting aside this glory to be our Redeemer and resurrecting from the dead and ascending back to heaven where he now sits in his magnificent glory, unto which we are called.

**1 Thess. 2:13a For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God,**

- Paul and his company “thank God without ceasing.” They never stopped praying for them in a regular way.
- The reason is that
  - First, for their election, which Paul has mentioned before.
  - Second, they received the word of God, which is necessary, not only for salvation, but for spiritual growth and a continual evangelism.
  - Third, that they hear it from Paul and his company, that they were a part of this great work that has been started in Thessalonica.
  - Fourth, that they received, not the word of man, but the word of God, which is truth; and it is called “the word of God.”
  - That’s what we call it: the word of God.

**13b which effectually worketh also in you that believe.**

- Not only did Paul give the word of God to them, and not only did they receive it as the word of God and not the word of man, but the word of God works effectually in them that believe.
- Notice the word “worketh.” It is present tense, which means that in their hearing they were touched effectually; that is, their hearing gave them the ability to continue to work for the advancement of the kingdom of God.

- But it works only in those who believe, not in the lost and sinful heart.

**1 Thess. 2:14a For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus:**

- The hearers of the Gospel here are called “brethren,” which indicates that Paul was persuaded that they were saved by grace through faith by the preaching of the Gospel.
- Also, they became followers, not only of Paul and his company, but of the churches of God in Judea.
  - Acts 9:31 *Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.*
- So there were other churches in Judea besides the main church in Jerusalem.
- And these churches were “in Christ Jesus.”
  - This implies there may have been churches that were NOT in Christ Jesus, perhaps false churches, which may have been established upon the idea that circumcision was necessary for salvation.
  - All true churches are “in Christ Jesus.” False ones are not.

**14b for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen,**

- Acts 17:5 *But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. 6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; 7 Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus.*

**14c even as they have of the Jews:**

- Acts 8:1 *And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the*

*apostles.*

- Hebrews 10:32 *But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;*

### **1 Thess. 2:15a Who both killed the Lord Jesus,**

- The pronoun “who” refers back to the Jews in verse 14.
- They brought the Lord Jesus to the judges and charged him to Pilate.
- But Pilate would not put him to death, but gave Jesus back to the Jews to do with him whatever they desired.
- So, the Jews killed Jesus.
- It is no wonder, then, that they should persecute the followers of Christ, and they did.

### **15b and their own prophets,**

- These were the prophets that God sent to them to teach them the truths of God, but they refused to believe the truth and persecuted and killed their own prophets, who could have saved them from many a curse from God.
- Even Jesus cried out in his agony over Jerusalem: Matthew 23:37 *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!*
- These Jews were the children of those who killed the prophets, and they had the same minds to do it, also: Matthew 23:31 *Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.*

### **15c and have persecuted us;**

- If they persecuted the prophets, why would they not persecute the followers of Christ, who is himself a prophet?

### **15d and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:**

- They considered themselves to be the chosen nation of God and purposed in their hearts that God loved them and was on their side.

- Yet they “pleased not God.”
- They had no faith in God, and Hebrews 11:6 says, *But without faith it is impossible to please him . . .*
- They had carnal minds and pleased themselves.

**1 Thess. 2:16a Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved,**

- These lost Jews had no faith, so they already despised the Gentiles.
- Even the saved Jews at first resented the fact that Peter had gone into the house of Cornelius to preach to them; but, when Peter told of the “heavenly vision,” they submitted to the fact that God had granted repentance to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews.
- In persecuting the saved Jews, these lost Jews were “forbidding,” or hindering the apostles and their followers to preach to the Gentiles that they might be saved.
- The only way of salvation is through the “foolishness of preaching,” which preaching of the Gospel was foolishness to these lost Jews.
- Romans 1:13 *Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let [or hindered] hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.*

**16b to fill up their sins alway:**

- Their fathers killed the prophets, and the fathers’ children continued to kill the prophets, and this generation has the same mind to do the same thing.
- Therefore they “fill up” their sins always, which means that generation after generation will continue to have the same mind.

**16c for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.**

- This is not eternal wrath that will come upon all unbelievers in the end, but this is the temporal wrath that is soon to come upon the Jews as the Romans come into Jerusalem and destroy their temple and their very way of life and scattering the Jews to all the nations of the world. This happened around the year 70 AD.
- It was “to the uttermost” in the sense that, when it happened, the Jews had nothing wherewith they could continue their ceremonial laws. To this day they

do not, and they say they cannot, sacrifice to God, because there is no temple.

- “The uttermost” also refers to the “fullness of the Gentiles.” This destruction will continue unto the Gentiles have been brought to the full.
- In that day God will bring salvation to the hearts of many Jews, who will believe on him and be saved by the Gospel.

**1 Thess. 2:17a But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart,**

- Acts 17:5 *But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.*
- Paul and his company were taken from them, not willingly, but because of this great uproar that took place.
- He hopes to soon see their faces again.

**17b endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.**

- Their sudden departure made Paul and his company more eager to see their faces again.

**1 Thess. 2:18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.**

- This verse shows us the “labor of love” that was needed to serve the people of Thessalonica.
- Paul evidently tried several times to come to them, as he says “once and again.”
- Satan hindered Paul in Berea.
- Satan hindered Paul at Athens by the disputes of the Jews and Stoics.
- Satan does all he can to hinder the preaching of the Gospel
- This was certainly a *labor of love* for Paul. It took much endurance in this labor to continue the work to preach the word to the Gentiles.

**Patience of Hope, 1 Thess. 2:19-20**

**1 Thess. 2:19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? 20 For ye are our glory and joy.**

- This is their Patience of Hope.
- It is not only their hope, but also their joy and their crown of rejoicing.
- In our *sure and steadfast hope* we can look forward to joy in our hearts and rejoicing from our lips.
- Paul says that the believers at Thessalonica are his hope, joy, and rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- This will be at *his coming*. When Jesus returns, Paul will rejoice, and it will be shown how much Paul rejoiced in his work for and with the Thessalonians.
- Along with disappointment with our selves, there will also be much joy and rejoicing when our hope turns to sight and we no longer hope for that which we cannot see but rejoice in that which we can see.

## Chapter 3

### Work Of Faith, 3:1-5

**1Thess. 3:1 Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;**

- Paul could no longer forbear, for he had a fire in his bones to come and see these people again.
- It was something like Jeremiah's fire in his bones in Jeremiah 20:9, that he would not stop preaching God's word because of this fire within him.
- From the reading of this verse many believe that the books to the Thessalonians was written from Athens, Greece.
- Paul thought it good to be left at Athens, because he was either with one or two other men he worked with, or he may have been alone there.
- The word *we* could be used here as a plural used for a singular, or it could be that the decision for Paul to stay at Athens came from the men in his company.
- It was from Athens, it seems, that Paul distributed the men to go to different places to do work, especially here to send Timothy to Thessalonica to know of their affairs so he could return to Paul with a report of them.

**1 Thess. 3:2a And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ,**

- Timothy had three positions that made him a good candidate for going to Thessalonica to help the church there.
- First, he was a *brother*
  - Timothy was actually more than a brother to Paul.
  - Timothy was a *son in the faith*.
  - 1 Tim. 1:2 *Unto Timothy, **my own son in the faith**: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.*
  - Paul wrote two letters to him. Timothy was a very young man when he first worked with Paul.
- Second, he was a *minister of God*
  - The word *minister*, of course, means "a servant."
  - Timothy was not a servant of Paul but a servant of Jesus Christ, or of God.
  - This is the way Paul taught and directed him through his young life.



- Paul trusted him fiercely and could depend upon Timothy for anything that he needed him to do.
- Third, Timothy was a *fellow laborer* in the Gospel of Christ.
  - This means that he labored with Paul in the Gospel of Christ.
  - Paul, then, accounted Timothy as a peer, a partner in the ministry, not a young upstart who did not know much.
  - Their relationship was deep and pure, and they did much work for the Lord's churches.

## **2b to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:**

- “To establish you”
  - The Greek word for *establish* means “to set fast” or “to strengthen.”
  - Every church needs to be strengthened, and this was an ongoing thing for the apostles and those who worked with the apostles.
  - Timothy was not an apostle, but he was a great help to them.
  - This strengthening was done by the *ministry of the word*.
  - Anything done in a church outside the word of God is to no avail.
    - The churches need to be cleansed by the word – Eph. 5:26 *That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,*
    - We must also overcome by the word – Rev. 12:11 *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.*
- “To comfort you”
  - Timothy was to comfort this church, those who were distressed by affliction and by their own consciences.
  - Barnabas had, it seems, a ministry of consolation, called a *son of consolation* (Acts 4:36).
  - There may be some who have *doubts* about all of the uproar over the seemingly new doctrine that has come to different areas of the world. These needed comfort.
  - This comfort was *concerning your faith*.
  - Their doctrine of *faith* was a faith that was *once delivered unto the saints* (Jude 1:3). This was a great comfort for these with weak consciences.
  - Also, the teaching of the coming of the Lord would be a great comfort – When preaching on the coming of Christ (in Chapter 4) we will see that Christ's coming is a great comforter to all of us. Paul says in 1 Thess. 4:18

*Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

**1 Thess. 3:3a That no man should be moved by these afflictions:**

- Paul is encouraging these young believers not to be moved (or terrified) by his afflictions.
- These believers were not accustomed to afflictions such as Paul had endured, but Paul was an old soldier of the cross and had adapted to affliction and was strong in faith to believe that God would deliver him from all of them even if it meant his death.
- Most of us today have not been tested with affliction, so it would be hard for us not to be afraid when confronted in our own lives or in the life of another person for the affliction that may be experienced.
- It is said of Paul in Acts 9:16 *For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.*

**3b for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.**

- 2 Tim. 3:12 *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*
- 1 Peter 1:6 *Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:*
- 1 Peter 4:12 *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:*
- James 1:2-4 *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*
- Phil. 1:29 *For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;*

**1 Thess. 3:4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.**

- When Paul was with the believers at Thessalonica, he told them of the troubles he would have, and it came to pass as he said it would.
- Due to Paul's preaching in the synagogue of the Jews, the unbelieving Jews

were angry, and we read in Acts 17:5 *But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.*

- The Thessalonians knew about this occasion.

**1 Thess. 3:5a For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith,**

- Paul could not bear any longer not knowing of the condition of the believers in Thessalonica, so he sent to know about their faith, whether they stood fast in it or had wavered from it.
- So Paul sent Timothy to investigate their affairs.

**5b lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.**

- Paul wanted to know their affairs, because he thought that the tempter (Satan) might in some way tempt them to draw them away from their faithfulness, and by that Paul's work among them may be in vain.
- Verses 1-5, then, show Paul's *work of faith*.

### **The Labor of Love: 3:6-12**

**1 Thess. 3:6 But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you:**

- So, Timothy was sent to Thessalonica to investigate the situation there, and he brought back *good tidings of your faith and charity*.
- Timothy told Paul that the believers there had a *good remembrance* of Paul and his company.
- They desired greatly to see Paul and his company, and Paul was anxious to see them, also, and hoped to soon go to see the believers at Thessalonica.

**1 Thess. 3:7 Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:**

- Paul was comforted by their remembrance of him and their faithful condition in the faith despite his affliction and distress.
- He was comforted by their faith, that it was solid and effective in the ministry of the word of God and in evangelism.

**1 Thess. 3:8 For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.**

- Paul and his company are now alive, not under the sentence of death as was the case which made him distressed and made him wonder about the faith of these tender believers.
- But now that the good news has come from Timothy, Paul and his company live, or have revived and made alive again to the confidence of surety of their faith and work.
- As long as they *stand fast in the Lord*, Paul will feel alive and determined to continue to do the work of the Lord with confidence and boldness.

**1 Thess. 3:9 For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;**

- Paul had once before given thanks for these believers. Now he wonders how much more thanks he can render to God in this good news from Timothy, that they are strong in the faith and in the work of God.
  - 1 Thess. 1:2 *We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;*
  - 2 Thess. 1:3 *We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;*
- This brought Paul much joy, not for his own sake, but for their sakes before God, a testimony before God of their good work in the church there.

**1 Thess. 3:10a Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face,**

- Paul is praying *exceedingly* that he might see their faces at Thessalonica.

- He does this day and night, a consistent, genuine prayer.

### **10b and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?**

- He also desires to help them to perfect anything that is lacking of their faith.
- They had faith, but they needed more instruction concerning the *doctrine of faith* and how to teach it and practice it more perfectly in their lives.
- Eph 4:11-12 *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:*

### **1 Thess. 3:11 Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.**

- Paul here asks God to direct him and his company to once again have the opportunity to visit Thessalonica and to bring them some benefit as to their growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord and to perfect their understand of the doctrine and the use of faith.

### **1 Thess. 3:12 And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:**

- Paul has been speaking much of their faith; now he adds another dimension of their character in Christ. It is that of LOVE.
- They are to increase and abound in love. He mentions three things here:
  - Love toward one another – 1 Thess. 4:9 *But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.*
  - Love all men – James 2:8 *If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:*
  - He compares this love with the love that Paul has for them. By this time they should know how much he loved them, being willing to endure afflictions for the cause of Christ and the cause of this church.

### **Patience of Hope, 3:13**

### **1 Thess. 3:13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness**

**before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.**

- Here Paul sets a goal for the believers at Thessalonica.
- They are to increase in faith and love until the coming of Jesus Christ.
- He desired that their hearts may be *stablished*. This word *stablish* means to set oneself toward a certain direction.
- That direction is toward our standing before God the Father at the coming of Jesus Christ.
- Our standing then should be *unblameable in holiness*.
  - Paul may here be speaking of the assurance of salvation; that is, being sure that these believers have their hearts directed toward God in genuine belief, that they may, by God's grace, stand before God blameless.
  - Jude 1:24 *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,*
- This will be the time when we shall stand before God *with all his saints*.
  - Jude 1:14 *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh **with ten thousands of his saints,***
  - 2 Thess. 1:10 *When he shall come to be **glorified in his saints,** and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.*
- This is the *patience of hope*.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Work Of Faith 4-1-8**

**1 Thess. 4:1a Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, . . .**

- “We beseech you, brethren” means that Paul and his company were pleading with the Thessalonians. Paul is not only suggesting that they work for the Lord in faith; but he is begging them to do so, because Paul knows how important it is for believers to also work for the Lord. Faith is “unto good works” according to Ephesians 2:10.
- He also “exhorts” them, or encourages them. He could plead with them in an arrogant and supercilious manner, but he also exhorts them, or lifts them up, encourages them to be faithful in their service.
- Paul does this exhorting “by the Lord Jesus.” This indicates that Paul has been led by our Savior to beseech and exhort these believers much as he does in 2 Corinthians 5:20 *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you **in Christ's stead**, be ye reconciled to God.*
- He pleads with them to *walk and to please God.*
  - First we are to walk with and for the Lord Jesus.
  - Then, we are to please God. In pleasing Jesus Christ we are pleasing God.

**1b so ye would abound more and more.**

- The believers at Thessalonica had received this plea from Paul, and he encourages them, not only to *walk and to please God*, but also to *abound more and more.*
- That is, they were to grow in their faithfulness to the Lord.
  - We are to grow in grace and knowledge – 2 Peter 3:18 *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*
  - Ephesians 4:15 *But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:*
  - 1 Peter 2:2 *As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*

- Many have stopped growing in the Lord. This is to our shame.

**1 Thess. 4:2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.**

- They were given the commandments of faith and love, the ordinances of God (baptism and the Lord's Supper), worship and discipline in the house of God, and their conduct in the world.
- These commandments were given, not by Paul himself, but by the Lord Jesus, which make them superior to man's own moral and spiritual principles; they are God's principles.

**1 Thess. 4:3a For this is the will of God, even your sanctification,**

- The will of God is his "will of decrees," says one writer.
- It is God's will that every believer be sanctified. It is God's will in the salvation of individuals that his life reflect the internal sanctification that was performed in that individual at the time of regeneration.
- F. B. Meyer says "It is God's will that we should be holy—the whole object of our redemption has this for its purpose." Meyer differentiates between *purity* and *industry*.
- Gills differentiates between internal and external sanctification, the internal performed by the Holy Spirit in our regeneration, and the external is the working out of this internal sanctification as we live by faith.

**3b that ye should abstain from fornication:**

- Paul particularly mentions *fornication* here, because it was a rife sin among the Gentiles, and many of the Jews had followed this horrible sin.
- Robertson in his Word Pictures says, "Pagan religion did not demand sexual purity of its devotees, the gods and goddesses being grossly immoral. Priestesses were in the temples for the service of the men who came."
- This order was given to the churches in Acts 15:20 *But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and **from fornication**, and from things strangled, and from blood.*



**1Thess. 4:4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;**

- Some believe that this *vessel* is one's own body and that the body be possessed in *sanctification and honour*.
  - Every person should do so.
  - We should be sure that our bodies are kept under subjection.
  - Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:27 *But I keep under my body, and bring [it] into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*
  - A man should keep his body clean and pure for the woman that he would marry, because his body is to belong to her only and not to anyone else.
- Some believe that this *vessel* has to do with a man's wife.
  - 1 Peter 3:7 *Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto **the weaker vessel**, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.*
  - This idea can imply that a man should look for and find a wife who is a pure woman, not one given to wantonness.
  - Then he is to keep her *or to possess her* in living with her a holy lifestyle that will be pleasing to the Lord.

**1 Thess. 4:5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:**

- *Concupiscence* means "all passions of lust." That is, allowing one's own lusts to take charge of his life and surrender to all kinds of passions and feelings that bring about the *motions of sins*.
  - Romans 7:5 *For when we were in the flesh, **the motions of sins**, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.*
- The Gentiles (pagans) were all about letting their passions run wild.
  - The Gentiles may know God intuitively; that is, in their hearts and minds where God has placed this knowledge to every man.
  - We read in Romans 1:19 *Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.*
  - But they did not know God intimately: Romans 1:21 *Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

- So, in essence, they did not really know God.
- These Gentiles who *know not God* shall not inherit the kingdom of God.
  - Galatians 5:21 *Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*

**1 Thess. 4:6a That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter:**

- To defraud means “to cheat.”
  - 1 Corinthians 6:8 *Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.*
  - It means to use unjust balances when weighing out things to deceive your brother in order to make a profit.
  - This also is, no doubt, referring to the passages we just read before, that a man should not cheat on his brother by taking his wife in promiscuity.
  - Some write that *in any manner* actually can mean *in this manner*, or in the manner just discussed.
  - The words *no man go beyond* refers to a man’s going beyond the commandment of the Lord to be chaste and pure sexually, so the context that Paul is referring here to sexual impurity and not trade in business.

**6ba because that the Lord is the avenger of all such,**

- The reason for the teaching that Paul has given both now in his writing and in his presence before to these *brethren* is that *the Lord is the avenger of all such*.
- God will avenge (or judge) these sins both in this present life and in the life to come.
  - In This Life
    - By the civil powers
    - Perhaps by violent death by the hands of an avenger, or by God’s allowing a person to die by his own hand, by God himself, or at a man’s own hands in suicide.
    - Or perhaps some judgment coming down from above like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, maybe through a storm or a disease.
    - Only God would know the real truth of the matter.
  - In The Life To Come
    - God’s eternal judgment will come upon liars, fornicators, etc.
    - Revelation 21:8 *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable,*

*and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*

**6b as we also have forewarned you and testified.**

- Paul warned them of this, no doubt, when he was present with them in Thessalonica, and he now sees it necessary to remind them of this strong message, which is one in which each professor in Christ should take heed.

**1 Thess. 4:7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.**

- God has called each one of us.
  - 2 Timothy 1:9 *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,*
  - 1 Peter 5:10 *But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.*
  - 2 Peter 1:3 *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*
  - And here (4:7) – *For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.*

**1 Thess. 4:8 He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.**

- A person who despises the things Paul just referred to does not despise man only but God also.
  - He despises God the Father, who is the author of all good, all purity, all chastity, whose very will would be despised, for it is God's will that we be clean and not unclean.
  - He despises God the Son, for Jesus is the very name in which these commandments were instructed to them by Paul and other apostles, and by the Son, without which none would have any kind of sanctification, either internally or externally.

- He despises God the Holy Spirit, because it is the Spirit that indwells us and guides us to follow after Christ and gives us the energy and the wisdom to possess our vessels in honor and to keep his commandments, though we do not keep them perfectly.
- It is God who also gives us the Holy Spirit.
  - This gift of the Holy Spirit is the greatest gift that anyone can receive.
    - He regenerates our hearts
    - He leads us into all truth
    - He never leaves us nor forsakes us
    - He makes intercession for us
    - He loves us and guides us into the truth.
- This Is A Work of Faith

### **The Labor Of Love, 4:9-12**

#### **1 Thess. 4:9a But as touching brotherly love . . .**

- Paul speaks first of *brotherly love*.
- The Greek word for *brotherly love* in the Bible here is *philadelphia*.
- The word *love* is used five (5) times in 1 Thessalonians.
  - 1:3 – *labor of love*
  - 3:12 – *increase and abound in love one toward another*
  - 4:9 – In this verse *brotherly love*
  - 5:8 – *putting on the breastplate of faith and love*
  - 5:13 – *esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake*
- We have, first, the *labor of love*.
- Then we have the *love one toward another*
- Here we have *brotherly love*
- In chapter five (5) we have love mentioned with faith and is mentioned as a breastplate, as it was put on the high priest in which was placed the Urim and the Thummim, which stand for *perfection* and *light*.
- In 5:18 there is a love that is expressed for those who work among them in the church, those who are ministers of the word and doctrine, no doubt.

**9b ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to**

## **love one another.**

- There was no need in them that Paul write concerning love.
- He had to write to them of other things, such as sanctification, service, dedication, and of the Lord's commandments, but not of love.
- However, he does mention five times in the book only to remind them of that which already resides in them.
- Because they are *taught of God to love one another*.
  - He is not speaking here of their being taught by the light of nature.
  - He is not speaking of their being taught by the law of Moses.
  - He is not speaking of their being taught in the doctrine of the Gospel
  - He is not speaking of their being taught in the new commandment.
  - He is not speaking of their being taught in the example of Christ.
  - But he is speaking of their being taught by the Spirit of God internally through regeneration.
- Romans 5:5 *And hope maketh not ashamed; because the **love of God** is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*
  - Leviticus 19:18 *Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.*
  - The Scripture is quoted seven (7) times in the New Testament: Matt. 5:43; 19:19; 22:39; Mark 12:31; Romans 13:9; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8

## **1 Thess. 4:10 And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;**

- This love that was to be shown was not exclusively to their own local church
- This love was to be displayed in all Macedonia, which was a large area of Greece.
- Also, they were to *increase more and more*.
  - Increase in administering temporal things to them as needed.
  - Increase in assisting them in distress and trouble.
  - Increase in counseling them and giving them advice
  - Increase in spiritual things, whatever they may be
  - Increase in bearing one another's burdens
  - Increase in forgiving one another
  - Increase in praying one for another

- Increase in instructing and teaching one another as it is proper.
- And the implication here is that this love would increase beyond the borders of Greece into other parts of the earth – Romans 15:25 *But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.*

**1 Thess. 4:11a And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business,**

- The Greek word for *study* is a word that does not mean study as we know it today.
- The word means *to emulate* or *to strive for*.
- These folks are to strive to be quiet, not quiet in the sense of not being loud, but quiet in the sense of minding one's own business.
- We are to be industrious yet quiet in our deportment and attitude.

**11b and to work with your own hands,**

- This phrase describes what is meant by *to be quiet*.
- It means to work with your own hands.
  - First, this means that you are to do your own work and not to neglect our duties.
  - Second, it means that we are not to depend on others instead of working for ourselves.
  - Paul speaks of this again in his second letter to the Thessalonians: 2 Thess. 3:10 *For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. 11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.*
  - So, there were some who were *working not at all*. Instead, they became busybodies.
  - That's what happens when a person is not busy.

**11c as we commanded you;**

- Paul is here only reminding these believers that he has already instructed them of this, but we all need to be reminded from time to time of things we have known for a long time.

**1 Thess. 4:12a That ye may walk honestly**

- Paul wants them to walk honestly, or decently.
- Every person paying his own way and not being a beggar or a thief or some other kind of person that would bring disgrace to the Gospel of Christ.

### **12b toward them that are without,**

- To live honestly toward those who are without the churches, those who are lost and without Christ, those who may be misers rather than workers, those who know not Christ and are without hope and without God in the world.
- It is not for us to be a stumbling block to those without but to be a witness, not only of the Gospel, but of the fruit of the Gospel, which is to live quietly and do our own work.

### **12c and that ye may have lack of nothing.**

- He is considering here that God would provide all the necessities of life for these believers and that they would lack nothing, since that is the way it should be with true and faithful believers.
- Psalm 23:1 *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.*
- He knows what we have need of before we ask, but we are to ask for our needs.
- Matthew 6:8 *Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.*
- But that we would have all the necessary knowledge and instruction and of earthly goods so we would not need to be dependent upon any other person.
- Proverbs 21:25 *The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.*
- This is the *labour of love*.

### **Patience of Hope 4:13 - 5:3**

- **1 Thess. 4:13a But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep,**
  - Evidently Paul's hearers had a tendency to be ignorant about the coming of the Lord, and especially about the saints who had died (*are asleep*).

- So, he takes time here to be sure they understand a little better about some of the things concerning the eternal future.
- They also did not understand about the resurrection of the dead and the joy and bliss that will be for the saints when they are resurrected.
- **13b that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.**
  - They also had a tendency to sorrow much concerning *them which are asleep*, as though they were lost from them forever and that they would never see them again or ever again have fellowship with them.
  - The world has an inordinate sorrow and lengthy mourning for their dead loved ones, but believers can more easily comfort one another with the words concerning the coming of the Lord and the benefit of knowing that they will be with him and with their loved ones forever in complete happiness and bliss.
  - Paul comforts them with these words.
  - Those who are saved, the saints of God, Paul says, are different from those who *have no hope*.
  - The lost have no hope in this life or the life to come, but the saints have a sure and steadfast hope for eternity, for those future days when all saints will be together with the Lord and have fellowship.

**1 Thess. 4:14a For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again,**

- This is the essence of the Gospel story: that Jesus died and rose again.
- This is the power of the Gospel. This is the work that Jesus came to do to accomplish our redemption.
- It is important that Jesus both DIE and RISE again. The song ONE DAY:

*Living he loved me; dying he saved me;  
Buried he carried my sins far away.*

*Rising he justified freely forever.  
One day he's coming, Oh, glorious day!*

- Jesus is the Scapegoat – Leviticus 16:10 *But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.*



- The priest would put his hands on the scapegoat symbolizing how that God placed our sins upon Jesus (our Scapegoat).
- The scapegoat was then killed (as our Scapegoat was killed).
- The scapegoat was loosed into the wilderness never to be seen again.
- That portrays our sins' being taken away, never to be remembered again.
- Jeremiah 31:34 . . . *for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*
- Though the scapegoat never returned, the Lord Jesus did return from the dead.
- Now, Paul goes a step further in the next verse and says,

**14b even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.**

- First, he explains that the saints *sleep in Jesus*.
- That means they are dead in their bodies, but they are at home with the Lord in Heaven awaiting Jesus' return.
- And when Jesus returns, the saints will *God bring with him*.
- Zechariah 14:5 *And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and ***all the saints with thee***.*
- What a joy and comfort this is to believers who are now living.
- Our loved ones who *sleep in Jesus* will come with him.
- Paul will explain this further in the coming verses.

**1 Thess. 4:15a For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord,**

- Paul has some new instruction for his hearers and for us.
- So here it insists on the fact that his message is coming from the word of the Lord, a word that God has given to him.
- It is important that this word be from the Lord, for Paul's authority is superseded by the authority of the Lord.
- Not only so, but a word from the Lord would more readily be heard and believed than a word simply from the Apostle Paul, though they had great regard for him.

**15b that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord**

- When Jesus returns, there will be some people remaining, or living at his coming.
- Paul is not here intimating that these very people who are alive in his day will be the ones who will be living when Jesus comes again, but he is simply saying that there will be remnant of believers who are living when Jesus comes.
- His use of the word *we* refers to believers, not to Paul and those living then, as Paul is a believer, and he believes that many of his hearers are believers, also.
- We could be that remnant. That is his point, I think.

### **15c shall not prevent them which are asleep.**

- Here the word *prevent* is used in its archaic form. Marriam-Webster gives these two definitions to the archaic usage of the word *prevent*.
  - c : to act ahead of
  - d: to go or arrive before
- So, then, this word in its archaic form means in this context that the living saints will not have their resurrected bodies before those who have already died in the Lord.

### **1 Thess. 4:16a For the Lord himself**

- There is only one Lord, so it is he, himself, who will appear.
- Acts 1:11 . . . ***this same Jesus***, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.
- John 14:3 . . . ***I will come*** again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.
- John the Baptist asked the question: Matthew 11:3 *And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?*
- There is no other Jesus, though some would say there is:
  - 2 Corinthians 11:4 *For if he that cometh preacheth ***another Jesus***, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive ***another spirit***, which ye have not received, or ***another gospel***, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.*
- So, if you have another Jesus, you have another spirit and another gospel.

## **16b shall descend from heaven with a shout,**

- This same Lord himself shall descent (or come down) from heaven.
  - This teaches us that Jesus is in heaven. He is sitting at the right hand of the Father.
  - 1 Peter 3:22 *Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.*
  - See also Rom. 8:24; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2.
  - This *shout* is a shout of an army commander as though going into battle.
  - When Jesus comes, he will come as King of kings and Lord of lords, and he will be accompanied by his army – Revelation 19:14 *And the armies [which were] in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*
  - Adam Clarke says, “Then the κελευσμα (shout or order) shall be given for the dead to arise.”
  - Psalm 88:10 *Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee? Selah.*
  - This shout is an order from a commander for the saints to rise.
  - This shout could very well be “Arise, ye saints of God.”
  - And the bodies of every believer will be joined with their spirits to rise from the dead, and their bodies will be changed in a twinkling of an eye.
  - 1 Corinthians 15:52 *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

## **16c with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God:**

- The voice of the archangel
  - Some say the archangel is Christ; some say it is Michael, so called in Jude 1:9 *Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.*
  - So, if the archangel here is Christ, then Michael is Christ. Some think that is the case.
  - You can work that out to your own satisfaction.
- The trump of God
  - Some say this will be the same as the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11:15,

but I do not believe that is the case.

- I believe it could well be that the *trump of God* is the same as the *voice of the archangel*.
- This is like the command of God in the beginning when he commanded the light to come upon the earth.
- God created the universe by a command, so he will create us anew by a command.
- Only his voice could be so authoritative that he can recreate.
- Let us continue to read in 1 Corinthians 15:53 *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.*
- This corruptible putting on incorruption is done by the command, the voice, or the trump of God.

#### **16d and the dead in Christ shall rise first:**

- The *dead in Christ* are those who have died in the Lord already, those who will die before the Lord's second coming.
- Revelation 14:13 *And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.*
- Those in the graves will *rise first*.
- They will come forth from their graves before we which are alive and remain.
- Their bodies will be united with their spirits, and they will come forth from the graves and stand with us on the earth, probably for just a split second.
- They will *rise first*, because we who are alive will not have been changed corruptible to incorruptible.

#### **1 Thess. 4:17a Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air:**

- We who are alive and remain will be *caught up together* (Rapture).
- The *dead in Christ* will rise first, but they will not leave the earth first.
- We will be *caught up together*, those who slept in Jesus, and those of us who are still alive on the earth at Jesus' coming.

- I am assuming here that we who are here today will be alive when Jesus comes, but we all know that may not be the case.
- So, we understand that *we which are alive and remain* refers to those people who are living at Jesus' coming, whoever they are.
- We will be *caught up* in the clouds, in the sky, to meet the Lord in the air.
- Some have stressed the fact that Jesus does not come down to the earth but rather meets believers in the air.

**17b and so shall we ever be with the Lord.**

- This does not mean that we will always be in the air with him.
- It simply means that wherever he is, that is where we will be forever.
- John 14:3 *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*
- Eventually, as you know, we will be with him here on earth when later he does come to the earth to set up his earthly kingdom.
- Matthew 5:5 *Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*

**1 Thess. 4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.**

- It should be a great comfort to know these things.
- These words here spoken by the Apostle Paul should be a comfort to the Thessalonians as well as to us today.
- We are, I think, to speak these words often to one another to bring comfort and assurance to the heart of every believer.

**1 Thess. 5:1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.**

- Paul wrote to them about many things, and several of those things concerned the coming of the Lord, and this was for their encouragement and assurance, which they are to us, also.
- But to write to them of the *times and the seasons*, would be of no value to them, since the times and seasons of his coming are set by the Lord and has not been revealed to us.
- Acts 1:6 *When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying,*

*Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.*

- It would be trivial and worthless to try to write of these times and seasons of the coming of the Lord, for they are *put in his own power*.
- We are not to attempt to set times and seasons of the Lord's return, but these verses in Acts go on to say that we should be witnesses and leave those things regarding his coming to God himself.

**1 Thess. 5:2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.**

- Paul continues his thoughts here concerning the *patience of hope*.
- He begins with the word *for*, which means *because*.
- They need not know the *times and seasons* of Christ's coming, *because*.
- Because they *know perfectly*, in a solid and exact way.
- Notice what the Lord himself said in Matthew 24:42 *Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.*
- Throw all your books and tapes away that try to tell you when the Lord is coming.
- We don't need to know when he is coming, only THAT he is coming, and that it can be any time.
- He will be coming as a *thief in the night*.
  - A thief comes in the dark; that is, when no one is looking or expecting.
  - A thief comes suddenly to take by surprise.
  - Luke 12:40 *Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.*

**1 Thess. 5:3a For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them,**

- Notice the pronoun change in this verse.
- Paul has before been using the word *we* and *yourselves* and *one another*.
- Now he uses *they*.
- He is speaking to the unregenerated, those who are lost in their sins.
- They say *Peace and safety*.
- They believe that they can build their barns, make more money, live to an old

age, and enjoy life to the fullest.

- Luke 12:18 *And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.*
- These verses go on to say in verses 20 and 21 *But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? 21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.*

### **3b as travail upon a woman with child;**

- When a woman is in travail, she is in a position that is unavoidable.
- She will have this baby. There is no doubt of that.
- It will come, not when she desires, but when the time is full.
- It may be today, or it may be tomorrow.
- She does not know.
- Our travail is the pain of this world, living in a corruptible body, and hoping for that which is sure to come.
- But the lost, though they have this travail, do not understand that the coming of the Lord is unavoidable.
- Their *Peace and safety* will be short-lived. They must meet the Lord.

### **3c and they shall not escape.**

- That which is unavoidable in their unbelief is that *they shall not escape*.
- They shall not escape this *sudden destruction*.
- We read in Philippians 3:19 *Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.*
- This sudden destruction is the judgment and wrath of God, from which we who have believed have fled from the wrath to come (See. Matt. 3:7).
- But the lost will not escape.
- Matthew 23:33 *Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?*
- Christ is our freedom, or our escape.
- The invitation is here: Hebrews 2:3 *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was*

*confirmed unto us by them that heard him;*

- To the Hebrews this writer tells his hearers that, if they can easily turn away from the faith that they profess, or neglect to be faithful to that faith they profess, then they, no doubt, are not true believers, and they will not escape the judgment of God.
- One must have true faith in Christ and his Gospel, and that is proven by the faithfulness of those who profess to believe, who truly will not fall away from Christ's truths.
- We, rather, are sealed with that holy Spirit of promise: Ephesians 1:13 *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,*
- So, this is the *patience of hope*.
  - Here is our hope: 1 John 3:3 *And every man that hath this **hope** in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*
  - Here is our patience: Hebrews 6:12 *That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and **patience** inherit the promises.*
  - Here is our patience and hope: Romans 8:25 *But if we **hope** for that we see not, then do we with **patience** wait for it.*

## **Chapter Five**

**Work Of Faith**, 5:4-11

**Labor Of Love**, 5:12-22

**Patience Of Hope**, 5:23-24

**Conclusion**, 5:25-28

**Work Of Faith**, 5:4-11

**1 Thess. 5:4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.**

- Their work of faith began when they were taken out of darkness into his marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9).
- This made them *brethren* in the Lord, because we are in the family of God,



being saved by grace (Eph. 3:15).

- The reason that this is significant is that, being in the light, they will not be surprised by *that day*.
- That day is the day when the Lord will return to take us out of the world.
- The thief usually comes at night; but, when the lights are on, the thief generally stays away.
- Since we are in the light, we will see the signs of the times and be ready when Jesus comes with no surprises, even though he will come at a time when we think not.

**1 Thess. 5:5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.**

- In verse five (5) Paul describes who we are.
- We are *children of light, and the children of the day*.
- John 1:9 *That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.*
- Matthew 5:14 *Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*
- Being that *city that is set on an hill*, we are witnesses to the world, for the world cannot help but see us at work in the world and the difference that is in us as the children of the world.
- The world does not like us
  - John 15:18 *If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.*
  - 1 John 3:13 *Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.*
- Therefore, we are *not of the night, nor of darkness*.
  - Matthew 4:16 *The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.*
  - Ephesians 5:8 *For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:*

**1 Thess. 5:6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.**

- We are not to sleep as others do.
  - We are not like the uncircumcised Gentiles, or those unbelievers who are in

- the darkness and are asleep from the truths of the Gospel
- But we are to *watch* and *be sober*.
    - Some believers are snoozing.
    - They have let down their guards concerning the return of the Lord.
    - They have heard the news all their lives that Jesus is coming again, but it is hard for them to believe it sincerely, though they agree with it mentally.
    - So Paul says in Romans 13:11 *And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*
    - Every day we live is one step closer to death or to the coming of the Lord.
    - Our salvation, our complete salvation, body and spirit, is awaiting us.
    - There is no time to sleep but to be diligent.
    - Peter says in 2 Peter 3:13-14 *Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. 14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, **be diligent** that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.*
    - To be diligent means to stay awake and to watch.
    - Again we read in Matthew 24:42 *Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.*
    - It is a work of faith to stay awake.

**1 Thess. 5:7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.**

- Those in the night are the lost, who enjoy the night, sleeping away from the light and are drunken in the night.
- This, compared to our work of faith, which is a work that is to be done in the light, not in the darkness.
- We must expose the darkness and give the message to those in the darkness to bring them to the light.
- Acts 26:23 *That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should **shew light unto the people**, and to the Gentiles.*

**1 Thess. 5:8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.**

- Now here is the REAL work of faith.
  - Let us be sober – sober in mind and heart, thinking piously and spiritually in the will of God.
  - Let us put on the breastplate of faith and love
    - Ephesians 6:10-18 *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;*
    - Our work of faith is a battle, and we must fight that battle with this spiritual armor.

**1 Thess. 5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,**

- Here is the reason for our *work of faith*.
  - God has *appointed* us – The word for *appointed* means to “lay down a path, to fix or establish.”
  - God has fixed things for us, established a way, a truth, and a life (John 14:6).
  - This fixed path is a path to obtain salvation
    - From before the foundation of the world, God has appointed believers to obtain salvation, both spiritually and physically.
    - We were first born again by the Spirit of God by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and his work.
    - Then we wait, in the light of his grace, to obtain salvation of our bodies.
    - This is done by the Lord Jesus Christ.

**1 Thess. 5:10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.**

- Because Jesus died for us. That is the crux of our salvation, both spiritual and physical, a complete salvation.
- This is true whether we wake or sleep.
  - To wake means to be saved and be alive in our bodies.
  - To sleep means to be *asleep in Jesus*, or dead in our bodies but alive in the spirit.
- All this, so that we can live together with him.
  - *That where I am, there ye may be also* (John 14:6).

**1 Thess. 5:11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.**

- After teaching these things about the coming of the Lord, our *work of faith* is to comfort ourselves together.
- It is also to *edify one another*, that is, to encourage one another, or lift up one another in the coming of the Lord.
- They were at this time accustomed to do this, but there is a warning here to continue to do it, lest this church stray from this comfort of one another.
- This is our *work of faith*.

### **Labor Of Love, 5:12-22**

**1 Thess. 5:12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;**

- A labor of love included **knowing them** that labor among you.
  - These are the pastors among the people at the church at Thessalonica.
  - These pastors *labored among them*.
  - They labored with the people, loving them, helping them through rough times, prayed with them during sickness and the death of loved ones.
  - But they also labored in the word and doctrine – 1 Timothy 5:17 *Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they*

*who labour in the word and doctrine.*

- They give themselves to meditation, study, and prayer – 2 Timothy 2:15 *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*
- They preach the word in season and out of season – 2 Timothy 4:2 *Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*
- The *labor of love* is to *know them*, take note of them, and think of them and their welfare.

**1 Thess. 5:13a And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.**

- The labor of love is to *esteem them very highly in love*.
  - This means to honor them abundantly.
  - They should be well spoken of in the community.
- For their work's sake
  - These pastors are not to be slothful, lazy.
  - They are to be at work (ergon).
  - A pastor's duties are work, not relaxation and wasting time.
  - Paul told young Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:5 *But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.*
  - Here is some of their work:
    - Endure afflictions – Be strong in persecution
    - The duties of an evangelist is work (ergon).
    - Prove their ministry – by consistently and properly doing the work of preaching the Gospel and administering the ordinances.
    - To have a good reputation with those without the church.

**13b And be at peace among yourselves.**

- Church members are to be at peace one with another.
- Sometimes this is a great challenge, since there is a human tendency to division among church members and schisms within the church.
- So *the labor of love* includes having peace in the church.

**1 Thess. 5:14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly,**

## **comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.**

- Part of the *labor of love* is to *warn them that are unruly*.
  - That might sound strange; but, if we do not warn them that are unruly, we will be causing confusion in the church.
  - 1 Timothy 5:20 *Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.*
- Part of the *labor of love* is to *comfort the feebleminded*.
  - These are the people who have lost loved ones and are under much stress from mourning.
  - Also, those who are struggling, being poor, or enduring suffering or persecution.
- Part of the *labor of love* is to *support the weak*.
  - These are the weak in faith or in the knowledge of the Lord.
  - Also, those who are weak in mind.
  - Those who are weak physically – Romans 15:1 *We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.*
- Part of the *labor of love* is to *be patient toward all men*.
  - This includes the work just mentioned and also that we should . . .
    - Romans 12:19 *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but [rather] give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance [is] mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*
    - Eph 4:27 *Neither give place to the devil.*
- All this because of our *labor of love*.

## **1 Thess. 5:15a See that none render evil for evil unto any man;**

- The word *render* is from the root Greek word for *give*.
- This word with its prefix means *to give over*.
- *evil for evil*
  - Not to give an evil word for an evil word received from someone else.
  - Not to give an evil action for an evil action received from another.
  - Not to give an evil persecution for an evil persecution from someone.
- *unto any man*
  - Not to a friend, not to an enemy, a profane person, a persecutor, and indeed not to another friend or brother in Christ.
  - We are not to *give over* any evil in return for any evil that may be sent to us no matter how small or large it may be.

- Romans 12:19 *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*
- Remember, this is a *Labor of Love*.

**15b but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.**

- The word *follow* in this verse comes from the Greek word that means *to follow after, to pursue, to run after*.
- We are to pursue that which is good, run after that which is good, flee toward that which is good. The idea here, I think, is that we are fleeing God's wrath, fleeing from the devil, and running to God and his goodness and blessings.
- We are to do this in the company of all people (*all men*).
- We are to pursue good at work, at play, at church, in our families, wherever we go and whatever we do.

**1 Thess, 5:16 Rejoice evermore.**

- Not physically
  - We cannot always rejoice in a physical way due to the fact that many hardships accompany us on our way through life.
  - Physically, we are to *go to the house of mourning*.
  - Ecclesiastes 7:4 *The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.*
- But spiritually
  - In our spirit, we can rejoice in the Lord
  - Isaiah 61:10 *I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.*
  - *Rejoice in the Lord* is found nine (9) times in the Bible, seven (7) times in the Old Testament, and two (2) times in the New Testament.
  - And here we have *Rejoice evermore*.
  - *evermore* literally means *every when* and also means *always*.
  - *Evermore* means "at all times."
- Acts 5:41 *And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.*

- Romans 12:12 *Rejoicing in **hope**; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;*
- So, in suffering or in hope we are to rejoice.

### **1 Thess. 5:17 Pray without ceasing.**

- In other words, praying without stopping the practice of praying.
- Believers in Christ are to be daily and often found in prayer to God.
- We should pray daily and often due to the fact that in prayer we are blessed with communion with God and also to hear God's calling to fresh duties that we are to perform, possibly in that very same day.
- Also, we need new grace, strength, and assistance for our Christian lives.
- Also, to attenuate our often discouragements and salve for our trials.
- Also, to come boldly to the throne of grace as a divine privilege that we might receive help in time of need (Heb. 4:16).

### **1 Thess. 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.**

- We are to give thanks to God, our Father.
  - Ephesians 5:20 *Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;*
- We are to give thanks for everything.
  - **For temporal things**, such as food, clothing, health, or our own being and preservation, for the mercies of life, and the temporal things in our religious life such as (1) the preaching of God's word, (2) the ordinances: baptism and Lord's supper, (3) for preachers, singers, evangelists, etc.
  - **For Spiritual things**, such as these things listed by one commentator:
    - . . . for electing, redeeming, regenerating, adopting, pardoning, justifying, and persevering grace: for a meetness for heaven, a right unto it, and a good hope of it; and especially for Jesus Christ, for such an husband, such an head, such a surety and Saviour, and advocate with the Father, as he is; and for life, peace, joy, comfort, righteousness, and salvation in him . . . .
- This is the will of God in Christ for Paul's hearers.
  - The giving of thanks is a part of the *perfect will of God* mentioned in . . .
  - Romans 12:2 *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by*



*the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

### **1 Thess. 5:19 Quench not the Spirit.**

- No one can quench the Spirit of God himself, but he may quench . . .
- The graces of the Spirit
  - Faith, hope, love, zeal, joy, knowledge, which cannot be totally lost but can be quenched and lessened in strength.
- The gifts of the Spirit
  - Some of these gifts were given to the apostles on the Day of Pentecost under the metaphor of *fire*.
  - Therefore, Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 1:6 *Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.*
  - Some of these gifts were extraordinary, such as raising the dead, but others were more common gifts such as the gift of knowledge and understanding and wisdom.
- How are these quenched?
  - Matthew 25:18 *But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.*
  - Also, the non-use of these gifts, that they lie dormant so long that they are rendered useless and unprofitable to the work of the Lord.
  - Also, in concealing the truth and not confessing it publicly.
  - These and other things quench the Spirit of God, because God works in us to perform his will – Philippians 2:13 *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*
  - If we suppress or neglect his will, then we quench the Spirit and the work of God in our lives.

### **1 Thess. 5:20 Despise not prophesyings.**

- We are not to despise the prophecies of the Old Testament, those that reach forward in time to teach us of the birth, the life, the death, the burial, and the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

- Isaiah prophecies around 600 years before Christ's birth, yet his prophecies are true.
- David spoke of Jesus' work in Psalm 22-23-24, including his ascension to heaven after his death and burial.
- Other prophecies told of his bones' not being broken, of his being deceived by a friend and even the place where he would be born.
- We should not despise these prophecies but rather cherish them.

### **1 Thess. 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.**

- Rather than despise the prophecies, we are to *prove all things*, I think referring to these prophecies of the Old Testament (the Scriptures).
  - We are to examine these prophecies with the word of truth
  - 1 John 4:1 *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*
  - John 5:39 *Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.*
- Then the things that are found to be tried and tested with the word of truth are to be *held fast*.
  - We are to hold them and not let them go.
  - Even though men may disregard or show contempt toward them, we are not to let them go, or let them slip – Hebrews 2:1 *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.*
  - 2 Timothy 1:13 *Hold fast the form of sound words, . . .*
  - Hebrews 3:6 . . . *hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.*
  - Hebrews 4:14 and 10:23 tell us . . . *let us hold fast our profession.*
  - Revelation 2:25 *But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.*
  - Revelation 3:3 *Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. . .*

### **1 Thess. 5:22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.**

- We are to abstain from the motions of evil (or sin—Rom. 7:5), every occasion of sin, that which leads to sin, and that which may be suspected to be sin by others.

- Romans 6:6 *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*
- Some commentators think this means all *kinds* or *forms* of sin, but the Greek word is used as an actual appearance.
- John 5:37 *And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.*
- And this is a “Labor of Love.”

### **Patience of Hope**, 1 Thess. 5:23-28

#### **1 Thess. 5:23a And the very God of peace**

- Our God is a God of peace.
- Colossians 1:20 *And, having **made peace through the blood of his cross**, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.*
- Philippians 4:7 *And the peace of God, which **passeth all understanding**, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*
- John 14:27 *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*
- So, it is this God of peace who is instructing us to do his will.

#### **23b sanctify you wholly;**

- Paul here desires that the God of peace will sanctify each and every one of his listeners.
- **Positional Sanctification** is that setting apart of the soul and spirit unto God, saving the soul from sin, and that is perfect sanctification.
- **Practical Sanctification** is that setting apart a little at a time as a new Christian grows in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.
  - This sanctification is progressive.
  - 1 Corinthians 3:1 *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto **carnal**, even as unto **babes in Christ**.*
  - Mark 4:28 *For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the **full corn** in the ear.*
  - Ephesians 4:15 *But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all*

*things, which is the head, even Christ:*

**23c and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

- And while we are being sanctified, or while we are growing up in the Lord, Paul prays for a specific situation, which he knows that God will perform.
- That is, that the spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless.
- This is another way of teaching eternal security.
- While we are growing, God is keeping our souls in divine preservation to be presented to his Father at his coming.
- Jude 1:24 *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,*
- This is our final destination. We shall be delivered there by God himself due to his preserving us through this life that he might present us faultless to the glory of God with joy, exceeding joy, knowing that it was God himself who did all of this for us, and we owe all honor, praise, and glory to God himself in Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit.
- This is our Patience of Hope.
- Patience, because, as stated in Romans 8:25 *But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.*
- Hope, because God gives us a sure and steadfast hope in Christ – Hebrews 6:19 *Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;*