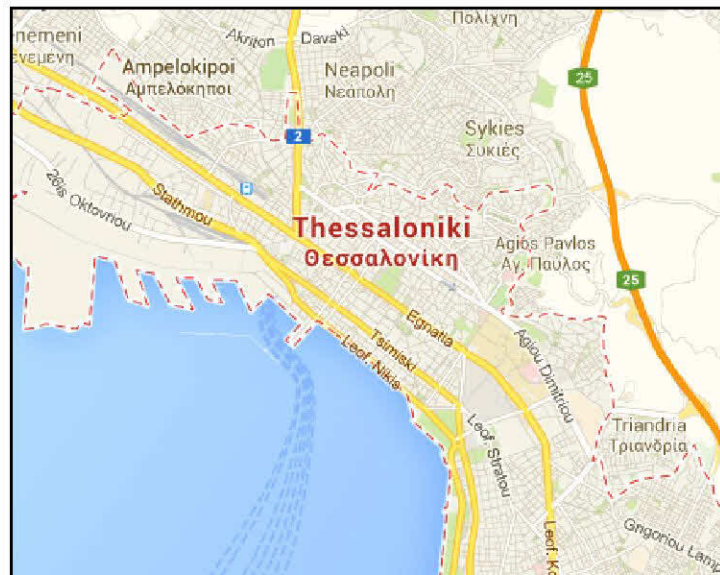


The Books Of 1 & 2 Thessalonians



By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe

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1 Thessalonians

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe - First Baptist Church, Harrison, Ohio
Acts 17:1-10

LESSON ONE: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5
April 27, 2014

I. HISTORY OF THE CITY

- A. Thessalonica is a city of Macedonia.
- B. "In c. 315 BC Cassander, the son-in-law of Philip of Macedon (who fathered Alexander the Great) gathered and organized the area villages into a new metropolis, Thessalonica. He gave the city its name in honor of his wife, the half-sister of Alexander."
- C. Her name was Thessalonica.
- D. Almost all New Testament scholars accept 1 Thessalonians as genuine book written by the Apostle Paul.
- E. This does not prove its genuineness, but many early so-called church scholars quoted from this book: Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian.
- F. We read of the history of this book in Acts 17:1-10

II. INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK, 1 Thess. 1:1-10

- A. Greeting, 1
 1. Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus, which we know as Timothy.
 2. The church is in God and in the Lord Jesus Christ
 3. Grace be to you, extended in greeting, wishing grace.
 4. And peace, which, no doubt, include the peace of God (Phil. 4:7; Col. 3:16) and peace with God (Rom. 5:1).
 5. Colossians 3:15 *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.*
- B. Giving Thanks, 2
 1. He thanks God for them and prays for them in his and OUR prayers.
 2. Which we should do for our own churches.

III. REMEMBERING THREE THINGS, 3

- A. Work of faith
 1. This is the working faith, not the saving faith.
 2. Galatians 5:6 *For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.*
- B. Labor of love
 1. Hebrews 6:10 *For God [is] not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.*
- C. Patience of hope

1. Romans 5:3 *And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 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.*

D. “in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;” 3

IV. YOUR ELECTION OF GOD

A. The word “election” is found six (6) times in the New Testament, 4

1. Romans 9:11 *(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)*
2. Romans 11:5 *Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*
3. Romans 11:7 *What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.*
4. Romans 11:28 *As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.*
5. 1 Thessalonians 1:4 *Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.*
6. 2 Peter 1:10 *Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:*

B. We should not be afraid of this word.

C. Explanation of election, 5

1. 1 Thessalonians 1:5 *For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.*

1 Thessalonians

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe - First Baptist Church, Harrison, Ohio

LESSON TWO: 1 Thessalonians 1:6-10

May 4, 2014

I. REHEARSING THE PAST LESSON

A. Work of Faith

1. Remember that faith works – James 2:26 *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

B. Labor of Love

1. Hebrews 6:10 *For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.*

C. Patience of Hope

1. Romans 8:25 *But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.*

II. FOLLOWERS OF US, 6

A. We must understand that, before a person follows Christ, he first follows a person.

B. He hears the Gospel from a person.

C. He trusts the person to some degree.

D. This is why preachers must have a good reputation – 1 Thess. 4:11-12 *And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; 12 That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.*

E. Children look up to older people, usually boys to men and girls to women. That is why we must keep a good reputation and to pay attention and teach the young folks.

F. Many of these, no doubt were there in Acts 17:4 when many believed and consorted with Paul and Silas.

III. AND OF THE LORD, 6

A. The whole purpose of following a person is so that you may eventually follow the Lord.

B. This means that every person giving the Gospel must follow the Lord, also; otherwise, the person to whom we are witnessing may be led in the wrong direction.

C. We are leading them to service of Jesus Christ.

D. We are teaching them through the word of God to be disciples of Christ.

E. We are not building a following for ourselves.

1. 1 Corinthians 1:12 *Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.*

2. 1 Corinthians 3:4 *For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?*

F. They became followers of the Lord after they heard God's message from Paul.

IV. THEIR FOLLOWING THE LORD PROVEN BY AFFLICTION, 6

- A. Those who follow the Lord are expected to have affliction and tribulation in the world, and these did.
1. 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.*
 2. John 16:33 *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*
 3. 2 Corinthians 6:3-5 *Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed: 4 But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, 5 In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;*
- B. THEIR FOLLOWING THE LORD PROVEN BY THEIR JOY,6
1. Notice Acts 13:49 *And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. 50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. 51 But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. 52 And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.*
 2. Acts 20:24 *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*
 3. Romans 14:17 *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

V. BEING EXAMPLES TO OTHER BELIEVERS, 7-8

- A. Being faithful in believing and in afflictions, these believers became examples to other believers in their regions of Macedonia and Achaia.
- B. Paul made himself an example so that they may follow him and become examples to others: 2 Thessalonians 3:9 *Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.*
- C. Now that they have followed Paul and the Lord, they no longer need for Paul to speak for them.
- D. They can take up the work of evangelism themselves.
- E. 2 Timothy 2:2 *And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*
- F. He says in our text in verse 8: “in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad.”
- G. Now Paul does not need to go to every place and preach the gospel to others, but he has now followers of his doctrine who can go in those places and preach the Gospel.

VI. TURNED TO GOD FROM IDOLS, 9

- A. The true nature of the faith of these believers at Thessalonica is the fact that they have truly turned to God from idols, idols of the world, of self, of sin, and turned to God by faith, trusting him for salvation and for service.
- B. Those who believe amiss have clung to their old idols, not truly turning from themselves and the world.
- C. Those who truly believe are pilgrims and strangers as Peter says in 1 Peter 2:11 *Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;*
- D. Paul was their example, they were examples to others, and their story is an example for us today to be believers in Jesus Christ and also servants, abstaining from fleshly lusts and being ambassadors for Christ serving the true God.

VII. WAITING FOR JESUS, 10

- A. We see two infinitives in verses 9 and 10.
- B. In verse 9 we see the infinitive “to serve.” We are to serve the living and true God.
- C. The infinitive in verse 10 is “to wait.”
- D. We are, as we serve God, to wait “for his Son from heaven.”
- E. Sometimes we get discouraged while serving God. We get tired and disheartened.
- F. But, along with serving God, we are to wait.
 - 1. Titus 2:13 *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*
 - 2. 2 Peter 3:12 *Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?*
 - 3. Jude 1:21 *Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*
- G. So we are to serve and to wait. This is the nature behind the Great Commission of the Lord in Matt. 28:18-20.

Matthew 28:18-20 *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

1 Thessalonians

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe - First Baptist Church, Harrison, Ohio
Acts 17:1-10 Background Reading

LESSON THREE: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12
May 11, 2014 PM

- I. THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF THE APOSTLES' ENTERING THESSALONICA
 - A. It was not in vain, 1
 - 1. KENOS: Empty, destitute of anything to bring to the people, empty purpose, without work.
 - 2. Not with vain words or pomp and circumstance, but with humility and lowliness, even as our Lord came into the world to serve the purpose of God.
 - B. Even after we had suffered, 2
 - 1. They suffered much at Philippi. See Acts 16:22-24
 - 2. Their entering in was worth the suffering that had been done before, suffering they may have to receive also in Thessalonica as far as they knew; but they went anyway.
 - C. Not of deceit, 3
 - 1. PLANE: A wandering or straying about. Nonsense, a mental wandering. Error, straying from the truth of God.
 - 2. They went there to preach the truth in love, not to deceive, wandering from the truth.
 - D. Not of uncleanness, 3
 - 1. AKATHARSIA: Physical and moral impurity, sinful lusts, impure motives.
 - 2. They did not enter into Thessalonica with immoral lives, parading their sins while pretending to preach righteousness.
 - E. Not in guile, 3
 - 1. They did not enter into Thessalonica in craftiness, trying to trick people into believing, but depending upon the work of God in their hearts.
 - F. Not as pleasing men but God, 4
 - 1. The apostles were "allowed" or were deemed worthy (by the grace of God) to be put in trust, having faith in, the gospel.
 - 2. So, they spoke the gospel, not to please men, but to please God; for it is God who put them in trust of it, giving them faith both to believe the gospel and also faith to preach the gospel.
 - 3. Because it is God who "trieth" or tests, examines, or proves the hearts of men.
 - G. Not with flattering words, 5
 - 1. "Flattering" – KOLAKEIA: "to appear, to show in the light."
 - 2. They did not enter in to the Thessalonians just to show off, in other words.
 - 3. They did not use flattering words, fancy words, words to persuade, except the word of the gospel alone.
 - H. Not with a "cloak" of covetousness, 5
 - 1. They did not use a cloak to cover their evil intention to amass wealth from the people, clothing themselves in self-righteousness in order get gain.

2. But they preached the word in sincerity and love.
- I. They did not seek the glory of men, 6
 1. “Glory” - DOXA: brightness, splendor.
 2. They did not seek to show out in an exalted or majestic position before men.
 3. They could have come that way, being a burden to them as apostles of Christ, since they had privileges and gifts that others did not have.
 - a. The Scriptures are Apostolic - Paul wrote 13 or 14 books of the New Testament.
 - b. The Church is Apostolic - Ephesians 2:20
 - c. The Gifts are Apostolic - 2 Corinthians 12:12
 4. The apostles did not use their authority as apostles to gain glory from men.

II. THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE APOSTLES’ ENTERING THESSALONICA

- A. They were gentle among them, 7
 1. They were mild and gentle: EPIOS
 2. As a nurse cherishes: THALPO, “to keep warm, to foster with tender care.”
- B. They were affectionately desirous of the people there, 8
 1. They had a lovingly longing for these people to impart or to give them something of worth, of glory, of goodness.
 2. They came to give, not the gospel only, but their own souls, their help, their encouragement, their love, their care.
- C. Their laboring, 9
 1. This word “labour” - KOPOS, indicates sorrow, grief.
 2. The word “travail” - MOCHTHOS, indicates hardship, distress, toil.
 3. The second word “labouring” - ERGAZOMAI, indicates a continuing labor, a job, a trade, or “to do business.”
 4. Paul and others took up a trade to work a job in order that the people in Thessalonica would not have to be burdened with their livelihood. Acts 18:3 *And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.*
 5. The apostles did this so they could preach the gospel to them, asking nothing from them.
- D. Their behavior, 10
 1. They behaved with holiness (holily).
 2. They behaved “justly,” properly, rightly, agreeably, in good standing among the people.
 3. They behaved “unblameably.” This is an old word that means “blamelessly,” without blame. Ephesians 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:*
 4. They behaved themselves this way among the believers, who had reason to watch their lives to see if they were genuine and that their gospel was pure.
- E. Their charge to them 11-12
 1. They exhorted them: PARAKALEO, “to call alongside.” It means to summons or to call to a duty.

2. Remember the vision of Paul from Macedonia. The man in the vision said, “Come over and help us.” (Acts 16:9).
 3. They comforted them: PARAMUTHEOMAI, to encourage or console.
 4. They charged them: MARTUREO, “a witness.” They witnessed to them the truth of God.
 5. They charged them, not as a master over a slave, but as a father to his children.
 6. They charged them to walk “worthy of God,” not necessarily worthy of men.
 7. Because it is God who called them into his kingdom and glory.
- F. This is the purpose for all of our work for God, not for men – John 12:43 *For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.*
- G. We preach the gospel to people, not that we might have a large ministry or that we may receive recognition, but that men, women, boys, and girls may be brought into the kingdom and glory of God.

1 Thessalonians

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe - First Baptist Church, Harrison, Ohio
Acts 17:1-10 Background Reading

LESSON FOUR: 1 Thessalonians 2:13-19
May 18, 2014 PM

I. THE GRATEFUL RECEPTION, 13

A. Paul's Gratefulness In Other Scriptures

1. Paul was thankful for many things while serving the Lord.
2. Romans 1:8 *First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.*
3. 1 Corinthians 1:4 *I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;*
4. 1 Corinthians 1:14 *I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;*
5. 1 Corinthians 14:18 *I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:*
6. In both books of Timothy and in Philemon Paul is grateful, mainly for the people to whom he has preached the gospel and his remembrance of their faithfulness.

B. Paul's Gratefulness In This Verse

1. Paul is grateful, or thankful, that the Thessalonians received the word of God, not as the word of man, but as the word of God.
2. He is grateful that this word works effectually in those that believe.
3. The word of God preached does no good unless it settles in the hearts of the hearers and works effectually in them to bring forth fruit unto righteousness.

II. THE GUIDED SUFFERING, 14

- A. The Thessalonians had a good example from the churches in Judea, who suffered tremendously at the hands of the Jews.
- B. Paul does not mention his own suffering but relates the example to the churches in Judea, which actually suffered at the hands of Saul, for which Paul was ashamed and called himself the chief of sinners for persecutions against the Lord's churches.
- C. It is difficult for one church to suffer alone; but, with the example of others, together we can bear the whip, if you will, as the world persecutes the churches of God.
- D. David Jeremiah told a story about sheep, which I cannot confirm is true, since I have never been around those who kept sheep. He said that sometimes the sheep will stand side by side in a circle with their heads away from the center of the circle to look the wolves right in the eye and to attack the wolves together in order to protect themselves from being taken off one by one.
- E. This is the way our churches should be. We should not be so capital "I" independent that we cannot stand with other churches of like faith and order to stand against the wiles of the devil.
- F. Not only had Judean churches suffered at the hands of the Jews in which they took the

house of Jason before the magistrates, but many other persecutions they had, also. In Acts 17:8 we read, *And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.*

- G. 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.*
- H. Hebrews 10:32 *But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;*
- I. So, the Thessalonians were willing to suffer for Christ's sake because their brethren in Judea were willing to do so. They had a guided suffering.
- J. Remember how I mentioned a couple of nights ago Philippians 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;*
- K. We are not immune to this same kind of suffering, but we need to have an example, a guide to help us along.

III. THE GUILTY JEWS, 15-16

- A. Verse 15 says that the Jews killed Jesus.
- B. But Isaiah 53:10 says that God killed *Jesus, Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.*
- C. The Jews also killed their own prophets.
- D. Luke 11:51 *From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.*
- E. "They have persecuted us," Paul says, 15
- F. The Jews "pleased not God" 15
- G. The Jews are "contrary to all men" 15
 - 1. Matthew Henry says on this, "Their persecuting spirit was a perverse spirit; contrary to the light of nature, and contrary to humanity, contrary to the welfare of all men, and contrary to the sentiments of all men not under the power of bigotry."
- H. Now verse 16 says they forbade Paul and the brethren to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved.
 - 1. The Gospel had long been only to the Jews, and the Jews were jealous of the law of God, of which they were the guardians.
 - 2. They considered the Gentiles dogs and referred to them as "the world."
 - 3. So, they did not want Paul and the other apostles to take the word of God, which the Jews actually misrepresented, and preach it to the Gentiles as though they were the same as or equal to the Jews.
 - 4. Paul said in Romans 10:12 *For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.*
 - 5. The Great Commission tells us to Go into all the world and make disciples
- I. The Jews were filling up their sins always, continuing their sins, pretending to serve God.
- J. This brought the wrath of God upon them to the uttermost.

1. “To the uttermost,” I think, means unto the end of the age.
2. God will allow persecution of the Jews in every age until the end due to their disobedience and their neglect.
3. During that time God will save many Jews by his grace.

IV. THE GENUINE LONGING, 17

- A. Paul was taken from them, and we do not know the details.
- B. He may have been taken from them due to his business of tentmaking.
- C. He may have been taken from them due to some harsh persecution against him from an enemy or even from the devil himself
- D. Paul had very many encounters with the devil in his ministry.
- E. But only in presence, not in heart, because the longer he stayed the more he desired to see them face to face.

V. THE GUILFUL HINDRANCE, 18

- A. Paul would have come many times if possible, but Satan hindered him.
- B. Paul and Satan had many endeavors as though the Devil had encamped near Paul to give him grief time and time again.
 1. 2 Corinthians 12:7 *And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.*
 2. Here Satan hindered Paul from returning to Thessalonica, and we do not know how he did that, but we do know that it was under God’s permission for the good of the ministry of Paul and the churches and for the glory of God.

VI. THE GLORIOUS HOPE, JOY, AND CROWN, 19

- A. Paul gloried in the flesh – 2 Corinthians 11:18 *Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.*
- B. Paul gloried in his infirmities – 2 Corinthians 11:30 *If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.*
- C. But here Paul glories in the saints at Thessalonica, saying that they have hope; that is, Paul and the brethren with him have a hope that each one who professes actually truly possesses the Lord as Savior.
- D. They are his joy, not that deep-seated joy that is in Christ, but that joy in knowing that Paul’s ministry is effective by the grace of God and that people are following the message that he is preaching.
- E. They are Paul’s crown of rejoicing, rejoicing in the grace of God, that it was effective among them as the gospel was preached to them.
- F. Verse 20 repeats that they are Paul’s glory and joy and also of the others, also.

1. 2 Corinthians 1:7 *And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.*

VII. CONCLUSION

- A. We have noticed The Grateful Reception, The Guided Suffering, The Guilty Jews, The Genuine Longing, The Guileful Hindrance, and The Glorious Hope, Joy, & Crown.
- B. This is the way of service to God.
 1. We reach out to those who need the Gospel.
 2. We pray that the Gospel will be received as the word of God, not the word of men.
 3. We expect tribulation and suffering, because Jesus said that “in the world ye shall have tribulation,” and he said through Paul that it is given unto us to believe and to suffer (Phil. 1:29).
- C. We must, then, see that the world is much like the Jews were in Paul’s day, for the religion of the world that is being persecuted more than any other is Christianity. It is disallowed in many nations around the world, and many who have worked to construct our public education have said that the classroom is the battlefield to rid the nation and the world of Christianity and make a god of secularism and humanism.
- D. We also have a genuine longing to be a witness to the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ and long to be with God’s people with a love that God has taught us to have for our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- E. Satan will hinder us, we know; but God has promised us that he will go before us and will perform his will.
- F. Those who have been affected by the Gospel through the grace of God are our hope, our joy, our crown, and our consolation.
- G. The work of God must go forward. We must not stay behind or leave the field of battle. We must put on the armor of God and fight the good fight of faith so that the name of God and Christ and the truth of the word of God may be spread throughout the world to the glory of God.
- H. Are we willing do be faithful and to stand firm on the truth? May God give us grace to be faithful as stewards of his word and work.

1 Thessalonians

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe - First Baptist Church, Harrison, Ohio

Acts 17:1-10 Background Reading

LESSON FIVE: 1 Thessalonians 3:1-13

May 25, 2014 PM

I. CONTENDING ALONE, 1

A. Paul was at Athens

B. It seems that he may have sent Silas and Timothy to different places to establish and comfort the saints in the churches.

C. Sometimes we must serve alone.

1. As we know, the high priest in the Old Testament did his work alone – Hebrews 9:7
But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people:
2. 2 Timothy 4:16-17 *At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. 17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.*

D. When he was alone, Paul took comfort in those whom the Lord had touched through his ministry.

II. COMFORTING THE SAINTS, 2-4

A. Timothy was sent there.

1. He is “our brother”
2. He is a “minister of God”
3. He is a “fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ”

B. Timothy was sent there

1. To establish them – that is, to settle their minds in the truth of God’s word and encourage them to continue on in God’s work, 2
2. Revivals, fellowships, conferences are good for establishing churches.
3. To comfort them – anyone who has had the affliction that they had at Thessalonica needs to be comforted, 2

C. Timothy was to be sure that “no man should be moved” 3-4

1. The word for “should be moved” here means “to agitate.”
2. They were not to be agitated by the afflictions that were taking place but were to put their trust in God.

3. After all, they were appointed to these afflictions by God himself.
4. Paul had warned them of these afflictions when he was with them, 4
 - a. Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 1:8 *Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;*
 - b. Hebrews 10:32 *But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;*

III. CONFRONTING THE TEMPTER, 5

- A. Paul was fearful that perhaps the tempter may have taken hold of the believers there, making his work there in vain.
- B. Faith without works is dead.
- C. If there is no work from the preaching of the gospel, no outward fruit, no increase in benefit, then the faith that is professed is vain.
- D. Paul would not want to do all the work and experience all the afflictions that he did only to find that his work was in vain.
- E. But Paul himself said in 1 Corinthians 15:58 “forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

IV. CONFIDING IN TIMOTHY, 6-7

- A. Timothy was to go there and bring back a report to Paul, 6
- B. Paul would believe the report that Timothy would give him, 6
- C. When he heard the report, Paul was comforted, 7
 1. 3 John 1:4 *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.*

V. COUNTING THE COST, 8-13

- A. Stand Fast, 8-11a
 1. Paul prays for their steadfastness, 9-11a
 2. 1 Corinthians 16:13 *Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.*
 3. Galatians 5:1 *Stand fast therefore in ... liberty...*
 4. Phil. 4:1(and here) *stand fast in the Lord,*
 5. 2 Thess. 2:15 *stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught,*
 6. Paul warns them in 1 Thessalonians 3:8 *For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.*
- B. Perfect That Which Is Lacking, 11b
 1. No one is perfect; no church is perfect.
 2. So we need to continue to perfect what is lacking in our faith
 3. Philippians 3:12 *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect:*

but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

C. Abound In Love, 12

1. The word “abound” means “to overflow”
2. The love for the brethren is not only a proof of our salvation but is a very solid foundation for our service to the Lord. Faithful love gives strength and assurance, for love comes from God, because God is love, and it abounds in us.

D. Establish Your Hearts, 13

1. Our goal is to establish our hearts in love through the grace of God, to serve him and love him and grow in his grace and knowledge.
2. Though we may grow old in the body, we do not have to grow old in our hearts, our souls.
3. We can increase more and more – Philippians 1:9 *And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;*
4. Our goal is to end this life with a heart full of the knowledge of God.
5. Paul told the Colossians: Colossians 1:10 *That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;*
6. Our goal is to be “unblameable in holiness” before God at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all the saints (see 4:14).
 - a. One day we will join the saints, the holy ones.
 - b. When we do, we would like to have a life full of the knowledge of God surrendered to his will, patient, loving, assured, steadfast in afflictions, and anxious for his coming to meet the saints.
7. This is the cost of serving God.
 - a. Luke 14:28 *For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?*
 - b. Have you counted the cost of serving God?

1 Thessalonians

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe - First Baptist Church, Harrison, Ohio

Acts 17:1-10 Background Reading

LESSON SIX: 1 Thessalonians - Chapter 4:1-7

June 1, 2014 PM

I. THE LESSON GIVEN, 1-3a

A. They Received The Lesson, 1a

1. “Ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God.”
2. 1 Thessalonians 2:13 *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, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*

B. They Are To Abound In The Lesson Learned, 1b

1. Abound in hope – Romans 15:13 *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*
2. Abound in everything – 2 Corinthians 8:7 *Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also (the grace of giving).*
3. Abound in love – 1 Thessalonians 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:*
4. Abound in many spiritual things – 2 Peter 1:5-8 *And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

C. These Are God’s Commandments, 2

D. This Is for Our Sanctification, 3a

1. Sanctification is a setting apart unto holiness.
2. 1 Corinthians 1:30 *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:*
3. The word “sanctification” is used twice here, once in verse 3 and once in verse 4.
4. So the subject at hand is our sanctification.

II. THE LIST GIVEN, 3b-6

A. Abstain From Fornication

1. 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.* See Acts 15:29; 21:25.
 2. 1 Corinthians 5:1 *It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.*
 3. Galatians 5:19 *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,*
- B. Possess Our Vessels In Sanctification, 4a
1. Through the truth
 - a. John 17:17 *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*
 - b. John 17:19 *And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.*
 2. By faith – Acts 26:18 *To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.*
- C. Possess Our Vessels In Honor, 4b
1. Romans 12:10 *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;*
 2. Ephesians 6:2 *Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)*
 3. 1 Timothy 5:3 *Honour widows that are widows indeed.*
 4. 2 Timothy 2:20 *But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. 21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, [and] prepared unto every good work.*
- D. Not In Lust of Concupiscence, 5
1. The word “concupiscence” means “desiring something that is forbidden.”
 2. The word lust carries with it the meaning of “passion,” a strong feeling.
 3. So this sin would be the passion, or the strong feeling, toward something that is forbidden.
 - a. You really want to walk on the grass after you read “Do Not Walk On The Grass.”
 - b. You really want to talk when the sign in the library reads “QUIET PLEASE.”
 4. This leads to all kinds of crimes and sins.
- E. Defrauding, 6
1. The English word “defraud” is used three other times in the New Testament, but they are from a different Greek word. Those words mean to “rob or steal.”
 2. This Greek word means “to take advantage of another person.”

3. This word is used with “go beyond,” which literally means “to step over.”
4. When you defraud, or take advantage, of another person, you are stepping over them and taking privileges to which you have no right.
5. The Lord will avenge all who do this.
6. Paul says he has forewarned them of this, probably when he was with them in person.

III. THE LESSON LEARNED, 7

- A. God has not called us to uncleanness, or of impure motives and lusts.
- B. But God has called us unto “holiness,” which is the same word as “sanctification.”
- C. He did not call us to continue in sin but to stop our sin and serve the Lord.
- D. Romans 6:1 *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*
- E. This is a lesson to believers.
- F. Remember: Hebrews 12:14 *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:*

1 Thessalonians

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe - First Baptist Church, Harrison, Ohio

Acts 17:1-10 Background Reading

LESSON SEVEN: 1 Thessalonians - Chapter 4:8-18

June 8, 2014 PM

I. THE INCREASE IN SERVICE, 4:8-12

A. The Opposite Opinion, 8

1. Paul is inscribing sanctification upon the lives of believers.
2. He is encouraging them to stay within proper limits of action, not going beyond to defraud anyone in lusts.
3. But here in verse 8 he mentions the opposite opinion. In this the men “despise,” but they despise not man but God.
4. They received not man but God in the beginning of their assembly (2:13).
5. Here in verse 8 they are refusing, or despising, this word that was preached by Paul, but they are not despising him and his helpers, but they are despising God.
6. Paul tells them in 1 Thessalonians 5:20 *Despise not prophesyings.*

B. The Operation Of The Spirit, 8

1. They received Paul’s word as the word of God, because God had given them the Holy Spirit.
2. Without the Holy Spirit, they could not know this was the word of God, neither can they do as Paul instructs them to do without the Spirit’s power.
3. 1 Corinthians 2:11 *For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.*
4. 1 Corinthians 2:14 *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*
5. So the gifts in the churches are given by the Spirit of God: 1 Corinthians 12:8 *For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; 9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: 11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.*

C. The Opportunity Of Love, 9

1. The opportunity of love is always present in every member of this church.
2. It is always present, because God teaches each one of us to love as he has loved us.

3. John 15:9 *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.*
4. John 15:12 *This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.*
5. 1 John 2:7 *Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. 8 Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth. 9 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. 10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. 11 But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.*

D. The Order Of More Love, 10

1. Paul orders the members of this church now to increase more and more in love.
2. This can be done through temporal or physical help.
3. This can be done by also giving spiritual support through teaching, preaching, and prayer.
4. This can be done by bearing one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2)
5. This can be done by forgiving one another (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13).
6. This can be done by praying one for another (Eph. 6:18).
7. We are to learn to do these things *more and more*.

E. The Order Of A Personal Life, 11

1. They are encouraged to not be involved in other people's lives unless it is to be a help to them either physically or spiritually.
2. They are to live peaceably one with another.
3. They are not to gossip or backbite.
4. 2 Corinthians 13:11 *Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.*

F. The Outward Testimony, 12

1. They are admonished to walk honestly toward those who are in the world, for the world will be a great benefit to them at times when the need arises.
2. Luke 16:9 *And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.*

II. THE IGNORANCE OF SOME, 4:13-18

A. Ignorance Of Those Who Sleep, 13

1. John 11:11 *These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.*

2. This means that death sleep is not the end but brings to mind things that can or must happen after death.
 - a. There can be a resurrection of the body as in the case of Lazarus.
 - b. There can be joy over those who sleep in death.
 - c. There is no reason to have “no hope.”
- B. Ignorance Of Jesus’ Return, 14
1. We believe that Jesus died and rose again.
 - a. Romans 10:9 *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*
 - b. Hebrews 11:6 *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*
 2. We also believe that God will bring the dead saints with him when he comes.
- C. Ignorance Of The Order Of Christ’s Return, 15-17
1. We will not *prevent*, or go before those who are asleep in death.
 2. God will bring them with him, and we will all go together.
 3. Some believers will be alive when Jesus comes.
 4. Then Paul gives the order:
 - a. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout . . . 16a
 - b. The dead in Christ shall rise first, 16b; that is, before the living saints are taken up or raptured.
 - c. Then the living saints will be caught up (raptured) together, at the same time, in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, 17a
 - d. And so shall we ever be with the Lord, 17b
- D. Ignorance Of The Comfort That We Can Have, 18
1. 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. 55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*
 2. James 5:8 *Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.*
 3. It is a great comfort to know that the dead believers have not died in vain.
 4. There is a great comfort in looking for the coming of the Lord.

5. Jude 1:21 *Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*
6. Luke 21:28 *And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.*

1 Thessalonians

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe - First Baptist Church, Harrison, Ohio

Acts 17:1-10 Background Reading

LESSON EIGHT: 1 Thessalonians - Chapter 5

June 15, 2014 PM

I. WALKING IN ANTICIPATION, 1-3

A. Anticipating The Seasons Of Time, 1-2

1. It is not for us to know the seasons: Acts 1:7 *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.*
2. But some things about the seasons we can know.
3. This one thing about the seasons is that the Day of the Lord will come as the thief in the night, 2
4. When we think not: Luke 12:40 *Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.*

B. Anticipating The Severity Of Judgment, 3

1. When people think they are safe and that there is peace, then sudden destruction will come upon them, 3
2. It will be like the travail of a woman who is due to have a baby.
3. This sudden destruction will be a severe judgment upon the lost.

II. WALKING IN ASSOCIATION, 4-13

A. Walking Away From The Darkness, 4-5

1. We who are saved have walked away from the darkness.
2. We have been delivered from darkness: Acts 26:18 *To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.*
3. John 8:12 *Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*
4. We follow the Lord, because he is the Light of the world: 1 John 1:6 *If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:*

B. Walking Awake, Not Asleep, 6-7

1. 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.*
2. 1 Corinthians 15:34 *Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the*

- knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.*
3. Ephesians 5:14 *Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*
- C. Walking Aware Of Our Enemy, 8
1. We are to be aware of our enemy, the Devil
 2. Ephesians 6:11 *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*
 3. 1 Peter 5:8 *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*
 4. We must be sober, or keen minded, aware of what is going on.
 5. We must study our enemy, learning his habits and his character.
 6. We must be ready to stand against his deceitful ploys.
 7. We do this by putting on the “breastplate of faith and love.”
 8. We do this by putting on the “helmet, the hope of salvation.”
 9. We read of these in Ephesians 6:14 and 17.
- D. Walking Appointed To Obtain Salvation, 9-10
1. Unbelievers are appointed to wrath, but not God’s sheep.
 2. We are appointed to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ.
 3. 1 Peter 2:8 *And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.*
 4. But we have been appointed to obtain salvation.
 5. If it had not been for the true grace of God, no one would be saved.
 6. God must convict and convince the sinner of his depravity and bring him to repentance and faith; otherwise, there will be no salvation.
 7. Salvation is ours, because God gave it to us.
 8. He has translated us into his kingdom: Colossians 1:13 *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*
 9. He has brought us to God: 1 Peter 3:18 *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:*
 10. He has chosen us: Ephesians 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:*
 11. He has adopted us: Ephesians 1:5 *Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,*
 12. Our walk can be sure and confident, because God has done these and many more things for us to obtain salvation.
 13. He died for us, 10

E. Walking Along With The Brethren, 11-13

1. We are to comfort and edify one another as brethren, 11
2. We are to admonish those who are over us, our leaders in spiritual things, 12
3. We are to esteem spiritual leaders very highly in love for the work that they do, being faithful to the study and preaching of God's word, and teaching the things needed for every believer, 13
4. We are also to live at peace with one another, 13

III. WALKING IN ACTION, 14-24

A. Action In Warning, 14

1. Warn the unruly. Paul says in Romans 16:17 *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*
2. Along with this they were to comfort some, support some, and be patient toward some.

B. Action In Watching, 15

1. Watch to see that one person does not render evil to another person—eye for eye and tooth for tooth.
2. Watch to be sure to follow that which is good both in and out of the assembly.

C. Action In Worshiping, 16-21

1. Here is what we do when we worship from the heart.
2. John 4:24 *God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*
3. Rejoice evermore, 16
 - a. Matthew 5:12 *Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*
 - b. Philippians 4:4 *Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.*
4. Pray without ceasing, 17
 - a. The word “pray” is used 166 times in the new Testament.
 - b. James 5:16 *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*
 - c. Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:25 *Brethren, pray for us.*
5. In everything give thanks, 18
 - a. Ephesians 5:20 *Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;*
 - b. Colossians 1:12 *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:*
 - c. Colossians 3:17 *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the*

Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

6. Quench not the Spirit, 19

- a. We are definitely to quench the darts of the wicked one (Eph. 6:16), but we are not to quench the Spirit of God.
- b. We cannot quench the person of the Holy Spirit, because he is what he is, and there is no changing him. He has all power, and he always accomplishes his will, since he is God.
- c. But we can quench his gifts, such as faith, love, zeal, spiritual knowledge.
- d. Neither can these be completely cast out but only quenched to a lower level, put to the side and unused.
- e. What we do not use we lose, we say; but we don't really lose these things; we only become very amateurish in them, so quenching them, not giving God the glory he so deserves.

7. Despise not prophesyings, 20

- a. 1 Corinthians 14:6 *Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?*
- b. 1 Corinthians 14:22 *Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.*
- c. In other words, do not despise doctrine.

8. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good, 21

- a. We are to prove the will of God: 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.*
- b. We are prove ourselves: 2 Corinthians 13:5 *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*
- c. We are to prove our own work: Galatians 6:4 *But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.*

D. Action In Warring, 22

1. Romans 7:23 *But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*
2. We need to win this war by submitting to the Lord through repentance.
3. This should be a good warfare: 1 Timothy 1:18 *This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;*

E. Action In Waiting, 23-24

1. We wait for the coming of the Lord, serving and loving him, as God sustains us and

leads us along.

2. He will sanctify us, 23
 - a. He sanctified us in our salvation: Hebrews 13:12 *Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.*
 - b. He sanctifies his churches: Ephesians 5:26 *That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, → The “it” is the church.*
 - c. He sanctifies us through the truth: John 17:17 *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*
3. He will preserve us blameless, 23
 - a. 2 Timothy 4:18 *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*
 - b. Jude 1:1 *Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:*
4. Now God is faithful, who called us, and he will do these things, 24

IV. WALKING IN AUTHORITY, 25-28

A. Walking In Authority of Prayer, 25

1. We can walk with God’s authority, the authority of God’s word, if people will pray for us. We need to pray one for another, as we have already stated.
2. Paul depended upon the Thessalonians and others to pray for him, and he prayed for them.
3. This is a reciprocity agreement—I pray for you; you pray for me.
4. This is a tit-for-tat, a *quid pro quo*.

B. Walking In Authority of Personality, 26

1. We need to have a peaceable and hospitable personality.
2. 1 Peter 4:9 *Use hospitality one to another without grudging.*
3. 1 Timothy 3:7 *Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*

C. Walking In Authority of Participating, 27

1. Paul asked everyone to participate in what he is doing.
2. He wanted his letters read to all the churches in Macedonia (and probably everywhere else).
3. We can participate in the Gospel, preaching to those around us and teaching these things to our friends and family.

D. Walking In Authority of The Paraklete, 28

1. Paul begs the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with them.
2. This can be only through the Paraklete.

3. This is a Greek word meaning “an advocate,” actually, one who walks along side to help.
4. We have a helper in the Lord: Hebrews 13:6 *So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*
5. Psalms 46:1 *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

2 Thessalonians

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe - First Baptist Church, Harrison, Ohio

Acts 17:1-10

LESSON ONE: 2 Thessalonians Chapter One

June 22, 2014

I. GROWTH OF FAITH, 1:1-3

A. Two Verses From First Thessalonians

1. 1 Thessalonians 4:1 *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, so ye would abound more and more.*
2. 1 Thessalonians 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;*

B. Paul Follows Up His First Letter

1. Greeting, 1-2
 - a. Paul greets the Thessalonians as usual, 1-2
 - b. He desires grace and peace for them in these two verses.
2. Approval, 3
 - a. He approves of their *faith* as he did in his first letter to them (1 Thess. 1:3)
 - b. Their faith was spoken of everywhere, (1 Thess. 1:8).
 - c. But he desired to establish them in that faith (1 Thess. 3:2)
 - d. So much so that he sent to know their faith (1 Thess. 3:5)
 - e. Then Timothy brought Paul news of their faith (1 Thess. 3:6)
 - f. Paul was comforted by their faith in afflictions (1 Thess. 3:7)
 - g. But there were some things lacking in their faith (1 Thess. 3:10)
 - h. Paul encouraged them to put on the breastplate of faith (1 Thess. 5:8)
3. Growth, 3
 - a. Paul was thankful that their faith grows exceedingly, 3
 - b. The purpose of Paul's addressing their faith is to increase their faith, even as the disciples pleaded with the Lord in Luke 17:5 *And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.*
 - c. In four occasions in the book of Matthew the Lord states to his disciples "O ye of little faith" (Matt. 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8).
 - d. We today are, no doubt, a people of little faith. Maybe we should pray that the Lord "increase our faith."

II. GODLY ENDURANCE, 1:4-6

A. Paul Mentions Six Things Relevant To Faith, 4-5

1. Patience

- a. Luke 21:19 *In your patience possess ye your souls.*
- b. Waiting for your first baby to be born
- c. Waiting for a sore to heal
- d. Waiting for your strength to come back after surgery
- e. Waiting for your next big raise
- f. Waiting for the day you will graduate from college
- g. Waiting for the day to be over
- h. Waiting for your food at a restaurant
- i. Waiting for things to get better
- j. Waiting for another person to shut up so you can get your point across
- k. Waiting for another preacher to get finished preaching so you can preach your sermon
- l. Waiting for our afflictions to be over
- m. Waiting for the coming of the Lord
- n. Patience is not *waiting* but your *response* to waiting. How do you deal with having to wait?
- o. A verse we should remember: 1 Peter 2:20 *For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.*

2. Faith

- a. This is faith itself
- b. Hebrews 11:1 *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*
- c. We cannot endure properly without faith

3. Persecutions

- a. The Greek word for *persecution* comes from a root word that means “to flee, or to run away.” The disciples several times went from one city to another when persecution came.
- b. Mark 10:30 *But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.*
- c. Persecutions visited the first disciples of the Lord.
- d. Persecutions continued through the beginning of the church and the spreading of the Gospel around the world.
- e. Paul had many persecutions in his ministry

- f. We have persecutions today and may have many more.
- 4. Tribulations
 - a. This Greek word means “a pressing together.”
 - b. When people press you to change your mind about your faith or tempt you to turn away from the Gospel or your faithfulness to God.
- 5. Endurance
 - a. This Greek word means to continue standing erect, not to fall when hard times come.
 - b. Ephesians 6:13 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.
 - c. To stand means to remain standing, not to waver between opinions or to be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine (Eph. 4:14).
- 6. Judgment
 - a. There is a judgment of the saved, which is called chastisement.
 - (1) Psalms 94:12 *Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;*
 - (2) The Thessalonians are counted worthy through this judgment. They know that persecutions and afflictions abide them and are willing to suffer because of the eventual judgment or damnation of their enemies.
 - b. There is a judgment of the lost, which is called damnation.
 - (1) Read verses 5-6

III. GENUINE REST, 1:7-10

A. Rest With Us, 7a

- 1. Hebrews 4:9 *There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.*
- 2. Hebrews 4:11 *Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.*
 - a. This word *labour* means “to make haste, to give diligence.”
 - b. This is not work for salvation. This is perseverance of the saints, showing faith by works, which is evidence of genuine salvation.
- 3. The final and true rest does not come until the judgment of the world is come, of which we shall read in the next verses.
- 4. Notice here two verses that explain this final rest of believers:
 - a. Psalms 92:9 *For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.*
 - b. Psalms 92:12 *The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.*
 - c. After the judgment of the lost, the righteous shall shine forth in the new heaven

and earth.

- d. Matthew 13:43 *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

B. No Rest For The Wicked, 7b-9

1. Our rest will come when Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 7b
2. These angels in flaming fire will take vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ, 8
3. 2 Thessalonians 1:9 *Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;*
4. They will be punished “from the presence of the Lord,” but altogether out of his presence. The Lord’s presence will be in hell meting out the deserts of the wicked.
5. They will, though, be absent from the presence of this the glory of his power; that is, they will not be recipients of his mercy, grace, longsuffering, his word, and his kindnesses.
6. This will be our final and permanent rest, a rest where the wicked will be destroyed from among us, and we will live in the presence of God’s greatness, peace, and comfort and praise forever and ever.

C. Restatement Of Our Rest, 10

1. When Christ comes, he will be glorified in his saints.
2. When Christ comes, he will be admired in all them that believe.
3. All this due to their hearing and believing the Gospel, the message of Paul to them from God, the same message that saves today and brings glory to God.

IV. GLORIOUS GRACE, 1:11-12

- A. If they persevere in the grace of God and work out their own salvation with fear and trembling (for it is God that works in them to will and to do of his good pleasure), they will be counted worthy of God’s calling to serve him and to preach his Gospel (See Phil. 2:12).
- B. They will be able to fulfill the good pleasure of God’s goodness, his will in their lives, 11
- C. They will be able to do the work of faith with power: DUNAMIS, strength, energy.
- D. All of this is done, then, for the glory of God according to his grace, 12

2 Thessalonians

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe - First Baptist Church, Harrison, Ohio

Acts 17:1-10

LESSON TWO: "The Great Falling Away"

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3

June 29, 2014

I. THE FALLING AWAY, 2:1-3

- A. At least three things must happen before the Lord returns: (1) The Falling Away; (2) The Removing Of That Which Withholds; and (3) The Wicked One Is Revealed. The first of these is The Falling Away as mentioned in verse three.
- B. God has a standard, and any turning away from that standard is a falling away from the judgments, covenants, statutes, and the grace of God.
- C. This standard is the word of God, the Bible.
- D. Now this is called in verse three "the" falling away, because there is an article before the Greek word APOSTASIA, or we might say, "the great apostasy."
- E. Apostasy, or the turning away from truth has always existed in the world, and it will exist until the Lord comes again.
- F. But this is "the apostasy." There is an apostasy that is the mother of all apostasies, and that is why many call this The Great Apostasy.
- G. What is it?
 - 1. It is not a general turning away from the word of God.
 - 2. It is not a neglect of the word of God.
 - 3. It is not simply the misinterpretation of the word of God.
 - 4. It is a conspiracy toward dethroning God and destroying God's word.
 - 5. It is, then, not only a falling away from God's word; it is also a turning away from his church, developing new ways or means of preaching a gospel and being included in the kingdom of God with some degree of authority.
- H. Let us see now the trend of this falling away, this apostasy.
 - 1. Paul the apostle cannot be included in this falling away, because he was brought from radical Judaism into the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, not going from the church, but being brought into the church by the grace of God.
 - 2. Acts Chapter 15 – The First Apostasy

Acts 15:3 And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through

Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

Acts 15:5 But there rose up certain of the sect {breaking away} of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command [them] to keep the law of Moses.

But Peter said . . .

Acts 15:9-11 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

3. Going out from us is apostasy:

1 John 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

John 6:67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

I. Now A Little History

1. The philosophy of Plato and others has drawn away many from the truth of God's word.
2. The Great Reformation is an attempt to come away from error but instead it was only a dividing into sects an institution that had already gone away from many basic Bible truths such as bishop rule, infant baptism, sacraments, etc.
3. An attempt at a Universal Christianity
 - a. Beginning with the philosophy of Plato, the framework for Unitarianism and a Universalist theology built upon reason, a movement we call Neo-Platonism attempted to blend Christianity with Judaism and is pantheistic (God is in everything).
 - b. When Constantine turned to Christianity from paganism, the pagans lost much of their influence. By now Christianity was something much different from what it was when believers were first called Christians at Antioch.
 - c. Constantine legalized worship under the name Christianity and developed the symbol made from Greek letters Chi and Rho overlaid over each other, which

symbolized, not only the name Christ, but also the phrase Roman Christian.

- d. He also put the cross on the coins with the figures of *Sol Invictus* (the sun god) and *Mars Conservator* (the god of war, Mars).
- e. He was called *pontifex maximus*, which means “supreme bridge builder.” He was building a bridge between paganism and Christianity.

4. Christian Socialism

- a. The Great Awakening took place in the 18th century. This revitalized an interest in the concept of Jesus Christ and faith in him as Savior.
- b. But two men opposed this and took up the socialist agenda.

(1) Georg Hegel (1770-1831), a German philosopher

- (a) Believed reason governed the world
- (b) Reason became the basis for the absolute
- (c) His philosophy became the core of Marxism.

(2) Samuel Taylor Coleridge, an English poet and philosopher

- (a) He was basically Christian in the beginning of his life.
- (b) He was influenced by the philosopher, Immanuel Kant.
- (c) He thought Reason was the divine spark in the soul.
- (d) To him Logos was Reason, not Christ.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social Change• Social Justice• Greater Good “End justifies the Means”

- c. The word Socialism was first used in England in 1827 in a Cooperative Magazine to describe the views of Robert Owen.
- d. F. D. Maurice, Charles Kingsley, and John Malcom Forbes Ludlow founded the Christian Socialist Movement in 1848.
- e. A follower of Robert Owen coined the word Secularism in order to symbolically break away from such labels as atheism and infidelity.

5. Christian Communism

- a. In 1848 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels issued the *Communist Manifesto*, which advocated a revolutionary struggle between chasses as a means for achieving Socialism. (Dialectic Materialism)
- b. Marx was raised a Christian. Engels was born a Jew.
- c. F. D. Maurice also proposed the concept of “Christian Communism” in the “New Moral World” in a letter to his friend, Ludlow.
 - (1) He taught that the church rather than the government should implement Communism.
 - (2) He was promoting the concept of a one-world religious, economic and political system.

J. Apostasy And The Bible

- 1. F. D. Maurice said that the inspiration of the Bible was not *unique* but that whatever

- a man wrote, spoke or thought was inspired.”
2. Charles Darwin (1809=1882) wrote his *Origin of Species* as a direct challenge to the Scriptural teaching of creation by God.
 - a. This provided the necessary component to enable one to use reason to challenge the authority of God and his word.
 - b. Fenton Hort was excited about the work of Darwin. He said, “... but at present my feeling is strong that the theory is unanswerable.”
 - c. Wescott wrote to Hort and said, “I find the presumption in favour of absolute truth--I reject the word infallibility--of Holy Scripture overwhelming.”
 - d. Maurice adopted the idea of “rational inspiration” of Scripture. He believed it was the “illumination of the rational consciousness.”
 - e. In 1853, Daniel Macmillan proposed a plan to get rid of the “vile” Textus Receptus, which was used to translate the King James Bible.
 - f. Hort viewed the Bible as an obstacle that prevented people from coming to the truth – New Bibles.
 - g. In the new manuscripts the plan was explained as “The margin will give ample scope for our own ingenuity and principles. In the arrangement of paragraphs I think we might follow our own judgement entirely.” Rationalism
 - h. Dean John William Burgon (1813-1888) fought against these new editions and wrote several books on the subject.
 - i. Bible Criticism turned an infallible Bible into one that was to submit to the standard of Reason.
 - j. Immanuel Kant evaluated the Bible by reason through textual criticism.
 - k. Friedrich Ernst Daniel Schleiermacher said, “It is not the person who believes in a holy writing who has religion, but only the one who needs none and probably could make one for himself.” Reason – Rationalism

K. Ecumenicalism

1. This is also a part of The Great Falling Away
2. This is the mixing of opposing theologies or doctrines into one confusing and well accepted generalized doctrine.
3. That wonderful, moral man, Billy Graham, who is beloved by so many people, has by his own choice become a part of this movement.
4. With the intent to evangelize the world, many preachers have dropped most of the precious doctrines of the Scripture and have gone to preaching a simple gospel and that alone.
5. This blends true and false institutions to become a part of the Universal Christianity.
6. Those who believe in works for salvation, baptism for salvation, losing one’s salvation, and much liturgical and sacramental worship are blended together along with the basic truth of Scripture, diluting the truth into compromise.

7. *How can two walk together except they be agreed*, says Amos 3:3.
8. This is only a part of The Great Falling Away, The Great Apostasy.
9. Do not be a part of this apostasy.
10. Study your Bible every day to show yourself approved of God a workman that needeth not be ashamed.

2 Thessalonians

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe - First Baptist Church, Harrison, Ohio

Acts 17:1-10

LESSON THREE: "The Man Of Sin"

2 Thessalonians 2:3-17

July 13, 2014

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. From *When Antichrist Reigns*, by Oswald J. Smith, 1927: "When Antichrist reigns atheism will flourish, Satan will then have achieved his greatest success. God must be obliterated. In a last determined effort to get rid of Him atheism will endeavor to turn men's thoughts from the supernatural to the natural, from the spiritual to the material, from Eternity to time. Already there are ominous signs. The shadows are deepening. Atheism today dares to raise its voice in defiance of God and His Christ, not only in Bolshevich Russia, but in America, the land of the Pilgrim Fathers. From persecution they fled; to worship God as they pleased they came. Not to get farther away from God, but to get nearer to Him was their objective. The Bible was their chart, their compass. No thought had they of infidelity. That remained for their children, children wise in their own conceits. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." They did not wish to be classed as "fools." But it is the End-Time, and atheism is an End-Time sign. Hence its development in this our day." (Page 90).
- B. Oswald J. Smith said that he stood in the study of Voltaire, a man who did his best to prove that there was no God and wondered what he would think now if he could sit in that well cushioned chair again. He thought of Voltaire's house in the Louvre where he lived, that great infidel, and realized that now, instead of being empty of Bibles, as Voltaire said that in 100 years there would not be a Bible left on earth, his house was now piled high with Bibles. This is an American story, say many historians, and is not true, but it tells a tale of how that those who have tried to destroy the Bible have not been successful.
- C. The propagation of Atheism has been going on all through history, but we know that since the 19th century and the early 20th century large organizations are preaching the doctrine of Atheism. In the early 20th century many organizations existed with patterns of education for the youth to become atheistic. The American Association for the Advancement of Atheism started by Charles Lee Smith (1887-1964). Smith was the last person convicted of "blasphemy" in the United States, which charge was eventually dismissed. This was about 1928.
- D. Another organization is the Junior Atheistic League. Certain small groups were named "The Devil's Angels, The Circle of the Godless, The Legion of the Damned, God's Black Sheep, and The Damned Souls.

- E. There was at one time an organization called American Anti-Bible Society.
- F. With that introduction, now to our text.

II. THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY, Verse 7

- A. We must remember that, whatever the detailed answer to this prophecy is, it is a mystery.
- B. But there are some things that the reader can know.
 - 1. He can know “what withholdeth” (6) Whatever is holding back this Anti-Christ was in existence when these verses were written, and the readers knew what it was that holds back the Anti-Christ.
 - 2. They knew that the mystery of iniquity is already working (7)

III. THE MAN WHO WITHHOLDS

- A. Some say it is Saul of Tarsus, who hindered the work of the churches for a time before he was saved, but that in itself did not withhold the preaching of the Gospel but in ways improved it through the scattering of the believers.
- B. Some say it is the Preaching of the Gospel, which did not hinder him, for it goes on today just as it did then, and there is no time when the Gospel was done with or ceased in order for this Man of Sin to be revealed.
- C. Some say it is the Holy Spirit, or the apostolic gifts of the Spirit; which, although these were temporary, yet the use of them did not hinder the Man of Sin, since no revelation of him was noticed when, at the completion of the Bible, these gifts ceased.
- D. Some say it is the Great Apostasy, but that apostasy has not ceased or been taken away to reveal the Man of Sin.
- E. Many, many people believe it to be the Roman Emperor as the head of the Roman government, a man in position, passing from one emperor to another, each one individually hindering the revelation of the Anti-Christ.
- F. Thus we speak of “the king” of a country, yet there are many kings.
 - 1. Thus we speak of “the Pharaoh” yet there are many Pharaohs.
 - 2. Thus we speak of “the president” yet there are many presidents.
- G. So, “he who now letteth” or “he who now holds back” is a person in a position in the government of Rome, who in his own time hindered the revelation of this Man of Sin until this position of the Roman government be taken out of the way, until Rome fell in 476 AD.
- H. Then, and only then, can this Anti-Christ take the Roman ruler’s position and subvert that role to make it not only a political but a religious role.
- I. This hindering one is called “what withholdeth” in verse 6 and “he who now letteth” in verse 7. So, this is both a thing and a person.

IV. THE MAN OF SIN

A. His Names

1. In verse three he is called The Man of Sin
2. In verse three he is called The Son of Perdition
3. In verse eight he is called That Wicked, or That Wicked One
4. In 1 John 2:18 he is called the Anti-Christ: *Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.*

B. His Work

1. He opposes God, 4 [There is no opposite of God]
2. He exalts himself above God, 4
3. He sits in the temple as God, 4
4. He shows the world that he is God, 4
5. His coming is after the working of Satan, 9
6. He has all power, and signs, and wonders, 9
7. He is a liar, 1 John 2:22
8. He denies that Jesus is the Christ, 1 John 2:22
9. He denies both the Father and the Son, 1 John 2:22
10. He does not confess that Jesus is come in the flesh, 2 John 1:7
11. He is a deceiver, 2 John 1:7; 2 Thess. 2:10
 - a. He will deceive them that perish, 10
 - b. Because they did not receive the love of the truth to be saved, 10
 - c. God sent them (them that perish) strong delusion that they will believe “**the lie**.” This is the great lie that came from the truth – Romans 1:25 *Who changed **the truth of God into a lie** (or **THE lie**), and worshipped and served **the creature more than **the** Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.***

C. His End

1. The Lord will consume him with the spirit of his mouth, 8 [Cannot conquer world]
2. The Lord will destroy him with the brightness of his coming, 8
3. Those who believed not will be damned, 12
4. Those who had pleasure in unrighteousness (sin) will be damned, 12

D. His Revelation

1. **The General Position** of many is that, as 1 John 2:18 tells us, there are many antichrists and that these antichrists will rise up from time to time and continue to oppose God and build their little kingdoms, exalting themselves as God.
2. **The Ecclesiastical Position**, One specific identification of the Anti-Christ is in the Roman Catholic movement away from the truth of the Bible, accounting the Pope (each one in his own turn) as the Anti-Christ. This surely is a tempting connection,

since many of the characteristics of the Catholic Church seem to match up with the doctrine of this Anti-Christ.

- a. The “all power” of the Pope began in 750 AD
 - b. Celibacy began in 1079 AD – 1 Timothy 4:3 *Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.*
 - c. Confession to a priest rather than Christ, 1215 AD at Lateran Council by Pope Innocent III.
 - d. Forbidding of the reading of the Bible, 1229 AD
 - e. Making Mary the mother of God, 1931 AD
 - f. Infallibility of the Pope, by Vatican I on July 18, 1870.
 - g. Pope called Vicar of Christ and Holy Father
3. **The Eschatological Position**
- a. Many also believe that this Man of Sin, this Anti-Christ, is yet to come and that there is nothing that exists today that will be even close to the wickedness that shall come when this man is revealed.
 - b. Those who believe in the Eschatological Position believe, also, that the Holy Spirit is the One who withholds and that he will be taken out of the way in his influence when the people of God are raptured out of the world.
 - c. Then, in the tribulation period, this Man of Sin will wreak havoc on the earth with his lies and deceit and signs and wonders.

V. THE MEANING FOR US, 13-17

- A. You may choose whatever path you like to come to your conclusion as to who this Man of Sin is or will be, but we must get the real meaning of this passage. The meaning is not simply to reveal the Man of Sin.
- B. Notice the words in verse 13 “but we,” meaning that God is now turning his attention to we who are believers against those who perish (verse 10).
- C. We are to give thanks, 13
 1. Because God has chosen us unto salvation, 13
 - a. Through sanctification of the Spirit
 - b. Through belief of the truth
 2. Because God called us into the Gospel, 14
 - a. And this that we might obtain the glory of Christ, that is, our glorification through the Spirit of grace, our eternal security and final abode with Christ.
- D. We Are To Stand Fast, 15
 1. Holding the traditions, or practices, which Paul and the apostles taught us through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit through word or letter (epistle).

E. God Has Loved Us

1. John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*
2. That means ME
3. Romans 8:37 *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*
4. 1 John 4:19 *We love him, because he first loved us.*

F. God Gave Us Everlasting Consolation And Good Hope

1. 2 Corinthians 1:5 *For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.*

G. It Is By Grace That God Has Done This, 17

1. "Through grace" 17
2. It is by grace that we are saved (Eph. 2:8-10)
3. It is by grace that we believed (Acts 18:27)
4. It is by grace that we learn – Titus 2:11 *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;*
5. It is grace that helps us in time of need – Hebrews 4:16 *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

H. We Are To Comfort Our Hearts

1. 2 Corinthians 1:3 *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;*
2. We can comfort our hearts, because we know that God has all of history already planned, and he knows the answer to our mysteries.
3. Therefore, we can trust him and depend upon him to care for us.

I. We Are To Establish Ourselves In Word and Work

1. The Word
 - a. The angel said to the apostles – Acts 5:20 *Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.*
 - b. Paul said in Acts 26:25 . . . *I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.*
2. The Work
 - a. Acts 13:2 *As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.*
 - b. 1 Corinthians 15:58 *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

VI. CONCLUSION

- A. What have we learned? We have learned that there is a great mystery and that we must believe that it is true, whether we know and completely understand the fulfillment of it.
- B. We have learned that God allows the mystery of iniquity to work so that we might shine as lights in the world. – *Philippians 2:15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;*
- C. God has saved us through Christ, and we are to be a witness of the saving grace of God.
- D. We are to live before the world in a way that the world can see the difference between sin and salvation, between good and bad, between the truth and the lie.
- E. We have work to do. Let's get to it!

2 Thessalonians

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe - First Baptist Church, Harrison, Ohio

Acts 17:1-10

LESSON FOUR

2 Thessalonians 3 – “Three Ways”

July 20, 2014

I. THE WAY OF THE LORD, 3:1-5

A. Paul's Desire For Continual Progress, 1

1. The verbs in this verse are all in a present tense, which gives the idea of a continual process.
2. “Pray for us” means “continue praying for us.”
3. The verb “have free course” means “continue to have free course.”
4. The verse “be glorified” means “continue to be glorified.”
5. Paul's desire, then, is that the word of God may flow through him as blood flows through clean arteries in the body, that the word of God may be effective and effectual as he continues to preach the Gospel.
6. His desire is that the word of God be “glorified” continually as he continues to preach the Gospel to a dying world.
7. Even as it is continuing to be effectual and being glorified in the Thessalonians.

B. Paul's Desire For Continual Deliverance, 2

1. As Paul traveled and preached, he was constantly barraged with unreasonable and wicked men, so here he asks believers to pray that God would continue to deliver him from them.
2. Even at Thessalonica wicked men were there to confront him.
3. The reason for this is that “all men have not faith.”
 - a. It is faith that brings the love of the truth to the believers.
 - b. It is faith that encourages us to continue on in the work of the Lord.
 - c. It is faith that allows us to see above the fray of life's battles and stay in the fight, wearing the armor of God.
 - d. But all men do not have faith, so there are unreasonable and wicked men in the world.

C. Paul's Declaration Of The Lord's Faithfulness, 3

1. Paul told them in their first letter, 1 Thessalonians 5:24 *Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.*
2. No matter who you are. No matter where you are. No matter what you do. No matter

what you don't do. No matter about your circumstances. No matter about the influences around you. THE LORD IS FAITHFUL.

3. When you are safe, happy, and peaceful, God is faithful.
4. When you are suffering, hurting, or having hardship, God is faithful.
5. Even when you don't understand God, he is faithful; and he is faithful to his own character and his own decrees.
6. The only way to stay away from evil is for God to "stablish" you.
 - a. He told them in 2 Thessalonians 2:17 that God would: *Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.*
7. Being established, they can, then, be kept away from *evil*, or *the evil one*.
 - a. Satan is the originator of evil.
 - b. Satan is the guardian of evil.
 - c. Satan is the propagator of evil.
 - d. Satan attacks with evil and influences people to be evil.
 - e. God is the only hope of our being guarded and delivered from evil, as the Lord prayed in his model prayer "deliver us from evil."

D. Paul's Confidence In Their Work, 4

1. Paul had already commanded them to do many things, these things he received from the Lord.
2. They were to follow his teachings, because they were from the Lord.
3. Paul has confidence, knowing what the Lord has done for them through the Gospel, that they do and will continue to do obey the commandments given to Paul by God.

E. Paul's Dedication Of Them To Christ, 5

1. Paul now refers the believers to the Lord, knowing that these truths that he has delivered to them did not come from him but from the Lord, and it is left to the Lord to direct their hearts.
2. He desires their hearts be directed to the love of God.
 - a. God's love is shed abroad in their hearts – 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.*
 - b. We cannot be separated from the love of God – Romans 8:39 *Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
 - c. Jude said in Jude 1:21 *Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*
3. Paul also dedicates them to their patiently waiting for the coming of Christ.
 - a. Christ is coming – Hebrews 9:28 *So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

- b. He told them in their first letter – 1 Thessalonians 1:10 *And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*

II. THE WAY OF THE WORLD, 3:6-15

A. People Walk Disorderly, 6

1. Instead of walking after the tradition of Paul, that he received from God, they walk their own way.
2. Paul told the Philippians in Philippians 2:4 *Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.*

B. People Do Not Work, 10

1. They work “not at all” – In other words, they were allergic to work.
2. Proverbs 22:13 *The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.*

C. People Are Busybodies, 11

1. 1 Thessalonians 4:11 *And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;*
2. If a person does not work with his own hands and does not do his own business, he will mingle with other people’s business.
3. Such as those who have no children write books telling us how to raise our children.
4. Paul instructs these people in verse 12 – 1 Thessalonians 4:12 *That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.*

D. People Do Not Obey Paul’s Instructions From God, 14

1. 1 John 1:6 *If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:*
2. These are believers who get caught up in the world and do not obey the truth.
3. This is the way of the world.

E. But We Are Not To Be Weary In Our Well Doing, 13

1. If we do well, we may have persecution, but we are not to get weary of our work.
2. 1 Peter 2:20 *For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.*
3. Isaiah 40:31 *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*

F. We Are To Withdraw From The Disorderly, 6

1. We believe this is church discipline, where, if a person brings disorder or disgrace upon the church of the Lord Jesus that he is to be disciplined, losing his membership status and being disallowed to be a part of any of the church’s business, and that so

that he may be ashamed (14) and return to his faithfulness to the Lord.

G. We Are To Mark That Man, 14

1. To “note” means to “mark,” I believe in our minds that person who is disorderly, watch him for a while, and then take action if necessary.
2. Matt. 18:15-17 *Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.*
3. In Matthew 18 the Lord says that the brother shall “be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” In our present chapter it says, “Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.”
4. In both cases they are a brother. Though we let a person be unto us as a heathen man and a publican, disallowing his membership in the local church, that does not mean that we must treat him as an enemy. The whole purpose of discipline is to win the brother back.

III. THE WAY OF PEACE, 3:16-18

A. Paul Prays For God’s Peace, 16

1. Paul prays that God will give them peace always.
2. In his first letter he uses the title “God of peace” (1 Thess. 5:23)
3. Here he uses the title “Lord of peace.”
4. Only the Lord can give peace, true peace – 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.*
5. And this is the way he gives us peace “The Lord be with you all.”
6. Hebrews 13:5 . . . , *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*
7. That is true peace.

B. Paul Signs His Own Letter, 17-18

1. It is believed that Paul had a physical problem with his eyes due to that experience that he had with the Lord, when the Lord gave him a “thorn in the flesh.”
2. So his letters were probably dictated and written down by a amanuensis, or secretary.
3. But he seemed to sign his own name at the end such as he did in large letter at the end of Galatians – Galatians 6:11 *Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.*

IV. CONCLUSION

- A. Sometimes we need things written in a large letter to remind us that God is on the throne;

he does all things well; and he will give us peace. But we need to remember that he is faithful, and we are to remain faithful to him.

B. 1 Corinthians 4:2 *Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*

C. This is the way of peace.