

A
STUDY IN
THE
BOOK
OF
FIRST
THESSALONIANS

AN OPEN BOOK
FOR
A
GOOD LOOK

Table of Contents

First Thessalonians

Inside Cover -----	1
Table of Contents -----	2
How to Study-----	3
Introduction-----	4
Chapter One-----	5
Chapter Two-----	10
Chapter Three-----	17
Chapter Four-----	22
Chapter Five-----	30
Appendix one-----	37

Second Thessalonians

Intro-----	43
Chapter One-----	44
Chapter Two-----	49
Chapter Three-----	59

List of Bible Studies

How to Study Your Bible

1. Begin in Prayer 1 Cor 2: 9-14
2. Read the Bible Neh. 8: 1-3
3. Study the Bible Neh. 8:8
4. Meditate upon it Deut. 6:6-9; Ps. 1
5. Pass the Bible on to others Heb. 5: 12

How to Study Each Chapter

1. The Theme
2. The most important verse
3. The most prominent word
4. The teaching about Christ
5. The command to obey
6. The promise to claim
7. The new truth learned Psalm 119:18

Also every verse or passage has at least 3 applications

1. Past: this is the historical application
2. Present: This is a devotional or spiritual application
3. Future: This is a doctrinal or prophetic application

1 Thessalonians

Introduction

The church at Thessalonica was founded by Paul during his second missionary journey as recorded in the book of Acts chapter 17: 1-10. Of the many churches established by the Apostle, only a few, six to be exact would receive an epistle from him. Of the six only the church at Corinth and the one in Thessalonica were blessed with two inspired letters each.

Paul spent at least three weeks in this city in the home of Jason, organizing the church, working all the while as a tent maker, that he might not be a burden to the believers as recorded in 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12.

His visit there is short lived for the gospel is opposed by some unbelieving Jews. This trouble caused Paul under cover of night to flee along with Timothy, and Silas to Berea. He is soon driven from Berea by the same vicious Jews and he then heads for Athens.

While in Athens he sent word to Timothy requesting that his young helper go back and strengthen the work at Thessalonica, which Timothy promptly does (1 Thess. 3:1-2).

From Athens Paul goes to Corinth. Here at a later date both Silas and Timothy brings a good report concerning the work in Thessalonica. Paul is overjoyed and writes both first and second Thessalonians from Corinth at this time.

His letter was written to encourage, establish, instruct and inspire. The church was apparently comprised of a great many gentiles (Acts 17:4).

Henrietta Mears wrote: Paul's success in Thessalonica has not been the usual experience of missionaries among the heathen. Carey in India, Judson in Burma, Morrison in China and Moffat in Africa waited each 7 years for his first convert. But here the Holy Spirit allowed Paul to reap a sudden harvest.

CHAPTER ONE

Verses 1: Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are a couple of items of importance to notice in this first verse. First Paul does not use any title at all for himself or his fellow ministers. This has become of some note to me of late as it seems that people put a great deal of emphasis on titles these days. It used to be that a Pastor was more than satisfied to be called Parson in his church and community. This no longer seems to be the case as man desires greater titles for himself such as one fellow I know and grew up with decided Pastor no longer was high enough so he and another Pastor changed their title to Bishop like that made them somehow superior to all others.

Paul has the right idea he sends this letter from himself and Silas and Timothy to a church that belong to the only one who has the right to a title the Lord Jesus. Paul then adds his usual greeting of God's grace (unmerited favor) and peace (of God) be with them there in Thessalonica.

Verses 2-3: We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

Paul wants his brothers and sisters in the church to know that he holds them up before the throne of grace daily. He gave thanks to God for what they had done and were doing for

him and his ministry team in getting them safely out of town and then in constant prayer and support.

He also remembers their great faith, this was not a hope so type of faith but a sound and working faith. This was coupled with their great love, not a love that gazed at someone or something but a love that worked through that faith to see souls saved. They lived a life built on hope and that not on idle expectations of a future good but rather even in the midst of suffering and affliction there hope was steadfast in Christ not to get out of the suffering as so many today want. No they had hope that even in their suffering they would be allowed to go through it for Christ as He was willing to suffer for them.

Verses 4-5: Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. 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.

The word “elect” means to “chose” so when one sees this word in relation to God we must accept what the Bible says. Now this in no way lessens man’s freewill it rather compliments God’s election. Election is both individual and corporate. It covers Christian and Congregation. Here the latter is in view as Paul is talking to the Church.

The great preacher C. H. Spurgeon was once asked how he reconciled God’s election with man’s choice. His answer “ I never have to reconcile friends!”.

Notice also that the entire Trinity is involved in this election as follows

1. In regards to the Father: we were saved before the foundation of the world! Eph. 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: notice here Paul says God chose us before He created the world and even gives the reason for doing so. Also look at 2 Timothy 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our

- works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,
2. In regards to the Son: we were saved at the cross! Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.
 3. In regards to the Holy Spirit: we were saved at the moment of our decision to accept Christ! Look here at the following two passages. 1 Cor. 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. Titus 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost

Verses 6-7: And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

Paul commends them for being followers of him and the Lord knowing that he had taught them the truth and that not only they but he also had suffered persecution for the truths sake. He was rejoicing over the way they had handled themselves amid their persecution. They had done so well that they had become example for all the other churches in the region of Macedonia.

Verse 8: For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

Paul continues his commendation as he knew that as the people from the church had traveled they had continued to

spread the word in every city and town. Dr. Charles Ryrie had this comment “the word translated sounded out is very picturesque. It spells echo. Thus the picture is of the message of the gospel so stirring the strings of the Thessalonians heart that it reverberated in strong and clear tones to all Greece and everywhere” thus, while awaiting the trumpet of Christ to sound, these Thessalonians were sounding out the trumpet for Christ! It is proven that 70 to 80 percent of church growth comes from friend to friend and relative to relative. Personal contact brings harvest. Still nearly 3 billion have no witness at all.

Verses 9-10: For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; 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.

The people reporting to Paul let him know what these witnesses from Thessalonica were sharing and that Paul had done a good job in teaching them. This is an expectant church and it is stated in three tenses in these two verses lets see. First: in the past tense we have “ye turned” as an illustration put your hand to your face, now turn the back of your hand to you so your palm is turned from you” that is “ye turned”. Second: in the present tense “to serve the living and true God” Third: in the future tense “to wait for His Son” is to wait with patience and confidence expectantly. All this may be tied in beautifully with Paul’s statement concerning them in 1:3 where he writes of their “work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope” so we see.

In the past, a turning and looking to the Father! This was there work of faith! John 6: 28-29 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? 29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

In the present, serving and looking on the field! This was there labor of love! John 4:35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. Also read 1 Cor. 15:58 and Heb. 6:10

In the future, waiting and looking for the Son! This was there patience of hope! 2 Tim. 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Chapter Two

Introduction: Paul will take the next two chapters too remind his readers of those circumstances involved in the founding of their church at Thessalonica as recorded in Acts 17.

Paul will cover the activities of the shepherd or what Paul says about himself. The activities of the sheep in Thessalonica or what Paul says about his converts and the activities of the serpent in Thessalonica what Paul says about his enemies the Judaizers..

Verses 1-2: For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain: But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.

Paul reminds them that when he came to them he did not come with empty words of religion but with words of power and life. Speaking boldly to them even after the way he and Silas had been assaulted and mistreated at Philippi. The word “contention” means agony and conveys the idea of the struggle that Paul had went through to bring these converts the gospel.

Paul was a bold speaker regardless of the personal risk. He would face anyone at any time to present the gospel and they knew this and because of this many there had been saved.

Verses 3-4: For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

Paul lets them know that his preaching to them was not from an attitude of deceiving them about anything where the word or he was concerned. He did not come with any kind of unclean or impure thoughts or motives seeking something

from them that would be considered sinful in any way. Neither did he come with guile or words used to bring him some gain in any area of life. Paul was a man of God who never forgot that he was given a privilege to proclaim the word and was placed in a position of trust and he would in no way whatsoever use this position to do what would be an advantage to him by saying and doing what pleased men no he was only interested in pleasing God who looks at and tries a man's heart or motives for what they are doing.

I must say there are a number of T.V. preachers who should closely read these words and then put them to practice and stop doing what they are doing in preaching to please men and line their pockets with money that belongs to God and misused by these men and women!

Verses 5-6: For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness: Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

Look what Paul adds, at no time did he ever come to them while he was with them with the words that would make them feel good about themselves or that would make them think something of Paul. No he brought the pure word of God and let it work what it would on people's hearts.

Paul did not come to them with a covetous heart try to get rich off of them and he had God as his witness and needed no other. He was not seeking man's glory if he had been he would have tickled their ears with those flattering word but he did not. Paul even reminds them that he did some tent making while he was there so that he would not be a financial burden to them as maybe some others might have.

It is surely clear that many preachers should look at Paul and start living a life style more fitting a New Testament preacher one of humility, humble living, and sound doctrine with out putting an over whelming burden on people just to live a rich life.

Verse 7-8: But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

Here is the right kind of attitude for a shepherd of God's sheep. Notice Paul says that he was as gentle and loving as a mother is to her new born babies. Paul took extra care with them loving them so much that he not only wanted them to know the wonders of God's word but he would invest his very soul in theirs so they might enjoy the joy and blessings of the Christian life as he did.

Dr. Charles Ryrie said "the word cherish means to "warm" as in Deut. 22:6 it's only other New Testament use as in Eph. 5:29 that it describes the Lords relationship to the church."

How a mother feeds her children is almost as important as what she feeds it Eph 4:15

Verse 9: For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

Well they should remember how hard Paul and his men had worked both in physical labor and in spiritual labors as well even to the point of weariness. They worked even to the point that it seemed to be night and day as Paul would work as a tent maker in the day as noted here by Richard Wolff "Paul had learned to cut out and stitch the coarse goat hair cloth used for making tents, shoes and mats. It was customary for a rabbi to learn a trade". Then at night he would preach and teach until late and then repeat it the next day.

Verse 10: Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and

unblameably we behaved ourselves
among you that believe:

Paul in this verse uses three words that are key's to Paul's consistent example. The first is the word "holily" which is his testimony God ward or his spirituality. The second word is "justly" this is his testimony man ward or his social ability. Then the third word is "unblamable" this is his testimony about himself or that which spoke of him personally.

Thus we have here an upward, outward and an inward look at Paul's life. His life possessed that spiritual maturity that a good leader simply must have.

Verses 11-12: As ye know how we
exhorted and comforted and charged
every one of you, as a father doth his
children, That ye would walk worthy
of God, who hath called you unto his
kingdom and glory.

Paul had encouraged the believers there to live holy lives and to maintain them even during times of great affliction and suffering. Not so much as an Apostle but as a loving father would his children to live their lives in such a way that would reflect the character of the parents. Since we are God the Father's children we should be living our lives in such a way that we reflect His holy character.

Verse 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.

Paul says because of his concern for them and their reception of him and also of the word of God he gave great thanks and praise to God. These believers had not just listened as though a man was talking to them with just a man's words but this man came with God's word and they knew it was divine truth when they heard and received it into their lives. My how we

need to hear the true word of God and take it into our lives not as that from men but the true words of God so that if can have that effective work of changing our lives from the inside.

Verse 14-15: For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

This church had followed if the same path as the church's in Judea in becoming Christ like and in so doing faced great persecution not from the heathen Romans but much the rather from the Jews who had put Jesus on the cross. Now this church did not pattern their services or worship or leadership after the Judean churches nor were they under the control of the Judean church's their commonality was in their suffering at the hands of Judaizers. These self righteous men were not interested in the truth only in maintaining control of the Jewish religion and any threat to it.

Verse 16: Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

Here is Paul's description on what was happening; the Jews did not have a problem with Paul talking to Gentiles as long as he was making proselytes for there religion. They did not even care if he talked of eternal life as long as he did not talk of that new way called Christianity.

They did this knowing that they were in rebellion to God and were doing the same things that their forefathers had done down through the centuries. Incurring God's wrath time and again and never learning from the past.

Verse 17-18: But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire. Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

Paul uses a phrase that denotes being moved away from someone in such a way as to cause bereavement such was the love and attachment Paul had for these saints. He thought he would only have been away at Berea for a short period of time and then return; however that had not been the case. So he tells them that even though he was not physically present with them his heart was still very much with them. He was still longing and working to return to them but he was fought on every hand by Satan and his cohorts.

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

Paul counted each person who had received Christ as his hope and joy before the Lord and they would be his crown of rejoicing when Christ comes again. The word of God mentions at least five possible rewards. These are as follows

1. The incorruptible crown: this is given to those who master the old nature 1 Cor. 9: 25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.
2. The crown of life: this is given to those who successfully endure temptation as seen in James 1:2-3 and Rev. 22:10
3. The crown of righteousness: this is given to those who especially love the doctrine of the rapture read here 2 Tim. 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge,

- shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.
4. The crown of glory: this is given to those faithful preachers and teachers of God's word 1 Peter 5:2-4 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.; and 2 Tim. 4:1-2
 5. The crown of rejoicing: given to soul winners

Chapter Three

THIS chapter is a continuation of the course of thought pursued in the previous chapter, and seems designed to meet the same state of feeling existing in Thessalonica, and the same objections which some there urged against the apostle. The objection seems to have been, that he had really no attachment for them, and no regard for their welfare; that he had fled from them on the slightest danger, and that when the danger was passed, he had not returned, but had left them to bear their afflictions alone. It was important, therefore, for him to remind them of what he had actually done, and to state his real feelings towards them. He refers them, therefore, to the following things as proof of his interest in them, and his affection for them.

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

Paul having been forced to leave Berea also sailed on to Athens and while there his concern for his children in the faith became a case of continuing concern because of the Judaizers. Paul had to make a decision and that was to send someone to them and to stay in Athens alone considering that to be better for them.

Verse 2: And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:

Paul sends his young energetic associate Timothy to them. His mission was to continue to establish their foundation in the truth of Christ. He also was going to reassure them of both Paul's welfare and the certainty of his continued love for them. Paul sent them someone who he knew would be able to accomplish his mission.

You see physical age is not so important as is spiritual wisdom and soundness. Timothy was young but his mother

and grandmother had made sure he was rooted and grounded in the word and then Paul opened the word to him concerning Jesus.

Verse 3: That no man should be moved
by these afflictions: for yourselves
know that we are appointed thereunto.

In this passage he asks the Thessalonians not to pity him because of his sufferings. The Apostle states his trials had neither shaken nor surprised him. William MacDonald said "Trials form a necessary discipline in our lives". In this verse we have the word "moved" which means to wobble and collapse. Their steadiness would prove the reality theirs and our faith and weed out those who are mere professors; look here at what Peter said in 1 Peter 1:7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

Trials enable us to comfort and encourage others who are going through trials 2 Cor. 1:4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

Trials also develop certain graces, such as patience, in our character as seen in Romans 5:3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

Trials make us more zealous in spreading the gospel look at Acts 4:29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, also Acts 5; 27-29 and 8: 3-4.

Finally trials help to remove the dross from our lives as Job told us in Job 23:10 But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

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

Paul while he was with them had spent some time preparing these believers for what he knew would surely follow and that was persecution. Now they were facing it and he was not there and it was important for him to know that they had listened and was ready and able to bear it.

Verse 5: For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

When Paul had not heard and could not wait any longer he sent Timothy to find out how they stood in the faith first delivered to them. Even then apostasy was raising its ugly head and he needed to know if someone had slipped in and begun to seduce them into some form of heresy such as Gnosticism.

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

Upon Timothy's arrival he greeted Paul with some welcome news from his much loved church. First their faith was strong in the truth and there was no apostasy among the true believers. Second their love for him was still strong and they kept him in mind always. They wanted to see very badly as much as Timothy had wanted to rejoin Paul as he had now.

Verse 7: Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:

Paul was so thankful for the comfort he received upon the good report from Timothy concerning the Thessalonian Church. Charles Ryrie said “The word comfort means more than a soothing; it also means “strengthening”. In the midst of afflictions, choking, pressing care or distress a crushing trouble.

Paul had suffered what appeared to be four successive defeats as follows.

1. Philippi- he was jailed
2. Thessalonica- forced out of town
3. Berea- chased by the Jews
4. Athens- no apparent success with philosophers

Verses 8-9: For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord. For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;

Paul says I can carry on now “we live” knowing you are standing fast in the Lord. He adds that there was no more praise he could add to what he was already giving to God for them.

Verse 10: Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

Paul lets them know that he prayed hard for the opportunity to return to them so that he could have time with them to strengthen the weak areas of their faith. This is one reason it is so vital to have a good pastor, teacher and a home church so that ones faith can be constantly strengthened.

Verse 11: Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

Paul did not in any way want to come to them again on his own. He was seeking the leading “direct” of the Father and the

Son and he would leave it to them as what way he would go next.

Verse 12: And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:

Paul asks the Lord to help them to keep on growing in their love for one another and for the lost as well as for the Lord.

Verse 13: To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

Paul concludes this chapter with a desire for God to establish them or buttress or support in holiness while awaiting Christ return.

Chapter Four

In this chapter the apostle gives strong exhortations to abound in holiness, with a caution against uncleanness, enforced with several arguments (v. 1-8). He then mentions the great duties of brotherly love, and quietness with industry in our callings (v. 9–12). Paul concludes with comforting those who mourned for their family and friends that had died in the Lord (v. 13–18).

Verse 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.

Paul continues his exhorting of the Christians there to continue to live “walk” in a pleasing manner before the Lord and before other men. Not only to walk as they are now but to continue to grow into an ever closer walk with God and to never think that they were already loving Him enough or others enough.

Verse 2: For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

Paul reminds them that they already knew what he had taught them by the Lord Jesus and he was not going to go over it again with them they should just remember and live the instructions “commandments” out.

Verse 3: For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

Paul reminds them that God has made it His will that these Thessalonian believers be holy before Him. Holiness is a very serious issue where the Lord is concerned, so many want to go to heaven but they do not care at all about living holy or sanctified lives. Paul points out one area in particular that the Greeks had trouble with and that was sexual immorality. Paul

makes it plain that being holy and living immoral is incompatible.

The Christian is to know God's will, what does he want me to do? First for the sinner there is only one thing God wills for them and that is they become saved! 1 Tim. 2:4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. And 2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

In like manner he had only one will for Saints and that is that they be sanctified! Here Paul of course refers to a daily growing in grace and maturing in the faith. The first step in sanctification is consecration Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 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.

Verse 4: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

Paul tells them that to prevent any incidence of the kind mentioned in the previous verse a man must "know" or have that experiential knowledge of how to "possess" either his own body or he must be totally faithful to his wife. Peter calls the wife the weaker vessel. The word vessel is a common reference to one's wife in Jewish literature.

Verse 5-6: Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

Paul warns these saints that they should not allow even the beginning of sin which is the lust thereof to form in their minds. This he includes as all sin whether it be lusts of the flesh including sexual immorality or greed, or any other sin. They were to especially not behave as the ungodly Greeks or the unsaved. They needed to maintain that holiness of life that would be easily seen and would set them apart from others.

This is no less true today we as believers in this ever increasingly sinful world with all that it offers are to live holy lives at all times and before both God and the unsaved..

Verses 7-8: For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

One thing is certain those who were practicing the above mentioned lusts and immorality were not doing it because of God's will but in direct opposition to His will which is for us to live a life of holiness.

Paul tells them whoever rejects (despises) these commands are not only rejecting him and the other ministers of God. No they are in reality rejecting God himself and this is not holiness and couldn't come from the one who gave us the Holy Spirit to indwell us so we would not do these things.

Verse 9: But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

Paul reminds them that loving the brethren is one area he should not have to remind them they knew it what they needed to do was practice this instead of the uncleanness he has been talking to them about.

God the Father puts an inherent love in His children for one another. It has been a blessing to see this in action many times while traveling. Upon meeting someone who was a Christian there was an immediate bond between us, that brotherly love.

Verse 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;

These Thessalonian believers were well known for showing their love for one another all throughout the region of Macedonia. However Paul pleads with them to not stop with that but to show the same love to all Christians everywhere and more each day.

We too should always be striving to increase range of love from family out to our church family and then to all believers wherever we come upon them regardless of labels.

Verse 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; That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

Paul encourages them here to go about their everyday duties in a quiet or unassuming manner, not being arrogant about their being a Christian. They were to be honest in business dealings and to provide for their families as they should.

In doing this they and we can have a powerful impact on the lost simply by not acting as they do in such affairs. By living holy lives the Lord will bless in that you will have sufficiency in every area of life.

In this next great passage Paul answers a question that had bothered the Thessalonians. When he was among them in Acts 17 they had no doubt learned many precious truths about the glorious return of Christ to earth some day and the setting up of the millennial kingdom. Now in fact, to some, this all seemed to be just around the corner. But since the apostle's departure, a number of believers had died. Did this mean they would miss everything? This then is the background to the

great rapture passage before us here in these closing verses of chapter four.

There are in these six verses eight certain things presented to us.

Verse 13: But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

Paul starts with a realization; he did not want them to without knowledge of what was happening and what was going to happen. I would have you notice first that Paul refers to those who had died as only being asleep; you see this physical body is laid in the ground as you would a seed of corn. Then when Christ come for his church it will come forth as a new incorruptible body fit for heaven and our spirit which will come with him as he detailed to the church at Corinth.

Second he reminds them that they should not sorrow as the unsaved who have no hope; for a Christian when a loved one slips this earthly vale nothing has been lost only an address change has occurred and we should know that and should not sorrow as such for we have a blessed hope that we are looking for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 14: For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

A true believer must certainly believe that Jesus died and rose again to fail to do this is to fail to accept Christ as Saviour. Now in believing this Paul reassures them that when Jesus returns in the clouds as the apostles saw Him go away He will have with Him all who have died as believers.

This verse in no way hints at or teaches soul sleep as some cultish religions teach. This is an unscriptural doctrine that is easily refuted by the Word of God in Matt. 17:3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with

him. Here we see that Moses and Elijah were not soul sleeping they were quite awake and conversing with Jesus.

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

This is a wonderful blessing to come to understand Paul speaking under the direct control of God the Father says this. When Jesus comes with those who had died then those of us who are still living here will not go before (prevent) them.

Verse 16: For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

This verse contains three great items out of our six and it is one of the great verses to bring a comfort and blessing to all who read it and believe it.

First a revealing of the fact; that the Lord Himself will come for us and call us to be with him.

Second he is coming with a clear calling; notice it will be a shout. Now the exact words are as yet unknown but allow me to give an opinion here using the Word for my basis. The shout very well may be our names as Jesus will call out and each of us will hear our names in that call. I base this on what He did at Lazarus grave there He did not just say arise or every one buried there would have gotten out of their tombs. No He called only Lazarus by name. now this is just an opinion and should only be taken for that.

Third he speaks as with the voice of the archangel not that He is an archangel and He will blow the trumpet of God not Gabriel as is often mentioned. It is interesting that no where in the Word of God does it say Gabriel even has a trumpet.

Fourth he says that the dead shall "rise" this word means to stand up on ones feet. Spirits can not do this only bodies can, so it must be a physical rising.

Verse 17: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

The first thing we should notice is that Paul while writing this letter nearly two thousand years ago expected that while he was still alive to see these events take place. We know that just a few years later he would write to his son in the faith Timothy these words 2 Tim. 4:6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

The second phrase is the one that has caused so many so much trouble unnecessarily and that is “caught up” these two words mean to “snatch away suddenly” in the Greek or to be “raptured” which has the same meaning. When one is raptured they are taken suddenly from one state to another. This is why Paul said this mortality must take on immortality and this corruptible must take on incorruptibility. We must be changed so that we can meet Jesus in the air and there join with Him for eternity. Paul in Corinthians tells us that this change will take place in a moment in the twinkling of an eye. We will lose they bonds of gravity and be truly free to go as He has always promised.

One needs to read appendix one at the end of the book for some further information on the rapture.

Verse 18: Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

We must not forget why Paul wrote these precious words to begin with. The Thessalonians were struggling with two issues that brought fearful feelings. First they thought their loved ones once they died would miss the resurrection and second that since they were in the midst of heavy persecution that they may well have missed the Lord’s return. So Paul wrote this passage to bring comfort to them and all who read them in that region.

The good news is they have not lost there power to bring comfort to a Christians heart at the graveside or in living the

Christian life as we see world events unfold around us in an ever increasing abundance.

Chapter Five

In this chapter Paul will give the Thessalonians the responsibility of the church.

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

Paul starts this chapter with a continuing of the line of thought from chapter 4. The time or season of the Lord's return was an unnecessary and wasteful use of time for all that Paul could give them would be speculation and speculation only leads to more of the same and even more wasted time trying to figure out what the Lord Himself said was in the Father's hand and no man knew it.

Verse 2: For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

Paul reminds them that they knew with great accuracy "perfectly" and clearness they knew whether by the Lord Himself or by the ministry of the apostle they knew. They knew that the time of the Lord's revealing as King of Kings was going to come like a thief that is suddenly and unexpectedly.

Verse 3: For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

In the immediate application of this verse we have the fact that when Rome came against Jerusalem in AD 70 the citizens were so sure of themselves that God would not give the city up to them that they made no effort at diplomacy or protection. Then Titus proceeded to devastate the city and leave no stone upon another. It was as Paul alludes like a woman beginning labor it is just suddenly there.

Verse 4: But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

This verse refers to a notion that was very prevalent among the Jews that God would judge the Gentiles in the night time, when utterly secure and careless; but he would judge the Jews in the day time, when employed in reading and performing the words of the law. The words in Midrash Tehillim, on Psalm 9: 8, are the following: “When the holy blessed God shall judge the Gentiles, it shall be in the night season, in which they shall be asleep in their transgressions; but when he shall judge the Israelites, it shall be in the day time, when they are occupied in the study of the law”.

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

Paul tells them that whether they are Jew or Gentile having received Christ as Saviour makes them all children of light because Jesus is the light of the world. The only ones left in the night were those without Christ.

Malachi said this in Malachi 4:2 “the son of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings” it is therefore only logical that the children of light should wait for that glorious day.

Verse 6: Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

Paul says to them and us that those who are of the day—who believe the Gospel and belong to Christ, should not give way to a careless, unconcerned state of mind, like to the Gentiles and sinners in general, who are dumb to and blinded by sin, so that they neither think nor feel; but live in time as if it were eternity; or rather, live as if there were no eternity, no future state of existence, rewards, or punishments. We should stay on constant vigil and be serious about coming events.

Verse 7: For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

This is pretty common knowledge that those who want to sleep life away like the night and those who like the alcoholic life also like the night to hide their sinful life styles. In the first century these two sins were doubly scandalous more so than today.

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

We are not only called to WORK, but we are called also to fight; and that we may not be surprised, we must watch; and that we may be in a condition to defend ourselves, we must be sober; and that we may be enabled to conquer, we must be armed: and what the breastplate and helmet are to a soldier's heart and head, such are faith, love, and hope to us. Faith enables us to endure, as seeing him who is invisible; love excites us to diligence and activity, and makes us bear our troubles and difficulties pleasantly; hope helps us to anticipate the great end, the glory that shall be revealed, and which we know we shall in due time obtain, if we faint not.

Verse 9: For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

This is a reference to both external wrath as seen here in John 3:36 in Jesus words He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. And Paul's words in Colossians 3:6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: Paul also is speaking of tribulational wrath as seen in the following verses from Revelations 6:17; 15:1; 11:18. Paul begins and ends his epistle to the Thessalonian Church with this precious promise.

Verses 10-11: Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

Paul has these reassuring words that Jesus died for us that whether one goes by way of death or are alive when he returns in the air it is a fact we will live with Him in the place He is building for us according to John 14. We are to take these words and use them to bring comfort to one another and to teach and strengthen each other even as the Thessalonians already were.

Verses 12-13: And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

Paul says it is very important that Christians in a local church know those who labor in the Word of God among them. These are the ones the Lord has set over them to shepherd and feed the flock. They need to be respected at all times and prayed for on a regular basis because they do their work for the brethren's sake. Here are some passages on leaders Eph. 4:7-11; 1 Peter 5:5 "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" and Hebrews 13: 7-9, 14, 17 and 19.

Verses 14-15: Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is

good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

Paul encourages them to be mindful of two things in these two verses. First what they were to do; that is to warn the unruly. The word unruly here refers to soldiers who deserted the ranks, those who are drifting or getting out of the way of the Lord we are to warn them and try and bring them back. Also they were to comfort the “feeble minded” these are the faint hearted or weak in the spirit. Last they were to support the weak the immature in the faith as mentioned in Romans 14.

Verses 16-17: Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing.

Paul in closing this letter reminds these believers to always maintain a joyful heart or a deep inner heart joy. Also we are to have a constant state of prayer going on. Charles Ryrie had this to say “just as a person with a hacking cough is not always coughing audibly, though the coughing tendency is always there. So the Christian may not always be praying audibly yet prayer is always his heart attitude.

Verse 18: In every thing give thanks:
for this is the will of God in Christ
Jesus concerning you.

The importance of this command cannot be overstated. The cure for pride in our lives is not to practice humility, lest we become proud of our pioussness, but to be thankful! In Romans chapter 1 Paul describes the terrible final stages of Gentile world apostasy. The picture he paints is one of the most chilling in the entire bible. What horrible crime could possibly cause all this, look at Romans 1:21 “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened”. Someone has the following little rule: be careful for nothing, be prayerful in everything, and be thankful for anything!

Verse 19: Quench not the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is like a fire read Jesus words in Matt. 3:11, Luke 3:16; Mark 9:48 and Hebrews 11:34. To quench the Spirit is one of two sins a believer can commit against the Holy Spirit. The other is to grieve Him as seen Eph. 4:30. now to quench Him is not means to not do what He wants us to do, while to grieve is to do what he does not want us to do.

Verse 20: Despise not prophesyings.

The Thessalonians had gone to an extreme of refusing all forth telling of the Word while the Corinthian church went to the other extreme of allowing in everything that said it was from god without checking to see if it was in line with the whole of Scripture. 1 Cor. 14. We are to sniff out but not swallow everything!

Verse 21: Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

They were to hold fast to what was good that is when a truth is revealed by the Spirit hold on to it.

Verse 22: Abstain from all appearance of evil.

Paul says that Christians are to abstain or avoid everything that might even give the appearance of being evil such as places, people, and situations.

Verse 23-28: And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss. I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Paul's conclusion has at its beginning the trinity of our make-up. He does not want just our spirit or our soul to be separated but all of us to be both separated and kept blameless notice it does not say sinless only blameless until Jesus comes for us. Paul puts the doing of this on God in that he says faithful is He who calleth; He will do the work.

Paul concludes with a request for prayer and for them to greet the brethren with a kiss and to be sure to share this letter with all. May God's grace rest on them all at all times?

Appendix One

Is The Rapture Before The Great Tribulation

Are We Going To Be Delivered From Wrath & Taken To Heaven Or Not?

John 14:1-3

¹Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

These verses are not in reference to a place on earth, but in HEAVEN. In other words, one day Jesus Christ is going to come for a certain group of believers, and taken into the place where Jesus was at – HEAVEN – to be with Him for some duration of time.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52

⁵¹Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵²In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

These verses make it clear that at a certain point in time, the Christians who are living at this described event, will be "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" delivered – not to die; into an incorruptible state and taken to HEAVEN.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

¹³But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. ¹⁴For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep

in Jesus will God bring with him. ¹⁵For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. ¹⁸Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

These verses make it clear that death is not going to occur for some Christians, that the Christians already in HEAVEN will come back in the sky (not down to earth) with Jesus to meet those "caught up" in verse seventeen (RAPTURED). These people will be taken into HEAVEN.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 (See verse 9)

“For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, “

This verse in its context tells us that Christians will not be appointed to God's time of wrath known as the Great Tribulation period. The Bible describes the wrath of God as being a period of time where His judgment on the world will be poured out. Notice the nature of this time in the following scriptures: Revelation chapters 6-19, Amos 5:18; Joel 2:1; Zephaniah 1:14-18; Isaiah 2:12-21; Jeremiah 30:6-9. Notice the intent of this time: Isaiah 13:9, 13; Zephaniah 1:5; Revelation 6:16-17.

The intent of the children of light (1 Thes. 5:5) is a key to understanding (1Thes. 5:4-5, 9). The day of darkness will not overtake the believer. The contrast is those of light and those of darkness. Notice "they" (those in darkness) versus "you" (the born-again Christian).

In I Corinthians 15:52 - the last trump, Paul is not referring to the last of the seven trumpets in the book of Revelation (Rev. 8:2; 11:15), for the book of Revelation had not yet been written and Paul obviously intended for the Corinthians to understand what he meant. The sounding of an angelic trumpet at the resurrection day had also been mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 4:16. Trumpets were traditionally associated with calls to action (1 Corinthians 14:8; Judges 6:20), and this particular trumpet sounded in heaven will call all saints, living and dead, to ascend into heaven to meet the returning Christ. It is, therefore, “the last trump” of this present age of the church.” – *Henry Morris, Defender’s Study Bible*

Doesn’t Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 17 & 21 Depict Christians Going Through The Great Tribulation?

Don’t these passages of scripture indicate that the church age will go through The Great Tribulation? Not at all! Just because the Apostles and some first century Christians were persecuted and martyred as predicted by the Lord, this was not the Great Tribulation occurring. Do you know what happened to Jerusalem in 70 AD? Answer: Exactly (yet partially) what Jesus solemnly warned the disciples in Matthew chapter twenty-four. Even the Jewish temple was destroyed, as Jesus predicted. Roman forces were sent to further subjugate Israel under Rome’s authority. But, at this time in 70 AD, Matthew 24 was only partially fulfilled (like many prophecies it has a partial and a complete time of fulfillment). But the initial and solemn warnings Jesus made to His disciples occurred around and at 70 AD. Many of the apostles did suffer at the hands of either the Jewish or Roman authorities. But still there remains to be the ultimate fulfillment of Matthew 24 that will take place in the Great Tribulation, also known as Daniel’s Seventieth Week (Daniel 9:24-27).

In Jesus Christ’s Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24-25, Mark 13 & Luke 17 & 21) – the eschatological teaching here does not explain or reflect the church-age scheme of the occurrence of the Rapture, due to the fact He did not intend to reveal it at

this point and time. The Rapture of the New Testament saints was to be revealed to the Apostles after the Holy Ghost came (see John 14-16). Thus, due to the fact God would use the Apostle Paul to reveal this “mystery” later, the Rapture is not being taught in the Lord’s Olivet discourse. This is also why John 5:28-29 is corollary to Daniel 12 – both of these are referring to the Old Testament scheme. The four gospels are in the collection of New Testament books, but they are still in many respects reflecting the Old Testament scheme of prophecy. In the time Christ gave His Olivet Discourse, the Jewish temple is still standing; the Jewish law is still not fulfilled because Jesus hasn’t yet died for the sins of the world, etc. And when it comes to truth being revealed, the Lord is particular to timing (Acts 1:6-7; Galatians 4:4; Titus 1:3; etc.).

2 Thessalonians 2:1-2

¹Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him,

²That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

Another question: Do you know what the apostle Paul solemnly warned the early church-age Christians in 2 Thessalonians chapter two? Paul is telling them not to believe in the lie being circulated (and perhaps even forged by an imposter as Paul) at that time – that Christians are going through the Great Tribulation. Persecution was upon them, true – but it wasn’t the Great Tribulation – and Paul gives the logistics proving that the church-age believer will not suffer this particular tribulation later on either. In verse one there are two distinct end-time occurrences described – The Return of Christ, and the Rapture. And even though they are referenced in opposite order of the way they will actually occur, this arrangement is obviously clarified further on in the same chapter. And the reason for this disorder is because the Thessalonians were being taught by some false teachers the opposite order of what Paul had previously taught the

Thessalonians. Paul's order had been: the Rapture would happen first, and then Christ returns.

A Martyr's Crown To Cast At Jesus Feet

What do you say to someone who holds to church age Christians going through the Great Tribulation? The accusation of being afraid to suffer for the faith (be martyred) seems to be one of the charges insinuated against those who believe in the pre-tribulation rapture. But for your information – a martyr is not only one who dies for their faith. A martyr is someone that will live for their faith – which is a key factor if one is going to “properly” die for it – to be an indisputable martyr. The word “*witnesses*” in Acts 1:8 comes from the Greek word “*martus*” – our English martyr. And here Christ is telling His disciples to be a “living” witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. So being a martyr is much more than when one dies for their faith; because this death should be preceded by a life that brings glory to God as well. It is very unlikely that a non-committed, non-soul winning Christian is going to portray real martyrdom-type courage at the moment when called upon to be the-martyr-for-others-to-follow, as an example. It is commendable that there are those who want to be thought of as willing to die for the faith by their gallantry as Great Tribulation saints. But to be sure, this sensationalism won't be necessary. This may sound heroic – but if you are willing to live for Christ and die for Christ, and you don't “get to” go through the Great Tribulation, you'll still get the Martyr's Crown.

Here's The Scoop

The Rapture Takes Place – *Church-Age Believers* Are Taken To Heaven (just like John 14; 1 Thessalonians 4 and 1 Corinthians 15 describe)

Then The Great Tribulation Will begin which is the time of Jacob's trouble according to the Word of God. Jacob is a name used for Israel as it was his name first. – But not church age believers because they're all in heaven due to the rapture

and resurrection described in 1 Thessalonians 4. This does not negate the fact of the many church-age Christians who were martyred through the centuries.

Seven Years Afterward the Return of Christ to Earth Ushers in His 1000 Year Reign. It's not going to be in Heaven for sure – therefore John 14:1-3, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 & 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 doesn't happen here – because these are history at this point!

SECOND THESSALONIANS

INTRO:

I. Writer: Paul the Apostle

II. Time of Writing: About 50-52 A.d.

III. Purpose: there are two main purposes

1. To assure all believers that God uses persecution

-- He uses persecution to refine us. Persecution teaches endurance.

To be able to stand in a corrupt and dying world.

-- He uses persecution to seal believers. Persecution proves a believer genuine.

-- He uses persecution to seal the doom of persecutors

2. To correct some false ideas about Christ's return.

IV. Features

1. City of Thessalonica-- Capitol of Macedonia, founded by

Cassander, the top officer of Alexander the great. The cities population reached 200,000.

2. Church of Thessalonica--Because of the city's strategic location the gospel was spread far and beyond rather rapidly. It was the second great city evangelized. Paul used homes, instead of the synagogue. He had so much success that the Jews attacked and forced him out of the city to Berea. He was then forced from Berea to Athens and from there to Corinth, where he wrote first Thessalonians. After receiving the letter they responded with questions. These questions prompted this letter.

The church was made up of both believing Jews and Greeks. This is one of the churches that did not financially support Paul in his missionary work, even though they were a large congregation.

3. This epistle declares Christ as Lord 2Th.1: 1

4. This letter declares the Second Coming of Christ 2Th.2: 13

5. It is a letter of "great encouragement in facing persecution"
2nd 1:6

6. It is a letter of great evangelistic and missionary challenge
2Th.1: 8-12

CHAPTER ONE

I. GREETINGS

Intro: these first five verses make it clear what is necessary to make for a strong church.

Verses 1-5: Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: 2 Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; 4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: 5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

Ministers are to be faithful to the church

No matter the circumstances, and then there are special times of care during persecution as Paul had already told them and us in 1Thess. 2:1-12 times such as - ridicule - being ostracized - mocked - threatened - cursed - Rejected. They may have even been physically attacked and martyred look at 1Thess 4:13 "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."

The church was confused about the return of Christ, the day of the Lord and the Day of Judgment. Some felt the terrible time of the tribulation had already begun. They felt this because of the persecution they had been going through.

A church can only be a model if its ministers are faithful to the Lord and His word Ro. 15:1 says "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to

please ourselves." Gal. 6:2; Hebrews 13:3 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

The believers have a firm foundation in God and Christ verse 1. The believers know the grace and peace of God verse 2. The believers have a faith that grows exceedingly verse 3 Exceedingly- means to grow beyond measure, beyond what would be expected. Imagine a church full of believers where faith in Jesus grew explosively and this during severe persecution. Too many believers have their minds upon growing and increasing in the comfort and possessions of this world.

The believers have a love that abounds and overflows towards one another in verse 3. What does that mean it is a love

- That binds individuals together
- That binds individuals in an unbreakable union
- That shows concern and looks after the welfare of one

another

This was the kind of love that the model church of Thessalonica had. Here are some other references of what Jesus Himself said about this subject John 13:34-35; John 15:12; Romans 12:9; 1 Peter 1:22; 4:8

The believers have a strong patience and faith in facing persecution and tribulation. Patience here means to be steadfast, to endure, and to persevere. Tribulation -refers to any kind of trial or trouble. Paul says their faith was so strong that he told others of it.

II. A GLIMPSE OF THE END 1:6--2:17

Verse 6: Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

Righteous Judgment the purpose of judgment is to rectify injustice see also Acts 17:5-8; 1 Thess 1:6; 2:2, 14; 3:3-4

All evil will be dealt with; all those who mistreat others will face judgment. We live in the midst of an evil and unjust people. God must judge the world; his very nature demands that all the injustices and wrongs be punished Romans 12:19;

Hebrews 10:30 says "For we know Him that hath said, vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord and again, the Lord shall judge His people"

Verses 7-8: And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

The Executor of Judgment, Jesus he is coming to both give rest to His followers, including rest from injustice and death of this world. His return shall be a spectacular appearance from heaven. The word "Revealed" used here means to be unveiled or uncovered. The day of the Lord will see the heavens rent this is the stars and sky folding back to let Christ descend to His royal throne in Jerusalem.

His return will be with the angels, for at least two reasons. To add to His majesty and triumph; Jesus says this in Matt 16:27 says "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His father with angels." Jesus in Matt 25:31 adds "When the son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the Holy angels with Him." To carry out His orders and to execute His justice and mercy; Christ adds to this from Matt. 13:39 says, "The enemy that sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels." read also Matt. 13:49-50 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

His return in judgment shall be in flaming fire. This refers to the glory and holiness of His appearance; it will be so brilliant that it will be as the flaming fire of God.

Verse 8: In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

The people to be judged are separated into two classes all who do not know God, the only living and true God, shall be judged. These are those who reject natural revelation, who look at creation and fail to see God.

Men can know God outside of themselves; in creation; nature, the earth, outer space Romans 1:19-21, 2:11-15. Men can know God's love and care and provision. Instead of seeing they reject God, and rather

- Worship creation; science and man
- Worship the God of imagination: one that allows living as you please

All who obey not the gospel of Jesus will be judged

- Every person who has ever heard the gospel and rejected it
- Every person who has professed the gospel, but does not obey it
- Every person who has been baptized but does not obey
- Every person who has joined church but does not obey

Verse 9: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

The Penalty of Judgment: This will be terrible but deserved, why? Because they had opportunity to know and obey the truth and chose rather to deny the truth. There are three things about the penalty. The "who" here is used in a qualitative sense? That is "persons who are such as" these deserve judgment.

"Shall suffer punishment" - means to pay the penalty Matthew Henry said "they did sins work, and must receive sins wages"; the word "Punishment"- means righteous punishment, look at Luke 3:17; Heb.10:29-30; 2 Peter 2:9

This phrase "everlasting destruction" does not mean annihilation or ceasing to exist. It rather means to be separated from the face of the Lord. They carry the idea of ruin, loss, to be cut off. Matt. 13:30, 49.

Verse 10: When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

The Time of the Judgment is Set. It is when Jesus comes to be glorified in His saints and to be admired in all who believe in Him. The word "In" His glory is to be seen in His saints. The world will wonder at the - height - depth - length - breadth of His love for us. The dimensions of our salvation are beyond imagination. Leon Morris said "the glory of that day will far surpass anything of which we can have any idea - and when we do behold it we shall be lost in amazement.

Verses 11-12: Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Escape from Judgment – Paul offers a prayer for these believers.

Three things are necessary to escape judgment a person must be counted worthy by God, how? A person must approach God through faith in his Son; any one whom honors Christ is counted worthy. God credits us with righteousness

God must complete the work of faith in us. We age and die and we cannot complete anything permanently. Therefore God has to take our initial faith and complete the good pleasure in us.

And complete the work of faith in us. The name of Christ must be glorified in us. We must let him live and move in us daily we must let him be glorified in us.

CHAPTER TWO

THE DAY OF THE LORD

Intro: when the Bible mentions the day of the Lord it does not refer to a single day in history. It is used to add force or emphasis to the span of time covered. This day begins with the great event found in the following verses.

Verses 1-2: Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

Paul urges these saints to guard against being shaken in their faith or troubled by the Day of the Lord. In verses 1 and 2 we see these believers at Thessalonica were so pressed they thought this day or time had begun. Someone had been spreading that rumor around claiming

- That a spirit had revealed it
- That the person had a special word -a special revelation
- That he had either received or heard of a letter from Paul stating it

Why some were being shaken in their faith, Paul pleads with them to take their focus off of the persecution and place it on the true coming of the lord. For that day is a time of judgment on unbelievers, because we are not appointed unto wrath but a glorious appearing of Jesus read the following 1 thess. 5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, and Titus 2:12-13

2. Paul says let nothing shake you, not a so-called angelic revelation or revelation by a man or a supposed letter from a "spiritual" person

Verse 3: Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first,

and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

Let no man deceive you. There is a need to watch for two significant events that will precede or launch this terrible day. 1Thess 5:1-3

The first event will be a great falling away of believers from God. The phrase "Falling away" is that apostasy, revolt, rebellion, against God by millions on earth.

Leon Morris said" In the last times there will be an outstanding manifestation of the powers of evil arrayed against God" there is an ample amount of scripture to prove this as seen in these three examples showing what will be happening in the church in the last days 2 Tim 3:1-5; 1Tim 4:1,2; 2 Tim 4:3-4

The second event that will launch the day of the Lord; this is a revealing of the man of sin also called the son of perdition, we commonly call him the Anti-Christ as he is a definite person who is the embodiment of all that is evil. He will be revealed indicating that he will be alive and living somewhere in the world most likely in the European Union.

Well he is revealed. A.T. Robertson "the implication is that the Man of sin is hidden somewhere who will suddenly be manifested". He is the man of lawlessness- he is the embodiment of rebellion against God.

He is the Son of perdition – this tells us that he will be so evil that he is likened to being the direct son of Satan. Therefore he is doomed to destruction. This man is not just another evil world leader, but the anti Christ. Who will launch the day of the Lord look in Revelation 13:4-9.

Whose very name is destruction Mark 13:14; Matthew 24:15

Verses 4-9: Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might

be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

These six verses Paul uses to give the Thessalonian Believers some identifying marks of this Man of Sin.

Five Character traits; we have seen in verse 3 that He idealizes sin. He will fulfill Satan's dreams on earth.

Judas was said to be the son of perdition, prompting some to believe that he will be the embodiment of this new person.

He is the one who opposes all that is called God. In verse 4, he is the adversary of all that Christ stands for. He lifts himself up above God. Not only the people of God but also all religions will be required to submit or suffer. He claims to be God and above all that is to be worshipped. He does this by sitting in the temple on the throne of God Himself.

This is reference to a great world leader who will be head of a state religion encompassing all religions. It is a return to Emperor Worship. He will become this by appearing to cause all nations to live in peace and to solve all hunger in the world, along with homelessness, unemployment, poverty, medical care, crime, etc. Men would willingly serve a religion that could do that. They would worship his government, his science, and technology.

The Danger is so great

Paul taught these Thessalonians and we cannot over stress the importance of these events (apostasy, antichrist, day of the Lord) they are going to happen and soon.

- The Lord is returning to gather His people
- The great day of the Lord is going to fall
- The great apostasy is already on us

- The anti Christ will arise and create a utopia atmosphere in rebellion to God.
- With the end of this age coming people must be taught the truth.

The Revelation of Anti Christ is seen in verses 6-8. There is a set time when anti Christ shall be revealed. "Revealed in his time" right now there is a restraining power in the world holding back his appearance? There is a day coming when this power will be "taken out of the way" Let me give you three things to consider

1. "Out of the way" not taken away, there is a difference. The power will be moved or changed to allow anti Christ to work freely.
2. "He" and "what" are both used to describe this restraining power. This power can determine when to step aside.
3. Logic is to be applied in making a determination of this power. What is this power? Is it the law? No the law of man changes in both societies and generations

The true identity of this power is none other than God the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament here in Gen. 6:3 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. we see that He is described as holding back evil. He is described with both masculine and neuter terminology in the New Testament.

The "mystery of iniquity" (lawlessness is right now working in the world. A mystery in the Bible is a previously unrevealed truth.

- Why do we do the things we know are wrong?
- Why do we allow selfish barriers to be built in our lives towards family and friends, co-workers; barriers that both destroy our relationships and us?
- Why do we hoard, indulge, bank, build and then do even more of the same, neglecting the needy of the world. Why because of sin (lawlessness) in our lives. It is an unknown quantity in our lives.

In the last days the anti-Christ will be revealed in all his naked deformity- openly and brazenly working. He will cause

men to want more and more and never be satisfied. For further proof read Matthew 24:10-12; Romans 1: 21-31.

The End of Anti-Christ

The Anti- Christ poses no real threat to the Lord Himself; his power is but a drop of water in the ocean. Jesus will slay the Anti- Christ with the Spirit of His mouth (breath) This is the Spirit of truth, Holiness an unlimited power. The same breath that created man will dispatch this man of evil. Christ power is irresistible read here what the Prophet Isaiah had to say in Isaiah 11:4 “But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.”

He will destroy Anti-Christ with His glory (brightness) this word is only used to describe Jesus coming. It is used only five times in the New Testament, and each time it refers to His coming again. Once it refers to His first coming here in 2 Timothy 1:16 and the other 4 times to His Second Coming in the following references 1Timothy 6:14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; 2Tim 4:1, 8 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; and but unto all them also that love his appearing. Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

Christ showing Himself in all His glory will destroy the Anti Christ as though a laser burnt him up, the word “destroy” does not mean annihilate but rather to render inoperative, or powerless.

Next we have the work of Anti-Christ

His purpose is to carry on Satan’s activity on the Earth. He will be the embodiment of Satan, He will carry on the lying powers and signs and wonders. He will carry out the activities of Satan. Satan will completely control his life as god completely controlled Christ. Millions will watch and follow these lying powers and wonders

To bring peace

To adequately grow and distribute food so all may survive
To solve the problem of adequate health care, full
employment no more energy crunches and all other problems
will seem to be solved.

What is wrong with these? Nothing, but he will not stop there
he will claim divine power and insist that all men bow to him
and his science. All of these great benefits to man still end at
the grave. You see his benefit can only last a person a few
years barring accident. Luke 4:6 "And the devil said unto
him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them:
for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I
give it"; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be
vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring
lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Verses 10-12: And with all
deceivableness of unrighteousness in
them that perish; because they
received not the love of the truth, that
they might be saved. And for this
cause God shall send them strong
delusion, that they should believe a lie:
That they all might be damned who
believed not the truth, but had
pleasure in unrighteousness.

The followers of the Anti- Christ 2:10-12

We see first that they are perishing in verse 10 the phrase
"That perish" means they are in a continuous action of dying
"perishing" means to be lost to be moving in the opposite
direction. The Gospel is hid to them because of this Luke 13: 3
"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise
perish."

They do not believe the truth verse 10b "Received" means to
welcome, to open up to. They reject the Gospel as in John 3:19
"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the
world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because
their deeds were evil". So we can clearly see they are
deceived. There are two factors involved in this deception.

1---The deceit of the deceiver

2-- The willingness of the person to reject the truth. "For this cause" the cause is one's choice to ignore the truth. A person is not deceived apart from his own will. The law of sowing and reaping in Galatians 6:7-8 is at work in these peoples lives. Leon Morris said, "It is the law of life that those who take this step (disbelief) go further and further astray in to error."

They are the damned

Those who take pleasure in unrighteousness are "damned" the word means to be judged, or condemned. They are this way for two reasons

First they will not believe the truth, that God loves Jesus so when a person curses him, dishonors Him, neglects, rejects, despises Him; God will not overlook this.

They will have pleasure in unrighteousness they will lust with their eyes; they will lust with their flesh.

They will seek the pride of life- position, recognition, honor, and wealth. The tragic result is that man loves himself and not God. Romans 1:26-32 "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."

Verses 13-17: But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

Salvation of God's followers

First Believers are saved as Paul states in verse 13 "but" there is a sharp contrast between the unbelievers and believers "beloved" why? Because we follow Christ who is the origin of God's salvation in verse 13.

Before creation God set down his plan "chosen" this is the only place this word is used it is the same word God used for choosing Israel.

God saw us as saved before we were born. Think of the security of this and compare it with these words of Jesus in John 10:28-29 "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." and what Paul in Romans 8 tells us that "there is now therefore no condemnation". Paul continues by saying that we have "sanctification" by the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit takes a dead spirit and quickens it or makes it alive as Jesus tells us in John 6:63 It is the spirit

that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. He convicts a man of sin, of his need to be saved and given life.

The Holy Spirit attracts men to the cross of Christ. Also the Holy Spirit stirs a man to respond by coming to Christ.

Here is how they respond they demonstrate “Belief of the truth” or believing the gospel. Believers accept the gospel with all their hearts. When a person really believes, God saves him, and this is the promise of His word.

We find in verse 14 The Purpose of Salvation that is To gain glory for Christ – these Thessalonians were being severely persecuted. This verse would bring real comfort to them, they were headed for glory. The word “glory” here means to be full of perfect light, compare this with Romans 8:16-17, and Philippians 3:21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Next we find the Duty of Salvation in verse 15

We are to stand fast and to cling to the Word of God. The word “Traditions” in this verse means all the Word of God whether taught or written. Dr. Leon Morris had this comment on this “the prominent idea is that of an authority external to the teacher himself” We are not to knuckle under to the world and its enticements.

The Resources of Salvation

There are five listed below.

1. The believer receives the love of God and Christ
2. The person receives eternal consolation and encouragement
3. The believer receives good hope, what greater hope that to live eternally with God 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18
4. The believer receives comfort- Only God can give the needed comfort
5. The believer is established in every good word and work. The word “stablish” means to strengthen, secure, and

set fast. It is one-thing men long for, that is to be secure. God is able to fulfill this!

Chapter Three

III.FINAL WORDS 3:1-18

Verses 1-5: Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith. But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

Pray that the word has free course (1-5)

They were suffering, however Paul was at Corinth and he too was suffering persecution and desired for them to pray for him also. But take note he did not ask prayer for comfort, personal needs or to be removed from Corinth.

Instead He asked prayer for two things first for the word to have free course. Too often God's word has no power to influence because of the following. –Opposition ---day dreaming minds --- unprepared hearts etc. Second he asks for a “Free course” is a picture of an Olympic athlete running a race? When the word has free course, souls would be saved and lives would be changed. Believers should always be praying for the minister and teachers of the gospel, that the word might be free.

There was a need for believers to be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men (verse 2). Ministers and teachers are attacked by unreasonable and wicked people. So why would they want to attack? Because they all are not right with God when people lack reason and morality they are dangerous. Read here what Peter had to say in 2 Peter 2:9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and

to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

Next we see there is the Lord's faithfulness in verse 3.

Believers may fail us when we have our greatest need. But the Lord will not. He will do things for the believer

He will work all things for good

----He will establish us and keep us from evil

----He will deliver us by overcoming our failures

--- He will deliver us by delivering us from the sting of death

He will motivate us to keep His commandments (verse 4).

When we sense a stirring within our heart to do well, that is the Spirit of God. A person can tell if he is a true believer or not by the working of the Lord within the Heart.

He directs our hearts to love God (verse 5) the word "directs" means to make straight or to be straight. Jesus will direct our focus to God's love so that when trials come we will be able to stand and be victorious

The Lord directs us to patiently await Christ's return the genuine believer will keep their eyes turned upon Christ's return. Listen to what Paul tells the church at Colosse in Colossians 1:15 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

Verses 6-18: Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to

follow us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all. The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

FINAL WORDS ON WORK AND EMPLOYMENT (6-18)

Today business places are full of disorderly workers many today chose not to work, seeking rather someone to take care of them.

Paul gives instruction for the church to withdraw from the brother who walks disorderly. There were then, those who were setting dates for the Lord's return and in so doing many believers quit working and gave everything away; and when Christ did not come they had to live off of the other believers who had not been foolish enough to quit. There are four reasons to withdraw

The idle worker disobeys instruction (verse 6) the word "tradition" means the whole word of God.

The idle person has the example of the committed worker "Paul" in verse 7, 9

The idle must work or he is not to eat. Verse 10 and Hebrews 6:11, 12. The idle tend towards being busy bodies. The mind is always active with either good or evil thoughts such as tattling, gossip, spreading rumors, poking there nose where they have no business

Paul says everyone is to work in verses 12-13

This is a command from God to work in quietness “just do your works” and be a light what ever you do.

Idlers are to be disciplined in verses 14-15. They were to be put out of the fellowship, so that their shame will bring repentance. The individual was to be marked or noted by all to be disapproved of. The hope was that warnings and shame might stir their repentance compare to Ezra 9:6

WE have three great possessions in Christ. This is a concluding prayer.

1. The believer is to receive peace from the Lord of Peace.
This peace comes always and at all times.
2. The believer is to receive fellowship. It is to be a very personal and deep fellowship because of Paul’s bond with them.
3. The believer receives grace- that undeserved special favor and strength that comes through and by Christ.

Conclusion: So concludes Paul’s second and last letter to the church at Thessalonica. The warnings and exhortation are as relevant today as then and maybe even more so. I encourage all to look up and keep your focus on the Lord, for He is coming soon!