

1 Thessalonians:

Living In The Present – With A Future Tense!



Author of 1Thessalonians: The Apostle Paul

Brief Overview of The Life of Paul:

Saul means: "desired", the Jewish name of the apostle Paul

Paul: From the Roman family name *Paulus*, which means "small" or "humble" in Latin.

Paul was the writer of many N.T. books and zealous leader in the early Church. Paul wrote Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and probably Hebrews.

Saul/Paul first mentioned in The Bible:

Acts 7:55-60

⁵⁵ But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, **(Trinity Mentioned)**

⁵⁶ And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

⁵⁷ Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

⁵⁸ And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, **whose name was Saul.**

⁵⁹ And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. **(Deity of Jesus Bible verse)**

⁶⁰ And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Saul or Paul?

There is a common misconception among Christians that the name of Saul of Tarsus was changed to Paul after Saul's life-changing encounter with the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus.

In **Acts 13:9**, Saul is called Paul for the first time on the island of Cyprus — much later than the time of his conversion. The author (Luke) indicates the names were interchangeable:

Acts 13:9

⁹Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him.

Paul's Pre-Christian Life:

1. His Birth (5 A.D.): Born in Tarsus the chief city of Cilicia, in Asia Minor/Turkey:

Acts 22:3

³I am verily a man which am a Jew, **born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia**, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.



2. Of the Tribe of Benjamin:

Philippians 3:5

⁵Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, **of the tribe of Benjamin**, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

3. Paul was a Roman Citizen:

Acts 22:25

²⁵And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man **that is a Roman**, and uncondemned?

4. Paul's Family:

Father, Acts 23:6

⁶But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, **the son of a Pharisee**: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

Sister, Acts 23:16

¹⁶And when **Paul's sister's son** heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul.

Other Relatives, Romans 16:7

⁷Salute Andronicus and Junia, my **kinsmen**, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

Romans 16:11

¹¹ Salute Herodion my **kinsman**. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

Was the apostle Paul married?

The Bible does not definitively state what Paul's marital status was. However, the social norm of the time required Pharisees and members of the Sanhedrin to be married.

As he was a Pharisee and likely a member of the Sanhedrin, he was almost certainly married at one point. If this were the case, he could have been a widower at the time of his ministry.

5. Educated at Jerusalem, at the feet of Gamaliel, a celebrated Rabbi.

Acts 22:3

³ I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.

6. Paul was acquainted with several of the ancient Greek poets, whom he occasionally quotes.

Acts 17:28 (Aratus of Cilicia)

²⁸ For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

Titus 1:12 (Epimenides of Crete)

¹² One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, the Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.

7. Like all Jews, he was brought up to a trade, which was that of a Tent Maker.

Acts 18:3

³ And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were **tentmakers**.

8. Paul's Religion: A strict Pharisee/Jew.

Acts 23:6

⁶ But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, **I am a Pharisee**, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

Galatians 1:14

¹⁴ And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

9. Paul: Persecutor of the early Christian Church.

Acts 8:1

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

10. Paul was ordained by the Lord Jesus to be the Apostle to the Gentiles (that's us).

Acts 9:15-16

¹⁵ But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

¹⁶ For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

Paul's Early Christian life:

Taught by Jesus

Paul spends three years in Arabia where Jesus personally teaches him!

Galatians 1:11-12

¹¹ But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

¹² For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, **but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.**

Galatians 1:15-18

¹⁵ But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,

¹⁶ To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

¹⁷ Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; **but I went into Arabia**, and returned again unto Damascus.

¹⁸ Then after **three years** I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

The Book: 1Thessalonians

52th Book of The Bible, 5 Chapters, 89 Verses and 1,837 words.

Date Written: Around 51-52 A.D.

Key Words: Gospel 6x, Word 5x, Tribulation 1x –Suffer 1x – Affliction 2x, Spirit/Holy Spirit 2x. Coming 4x.

Theme: The main theme is Jesus' second coming. When he returns, the dead who have believed in Christ will rise and will join the living to meet the Lord in the air (4:15–17). Unbelievers will experience God's wrath, while believers will inherit salvation (1:10; 5:2–4, 9–10). In preparation for that great day, Christians are called to be holy and blameless (3:11–4:8; 5:23). God, who is faithful, will produce in them the holiness he requires (5:24).

Key Themes

- I. God's wrath comes on those who reject the gospel (2:16; 5:3).
- II. Jesus' death and resurrection are the basis for the Christian's hope (4:14; 5:10).

- III. Christians are destined not for wrath but for salvation when Christ returns (1:10; 5:4, 9).
- IV. Christians who die will participate fully in the second coming (4:14–17; 5:10).
- V. Those who respond to the gospel have been elected and called by God. They continue to be called by God throughout their lives (1:4; 2:12; 4:7; 5:9, 24).
- VI. Christians should live lives of complete holiness (3:13; 4:3–8; 5:23).
- VII. Christians must never ignore their responsibility to work (4:9–12; 5:14).
- VIII. The truth of the gospel is confirmed by the integrity of its preachers (1:5; 2:1–12).
- IX. Joy, especially in suffering, is a mark of the Christian (1:6; 5:16).
- X. Christians experience the realities of the new covenant (4:8–9).
- XI. Faith, hope, and love are essential traits of the Christian (1:2–3; 5:8).

Paul undoubtedly had multiple reasons for writing, all coming out of his concern for the flock from which he had been separated. Some of Paul's purposes clearly included:

- 1) Encouraging the church (1 Th 1:2–10);
- 2) Answering false allegations (1 Th 2:1–12);
- 3) Comforting the persecuted flock (1 Th 2:13–16);
- 4) Expressing his joy in their faith (1 Th 2:17–3:13);
- 5) Reminding them of the importance of moral purity (1 Th 4:1–8);
- 6) Condemning the sluggard lifestyle (1 Th 4:9–12);
- 7) Correcting a wrong understanding of prophetic events (1Th 4:13–5:11);
- 8) Defusing tensions within the flock (1 Th 5:12–15);
- 9) Exhorting the flock in the basics of Christian living (1 Th 5:16–22)

Key Verses:

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

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

¹³To 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.

Historical – Theological Themes: 1Thessalonians was penned at Corinth by the apostle Paul in response to Timothy's report on the progress of the church they had recently established there (3:1-6).

Paul, along with Silas and Timothy, founded the church at Thessalonica on his second missionary journey (Acts 17:1-14). The apostle had been drawn to this important Roman port after seeing a vision in which a Macedonian man was calling for help (Acts 16:9).

“The City”. Thessalonica (Salonika today), had been named (in 315 B.C.), by Cassander after his wife, Alexander the Great's half-sister. Under the Romans the city, famous for its hot springs, burgeoned to a population of over 200,000. It was situated strategically on the Via Egnatia, the main Roman highway from east to west. Its sheltered harbor made an ideal naval station. The city

was a natural center for traffic moving in all directions. In Paul's day, it was the capital of Macedonia.

The Church at Thessalonica

The establishment of the church is recorded in **Acts 17:1-9**. On his second missionary journey, Paul and his companions (Silas and Timothy) had just left Philippi and passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia to arrive at Thessalonica. As was his custom, Paul immediately located the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews for three Sabbaths concerning Jesus Christ. While some of them were persuaded, including a great number of devout Greeks and leading women, the unbelieving Jews became jealous and created an uproar in the city. Therefore it became necessary to send Paul and Silas away secretly by night to Berea.

Despite such ominous beginnings, a strong church was established in Thessalonica (**1Th 1:2-10**). Mostly Gentile (**1Th 1:9**), its members included Jason (**Acts 17:9**), Aristarchus, and Secundus (**Acts 20:4**).

This book is unique in that every chapter ends with a reference to the Second Coming of Christ!

1 Thessalonians 5:23

²³ 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**.

PURPOSE OF THE BOOK:

1. To confirm young converts in the elementary truth of the gospel.
2. To condition them to go on unto holy living.
3. To comfort them regarding the return of Christ.

A heathen inscription in Thessalonica read:

“After death no reviving, after the grave no meeting again.”

Some Bible Scholar Outlines:

INTRODUCTION (1Th 1:1-4)

1. Salutation (**1Th 1:1**)
2. Thanksgiving for their faith, hope, and love (**1Th 1:2-4**)
- I. **PERSONAL REFLECTIONS (1Th 1:5-3:13)**
 - A. **REGARDING THEIR CONDITION (1Th 1:5-10)**
 1. Their reception of the gospel (**1Th 1:5-7**)
 2. Their reputation in every place (**1Th 1:8-10**)
 - B. **REGARDING HIS CONDUCT (1Th 2:1-12)**
 1. The manner of his preaching (**1Th 2:1-8**)
 2. The manner of his life (**1Th 2:9-12**)
 - C. **REGARDING HIS CONCERN (1Th 2:13-3:13)**
 1. For their faithfulness (**1Th 2:13-3:10**)

2. For their continued growth (1Th 3:11-13)

II. APOSTOLIC INSTRUCTIONS (1Th 4:1-5:28)

A. WALK IN HOLINESS (1Th 4:1-8)

1. To please God (1Th 4:1-2)
2. To abstain from sexual immorality (1Th 4:3-8)

B. WALK IN LOVE (1Th 4:9-10)

1. As they are taught by God to love one another (1Th 4:9)
2. To increase more and more (1Th 4:10)

C. WALK IN DILIGENCE (1Th 4:11-12)

1. To work with their hands (1Th 4:11)
2. To walk properly toward those who are outside (1Th 4:12)

D. WALK IN HOPE (1Th 4:13-18)

1. With no sorrow concerning those who have died (1Th 4:13-14)
2. For we will be rejoined with them when Christ returns (1Th 4:15-18)

E. WALK IN LIGHT (1Th 5:1-11)

1. For the Day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night (1Th 5:1-4)
2. For we are sons of light and sons of the day (1Th 5:5-8)
3. For God has appointed us to salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ (1Th 5:9-11)

F. WALK IN OBEDIENCE (1Th 5:12-22)

1. With respect toward those over us (1Th 5:12-13)
2. With concern for one another (1Th 5:14-15)
3. With joy, prayer and thanksgiving (1Th 5:16-18)
4. Don't quench the Spirit or despise prophecies, but don't be gullible either (1Th 5:19-22)

CONCLUDING REMARKS (1Th 5:23-28)

1. A prayer for their sanctification and preservation (1Th 5:23-24)
2. A request for prayer in his behalf (1Th 5:25)
3. A charge to greet one another with a holy kiss, and to read the epistle to others (1Th 5:26-27)
4. A benediction of grace from the Lord Jesus Christ (1Th 5:28)

Some Bible Scholar Outlines # 2:

1. The Christian's ATTITUDE toward the return of Christ, Chapter 1 (to serve...to wait..., vv. 9, 10)
2. The Christian's REWARD at the return of Christ, Chapter 2
3. The Christian's LIFE and the return of Christ, Chapters 3:1 — 4:12
4. The Christian's DEATH and the return of Christ, Chapter 4:13-18
5. The Christian's ACTIONS in view of the return of Christ, Chapter 5

Some Bible Scholar Outlines # 3:

I. Coming of Christ is an **INSPIRING HOPE**, Chapter 1

- A. Introduction, vv. 1-4
- B. Gospel received in much assurance and much affliction, vv. 5-7
- C. Gospel results, vv. 8-10

II. Coming of Christ is a **WORKING HOPE**, Chapter 2

- A. Motive and method of a true witness for Christ, vv. 1-6
- B. Mother side of the apostle's ministry (comfort), vv. 7-9
- C. Father side of the apostle's ministry (charge), vv. 10-13
- D. Brother side of the apostle's ministry (challenge), vv. 14-16
- E. Reward of a true witness for Christ, vv. 17-20

III. Coming of Christ is a **PURIFYING HOPE**, Chapters 3:1 —4:12

- A. Timothy brings a good report of Thessalonians, Chapter 3:1-8
- B. Paul urges Thessalonians to continue to grow in faith, Chapter 3:9-13
- C. How believers are to walk, Chapter 4:1-12

IV. Coming of Christ is a **COMFORTING HOPE**, Chapter 4:13-18

(What death means to a Christian; what the Rapture means to the church.)

V. Coming of Christ is a **ROUSING HOPE** (leads to action), Chapter 5

(Dead believers are asleep in Jesus; living believers are awake for Jesus.)

- A. Call to be awake and alert in view of Christ's coming, vv. 1-10
- B. Commandments for Christians, vv. 11-28

Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians to brand new converts who have just been saved, so this is the Book you should put in the hands of new converts today. John was written for a sinner to get saved and Romans would be way over the head of a "New Babe" in Christ. Many simple truths as The Gospel, The Bible-The Word of God and The Second Coming of The Lord are found here!



1 Thessalonians:

Living In The Present – With A Future Tense!



Pastor Hank's 1Thessalonians Chapter One Outline: Salutation, Thanksgiving for their faith, hope, and love, Verses 1-4. The Gospel and the Thessalonian Church, Verses 5-7. The Thessalonians responded by sounding out the Word of the Lord, Verses 8-10.

1 Thessalonians 1

Salutation, Thanksgiving for their faith, hope, and love, Verses 1-4:

Verse 1

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.

Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus... The inclusion of Paul's distinguished helpers, Silvanus and Timotheus (Timothy), in this salutation was not intended as designation of them as co-authors with Paul of this letter, but rather as a mark of friendship and courtesy on the part of the apostle for these faithful workers who had so frequently labored and suffered with him on the mission field. Silas was beaten and imprisoned with Paul at Philippi (Acts 15:19), and Timothy's imprisonment is mentioned in Hebrews 13:23. Timothy's father was a Greek, and Silas was a Roman citizen.

Silvanus was chosen by Paul following the dispute with Barnabas (Acts 15:40), and Timothy was recruited from Lystra where Paul had been stoned (Acts 16:1); thus both were identified with Paul on the second missionary journey and extensively thereafter.

Paul was an amazing man and apostle of God, but he usually did not work all by himself. Whenever he could, Paul worked with a team. Here Paul mentioned the men he worked with.

Silvanus (also known as *Silas*) was a long and experienced companion of Paul. He traveled with Paul on his second missionary journey and was imprisoned and set free with Paul in the Philippian jail (Acts 16:19-30). When Paul first came to Thessalonica, Silas came with him (Acts 17:1-9). Therefore, the Thessalonians knew **Silvanus** well.

Timothy was a resident of Lystra, a city in the province of Galatia (Acts 16:1-3). He was the son of a Greek father (Acts 16:1) and a Jewish mother named Eunice (2 Timothy 1:5). From his youth learned the Scriptures from his mother and grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15). Timothy was a trusted companion and associate of Paul, and he accompanied Paul on many of his missionary journeys. Paul sent Timothy to the Thessalonians on a previous occasion (1 Thessalonians 3:2).

unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ... Paul himself founded the church in Thessalonica on his second missionary journey (Acts 17:1-9). He was only in the city a short time because he was forced out by enemies of the Gospel. Yet **the church of the Thessalonians** continued alive and active. Though Paul had to suddenly leave this young church, his deep concern for them prompted this letter.

Grace be unto you, and peace... Paul's familiar greeting that appears in all his epistles.

Grace, the favor and approval of God.

Peace, the consequence of this manifested mercy, peace of conscience, and peace with God; producing internal happiness, quietness, and assurance.

from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ... Paul's construction, which unites the two under the government of the one preposition in, places the two names side by side on a basis of equality. **It is a clear witness to his conviction concerning the deity of Jesus Christ.**

Verse 2

²We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

We give thanks to God always for you all... When Paul thought of the Christians in Thessalonica, his heart filled with gratitude. Paul started the church there in less than ideal circumstances, being run out of town after only three weekends with them (Acts 17:1-10). Yet the church was strong and full of life. Paul knew that this work was beyond him and his abilities and that it was the work of God.

making mention of you in our prayers... Paul and his companions prayed frequently for the entire flock and 3 of those prayers are offered in this letter (1:2-3; 3:11-13; 5:23-24).

Verse 3

³Remembering 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;

Remembering... Paul gave thanks because he remembered continually what he had seen spring up in their lives. They worked hard for God because they believed. They labored hard for God because they loved Him. They patiently endured because of their future hope. And Paul remembered gladly how all three were revealed when he was among them.

What a contrast this was with the Ephesian church in **Revelation 2:2**. They too had works, and labour, and patient endurance, but they had lost their first love. There is no mention there of faith, love and hope, except for the loss of their first love. We must ever ensure that our service does not take our eyes off Christ.

This trilogy of **faith, love and hope** occurs regularly. See 1 Thessalonians 5:8; Romans 5:2-5; 1 Corinthians 13:13; Galatians 5:5-6; Colossians 1:4-5; Hebrews 6:10-12; 1 Peter 1:21-22. The early church recognized that they were the foundation of any Christian life. If one be missing that life will be severely impeded.

What then was their '**work of faith**'? That they turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God and to wait for His Son from Heaven (verse 9).

What then was their **‘labour of love’**? Having believed, the Thessalonians were then filled with love for Christ and responded by hard work in His service. The word for ‘labour’ means hard toil and the willingness to endure much hardship. True love for Christ is all demanding and expresses itself in service, both in witnessing and praying, and in doing good and revealing concern for those in need. It is not without significance that the provision of hospitals and schools for the poor in Europe in centuries past originally arose from the activities of men and women of God, and that many of the great nineteenth century reformers were evangelical Christians. Jesus’ parables constantly stressed that we are ‘servants’ who are to go about our physical duties in readiness for His coming.

What then was their **‘patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ’**? Becoming a Christian produces ‘hope’ for the future. It is a certain hope because of the One in Whom that hope is placed. In the final analysis it is the assured hope of eventually being a totally transformed being in the presence of God, often expressed in terms of Christ’s Second Coming which will bring that about.

in the sight of God and our Father... Paul does not hesitate to exalt Christ in the presence of God, and what is more to turn all our thoughts on Christ while in that Presence. The Jew would argue for faith in God as being supreme, and that to put faith, love and hope on any other in His presence would be blasphemy. It would be to sideline God. And Paul agrees. And yet in the presence of our God and Father he centralizes attention on the Lord Jesus Christ. This can only be because to love Christ is to love God, to believe in Christ is to believe in God, to hope in Christ is to hope in God. In this is clearly expressed that in Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead in bodily form (Colossians 2:9). It confirms His co-equality with the Father. When we love Christ, serve Christ, worship Christ, it is always in the presence of our God and Father, and is worship too of Him. The Fatherhood of God results in response to the Son Who reveals Him (John 1:14; John 1:18; John 14:9).

Verse 4

⁴ Knowing, **brethren beloved, your election of God.**

Paul says ‘brethren’ it has a very powerful significance. He is speaking to those whom he believes are true children of God, who can say ‘our Father’, as indeed his next words reveal...

This idea is confirmed in the rest of the New Testament. Those who believe in Jesus Christ become His children (John 1:12) and are ‘born -- of God’ (John 1:13). We can call God ‘Abba, Father’ when we have been adopted through the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6). To become His sons and daughters we must turn away from all that defiles, especially idolatry (2 Corinthians 6:16-18).

brethren beloved, your election of God... Here, as elsewhere, election derives from God's love; election to damnation is not found in the New Testament. Such views as this derive from the failure to understand that God's election works both ways, both to eternal life and to eternal death. And who are they who are thus "elected"? Those people who will love God and choose to serve him are "the elect" foreordained before all time to inherit eternal salvation; whereas, those who will not love God and who choose to disobey him are "elected" to eternal death.

The Church is commonly called “the elect” (Rom. 8:33; Col., 3:12; 2 Tim. 2:10; Titus 1:1). In salvation, the initiating will is God’s, not man’s (John 1:13; Acts 13:46-48; Rom. 9:15-16; 1 Cor. 1:30; Col. 1:13; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Peter 1:1-2).

Man's will participates in response to God's promptings as Paul makes clear when he says the Thessalonians received the Word (verse 6), and they turned to God from idols (verse 9). These two responses describe faith and repentance, which God repeatedly calls sinners to do throughout Scripture (Acts 20-21).

Election is God's side of salvation. Our side is still "whosoever will" may come. God gives a legitimate and sincere offer of salvation:

Isaiah 55:1

1 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Predestination and election can be easily understood with the following illustration: Bob Smith lives in Tyler, Texas. He has been invited to attend a banquet in Shreveport, Louisiana. The host for the banquet sent Bob a ticket for a seat on a bus scheduled to leave Tyler at 9:30 a.m. on a Wednesday and arrive in Shreveport at 12:00 noon the same day-just in time for the party.

The destination of the bus has been predetermined. As soon as Bob steps onto the bus, he becomes a participant in this predetermined trip. His ticket assures him of a seat on the bus. His destination is certain.

However, if Bob throws away his ticket before departure, or if he gets off the bus between Tyler and Shreveport, he will not arrive at the destination originally intended for him.

The same is true of the predetermined journey God has set before us. If we use the free "ticket" He has given to us, get aboard the "bus" to the Kingdom, and stay on the bus until it arrives, we will arrive at our proper destination. But if we get off the "bus" before it reaches its destination, we will not enter the Kingdom. Or, if we throw away the "ticket" before boarding, we will forfeit our "seat" on the bus and lose the privilege of participating in the predetermined journey.

The host of the banquet invited many, offering them free tickets, but many of them declined the offer. The only ones finally chosen for participation in the festivities were those who made the trip and showed up for the banquet.

Divine election is no different. God chooses those who choose Him. Many are invited, but those finally chosen for participation in the Kingdom are those who accept God's provisions for salvation. Jesus Christ is the Elect One chosen from the foundation of the world (**Isaiah 42:1**; **1 Peter 1:20**). He is the Way into the Kingdom of God (**John 14:6**). When we accept Him, we are "in Christ," and become participants in His death and resurrection (**Romans 6:311**; **2 Corinthians 4:14**). Similarly, by joining ourselves to the Elect One, becoming members of His Body, we become participants in His election.

The Gospel and the Thessalonian Church, Verses 5-7:

Verse 5

⁵For 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.

Paul speaks of it as “**our gospel**” because it was the gospel preached by him and Silas and Timothy. He did not mean to say that the gospel had been originated by him, but only that he had delivered the good news of salvation to them.

Note: The Ten Gospels that are given in The New Testament:

1-4. There are the four Gospels accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

5. The Gospel of the Kingdom.

Matthew 9:35

³⁵ And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching **the gospel of the kingdom**, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

6. Paul preached The Gospel of the grace of God.

Acts 20:24 (2 Timothy 2:8)

²⁴ But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify **the gospel of the grace of God**.

Defined in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

² By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

³ For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

⁴ And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

7. There is the entire body of Sound Doctrine which Paul committed to the Church, which Paul called ‘my gospel’.

Romans 2:16

¹⁶ In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to **my gospel**.

8. Hebrews 4:2 talks about “the gospel preached” to the Children of Israel when they were on the verge of entering The Promised Land

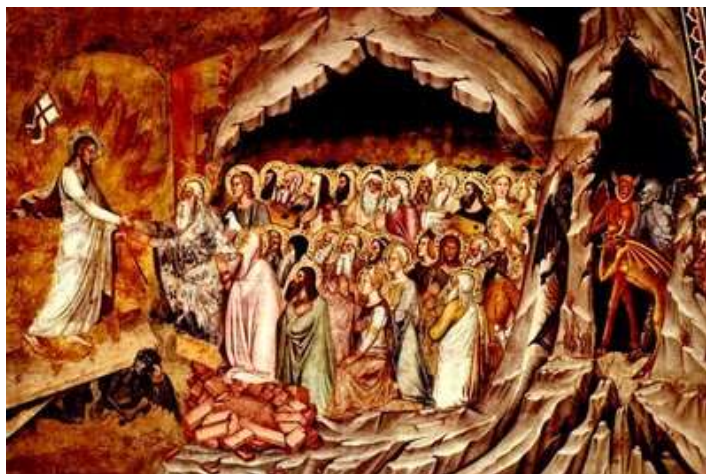
Hebrews 4:2

² For unto us was **the gospel preached**, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

9. Jesus Preached the gospel to The Old Testament Saints in Paradise.

1 Peter 4:6

⁶ For for this cause was **the gospel preached** also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.



Descent of Christ to Limbo (1365-68) - Andrea da Firenze

10. At the end of The Tribulation an Angel preaches “the everlasting gospel” that God will save any gentile who will worship Him as the Creator.

Revelation 14:6-7

⁶ And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having **the everlasting gospel** to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

⁷ Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Remember what the word Gospel means: “good news.” For Paul, the best news was not about more money, more love, more status, or more stuff. The good news was about a real relationship with God through the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross!

but also in power... The message of Jesus Christ has power. It has power for miracles; power for wonderful signs from God; and best of all, it has the power to change minds, hearts, and lives.

and in the Holy Ghost... The Gospel is a message by the **Holy Spirit**, a living Person, who works within the hearts of the hearers, to convict, to comfort, and to instruct. If the preacher only speaks, then it is a matter of **word only**, but when the **Holy Spirit** works through the Word, a great spiritual work is accomplished.

We sometimes think too little about the *spiritual* operations of the Word of God. There is a spiritual work of God’s Word that goes far beyond the basic educational value of learning the Bible.

and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake... The Gospel is a message given in much assurance. This describes the preacher who really believes what he preaches. There is no substitute for that assurance, and if a preacher doesn’t have it, he should stay out of the pulpit.

Verse 6

⁶ And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.

And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord... The Thessalonians stopped following other things, but followed after Paul and the Lord. Paul says that it was a good thing for them to follow him, and he wasn't shy about saying "follow me" because he knew where he was going.

This shows that Paul's message included an element of *personal discipleship*. There was a sense in which Paul personally led these Thessalonian Christians in their spiritual life. They could see his life and were invited to learn from his example.

Paul repeated this theme several times:

Philippians 3:17

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

1 Corinthians 11:1

1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

having received the word in much affliction... The Thessalonian Christians distinguished themselves because they received the Word, even in much affliction. The message they heard came with adversity; yet they received it, and Paul thanked God because of it.

Acts 17

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.

with joy of the Holy Ghost... When the Thessalonian Christians faced the affliction from receiving the Word, they didn't just face it with a resigned fatalism. They faced it with joy of the Holy Spirit.

Not long before coming to Thessalonica, Paul and Silas personally experienced the principle of having the joy of the Holy Spirit even in the presence of much affliction – when they sang in the

Philippian jail despite their chains and sufferings. They were examples of this same spirit to the Thessalonian Christians.



Verse 7

⁷So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

First, Paul was an example to the Thessalonian Christians. Then they became examples to others. This is exactly how the work of God should happen.

The Christians in Macedonia and Achaia needed examples, and the Thessalonians supplied that need. This was true even though they had only been followers of Jesus a short time. As Christians, we always need others who will show us how to follow Jesus Christ, beyond the need of hearing about how to follow Him.

Paul expands this from being examples to Teaching/Disciplining others to Timothy:

2 Timothy 2:2

²And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses... Paul reminded Timothy of the body of truth that he had heard from the Apostle in the presence of many others. Certainly, Timothy heard many Bible studies from Paul, and shared much time with the Apostle in personal discipleship. During Timothy's many years of close association with Paul, he had heard divine truth which God had revealed through the apostle.

many witnesses... Such as Silas, Barnabas, Luke, and many others in the churches who could attest to the divine authenticity of Paul's teaching, a needed reminder to Timothy in light of the many defections at Ephesus (1:15).

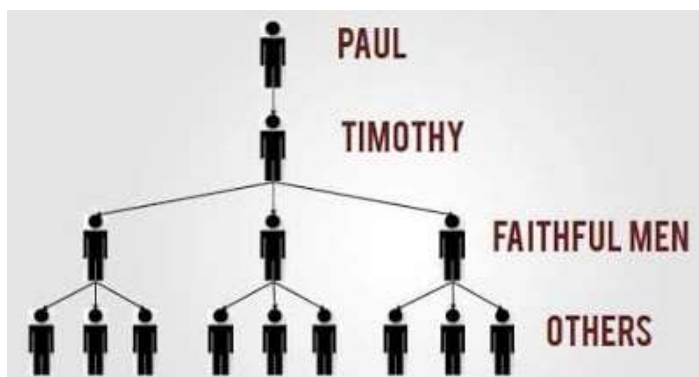
Timothy was to take the divine revelation he had learned from Paul and teach it to other faithful men, men with proven spiritual character and giftedness, who would in turn pass on those truths to another generation.

the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also... From Paul to Timothy to faithful men to others encompasses 4 generations of godly leaders. That process of spiritual reproduction, which began in the early church, is to continue until the Lord returns.

It seems to me, that Paul is more concerned about the work being carried on after his death, than he is of dying. He is also, very concerned that they do not teach another gospel, than the gospel that he had taught. Paul knows that Timothy will bring what he has taught him.

He is telling Timothy to seek out Lay Ministers that had begun under his ministry, and encourage them to teach the pure gospel that he had brought. Paul was afraid that many of the doctrines would be affected too badly by the customs of the people who they were ministering to. Paul felt that his converts would follow his teachings better, when they were teaching others.

Paul=Timothy=Faithful Men=Others



1 Thessalonians:

Living In The Present – With A Future Tense!



Pastor Hank's 1Thessalonians Chapter One Outline: Salutation, Thanksgiving for their faith, hope, and love, Verses 1-4. The Gospel and the Thessalonian Church, Verses 5-7. The Thessalonians responded by sounding out the Word of the Lord, Verses 8-10.

1 Thessalonians 1

The Thessalonians responded by sounding out the Word of the Lord, Verses 8-10:

Verse 8

⁸For 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.

This was part of the good example that the Thessalonian Christians provided. **“Sounded out”** means “a loud ringing sound, as of a trumpet blast.” The good work the Lord did among the Thessalonians became known all over the region, and everyone talked about the changes.

Verse 9

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

Everywhere Christians were talking about what had happened to the Thessalonians through the preaching of Paul and Silas, and with what powerful effect (in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, Verse 5) they had proclaimed the Good News in Thessalonika. For they saw these Thessalonians transformed. They had become completely different people. They no longer partook in idolatrous worship but looked only to the living God, and were now totally involved in serving Him and looking for the return of Christ, the deliverer from coming judgment and wrath.

Note the threefold picture. ‘Turned to God from idols (a work of faith), to serve the living and true God (a labour of love) and to wait for His Son from the heavens (the patient endurance of hope).’ (Compare Verse 3).

Verse 10

¹⁰And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

In verse 10 we see three very important Bible Subjects: The Second Coming, Resurrection and Judgment!

And to wait for his Son from heaven... Means waiting with expectation, looking ahead in faith, to the fulfillment of Christ's promises to return to the saints.

And to wait for his Son from heaven... The expectation of Christ's return is especially prominent in this letter, see 1 Thessalonians 2:19; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

Paul also wrote in:

Titus 2:13

¹³ Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

The Doctrine of The Second Coming of Jesus:

The return of Jesus Christ from Heaven to judge His enemies and set up His earthly rule.

The Second Coming is spoken of in greatest detail in:

Revelation 19:11-16

¹¹ And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

¹² His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

¹³ And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

¹⁴ And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

¹⁵ And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

¹⁶ And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.



O.T. Prophecies of Christ's Second Coming:

Job 19:25-27

²⁵ For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

²⁶ And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

²⁷ Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

Isaiah 13:3-5

³ I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoice in my highness.

⁴ The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together: the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle.

⁵ They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

Daniel 7:13-14

¹³ I saw in the night visions, and, behold, **one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven**, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

¹⁴ And there was given him dominion, and glory, **and a kingdom**, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

Zechariah 2:10

¹⁰ Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: **for, lo, I come**, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord.

Zechariah 14:4-5

⁴ And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

⁵ And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.

Psalms 96:13

¹³ Before the Lord: **for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth**: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

Jesus said He was Coming back!

Matthew 25:31

³¹ When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

The Angels said Jesus was Coming back!

Acts 1:10-11

¹⁰ And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

¹¹ Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, **shall so come in like** manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

Paul said that Jesus was Coming back!

2 Thessalonians 1:7-10

⁷ And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

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

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

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.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-2

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

² 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.

1 Thessalonians 3:13

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.

1 Corinthians 11:26

²⁶ For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death **till he come**.

James said that Jesus was Coming back:

James 5:7-9

⁷ Be patient therefore, brethren, **unto the coming of the Lord**. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

⁸ Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

⁹ Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.

John said that Jesus was Coming back:

1 John 2:28

²⁸ And now, little children, abide in him; that, **when he shall appear**, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

Jude said that Jesus was Coming back! :

Jude 1:14-15

¹⁴ And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, **Behold, the Lord cometh** with ten thousands of his saints,

¹⁵ To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

In the 260 chapters of the New Testament, there are 318 references to the Second Coming of Christ—an amazing **1 out of every 30 verses**. Twenty-three of the 27 New Testament books refer to this great event. For every prophecy in the Bible concerning Christ's first advent, there are 8 which look forward to His second!

The revelation of The Second Coming of Jesus is one of the most important and most frequently mentioned doctrines of the New Testament. **One out of every twenty-five verses** in the New Testament refers either to the rapture of the church or to Christ's coming to reign over the world!

****Note: The Bible describes the Rapture and Second Coming as different events.**

The Bible sees **The Rapture** (John 14:1-4; I Corinthians 15:51-58; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) and **The Second Coming** (Zechariah 14:1-21; Matthew 24:29-31; Mark 13:24-27; Luke 21:25-27; Revelation 19) as separate events, because when the verses are compared they describe two very different events:

1. Rapture — Believers meet Christ in the air.

Second Coming — Christ returns to the Mount of Olives to meet the believers that survived the Great Tribulation on earth.

2. Rapture — Mount of Olives is unchanged.

Second Coming — Mount of Olives is divided, forming a valley east of Jerusalem.

3. Rapture — Living believers obtain glorified bodies.

Second Coming — Those believers from Great Tribulation remain in same bodies.

4. Rapture — Believers go to heaven.

Second Coming — Glorified believers come from heaven, earthly believers stay on earth

5. Rapture — World left unjudged and living in sin.

Second Coming — World is judged and righteousness is established.

6. Rapture — Depicts deliverance of the Church from wrath.
Second Coming — Depicts deliverance of believers who endured wrath.

7. Rapture — No signs precede it.
Second Coming — Many signs precede it.

8. Rapture — Revealed only in New Testament.
Second Coming — Revealed in both Old and New Testaments

9. Rapture — Deals with only the saved.
Second Coming — deals with both the saved and unsaved

10. Rapture — Satan remains free.
Second Coming — Satan is bound and thrown into the Abyss.

Looking for that blessed hope... Indicates that Christians should live in active expectation of the return of Jesus.

It should be precious for Christians to consider:

- He came the first time to save the soul of man; He will come a second time to resurrect the body.
- He came the first time to save the individual; He will come a second time to save society.
- He came the first time to a crucifixion; He will come a second time to a coronation.
- He came the first time to a tree; He will come a second time to a throne.
- He came the first time in humility; He will come a second time in glory.
- He came the first time and was judged by men; He will come a second time to judge all men.
- He came the first time and stood before Pilate; He will come a second time and Pilate will stand before Him.

Beware of the Scoffers!

2 Peter 3:3-4

³Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

⁴And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.



Jesus Is Coming Back!

whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus... Resurrection, This coming One was a proof of the new life that was available to those who believed, for He Himself had been raised from the dead and would come in that resurrected life. He was the guarantee of their future resurrected life (1 Thessalonians 4:14; 1 Corinthians 15:20-24). This positive view of life beyond death was in direct contrast to the gloomy views held by those who served false idols beyond the grave.

Who Raised Jesus From The Dead?

Galatians 1:1

1 Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)

John 2:18-19

¹⁸Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

¹⁹Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

Romans 8:11

¹¹But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

All three members of the Trinity - God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit were involved in the resurrection of Jesus. The resurrection is individually ascribed to each one of them.

which delivered us from the wrath to come... This is a reference to the Judgment of the Great Day, and the "wrath of God that falls upon the sons of disobedience" (Ephesians 5:6). Other passages bearing on this are Romans 1:18, 28, 32; Romans 2:8,9; Ephesians 2:3 and Colossians 3:6. God has a score to settle with sin, and a day has been appointed in which he will judge the world in righteousness.

Acts 17:31

³¹Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.



1 Thessalonians:

Living In The Present – With A Future Tense!



Pastor Hank's 1Thessalonians Chapter Two Outline: Paul's defense against criticism, Verses 1-12. Stressing the faithfulness of the Thessalonians under persecution, Verses 13-16. A warm expression of Paul's affection for them, Verses 17-20.

Paul's defense against criticism, Verses 1-12:

1 Thessalonians 2

Verse 1

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

This begins a section where Paul defended his own character and ministry before the Thessalonians. This wasn't because Paul was insecure about his ministry, but because he had many enemies in Thessalonica (Acts 17:5-6 and 17:13) who discredited him in his absence, especially because of his hurried departure from Thessalonica. Paul's enemies said he left town quickly because he was a self-serving coward.

Paul wrote here in a personal manner, but this really wasn't a personal issue for Paul. He knew that it mattered for the sake of the Gospel. If Paul was discredited, then the Gospel message itself would be discredited.

Verse 2

² 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.

But even after that we had suffered before... Paul was willing to go on preaching even though it brought him much suffering. They knew how badly treated he had been at Philippi (Acts 16:12-40), but this had not prevented them from coming to Thessalonica, and continuing to preach boldly even though there were the signs of the same things happening to him there (Acts 17:5). He had not flinched or hesitated. He had been willing to suffer among them for the Gospel's sake while proclaiming the Good News from God to them. Note the stress that the Good News they had brought was **'of God'**. It was God's Good News, not his.

and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi... **'Shamefully entreated'** that is treated arrogantly or spitefully. At Philippi the law was called in and false accusations were made against them. They were then scourged and put in the stocks in prison.

we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention... Paul counted it a pleasure to be able to suffer for Christ and the gospel message. The message that Paul had brought to Thessalonica was not made milder by the conflict, but if anything was even bolder and more sure. Paul's boldness seemed to increase with every persecution.

Paul had to defend himself against False Accusations in the next few Verses:

- Paul has a police record and is therefore untrustworthy: (1 Thessalonians 2:2, suffered before referring to his imprisonment in Thessalonica).
- Paul's ministry is based on impure motives: (1 Thessalonians 2:3, uncleanness).
- Paul deliberately deceives others: (1 Thessalonians 2:3, in deceit).
- Paul preaches to please others, not God: (1 Thessalonians 2:4, not as pleasing men).
- Paul is in the ministry as a mercenary, to get what he can out of it materially: (1 Thessalonians 2:5, 2:9, nor a cloak for covetousness).
- Paul only wants personal glory: (1 Thessalonians 2:6, nor did we seek glory from men).
- Paul is something of a dictator: (1 Thessalonians 2:7 we were gentle among you).

Verse 3

³For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:

Paul was not a man of untruths. He spoke the message of God, exactly the way the Lord had given it to him. He did not alter the message to please man. Guile, in this verse would mean trickery.

The purity of Paul's message made it apparent that there was no deceit, uncleanness, or guile in his ministry. In the first century world Paul lived in, there were many competing religions, and many ministers of those religions were motivated by greed and gain.

Verse 4

⁴But 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.

I like the word "**allowed**" in the verse above. Paul counted it a privilege to be trusted with the **gospel message**. We should count it a privilege to be **allowed** to work for God ourselves. Paul spoke as an Messenger of God. Paul did not choose what he would say. He turned his tongue over to God and spoke the words as the Spirit gave him utterance.

Most Ministers today have this all turned around. They are preaching what the people want to hear. The Bible calls that preaching to itching ears.

2 Timothy 4:3

³For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

they heap to themselves teachers... This reminds us that the most popular teachers are not necessarily the most faithful teachers. Paul had no desire to please men. His desire was to bring the message God wanted the people to have as accurately as he could. Paul's desire was to please God, not man.

Paul is reminding us that in The Last Days, SAVED CHRISTIANS REJECT SOUND DOCTRINE, HAVING ITCHING EARS.

Question: "What does 2 Timothy 4:3 mean by itching ears?"

Answer: The apostle Paul wrote a warning for the church: The time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. (2 Timothy 4:3).

The Greek word translated "itching" literally means "to itch, rub, scratch, or tickle." To want one's ears "tickled" is to desire massages rather than messages—sermons that charm rather than challenge, entertain rather than edify, and please rather than preach.

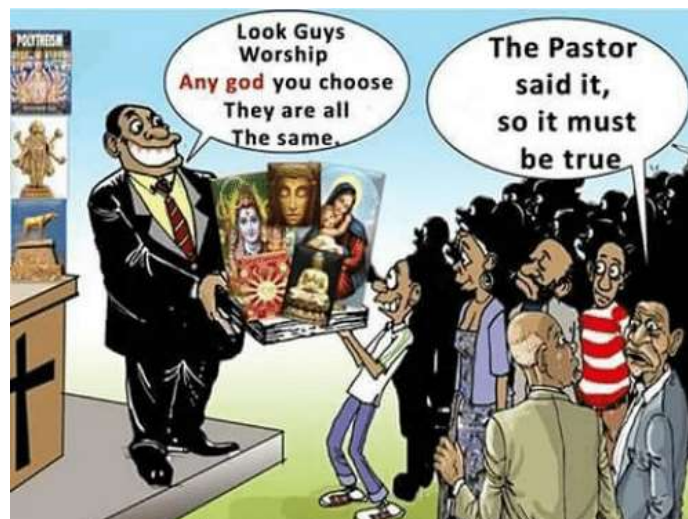
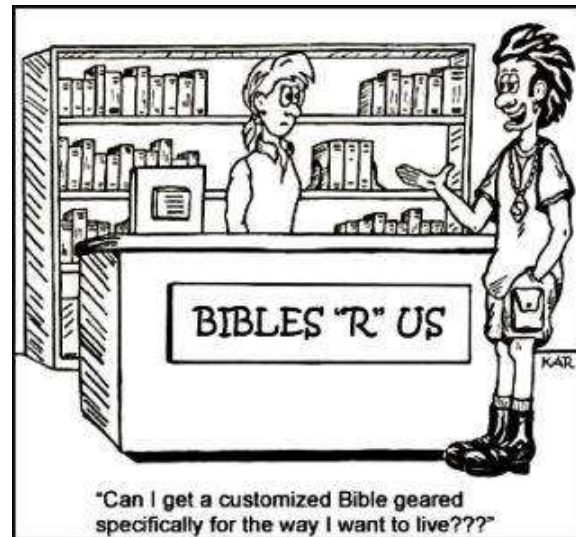
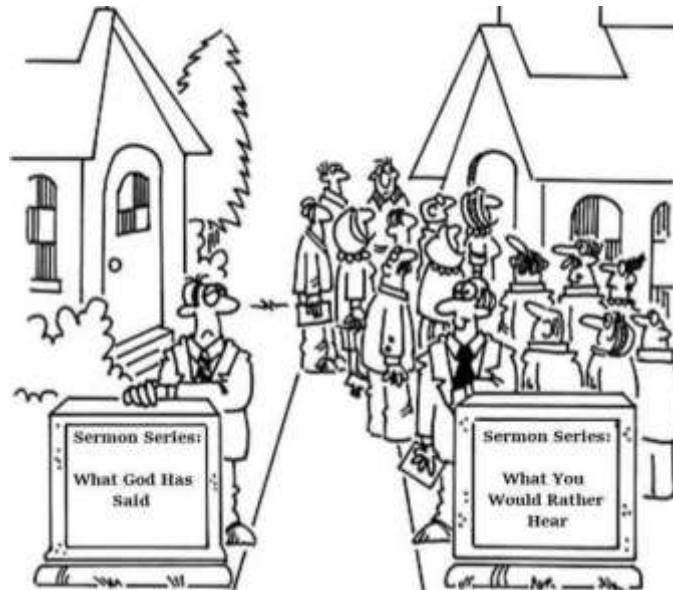
"Itching ears" is a figure of speech that refers to people's desires, felt needs, or wants. It is these desires that impel a person to believe whatever he wants to believe rather than the actual truth itself. When people have "itching ears," they decide for themselves what is right or wrong, and they seek out others to support their notions. "Itching ears" are concerned with what feels good or comfortable, not with the truth—after all, truth is often uncomfortable. Paul's warning is that the church would one day contain those who only opened their ears to those who would scratch their "itch."

Those with "itching ears" only want teachers who will assure them that all is well.

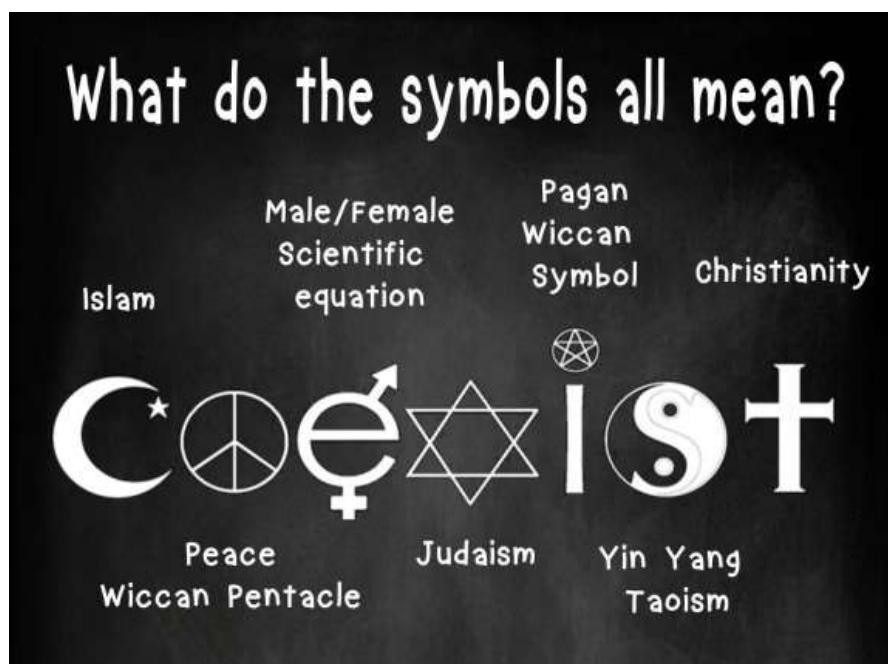
Evidence today of people having "itching ears" includes the popularity of messages that people are not required to change, as if repentance were outmoded; that people are basically good; that God is too loving to judge anyone; that the cross, with all its blood, is not really necessary; and that God wants His children to be healthy, wealthy, and content in this world. As people turn their backs on the truth about sin and condemnation, they disregard their need for repentance and forgiveness. And a craving for "new" and "fresher" ideas grows—even though there is "nothing new under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9–10)—accompanied by a longing to feel good about who they are and where they're going. Messages that tickle ears can fill a lot of churches, sell a lot of books, and buy a lot of time on Cable TV.

In today's postmodern church, we see many walking away from the hard truth. Some churches that once preached sound doctrine now teach as acceptable the very evils the Bible condemns. Some pastors are afraid to preach on certain passages of the Bible. "Christian feminists" deny God as a heavenly Father, calling Him a "She." "Gay Christians" are not only welcomed without repentance into church fellowship but into the pulpit, as well.





Modern Day Itching Ear Philosophy...



Verse 5

⁵For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness:

They were not like professional philosophers who went around in their philosophers' cloaks, giving men what they wanted to hear so that they would feel self-satisfied, and seeking payment for their teaching. Who put on a pretense because of their greed, as they angled for money and admiration. But Paul and his companions were not interested in pleasing men in their teaching, and lulling them into a feeling of satisfaction and wellbeing so that they would receive a reward. They were not in it for money or for prestige or for hero worship. Indeed they refrained from seeking in any way to benefit financially.

nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness... Cloke:(Greek prophasis), signifies "excuse," "cover up," or "front"; for an impure motive of greed.

Paul was not trying to get anything from them. He did not covet anything that belonged to them. When someone flatters you, they are usually setting you up to get something from you. Paul had none of these desires. He was compelled within himself to bring the Truth of the gospel to all who would receive it. Paul did not use the flattering words that often are a **cloak for covetousness**.

Verse 6

⁶Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

When Paul ministered among the Thessalonians, he was unconcerned for his personal glory. He didn't need fancy introductions or lavish praise. His satisfaction came from his relationship with Jesus, not from the praise of people.

Verse 7

⁷But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

even as a nurse cherisheth her children... Paul was like a nursing mother, who only looks to give to her child. Though some among the Thessalonians had accused Paul of ministering out of self-interest, but Paul simply asks the Christians in Thessalonica to remember the gentle character of his ministry among them.

Just as a nursing mother selflessly cares for her children, so Paul gave himself to the Thessalonians. **He changes the figure of speech to that of a father (In verse 11).**

Verse 8

⁸So 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.

In this, Paul was bringing them the good news of the gospel of Christ, but wanted them to feel the love that he had for them as well.

It has been said that people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Paul gave both his care and his knowledge to the Thessalonians.

Verse 9

⁹For 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.

For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day... Paul and his companions worked with their hands by day, and spent a considerable part of the night, or evenings, in preaching Christ to the people.

because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God... Represents wearisome toil and hard and painful toil. They had worn themselves out, working to support themselves (see Acts 18:3) so as not to be a financial burden, and preaching night and day whenever opportunity arose, until they were exhausted.

Verse 10

¹⁰Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

Ye are witnesses, and God also... Under Old Testament law it took two or more witnesses to verify truth (Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15; 2 Cor. 13:1). Here Paul called on both the Thessalonians and God as witnesses to affirm his holy conduct in the ministry (2 Cor. 1:12).

Paul is saying in this that he and those who travelled with him, were a living example of what they preached. He is also telling them that they were eye witnesses of this. He is saying, as God is my witness, we behaved properly to you.

holily... Means the quality of "holiness" in personal conduct.

Ye are witnesses... As to our outward personal conduct:

holily — towards God.

justly — towards men.

unblamably — in relation to ourselves.

God — as to our inner motives.

Verse 11

¹¹ As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,

The three key words in this are **exhorted, comforted, and charged**. Paul used these 3 words to describe his fatherly relationship with the Thessalonians since they were his children in the faith. They **emphasized the personal touch of a loving father**.

Exhorted... Means to strongly encourage. “You can do it!!”

Comforted... Means to give strength and hope to.

Charge... It is a military word, referring to an order from a commanding officer.

What charge? To follow The Gospel that Paul gave them, live right for God, to endure persecution and harassment from the Thessalonians...

Verse 12

¹² That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

Paul’s goal for these Christians is that they would walk in a manner worthy of God. This is the purpose of life. This is the new lifestyle to embrace. This goal is so important that Paul uses three different words to show this purpose. He and his companions exhorted, encouraged, and charged them to walk in a manner worthy of God. So what does this look like as Paul writes to these Thessalonians? What does it mean to walk worthy of God? Walking in a manner worthy of God is to have boldness in the face of opposition.

Walking from the inside out, our Walking journey starts with who we are then moves to what we do. To walk worthy, one must first understand and appreciate the great price God paid to redeem us. To Him, our worth is beyond the wealth this world contains. In fact, our redemption cost God His greatest treasure in heaven. The price He paid is indicative of how He sees us — with great value. The world may not attach much value to you. However, when you know your worth in God’s eyes, you will see yourself differently. It will be reflected in how you live your life.

Paul gave some good Instruction on Walking Worthy to The Colossians:

Colossians 1:10-12

¹⁰ **That ye might walk worthy** of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

¹¹ Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

¹² Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

1. Walking worthy of the Lord means pursuing the goal of pleasing the Lord in everything you do, in all areas of your life. (Verse 10)
2. Walking worthy of the Lord means continually bearing the right kind of fruit. (Verse 10)
3. Walking worthy of the Lord means continually increasing in your knowledge of God. (Verse 10)
4. Walking worthy of the Lord means continually receiving God's strength. (Verse 11)
5. Walking worthy of the Lord means that God will build patience and longsuffering into your way of life. (Verse 11)
6. Walking worthy of the Lord involves continually giving joyful praise to God, because of what He has done for us through Christ. Joyfulness, Verse 11.

The reason the Christian can praise and thank God the Father, even in the midst of situations that require patience and longsuffering, is because of what God the Father has done for us through Christ.



1 Thessalonians:

Living In The Present – With A Future Tense!



Pastor Hank's 1Thessalonians Chapter Two Outline: Paul's defense against criticism, Verses 1-12. Stressing the faithfulness of the Thessalonians under persecution, Verses 13-16. A warm expression of Paul's affection for them, Verses 17-20.

Stressing the faithfulness of the Thessalonians under persecution, Verses 13-16:

Verse 13

¹³For 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.

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing... This looks back to what Paul has been saying, and forward here to the description of the Thessalonian response. Paul and companions have preached faithfully and pastored faithfully. Now he rejoices that the Thessalonians responded faithfully.

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... Both Paul and the Thessalonians recognized that the Word he preached to them was the Word of God. In this context, Paul is boldly asserting the Divine Inspiration of his gospel (2 Timothy 3:16).

2 Timothy 3:16

¹⁶All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

which effectually worketh also in you that believe... Paul's confidence in the word of God wasn't a matter of wishful thinking or blind faith. He could see that it effectively works in those who believe. God's Word works, it doesn't only bring information or produce feelings. There is power in the word of God to change lives.

How the Word works in believers:

By the word the new birth is effected (1 Peter 1:23).

By it the soul is saved (James 1:21).

By it we are sanctified (John 17:17; 1 Timothy 4:5).

It prevails mightily (Acts 19:20).

Like the seed (Mark 4:26,27), it has power in itself to produce.

It is living and active (Hebrews 4:12).

It is like fire against that which is false (Jeremiah 23:29).

It is like a hammer against that which is strong (Jeremiah 23:29).

It is light in darkness (Psalms 119:105).

It is the sole weapon in Christian warfare (Ephesians 6:17).

Receiving the Word

I. The description of the Gospel--the Word of God.

1. It was given by God to the World.
2. It reveals to us His will in the salvation of ruined man.
3. He has commissioned His ministers to publish it.

II. The act of receiving it.

1. Hearing it as the Word of God, and not merely as the word of man.
2. Listening to it with attention.
3. Accepting it with the fullest credence.
4. Taking it wholly in all its parts.

III. The effect it produces.

1. It works a complete conformity to the character of Christ.
2. It supports the mind under all the difficulties and trials of life.

IV. The gratitude expressed for it.

1. Because it is all the gratuitous work of God's Spirit.
2. Because the safety and happiness it confers and ensures.

Reflections:

1. Have we received the gospel?
2. Are we bringing forth its fruits?

Verse 14

¹⁴For 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:

For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus... Not only were the Thessalonians imitators of Paul and the Lord, but also of the Churches in Judea, in the sense that they both were persecuted for Christ's sake.

for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews... They too are suffering persecution as the Christians in Judea are, partly, or even largely, instigated by the Jews in Thessalonica. It was Jewish persecution which first broke against the infant church; and it was conspicuously against their own countrymen; here Paul compared the persecutions of the Thessalonians which they had endured at the hands of their Gentile countrymen.

Verse 15

¹⁵ 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:

Interestingly this is the only place in Paul where the blame is specifically attached to the Jews by him, but that is because here he was thinking of the Jews as persecutors (Verse 14). Elsewhere the blame is laid squarely on everyone, both Jew and Gentile.

Acts 4:27

²⁷ For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,

For though Pilate condemned him to death, and the Roman soldiers executed the sentence, yet it was through the malice and envy of the Jews that he was delivered to him, who brought charges against him, and insisted upon the crucifixion of him; and who are therefore said to have taken him with wicked hands, and crucified and slain him; and to have killed the Prince of life, and to have been the betrayers and murderers of him; and therefore it is no wonder that such persons should persecute the followers of Christ, whether in Judea or elsewhere.

His indictment of the Jews is frightening. However, it should not be thought that Paul was in any manner reprehensible in the denunciation that followed. He said nothing that Christ had not said; all that he said was true; and all that he said needed to be said.

Verse 16

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 Paul revealed what offended the religious persecutors of the Thessalonians so much. They were outraged that Gentiles could be saved without first becoming Jews. This exclusive attitude filled up the measure of their sins.

The straw that broke the camel's back, as far as God's dealings with Israel were concerned, took place right there in Thessalonica, where they forbade that the gospel of God be preached to Gentiles. That did it! That "filled up" the measure of their sins, and wrath and judgment soon fell.

Paul comforted the Thessalonians by assuring them that God would indeed take care of their persecutors.

We should notice that Paul's anger is the anger of a man with his own nation, with his own people. He is very much part of them, and he sorrows for their fate.

A warm expression of Paul's affection for them, Verses 17-20:

Verse 17

¹⁷But 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.

Paul knew that the Thessalonians appreciated the comfort he gave, but they wondered why he didn't come and bring this comfort in person. They naturally thought that this would be much better. Yet Paul assured them that the reason was not a lack of love or desire on his part.

Paul now explains why he has not been back to see them and declares his strong desire to do so. He tells them that being parted from them has been like a bereavement. They had had to leave Thessalonica in a hurry (Acts 17:10), and then Paul had had to leave Berea (Acts 17:14). That had been for the sake of the churches there, to prevent serious trouble for them. But he assures them that the absence was only of the body. His heart was still with them.

Verse 18

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

Indeed his desire to see them was so great that he had made every attempt to come to them but Satan had hindered him. Possibly this points to some illness that had prevented him, or more likely to the interference of legal authorities, possibly brought about by Jewish instigators.

but Satan hindered us...The word is used of an athlete cutting in front of a rival to slow him down and prevent him winning. The hindering of the people of God is one of Satan's main aims.

Ten Ways That Satan Tries to Hinder Us:

1. Satan lies, and is the father of lies.

John 8:44

⁴⁴Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

2. He blinds the minds of unbelievers.

2 Corinthians 4:4

⁴In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

3. He masquerades as an Angel of Light.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

¹³For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

¹⁴And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

¹⁵Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

4. Satan does signs and wonders.

2 Thessalonians 2:9

⁹Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

5. Satan tempts people to sin.

This is what he did unsuccessfully to Jesus in the wilderness — he wanted him to abandon the path of suffering and obedience (Matthew 4:1–11). This is what he did successfully to Judas in the last hours of Jesus’s life (Luke 22:3–6). And in 2 Corinthians 11:3, Paul warns against this for all the believers:

2 Corinthians 11:3

³But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

6. Satan plucks the word of God out of people’s hearts and chokes faith.

Jesus told the parable of the four soils in Mark 4:1–9. In it, the seed of the word of God is sown, and some falls on the path and birds quickly take it away. He explains in verse 15:

Mark 4:15

¹⁵And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

7. Satan causes some sickness and disease.

Luke 13:16

¹⁶And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?

In Acts 10:38, Peter described Jesus as one who:

Acts 10:38

³⁸How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

8. Satan is a murderer.

Jesus said to those who were planning to kill him, “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.” (John 8:44). John says, “Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother.” (1 John 3:12). Jesus told the blameless church at Smyrna, “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” (Revelation 2:10).

To put it plainly, Satan is blood-thirsty. Christ came into the world that we might have life and have it abundantly (John 10:10). Satan comes that he might destroy life wherever he can and in the end make it eternally miserable.

9. Satan accuses Christians before God.

Revelation 12:10

¹⁰ And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

10. Satan fights against the plans of Church Workers.

1 Thessalonians 2:18

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

Satan hates evangelism and discipleship, and he will throw every obstacle he can in the way of Church Workers and people with a zeal for evangelism.

Sometimes We Hinder Ourselves In the Work of The Lord with Excuses...

1. I'm too busy with work.
2. I'm too busy with family commitments (we have kids).
3. I'm too busy with family problems (e.g. my sister's sick).
4. I'm too busy with other things.
5. I'm married to an unbeliever who doesn't like it when I go out.
6. My husband/wife and I don't get to spend much time together so the week nights/weekends are precious to us.
7. I don't know what opportunities are available.
8. I don't know what gifts God has given me.
9. I don't have the skills required to serve in the available areas.
10. No one asked me.
11. I've come here from another church because I'm burnt out. I just want to be fed for a while.
12. I'm serving in other ways outside of church.
13. I don't want to commit to anything in advance (I'd like to keep my options open).
14. I live too far away and it's a struggle to get to church outside of service times.
15. The staff team is paid to serve so I don't have to.
16. I don't know anyone who's serving in the area I would like to.
17. I serve the people I know by encouraging them in their faith.
18. I'm generous in other ways (e.g. with my money).
19. Serving is what the young people do – they've got the time and energy.
20. Everything seems under control – I'm not needed.
21. I offered to serve, and no one followed me up.

22. I offered to serve, but I wasn't needed.

23. I served for a while, but I felt unappreciated and no one thanked me.

24. I don't get anything out of it.

25. I just don't want to.

Verse 19

¹⁹For 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?

Again Paul closes the Chapter with a mention of The Second Coming of Jesus!

The hope of success, the joy of victory and the Crown given to the victor suggest a victor at the games.

or crown of rejoicing?... For Believers At The Judgment Seat of Christ, it's also Reward Time! It's Crowning Time!

The Bible specifically talks about 5 different Crowns that will be given to some of God's people when they enter into Heaven. Just like trophies, rings, and plaques are given to sports heroes or winning teams in sports, God is going to be doing the same thing in Heaven. The Greek word translated "crown" is *stephanos* (the source for the name Stephen the martyr) and means "a badge of royalty, a prize in the public games or a symbol of honor generally."

The Five Crowns:

1. The Incorruptible Crown: The Victor's Crown

Corinthians 9:24-25

²⁴Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

²⁵And 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.**

The Incorruptible Crown for the Christian is the victor's crown for those who keep under the body and bring it into subjection. It is a conquering of the old nature. Paul states that those who run a race in order to win the prize are temperate in all things. In other words, there is a lot they have to give up in order to be in proper condition to run that race.

Professional athletes are a good example. They have to go through training camp to get ready for the season. They have to watch their diets and weight in order to be able to successfully compete in the sport they are in. They have to give up a lot of their social life in order to stay in good shape. In other words, they do not live normal lives like the rest of us do. They sometimes lose time away from their families.

Just as we respect, honor, and pay these athletes for performing for us, God the Father will also be rewarding His own spiritual athletes if they are willing to go that extra mile for Him to complete what may be a difficult mission or call.

2. The Crown of Rejoicing: The Soul Winners Crown

1 Thessalonians 2:19

¹⁹ For what is our hope, or joy, or **crown of rejoicing**? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

The Soul Winners Crown is given to those who faithfully are witnesses to the saving grace of God and leads souls to Jesus.

3. The Crown of Life: The Martyr's Crown

James 1:12

¹² Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive **the crown of life**, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

The Martyr's Crown is given to those believers who endure trials, tribulations, and severe suffering, even unto death. Christians who have been martyred for their faith throughout history will be given this crown of life

Revelation 2:10 says:

¹⁰ Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a **crown of life**.

4. The Crown of Righteousness: The Second Coming Crown

2 Timothy 4:8

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**.

The Crown of Righteousness is given to those who love the appearing of Christ, who anxiously wait and look forward to the day when He will return for His saints.

Titus 2:13

¹³ Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

5. The Crown of Glory: 1 Peter 5:1-4 This is the Pastor's crown and will be given to the Ministers who faithfully feed the flock of God. . This probably could also include Street Preachers, Teachers, Sunday School Teachers, Missionaries and all those who teach the Word of God in their respective ministries.

1 Peter 5:1-4

¹ The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

² 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;

³ Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock.

⁴ And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, **ye shall receive a crown of glory** that fadeth not away.

Remember, The Devil or no man can take your Crown(s).

Jesus Revelation 3:11

¹¹ Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, **that no man take thy crown.**

And what do we do with our Crowns in Heaven? Revelation 4:10-11

¹⁰ The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, **and cast their crowns before the throne**, saying,

¹¹ Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

These elders place their **Crowns** at Jesus feet and if they do, would not all of us want to more so do because of our love for Him.



Verse 20

²⁰ For ye are our glory and joy.

This statement should challenge us. For Paul is saying that these Christians brought him more joy and made him prouder than any material object. Are our brethren more important to us, do they give us more happiness and pride than--our cars, homes, jobs, recreational activities, and hobbies? And am I living in such a way that my brethren could be proud of me?

Pastor Hank's Notes on 1 Thessalonians: Living In The Present – With A Future Tense!



1Thessalonians Chapter Three Outline: Why Paul sent Timothy to the Thessalonians, Verses 1-5. The good news from Timothy and the effect it had on Paul, Verses 6-9. Paul's Prayer for The Thessalonians, Verses 10-13.

The chapter is largely devoted with of Paul's concern over the fate of the beloved converts left in Thessalonica when Paul was compelled to flee, due to Jewish-instigated opposition from the city officials, and of the apostle's joy upon receiving the good news of their devotion to the Lord and of their love for Paul. It concludes with a fervent prayer that he might be spared to visit them again, and that the Thessalonians might abound and increase in their love of both God and man.

1 Thessalonians 3

Why Paul sent Timothy to the Thessalonians, Verses 1-5:

Verse 1

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

Wherefore when we could no longer forbear... The agony of separation between spiritual parent, Paul, and his children in Thessalonica became unbearably painful.

we thought it good to be left at Athens alone... Paul and Silas stayed behind while Timothy returned (verse 2).

Verse 2

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:

In the previous chapter Paul explained how much he wanted to be with the Thessalonians during their time of trial (1 Thessalonians 2:17-18). However, since Paul could not be with the Thessalonians himself, he did the next best thing. He sent his trusted companion and fellow worker Timothy to them.

to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith... Paul wanted Timothy to do two things – to establish and comfort/encourage the Thessalonians. Both are necessary, but establishing comes first. Comfort/Encouragement can really only come after we are established in the right direction.

Establish = To fix, make fast, to set. To achieve permanent acceptance or recognition for.

Verse 3

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

The apostle had mentioned before his great afflictions, and they knew well what he himself had suffered both at Thessalonica and Berea, Acts 17:1-34, and therefore might fear they might now be shaken in their faith. And Timothy therefore was sent to comfort and establish them.

Paul had endured for the sake of preaching the Gospel among them, and which he feared might be a means of troubling their minds, of shaking their faith, and moving them from the hope of the Gospel; for though none of these things moved him, who was an old soldier of Christ, and used to hardness, and an apostle of Christ; yet these were young converts, and not used to such things, and therefore might be surprised at them, and be offended, as stony ground hearers are; and though the apostle hoped better things of them, yet was he concerned for them, that no one among them might be unhinged by them, or succumb under them.

That no man should be moved... This shows what is a Christian's duty, to be unmoved by sufferings for the gospel. The word here used by the apostle answers another word, used in 2 Thessalonians 2:2, which alludes to the waves of the sea shaken by the winds. Fears, and doubts, or hesitations of mind, do move and shake it, which the apostle sent Timothy to prevent, or remove.

for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto... God had promised Paul future sufferings when He commended him to ministry through Ananias (Acts 9:16).

Acts 9:16

¹⁶For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

Paul reminded the Thessalonians of this divine appointment so that they would not think that:

- (1) God's plan was not working out as evidenced by Paul's troubles, or
- (2) Paul's afflictions demonstrated God's displeasure with him.

Peter writes in:

1 Peter 4:12-13

¹²Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

¹³But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

Some believe that Christians shouldn't suffer affliction and that God wants to teach us only by His Word, and not through trial or tribulation. It is true that there is a great deal of suffering we could be spared by simply obeying God's Word, and God wants to spare us that suffering. Nevertheless, suffering was good enough to teach Jesus (Hebrews 2:10 and 5:8), therefore it is good enough to teach us. God does teach the believer perseverance, obedience, how to comfort others, and deeper fellowship with Jesus in trials.

Verse 4

⁴For 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 reinforces his statements by reminding them that they had continually pre-warned the Thessalonians that tribulation was the Christian's lot. And now they knew it for themselves for it had happened.

Why does Tribulation happen to Christians?

John 15:19

¹⁹ If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, **therefore the world hateth you.**

Matthew 10:22

²² **And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake:** but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

But Remember:

Romans 8:35-37

³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

³⁶ As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

³⁷ Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

2 Corinthians 4:8-11

⁸ We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

⁹ Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

¹⁰ Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

¹¹ For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

Verse 5

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.

Paul was deeply depressed because of the heavy burden of suspense and uncertainty concerning the outcome of his mission at Thessalonica. Paul could barely endure the thought that the faith of the Thessalonians might crumble under this season of affliction, so he sent Timothy to both check on them and to help them.

The good news from Timothy and the effect it had on Paul, Verses 6-9:

Verse 6

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:

But now when Timotheus came from you unto us... When Timothy returned from his visit to the Thessalonians, he brought good news. The Thessalonians were doing well in faith and love, and Paul helped them to do even better with this letter he wrote.

and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity... “In these two words (**faith and charity**) All who aim at this double mark are beyond the danger of error for the whole of their life.” - John Calvin

All Pastors are reminded by this of the kind of relationship which ought to exist between them and the Church. When things go well with the Church, they are to count themselves happy, even though in other respects they are surrounded by much distress.

and that ye have good remembrance of us always... Timothy also brought the good news that the Thessalonians had not believed the vicious and false rumors about Paul.

desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you... Paul was pleased that they wanted him to come back and minister to them. He reminds them that he desires to come and see them as much as they want him to come.

Verse 7

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

Paul was very pleased that his spiritual children had been strong in the faith.

Verse 8

⁸ For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

For now we live... We see from this, Paul has had new life breathed into his weary soul, because these, his converts, have kept the faith. When one Christian stands fast in the Lord, it gives the others courage to stand.

if ye stand fast in the Lord... Pictured here is an army that refuses to retreat even though it is being assaulted by the enemy.



Verse 9

⁹ For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;

Paul's thanks and joy overflowed because he knew that they did stand fast in the Lord. Some find it easy to rejoice in the material prosperity in the life of others, but Paul honestly rejoiced in the spiritual prosperity of others.

Paul's Prayer for The Thessalonians, Verses 10-13:

Verse 10

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

Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face... Paul heard good news from Timothy, but it wasn't enough. He wanted to see the face of the church family in Thessalonica. Paul wanted it enough to pray night and day... exceedingly that God would make a way for him to see them.

and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?... In the midst of all this joy, Paul called attention to the fact that they were still lacking. Though the apostle repeatedly complimented them (1 Thessalonians 1:3, 1:7, 2:13, 2:19-20, and 3:6), he was also concerned to perfect (complete) what is lacking in their faith.

Verse 11

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

In the prayer that closes this section Paul clearly demonstrates that all must be of God. If they are to come to Thessalonica it must be because God directs them, removing the obstacles and the interference of Satan which has prevented it. Note again how God the Father and the Lord Jesus are in parallel. They are our God and Lord, working in full unity. And all our ways must be in their hands. That they are addressed in prayer together confirms the full deity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

direct our way unto you... Paul knew that Satan had hindered his return (2:18). Even though Timothy had visited and returned with a good report, Paul still felt the urgency to see his spiritual children again.

Verse 12

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:

And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another... This was not a loveless church, but they still had room to grown in love, because love is an essential mark of the Christian faith.

and toward all men... Paul looked for the Thessalonian Christians to show love to one another and to all. This love begins in the family of God, but it must go beyond.

even as we do toward you... Paul daringly set himself as a standard of love to be emulated. We should live such Christian lives that we could tell young Christians, "Love other people just the way that I do."

Jesus said in: Mark 12:30

³⁰ And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

John 13:35

³⁵ By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

1 John 4:20

²⁰ If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

Verse 13

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.

To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God , even our Father... Paul prayed that there would be no grounds of accusation because of un-holiness

Paul knew that God wanted the Thessalonians to have their hearts established blameless in holiness. The idea behind holiness is to be set apart from the world and unto God. The genuinely holy person is separated away from the domination of sin and self and the world, and they are separated to God.

at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints... Again Paul ends a Chapter here mentioning The Second Coming of Jesus! Paul was reminded of Jesus' return, because nothing can encourage us to holiness like remembering that Jesus might come today.

Saints=Christians



Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians emphasized three things that are important for every Christian:

- First, he wanted to *be* with them, so they could benefit from his apostolic wisdom and authority.
- He wanted them to abound in love.
- He wanted them to be established in true heart-holiness.

Pastor Hank's Notes on 1 Thessalonians: Living In The Present – With A Future Tense!



1Thessalonians Chapter Four Outline: Walking with God and Holy Living-Sanctification, Verses 1-8. We should live a life of increasing love, Verses 9-10. Work, Verse 11. We should live a life that is an example, Verse 12. Concerning Christians who have died and The Rapture, Verses 13-18.

1 Thessalonians 4, Verse 1

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's use of **Furthermore** does not mean he is finished. It means he here began the closing section of the letter, with practical instruction on how God wants His people to live.

that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God... Paul stresses that they had learned from him and his companions, both by example and teaching, how they should walk and thus please God, then he assures them that he does know that they are walking like this, and finally he stresses the need to abound more and more. He goes out of his way to be tactful and not cause offence, while achieving his object in stressing the need to continue to grow.

ye ought to walk and to please God... It was not a matter of choice or opinion. 'Walking' was a verb regularly used of living life in a certain way. It stressed the need for continual right behaviour and attitude, step by step, hour by hour, through life.

so ye would abound more and more... Paul was thankful for the growth he saw in the Thessalonians, but still looked for them to abound (thrive) more and more in a walk that would please God.

Verse 2

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

These were not suggestions from the pen of Paul. These are **commandments** from the Lord Jesus, and must be received that way.

This defines what they had received. Direct commandments from the Lord Jesus, as found through the authority of the teaching of Jesus passed on through the Apostles, and through Paul, and the early church, the 'Testimony of Jesus' (as later found in the Gospels). The word for '**commandments**' contains the idea of strict orders similar to military orders (Acts 16:23-24). We are under orders. It is not a matter of choice. So Paul stresses that he had not passed on his own ideas, they were the commands of the Lord.

Verse 3

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

The passage must be read as one whole, for each part defines the other. It is dealing with the major moral problem that faced Christians in the first century, and still faces them in many countries today, of lax and loose sexual behaviour. Marriage for some had become a mockery. Many religions in the first century encouraged sexual misbehavior and laxity. Sacred prostitutes were common, with whom sex was seen as a form of worship, and 'love feasts' (see 2 Peter 2:13-14), orgies, where anything went and was even looked on as religious activity, were a favorite pastime for many. Indeed the practice later invaded the Christian church causing major condemnation from Christ (Revelation 2:6; Revelation 2:14-15; Revelation 2:20-23). This was especially prevalent in the area of the world in which the Thessalonians lived. Thus becoming Christians had faced them with a totally new way of life.

Now Paul describes three things in the next couple of Verses that the Christian must avoid: **'that ye should abstain from fornication -- That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel -- That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter.'**

That you abstain from fornication... Fornication is a general word signifying sex engaged in outside a formal marriage relationship. The Christian is to avoid fornication!

The Bible Teaching on Sanctification

even your sanctification... Or in its verbal form, sanctify, literally means "to set apart" for special use or purpose, that is, to make holy or sacred. Therefore, sanctification refers to the state or process of being set apart, i.e. made holy. "Sanctify," "holy," and "saint" are translated from the same Greek words. Thus, to **Sanctify**, or to make holy, does not mean to purify or to make sinless, **but to set apart something for God and for His service.**



In the Bible many things other than people are said to be Sanctified:

1. The Tabernacle furniture a mountain. (Exodus 19:23); food (1 Timothy 4:5).

Exodus 40:10

¹⁰ And thou shalt anoint the altar of the burnt offering, and all his vessels, and **sanctify** the altar: and it shall be an altar most holy.

2. A Mountain.

Exodus 19:23

²³ And Moses said unto the Lord, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and **sanctify** it.

3. The Firstborn of the Animals.

Leviticus 27:26

²⁶ Only the firstling of the beasts, which should be the Lord's firstling, no man shall sanctify it; whether it be ox, or sheep: it is the Lord's.

Old Testament Priests were Sanctified.

Exodus 28:41

⁴¹ And thou shalt put them upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him; and shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and **sanctify** them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office.

God Sanctified The Nation of Israel.

Ezekiel 37:28

²⁸ And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.

In relation to the Christian, **Sanctification** or holiness refers to being set apart to God from sin. There are three distinctly different aspects of this sanctification: **past, present, and future**. Every Christian can say, "I have been sanctified; I am being sanctified; I will yet be sanctified."

Past Sanctification means the believer is already positionally set apart in Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:2

² Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are **sanctified in Christ Jesus**, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's:

At the new birth, every believer is eternally sanctified in Christ, is brought from the power of the devil into the family of God (John 1:14; Galatians 4:4-6), from the devil's kingdom into Christ's kingdom (Colossians 1:12-13); from the old creation into the new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Present Sanctification is the process by which the Holy Spirit gradually changes the believer's life to give victory over sin. This is practical sanctification. This is Christian growth, putting away sin and putting on godliness (Romans 6:19, 22; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 1 Peter 1:14-16). This present process of sanctification never ends in this life (1 John 1:8-10). The Christian must resist sin until he is taken from this world at death or at the return of Christ.

1 Thessalonians 4:3

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

Future Sanctification is the perfection the believer will enjoy at the resurrection (1 Thessalonians 5:23). At Christ's coming, every believer will receive a new body that will have no sin. The

Christian will no longer have to resist sin within or to grow toward perfection. His sanctification will be complete. He will be wholly and forever set apart to God from sin.

Sanctification is the process of being set apart for God's work and being conformed to the image of Christ. This conforming to Christ involves the work of the person, but it is still God working in the believer to produce more of a godly character and life in the person.

Verses 4 & 5

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

⁵Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

The Gentiles in general were ruled by their lustful passions. But that was the opposite of how Christians should behave. They should be ruled by spiritual ideals under God. Thus they are like the holy vessels set apart on the Tabernacle and must rule their bodies as ‘holy vessels’ set apart for God, dedicated to God’s service. They must do all as in the sight and presence of God. Their whole manner of life will be different, for their primary aim and responsibility will be to please and to serve God.

The idea behind sanctification is to be set apart, and God wants us set apart from a godless culture and its sexual immorality. If our sexual behavior is no different than **the Gentiles which know not God**, then we are not sanctified – set apart – in the way God wants us to be. This plainly means that the sexual conduct of the Christian should be different than the prevailing permissiveness of the day.

Verse 6

⁶That 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.

When we are sexually immoral, we take advantage of and defraud others and we cheat them in greater ways than we can imagine. The adulterer defrauds his mate and children. The fornicator defrauds his future mate and children, and both defraud their illicit partner.

It defrauds and takes advantage of others. It destroys marriages, breaks up relationships, makes a mockery of genuine love, drags men and women down to a lower level of living, and dishonors God (1 Corinthians 6:15-16; 1 Corinthians 6:18-19). And when we so lead others astray or hurt them, the Lord will avenge them, either at the day of judgment, or by illness and disease (1 Corinthians 11:30).

because that the Lord is the avenger of all such... Because the Lord is the avenger of all such: This is the **first** of four reasons for sexual purity. We can trust that God will punish sexual immorality, and that no one gets away with this sin – even if it is undiscovered.

There is no reason for considering that ‘**brother**’ here means any different from elsewhere. It refers to a fellow-Christian. Sexual transgression in the church was most likely to affect other Christians, especially in days when free time was limited, and that would be a great sin for it would be a sin against a brother which the Lord will avenge. And even sex outside the church community would harm fellow-Christian for it would bring shame on the church and on each brother.

Verse 7

⁷For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

This is the **second** reason why Christians should be sexually pure – because of our **call**. That call is not to **uncleanness**, but to **holiness**; therefore, sexual immorality is simply inconsistent with who we are in Jesus Christ.

For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness... Paul finally summarizes the position. Sexual purity is part of the call of God. There are two options, being involved in uncleanness or being in sanctification. God's call is from the one to the other. If we are those who are called by God then we do not have an option, for our behavior and attitude will reveal the genuineness of our calling. Again this sanctification is to be practical, although resulting from having been first sanctified by God (1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2).

Paul developed this same line of thought in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 and 6:15-20, concluding with the idea that we should glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Verse 8

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

He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God... If you despise or hate the Commandments that Paul just wrote about, then you despise God and HIS Holy Spirit!

Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God: The **third** reason for sexual purity is because to reject God's call to sexual purity is not rejecting man, but God Himself. Despite the petty ways many rationalize sexual immorality, we still **reject** God when we sin in this way.

Paul's strong command here did not seem to come because the Thessalonians were deep in sin. No specific sin is mentioned; it seems that this was meant to *prevent* sin rather than to *rebuke* sin, in light of the prevailing low standards in their society and because of the seductive strength of sexual immorality.

Who has also given us His Holy Spirit: This is the **fourth** of four reasons for sexual purity given in this passage. We have been given the Holy Spirit, who *empowers* the willing, trusting Christian to overcome sexual sin. By HIS Spirit, God has given us the resources for victory; we are responsible to use those resources.



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We should live a life of increasing love, Verses 9-10:

Verse 9

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

These principles are so basic that Paul knew they were obvious to the Thessalonian Christians. The Thessalonians were taught by God about the importance of love, yet we must all be reminded.

Verse 10

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;

It wasn't that the Thessalonians were without love; their love toward all the brethren was well known, but they had to **increase** more and more in their love.

Love

The Greek N.T. uses three main words for love.

(1) The Greek word most frequently translated love is **AGAPAO**, referring particularly to a giving, sacrificial love, as God's love for man (John 3:16; 1 John 4:10). It "indicates a direction of the will and finding one's joy in anything". This is the kind of love Christians are to have toward God (Mat. 22:37), toward other Christians (John 13:34), and toward all men (Gal. 5:14).

(2) The Greek word **THELO**, referring particularly to the will and desire, is translated love in Mark 12:38.

(3) Another common word for love is **PHILEO**, referring more to an affection and friendship. It is translated "kiss" in Mat. 26:48; Mark 14:44; and Luke 22:47. Phileo is used to describe Jesus' love for Lazarus (John 11:3) and John (John 20:2). *Phileo* is from the same Greek root as the word translated "friendship" (John 15:13-15). *Agapao* and never *phileo* is used of love toward our enemies (Mat. 5:44). In John 21:15-17 the Lord Jesus uses both *agapao* and *phileo* when He inquires about Peter's love for Him. The first two times, He asks Peter, "lovest [*agapao*] thou me?" (vv. 15-16), and Peter replies, "I love [*phileo*] thee." The third time Christ uses *phileo* and Peter replies with *phileo* (v. 17).

John 21:15-17

¹⁵So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, **lovest** [*agapao*] thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that **I love thee** [*phileo*]. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

¹⁶He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, **lovest** [*agapao*] thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that **I love thee** [*phileo*]. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

¹⁷He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, **lovest** [*phileo*] thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, **Lovest** [*phileo*] thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that **I love thee** [*phileo*]. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

PHILEO is combined with other words to describe various kinds of love:

Philadelphia refers to brotherly love (Romans 12:10; 1 Thes. 4:9; Hebrews 13:1; 1 Peter 1:22; 3:8).

Philoteknos refers to love of children (Titus 2:4).

Philandros refers to love of husband (Titus 2:4).

Titus 2:4

⁴That they may teach the young women to be sober, to **love** their husbands, to **love** their children,

Philanthropia refers to love of mankind (Titus 3:4).

Philotheos refers to love of God (2 Timothy 3:4).

Philagathos refers to love of good (Titus 1:8).

Philoxenos refers to love of hospitality (Titus 1:8).

Philautos refers to love of self (2 Timothy 3:2).

Philedonos refers to love of pleasure (2 Timothy 3:4).

(3) The Greek word *THELO*, referring particularly to the will and desire, is translated love in Mark 12:38.

SEVEN BIBLE FACTS ABOUT LOVE:

(1) Love is God's nature (1 John 4:8, 16).

1 John 4:8

⁸He that loveth not knoweth not God; **for God is love.**

(2) Godly love is giving, sacrificial love (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9; 3:16-17).

(3) Love is the greatest thing (1 Cor. 13:13).

1 Corinthians 13:13

¹³And now abideth faith, hope, **charity**, these three; but the greatest of these is **charity**.

(4) Love is an evidence of being Christ's disciple (John 13:35).

(5) Love is the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22).

Galatians 5:22

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is **love**, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

(6) Love is the first thing the Apostle mentioned concerning Christian living (Eph. 4:1-6).

(7) True Christian love cannot be separated from truth and holiness and obedience (Philip. 1:9; 1 John 5:3; 2 John 1; 3 John 1-4).

Work, Verse 11:

Verse 11

¹¹And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

And that ye study to be quiet... This refers to one who does not present social problems or generate conflict among those people in his life, but whose soul rests easy even in the midst of difficulty.

1 Peter 3:4

⁴But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, **even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit**, which is in the sight of God of great price.

The **quiet** life contradicts the hugely successful modern attraction to entertainment and excitement. This addiction to entertainment and excitement is damaging both spiritually and culturally. We might say that excitement and entertainment are like a religion for many people today.

- This religion has a god: The self.
- This religion has priests: Celebrities.
- This religion has a prophet: Perpetual entertainment.
- This religion has scriptures: Tabloids and entertainment, news, and informational programs.
- This religion has places of worship: Amusement parks, theaters, concert halls, sports arenas; and we could say that every television and internet connection is a little chapel.

The religion of excitement and entertainment seduces people into living their lives for one thing – the thrill of the moment. But these thrills are quickly over and forgotten, and all that is important is the next fun thing. This religion conditions its followers to only ask one question: “Is it fun?” It never wants us to ask more important questions such as, “Is it true?” “Is it right?” “Is it good?” “Is it godly?”

We need to live the **quiet** life so that we can really take the time and give the attention to listen to God. When we live the **quiet** life, we can listen to God and get to know Him better.

and to do your own business... This means that the Christian must focus on his or her own life and matters, instead of meddling in the lives of others. “Mind your own business” is the Biblical idea.



and to work with your own hands... We must recognize the dignity and honor of **work**. Work is God’s plan for the progress of society and the church. We fall into Satan’ snare when we expect things to always come easily, or regard God’s blessing as an opportunity for laziness.

Manual labor was despised by ancient Greek culture. They thought that the better a man was, the less he should work. In contrast, God gave us a Carpenter King, fisherman apostles, and tent-making missionaries.

God has a job for each of us to do. It is not the same job as someone else. It is unique in the fact that you are the only one called to do that specific job. Find out what the will of God is for your life and get busy doing it.

as we commanded you... This identifies Paul’s work ethic himself as he wouldn’t command them if he wasn’t a worker himself.

Verse 12

¹²That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

When we combine the love of our brothers with work, we walk properly. People who are not yet Christians (them that are without) will see our example and be influenced to become followers of Jesus.

and that ye may have lack of nothing... Paul completes the thought he began in 1 Thessalonians 3:10 (that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?). If they followed his teaching and example, they would lack nothing and come to the place of genuine Christian maturity.

The only contact that some people have with God is, the God they see operating in your life. You are a living witness by the way you conduct your life. If you live Christ-like before them, they see Christ in your walk. If you walk the worldly life, you lead them to destruction.

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Concerning Christians who have died and The Lord's Second Coming, Verses 13-18:

Verse 13

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.

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren... Four times in his letters, Paul asked Christians to *not* be **ignorant** about something:

- Don't be ignorant about God's plan for Israel (Romans 11:25).
- Don't be ignorant about spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:1).
- Don't be ignorant about suffering and trials in the Christian life (2 Corinthians 1:8).
- Don't be ignorant about the rapture and the second coming of Jesus (1 Thessalonians 4:13).

Remarkably, these are areas where ignorance is still common in the Christian world.

concerning them which are asleep... Sleep is the familiar New Testament euphemism for death which describes the appearance of the deceased. It describes the dead body, not the soul.

This beloved metaphor was frequently used by our Lord himself, as in the instances of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:39) and of Lazarus (John 11:11), and quickly adopted wherever Christianity was known. The very word "cemetery," "Koimeterion", is derived from the word used here, (koimao), and means 'a place of sleep.'

Mark 5:39

³⁹And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but **sleepeth**.

John 11:11

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

Sleep is also used of Stephen who was stoned to death (Acts 7:60).

Though Paul, referred to death as sleep, it does not prove the erroneous idea of soul sleep, that the present dead in Christ are in a state of suspended animation, waiting for a resurrection to consciousness.

Philippians 1:23

²³For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

2 Corinthians 5:8

⁸We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

The picture of death as sleep is constant in the New Testament and was here intended to stress that death was not the end, it was not a final annihilation.

In the few weeks Paul was with the Thessalonians, he emphasized the soon return of Jesus, and the Thessalonians believed it earnestly. Yet after Paul left, they wondered about those Christians who died before Jesus came back. They were troubled by the idea that these Christians might miss out on that great future event and that they might miss the victory and blessing of Jesus' coming.

Those who sleep are identified (in verse 16), as "the dead in Christ." Some, in ignorance, had concluded that those who die miss the Lord's return and they were grieved over their absence at such a glorious event.

concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope...

The belief held generally by the Greeks was that there was no resurrection, that death (**no hope**) was the end of all things. Paul wants them not to sorrow at all over the dead; sorrow is only fit for the lost who have no hope.

Sleep was a common way to express death in the ancient world, but among pagans, it was almost always seen as an *eternal* sleep.

Ancient writings are full of this pessimism regarding death:

- "Of a man once dead there is no resurrection." (Aeschylus)
- "Hopes are among the living, the dead are without hope." (Theocritus)
- "Suns may set and rise again but we, when once our brief light goes down, must sleep an endless night." (Catullus)

Verse 14

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

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again... One of the greatest promises made to those who believe is, that the death of the body is not eternal death of the soul. Because Jesus arose from the grave, all believers in Christ will arise with Him to new life in Him.

This was the confident belief of the Apostle Paul and the early Christians. We will certainly live, because Jesus lives and our union with Him is stronger than death. This is why we do not sorrow as those who have no hope and why we have more than a wishful hope.

When a sinner dies, we mourn for them. When a believer dies, we only mourn for ourselves, because they are no longer with us, but because they are with the Lord.

even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him... Jesus will bring the faithful departed with Him when He comes back. Their death does not mean that they will miss their share in the Death, therefore, does not annihilate them. It is their rest, undisturbed rest. They have retired from this troublesome world, and thereby put an end to their labors and sorrows. Being still in union with Jesus, they sleep in His arms, and are under His special care and protection. Their souls are in His presence, and their dust is guarded by His omnipotence; so that they cannot be lost; nor are they losers, but infinite gainers by death; and their removal out of this world is into a better, even a heavenly one.

For the Thessalonian Christians, their troubled minds were answered! In the resurrection of Jesus we have an amazing example of it and a promise of our own.

Verse 15

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.

This flatly answered the question that was troubling the Thessalonians. Paul assures the Thessalonians that those who have died in Christ will not be disadvantaged as against those who will be alive at His coming, as a matter of fact, having already undergone the necessary change that must come to all, they are a step nearer the resurrection and shall therefore "rise first" as Paul would say a moment later. Here it is presented negatively. The living shall not precede the dead saints in receiving the glory the Lord has prepared for them, and describes what will happen when Christ comes for His own.

Verse 16

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:

When Jesus comes, He will come personally. The Lord Himself will descend, and come with a shout. The ancient Greek word for shout here is the same word used for the commands that a ship captain makes to his rowers, or a commander speaking to his soldiers.

Shout, Voice, Trump... Apparently, there will be some audible signal that prompts this remarkable event. It may be that all three descriptions (shout, voice, and trumpet) refer to the same sound; or there may be three distinct sounds.

with the voice of the archangel... This doesn't mean that the Lord Himself is an archangel. The only one described as an archangel in the Bible is Michael (Jude 1:9). Paul means that when Jesus comes, He will come in the company of prominent angels.

and the dead in Christ shall rise first... Paul's point to the Thessalonians is clear. The prior dead in Christ will not be left out of either the resurrection or the return of Jesus. In fact, they will experience it first.

1 Corinthians 15:51-54

⁵¹Behold, I shew 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.

⁵³For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

⁵⁴So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

We are confident that the dead in Christ are not in some kind of soul sleep or suspended animation. Paul made it clear that to be absent from the body means to be present with the Lord. (2 Corinthians 5:8) The present dead in Christ are with the Lord in a spiritual body, awaiting their final resurrection body.

However God will do it, we are confident that His promise is true. "Though the bones be scattered to the four winds of heaven, yet, at the call of the Lord God, they shall come together again, bone to his bone... We doubt not that God will guard the dust of the precious sons and daughters of Zion." (Spurgeon)

THINGS HARD TO UNDERSTAND... The best way to understand it: Those that are alive get Raptured in their old corrupt bodies and are given new bodies in Heaven and those Christians whose Souls are already in Heaven will be reunited with their old bodies (**and the dead in Christ shall rise first**) and be given new bodies in Heaven, this is the cause and effect of The Resurrection.

Philippians 3:20-21

²⁰For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

²¹Who 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.

Question: "What is the difference between the Rapture and the Second Coming?"

Answer: The rapture and the second coming of Christ are often confused. Sometimes it is difficult to determine whether a scripture verse is referring to the rapture or the second coming. However, in studying end-times Bible prophecy, it is very important to differentiate between the two.

The Rapture is when Jesus Christ returns to remove the church (all believers in Christ) from the earth. The rapture is described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:50-54. Believers who have died will have their bodies resurrected and, along with believers who are still living, will meet the Lord in the air. This will all occur in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye. The second coming is when Jesus returns to defeat the Antichrist, destroy evil, and establish His millennial kingdom. The second coming is described in Revelation 19:11-16.

The important differences between the Rapture and Second Coming are as follows:

- 1) At the Rapture, believers meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:17). At the Second Coming, believers return with the Lord to the earth (Revelation 19:14).
- 2) The Second Coming occurs after the great and terrible tribulation (Revelation chapters 6–19). The Rapture occurs before the tribulation (1 Thessalonians 5:9; Revelation 3:10).

3) The Rapture is the removal of believers from the earth as an act of deliverance (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, 5:9). The Second Coming includes the removal of unbelievers as an act of judgment (Matthew 24:40-41).

4) The Rapture will be secret and instant (1 Corinthians 15:50-54). The Second Coming will be visible to all (Revelation 1:7; Matthew 24:29-30).

5) The Second Coming of Christ will not occur until after certain other end-times events take place (2 Thessalonians 2:4; Matthew 24:15-30; Revelation chapters 6–18). The Rapture is imminent; it could take place at any moment (Titus 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:50-54).

Verse 17

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.

Notice also that the living will be caught up together with the resurrected dead, and will with them meet the Lord 'in the air', the sphere in which Satan once was active (Ephesians 2:2). But he is a defeated foe, and he cannot stand before the Lord of glory.



Verse 18

¹⁸Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Paul did not tell them to take comfort, but to give comfort. These are comforting words because God is true and faithful!

The first comfort is found in that they need no longer fear at the thought of those who die in Christ missing out. They will share all the glory of His coming. The second, of course, is in that these words are a comfort and a strengthener to all Christians, especially when the going gets tough.

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The Apostle closes his Epistle in this Chapter. He describes the striking Difference of the Lord's coming, as he will appear to his church, and to the Ungodly. He again exhorts the Church to be comforted: and closes the Epistle with his Apostolic Blessing.

1 Thessalonians 5

An admonition to be ready for The Lord's Return, Verses 1-11:

Verse 1

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

The Thessalonians were well taught about the return of Jesus and other prophetic matters. Paul taught them about the times and the seasons regarding the return of Jesus. They had an idea of the prophetic times they lived in, and they could discern the seasons of the present culture.

Paul then thundered the warning that when the Second Advent does occur, vast numbers of earth's population shall be totally unprepared for it, and that even Christians should exercise the utmost diligence to be prepared for Jesus' coming.

Verse 2

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

For yourselves know perfectly... Paul here meant that he and Silas and Timothy had fully and carefully instructed them on these things.

The Thessalonians knew, and had been taught, that they couldn't know the day of Jesus' return. That day would remain unknown, and come as a surprise, as a thief in the night. A thief does not announce the exact time of his arrival.

that the day of the Lord... The idea behind the phrase the day of the Lord is that this is Gods' time. Man has his "day," and the Lord has His day.

It is Jesus Who is 'the Lord' all through the letter, so '**the day of the Lord**' has special reference to Him as the one appointed to judge the world (John 5:22; John 5:27). This is confirmed in that it can also be called 'the day of the Lord Jesus' in 1 Corinthians 5:5 where it refers to deliverance from the judgment, and 2 Corinthians 1:14 where it refers to Christian rejoicing at that day.

Joel 2:31

³¹ The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come.

that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night... Suddenly and at an unexpected time. It is God's will that men should live in constant preparation for it.

This phrase is not used to refer to the rapture of the church. It is used of Christ's coming in Judgment on the Day of the Lord at the end of the 7-year tribulation, which is distinct from the rapture of the church. And it is used of the judgment which concludes the Millennium (2 Peter 3:10).



Verse 3

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.

The unexpected nature of that day will be a tragedy for the unbeliever. They will be lulled to sleep by political and economic conditions, but they will be rudely awakened. They will hear the frightening verdict: **“they shall not escape.”**

At the precise moment when humanity feels most secure in their rebellious and sinful course against God, and at a time when all of the devices of government and society may have produced the environment in which man may fancy that the peace, prosperity and safety of the whole world have been secured - precisely then shall the Lord descend from heaven with a mighty shout, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God!

as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape... We see in the comparison here of the woman having a child, the suddenness of the birth pains. Suddenly, unawares to her, the pains of birth begin. The world at peace has no idea that sudden destruction is upon them. The rain in the days of Noah came suddenly. It had never rained on the earth before. It was a surprise to the unbelieving world, but not to Noah.

Verse 4

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

Darkness is used here as opposing to light, and very similarly to the writings of John; these passages refer not to literal darkness and light, but to the state of rebellion against God (darkness) and to the state of obedience (light).

Verse 5

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

God has made us **the children of light, and the children of the day**. The time when we were of the night or of the darkness is in the past. So now we simply have to live up to what God has made us.

The coming of Jesus will be a surprise for everybody, because no one knows the day or the hour (Matthew 24:36). But for Christians who know the times and the seasons, it will not be a complete surprise. No one knows the exact hour a thief will come, but some live in a general preparation against thieves. Those who are not in darkness, who live as **the children of light, and the children of the day**, these are ready for the return of Jesus.

Verse 6

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

Because we do not belong to the night nor of darkness (1 Thessalonians 5:5), our spiritual condition should never be marked by sleep. Spiritually speaking, we need to be active and aware, to **watch and be sober**.

Sleep speaks of so much that belongs to the world (the others), but should not belong to Christians:

- Sleep speaks of *ignorance*... Sleep speaks of *insensibility*...
- Sleep speaks of *no defense*... Sleep speaks of *inactivity*...

And be sober - The word here used (νήφω nēphō) is rendered sober in 1 Thessalonians 5:6, 1 Thessalonians 5:8; 1 Peter 1:13; 1 Peter 5:8; and watch in 2 Timothy 4:5, and 1 Peter 4:7. It does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. It properly means, to be temperate or abstinent, especially in respect to wine. Joseph: *Jewish Wars*. It is used in a more general sense, as meaning to be sober-minded, watchful, circumspect.

Verse 7

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

In this passage there is an allusion to the fact that persons not only sleep in the night, but that they are frequently drunken in the night also. The idea is, that the Lord Jesus, when he comes, will find

the wicked sunk not only in carnal security, but in sinful indulgences, and that those who are Christians ought not only to be awake and to watch as in the day-time, but to be temperate. They ought to be like persons engaged in the sober, honest, and appropriate employments of the day, and not like those who waste their days in sleep, and their nights in revelry.

A man who expects soon to see the Son of God coming to judgment, ought to be a sober man. No one would wish to be Raptured or see Jesus at His Second Coming from a Bar...

The opposite of spiritual watchfulness is spiritual sleep. The opposite of spiritual sobriety is to be spiritually drunk. As Christians we are of the day, and so we must watch and be sober.

Verse 8

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.

Paul used the images of a soldier's armor to illustrate the idea of watchfulness. A soldier is a good example of someone who must watch and be sober, and he is equipped to do that with his armor.

The switch to armour indicates the idea of a soldier armored and on watch, in contrast with his mates who are off duty and drunk or asleep.

Faith and love are represented by the breastplate because the breastplate covers the vital organs. No soldier would ever go to battle without his breastplate, and no Christian is equipped to live the Christian life without faith and love.

The hope of salvation is represented as a **helmet**, because the **helmet** protects the head, which is just as essential as the **breastplate**. **Hope** isn't used in the sense of wishful thinking, but in the sense of a confident expectation of God's hand in the future.

Salvation is an overall process. It commences when we first believe in Christ and have been 'saved' (Ephesians 2:8), that is when we experience the work of the Holy Spirit and believe, and are accounted righteous before God through the sacrifice of the cross. It goes on as the Holy Spirit continues His work within us, changing us from one degree of glory to another (2 Corinthians 3:18), as we continue to grow in faith and are 'being saved' (1 Corinthians 1:18), becoming more and more like Him. And it reaches its final accomplishment when we are presented before God holy and without blemish (Colossians 1:22; Ephesians 5:27), made like Him (1 John 3:1-2).

Verse 9

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

In this verse we have the comparison of two destinations, wrath or salvation.

Before we had the hope of salvation (1 Thessalonians 5:8), we had an appointment to wrath. We no longer have an appointment to wrath, **but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ**.

Wrath: It is important to understand that Paul means the **wrath of God**. We are saved from the world, the flesh, and the devil. But first and foremost, we are rescued from the **wrath** of God, the **wrath** that *we deserve*. Paul's whole context here is the believer's rescue from the **wrath** of God.

Our appointment **to wrath** was appointed in two ways. First, because of what Adam did to us and the whole human race, we are appointed **to wrath** (Romans 5:14-19). Second, because of our own sin, we are appointed to wrath. When Jesus died on the cross, He stood in our place in our appointment **to wrath**, and reschedules us with an appointment **to obtain salvation**. As believers, when we think we are appointed **to wrath**, we show up for an appointment that was cancelled by Jesus.

One of the things that gave salvation so full a meaning to New Testament Christians was that they were sure of the wrath of God and knew that Christ had rescued them from a terrible fate.

Verse 10

¹⁰ Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

Jesus died in our place. Not simply that Jesus died for us in the sense as a favor for us; but that He died as a substitute for us.

Having stated the fact of salvation Paul now declares the basis. It is because our Lord Jesus Christ died for us that salvation is possible. **The very fact of his mentioning the death of Christ here demonstrates that he knew of no other way by which a man could be saved.** And the result of that death is that when we believe in Him we are put into a position where it does not matter whether we ‘fall asleep in Christ’ or are found still ‘awake’. In either case, at His coming, we begin to live together with Him, we begin to experience His life as the life-giver (John 5:21; John 5:25; John 5:29).

While Paul no doubt knew that some Christians were not as watchful as they should be, it was not something he would mildly have accepted. The question is, can a person be a Christian and not at all watchful? The answer...

Verse 11

¹¹ Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

Paul again tells us not to take comfort, but to give comfort. If all Christians have a heart to comfort each other, then all will be comforted.

“It is clear that in the primitive churches the care of souls was not delegated to an individual officer, or even the more gifted brethren among them; it was a work in which every believer might have a share.” Paul Hiebert



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1 Thessalonians 5

Paul's instructions to the elders at Thessalonica, Verses 12-22:

Verse 12

¹² And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

And we beseech you, brethren, to know them... Christians are to **know** their leaders, and leaders are described in three ways:

1. **Them which labour among you...** Leaders are recognized not by their title but by their *service*. A title is fine; but only if the title is true and if the title describes what that person really is before God and man.
2. **And are over you in the Lord...** Leaders are recognized as being “**over**” the congregation in the sense of ruling and providing headship, as a shepherd is **over** the sheep. This describes a clear and legitimate order of authority.
3. **And admonish you...** Leaders are recognized as those who **admonish** the congregation. To **admonish** means “to caution or to reprove gently; to warn.” Henry Morris says of this word, “While its tone is brotherly, it is big-brotherly.”

“The Greek construction is three participles united under one article, thus indicating that they are not three distinct groups but one class of men discharging a threefold function.” - D. Edmond Hiebert

Verse 13

¹³ And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

This means that the congregation, who has chosen to follow a certain pastor, should have respect for the office of pastor. The work the pastor of the church does is to benefit the congregation. You should love and respect them for the work they do for God.

True and faithful Pastors of the church are the most honored men in the New Testament, aside from the holy apostles and prophets themselves. It is not for themselves alone, personally, that this honor and esteem are intended, but as a mark of respect and appreciation for their work, which is the most important on earth.

“Christian ministers, who preach the whole truth, and labour in the word and doctrine, are entitled to more than respect; the apostle commands them to be esteemed, abundantly, and superabundantly; and this is to be done in love.” – Adam Clarke

Paul also wrote in:

1 Timothy 5:17

¹⁷Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour... If an elder (a Pastor) does rule well and does labor in word and doctrine (clearly speaking of hard work), that one is worthy of double honor.

In this context, double honor means financial support. Paul has already stated that certain widows are worthy of honor (1 Timothy 5:1), speaking of financial support.

Five Things To Know About A Pastor's Salary: By Thomas Rainer

In many churches, the pastor's salary is a quiet issue. There is a sense of discomfort from both the pastor and the members when the topic is broached. Such discomfort is unfortunate, however, because a number of churches will not seek every year to make certain the pastor is paid fairly.

A couple of prefatory comments are in order. First, we all know of the extreme examples of pastors living lavishly or mismanaging money. Those stories, though true, represent a small minority. Most pastors are not overpaid. And most pastors manage their limited finances well. Second, I am aware that many people are unemployed and that anyone who has a job should be grateful. That is still not a good reason to pay a pastor unfairly. As a final note, this brief article is relevant to all paid church staff, though my focus is here on the pastor. In my 25 years of consulting and working with churches, I have discovered five common issues that are not always known by most church members. And lack of awareness of any one of these issues can have a detrimental impact on fair compensation for the pastor.

1. A pay or compensation package is not the same as a salary. I cringe when I hear churches state a package to be the pay for the pastor. The package includes benefits such as health insurance and expense reimbursements such as business use of the automobile. No worker in a secular company adds their benefits and expenses and calls it their pay. Anything other than the cash payment (before taxes) the pastor receives should be reported in a totally separate category.

2. There are many resources to find out what the fair compensation for a pastor should be. Many denominations provide their own compensation studies. But you can do an Internet search for “pastor pay” and see a plethora of resources that are available. And as a rule of thumb, you could seek to estimate what the mean income is for families in the church, and use that as a basis for compensation for the pastor. Churches that do not do their homework on pastoral compensation tend to underpay their pastors.

3. Many pastors request no raises but would still appreciate one. Some pastors simply don't want to deal with a critic who might question any raise given to a pastor. Others feel extremely uncomfortable talking about money in general, and use the "no raise" request to deflect further conversation. Some think it's just the noble thing to do. But most pastors, in reality, would appreciate a fair raise to keep up with growing expenses. Don't accept their requests as the last word.

4. Many pastors are under extreme stress because they do not have adequate income to meet their financial obligations. Like anyone else who is under heavy financial burdens, a pastor can find his thoughts consumed with worry. Because he is so distracted, he naturally is less effective in his ministry. Both he and his family feel the pressure.

5. Some pastors leave their churches because of pay issues. You will not likely hear a pastor announce in his resignation that he is leaving because of financial pressures. The reality is that, for a number of pastors, the issue of compensation is a major push from one church to another, or from the church to a secular vocation. It's not that the pastor is in his job for the money; it's that the compensation for his vocation is insufficient to meet his family's needs.

It is unfortunate that the few indulgent pastors who live lavish lifestyles get most of the attention. The reality is that most of the some 400,000 pastors in America are not overpaid; indeed many are underpaid. Those are the pastors who need our attention.



especially they who labour in the word and doctrine... God places tremendous importance upon preaching and teaching the gospel. Elders are to be apt to teach and are to be able to ground the members in the faith and oppose those who teach error (Acts 20:28-31; Hebrews 13:7; Hebrews 13:17; Titus 1:9)

Continuing, Verse 13: And be at peace among yourselves... This may suggest that there had been some dissension. So Paul asks both to consider their ways, the brothers to accept lovingly their overseers because of the work they did, and all to ensure peace between themselves. 'Esteem highly'. This is very strong in the Greek. They are to look on them as what they are, God's representatives, and to accord them Christian love, the love that is due to all the brothers and sisters. 'Be at peace' addresses both sides. All are to acknowledge any fault and restore peace among themselves

Romans 14:19

¹⁹Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

Verse 14

¹⁴Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

Now we exhort you, brethren... To **exhort** is to tell someone what they must do, but without sharpness or a critical spirit. It is not rebuke or condemnation, but neither is it merely a suggestion or advice. It is urgent and serious, but associated with comfort.

The **unruly** are those who are *out of order*, using a military word that describes the soldier who breaks ranks or marches out of step. This is the self-willed person who simply demands to hold his own opinion or preference. These must be warned.

comfort the feebleminded... Those of little heart. Conditions often cause some to lose heart and wish to drop out, be quitters. These must be held in line.

support the weak... People who are weak in faith, weak in their commitment, weak in their attendance, weak in their duty of giving, weak in all departments - these are the constant concern of elders, and should be the concern of all Christians.

be patient toward all men... Though different approaches must be taken with different people, Christians must be patient with all. This is because true Christianity is shown by its ability to love and help difficult people by showing patience towards them .

Verse 15

¹⁵See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

The Christian never should seek revenge or vengeance, but let God take up our side. Instead, we must always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all. When we have a forgiving heart towards others, not only is it good for them, it is good for ourselves.

Romans 12:17

¹⁷Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

Verses 16-18:

We have a threefold injunction. Rejoicing, praying and giving of thanks which are to be continual and total. This is to be the spirit of the church. A satisfactory attitude of heart towards God in worship, prayer and gratitude is God's will for us and will enable the church to go forward in strength.

Verse 16

¹⁶Rejoice evermore.

Philippians 4:4

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.

Few things about the New Testament are more remarkable than this continual stress on joy. The Christian can rejoice always because their joy isn't based in circumstances, but in God. Circumstances change, but God doesn't.

Verse 17

¹⁷ Pray without ceasing.

This does not mean pray repetitiously or continuously without a break, but rather pray persistently, and regularly. We are to maintain the good habit of frequent prayers.

Verse 18

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

“When joy and prayer are married their first born child is gratitude.” - Charles Spurgeon

Ephesians 5:20

²⁰ Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

Thanks should be given to God in every circumstance of life.

Thanklessness is a trait of unbelievers:

Romans 1:21

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.

for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you...

God's will for His people is that they be a rejoicing people, that their hearts be filled with joy, joy that endures through pain, through the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22; 1 Thessalonians 1:6). They are to rejoice in hope of the glory of God (Romans 5:2), they are to rejoice in their tribulations because of the fruit that it produces within them (Romans 5:3), they are to rejoice in persecution and when men speak ill against them for Christ's sake because it puts them on the side of the prophets and it will bring them great reward (Matthew 5:11-12; Luke 6:23), they are to rejoice because their names are written in Heaven (Luke 10:20), they are to rejoice in the truth (1 Corinthians 13:6), they are to rejoice in costly service (Philippians 2:17-18), they are to rejoice in the Lord (Philippians 3:1; Philippians 3:3; Philippians 4:4; 1 Peter 1:8) and in God through our Lord Jesus Christ because they have received atonement (Romans 5:11), they are to rejoice in their sufferings for the service of Christ (Colossians 1:24) because they are partakers in Christ's sufferings (1 Peter 4:13) and in testing (James 1:2), they are to rejoice because they have been begotten again to a living hope -- unto a salvation ready to be revealed at the last time' (1 Peter 1:3-6). Notice how often persecution and tribulation is mentioned. They are to be a cause of rejoicing.

God's will for His people is that they be a praying people. We are to pray for those who use us badly (Matthew 5:44), we are to pray for the establishing of God's Kingly Rule (Matthew 6:9-10), we are to pray for daily forgiveness and delivery from evil ((Matthew 6:12-13), we are to pray that the Lord will send forth labourers into the harvest (Matthew 9:38), we are to pray when times of testing approach (Matthew 26:41), we are to watch and pray in the light of the second coming (Mark 13:33), we are to pray for the work of God and His ambassadors (Romans 15:30; Colossians

4:3; 2 Thessalonians 3:1), we are to pray for each other (Romans 1:9; Colossians 1:9). Indeed prayer is mentioned so often as the Christian's vital breath at all times that it is impossible to list all references. It is regularly mentioned in Acts. It is Paul's constant theme. He constantly assures his converts and the churches to whom he writes that he is praying for them. He constantly exhorts to prayer. It is assumed that it will accompany all we do. Praying without ceasing means that we should carry God with us in everything we do. If we cannot take God with us we should not be there.

God's will for His people is that they be a thankful people. Paul never ceased to give thanks (1 Corinthians 1:4; Ephesians 1:16; Ephesians 5:20; 1 Thessalonians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:3). We are told that we must give thanks for everything (Ephesians 5:20; 1 Thessalonians 5:18), abounding at all times (Colossians 2:7; Colossians 3:15; Colossians 3:17), and that thanksgiving should accompany all our prayers (Philippians 4:6; Colossians 4:2; 1 Timothy 2:1).

What must we thank Him for? For all things:

- (a) His sending Christ to die for us. (Luke 2:14).
- (b) His quickening Spirit (2 Corinthians 9:15).
- (c) His gospel (Matthew 11:25)
- (d) His restraining grace (1 Corinthians 15:57; Romans 7:25).
- (e) His renewing and sanctifying grace.
- (f) His comforts (Psalms 147:1-3).
- (g) His ordinances.
- (a) Creation (Psalms 95:6; Psalms 100:1-3).
- (b) Preservation (Acts 17:28)
- (c) Provision (Psalms 147:7-9, 1 Timothy 6:17).
- (d) Health and strength (Psalms 18:32).
- (e) Gifts and parts (1 Corinthians 14:18).
- (f) Life and liberty.
- (g) Protection.

Article: Here's How Being Thankful Improves Your Health

"It is not happy people who are thankful; it is thankful people who are happy."

On Thanksgiving, people around the United States expressed gratitude for the bounty of their lives. However, many may not realize that in doing so, they are also improving the quality of their health. Moreover, they are increasing their life expectancies.

The scientific evidence is conclusive when it comes to mood, outlook, and health. Happy people live 7-10 years longer than unhappy people. Additionally, optimistic people have a 77% lower risk of heart disease than pessimistic people. But how can you become happier and more optimistic in your world view?

THE HOW OF HAPPINESS

In Sonja Lyubomirsky's *The How Of Happiness*, the author teaches us how 50% of our propensity for happiness is based on a genetic set point, something we can't influence very much, 10% is

based on life circumstances (such as getting the promotion, finding The One, or achieving the creative dream), and 40% is “intentional activity” that we can influence with our behavior.

That means we can be up to 40% happier in our lives without changing our circumstances one bit, and one of the key intentional activities is the practice of gratitude.

Research shows that consistently grateful people are happier, more energetic, more hopeful, more helpful, more empathic, more spiritual, more forgiving, and less materialistic. They’re also less likely to be depressed, anxious, lonely, envious, neurotic, or sick.

THE EVIDENCE

In one study, one group of participants were asked to name five things they’re grateful for every day. Another group was asked to list five hassles. Those expressing gratitude were not only happier and more optimistic, but they also reported fewer physical symptoms. They less frequently struggled with issues like headache, cough, nausea, or acne. Other gratitude studies have shown that those with chronic illnesses demonstrate clinical improvement when practicing regular gratitude.

Severely depressed people instructed to list grateful thoughts on a website daily were found to be significantly less depressed by the end of the study when compared to depressed people who weren’t asked to express gratitude. And we know that depression is a significant risk factor for disease.

HOW DOES GRATITUDE BOOST HAPPINESS?

According to Dr. Lyubomirsky, gratitude:

- Promotes savoring of positive life experiences
- Bolsters self-worth and self-esteem
- Helps people cope with stress and trauma
- Encourages caring acts and moral behavior
- Helps build social bonds, strengthen existing relationships, and nurture new relationships (and we know lonely people have twice the rate of heart disease as those with strong social connections)
- Inhibits harmful comparisons
- Diminishes or deters negative feelings such as anger, bitterness, and greed
- Thwarts hedonistic adaptation (the ability to adjust your set point to positive new circumstances so that we don’t appreciate the new circumstance and it has little affect on our overall health or happiness)

HOW TO PRACTICE GRATITUDE

You don’t have to wait for Thanksgiving to enjoy the benefits to your health and happiness that accompany gratitude.

Keep a gratitude journal.

Ponder 3-5 things you’re currently grateful for (it’s okay if these are mundane things!) and write them down. Data suggests that doing this once per week may be most beneficial, but if you find that doing it daily works best for you, go for it!

Cultivate An Attitude of Gratitude.

Journaling may not be your cup of tea, so you might be better off just training yourself to think grateful thoughts. Try noticing one ungrateful thought you have each day and switching it around to something you can be grateful for.

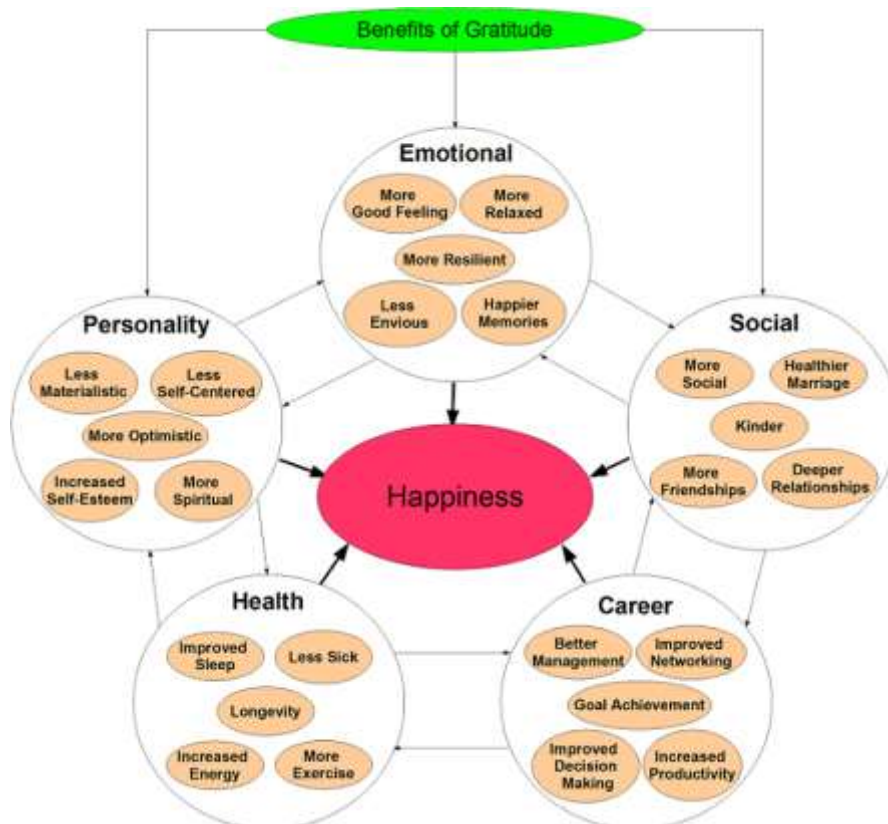
Vary Your Gratitude Practice.

Try journaling sometimes, thinking grateful thoughts, speaking what you're grateful for at dinner time, making art about what you're grateful for, but shake it up! We tend to get bored easily, so the practice of gratitude works better when we change how we're grateful.

Express Gratitude Directly To Others.

Call a friend, write a letter, share your grateful thoughts with family members, or speak to a colleague at work about what you're grateful for.

WHAT ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?



31 Benefits of Gratitude: The Ultimate Science-Backed Guide

<https://www.happierhuman.com/benefits-of-gratitude/>

1. Gratitude makes us happier.
2. Gratitude makes people like us.
3. Gratitude makes us healthier.
4. Gratitude boosts our career.
5. Gratitude strengthens our emotions.
6. Gratitude develops our personality.
7. Gratitude makes us more optimistic.
8. Gratitude reduces materialism.
9. Gratitude increases spiritualism.
10. Gratitude makes us less self-centered.
11. Gratitude increases self-esteem.
12. Gratitude improves your sleep.
13. Gratitude keeps you away from the doctor.
14. Gratitude lets you live longer.
15. Gratitude increases your energy levels.
16. Gratitude makes you more likely to exercise.
17. Gratitude helps us bounce back.
18. Gratitude makes us feel good.
19. Gratitude makes our memories happier.
20. Gratitude reduces feelings of envy.
21. Gratitude helps us relax.
22. Gratitude makes you friendlier.
23. Gratitude helps your marriage.
24. Gratitude makes you look good.
25. Gratitude helps you make friends.
26. Gratitude deepens friendships.
27. Gratitude makes you a more effective manager.
28. Gratitude helps you network.
29. Gratitude increases your goal achievement.
30. Gratitude improves your decision making.
31. Gratitude increases your productivity.

Pastor Hank's Notes on 1 Thessalonians: Living In The Present – With A Future Tense!



1Thessalonians Chapter Five Outline: An admonition to be ready for The Lord's Return, Verses 1-11. Paul's instructions to the elders at Thessalonica, Verses 12-22. Paul's conclusion, containing the apostolic signature and characteristic greeting, Verses 23-28.

The Apostle closes his Epistle in this Chapter. He describes the striking Difference of the Lord's coming, as he will appear to his church, and to the Ungodly. He again exhorts the Church to be comforted: and closes the Epistle with his Apostolic Blessing.

1 Thessalonians 5

Paul's instructions to the elders at Thessalonica, Verses 12-22:

Verse 19

¹⁹ Quench not the Spirit.

We can quench the fire of the Spirit by our doubt, our indifference, our rejection of Him, or by the distraction of others. This language is taken from the way of putting out a fire, and the sense is, we are not to extinguish the influences of the Holy Spirit in our hearts.

From The Biblical Illustrator Words of Warning:

I. The work of the Holy Spirit.

1. The Holy Spirit is God, and so has all the strength of God. What He pleases to do He can do. None can stand against Him. This is of the greatest possible comfort to us, because we have enemies that are too strong for us; but no enemy is strong enough to hurt us if the Spirit of God is on our side. And again, as the Holy Spirit is God, so He has that wonderful power of working on the heart which belongs to God, and in purifying it, and making it holy like Himself.

2. The Holy Spirit dwells in the Church. His work is done upon those who belong to the Church. "He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." What the soul of each one is to our body, so the Holy Spirit lives in the Church, and gives spiritual life to each member of the Church. He works through the ordinances of the Church, and what He gives, He is pleased to give through those ordinances.

3. The Holy Spirit is like a fire in the heart of man. Fire gives warmth and light. Is not this exactly the character of the work of the Holy One. What is colder than the fallen heart of man toward God? Who warms it into real love to God but the Spirit by whom the love of God is shed abroad in the heart? Again, what is darker than the heart of man? Who pours light into it, and makes us to see

that God is the true portion of the soul? It is the Holy Ghost. “We have an unction from the Holy One, and we know all things.”

The Quenching of the Holy Spirit:

1. The power we have to do this. We have already said that the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church is like a fair shining light. Its rays fall on all hearts. It touches, it gilds, it beautifies all souls. It gives them a new fairness, like the golden rays which bathe the whole landscape, making each separate leaf to glisten as it dances on its branch, and hill and valley, wood and meadow, to wear a holiday aspect. Do not choose darkness rather than light by quenching the Spirit. We have power to do this. If we choose, we may say--I will not be changed, I will not give up my icy coldness of soul, I will go on in the hard-bound frost of my own selfishness, I will care for myself, live for myself; the fire may burn around me, but I will quench it. So we may put out the light which would lead us to God and heaven.

2. The way in which we may exercise this power. The Spirit of God may give us light in the Holy Scriptures, and we may refuse to read them at all, or read them without learning to know God and ourselves. The Spirit of God may give us light in the Church, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, and we may determine not to see what the Church would have us to believe and to do. The loving Spirit of God is longing to work among you, His heart is set upon you, He is opening out the treasures of His goodness before you. Oh! Take care you do not check Him by your indifference. He will act to you as you act to Him. Just as fire cannot burn in a damp, unwholesome atmosphere--as there are places underground where the air is so foul that the brightest candle will go out at once, so if you choke the heavenly fire it will go out. The Holy Spirit will not work in the midst of cold, worldly, unbelieving hearts. By all that is dear and precious, “Quench not the Spirit!” (*R. W. Randall, M. A.*)

I. We have a Spirit to quench.

1. The possession of the Spirit is the distinguishing prerogative of the gospel covenant; this it is which imparts a life, an energy, a fullness, a reality, to its every part and detail.

2. We are all the depositaries of this great treasure; the holders of a wonderful gift, for the abuse or improvement of which we shall one day have to answer.

II. The nature and properties of this Spirit.

1. A consuming fire.

2. A purifying fire; it does not wholly destroy the will, so as to make man a passive instrument; it only strips the will of that evil which makes it at enmity with God. Nor does the Spirit deaden and annihilate the affections, powers, faculties of our moral nature; it only withdraws them from low, base, unworthy objects, and fixes them on others whose fruits will be love, joy, peace.

3. A kindling fire. It raises in the mind of man the fervor of devotion and the heat of Divine love.

4. A defending fire. Like the sword of the cherubim, it turns every way to guard “the tree of life.”

5. An enlightening fire.

III. What is meant by “quenching the Spirit.”

1. This is done by those who altogether fall away from Christ--by apostates.

2. It is not only, nor generally, by a sudden and violent wrenching and snapping asunder of the ties which bind him to Christ, that the obdurate sinner quenches the Spirit. The integrity and unity of his inner life is damaged and sapped little by little; he quenches the Spirit, more or less, in all the stages of his spiritual decay.

IV. What are the means, and what the agency, which operate in bringing this about?

1. Floods of ungodliness swamp the soul.

2. Blasts of fierce and headstrong passions.

3. Want of fuel to nourish and preserve it. In many a soul the Spirit's fire is quenched because it is never replenished by prayer, meditation, self-examination, works of charity and mercy, attendance on Holy Communion, etc.

V. The awful consequences. Let us quench the Spirit, and how shall the motions of sins which are in our members be rooted out? How shall we be able to purify ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord? (*Arthur G. Baxter.*)

On quenching the Spirit

"Quench not the Spirit." Put not out that heavenly fire which you did not kindle, but which you can extinguish. Put not out that holy fire which is the real heart of your life, and without which spiritual death is sure to follow. Put not out that fire by sensual pleasures and indulgence of fleshly appetites, as did Sodom and Gomorrah; by love of the world, as did Demas; by careless neglect, as did the lukewarm Church of Laodicea.

I. The fire can be put out.

1. You may put it out by indulgence of the body. The brutalizing power of fleshly sins, of whatever sort, always blunts the conscience, and makes the spiritual eye unable to discern the true nature of God's requirements. A man who has given himself up to these becomes coarse. If the sins be such as men can see, he becomes visibly coarse and earthly. If the sins be of the far wicked and yet more secret sort, he often retains much outward refinement and even softness of manner, but coarseness and earthliness of soul; with little sense of disgust at impurity, with a low and animal idea of the highest of all affections.

2. The fire can be put out by worldliness and a life devoted to self and selfish hopes. What can be more miserable than the condition of that man whose powers of mind have shown him the truth of God, whose understanding has been too highly cultivated to allow him to shut his eyes to the eternal laws of heaven, who can appreciate, perhaps, till his very heart thrills with admiration, the high examples of love, of self-sacrifice, of a pure and brave service, which history has recorded, and yet who cannot be, and who feels that he never can be, what he himself admires; who feels that while he admires the noble and the true, yet he is not attracted by it? The end of such a character generally is to lose even this much appreciation of what is good, and to retain admiration for nothing but refinement without a resolute will within; to despise all self-sacrifice, all generosity, all nobleness as romantic and weak; and, of course, either to give up religion altogether, or to make a superstition to suit the worldly temper.

3. Lastly, and most often of all, the fire of the Spirit can be put out by mere neglect. The Spirit holds before the sight, time after time, soul-stirring visions of what our lives and characters might be. As we read, as we live with our fellows, as we worship, as we listen, we are touched, enlightened, half roused to real resolution. But we hear not, or if we hear we make no effort; or if we make an effort, we soon give it up. The greatest thoughts, the noblest thoughts flit before the minds of men in whom their fellows suspect nothing of the kind; but they flit across the sky, and those who share in them, yet feel them to be as unreal as those clouds. There is no waste in nature equal to the waste of noble aspirations. What is the end of such coldness? The end is an incapacity to heart what they have so often heard in vain. In such men there comes at last an utter inability to understand that the message of God is a message to them at all. They hear and they understand, but they find no relation between their lives and what they learn. They will be selfish, and not know they are selfish; worldly, and not be able to see they are worldly; mean, and yet quite unconscious of their meanness.

The ways in which the Spirit may be quenched:

1. By directly resisting the truth He presents to the mind. After a short struggle the conflict is over, and that particular truth ceases to affect the mind. The man felt greatly annoyed by that truth until he quenched the Spirit; now he is annoyed by it no longer.
2. By endeavoring to support error. Men are foolish enough to attempt by argument to support a position which they know to be false. They argue it till they get committed, and thus quench the Spirit, and are left to believe in the very lie they unwisely attempted to advocate.
3. By uncharitable judgments, which are so averse to that love which is the fruit of the Spirit.
4. By bad temper, harsh, and vituperative language, and intemperate excitement on any subject whether religious or otherwise.
5. By indulging prejudice. Whenever the mind is made up on any subject before it is thoroughly canvassed, that mind is shut against the truth and the Spirit is quenched.
6. By violating conscience. Persons have had a very tender conscience on some subject, but all at once they come to have no conscience at all on that point. Change of conscience, of course, often results from conscientious change of views. But sometimes the mind is awakened just on the eve of committing a sin. A strange presentiment warns the man to desist. If he goes on the whole mind receives a dreadful shock, and its very eyes seem to be almost put out.
7. By indulging appetites and passions. These not only injure the body but the soul: and God sometimes gives men up to them.
8. By dishonesty and sharp practices in business.
9. By casting off fear and restraining prayer.
10. By idle conversation, levity, and trifling.
11. By indolence and procrastination.
12. By resisting the doctrine and duty of sanctification.

Verse 20

²⁰ Despise not prophesyings.

prophesyings... Refers to bringing a message ‘from God’. It has to be proved and tested (compare also 1 Corinthians 14:29). There is no thought of just accepting what is said, nor would it be open to just anyone. ‘Prophets’ would be acknowledged as having the ‘gift of prophecy’ (1 Corinthians 12:29; Ephesians 4:11). They were formally recognized (Acts 13:1; Ephesians 2:20; Ephesians 3:5). Their message would be tested against the Scriptures.

Verse 21

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

This is the same thing as trying the spirits to see whether they are of God or not. We must stand firmly on the Word of God and then we will not fail. Don't believe everything you hear. Check it out with the Word of God.

Evil and deception can show itself even in a spiritual setting, so it is important for Christians to **Prove all things**. When the **Prove** has been made (according to the standard of God's Word and the discernment of spirit among the leaders), we then **hold fast that which is good**.

Verse 22

²² Abstain from all appearance of evil.

We know that it is bad to do evil, but we see here that it is bad to even give the **appearance of evil**. The world is looking at how you conduct your life. If you give the appearance of evil, you might cause your weaker brother to sin.

So what does this verse tell us? It's saying that we should stay away from what simply appears to be evil or sinful even if we are not doing anything that is actually wrong. “We” may know we are not doing something wrong but if it could look wrong to someone else we should abstain (stay away) from it.

So, to help us more easily avoid even the appearance of sin, we should ask 3 questions: 1.) Would Christ go there? 2.) Would Christ do that? 3.) Would Christ say that? If my answer is NO and Christ wouldn't do it, then I shouldn't ether.

Not only do we flee from that which is evil, we flee from that which appears to be evil.



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The Apostle closes his Epistle in this Chapter. He describes the striking Difference of the Lord's coming, as he will appear to his church, and to the Ungodly. He again exhorts the Church to be comforted: and closes the Epistle with his Apostolic Blessing.

1 Thessalonians 5, Paul's conclusion, containing the apostolic signature and characteristic greeting, Verses 23-28:

Verse 23

²³ 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.

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly... Paul's main thought here, that the entire person is set apart and preserved by God, complete in **whole spirit and soul and body**.

The idea behind the word **sanctify** is "to set apart" – to make something different and distinct, breaking old associations and forming a new association. For example, a dress is a dress; but a wedding dress is *sanctified* – set apart for a special, glorious purpose. God wants us to be *set apart* to Him= **wholly/completely**.

and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless... Paul's use of **spirit, soul, and body** in this passage has led many to adopt what is called a Trichotimist view of man, believing that man is made up of three distinct parts: spirit, soul, and body.

Man is a triune being because he is created in the image of God. "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1:26). We know that God is a Trinity. The Holy Trinity is clearly set forth in the Apostle Paul's benediction that closed his Second Corinthian Epistle:

2 Corinthians 13:14

¹⁴ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

Our Lord Himself said, in what we call "The Great Commission":

Matthew 28:19

¹⁹ Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Created in the image of God, man is likewise a trinity. He has a spiritual nature that is separate and distinct from the body in which it dwells.

The two following passages from the Bible clearly establish the fact that man is a triune being composed of spirit, soul, and body:

1 Thessalonians 5:23

²³ 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.

Hebrews 4:12

¹² For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow (*body*), and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

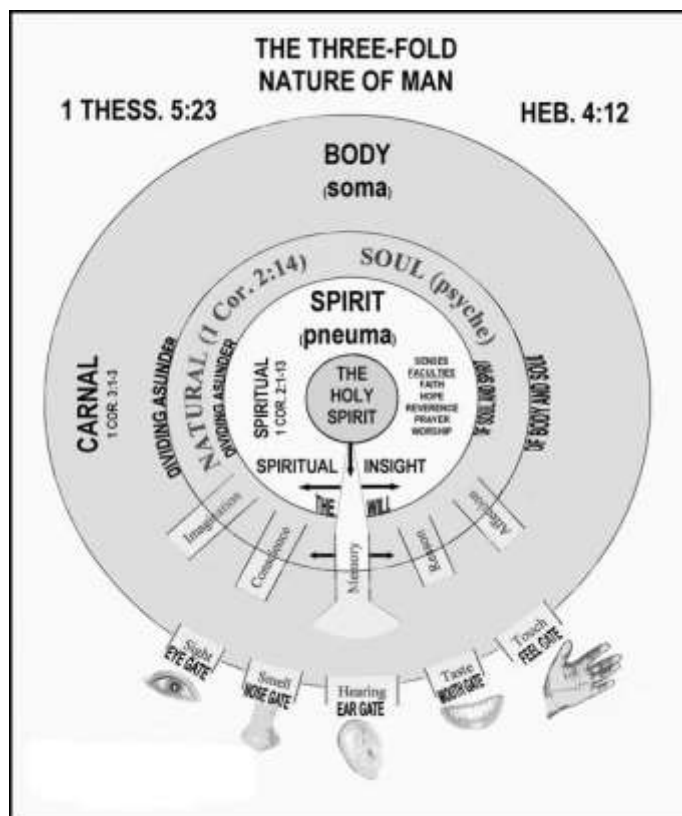
The threefold nature of man might be illustrated in several ways. Dr. Clarence Larkin uses three circles (*Rightly Dividing The Word*, page 86). The outer circle stands for the *body* of man, the middle circle for the *soul*, and the inner for the *spirit*. At this point it will be well to quote a portion from Dr. Larkin's book:

In the outer circle the 'Body' is shown as touching the Material world through the five senses of 'Sight,' 'Smell,' 'Hearing,' 'Taste' and 'Touch.'

The Gates to the 'Soul' are 'Imagination,' 'Conscience,' 'Memory,' 'Reason' and the 'Affections.'

The "Spirit" receives impressions of outward and material things through the soul. The spiritual faculties of the 'Spirit' are 'Faith,' 'Hope,' 'Reverence,' 'Prayer' and 'Worship.'

God intends there to be a hierarchy within the human person, ordered first with the spirit, then with the soul, and finally with the body.



The Tripartite Nature of Man

I. Body--sense-consciousness.

II. Soul--self-consciousness.

III. Spirit--God-consciousness.

be preserved blameless... The summation of the effect of salvation of people will be their presentation "without blame" before the throne of the glory of God. This can be only by the saved being presented "in Christ" (Colossians 1:28), and as being fully identified with Christ, in Christ and as Christ, and by no means in their own identity as perfect souls.

unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.... And those that are preserved to that day, **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**, are preserved to the end, and will be found blameless; and their whole man, spirit, soul, and body, being first sanctified, and then preserved, shall be saved and glorified.

Verse 24

²⁴ Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

The God who calls will also bring those whom He calls to glory and none will be lost.

The great achievement must ever remain the work of God. When people do all that they are commanded to do, the perfection that must be attained prior to entering eternal life is the fulfillment of God in Christ, not the achievement of any man

Verse 25

²⁵ Brethren, pray for us.

Paul was a Mighty Man used of God, but Paul wanted The Church to Pray for him. Not only should the Pastor pray for his flock, but the congregation should pray for their leader. I say with Paul, pray for me, I need your Prayers!

Verse 26

²⁶ Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.

The "Holy kiss" was a Jewish custom of welcome.

It was also used by the early Christians:

1 Peter 5:14

14 Greet ye one another with **a kiss of charity**. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

This is not speaking of a passionate kiss between a woman and a man, but is speaking of a warm greeting, a kiss on the cheek.

Verse 27

²⁷ I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

As a considerable portion of this Epistle was directed to the Elders at Thessalonica, Paul, by this powerful, even blunt, prayer served notice upon them that the Epistle did not belong to the elders, but to the Church.

Verse 28

²⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

This again is Paul's personal greeting. It partly repeats the greeting in 1 Thessalonians 1:1. Grace is God's undeserved active favor given in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, which Paul prays will be active in all the members of the church at Thessalonica and us as well.

It has been a Blessing and an honor to Teach a Book of The Bible, Pastor Henry T. Anderson

