1 and 2 Thessalonians

Lesson notes on the letters to the Thessalonians

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"I Thank God for your Fruit!"

I Thessalonians 1:1-3
8-13-2025



INTRODUCTION:

When people think about you, what do they remember? What comes to mind?

*** You should desire to be remembered for your faith, love, and hope.**

I. THE FRUIT OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY IS <u>FAITH</u> <u>THAT WORKS</u> (v. 3a)



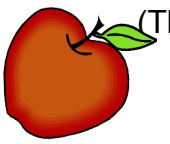
(The <u>basis</u> for your service is your <u>faith</u>)

II. THE FRUIT OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY IS <u>LOVE</u> <u>THAT SWEATS</u> (v. 3b)



(The <u>motive</u> for your service is your <u>love</u>)

III. THE FRUIT OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY IS <u>HOPE</u> <u>THAT ENDURES</u> (v. 3c)



(The <u>length</u> of your service depends on your <u>hope</u>)

"I Thank God for your Fruit!"

I Thessalonians 1:1-3
8-20-2025



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(The basis for your service is your faith)

II. THE FRUIT OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY IS _____ THAT _____ (v. 3b)



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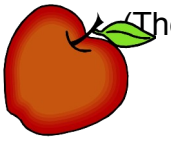
III. THE FRUIT OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY IS _____ THAT _____ (v. 3c)



(The length of your service depends on your hope)

"I Thank God for your Fruit!"

I Thessalonians 1:1-3

8-13-2025

INTRODUCTION:

"Silvanus" = Silas

"Church" = true believers make up a church, and as such they are <u>in</u> God and (in) Christ.

NOTE: God the Father and Christ are tied together (to be in one is to be in the other).

Jesus said: "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me" (Jn. 14:10, 11). "...Because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me and I in you." (Jn. 14:20).

"Grace and peace" = the grace of God always precedes the peace of God. You will never know the peace of God until you know His grace.

Background to the Thessalonian church: Acts 17:1-15. Second Missionary journey of Paul.

Thessalonica was a large city of 200,000. Much commercial traffic because it was a seaport city.
A wealthy city (cp. Acts 17:4); <u>mixed</u> nationalities, religious, and moral standards.

Because Paul had to depart so quickly from the infant church, he was concerned about them. They lacked experienced leadership, so Paul sent Timothy to see how they were doing.

Timothy brought back good news (I Thes. 3:6), and now Paul rejoices greatly as he recalls how genuine they were when they came to Christ.

ILLUS: leading someone to Christ and wondering if they were sincere when they made a profession of faith. You wonder, "Will I ever see this person again?" EX - the man who led me to Christ never really thought he would see me again.

Paul was so excited to hear how these believers were doing after Timothy's report.
Prior to this report he was a bit anxious about these believers (cp.3:5)

What made Paul wonder [concerned about] their faith in Christ?

1) Possibly because they "received the word in much affliction" (1:6; cp. 3:3, 4)

2) They were not as noble as the Bereans, who searched the Scriptures daily to make sure Paul was right

3) He had only been with them for 3 weeks (Acts 17:2 - three Sabbaths)

NOTE: He gives God the thanks (salvation is of God - cp. v. 4).

ILLUS: of looking at high school or college year book and remembering what people were like.

When I think of some people, I remember someone who was: a goofball (joker), proud (always demanded his own selfish way), talented, opinionated, enthusiastic, etc.

What do people remember about you? What do they think about you?

When people think about you, what do they remember? What comes to mind?

- **You should desire to be remembered for your faith, love, and hope.**

Paul in verse 3 recalled (remembered) 3 internal evidences in the Thessalonians lives that caused him to continually thank God for them! - faith, love, and hope.

These are the same 3 virtues mentioned in I Cor. 13:13 (cp. Gal. 5:5-6 - in which context Paul is showing that salvation does not evidence itself by man's efforts of law-keeping (circumcision) but by the Spirit who gives faith, hope (v. 5), and love (v. 6).

These 3 virtues are also tied together in Rom. 5:2-5; Col. 1:4-5; Heb. 6:10-12, 10:22-24; and I Pet. 1:21-22.

NOTE: These fruits of faith, love and hope--because they are internal--cannot be seen. However, they show that they are resident (at home) because of what comes out of the person's life.

"Work" (flows out) of faith
"Labor" (flows out) of love
"Patience (flows out) of hope

Paul in verses 1-10 is describing the fruit (evidence of true salvation.

He summarizes the fruit that <u>will</u> (to one degree or another) be found in a true Christian.
"Work" = points to the <u>type</u> (kind) of fruit
"Labor" = points to the <u>quality</u> of fruit
"Patience" = points to the <u>longevity</u> (quantity) of fruit

ILLUS: of a dead tree that bears no leaves, fruit, etc.
Faith in Christ brings life (I Jn. 5:12) to the inner man - what you <u>are</u>. And where there is life there must be growth and fruit (an outworking - what you <u>do</u>)

"No man can come to Christ by faith and remain the same anymore than he can come into contact with a 220 volt wire and remain the same" (Wiersbe, <u>James</u>, p. 78)

I. THE FRUIT OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY IS FAITH THAT WORKS (v. 3a)

(The basis for your service is your faith)

James is not the only one who tied faith to works. Paul does it here!

Faith must always lead to works (Jms. 2:14-26). We are not saved by faith plus works, but by a faith that works.

A dead faith paralyzes the arm from helping, paralyzes the hand from giving, and paralyzes the leg from going.

Paul said to Titus: "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him" (Tit. 1:16).

Salvation is not seen by words of lips, but by works of life.

I call Hebrews 11 "The Hall of Faith." The heroes of the faith are described as believers whose faith affected their behavior.

1. They worshipped by faith as Abel.
2. walked . . . . . Enoch
3. worked . . . . . Noah
4. lived . . . . . Abraham
5. governed . . . . . Moses
6. followed . . . . . Israel
7. fought . . . . . Joshua
8. conquered . . . . . Gideon
9. subdued kingdoms . . . David
10. closed mouths of lions-Daniel
11. walked through the fire by faith as the 3 Hebrew children

By faith they were patient in suffering, courageous in battle, made strong out of weakness, and were victorious in achieving God's will for their lives.

I would have no desire to pastor a church if I did not believe that Christ was real, salvation was real, the Bible was real, hell was real, and Heaven was real.
The bottom line of your Christian life is faith! ("This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" - I Jn. 5:4).

II. THE FRUIT OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY IS LOVE THAT SWEATS (v. 3b)

(The motive for your service is your love)

Because God is love and He lives in you (I Jn. 4:7-8), His love will flow out (if indeed it is in you to begin with)

The love described ( ) is not a feeling; it is a determination to do right.

It is not doing for someone because they are worthy, but because they have a need.

It is not conditional, it has no strings attached.

This love is a decision to love because of God. You see, love is built on "faith" in God.

You need to mature to the point where you can say: "Lord, I don't feel like loving my mate (fellow believers, lost, etc.), but I will because of You. I will for Your sake, and for the honor of your name.

(TURN TO: Heb. 6:9-11 - "Work and labor of love, which ye have shewed toward His name (v. 10) ... hope (v. 11)

"Labor" = wearisome toil involving sweat and fatigue.
"The word emphasizes the weariness which follows on this straining of all one's powers to the utmost" (Trench's Synonyms, p. 378).

When you love someone you will:
1) go the extra mile for them!
2) go beyond the call of duty for them!
3) sweat a bit in your service!

(We are so unloving and lazy and selfish that we don't service in church, etc., if it means the sacrifice of some time and energy)

Just like there is "no pain, no gain" in exercise, so if there is "no pain, there will be no reward" at the Judgment Seat.

III. THE FRUIT OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY IS HOPE THAT ENDURES (v. 3c)

(The length of your service depends on your hope)

"Hope" = confidence. To look to the future with confident expectation.

Our hope is described in verse 10 - we are waiting for Christ to return.

The return of Christ is the dominant theme of I & II Thess.

Every chapter in I Thes. closes with a statement about Christ's return (1:10, 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:23).

The expectancy of Christ's return is a mark that you are really saved. Unsaved people are not eagerly awaiting the Lord's return.

"Patience" - an ability to remain under pressure. This church was undergoing opposition. Right from the start of their Christian lives, they underwent "affliction" (v. 6)

The only thing that will bring us through those real tough times of struggle, opposition, etc., is our hope which is in Christ.

ILLUS: of fleeting thoughts of just giving up, quitting, etc. -- washed away because of our hope!

We are looking for that "blessed hope and glorious appearing..." (Tit. 2:13).

Your having an enduring hope is a mark of true salvation. The one who forsakes Christ is not losing his salvation, but is indicating that he never had it to begin with.

I Jn. - "They went out from among us because they were not of us..."

CONCLUSION:

What do you want to be remembered for?

Your intelligence, looks, neatness, organization, achievement in worldly endeavors?

What we should want others to notice about us is our faith, love, and hope. You don't have to be talented (gifted), etc., to display these.

These virtues are for all believers! And they will be in your life if you are truly saved. But are they in your life to the degree that God wants them?

You measure what is inside you by what comes out.

The amount of your work (for Christ) reveals the amount of your faith

The amount of your sweat (for Christ) reveals the amount of your love

The amount of your patience (for Christ) reveals the amount of your hope

What causes Christians (ex. your pastor) to thank God for you?

It's when he can look back at your life and honestly say: "You know, so & so wasn't perfect, but I know he was real.

1) He was a Christian whose faith did something
2) He was a Christian whose love went the extra mile
3) He was a Christian whose hope made him faithful to the end

Jn. 15:8 - "Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit"

"CHOSEN FOR SURE!"

1 Thessalonians 1:4-10

8-27-2025

You can be sure that God chose you! (v. 4)

How do you know? 2 major evidences

I. THOSE GOD CHOOSES, HE <u>CONVICTS</u> (v. 5)

A. God Sends Conviction By An Empowered <u>Message</u> (V. 5a)

B. God Sends Conviction By An Exemplary <u>Messenger</u> (V. 5b)

II. THOSE GOD CHOOSES, HE <u>CHANGES</u> (v. 6-10)

Evidences of a changed life:

God gives you -

A. A <u>Life</u> Worth <u>Copying</u> (V. 6-7)

B. A <u>Faith</u> Worth <u>Sharing</u> (V. 8)

C. A <u>God</u> Worth Serving (V. 9)

D. A <u>Savior</u> Worth <u>Waiting For</u> (V. 10)

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A. A _____ Worth Copying (V. 6-7)

B. A _____ Worth Sharing (V. 8)

C. A _____ Worth Serving (V. 9)

D. A _____ Worth Waiting For (V. 10)

"CHOSEN FOR SURE!"

1 Thessalonians 1:4-10

8-27-2025

INTRODUCTION:

I'll never know why (out of the millions of people in the world) God chose me. Why did God save us?

Certainly not because of any of our goodness.

But because He loved us (NOTE: V. 4 "beloved" - lit. having been loved, God chose you).

How do I know God chose me?

The answer is simple: "I chose Him!"

I would never have chosen Him if He had now drawn me, and He would never have chosen me if I had not chosen Him!

This thought is almost paradoxical. Who chose whom? He chose me and I chose Him. Divine sovereignty and man's free will (SEE II Thes. 2:13)

Paul was confident that the people at Thessalonica were elected (chosen) by God. How did he know? How do you know He chose you?

There are those today who say, "You can't know for sure." "You can't be positive that you are saved and on your way to Heaven." They say, "Such a thing is presumptuous."

But is it? Not according to this passage.

*** You can be sure that God chose you! (v. 4)**

How do you know? 2 major evidences:

I. THOSE GOD CHOOSES, HE CONVICTS (V. 5)

"For" = because

Paul was sure they were saved because he remembered the effectiveness of the Gospel (good news) (cp. v. 3).

It touched their hearts and wills.

A. God Sends Conviction By An Empowered Message (v. 5a)

v. 5

"Came" = lit. was caused (made) to come (passive verb). God sent it and empowered it.

"Word only" - Many traveling teachers, preachers and philosophers in Paul's day were only peddling the gospel to make money off of ignorant people (cp. 2:3-5)

Preaching that is in "word only" is dead and lifeless.

ILLUS: Some rabbi or priest that stands up and recites some dry, dusty creed or memorized prayer, etc., does nothing to change the lives of the listeners.

We need Heaven-sent:

1) "Power" - It's a powerful conviction (- "dynamite")
The gospel is powerful (Ro. 1:16; I Cor. 2:4)

2) "Holy Spirit" - It's a personal conviction (person to person. The Holy Spirit is a person not a force).

3) "Much assurance" - It's a believable conviction. "Assurance" = a certainty or confidence.

B. God Sends Conviction By An Exemplary Messenger (v. 5b)

Our witnessing is in vain without God's power! And God's power will not work without human effort (someone must preach the truth and live the truth).

SEE I Thes. 2:10.

We ought to live right for the sake of others!

No man is an island unto himself. Your life affects others, either for heaven or hell!

II. THOSE GOD CHOOSES, HE CHANGES (v. 6-10)

Evidences of a changed life: God gives you -

A. A Life Worth Copying (v. 6-7)

V. 6

"Followers" = imitators or mimickers.

They copied Paul, Silas and Timothy, and ultimately the Lord (v. 6), then became examples themselves (v. 7) for others to copy or pattern their lives after.

There is nothing wrong with following the Godly virtues in someone's life as long as you are copying that which makes them Christ-like, not their own personal idiosyncracies.

I Cor. 11;1 - "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

We are to show others:
1)a "pattern of good works" (Tit. 2:7)
2)a faith worth following - follow the faith of your pastor (Heb. 13:7)

Heb. 6:12 - "That ye be not slothful, but followers of then who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

"Much affliction" = when God radically changes a life, that is intimidating. A believer's life will anger many friends and relatives.

"No doubt many lost their jobs because of their new faith. Just as the Jewish unbelievers persecuted the believers in Judea, so the Gentile unbelievers persecuted the Thessalonian believers (2:14-16). Faith is always tested, and persecution is one of the tests (Mt. 13:21; II Tim. 3:12)." (Wiersbe, p. 28).

--When you welcome God's Word when undergoing trouble (pressure) for it - you are worth following.

--When you welcome God's Word with a Holy Spirit-inspired joy - you are worth taking note of.

Only a changed man will receive God's Word this way.

Just as a newborn baby needs a family, a newborn Christian needs the family of believers - a local church and the leaders there.
V. 7

ILLUS: of how (in the printing trade) you go to a good original to copy from (to reproduce).

NOTE: These Thes. believers were not merely examples to the lost, but examples to the saved! And this is much harder to be.

Before you were saved, what did you have that was really worth copying?

Did you have love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, meekness, etc.?

God has saved men whose lives were wastes, but now are profitable. They were shameful, but now are shining; disgraceful, but now are delightful; they were losers, but now are leaders.

B. A Faith Worth Sharing (v. 8)

V. 8

The Thessalonians were both "receivers" (the Word came to them, 1:5) and "transmitters" (the Word went out from them, v. 8) (Wiersbe, p. 29)

"Sounded out" - The word suggests an echoing like thunder or sounding out as a trumpet. NOTE: They were not "tooting their own horn" either (Wiersbe, p. 29), but the "Word of the Lord."

Perfect tense - shows continuing results. The word is still echoing.

Not a shy, timid witness!

God can mightily use your testimony!

Macedonia - northern province of Greece

Achaia - Southern province of Greece

The Word went even beyond this! (II Thes. 3:1 - "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified even as it is with you"

After I got saved, God gave me something worth talking about.

NOTE: Election does not remove your responsibility to witness. Some say: "God will save those He wants to save; He doesn't need my help."

I'm glad the man who brought me the gospel didn't feel that way.

C. A God Worth Serving (v. 9)

V. 9

"Shew of us" = are reporting about us.

What a blessing it is to a preacher's heart to see changed lives.
--360 changed lives!

Repentance is always negative and positive. Turning from and turning to. You don't have salvation unless you have both!

The living God is not merely one who is alive, but one who gives life.

"Living" - "Christians are 'children of the living God' (Ro. 9:26). Their bodies are the 'temples of the living God' (II Cor. 6:16, indwelt by the 'Spirit of the living God' (II Cor. 3:3). The church is 'the church of the living God' (I Tim. 3:15), and for His church, God is preparing 'the city of the living God' (Heb. 12:22). The living God has given us a living hope by raising His Son Jesus Christ from the dead." (Wiersbe, p. 31)

"True" = genuine, real
as opposed to false idols.

Idolatry - cp. Ps. 115.

Everyone has a god!

If it is not something tangible, it is an "idol in your heart"

For some their god is money (materialism)
For some their god is themselves (humanism)

Anything other than "the God" (def. article in Greek) is a vain, worthless, hollow idol which cannot speak, hear or do anything.

Contrary to God who is "living"!

Our God is worth serving!

"Serve" = lit. to become a totally devoted slave to (a bond slave)

D. A Savior Worth Waiting For (V. 10)

"To wait" = to expectantly wait for; to anticipate continually His arrival.

Why is our Savior worth waiting for? He is going to save (rescue) us "out of" ( ) the coming anger ("wrath") of God in the Tribulation.

"Delivered" = present tense - jesus is the one who is rescuing us from the great danger ahead
(SEE I Th. 5:9)

V. 10

Just as God raised Christ from (out of) the dead, Christ is going to rescue us from (out of) the coming Tribulation.

Rev. 3:10-11a - "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold I come quickly."

Upon what basis should we wait for Christ? On the basis that He is alive today.

"The Christian's hope of the return of Christ is rooted in the fact that He was raised from the dead" (Ryrie).

CONCLUSION:

You can be sure that God chose you!

How do you know? 2 major evidences:

1. Those God chooses, He convicts

2. Those God chooses, He changes

God gives you:

--a life worth copying
--a faith worth sharing
--a God worth serving
--a Savior worth waiting for

THE MODEL DISCIPLE MAKER

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

10-1-2025

*** Follow the model disciple maker!**

We must have the characteristics that Paul had in his making of disciples.

3 Qualities (characteristics):

I. YOU NEED THE QUALITY OF AN HONEST STEWARD (v. 2-5)
(Paul's Motive)

An Honest Steward:

A. Tells The Truth With Boldness (V. 2)

An Honest Steward:

B. Tells The Truth With Right Motives (To Please God) (V. 3-4)

An Honest Steward:

C. Tells The Truth With Sincerity (V. 5)

II. YOU NEED THE QUALITY OF A GENTLE MOTHER (v. 6-9)
(Paul's Manner)

A. A Gentle Mother Is Not Burdensome (V. 6)

B. A Gentle Mother Shows Warm Affection (V. 7)

C. A Gentle Mother Shows Sacrificial Love (V. 8-9)

III. YOU NEED THE QUALITY OF A CONCERNED FATHER (V. 10-12)
(Paul's Method)

A. A Concerned Father Is Godly In His Walk (V. 10)
(He Sets The Proper Example)

B. A Concerned Father Is Serious In His Words (V. 11-12)
Be balanced with:
1. Exhortation (to affect the intellect)
2. Comfort (to affect the emotion)
3. Insistence (to affect the will)

THE MODEL DISCIPLE MAKER

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

10-1-2025

*** Follow the model disciple maker!**

We must have the characteristics that Paul had in his making of disciples.

3 Qualities (characteristics):

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(Paul's Motive)

An Honest Steward:
A. Tells The Truth With _____ (V. 2)

An Honest Steward:
B. Tells The Truth With Right (To Please God) (V. 3-4)

An Honest Steward:
C. Tells The Truth With _____ (V. 5)

II. YOU NEED THE QUALITY OF A GENTLE (v. 6-9)
(Paul's Manner)

A. A Gentle Mother Is Not (V. 6)

B. A Gentle Mother Shows Warm _____ (V. 7)

C. A Gentle Mother Shows Sacrificial (V. 8-9)

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(He Sets The Proper Example)

B. A Concerned Father Is Serious In His _____ (V. 11-12)
Be balanced with:
1. _____ (to affect the intellect)
2. _____ (to affect the emotion)
3. _____ (to affect the will)

THE MODEL DISCIPLE MAKER

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

10-1-2025

INTRODUCTION:

Example of people who lack balance in their personalities. Some are rough (no compassion). Some are soft like sponges (no backbone). Some are strictly business-oriented.

Moses was meek, yet stern. David was tender-hearted, yet had firm convictions.

Jesus was perfectly balanced in His personality.

1) He was trustworthy in carrying out His Father's will. He would do His task, and nothing would interfere.

2) He was gentle when John lay on His bosom, when He dealt with the woman at the well.

3) He was stern when He turned over the money changers' tables and when He rebuked the Pharisees.

Paul said: "I will become all things to all men..."

2:1

"In vain" = hollow, empty. Paul is saying, "You know that when we came to you it was not <u>without results</u>. It was not a waste of time.

Paul, Timothy, and Silas had an effective ministry not only because of what they said, but because of what they were (their sincere character) and how they said it (their balanced personality).

We all want <u>effectiveness</u> in ministry. We don't want to labor in vain.

*** Follow the model disciple maker!**
We must have the characteristics that Paul had in his making of disciples.

(To influence others for God, you need a <u>Godly balance</u> in the way you deal with people)

(To be effective in your evangelism and discipleship, you must have the qualities that Paul had)

3 Qualities (characteristics):

1. Honest Steward (v. 2-5)
2. Gentle Mother (v. 6-9)
3. Concerned Father (v. 10-12)

A steward is duty oriented. His only concern is getting the job done right (ethically and honestly)

A mother is care oriented. She is careful how she treats people (particularly her children).

A father is training/discipline oriented. He is concerned about what he does, what he does with his children.

I. YOU NEED THE QUALITY OF AN HONEST STEWARD (v. 2-5)

(Paul's Motive)

The picture of "steward" comes from the words "put in trust" (v. 4)

A steward is one who is put in trust (in charge) with something. He owns nothing, but manages what belongs to His master (EX: Joseph, Gen. 39:1-6).

EX: Someone entrusted me recently with their car keys, house keys, money, etc., when they went into the hospital.

A steward is task-oriented. He has a job to do and he does it.

An Honest Steward:

A. TELLS THE TRUTH WITH BOLDNESS (V. 2)

V. 2

How do you know a man's message is real, sincere, honest?

When he can boldly declare it while undergoing opposition.

"Shamefully entreated" = to be treated like dirt, garbage; to be abused and insulted.

They were accused of "exceedingly troubling" the city of Philippi (Acts 16:20).

They were accused of teaching heresy; of teaching an anti-Roman government propaganda (16:21).

They were stripped naked and whipped in front of a multitude of people (16:22), and then were chained up in the Philippian jail (in the inner cell) (16:23-24).

All this was for doing right!

Yet this did not stop them from going into Thessalonica and preaching.

As stewards we have no choice but to guard and invest the Gospel for our Savior.

Our boldness (courage, liberty) to speak the Gospel does not come from ourselves. We are "bold in our God!"

"Contention" = Gk. (agony) Intense, agonizing effort

"Contention" = an athletic term describing a contest (cp. Phil. 1:30). Dedication (a spirit that won't quit) is necessary.

As stewards of the mystery of God (I Cor. 4:1). They were faithful!

An Honest Steward:

B. TELLS THE TRUTH WITH RIGHT MOTIVES (to please God) (v. 3-4)

V. 3

"Exhortation" - the word was used to encourage soldiers before going into battle and it was said that "encouragement" was necessary for hired soldiers, but for those who fight for life and country, no exhortation is required (Milligan)

Paul defends himself against charges that some made against him. When you do right people will accuse you falsely.

"Deceit" = to lead astray; lead into error

"Uncleanness" = impure (motives)

"Guile" = trickery. A bait or trap (any form of trick or strategy to capture someone)

"Guile" - describes the baiting of a hook. Paul didn't trap people into

getting saved.
ILLUS: of a clever salesman who traps someone into buying his product. Spiritual witnessing is not "Christian salesmanship."

"Salvation does not lie at the end of a clever argument or a subtle presentation. It is the result of God's Word and the power of the Holy Spirit (1:5; 2:13) (Wiersbe, p. 38).

The cultists are deceived and deceivers.

The New Age movement is loaded with deception.

V. 4

"Allowed" = to approve after testing.

ILLUS: Tests required before you can be hired for certain jobs.

Paul passed the tests that God gave and so God entrusted him with a great responsibility.

God has put you "in trust" with your Bibles, salvation, family, etc. How faithful are you?

The message of the Gospel is a treasure God has entrusted to us. We must not bury this treasure, but invest it for "spiritual dividends" (Wiersbe, p. 36).

You can please men with <u>externals</u>. But you can only please God if He approves of your <u>heart</u>.

An Honest Steward:

C. TELLS THE TRUTH WITH <u>SINCERITY</u> (V. 5)

V. 5

"Flattery" = slick eloquence, to persuade by insincere speech.

When you give the Gospel, don't <u>butter up</u> the person. Don't ever lie and tell people something about themselves that you really don't mean. Be sincere!

Don't stoop to use gimmicks. Be straight-forward with people. They will appreciate you for it!

I don't mean to be rude and crude, but be honest in a loving way.

David hated flattery (Ps. 12:2).

"A flatterer is one who manipulates, rather than communicates (Wiersbe, p. 39)

Don't appeal to a person's ego (Pride) but to their will.

"A cloak of coveteousness" = an overcoat that hides greed on the inside. A cover-up (pretext) to hide selfishness.

Some people are really good at covering up selfishness.

Be sincere! Be honest with people.

Honesty is not the best policy - it is the only policy for the Christian.

"God is witness" - when you can call on God to back up (defend) your heart motive, you know you are sincere.

"Cloak" - to put on something for appearance with a design to cover up. An outward show to hide internal selfishness.

Paul is saying: What you saw on the outside is what was in the inside.

Paul was not two-faced.

II. YOU NEED THE QUALITY OF A GENTLE MOTHER (v. 6-9)

(Paul's Manner)

The picture of a "mother" comes from v. 7.

A. A GENTLE MOTHER IS NOT BURDENSOME (V. 6)

V. 6

A good mother doesn't add burdens on her children; she lifts them off.

ILLUS: of parents who demand that their children wait on them hand and foot. Parents are to be honored, but anyone who has to demand honor is not worthy of it.

Paul didn't seek glory of men by saying: "I am the Apostle Paul, you are to serve me hand and foot.

(NOTE: The total contrast between Paul and the R.C.C. pope)

Paul was not a "hard-nosed", demanding, insistent that he gets everything his way on a silver platter.

As an apostle, he had the authority backing him up to make demands upon the believers (EX: provide financially for him).

B. A GENTLE MOTHER SHOWS WARM AFFECTION (V. 7)

V. 7

"But (in contrast to being burdensome) we were gentle"

When children want affection, who do they usually call for? "Mama"

Why? Mothers are softer, more tender. Not rough and abrupt like men (in general).

Men, we should have this quality of gentleness. Our Lord Jesus was (and is).

"Nurse" = nursing mother (breast-feeding mother)

"Cherisheth" = warms. In Dt. 22:6, it is used of a bird warming her eggs.

C. A GENTLE MOTHER SHOWS SACRIFICIAL LOVE (V. 8-9)

V. 8

"Affectionately desirous" = to feel a deep longing for someone. The word was used on a grave inscription describing the parents' sad yearning for their dead child. A deep affection.

EX: The feelings David had for his friend Jonathan

EX: The love of David who cried, "Oh Absolum, my son, my son Absolum, would to God I had died for thee."

In the last days people will be without natural affection (II Tim. 3)

"The love of many will wax cold."

But in Jesus we have a haven of rest! And in each other we should find the same thing.

"Imparted" = share with someone.

A nursing mother imparts her own life into her child. "You cannot be a nursing mother and turn your baby over to someone else. That baby must be in your arms, next to your heart."

The nursing mother eats the food, and it is transformed into milk for the baby. The mature Christian feeds on the Word of God and then shares its nourishment with the younger believers so they can grow (I Pet. 2:1-3).

A nursing baby can become ill through reaction to something the mother has eaten. The Christian who is feeding others must be careful not to feed on the wrong things himself (Wiersbe, p. 40).

"Souls" = lives. Sharing the Gospel is one thing, sharing your life is another. Sometimes you must share your life before someone will accept your Gospel.

"Because you were dear unto us" = lit. "because you became our own beloved."

Paul did not turn his converts over to babysitters; he made sacrifices for

them himself (Wiersbe, p. 39).

V. 9

EX: of a hard-working mother who sacrifices sleep, time, energy, etc., for the benefit of her children (cp. Prov. 31).

Now Paul gives proof that he wanted to share more than words.

He put his life into these people.

"Labor" = exhausting toil, sweat

"Travail" = painful, troublesome work (the kind of work that went against the flesh)

The ministry is worth all of the effort we put into it.

So as to not be accused of ministering for money (v. 5), Paul made tents while also ministering the Word (Acts 20:31).

III. YOU NEED THE QUALITY OF A CONCERNED FATHER (V. 10-12)

(Paul's Method)

The picture of "father" comes from v. 11.

A. A CONCERNED FATHER IS GODLY IN HIS WALK (V. 10)

(He sets the proper example)

V. 10

"Holily" = Paul fulfilled his duties with piety.

"Justly" = upright character (do right!)

"Unblamably" = they could not find fault in his character.

"Among you that believe" - Sometimes we may tend to watch ourselves around the lost so as not to offend them, but let our guard down among our brothers and sisters in Christ, thinking: "They understand."

Family should know you more closely, and they will. Don't live one way for the outside word and another way in front of your family (church).

B. A CONCERNED FATHER IS SERIOUS IN HIS WORDS (V. 11-12)

V. 11

Paul viewed himself as a Father to those he led to Christ (I Cor. 4:15; II Tim. 1:2).

Be balanced with:

1. Exhortation (to affect the intellect)

   V. 11

   "Exhorted" = - used of the Holy Spirit (the Comforter), Who would guide the disciples "into all truth."

2. Comfort (to affect the emotion)

   "Comforted" = to encourage, cheer up. (EX: You can do it! a positive attitude)

   Children get discouraged easily.

3. Insistence (to affect the will)

   "Charged" = to insist upon a certain attitude or behavior by giving proof, evidence, testimony.

EX: You must live your life this way because I know what will happen if you don't.

Paul used his personal experience with the Lord as an encouragement.

"Every one of you" = each one. Paul had a one-on-one relationship with the believers, like a father should to his children.

V. 12

Every child needs to learn how to walk. This was Paul's goal (aim, purpose) in teaching new converts.

You should not be satisfied for anything less than for yourself and others

to have a walk (lifestyle) that would be worthy of (match or be equal to) the character that God expects.

CONCLUSION:

No one likes someone who shoves the Gospel down their throat all the time with sternness.

On the other hand, no one respects a softy who will tell you whatever you want to hear.

We need to be balanced Christians in dealing with people.

1.You need the quality of an honest steward
2.You need the quality of a gentle mother
3.You need the quality of a concerned father

Just as children need their parents to have the balance of consistent honesty, loving gentleness, and a concern for discipline, those you minister to (especially new believers) will need the same thing. Balance!

"GOD'S WORD WORKS"



1 Thessalonians 2:13-16
10-15-2025

INTRODUCTION:

**** You need to see that <u>God's Word really does work</u>! (v. 13d)***

Examine from vv. 13-16 two things about God's Word:

Examine:

I. THE <u>WAY</u> THAT GOD'S WORD WORKS (v. 13)
(The <u>Formula</u> for God's Word to Work)

A. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS <u>HEARD</u> (v. 13a)

Hindrances to hearing the Word:
1. preoccupation with other things
2. unconfessed sin
3. a reluctance to obey it

B. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS <u>ACCEPTED</u> (v. 13b)

Hindrances to really accepting the Word: (see Mt. 13:19-23)
1) Refusal to understand it (hard-hearted - v. 19)
2) Refusal to let it sink in deep (faint-hearted - v. 20, 21)
3) Preoccupation with worldliness (half-hearted - v. 22)

C. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS <u>BELIEVED TO BE FROM GOD</u> (v. 13c)

Examine:

II. THE <u>PROOF</u> THAT GOD'S WORD WORKS (v. 14-16)
(The <u>Evidence</u> that God's Word is at Work)

A. IT <u>CHANGES LIVES</u> (v. 14)
(If it didn't work, it couldn't change lives)

B. IT <u>IS OPPOSED</u> (v. 15-16)
(If it didn't work, it wouldn't be opposed)

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I. THE _____ THAT GOD'S WORD WORKS (v. 13)
(The _____ for God's Word to Work)

A. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS _____ (v. 13a)

Hindrances to hearing the Word:
1. _____with other things
2. unconfessed _____
3. a reluctance to _____it

B. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS _____ (v. 13b)

Hindrances to really accepting the Word: (see Mt. 13:19-23)
1) Refusal to _____ (hard-hearted - v. 19)
2) Refusal to let it _____ (faint-hearted - v. 20, 21)
3) Preoccupation with _____ (half-hearted - v. 22)

C. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS _____<u>TO BE</u>_____ (v. 13c)

Examine:

II. THE _____ THAT GOD'S WORD WORKS (v. 14-16)
(The _____ that God's Word is at Work)

A. IT _____ (v. 14)
(If it didn't work, it couldn't change lives)

B. IT <u>IS</u>_____ (v. 15-16)
(If it didn't work, it wouldn't be opposed)

"GOD'S WORD WORKS"

1 Thessalonians 2:13-16
10-15-2025

INTRODUCTION:

When it comes to machinery (automobiles, printing presses, etc.), I'm not so concerned about how it looks. My concern is: "Does it work?"

I am pragmatic when it comes to some things. If something is good, if it is real, it will work!

We hold in our hands today something that works! (The Bible)

"Effectively worketh" = - we get our Eng. word "energy" from it. It means to work with powerful energy, to operate with productiveness.

We should all desire God to use His Word in our lives and in the lives of others. To change us, mold us, revolutionalize us.

His Word is able!

The Bible is not just a book -- it's God's Word and its work is effective!

- It's a Mirror (it reflects the true condition of man)
- It's a Seed (it grows in your life and produces fruit)
- It's Water (it washes and cleanses)
- It's a Lamp (it shows the way)
- It's a Sword (it pierces the heart of man, bringing conviction)
- It's Nourishing Food (it is your milk, meat, bread, and honey)
- It's a Hammer (it can build you up)
- It's a Fire (it convicts, purifies, burning away the dross in your life)

And it is worth more than money!
It meant more to the Psalmist than "riches" (119:14), "thousands of gold and silver" (v. 72), and "fine gold" (v. 127).

The Bible is so powerful that it ought to have a warning sign on it, saying: "This Book is habit-forming. Regular use causes loss of anxiety (fear) and a decreased appetite for lying, lusting, cheating, stealing, and hating. You will notice the following symptoms: Increased sensations of love, peace, joy, compassion, faith, and courage."

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(The <u>Formula</u> for God's Word to Work)

A. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS <u>HEARD</u> (v. 13a)

Over 6 billion people in the world and most have never heard!

"How shall they hear without a preacher?..." (Ro. 10:14)

"Faith cometh by hearing..." (Ro. 10:17)

Our responsibility is to get the word out so that people can <u>hear</u> it! It's up to God to save them.

God's Word is like a weapon (The Sword of the Spirit). It is only of use when put into action.

The Bible isn't to be merely admired and treated like a relic. It is to be proclaimed, and listened to.

Sometimes people can become calloused so that you hear words (sound) from the pulpit, but you don't hear the <u>Word</u>.

Make every effort to stay alert and be open to God's Word.

1) Treat the Bible with <u>respect</u>
(don't throw it around, or let it collect dust)
It's God's Word!

2) Read it <u>carefully</u> - It's God's Word!

3) Listen to it <u>attentively</u> - It's God's Word!

Hindrances to hearing the Word:

1. preoccupation with other things
2. unconfessed sin
3. a reluctance to obey it

B. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS ACCEPTED (v. 13b)

"Received" = a hospitality word. It is the usual word for the reception of a guest.

The word means: to welcome, to willingly accept, to take to yourself.

In order for God's Word to benefit you, you must embrace it. You must take it into your life.

EX: Medicine does you no good unless you take it. The same with the Word.

The Thess. believers didn't just hear it - they accepted it!

Many are willing to hear but not accept.

We are good at hearing for others, and accepting the Word as it applies to others. But we will answer to God for what we did with the Word ourselves.

"To hear" = is to listen with the ear

"to receive" = is to listen with the heart

Hindrances to really accepting the Word:
(see Mt. 13:19-23)

1) Refusal to understand it (hard-hearted - v. 19)
2) Refusal to let it sink in deep (faint-hearted - v. 20, 21)
3) Preoccupation with worldliness (half-hearted - v. 22)

NOTE: V. 23 - the one with a tender heart obeys the Word (whole-hearted)

C. IT CAN ONLY WORK IF IT IS <u>BELIEVED TO BE FROM GOD</u>
(v. 13c)

It is amazing to think that we hold in our hands the actual Word of God! When you think about it, what a privilege it is to open up the Word of God. To gather together and be exhorted from the Truth!

When you sit down and read the Word, remind yourself: "This is from God!"

When you come to church and listen to the Word, remind yourself: "This is from God!"

Why isn't God's Word working in your heart? Why a lack of desire to read it?
--You are not really believing it is actually God's Word.

I, with Paul, can thank God for those of you who (when I preach and teach God's Word) humbly accept it as God's message.

When someone says: "Good message," our reply is: "Well, praise God - it's His Word!"

I'm simply passing on God's message.

As preachers, teachers, witnesses:
--we are His instruments using His Word
--We are His ambassadors proclaiming His message
--we are in His army bearing His Sword (the Word of God)

Cp. 1:5

Paul could preach with power, profound conviction, and with certainty (conviction) because what he said was not of man's devising.

Ways Satan gets people to deny God's Word--his lies are as follows:

1. The Bible was written by men (II Tim. 3:15, 16)
2. The Bible cannot be understood (it's not for you) (II Cor. 2:10-16)
3. Don't accept what is being taught - that's just Pastor's opinion/interpretation.

Sinful human nature tends to reject that which goes contrary to our presupposed beliefs or lifestyle.

I'm not saying that you should not examine the Scriptures to see whether what I'm saying is true or not; we should be like the Bereans (Acts 17:11). The Bible is our only authority, not the person proclaiming it.

The way a Christian treats his Bible shows how he regards Jesus Christ.
(The Bible is an extension of Jesus Christ)

He is the living Word (Jn. 1:1, 14), and the Bible is the written Word.

Both are called Bread (Jn. 6:48; Mt. 4:4); Light (Jn. 8:12; Ps. 119:105); and Truth (Jn. 14:6; 17:17).

Jesus Christ is forever the eternal Son of God (Ro. 1:25), and the Word of God will live forever (Ps. 119:89; I Pet. 1:23, 25).
(Wiersbe, p. 48, 49)

Examine:

II. THE PROOF THAT GOD'S WORD WORKS (v. 14-16)

(The Evidence that God's Word is at Work)

V. 14

"For" = introduces the proof (evidence) that God's Word works effectively.

A. IT CHANGES LIVES (v. 14)
(If it didn't work, it couldn't change lives)

You know something works when using it makes a difference (when you see results)-- EX: Marvel Mystery Oil
Downey Fabric Softener

"Became" = passive - lit. were caused (made) to become. The "Word" (v. 13) is the agent that produced this kind of fruit.

The same word that brings us salvation also changes our lives by equipping us with the ability to live for Christ and endure suffering for His sake.

"Followers" = imitators (cp. 1:6)

NOTE: Paul's thought is just like in 1:5-6.

First, the Word comes in power (v. 5)
Then the Word changes a life (v. 6)

We imitate the early Church and our Lord Jesus when we are willing to suffer affliction for the Word of God's sake!

"Followers" = they followed the same pattern that the churches in Judea did, even though they never saw the churches of Judea. The same Holy Spirit that came into the Judeans came into the Thessalonians. It is the Spirit who changes us. He makes us like other believers who live all the way around the world.

"In Judea" - geographically (physically)
"In Christ" - positionally (spiritually)
Only those who are really "in Christ" will suffer for their beliefs.

--Before salvation, you blush to say the name Jesus Christ, much less stand up for it.

--Before salvation, men curse that Name; after salvation, they suffer for it.

"The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation..." (Ro. 1:15-16).

B. IT IS OPPOSED (v. 15-16)
(If it didn't work, it wouldn't be opposed)

V. 14

Most often, those who will oppose you for Christ's Word are those closest to you (EX: relatives, neighbors, etc.)

Jesus said: "A prophet has honor, except in his own country."

V. 15

"Persecuted" = to hunt out

Bill Murray, the son of Madelaine Murray O'Hair, testified that anything that could be so hated and opposed by his mom had to be true.

People don't give their lives to oppose nothing! Satan knows the Word of God is true and it is powerful, so he is doing everything in his power to keep people from it.

If he had his way, he would stop all Bible-preaching churches; he would prohibit Bible's from being circulated.

He denied God's Word to Eve in the Garden (Gn. 3), and he hasn't stopped!

Why did the Jews kill Christ, the prophets, persecuted the Apostles? Why were they not pleasing to God and were contrary to all believers in general?
--Answer: Because they rejected the Word (the Truth).
--"Men love darkness rather than light..."
--Satan blinds the minds (of those who refuse to believe) from the light of the glorious Gospel (II Cor. 4:4-5)

Those who reject the Word, don't want anyone else to hear it either (SEE Acts 13:4-12 - Elymar the sorcerer, who tried to turn Sergius Paulus away from the faith).

V. 16

The unsaved world (inspired by Satan and his host) doesn't mind if Christians speak (EX: on politics, world affairs, etc. -- ex: Phil Donahue show), just so long as our speaking isn't God's Word, just so long as our speaking is not for the purpose that others get saved.

One of the worst sins anyone can commit (the sin that fills the cup full) is the sin of preventing others to trust Christ.

"It would be better that a millstone was tied..."

"Wrath - God's anger has already come in full measure (it's only a matter of time before it is evident).

I wouldn't want to be in the shoes of those who hate God's Word!

"A nation (or a person) can reach a point in opposition to God where return is impossible" (Morris, p. 65).

CONCLUSION:

Examine:

1. The way that God's Word works
   (the formula for God's Word to work)
   --It can only work if it is heard
   --It can only work if it is accepted
   --It can only work if it is believed to be from God

2. The proof that God's Word works
   (the evidence that God's Word is at work)
   --It changes lives
   --It is opposed

Go to your Bible expecting to hear from God!

Go to church expecting to hear from God!

God uses men to deliver His truth to others (EX: Acts 8 & 10), but never forget it is His Truth.

When witnessing, don't stoop to scientific arguments--

--God's Word works!

When you have a problem, don't try man's solutions--

--God's Word works!

When you doubt that "so and so" will ever change his/her ways, don't give up--

--God's Word works!

When you feel discouraged, open God's Word! And get your needs met
--It works!
--It's the answer!

"A HEART FOR NEW BELIEVERS"

1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:13

10-29-2025

*** We need a <u>Heart</u> for New Believers!**

What does it mean to have a heart?

A Heart for New Believers is:

I. A <u>DESIRE</u> FOR THEIR <u>FELLOWSHIP</u> (2:17-18; cp. 3:10, 11)

A Heart for New Believers is:

II. A <u>REJOICING</u> IN THEIR <u>SALVATION</u> (2:19-20; cp. 3:8, 9)

A Heart for New Believers is:

III. A <u>CONCERN</u> FOR THEIR <u>FAITH</u> (3:1-8)

A. BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE <u>STRENGTH</u> THAT THEY NEED (v. 1-2)
(The <u>Stability</u> of Their Faith Should be Our Concern)

B. BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE <u>PRESSURES</u> THEY WILL FACE (v. 3-5)
(The <u>Trial</u> of Their Faith Should be Our Concern)

C. BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE <u>FRUIT</u> THEY SHOULD SHOW (v. 6-8)
(The <u>Evidence</u> of Their Faith Should be Our Concern)

A Heart for New Believers is:

IV. A <u>PRAYER</u> FOR THEIR <u>GROWTH</u> (Full Maturity) (3:9-13)

A. A PRAYER WITH <u>THANKS</u> IN IT (v. 9)

B. A PRAYER WITH <u>FEET</u> IN IT (v. 10-11)

C. A PRAYER WITH <u>FAITH</u> IN IT (v. 12-13)

"A HEART FOR NEW BELIEVERS"

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10-29-2025

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What does it mean to have a heart?

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A Heart for New Believers is:

II. A <u>REJOICING</u> IN THEIR _____ (2:19-20; cp. 3:8, 9)

A Heart for New Believers is:

III. A <u>CONCERN</u> FOR THEIR _____ (3:1-8)

A. BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE _____ THAT THEY NEED (v. 1-2)
(The <u>Stability</u> of Their Faith Should be Our Concern)

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(The <u>Trial</u> of Their Faith Should be Our Concern)

C. BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE _____THEY SHOULD SHOW_(v. 6-8)
(The <u>Evidence</u> of Their Faith Should be Our Concern)

A Heart for New Believers is:

IV. A <u>PRAYER</u> FOR THEIR _____ (Full Maturity) (3:9-13)

A. A PRAYER WITH _____ IN IT (v. 9)

B. A PRAYER WITH _____ IN IT (v. 10-11)

C. A PRAYER WITH _____ IN IT (v. 12-13)

"A HEART FOR NEW BELIEVERS"

1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:13

10-29-2025

INTRODUCTION:

EX: of the need for compassion, a heart for people. People need someone who cares!

"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

Paul was one who cared! He had a heart for believers (especially new converts) (cp. v. 17 - "not in heart"). EX: the necessity of follow-up for new converts.

*** We need a <u>Heart</u> for New Believers!**

What does it mean to have a heart?

A Heart for New Believers is:

I. A <u>DESIRE</u> FOR THEIR <u>FELLOWSHIP</u> (2:17-18; cp. 3:10, 11)

2:17

"<u>Being taken</u>" from you = lit. - "<u>to be taken</u> so that you are left alone like <u>orphans</u>"

Paul viewed himself as their spiritual father and mother (2:7, 11).

ILLUS: of a mother being deprived of her little children. Nothing is more tragic!

Yet we can leave behind little orphans (new converts) and think little or nothing of it.

When you love someone, they may be taken out of your sight, but they are not taken out of your heart (inner thoughts and affections).

Paul and his co-workers fervently endeavored to see those new converts. They longed for them.

"Desire" = strong passion

If we are not careful, we can become clique-ish--where we only talk, fellowship, associate with those we have known for years.

Paul didn't know these Thessalonians for much more than <u>three weeks</u>! ("3 sabbaths" - Acts 17:2). Yet he loved them immensely.

2:18

Paul loved the Thessalonians so much he was willing to risk his life to return.

He loved the Philippians so much he was willing to stay out of heaven in order to encourage them (Phil. 2:22-26).

He said to the Corinthians "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you." (II Cor. 12:15) --Wiersbe (P. 60)

Satan does not want new converts to receive the care they need!

"Hindered" = lit. cut in on. To hinder by blocking the way.

This word was originally used to describe how an army would break up a road to render it impassable to their enemy (like some roads in NYC). It was also used in the athletic sense of cutting in on someone during a race.

A closed door may not always be God's way of saying "No." Sometimes Satan closes them! He hates new converts and does not want their faith to be strengthened. He will do anything to hinder their growth.

ILLUS: how Satan works on those about to get saved:

1) He uses men to turn them away from the faith (ILLUS: Elymar the Sorcerer - Acts 13:4-12)
2) He pulls away the seed (Word) sown in men's hearts (Mk. 4:15)
3) He blinds men to the truth (II Cor. 4:4)

ILLUS: how Satan works on those who get saved:

1) He intimidates them by <u>persecution</u> (Rev. 2:10)

2) He <u>physically afflicts</u> them to discourage service and devotion to God
EX: Job 2:7 - "sore boils"...from head to foot
EX: Paul - II Cor. 11:7 - "a messenger of Satan" gave Paul a thorn in the flesh

** 3) He throws <u>obstacles</u> in the path of believers to hinder or thwart their efforts
EX: Rom. 15:22 - "...I have been much hindered from coming to you."
--Acts 16:16-18 - Hindered prayer
--Eph. 6:16 - Satan throws "fiery darts"
--Dan. 10:13 - He even hindered an angel from coming to Daniel to give him new revelation.

A Heart for New Believers is:

II. A <u>REJOICING</u> IN THEIR <u>SALVATION</u> (2:19-20; cp. 3:8, 9)

2:19

When we get to Heaven, what we should desire above all else is to have brought some trophies (other converts) with us!

HYMN - "Must I go Empty-Handed...Must I meet my Savior so..."

That which will cause us to rejoice should <u>not</u> be: "Wow, I made it!" But rather, "Praise God! Look what I brought with me!"

(NOTE: Paul was not satisfied with just bringing converts with him -- He wanted to present mature, holy disciples! (SEE 3:13; II Cor. 11:2 - "chaste virgins" [God will raise us all up and will present all of us to His Son to be His bride - II Cor. 4:14]).

We rejoice in our salvation - How often do we rejoice when others get saved? Or do we really?

Our source of joy must be outside of ourselves to be real joy!

We will find real pleasure in seeking the well-being of others.

I can tell you right now why you are depressed, miserable, joyless! It is because all of your attention is focused on self. Put it on others!

"Let each esteem others better than themselves!" (Phil. 2:3).

2:20

As your pastor, I can say that <u>you</u> are my glory and joy! When God uses me to build you up, that gives me joy. When you drift away (absent from church), that robs my joy!

A Heart for New Believers is:

III. A CONCERN FOR THEIR FAITH (3:1-8)

Notice the emphasis on faith in this chapter (v. 5, 6, 7, 10)

A. BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE STRENGTH THAT THEY NEED (v. 1-2)
(The Stability of Their Faith Should be Our Concern)

3:1

"Forbear" - endure it; bear it.

Paul is saying, "I was so concerned about you, I was so anxious to hear how you were doing in the Lord that I could not stand it any longer! I had to find out!

3:2

"Establish" - to strengthen by adding extra support.

The word was used of a buttress or a projecting structure of brick or wood that would support and give extra stability to a wall or building so it wouldn't crumble.

"Comfort" = by giving encouragement and exhortation.
- lit. to call alongside

"Concerning" = for the advantage of...your faith

We are "established" in our faith with doctrine! (a new convert needs teaching)

We are "comforted" in our faith with encouragement! (a new convert needs someone who cares, someone to be along his side to exhort!)

One of the worst feelings in the world is loneliness (we know God is always with us--but we need each other).

We can't lead people to Christ and then abandon them! Their faith needs strengthening!

B. BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PRESSURES THEY WILL FACE (v. 3-5)
(The Trial of Their Faith Should be Our Concern)

A new convert needs to know about the various trials (testing pressures) that will come his way. Paul was sure to inform his new converts of this fact.

Paul himself faced pressures after his salvation (Acts 9:16 - "For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake."

It seems like as soon as someone trusts Christ that is when the heat starts coming. That is sometimes when your family turns against you, when your morals are tested, etc.

3:2-3

The stronger your faith, the less likely you are to be drawn away because of pressures that come your way.

"Moved" = to shake someone's faith, or draw someone away from their faith.

Satan uses afflictions (lit. - pressures) to cause us to run away from our faith. God allows it to prove the genuineness of our faith and to strengthen our faith.

3:5

For an unbeliever, Satan's tests (his application of pressure) are enough to scare him out of Christianity and to reveal that his profession was not real.

God promises the believer not to allow us to be tested above that which we are able to bear (I Cor. 10:13).

Paul was concerned that his labor (wearisome toil; work that causes sweat) might have been in vain.

C. BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE FRUIT THEY SHOULD SHOW (v. 6-8)
(The Evidence of Their Faith Should be Our Concern)

3:6

What to look for in a new convert:

Proofs of genuine salvation:
1) Faith - which evidences itself in works
2) Love - they loved the brethren!
They remembered Paul & yearned to see him

3:7

When your focus is on others, you can be going through the furnace yourself (with distress and pressure) and yet be comforted! (because of the faith of others).

3:8

Paul is saying: "Now we are really living since you are standing firm in the Lord."

Real living to Paul was not:
1) Budweiser beer
2) A mansion at Mara Largo
3) business in Tallahassee
4) a Bucs game in Tampa
5) or a camping trip in the Florida Keys

It was the unselfish satisfaction of knowing other believers are sturdy in their faith (walking with the Lord).

What is life to you?

Can you say, "Their faith is my concern"?

It can't be until you are sure about your own faith (get that settled, then focus on others).

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I Jn. 5:4).

A Heart for New Believers is:

IV. A PRAYER FOR THEIR GROWTH (Full Maturity) (3:9-13)

Samuel told Israel: "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you." (I Sam. 12:23)

A. A PRAYER WITH THANKS IN IT (v. 9)

3:9

Paul is saying, "I can't thank God enough! We can't return enough thanks to God for all of the joy He has given us because of how you turned out."

B. A PRAYER WITH FEET IN IT (v. 10-11)

Old saying: "Put feet to your prayers."

Paul was willing to be the answer to his prayer.

He didn't say: "God send someone else..."

EX: We should never pray that God would send forth laborers into His harvest unless we are first willing to go ourselves! (Mt. 9:37, 38)

Sometimes our prayers are unbiblical. I'll go a step further -- sometimes our prayers are sinful!

How dare we pray for God to meet someone's need, when we have the ability to meet it (ILLUS from Bulletin: When Moody heard a group of well-to-do businessmen praying that God would send a needed $1500 to meet a pressing church need, he went into the room and said, "Men, stop asking God to give you the needed money. Any one of you could write a check for this amount right now. Write the check and begin praising God!")

3:10

Paul still was not satisfied with leaving them alone (even after Timothy's report). He was still burdened to perfect their faith.

"Perfect" = to fit together, join together, restore, to repair, to equip.

Word was used: to reconcile political factions; as a surgical term for "setting bones"; for repairing fishing nets (Mk. 1:19)

"Lacking" = missing, shortcoming, a deficiency.
We get our Eng. word: hysterectomy

In all our lives, we need our faith built up. How much more a new convert.

3:11

"Direct" = lit. make straight; remove the obstacles that have been set by Satan.

"Way" = road

God answered this prayer: Paul wrote in II Thess. 1:3, "We are bound to thank God always for you brethren...because that your faith groweth exceedingly."

C. A PRAYER WITH FAITH IN IT (v. 12-13)

Not only must we ask God to help us do what we can do, but we need to trust God to do what we can't do!

Paul depended upon God to increase their love.

3:12

NOTE: Paul prayed for their love to increase. What does this mean?

It means that we cannot manufacture our own love. God must give it to us. God is love! (I Jn. 4:8). We need God to teach us to love (SEE I Th. 4:9, 10 - "...Taught of God...")

Make this a prayer request for yourself and others!

"Abound" = overflow, exceed

Paul didn't merely pray for them to love each other, but that they would really love!

That God would give them more love toward each other and toward the lost.

3:12-13

Your love not only benefits others, it benefits yourself!

1) When you love, it strengthens your heart. You will be so strong that you will endure anything for the benefit of others.

2) When you love, it produces holiness (love fulfills the law. When you love, you won't steal, lie, covet, commit adultery, etc.)

CONCLUSION:

Our church is noted for having a warm friendly spirit.

May we live up to this reputation.

"STAYING CLEAN IN A DIRTY WORLD"

(Sexual Sanctification)
I Thessalonians 4:1-8
11-12-2025

We need to stay clean in a dirty world!
(We need to stay pure in a perverted society)

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF SANCTIFICATION (v. 1-3a)
(God's Plea for You to Stay Clean)

A. IT PLEASES GOD (v. 1)
B. IT IS THE WILL OF GOD (v. 2-3a)

II. THE MEANING OF SANCTIFICATION (v. 3b-6a)
(God's Plan for You to Stay Clean)

A. Sanctification is:
SEPARATING YOURSELF FROM SEXUAL IMMORALITY (v. 3b)

B. Sanctification is:
STRENGTHENING YOURSELF AGAINST SEXUAL IMMORALITY (v. 4-5)

C. Sanctification is:
NOT STEPPING INTO FORBIDDEN TERRITORY (v. 6a)

D. Sanctification is:
NOT STEALING WHAT BELONGS TO SOMEONE ELSE (v. 6a)

III. THE REASONS FOR SANCTIFICATION (v. 6b-8)
(God's Provocation for You to Stay Clean)

A. SEXUAL SIN WILL BE JUDGED BY GOD (v. 6b)
(Look ahead to what you will reap!)

B. SEXUAL SIN IS CONTRARY TO GOD'S PURPOSE FOR SAVING YOU (v. 7)
(Look back at what God did for you!)

C. SEXUAL SIN IS REJECTING (rebellion against) GOD (v. 8)
(Look up at who you are rejecting!)

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I. THE <u>IMPORTANCE</u> OF SANCTIFICATION (v. 1-3a)
(God's _____ for You to Stay Clean)

A. IT _____ GOD (v. 1)
B. IT IS THE _____ OF GOD (v. 2-3a)

II. THE <u>MEANING</u> OF SANCTIFICATION (v. 3b-6a)
(God's _____ for You to Stay Clean)

A. Sanctification is:
_____ YOURSELF FROM SEXUAL IMMORALITY (v. 3b)

B. Sanctification is:
_____ YOURSELF AGAINST SEXUAL IMMORALITY (v. 4-5)

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(Look _____ at who you are rejecting!)

"STAYING CLEAN IN A DIRTY WORLD"

(Sexual Sanctification)
I Thessalonians 4:1-8
11-12-2025

INTRODUCTION

ILLUS: trying to keep my hands clean (free of ink) in a print shop that was dirty.

Quotes & recent statistics about the sexual morality of America.

Our moral standards are being systematically destroyed by Hollywood, modern novels, T.V. magazines, lewd stories, advertising techniques, "Adult" Bookstores, Home Videos and mainly the internet. Every form of perverted sex is promoted as "normal." The odd-balls are those who seek to live satisfied lives and are the married heterosexuals who are content with their spouse.

We need to stay clean in a dirty world!
(We need to stay pure in a perverted society)

Briefly explain verse 3.

Sanctification = to be holy; to be "set apart"

Fornication = Gk. "porneia"

1) Generally, refers to any sexually-oriented immorality -prostitution and harlotry; homosexuality; pornography; incest; masturbation and all other forms of lust.

2) Specifically refers to premarital sex (I Cor. 7:2). it is distinguished from adultery (Gal 5:19; I Cor. 6:9, 18).

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF SANCTIFICATION (v. 1-3a)

(God's Plea for You to Stay Clean)

v. 1

"Furthermore then" introduces the second half of Paul's letter. The first half (chap. 1-3) was personal; the second half is practical. The first part was historical; the second part hortatory.
Paul now will instruct and exhort as a wise father (cp. 2:11).

There is a sense of urgency in Paul's words. This matter of sexual purity is of extreme importance!

"We beseech you, brethren" = as a friend pleading in love to another friend. Personal appeal.

We need each other's support in the matter of our sexual morality in the society we live in.
The world is saying "Fornication and adultery are okay." We must say, "No, it is not!" Keep yourself pure in mind and body.

"We exhort you in the Lord" = we urge you in a manner that deserves your attention. Authoritative appeal.

"By the Lord" = lit. in the Lord. Paul's exhortation was not something he made up. This is the Lord's Word!

The appeal to moral living is based on our union with the Lord (we are one with Christ - I Cor. 6:15-17).

Paul is saying: What I am about to exhort you to do is not something new; we already told you this but will do so again.

This shows the extreme urgency and importance of repetitious teaching on the matter of moral purity. We hear very little today about being pure sexually. Abstinence is a foreign concept to many.

"Ought to walk" - Ought = it is necessary; it is a must - no option! We are morally obligated to live right. It is our duty!

A. IT PLEASES GOD (v. 1)

Contrary to the lost world, we don't "walk" with a view to obtaining the maximum amount of satisfaction for ourselves, but to please our Lord.

If you love the Lord, you will do that which pleases Him.

In the last days, "men will be lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God."

The world seeks to get pleasure; the Christian seeks to give it.

We must conduct our lives in a way that pleases God. Are you more interested in God's pleasure than your own?

"To please God" is the goal of the way we live. (walk)

Our primary goal is not to keep ourselves pure so that:

1) We can offer ourselves pure to our spouse at the wedding altar (though this is a noble and praise-worthy reason) - but to please God.

2) We won't ruin our lives and the lives of others who are watching us - but to please God.

3) We won't get AIDS or other communicable diseases - but to please God!

Joseph said: "how then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9)

Our primary desire in life ought to be to please God.

Is that your desire?

If it is, you will say to yourself:
"I can't look at pornography, I want to please God."
"I can't look at women with lust in my heart, I want to please God."
"I can't read Harlequin romance books, I want to please God."
"I can't commit fornication or adultery, I want to please God."

Paul said that he didn't live to merely please men, but God (v. 2:4)

"Abound more and more" = Paul is not saying that they were committing immorality or that their lives were displeasing to God. As a matter of fact, their lives were pleasing to God (cp. 4:1 in NASV), but he wanted them to keep in growing, keep on pleasing God - to overflow ("abound") or go beyond the pleasure they were already bringing to God.

Don't ever be satisfied with how far you have arrived. Never give up striving for higher levels or moral purity!

Some people seem to think that our goal is to see how close to the world's morals we can get without getting burned.

Our goal should be to stay as far away as possible!

"Can a man take fire into his bosom and not be burned?" (Prov. 6:27)

B. IT IS THE WILL OF GOD (v. 2-3a)

v. 2

"Commandments" = orders. A military term which conveys a tone of authority. When a superior officer gives orders, they must be carried out.

How much more the orders from Christ, our Commander-in-chief! Like Paul, the exhortation I am giving is not just my opinion. It's from the Lord! (cp. v. 8)

Jesus spoke out severely against divorce and adultery (Lk. 16:18); and He stated that thought was as built-worthy as action (Mt. 5:27-29).

Paul gave the newly saved Thessalonians exhortation regarding their sanctification (sexual purity). He knew that new converts needed this instruction! (Preventive and corrective medicine) He was wise enough to know that "their conversion would not automatically undo the moral habits of a lifetime." (Hiebert, p. 166)

v. 3

Paul knew that the temptation for sexual immorality was great in 2 places - Corinth and Thessalonica. Why these two places?

Both cities were geographically, economically and morally like NYC - very loose morals.

Both cities were seaports and had traffic from all points of the world passing through.

With mixed nationalities and mixed religions prevalent, there would also exist mixed moral standards. Confusion in sexual matters was prevalent.

As a matter of fact, Paul is writing to Thess. from Corinth, and no doubt is reminded of the existing perversion daily.

Liberals try to say that the teachings of the N.T. came from (were adaptations from) the society in which Paul, etc., lived. Not true! The Bible's "moral demands stand in stark contrast to the immoral practices of that day." (Hiebert, p. 167)

The world then, like today, regarded all forms of immorality with indifference. They even defended it (like today) as a necessity of nature, like eating and drinking. (if it was a necessity, God would not forbid it)

They got perverted to the point of viewing it as "spiritual" in some religious cults of the day.

No matter how bad the world is, God's will remains the same!

If God's will is that we be sexually pure, then we (as his children and servants) have no choice but to obey.

--No situation ethics - it's God's will! (ILLUS: of woman who committed adultery with the prison guard so that they would free her husband)

--There's nothing to think about or pray about - it's God's will!

If you are involved in fornication (in any manner), you are living outside of God's will for your life (cp. Ro. 12:1-2). God's hand of blessing is not on your life because of: unconfessed sexual immorality, unconfessed wrong thoughts.

Whenever God says "No" to something, Satan comes along and tempts us to wonder why? (EX: Adam & Eve) "You must be missing out on something."

We are not missing anything that is beneficial for us when we are within God's will. Real, lasting pleasure is in God's will! Ps. 16:11 - "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

II. THE MEANING OF SANCTIFICATION (v. 3b-6a)

(God's Plan for You to Stay Clean)

"Sanctification" = is related to the word "holy" and "saint" It means to be "set apart" from something morally evil, unto God.

In verses 3-6, God describes what He means by "sanctification" (v. 3) by using four explanatory infinitives.

A. Sanctification is:
SEPARATING YOURSELF FROM SEXUAL IMMORALITY (v. 3b)

God's plan for our sexual purity is not that we be like "Simeon the Stylite," who in 423 A.D. built a house up on the top of a pole (60 foot high pillar) and never came down; nor that we become a monk at a monastery.

You can keep yourself clean without having to move somewhere to some isolated island. We are in the world but not of it.

"Abstain from" =

1. It takes personal determination - Middle voice. You must "hold yourself off from" or "separate yourself" from fornication.
It's not enough to pray, "God, keep me from it." Although we must be in prayer. Praying “Deliver us from evil” or “Lead us not into temptation” are very important requests.

   However, God has told us to keep ourselves from it. God tells us to flee from fornication (I Cor. 6:18). Run from it! Don't flirt with it! Don't sample it! It will ruin you! Does God ever deny us anything that is good for us? NO!

   You must decide also to keep yourself away from anything that might lead to sexual impurity (whether in thought or action). If premarital sex is wrong, then anything that would lead to it is wrong also (EX: petting). If adultery is wrong, then anything that would lead to it is wrong also (EX: reading wrong materials, developing emotional relationship with secretary, etc.)

2. It takes <u>continual determination</u> - Present tense. Keep on abstaining. We can't rely upon past victory over wrong sexual thoughts, etc., and think the battle is over! We must continually keep ourselves away from it!

Satan may tempt you to take liberties in your sexual life when:

1) Close to marriage
2) You let your guard down (EX: David)
3) You have committed fornication in the past (developed an appetite) When you give in to something, it gets harder to resist the next time. Abstain from all appearance of evil; Stay away from all avenues of temptation.

SEE Prov. 5:1-8 **v. 8 "Remove thy way far from her" (EX: Joseph - Gen. 39:10

SEE Prov. 7:5-27

a. The victim wanders aimlessly into temptation (v. 6a)
b. The huntress uses planned-out tactics
--shock treatment (v. 13)
--spiritual story (v. 14)
--flattery (v. 15) (he is the very one she had to find)
--sensuous appeal (v. 16-18)
--reassurance (v. 19, 20)
c. The kill (v. 22, 23)

***V. 25 - Keep away!

B. Sanctification is:
STRENGTHENING YOURSELF AGAINST SEXUAL IMMORALITY
(v. 4-5)

v. 4

"Every one of you" - Purity is for all in the church. No exceptions. The same moral standards hold for all - not just pastor, deacons, and Sunday school teachers.

Sexual purity requires 2 things:

1. Instruction - "Should know"

   --know your weaknesses (sinful tendencies)
   Know what leads up to your wrong thinking, etc.

   --know God's Word - memorize Scripture dealing with purity and Biblical sexual relationships in marriage.

   NOTE: This knowledge is more than theoretical; it is practical

2. Self-Discipline - "Possess his (own) vessel"
   "Vessel" refers to our physical body (which is also called a "temple" - I Cor. 6:19) Paul speaks about having "this treasure in earthen vessels" (II Cor. 4:7).

   "Possess" = lit. to "gain ownership"; to acquire or obtain something. Hence, to have mastery or control over.

   That which I possess, I am in control over.

   Proverbs tells us it is better for a man to be able to control himself than to be able to conquer a walled city.

   God wants all of us to attain complete control over our bodies ("vessel") (over the wrong way of satisfying fleshly appetites).

The world does not have control (v. 5)

God wants us to know what it means to gain mastery (control) over our bodies.

To gain mastery over our bodies means positively:

1. Keep your body pure for God's use - "Sanctification" = set apart for God. View yourself as "holy unto the Lord" - Zech. 14:20.

   "Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body" (I Cor. 6:13).

   Immorality will zap your interest in godliness. You will lose your appetite for righteousness. Why? You are feeding yourself with a God-substitute.

   a. Covetousness (obsession) is idolatry
   b. You grieve the Spirit
   c. You will lose interest in praying, reading Bible, fellowshipping with God's people, etc.

   God only fills clean (holy) vessels. God only uses clean instruments.

2. View your body as valuable - "Honor"

   In II Tim. 2:21, Paul refers to the man who purges himself from impurity as being a "vessel unto honor."

   "Honor" = that which is valuable (precious). You don't throw away that which is valuable. You protect that which is valuable. You save that which is valuable.

   Your virginity is priceless! Don't throw it away! (like meat to the dogs or pearls to the pigs)

   Determine to save yourself for the one spouse God has for you.

   Sexual immorality cheapens God's design for sex in marriage. That which is common is not valuable. That which everyone has access to is not priceless. EX: Diamonds and gold are valuable. Why? Because diamonds are not a common stone and gold is not a common metal.

   --Pornography degrades women (it does not honor them); Women are viewed as nothing more than an object to satisfy the sexual lusts of perverted people.

   --Pre-marital sex takes the thrill and anticipation out of marriage (it does not honor marriage) Heb. 13:5 - "Marriage is honorable in all and the bed [sex in marriage] undefiled..."

--Pre-marital sex is a sin against your own body (I Cor. 6:18) (it does not honor the body)

You will lose self-respect, respect for others.

v. 5

To gain mastery over our bodies means negatively:

1. Don't satisfy your appetites like the world. "Gentiles" = nations of the world. Non-Christians.

   The world is out of control - "lust of concupiscence" = desires of passion or a passionate lust (desire). Appetites that spring out of a restless, suffering passion.

   Paul is describing a lust out of control; ungovernable; no restraints. The world's lust is like a lion out of a cage, like a raging river with no dam, like a fire out of control (no barriers, no walls, no fences)

   The world says, "If you have an appetite, feed it. If you have a desire, satisfy it. If you have anger, vent it. If you have something to brag about, display it." etc.

   The world says, "Let it out! It's wrong to hold back; do your own thing (right or wrong); have it your way."

   As believers, we are to have fences - not boundaries (restraining walls) that we think up (EX: celibacy of RCC priests) but that God has set up, and revealed in the Scriptures.

Four walls:

--Think right (beware of what you think) (Mt. 5:28; Phil. 4:8) "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

--Do right (beware of how you behave) (Phil. 4:9)

--Dress right (Beware of what you wear - modesty) (I Tim. 2:9)

--Look right (Beware of what you see) (Mt. 5:29)
(cp. Job 31:1 - "Covenant with mine eyes") Prov. 6:25a - "Lust not after her beauty in thine heart"

The world does not know God, nor His word; so therefore they go unrestrained.

We, like the Thessalonians, have no excuse; we know "the living and true God" (1:9).

The Gentiles in Paul's day invented gods that were like the people who made them up - gods of sexual immorality.

NOTE: progression in Rom. 1 -
Willful 1) ignorance 2) idolatry 3) immorality

C. Sanctification is:
NOT STEPPING INTO FORBIDDEN TERRITORY (v. 6a)

V. 6

"Go beyond" = transgress; to exceed the proper limits; to overstep the God-ordained boundaries.

Satan lies to us, saying: "The grass is greener on the other side of the fence." God says: "Eat out of your own orchard." (Prov. 5:15 - "Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.")

God's plan for sexual relations was not limited to propagation, but also for pleasure (to please your spouse - I Cor. 7:3-4).

Your physical relationship in marriage is a reassurance of love and affection.

Pre-marital sex is not love but lust.

It is a physical demonstration of the unity (oneness) of husband and wife (I Cor. 6:16).

So with anyone other than your spouse, it is acting out a lie!

Just as Christ has a unity with his church and no one else (Eph. 5), you are to have a unity with your mate and no one else.

Any other form of sex, other than between husband and wife is a perversion.
A person is outside of God's boundary; In Satan's territory.

D. Sanctification is:
NOT STEALING WHAT BELONGS TO SOMEONE ELSE (v. 6a)

V. 6

"Defraud" = to selfishly take that which belongs to someone else. To cheat or take advantage of someone else; to steal.

Proverbs 9:17-18 says: Stolen waters are sweet, and bread *eaten* in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead *are* there; *and that* her guests *are* in the depths of hell.

When someone has illicit sex with someone they are not married to, they are doing 2 things:

1) You are stealing from that person (robbing virtue; EX: like robbing a piggy bank - money that had been saved for the future and you stole it).

2) You are stealing from the one who will marry that person. The future partner of a person like this should be able to marry a spouse who has been preserved. You are kissing another man's wife! Adultery and fornication are stealing!

   People I used to work with used this perverted logic to try to justify their premarital sex: "You don't buy a car unless you test drive it, do you? You have to try it out" Well my response was: A person is not a car and secondly if a car is used to test drive it ins no longer new. Someone else will get a used car; A demonstration model.

   Do you like buying packages that have been opened and the contents tampered with? Don't defraud someone of what is rightfully theirs.

   Don't even think about it!

   You must think, "This woman belongs to that man. I can't think of stealing that which is his." "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house or wife!" (Ex. 20:17)

III. THE REASONS FOR SANCTIFICATION (v. 6b-8)

(God's Provocation for You to Stay Clean)

Paul gives three serious reasons why we must stay clean (sexually pure):

A. SEXUAL SIN WILL BE JUDGED BY GOD (v. 6b)

(Look ahead to what you will reap!)

V. 6b

"The Lord" = Jesus Christ is the Judge (Jn. 5:22; II Th. 1:7-9) who will avenge/reward you for what you did. Justice will be righteously carried out.

People think they will get away with it. "Fornicators and adulterers God will judge!" (Heb. 13:5)

Judgment is not always immediate!
Ecc 8:11 Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

Your sin may reap the undesirable results of affecting your children, and grandchildren (ex. 2 Samuel 21:1-9)

Not only does sexual sin bring a harvest of misery, guilt and sorrows, but it brings judgment from God. (Lev. 20:10 – The Death penalty for adultery under the old Testament. 2 Peter 2:6 – Sodom is an example.

God teaches us how bad sexual immorality is by sending (allowing) sexually transmitted diseases: There are 23 different infections (including gonorrhea, herpes, venereal diseases,; AIDS etch. God does so to teach us how wrong it is.

Many think they are slick in avoiding these diseases or unwanted pregnancies, but God will judge.

"Of all such" = all forms of fornication (sexual immorality)

"Forewarned" = Paul's warning was not something new.

"Testified" = to "seriously affirm"

"It was a warning intended to penetrate their conscience. `Men's dullness,' says Calvin, `is such that unless they are struck forcefully, they have no sense of the divine

judgment.'" (Hiebert, p. 174)

If God did not spare David the consequences of his sin, what makes us think that we will escape? (God's hatred for idolatrous sexual immorality is seen in Numbers 25:1-9).

Today the catch word is "safe sex."

Do you want to be really safe? Obey God or else!

B. SEXUAL SIN IS <u>CONTRARY</u> TO GOD'S PURPOSE FOR SAVING YOU (v. 7)
(Look <u>back</u> at what God did for you!)

v. 7

"Called" = shows that God took the initiative in pulling us out of darkness of sin into the light of salvation.

Immorality is inconsistent with God's gracious call. It's a slap in the face.

God did not save us to sin!

Our song is not:
"Free from the law, Oh, happy condition,
Now I can sin and still have remission."

Those who practice a lifestyle of sexual immorality will not enter the kingdom of God. (I Cor. 6:9-10; Compare also Galatians 5:19, 21; Ephesians 5:5-6; Revelation 21:8)

God saved us to be like Him - Holy. "Be ye holy, for I am holy."

We are united to Christ and therefore must be clean. (I Cor. 6:15-17)

C. SEXUAL SIN IS REJECTING (rebellion against) GOD
(v. 8)
(Look up at who you are rejecting!)

V. 8

"Despiseth" = reject, set aside.

Some may turn me off and not listen, but it is really God you are rejecting.

"He that despiseth" - present tense. Describes one who is a deliberate, continual rejector.

The world laughs and mocks at moral purity. They are laughing and mocking God.

Some so-called "Christians" would take what I'm saying lightly. God is very serious here!

Why does Paul mention the "Holy Spirit"?

1) The Holy Spirit convicts us that the command to moral purity is from God

2) The Holy Spirit is just that -- holy! Holiness (sanctification) is the emphasis in this context. Because He lives in us, we must not grieve or quench him. Having the Holy Spirit and living in immorality is a contradiction; an inconsistency; Immorality is sin against the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit!

3) The Holy Spirit is our source of victory over the flesh. "Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." This is a promise!

Yield to God today!

- If you have been reading wrong books, confess and forsake that sin;
- If you have been watching that which you know is wrong stop it for Jesus.
- If you have been thinking wrong thoughts (obsessed with evil thoughts) confess that to God and ask His forgiveness and grace.

"SOMETHING YOU NEVER LEARNED IN SCHOOL"

I Thessalonians 4:9-10

1-7-2026

**** You should be "taught of God to love!"***

Why? 2 Reasons:

I. GOD'S LESSON ON LOVE IS <u>PERSONAL</u> (v. 9)
(Private Tutoring)

A. SOME LESSONS CAN ONLY BE LEARNED FROM THE MASTER

B. SOME LESSONS CANNOT BE LEARNED OVER-NIGHT

II. GOD'S LESSON ON LOVE IS <u>PRACTICAL</u> (v. 10)
(Productive Instruction)

A. LOVE TAUGHT BY GOD IS SOMETHING YOU CAN <u>DO</u>
(Not Limited to <u>Theory</u>)

B. LOVE TAUGHT BY GOD IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO <u>CONTINUALLY</u>
(<u>Not</u> Limited in <u>Duration</u> [time])

C. LOVE TAUGHT BY GOD IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO FOR <u>ALL BELIEVERS</u>
(<u>Not</u> Limited in <u>Effectiveness</u> [quantity])

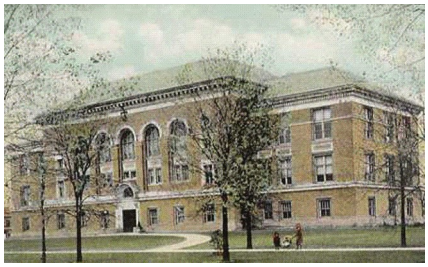
1. Love is to be <u>impartial</u>

2. Love is to be <u>reciprocal</u> (cp. v. 9 "one another")

D. LOVE TAUGHT BY GOD IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO TO <u>EVER-INCREASING LEVELS</u>
(<u>Not</u> Limited in <u>Extent</u> [quality])

"SOMETHING YOU NEVER LEARNED IN SCHOOL"

I Thessalonians 4:9-10
1-7-2026



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_____
(Not Limited in Effectiveness [quantity])

1. Love is to be _____

2. Love is to be _____ (cp. v. 9 "one another")

D. LOVE TAUGHT BY GOD IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO TO _____
_____
(Not Limited in Extent [quality])

"SOMETHING YOU NEVER LEARNED IN SCHOOL"

I Thessalonians 4:9-10

1-7-2026

INTRODUCTION:

Today I want you to see something you never learned in school...

Something you never really understood while a teacher lectured...

Something you will never master by reading a textbook...

That is - How to have and exercise God's Love.

In verse one God calls on us to walk in such a way that we please God. (This forms the theme for what follows)

He then showed us 3 ways to do this:

1) Sexual Purity (v.2-8)
2) Brotherly Love (v.9-10)
3) Working for a living (v. 11-12)

ILLUS: of the benefits of private (or small class) tutoring (intimacy; no distractions; personal concern; more attention; individualized to meet your needs, etc.)

***You should be "taught of God to love!"**

Why? 2 Reasons:

I. GOD'S LESSON ON LOVE IS PERSONAL (v. 9)

(Private Tutoring)

A. SOME LESSONS CAN ONLY BE LEARNED FROM THE MASTER

V. 9

If Paul would have needed to write on this subject, the best he could do is show what love is, what it isn't; whether or not one has it as evidenced in his life.

Some lessons can't be learned by precept alone.

Some lessons take extraordinary instruction; sometimes we need the Master to teach us.

Love is one lesson we must rely upon God to really learn.

"Brotherly love" = "philadelphia" In classical greek it was used for affection

or love for a brother or sister by birth, but in the N.T., it is always used to show the love of "the brethren" (fellow believers).

Christian love does not under-value or disregard natural family ties (God condemns those without natural affection - Ro. 1:31; II Tim. 3:3), but it transcends these limited natural ties and has a wider sphere of affection (Lk. 8:21) (Hiebert, p. 177)

Wherever men get saved, wherever the gospel takes root, a "family feeling" sprouts up among the converts.

a. Love was the mark of the early Church (Acts 4:32) - They were family.

b. Love is a conviction to the lost world "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another."

c. Love is a mark of one's salvation (I Jn. 3:14-16).

Do you ever notice what animals do instinctively? Fish do not attend classes to learn how to swim (although they do swim in schools). Birds by nature flap their wings to fly.

"It is nature that determines action. Because a fish has a fish's nature, it swims; because a hawk has a hawk's nature, it flies. And because a Christian has God's nature (II Pet. 1:4), he loves - because God is love (I Jn. 4:8) (Wiersbe, p. 78)

What may this truth hint at if one professes to know Christ but does not love? Maybe unsaved.

"Taught of God" = this is one word in Greek. Lit. "God-taught" This is the only time it appears in N.T. Paul tied the word "God" to the word "taught" to show that they were indoctrinated by God in the matter of love.

"taught by God" - an intuitive teaching, whereby it comes natural to love.

The word points to a divine relationship between God and believers (who are "born of God" and have His Spirit) whereby we cannot help but love those in our family ("It's the way we are being brought up" - so to speak).

God (our spiritual Father) teaches us like our earthly father should have: "Son, love your brother."

This teaching is God's tutoring your heart by the indwelling Spirit.

We are taught in the school of God, in the classroom of our heart, by the Holy Spirit who is the instructor.

Rom. 5:5 - "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

Without God loving through us, we have no real love! Our love is carnal!

God is anxiously looking for interested students to impart this lesson to.

B. SOME LESSONS CANNOT BE LEARNED OVER-NIGHT

"Are taught" = present tense. He didn't say you were taught, but rather are taught.

The lesson is in process. It's not over yet! It's not a crash course. We don't ever graduate until in heaven, nor receive a diploma yet.

It's a matter that God will need to teach us over and over. Why?

1) It takes time to perfect since we have a sinful old nature that creeps up and battles against the Spirit.

2) It's the most vital command for the N.T. believer. He wants us to really learn what it means to love.

You can measure your spirituality by how much you love (give, help, concern, etc.)

II. GOD'S LESSON ON LOVE IS PRACTICAL (v. 10)

(Productive Instruction)

A. LOVE TAUGHT BY GOD IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO
(Not Limited to Theory)

V. 10

While you can't see from outward observation the teaching process, you can see that the lesson is being learned.

When the subject of Biblical love is really learned (subjectively), it will show itself (objectively).

God does not say: "Indeed you feel...but indeed you do" or "Indeed you know...but indeed you do"

Love is doing! ( )

Some things we learn are not really that valuable because they don't touch life; mere "pie in the sky" useless rhetoric.

We don't want to learn things just to know them, or just to put it on paper, but to put it into life.

God's teaching us to love is not some dry, dusty theory to tickle our brain - it's practical

It's one thing to know what to do; it's another thing to do it. God gives us the "know-how" and the ability.

Love is action; it's giving, meeting needs, sacrificing (I Jn. 3:17-18 - "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.")

You can do without loving; but you can't love without doing!

May God help me to feed and lead V.B.C. because of my love for you. May God help Rocky to be faithful as a deacon out of love; Those who minister in Music...Those who clean the building...Those who repair the building...Those who cook meals and deliver them....etc.

B. LOVE TAUGHT BY GOD IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO CONTINUALLY

(Not Limited in Duration [time])

"Ye do" = Present tense indicating continual or habitual action

In verse 9 "to love one another" is also showing that love is not to be occasional, sporadic, but a continual and habitual practice.

I Cor. 13:13 - the greatest virtue is love. Why? Love will still exist in Heaven, while faith will be replaced by sight, and hope will be replaced by reality.

Some things we learn to do are useful until out-dated. Love is never out-dated.

C. LOVE TAUGHT BY GOD IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO FOR ALL BELIEVERS
(Not Limited in Effectiveness [quantity])

Some things we learn have limited applications. Love fits all!

We are to love one another.

1. Love is to be impartial

It's a love expressed not only to their own church members, but also toward all fellow believers "in all Macedonia" (the Roman province of which Thessalonica was the capital) (Hiebert, p. 179)

"Their expression of love toward other believers was as wide as their opportunities" (Hiebert, p. 179)

We have so many opportunities, but often neglect, overlook, ignore them.

2. Love is to be reciprocal (cp. v. 9 "one another")

"Tertullian (c. 192) quotes the heathen as remarking in amazement, 'Behold how these Christians love one another!'" (Heibert, p. 177)

Does the world say of us, "Behold how Christians love one another"? OR do they say, "Behold how they shove one another"?

Do they see us united or divided?
Do they see us helping or hindering?
supporting or tearing down?
seeking to get or striving to give?

Maybe this shows what school we attended to learn how to love.

D. LOVE TAUGHT BY GOD IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO TO EVER-

INCREASING LEVELS
(Not Limited in Extent [quality])

Some things we learn to do can only be perfected so much and then we get bored.

Love is inexhaustible. We won't "get it down" (perfected) until in Heaven.

NOTE: how Paul previously commended the Thessalonians for their love - 1:3; 3:6

But now he wants them to "increase more and more"

V. 10b

Cp. verse 1 - "abound more and more"

"Increase more and more" = overflow; (to keep on growing; like a living plant must keep growing and producing fruit, we must grow in our love or we will dry up and die in our spiritual walk).

"Beseech" = shows personal concern and sense of urgency.

Never be satisfied; never feel as though you have done enough.

Let's not stop until we reach Heaven!

Go on to new heights, new horizons, maximum level.

We tend to go to a limit in our love. Why?

1) We are not learning from God how to excel.

2) Shy, timid, etc. because we are self-conscious. Self-consciousness is really another word for egotistical pride. We worry about what others will think; we have been taught in our society to be "macho," "cool," etc.

Giving out of love (without selfish motives) is so rare, it's almost extinct!

How does God cause our love to "increase more and more"? "By putting us into circumstances that force us to practice Christian love. Love is the "circulatory system" of the body of Christ, but if our spiritual muscles are not exercised, the circulation is impaired. The difficulties that we believers have with one another are opportunities for us to grow in our love. This explains why Christians who have had the most problems with one another often end up loving one another deeply, much to the amazement of the world." Wiersbe, p. 78-79).

"Increase" - don't be "weary in well-doing"

CONCLUSION:

I. God's lesson on love is personal

II. God's lesson on love is practical

**Will you make it a daily prayer request:

1) God teach me how to love someone that crosses my path today the way you love them (with your love).
--genuine love (unhypocritical, unselfish)
--consistent love (unaffected by circumstances)
--impartial love (no favoritism; no prejudice)

HYMN - "May Christ be seen in me."

"A Biblical Work Ethic"

1 Thessalonians 4:11-12
1-14-2026

It should be your desire to please God by abounding in old-fashioned work!

3 Reasons: We should be Christians who work because of -

1. The Command to work (v. 11)
2. The Benefits of work (v. 11)
3. The Purpose of work (v. 12)

I. THE COMMAND TO WORK (v. 11)

A. IT'S A COMMAND THAT IS NOT UNREASONABLE (or unBiblical)
(Work should be considered an honor)

B. IT'S A COMMAND THAT IS NOT OPTIONAL
(The command to work must not be treated lightly)

II. THE BENEFITS OF WORK (v. 11)

A. IT HELPS YOU SETTLE DOWN
(Work relieves mental, physical, and emotional unrest [relieves excitement & tension])

B. IT KEEPS YOU FROM BEING A BUSYBODY
(Work removes meddlesomeness)

C. IT ALLOWS YOU TO USE WHAT GOD GAVE YOU
(Work replaces idleness)

III. THE PURPOSE OF WORK (v. 12)

You must work so that:
A. YOU UPHOLD A TESTIMONY FOR CHRIST

You must work so that:
B. YOUR NEEDS ARE MET

"A Biblical Work Ethic"

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1-14-2026

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3 Reasons: We should be Christians who work because of -

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2. The Benefits of work (v. 11)
3. The Purpose of work (v. 12)

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III. THE PURPOSE OF WORK (v. 12)

You must work so that:
A. YOU UPHOLD A _____ FOR CHRIST

You must work so that:
B. YOUR _____ ARE MET

“A Biblical Work Ethic”

1 Thessalonians 4:11-12
1-14-2026

INTRODUCTION: Our sinful nature does not want to work. By nature we tend toward ease, leisure, and luxury without earning it. We are afraid of work. This four-letter word is practically a curse word in the 20th century. What do you say when you leave someone? "Don't work too hard!"

America once believed in "earning your bread."

Today America's philosophy is centered around putting in less and less time for more and more money.

Our nation will sooner or later pay for this attitude. No one wants to invest. Everyone wants to take, take, take.

In context (v. 1-2), God is showing us 3 things that please Him:

1. Our sanctification (v. 3-8)
2. Our love (v. 9-10)
3. Our work (v. 11-12)

*** It should be your desire to please God by abounding in old-fashioned work!**

3 Reasons: We should be Christians who work because of -

1. The Command to work (v. 11)
2. The Benefits of work (v. 11)
3. The Purpose of work (v. 12)

I. THE COMMAND TO WORK (v. 11)

The "and" (coordinating conjunction) ties verse 11 to the last sentence in verse 10.

Paul is saying: "We beseech you [not only to abound in love - v. 9-10 - but also] to work!"

it's interesting that Paul abruptly shifts from a command to love (v. 9-10), to a command to work (v. 11-12).

One commentator explains the transition this way: "The new exhortation is added with a view to saving brotherly love from being damaged" (Riggenbach, cited in Hiebert, p. 180).

One way to see that nothing we say or do becomes a stumbling block to anyone else, is to be busy doing what God wants us to do!

Those who cause problems in churches are the "busybody" type, who have too much "free time" on their hands.

A. IT'S A COMMAND THAT IS NOT UNREASONABLE (or unBiblical)
(Work should be considered an honor)

"Study" = lit. to have an affection for honor; to be fond of honor - to be moved into serious action by a love for honor. Those who love the honor of getting an "A" study! They put in the effort. The word in this context means to "strive eagerly" or "make it your ambition." (cp. its use in Ro. 15:20; II Cor. 5:9)

"Seek earnestly to be quiet."

The exhortation: "Study to be quiet" indicates that there was a spirit of restlessness in the young Thess. church (Hiebert, p. 180).

There is reason to believe that this restlessness (not working) came about because they were excited about, and anticipated the imminent return of Christ.

Proof: 1) Following verses deal with return
2) Follow-up letter (II Thess. 3:5-15)

--Proper earthly interests were reduced in their eyes.
--Because they expected Christ to soon appear they neglected their daily duties; while the truth of Christ's return should actually make us more enthusiastic and faithful about our daily duties.

They might have thought: "It is not work the effort to work; it is not honorable; it is not a high ambition to be serious about our jobs---after all, we will leave it all behind soon!"

Therefore, Paul says, "You are to make it your ambition ("study") to work."

Work is not a curse, it is a blessing. God gave Adam work to do in the Garden of Eden before man sinned. After the fall, he would still work, only now it would be "by the sweat of his brow." (cp. Gen. 2:15 and 3:17)

No difference between the secular and the sacred to a Christian.

There is nothing inconsistent between honest toil and personal holiness. All things are to be done as service to Christ (Col. 3:17 - "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

Jesus worked, as a carpenter, before full-time ministry.

While a church planter, Paul worked so the churches would not say he preached for money.

B. IT'S A COMMAND THAT IS NOT OPTIONAL
(The command to work must not be treated lightly)

"Commanded" = a military term; to charge or order. To give instructions that must be carried out.

To not be working (unless totally physically unable) is sin!

II. THE BENEFITS OF WORK (v. 11)

A. IT HELPS YOU SETTLE DOWN
(Work relieves mental, physical, and emotional unrest [excitement; tension])

The infinitive "to be quiet" basically means: "To be at rest". It was used of silence after speech, peace after war, and rest after labor. It was also used of tranquility or peace of mind." (HIebert, p. 182)

"To be quiet" refers to having a calm, peaceful life; it's the opposite of being disorderly and disturbed, which always will lead to your causing disturbances.

Being quiet is tied to working in II Thess. 3:12.
You have an inner peace; because when you are working you are concentrating your energy on something without divided interests.

"Your body, mind, and emotions were designed for hard work, and will break down without it" ("Last Days" Journal, 1986, p. 25). The phrase "Use it or lose it" is true!

EX: of people who don't have a job. They have energy that isn't being used, so they are restless (an honest day's work gives you a good night's sleep), tense, flustered, in a tempest - going this way and then that, but accomplishing nothing!

Work is God's invention. It's good for you!

"Salt from the sweat of work preserves the soul" ("Last Days" p. 27).

I am miserable (depressed, etc.) when I don't get things done.

Man needs a sense of accomplishment.

The happiest people in a church are those that serve the most.

If you want something to get done, give it to someone who is already busy (If you give it to someone who isn't doing anything, chances are he won't get at what you give him to do).

Working hard has great therapeutic value for those of you who are "sick" all the time. Work is really a great healer!

--You get your mind off yourself
--You use muscles and tone them (lose weight)
--You get circulation going
--You have a sense of accomplishment

B. IT KEEPS YOU FROM BEING A BUSYBODY
(Work removes meddlesomeness)

The words "to do your own business" means to be busy with your own job - to be occupied with your own responsibilities. The implication is this: "Be busy, not a busybody!"

"But let none of you suffer...as a busybody in other men's matters" (I Pet. 4:15)

EX: of what would happen if young widows (under 60) were financially provided for by the Church - they would be busybodies, gossips, etc. (I Tim. 5:3-15)

The woman in Prov. 31 is one who can be primarily characterized as a worker!

"Wives are to be keepers (workers) at home" (Titus 2:5)

C. IT ALLOWS YOU TO USE WHAT GOD GAVE YOU
(Work replaces idleness)

"Work" = to labor daily

"With your own hands" = points to 1) manual labor (the Greeks viewed it as degrading, only to be done by slaves) 2) Skilled labor (If God has given you ability, use it; if skill (a trade), use it!

There was much wealth in Thessalonica; and a few wealthy people in the church (Acts 17:4), yet all are exhorted to work!

Ben Franklin said: "No man ere was glorious who was not laborious."

Why did God give us hands and legs if He didn't intend we use them?

Why so much chaos (sin) in our Country?
--Many don't work (instead they sell drugs, sell bodies)
--Many don't work enough (get rich quick schemes)

"Wealth obtained by fraud dwindles, but the one who gathers by labor increases it" (Prov. 13:11)

NOTE: Warn of the danger of being a "workaholic" where work becomes your god (need a balance).

Because America works less and makes more, she like Sodom has more time to sin (EZ. 16:49)

Laziness is sin. Idleness is sin. What good is a car that only runs in neutral all day? In NY it is a car waiting for a thief to drive it away.

So are you if you are idle. Idleness is the Devil's workshop.

How should we work?

1) David says in I Chron. 29:2, "I have prepared with <u>all my might</u> for the house of God"

2) <u>Cheerfully</u> - Col. 3:23 - "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."

3) <u>Be thorough</u> - finish the job

4) Go the <u>extra mile</u> = Do it right! We are ambassadors for Christ! You will really shock the unsaved world! (leave things cleaner when you are finished with them than when you started)

III. THE PURPOSE OF WORK (v. 12)

You must work so that:

A. YOU UPHOLD A TESTIMONY FOR CHRIST

"Walk" = conduct your lives.

"Honestly" = lit. good form. In a way that matches your profession. A "becoming" or "fitting" behavior. So the unsaved don't see an inconsistency in you and thus have an excuse to reject your gospel.

"Them that are without" = those outside of our assembly and those outside of Christ.

God is concerned about those that are without (outside)

Col. 4:5 - Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time."

I Tim. 3:7 - "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without: lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."
(Cp. also I Cor. 5:12-13)

Unbelievers may not comprehend the blessings of the gospel, but they are fully able to see the difference between order and confusion, and between idleness and diligence in professed believers (Hiebert, p. 184).

We can never be indifferent to the impact we produce by our example.

We don't merely discredit ourselves, but we discredit the name of our Lord!

Christians who defend their beliefs but do not pay their bills have no beliefs to defend.

Your boss, neighbor, unsaved parents, etc., may look at your and say: "If Jesus is like you, I want nothing to do with Him."

When you are lazy on the job, you are discrediting the cause of Christ.

When you are dishonest (steal time, extra-long breaks, late, etc.) on the job, you are discrediting the cause of Christ.

When you are unproductive on the job, you are discrediting the cause of

Christ.

When you do a poor job (sloppy work) you are discrediting the cause of Christ.

A Christian should never be known as being slothful, unfaithful, etc. in his job.

A hard worker will win the respect of outsiders.

You must work so that:

B. YOUR NEEDS ARE MET

We are not to be parasites (free-loaders) living off others (using others).

Those who "deliberately impose upon the generosity of others are not living in love" (Hiebert, p. 185).

There are times when we do need each other (EX: Acts 2, 4).

"While believers must always be ready to help others (Gal. 6:2) (as an act of love), believers must also shoulder their own burden (Gal. 6:5)." (Morris, p. 88)

But these times should be the exception not the rule.

We are seeking to give, not get! Eph. 4:28 - "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

--Anyone who can work, should work.
(Public welfare discourages work - if it is to be given, it should only be for the disabled and elderly)

--Anyone who wants to work, will work.

(There is no excuse for not finding a job) I would rather dig ditches than beg.

CONCLUSION:

Are you working hard? Or hardly working?

Jesus said: "I must work..." (Jn. 9:4)

"FAMILY REUNION"

(A Meeting in the Sky)
I Thessalonians 4:13-18
1-21-2026



The reunion we look forward to should change our outlook on life and death!
4 Reasons:

I. The Reunion We Look Forward to is a:
CHEERFUL HOPE (v. 13)
(There will be no tears of sorrow)

II. The Reunion We Look Forward to is a:
CERTAIN HOPE (v. 14)
(It comes with a guarantee)

III. The Reunion We Look Forward to is a:
COMMON HOPE (v. 15-17)
(The whole family is invited)

A. IT'S A SPECIAL REUNION

1. For Honored Participants (those who have died)
2. For Family Only ("In Christ")

B. IT'S A PERSONAL REUNION
("The Lord Himself . . . meet the Lord . . . with the Lord")

C. IT'S A POWERFUL REUNION

1. "Shout"
2. "Voice . . . Trump"
3. Snatched up

D. IT'S A PERMANENT REUNION
("So shall we ever be with the Lord")

IV. The Reunion We Look Forward to is a:
COMFORTING HOPE (v. 18)
(It's something to talk about)

A. PERSONAL ENCOURAGEMENT ("comfort")
B. MUTUAL ENCOURAGEMENT ("one another")
C. SPECIFIC ENCOURAGEMENT ("with these words")

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"FAMILY REUNION"

(A Meeting in the Sky)
I Thessalonians 4:13-18
1-21-2026

INTRODUCTION:

ILLUS: Family & High School reunions. No doubt a sad time to hear what happened to some. And a glad time to see how others are doing. You go to them with mixed emotions.

Today we will learn about a reunion that will bring with it no sorrow, no regrets, no mixed emotions.

ILLUS: Song - "There's going to be a meeting in the air . . ."

The fact of our meeting in the air, our reunion in the skies, should have an impact on your life here and now!

PROPOSITION: **The reunion we look forward to should change our outlook on life and death!**

4 Reasons:

I. The Reunion We Look Forward to is a:
CHEERFUL HOPE (v. 13)
(There will be no tears of sorrow)

V. 13

Paul by saying negatively, "I do not want you to be ignorant" is saying positively, "I want you to know!"

Teaching on the end times was important to Paul. He didn't view eschatalogy as a subject to be avoided.

Paul knew that ignorance concerning any spiritual reality (esp. resurrection of the dead) would be bad for believers (Hiebert, p. 188).

"Asleep" = a euphemism (softer term) describing one who is dead. When you are dead, you have the appearance of sleep.

We use terms to soften the idea of death. Rather than saying, "_____ died" we say "_____" passed away" or "____" went home."

When we bring a cat or dog to the vetinarian, we don't say: "We had our dog/cat killed"; we say: "We had the animal `put to sleep'."

Deut. 31:16a - "And the Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers"
EX: In Old Testament:
"David slept with his fathers" (I Ki. 2:10)
Solomon - I Ki. 11:43
Hezekiah - II Chron. 32:33

In the N.T., this term "sleep" is never used of an unbeliever in death. Only believers.

It is qualified in Verse 14 - "those who sleep in Jesus"

I Cor. 15:15 - "We shall not all sleep..."

EX: Lazarus (Jn. 11:11)
Young Damsel (Lk. 8:52)
Those who arose after Christ's resurrection (Mt. 27:51-53)

Jesus is the "first fruits of them that slept" (I Cor. 15:20)

The word "sleep" indicates 1) the restful effect of death for the child of God (for "to be absent from the body = present with the Lord" - II Cor. 5:8) [NOTE: it does not hint at "soul sleep"]; and 2) it also shows the temporary nature of death (Hiebert, p. 188)

To "sorrow not" -

1) Does not prohibit all sorrow (grief - even Jesus wept Jn. 1:1), but our sorrow is not like the unsaved.

2) Does not mean we won't miss certain saints who move on (graduate) to heaven before us.

Why might the Thess. believers have had sorrow for those who died?

Implications from context:

1. They may have thought that they who died would miss out on our happy reunion in the clouds with Christ.

2. They may have thought that throughout eternity those who died "in Christ" would in some way get the "raw end of the stick" (i.e. that they would be inferior in some way for having not survived until the end)

`

3. They may have thought that they would have to wait until the Millennial Kingdom was over to be resurrected and miss out on reigning with Christ. (Rev. 20:4) Context indicates that the Thess. Problem was not with the fact of the resurrection of the dead. Their problem was that of timing. They wanted to know when!

The pagans such as Sadducees and other philosophers of the day did not have any hope.

Aeschylus in unbelief said: "of a man once dead there is no resurrection."

Theocritus blindly said, "Hopes are among the living; the dead are without hope."

Catullus lamented: "Suns may set and rise again, but we, when once our brief light goes down, must sleep an endless night."

And Lucretius uttered these hopeless words: "No one awakes and arises who has once been overtaken by the chilling end of life."

On a sepulchre found in Thessalonica was this inscription: "After death there is no revival, after the grave no meeting of those who have loved each other on earth." (Hiebert, p. 191)

The world has no hope! Nothing to cling to! Nothing to look forward to!

And by the way, our hope won't disappoint us. We are not clinging to a false sense of needed security. Like the agnostics say.

--What we do have is a hope (confidence) that we will see them again.

--What we do have is a comfort (encouragement) (v. 18) that death does not end it all. (As a matter of fact, it is only the beginning!)

We have a cheerful hope!

II. The Reunion We Look Forward to is a:
CERTAIN HOPE (v. 14)
(It comes with a guarantee)

The word "if" in the greek is a condition of reality or certainty (first class); therefore, it has the idea of "since"

NOTE: It says "Jesus died" (no euphemism to soften his death), yet believers "sleep." Never is the word "sleep" used of Christ's death! Why? He faced the full impact of death as our Sin-bearer. His death brought about the death of death (I Cor. 15:56, 57). Jesus transformed death for believers into sleep that awaits a future awakening (Hiebert, p. 192).
"Sleep in Jesus" = "in" = which literally means "through" or "by means of"

God is teaching us this: Death for the believer is turned into mere sleep through the atoning work of Jesus.

By Jesus' death and resurrection, He disarmed death and removed its sting from those in Him (See Hiebert, p. 194).

It is by means of Jesus that our victory over the grave is guaranteed. Because of what Christ did, we can take comfort; our resurrection is guaranteed because of His.

Why? We are in Him! One with him!

--He is the Head. WE are the body.
The body goes where the Head goes!
--He is the Groom; we are the bride
The bride goes where the Groom goes!

We are bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh (Eph. 5:30). "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit" (I Cor. 6:15)

We are so much one that what He has is ours; what He has done, it's as if we also have done it.
His death for sin was our death to sin (Ro. 6)
His resurrection from the grave was our res. from the grave.
His life is our life. "When Christ who is our life shall appear"
His riches are our riches (Eph. 1:3ff)

The point of the verse is this: When Jesus comes back, the souls of the saints who have previously died, also come with Him because they are also one with Him!

"No longer must the mourners weep
And call departed Christians dead;
For death is hallowed into sleep,
And every grave becomes a bed.
Now once more, Eden's door
Opens stands to mortal eyes!
Now at last, old things past,
Christ is risen! We too shall rise!"
(Hiebert, p. 192)

III. The Reunion We Look Forward to is a: COMMON HOPE (v. 15-17)

(The whole family is invited)

A. IT'S A SPECIAL REUNION

V. 15

"By the word of the Lord" = shows that the Lord spoke these words to Paul (new revelation)

What Paul received to give them was a "mystery" (I Cor. 15:51-54) - i.e. something previously unknown.

The mystery is not the fact of a resurrection (the O.T. saints knew about this). The mystery is that "we shall all" (living and dead) be raptured and changed at the same time.

Paul anticipated Christ to return in His day. He says in first person plural, "We which are alive..."

Paul lived in anticipation of Christ's return.

He knew it was imminent! The time of it, he did not know (cf. Acts 1:7; Mt. 24:36).

But he was still "looking." (Titus 2:11-13).

1. For Honored Participants (those who have died)

"Shall not prevent" = not = - a double negative which means we will in no way go before or precede them.

Paul is saying: "Don't feel sorry for the dead in Christ; they are going up before us who are alive and remain." They even get a "head start!"

"Age before beauty"; "respect for elders".

2. For Family Only ("In Christ")

V. 16

The phrase "in Christ" is used exclusively of Church Age saints.

We will not be here when God pours out His wrath on the earth!

"Shout" = no doubt Jesus will have to qualify who He calls to come up. Because if He merely said, "Come up here" all in the graves (believers and unbelievers) would alike rise!

This invitation is not for all! It's only for family!

B. IT'S A PERSONAL REUNION
("The Lord Himself . . . meet the Lord . . . with the Lord")

The Lord Himself - the word "Himself" is emphatic. The Lord will not send a substitute to come for His bride - He will come Himself! In Person!

"The Lord Himself" - Jesus will rise off of the throne He is seated on (Ro. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1) and will personally come down.

Note: The word “Himself” is the Greek word Autos (which means “the Same”) and NOT the word “Monos” (which means “alone”). This word “autos” allows for Christ to come with His Angels and even utilize Angels in the rescue of His people at the Rapture (Matthew 24:30-31). The word “Himself” here does NOT mean “the Lord ALONE shall descend from Heaven”

Acts 1:11 - "This same Jesus ... shall so come"

V. 17

"To meet" = to get together for a meeting. The word had a technical meaning in Greek society to describe how a visiting dignitary would be met formally by citizens who had left their city to meet him. They then would ceremonially escort this important person back into the city (Best).

In our case, we will meet Christ; then He will escort us to His city.

The clouds will be as it were our "chariot" to carry us to heaven. (Lightfoot)

Jesus will come to bring his bride to where He is (Jn. 14:2-3)

In Heaven, we will experience the judgment seat of Christ (I Cor. 3; II Cor. 5). Then the marriage supper of the lamb (Rev. 19:7), followed by a return to earth for the final battle before the Millennium Kingdom (Rev. 19:11-16).

"Meeting" - see Mt. 25:6. Prepared virgins meet the bridegroom for the marriage (v. 10).

C. IT'S A POWERFUL REUNION

1."Shout"

V. 16

"Shout" = an authoritative loud order. The word was used to denote the cry made by the ship's master to its rowers (Ex: "Row! Row!") or by a military officer to his soldiers (EX: "Men! Stand up, gun on right shoulder, chin up, and march!"). or by a hunter to his hounds ("Come, boy!") or by a charioteer to his horses ("Go! "Giddy up!")

When used to military or naval personnel, it was a battle cry. In most places, it denotes a loud, authoritative cry, often one uttered in a time of great excitement (SEE Rienecker, p. 599).

The world will be busy; Christians will be busy, until that unexpected call comes: "Come up hither!" (EX: Rev. 4:1).

This "shout" comes from the lips of Christ.

Cp. Jn. 5:25 - "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."

EX: Jn. 11:43 - Jesus cried out with a loud voice: "Lazarus, come forth!"

2. "Voice . . . Trump"

Archangel = Jude 9 = Michael

The "voice" of the archangel refers to the "sound" of the trumpet.

God puts a conjuction (meaning "even") between the two phrases to show that the voice (sound) and the trumpet are the same (cp. Rev. 8:13 - "voices of the trumpet"; Rev. 10:7; Rev. 11:15)

Since this trumpet is called the "last trump" (In I Cor. 15:52), some view this as the seventh trumpet in Rev. 11:15. (However, there is no mention of a rapture in Rev. 11:15ff)

Others tie this trump to Mt. 24:31 (however, this verse is describing the angels regathering Israel to Jerusalem in fulfillment of Joel 3:1ff and Ezek. 37:1-14; cp. Mt. 13:30, 38-43).

"Trumpet" - used by Jews in their festivals

3.Snatched up

V. 17

"Caught up" = lit. to snatch up; to seize or carry off by force. to be raptured (a Latin word translating this word).

The word denotes the action of a swoop of a force which cannot be resisted (the verb is passive - God does the snatching of His children!)

The word "then" denotes the speedy following of what happened previous (Reinecker, p. 599).

Right "on the heels" of those who come blasting out of the graves, we will go up!

The words "together with them" are emphatic. Paul's point is this: They are not going up alone; we will be following right after (a matter of fractions of a second).

We are not looking for the undertaker - but the uppertaker!

D. IT'S A PERMANENT REUNION
("So shall we ever be with the Lord")

"And so" [in this (united) manner] shall we ever be with the Lord"

NOTE: Paul does not say "and there" as if the air were the permanent dwelling place. (Frame, cited in Hiebert, p. 203).

The important thing is not the place we will be in, but the One we will be with (Christ).

IV. The Reunion We Look Forward to is a:
<u>COMFORTING HOPE</u> (v. 18)
(It's something to talk about)

A. <u>PERSONAL</u> ENCOURAGEMENT ("comfort")

V. 18

"Comfort" = lit. to call alongside; to encourage. Like one who consoles, hugs, gives encouraging words to one sorrowing over the loss of a loved one.

What comforting words we can give: "_____ is in Heaven, but we will see him again!"

B. <u>MUTUAL</u> ENCOURAGEMENT ("one another")

C. <u>SPECIFIC</u> ENCOURAGEMENT ("with these words")

"With these words" = lit. <u>in</u> these words.

The point is this: Use these very words that I (Paul) gave you. (They are inspired words!)

CONCLUSION:

The Rapture is a comforting truth not only because we will be reunited with our spiritual family, but because we will not be here to experience the wrath of God!

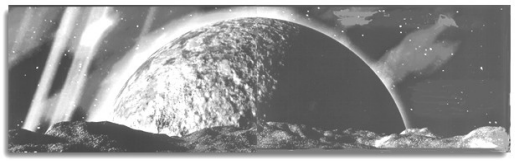
Jesus comes for us like a thief int he night; then sudden destruction falls on the earth. Men will be saying, "Peace and safety" before Christ's return.

EX: Noah and the Flood Mt. 24:37-41 (cp. II Pet. 3:3-7)

EX: Lot and the destruction of Sodom (Lk.4 17:28-37).

"BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!"

I Thessalonians 5:1-3
2-11-2026



**** You must escape the wrath of God before it's too late!***

Why? 2 Reasons:

I. THE WRATH OF GOD WILL FALL AT A TIME WHEN:
THE WORLD WILL NOT _____ IT (v. 1-3a)

A. IT'S AN _____ TIME (v. 1)
(It's a day not marked on the calendar)

B. IT'S AN _____ TIME (v. 2)
(It's a day that comes unannounced)

C. IT'S A "_____" TIME (v. 3a)
(It's a day that comes during a time of false security for the heathen world)

1."Peace"

2."Safety"

II. THE WRATH OF GOD WILL FALL AT A TIME WHEN:
THE WORLD WILL NOT _____ IT (v. 3b)

A. UNBELIEVERS WILL ENTER IT _____

B. UNBELIEVERS WILL FIND _____

"BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!"

I Thessalonians 5:1-3

2-4-2026

**** You must escape the wrath of God before it's too late!***

Why? 2 Reasons:

I. THE WRATH OF GOD WILL FALL AT A TIME WHEN: <u>THE WORLD WILL NOT EXPECT IT</u> (v. 1-3a)

A. IT'S AN <u>UNKNOWN</u> TIME (v. 1)
(It's a day not marked on the calendar)

B. IT'S AN <u>UNEXPECTED TIME</u> (v. 2)
(It's a day that comes unannounced)

C. IT'S A <u>"SECURE"</u> TIME (v. 3a)
(It's a day that comes during a time of false security for the heathen world)

1."Peace"

2."Safety"

II. THE WRATH OF GOD WILL FALL AT A TIME WHEN: <u>THE WORLD WILL NOT ESCAPE IT</u> (v. 3b)

A. UNBELIEVERS WILL ENTER IT <u>QUICKLY</u>

B. UNBELIEVERS WILL FIND <u>NO WAY OUT</u>

"BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!"

I Thessalonians 5:1-3

2-4-2026

INTRODUCTION:

Paul after describing what happens to the "dead in Christ" at His coming, now exhorts those living "in Christ" to be ready for His coming.

READ V. 1-3

Give examples of things we do "too late," things we "put off."

V. 2

"The day of the Lord" = a day belonging to the Lord (Jehovah).

(As opposed to "the time of the Gentiles" or the time of Satan [Rev. 12:12])

The word "Day" can mean a literal 24-hour period (EX Gen. 2:3), or a longer time period (Gen. 2:4)

"The day of the Lord" is a reference to the Great Tribulation
which begins after the Church is delivered (raptured) (I Cor. 1:7-9)

The Day of the Lord - SEE Is. 2:12, 18-22
- v. 12 - a day to destroy the proud
- v. 19 - a day of desperation
- v. 20 - a day of throwing away idols
- v. 21 - a day when God shakes the earth

SEEIs. 13:6-13
- v. 7 - a day of fainting hands and melting hearts
- v. 8 - a day of shocking pain
- v. 10 - a day of signs in the sky
- v. 11 - a day of humbling the proud

Ezekiel 7:19 - a day of no deliverance

SEEJoel 1:15 - a day of destruction

Joel 2:1-6, 11 - a day of torment

Amos 5:18-19 - a day of no escape

Amos 5:20 - a day of darkness

Obad. 15 - a day of judgment on the heathen (cp. Ez. 30:3)

SEE Zeph. 1:14-18 -
v. 14 - a day that comes quickly
v. 15 - a day of wrath etc.
v. 17 - a day of no hope
v. 18 - a day when money will do you no good

*** You must escape the wrath of God before it's too late!**

Why? 2 Reasons:

I. THE WRATH OF GOD WILL FALL AT A TIME WHEN: <u>THE WORLD WILL NOT EXPECT IT</u> (v. 1-3a)

A. IT'S AN <u>UNKNOWN</u> TIME (v. 1)
(It's a day not marked on the calendar)

V. 1

Nearly 20 centuries have come and gone since our Lord gave the promise of His return, and He has no returned yet. This does not mean that God does not keep His promises. No.

It simply means that <u>God does not follow our calendar</u> (EX: I Pet. 3:8). (Wiersbe, p. 98)

No one can "set any fixed date" on his calendar for the second coming. Cults have tried.

"Times and Seasons" - a phrase Jesus used when asked when He would set up His kingdom (Acts 1:7 - And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."

If God had told us what time (the year and day) His Son was coming back, the saints throughout the Church age would have been missing one of the greatest incentives for godly (pure) living (I Jn. 3:3).

If Christ came at the end of the Tribulation, we would know the time of His coming because once the Trib. begins you can count the days before it ends.

B. IT'S AN UNEXPECTED TIME (v. 2)
(It's a day that comes unannounced)

V. 2

Verse 2 is a paradoxical statement: Paul is saying this - "You know perfectly well that we don't know" (the hour of Christ's return)."

"You know accurately, that we don't know accurately."

We do not know the time of Christ's coming, but we do know the certainty of it.

"So cometh" = present tense (rather than future) to give vividness (or show the abiding reality) of His coming in power and glory.

Jesus comes as a "thief." Every reference to his coming as a thief refers not to the rapture, but to His judgment (Lk. 12:39, 21:34; II Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:3, 16:15.).

A thief comes when men are asleep, not when they are alert, awake and watching.

Because the world will be asleep, (during "the night") this proves that those who are awake will not be here. Only the sleepers will be here. We will be gone, delivered before the Flood comes (EX: Mt. 24:37-39) and before the fire falls (Lk. 17:28-30).

C. IT'S A "SECURE" TIME (v. 3a)
(It's a day that comes during a time of false security)

1. "Peace"

V. 3

"They" = unbelievers; in contrast to "Ye brethren" in verse 4.

"Peace and safety" = no feeling of harm. They will be self-deceived into thinking that peace is everywhere and that everything is safe and secure.

God will allow a strong delusion, and they will believe the life of the Anti-christ. (Thes. 2:10-12)

2. "Safety"

The feeling of safety is the result of a feeling of peace. It points to the idea of being unshaken, unmoved or secure from danger.

The word was a law term referring to a "bond" or "security" (MM)

People who are in the tribulation will "feel that everything is safe and secure and see no outward evidence to dispute the feeling" (Hiebert, p. 212).

What will give such a feeling of safety?

1) They will have a strong leader they will trust - the Anti-Christ (Rev. 13:4)

2) They will feel secure from God's interfering with their lifestyles. The world will not fear God or His wrath. The moral conscience of the world (namely, believers) will be gone (raptured).

Because their consciences have been dulled because of the repeated warnings of coming judgment and because they deliberately rejected the love of the truth, they will believe the Devil's lie and feel secure (II Thes. 2:10-12).

There is <u>no</u> security outside of God!

II. THE WRATH OF GOD WILL FALL AT A TIME WHEN: THE WORLD WILL NOT ESCAPE IT (v. 3b)

A. UNBELIEVERS WILL ENTER IT QUICKLY

"Sudden" = emphatic. The world will be caught totally unprepared.

"Destruction" = disaster, ruin. The word is used in the LXX (esp. in the prophets) specifically describing end-time destruction

"Cometh upon" = to stand upon. Destruction like a giant will overwhelm the world

"Cometh upon them" - used of misfortunes which suddenly come crashing down on someone

Destruction is the opposite of deliverance (salvation) which awaits believers (v. 7-10)

Which do you choose?
You must choose now!

Once the day of the Lord begins, it will be too late!

B. UNBELIEVERS WILL FIND NO WAY OUT

"As travail upon a woman with child" = lit. like the birth pain of the one having [a child] in her womb." - a Greek idiom - describing a pregnant woman.

When do the birth pains begin? At the beginning of the Tribulation.

(SEE Mt. 24:3-8, which is parallel to Rev. 6, which begins the tribulation).

**V. 8 - "These are the beginning of sorrows" - lit. birth pains

SEE Is. 13:6-13

Why is the Tribulation likened unto birth pains?

1) It leads to the birth of the Kingdom (when Christ returns to the earth (Mt. 24:30)

2) It describes something that begins suddenly and continues steadily

3) It shows that no one will get out of it until it's over

"Escape" = lit. - "to run (flee) out"

There is no escape; no way out for those will here for the Day of the Lord.

SEE Lk. 21:34-36.

"Not" = double negative ( ) - there is absolutely no way out. By no means will they escape.

No one will escape. There will be an eerie feeling of helplessness. If you enter the day of the Lord you have entered the point of no return!

CONCLUSION:

"BE AWAKE AND READY TO GO!"

1 Thessalonians 5:4-11

2-25-2026

Before the wrath of God falls on an unexpecting world, <u>you must be awake and ready to go!</u>

Remember three facts about God's salvation that will help us to be awake and ready:

I. GOD'S SALVATION <u>HAS</u> DELIVERED US FROM THE <u>STATE</u> OF DARKNESS (V. 4-5) *(Our <u>character</u> - what we <u>are</u>, in contrast to those spiritually asleep)*

II. GOD'S SALVATION <u>SHOULD</u> DELIVER US FROM THE <u>LIFESTYLE</u> OF DARKNESS (V. 6-8) *(Our <u>conduct</u> - what we <u>should be</u>, in contrast to those spiritually asleep)*

A. A Believer Should Be Spiritually <u>Awake</u> (watching, not sleeping - v. 6-7)

B. A Believer Should Be Spiritually <u>Alert</u> (sober, not drunk - v. 6-7)

C. A Believer Should Be Dressed In Spiritually <u>Attire</u> (faith, love, and hope in God - v. 8)

III. GOD'S SALVATION <u>WILL</u> DELIVER US FROM THE <u>JUDGMENT</u> OF DARKNESS (V. 9-10) *(Our <u>confidence</u> - what we <u>will be</u>, in contrast to those spiritually asleep)*

A. We Are Certain Of Deliverance Because Of <u>God's Plan</u> (v. 9)

B. We Are Certain Of Deliverance Because Of <u>Christ's Death</u> (v. 10)

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2-25-2026

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A. A Believer Should Be Spiritually _____(watching, not sleeping - v. 6-7)

B. A Believer Should Be Spiritually _____(sober, not drunk - v. 6-7)

C. A Believer Should Be Dressed In Spiritually _____ (faith, love, and hope in God - v. 8)

III. GOD'S SALVATION <u>WILL</u> DELIVER US FROM THE _____ _____ (V. 9-10) *(Our <u>confidence</u> - what we <u>will be</u>, in contrast to those spiritually asleep)*

A. We Are Certain Of Deliverance Because Of _____ (v. 9)

B. We Are Certain Of Deliverance Because Of _____(v. 10)

CONCLUSION: V. 11

"BE AWAKE AND READY TO GO!"

1 Thessalonians 5:4-11

2-25-2026

INTRODUCTION:

Having described how the wrath of God would fall upon unbelievers at a time when the would not expect it (v. 1-3a), nor escape it (v. 3b), Paul now encourages believers (v. 4-11).

His words positively exhort us to be awake and ready to go!

*** Before the wrath of God falls on an unexpecting world, you must be awake and ready to go!**

Remember three facts about God's salvation that will help us to be awake and ready:

I. GOD'S SALVATION HAS DELIVERED US FROM THE STATE OF DARKNESS (V. 4-5) (Our character - what we are, in contrast to those spiritually asleep)

V. 4

"But ye, brethren" = shows sharp contrast

"Darkness" = a figure of speech to describe the lostness or the moral blindness of an unbeliever who is stumbling in sin (cp. I Jn. 2:8-11).

"[Unsaved] men love darkness rather than light..." (Jn. 3:19)

The word darkness is used to describe people who are deliberately blind to the truth (Christ). But praise God, believers are not blind to spiritual realities. We have been enlightened (Heb. 6:4; 10:32).

Col. 1:13 - "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."

"Overtake" = lit. to take hold of you, to come upon quickly and seize you.

"That day" = the day of the Lord (v. 2).

Believers will <u>not</u> be caught by surprise.
Believers will <u>not</u> be caught in the dark.

Those in darkness will be saying "Peace and safety" (v. 3), not fearing the impending wrath of God.

But we know it is coming (are we living like it?)

"Thief" = the wrath of Christ which falls immediately after he comes back for His saints will catch the world by surprise.

(SEE Luke 12:39; 21:34; II Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:3, 16:15).

V. 5

NOTE:	Chiasm -	Light	Night
		Day	Darkness

Light is contrasted with darkness
Day is contrasted with night

"Sons of light" = children characterized by light. A one-word description for a Christian should be "light." We are the "light of the world" (Mt. 6)

To be a son of God is to be a son of light, for God is light (I Jn. 1:5), Christ is light (Jn. 1:4-9).

I John 1:6-7 - A believer does not walk in darkness!

Someone who claims to have fellowship with Christ, yet walks in darkness, is a liar.

II. GOD'S SALVATION SHOULD DELIVER US FROM THE LIFESTYLE OF DARKNESS (V. 6-8)

(Our conduct - what we should be, in contrast to those spiritually asleep)

V. 6

"Therefore" - because of what we are (v. 4-5), we should act in a way that matches what we are!

God is showing us that because we are different (v. 4-5) by virtue of our salvation, we must live differently (v. 6-8).

Three characteristics of someone who is not ready to go someplace:

He is not:
1) awake (sleeping)
2) alert (drunk)
3) dressed (naked)

A. A Believer Should Be Spiritually Awake (watching, not sleeping - v. 6-7)

V. 6

We are not to be spiritually sleeping.

"As do others" = the rest of the lost world.

Rather, we are to "watch" = to stay awake, be vigilant.

The wrath of God (cp. v. 9) will not come upon God's people like it will come upon the world (which will be sound asleep)

EX: Mt. 25:5 - sleeping before Christ's coming.

B. A Believer Should Be Spiritually Alert (sober, not drunk - v. 6-7)

"Sober" = morally alert

SEE I Pet. 1:13-16

"Be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (v. 13)

V. 7

Why do men drink at night? Answer: Jn. 3:20 - "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

Drinking alcoholic beverages is totally out of the character of a true believer!

Anything that dulls our spiritual senses is wrong!

Anything that dulls our moral alertness is wrong!

SEE Lk. 21:34 = drunkenness and the Day of the Lord

Just as drinking and driving don't mix, drinking and flying (up - in the Rapture) don't mix. (No one goes to be with Christ who is a drunkard! cp. I Cor. 6:10)

Unbelievers are asleep because they are living in the night (darkness); unbelievers are drunk because they are living in the night (darkness).

We are not of the night, so we must not live as if we were! Be alert!

C. A Believer Should Be Dressed In Spiritually Attire (faith, love, and hope in God - v. 8)

V. 8

Some who call themselves "believers" are not dressed for Heaven; they are wearing the rags of hell!

However, we who are of the day (genuine believers) must be dressed like it.

The virtuous trio of faith, hope, and love, is also seen in 1:3; I Cor. 13:13; Gal. 5:5-6; Rom. 5:2-5; Col. 1:4-5; Heb. 6:10-12.

In this verse (v. 8), our faith, love, and hope are all aimed toward God.

Although faith, love and hope come from God, we are responsible to put them on ourselves (v. middle voice), and we are to dress ourselves in them continually (present tense)

The department store for acquiring faith, love, and hope is Heaven! But we must put them on ourselves at home!

Having faith in God, and love for God around your chest will prevent your heart from going to sleep and getting hard and cold.

Having hope around your head will prevent your mind from being troubled.

Cp. Eph. 6:17 - "The Helmet of salvation" = the assurance of deliverance from judgment.

III. GOD'S SALVATION WILL DELIVER US FROM THE JUDGMENT OF DARKNESS (V. 9-10) (Our confidence - what we will be, in contrast to those spiritually asleep)

A. We Are Certain Of Deliverance Because Of God's Plan (v. 9)

V. 9

"Appointed" = to place into; or destine

God has our flight pre=arranged; our departure is booked; our tickets have been purchased in advance!

And our flight leaves right on time! (before God's wrath is poured out)

SEE I Thess. 1:10 where our deliverance from God's wrath is so sure, God puts its fulfillment in the past tense.

Salvation from sin is only by our Lord Jesus Christ, and salvation (deliverance) from the wrath of God is only by our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is in no other (Acts 4:12)!

B. We Are Certain Of Deliverance Because Of Christ's Death (v. 10)

Christ died on our behalf for the purpose that we might live with him. His death means our life!

And this living with Christ is for you whether you are living when Christ returns, or whether you have died. (sleep)

question - by using the terms "wake or sleep" - Is Paul still speaking about spiritually sleeping and being awake, or literal?

Answer: He switches back to literal.

"Wake or sleep" = A play on words meaning alive or dead.

In context, those spiritually asleep will not be delivered, they will not escape (v. 3)

The word **"sleep"** is used again to conclude Paul's thought as he began it in verses 14-16. It was literal in v. 14-16, and now Paul goes back to use the term "sleep" as a euphemism for "death" int he same way he began the context.

Rom. 14:9 = "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living."

CONCLUSION: V. 11

--Don't be caught in the dark!

--Don't slip into the fires of the Tribulation and Hell asleep!

--Don't think you can assume you are ready to be raptured (genuinely saved) when your life shows just the opposite.

* Those asleep to spiritual truth (i.e. to Christ) are not saved

* Those intoxicated by anything that deadens moral alertness are only fooling themselves.

I Jn. 2:28-29 - 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. If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that everyone that doeth righteousness is born of him."

Live expectantly (be awake, alert, and dressed ready to go!)

Have your suitcase packed! (not with the things of the world, because they will not pass luggage inspection! But be packing things that are eternal!)

"A GODLY ATTITUDE TOWARD YOUR PASTOR"

1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13

3-4-2026

Every believer should have the attitude that God wants (expects) toward their pastor!

What attitude does God expect?

God expects you to have:

I. An Attitude of <u>APPRECIATION</u> For Your Pastor (V. 12)

A. Appreciate Him For Being Your Spiritual <u>Laborer</u>

B. Appreciate Him For Being Your Spiritual <u>Leader</u>

C. Appreciate Him For Being Your Spiritual <u>Counselor</u>

God Expects You To Have:

Ii. An Attitude of <u>RESPECT</u> For Your Pastor (V. 13)

A. The <u>Measure</u> Of Respect
(Esteem Them Highly)

B. The <u>Manner</u> Of Respect
(Esteem Them Lovingly)

C. The <u>Motive</u> Of Respect
(Esteem Them For Their Work's Sake)

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A. Appreciate Him For Being Your Spiritual _____

B. Appreciate Him For Being Your Spiritual _____

C. Appreciate Him For Being Your Spiritual _____

God Expects You To Have:

Ii. An Attitude of _____ For Your Pastor (V. 13)

A. The _____ Of Respect
(Esteem Them _____)

B. The _____ Of Respect
(Esteem Them _____)

C. The _____ Of Respect
(Esteem Them For Their _____)

"A GODLY ATTITUDE TOWARD YOUR PASTOR"

1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13

3-4-2026

INTRODUCTION:

There are a couple of subjects that are always touchy areas for a pastor to preach on:

1) giving - because people think you are begging for money

2) honoring your pastor - because people think you are tooting your own horn or selfishly asking things for yourself

To be a pastor and to preach how your people out to treat their pastor is indeed awkward and difficult. I wonder how the pastors felt as they read this letter of Paul to their people at Thessalonica.

But I view this message to be more for your own benefit than for mine.

As pastor, I am your servant.
The benefit of being served is yours

As pastor, I am your shepherd.
The benefit of being fed is yours.

As pastor, I am your overseer.
The benefit of being led is yours.

(NOTE: the emphasis on the word you in verse 13)

I am to lead, feed, protect, serve, pray for you, plan for you, etc. So you see, if I am a godly pastor, anything you do for me, you are doing for you!

To mistreat your pastor is to hurt yourself.
To gossip about your pastor is to inflict injury on yourself.
To not provide for your pastor is to "cut your own throat."

Timothy had just returned from the Thessalonian believers and evidently told Paul that their attitude toward their pastors was not all that it should have been.

In their expectation of the Lord's soon return, they may have not only quit their jobs (inference from II Thess. 3:10-11) but also may have thought, "What do we need our pastor for? After all, we are not going to be here long!"

Or they may have thought that their pastors were crooked, in the ministry for what they could get out of it. so Paul responds in I Thess. 2:3-6 in defense of himself.

Whatever the reason, they apparently had been: quenching the Spirit (v. 19); despising what the preacher uttered (v. 20); and may have even had some quarrels, gripes, etc., rather than being at peace (v. 13b)

Whereas v. 14-15 describes the believers' attitude toward each other, verses 12-13 describes the believers' attitude toward their pastor.`

I'm sure that if every pastor knew exactly what everyone of his church members thought of him, his feelings would not be too positive.

You won't answer to me for your attitude (which I can't always read), but to God!

Therefore . . .

Every believer should have the attitude that God wants (expects) toward their pastor!

What attitude does God expect?

God expects you to have:

I. AN ATTITUDE OF <u>APPRECIATION</u> FOR YOUR PASTOR (v. 12)

"We beseech" = like a friend making an urgent appeal or request of a friend. Paul is saying: "We are begging you, brothers."

Only real brothers (Christians) could and would truly do what Paul is about to ask. Non-spiritual people cannot recognize or appreciate spiritual workers or their work (Hiebert, p. 231).

"Them" = why plural? ANSWER: Paul is writing to the church at Thess. in a collective sense. They met in houses throughout Thess. (cp. Acts 17:5; Ro. 16:5; I Cor. 16:19), and each house had at least one elder (pastor) overseeing the assembly. (However, a plurality of pastors would also be necessary in larger churches; cp. Acts 14:23)

This letter, therefore, would be an encyclical letter that was passed from house church to house church.

Two main Greek words for "know":

1) - the act of taking in knowledge; to come to understand (the process of learning)

2) - the state of having attained knowledge; to see or perceive (the perfection of knowing)

So, in this verse God is not teaching you to get to know (become acquainted with) your pastor (although this is important), but to know what I am worth to you and the cause of Christ.

It means to "know the value" of your pastor, or in other words "to appreciate."

To express what you are to appreciate about your pastor, Paul uses 3 participles to describe the pastor's function (what he does for you).

A. APPRECIATE HIM FOR BEING YOUR SPIRITUAL LABORER

"Labour" = to work to the point of exhaustion (cp. 1:3). The word describes the type of work that makes one weary; that takes much strenuous effort. The word is used both of bodily and mental labor.

In reference to pastors, however, this word is specifically used of the mental and physical labor of studying and ministering the Word of God.

I Tim. 5:17 - "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine."

B. APPRECIATE HIM FOR BEING YOUR SPIRITUAL LEADER

"Are over you" = lit. means: to stand in front of, ahead of, or before. Hence, to be at the head, to direct or rule.

The qualifying phrase "in the Lord" shows that the pastor is to stand in front of the flock:

1) for spiritual service.

   a. not civic or political affairs
   b. the pastor is not a secular social worker
   c. is not a "do-it-all" man for the church either

   I'm sure most problems between pastors and their members would be dissolved if the people would know the duties, priorities, and ministries of their spiritual leaders.

   The pastor is not a:
   1.taxicab driver
   2.errand boy ("gopher")
   3.babysitter
   4.tour guide
   5.janitor
   6.walking encyclopedia
   (with all the answers to science, history, sociology, politics, economics, etc.)
   7.banquet caterer

2) in a subordinate service

Christ's lordship is above the pastor's leadership. He is the Chief Shepherd. The pastor is not a lord over God's heritage (I Pet. 5:3).

I am standing in front of you in the Lord's service, not my own (FBC is a church that belongs to God - I Pet. 5:1).

Some pastors wrongly set themselves up and teach their people: "Touch not the Lord's anointed" (meaning: don't ever question his beliefs and practices; don't ever offer any input, suggestions, etc.).

But this is wrong!

Because the pastor has a God-given position of "standing before" the flock, this points to leadership!

The pastor's office is a very serious one. We are to lead the flock or "oversee" the flock (I Pet. 3:2).

Pastor leadership means 2 things:

1) Spiritual guidance - In order for someone to guide, you must have those who are willing to follow (submit)

Heb. 13:7 - "Remember them which have the rule over you..." This verse means: Be mindful of their faith and follow their example.

Heb. 13:17 - "Obey them..." This verse means: Do what the pastor says and yield to his leadership because he goes without sleep ("watches") for your souls and will answer to God for you. You will also answer to God for your obedience and submission tot he pastor.

Heb. 13:24 - "Salute them..." To salute means to greet with respect. I don't want to be bowed down to, nor called "Reverence." "Holy and reverence is His Name" = God only! (Ps. 111:9)

2) Spiritual protection - SEE Acts 20:28-31

C. APPRECIATE HIM FOR BEING YOUR SPIRITUAL COUNSELOR

"Admonish" = lit. to put into the mind; to confront one's thinking. The word is used in the sense of: 1) to rebuke; and 2) to instruct

1. To rebuke = to correct sinful thinking (Ii Thess. 3:14-15 - "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother) (cp. Tit. 3:10)

2. To instruct = to strengthen defective (weak) thinking cp. Rom. 15:14)

   a. To remind about what may be forgotten (Acts 20:31 - "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

   b. To warn about potential danger (cp. Acts 20:31; I Cor. 4:14 - "I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.")

   c. To encourage about God's will (Col. 3:16 - "Let the Word of Christ dwell in your richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

   What does a pastor use to confront the flock's thinking? The Word of God. The Bible (including the examples in the O.T.) has been "written for our admonition" (I Cor. 10:11).

The pastor is to preach the Word (II Tim. 4:2).

The Word is inspired and profitable to show what is right ("doctrine"); what is not right ("reproof"); how to make it right "correction"); and how to keep in right ("instruction in righteousness") (II Tim. 3:15-16).

No Christian should have to go to a secular psychologist (shrink) for counsel. God gave you a pastor to counsel you (we also have each other to help counsel us - Rom. 15:14).

NOTE: Some people's mental problems stem from physical problems in which case a psychiatrist [who can prescribe medicine] is needed)

The world has no answers to spiritual problems!
How can those with blinded minds (II Cor. 4:4) enlighten your mind?

God expects you to have:

II. AN ATTITUDE OF <u>RESPECT</u> FOR YOUR PASTOR (v. 13)

"Esteem" = to think highly of, to build up someone in your mental conception of them.

"To esteem" (being in the middle voice) does not mean to brag about your pastor to others, but to regard him highly in your own mind. This thinking is also to be continual (present tense).

Phil. 2:3 - "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

The noun form is used of one in a high office and is translated "prince, governor, leader, chief, or ruler."

The phrase "very highly" answers the question "How much should I respect him?" It points to the quantity of respect.

The phrase "in love" answers the question "In what way do I show my respect for him?" It points to the quality of respect.

The phrase "for their work's sake" answers the question "Why should I respect him?" It points to the basis of the respect.

A. THE MEASURE OF RESPECT
(Esteem them highly)

"Very highly" = is a very emphatic superlative adverb which means "abundantly beyond all limits" or "above all measure."

Paul used this term in I Thes. 3:10 to describe how he prayed "exceedingly."

This word is used to show how God is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20; cp. also Mk. 7:37).

I certainly am not worthy to be thought of to this extent (nor is any pastor, evangelist, missionary, etc. on the face of this earth).

But can you imagine how pleased a pastor would be to be thought of this way? How motivated a pastor would be to serve a people like this?

B. THE MANNER OF RESPECT
(Esteem them lovingly)

How does a congregation express its attitude of respect for its pastor? ANSWER: Agapa love.

**This love is not an emotional feeling (EX: the dangers of people, especially women, who get emotionally attached; or of others who "love" his charismatic personality).

**This love is a decision to give him what he needs
--Give your pastor a willing, servant's heart
--Provide for your pastor financially

The mentality of "Keep your pastor poor" is of the devil.

It contradicts Scripture: SEE I Tim. 5:17-18 ("double honor"... "don't muzzle the ox")

If God wants me to be poor, fine! But a congregation should never want this for their pastor.

ILLUS. of pastors "church hopping" in midwest because under-appreciated and underpaid.

ILLUS. of pastors having to work secular jobs when the church they pastor is fully able to support them.

ILLUS. of pastors having to be concerned about how they will pay their bills.

I'm not at all saying that the pastor should live like Jim Baker and Oral Roberts, etc. But the people should do their dead-level best to see that his needs are all met.

This is loving your pastor where the rubber meets the road.

"For their work's sake" = Because of their work.

The emphasis is not on the act of working (which would normally be indicated by the participle "working"), but on the type of work. (My boss, employer, foreman, etc. is the Lord - it is His work)

Although a pastor will deserve respect if he works hard and well, the point here is not on how he does his job, but on what his job is. (EX: we are to respect a police officer, etc., because of his position, not merely for his performance)

C. THE MOTIVE OF RESPECT
(Esteem them for their work's sake)

Why should a pastor be held in high esteem? Certainly not because of his popularity or personality; but because he is doing the Lord's work!

The greatest work in the world is the Lord's work. The work that yields the highest eternal reward is the Lord's work. The work that does the most for mankind, society, etc., is the Lord's work.

"If any man desires the office of a bishop, he desires a good work" (I Tim. 3:1).

"Your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (I Cor. 15:58).

Don't respect me for my intellect, ability, personality, popularity, age, or experience in the ministry -- but because I am by God's grace doing His work (I Tim. 1:12 - "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry."

CONCLUSION:

"Be at peace" - Why does God include this exhortation? Because a right relationship between pastor and people is vital to a harmonious, orderly, Christ-honoring church.

I am to be at peace with you, you with me, and us with each other!

God does not merely want you to make peace with your pastor and each other, but to maintain it (present tense) (Hiebert, p. 234).

Guard it! If you hear gossip about your pastor, put an end to it.

If there are ill feelings in our church, lets get them corrected.

If anyone ever seeks to usurp authority or divide a church against its pastor, then its time to fall on our knees, beg for forgiveness and make reconciliation.

No peace = no power! No peace = no growth!

God expects you to have:

1.An attitude of appreciation for your pastor
2.An attitude of respect for your pastor.

It is a fearful thing to be a pastor. I will answer to God for how I led and fed you. You will answer for how you responded to what you were taught.

I am here at FBC for your benefit! So how you treat me is how you are treating yourself.

You will get (in blessings) exactly what you give (in attitude).

Gal. 6:7 - "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

"GOD'S MEDICINE FOR PEOPLE PROBLEMS"

I Thessalonians 5:14-15

3-25-2026



*** We must apply <u>GOD'S MEDICINE</u> to those who are spiritually ill.**

What does God prescribe?

I. GOD'S PRESCRIPTION FOR <u>BURDENSOME</u> PEOPLE (v. 14)

A. GOD PRESCRIBES <u>CONFRONTATION</u> OF THOSE WHO <u>GO ASTRAY</u>
(We must straighten out the <u>thinking</u> of those who go astray)

B. GOD PRESCRIBES <u>COMFORT</u> FOR THOSE WHO ARE <u>EASILY DISCOURAGED</u>
(We must strengthen the <u>hearts</u> of those who are easily discouraged)

C. GOD PRESCRIBES <u>SUPPORT</u> FOR THOSE WHO ARE <u>WITHOUT STRENGTH</u>
(We must support the weak <u>knees</u> of those who can't stand on their own)

D. GOD PRESCRIBES <u>PATIENCE</u> IN ALL CASES
(We must suffer long with everyone we care for)

II. GOD'S PRESCRIPTION FOR <u>TROUBLESOME</u> PEOPLE (v. 15)

A. GOD PRESCRIBES <u>WITHHOLDING EVIL</u> FROM THE EVIL-DOERS

B. GOD PRESCRIBES <u>DOING GOOD</u> FOR THE UNDESERVING

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(We must suffer long with everyone we care for)

II. GOD'S PRESCRIPTION FOR _____ PEOPLE (v. 15)

A. GOD PRESCRIBES _____ FROM THE EVIL-DOERS

B. GOD PRESCRIBES _____ FOR THE UNDESERVING

"GOD'S MEDICINE FOR PEOPLE PROBLEMS"

I Thessalonians 5:14-15

3-25-2026

INTRODUCTION:

Paul, after describing the attitude that God expects believers to have toward their pastor [an attitude of appreciation (v. 12), and respect (v. 13)], now describes the action believers are to have with each other.

Paul shifts from speaking about your relationship and responsibility toward your pastor, to your relationship and responsibility toward each other in our church.

ILLUS: How a doctor, nurse, or social worker must know how to handle various problems.

We are called to be spiritual physicians and spiritual workers who must know how to handle the irritable. We must know how to deal with those who "rub us the wrong way"; those who "get under your skin."

As Christians we need to learn how to help the helpless, to direct the directionless, to encourage the discouraged, to love the unlovable.

V. 14

"Brethren" = God is addressing believers in general.

While dealing with faulty members is in special measure the responsibility of the pastor, it is not confined to him. All believers must be ready to minister! (Hiebert, p. 234).

The three classes of Christians in need of help may have been the 3 groups who already had their problems addressed in this letter:

1."Unruly" = idlers (4:11-12)
2."feeble minded" = worried about death and salvation (4:14-17; 5:9-11)
3."Weak" = those who were tempted to lapse into immorality (4:2-8)

(Hendriksen, p. 136)

Three types of people needed special attention in the Thess. church; and each type needed different treatment.

Different needs must be handled in different ways.

The medicine we prescribe must meet the need or it could do more damage than good - even though we meant well.

*** We must apply GOD'S MEDICINE to those who are spiritually ill.**

What does God prescribe?

I. GOD'S PRESCRIPTION FOR BURDENSOME PEOPLE (v. 14)

A.GOD PRESCRIBES CONFRONTATION OF THOSE WHO GO ASTRAY
(We must straighten out the thinking of those who go astray)

V. 14

"Unruly" = a military term that described a soldier who neglected his duty and was out of order, out of step, and out of rank. It also described an army that was marching and advancing toward the enemy in disarray (disorderly confusion).

ILLUS: of a machine out of order
ILLUS: of marching out of step, throws others off
ILLUS: how Roman army marched perfectly. Rome conquered the world because they were organized.

One who is unruly is one who:

1) is not doing what he should do (sin of omission)

EX: not working (cp. II Thess. 3:6 - idleness)

Note: In I Th. 5:14, we are commanded to confront him. In II th. 3:6 we are to withdraw from him. Which do we do?

You do both. READ II Th. 3:14-15

2) is doing what he should not do (sin of commission)

Whenever someone does not do what they should be doing (EX: reading Bible, praying, attending church, working hard, loving family, etc.), it won't be long before they are doing what they shouldn't be doing.

How do we handle such a person?

"Warn" = is the same word as translated "admonish" in f. 12. It basically means to put into the mind, to confront the mind; to correct someone's thinking.

Thinking affects behavior.

Wrong thought patterns result in wrong patterns of behavior.

Many times we waste a lot of time trying to change someone's external

actions without dealing with the cause (the root) of sinful thinking. What a person thinks reveals what he is (his character)

To confront someone who is going astray, you need:

1. To know Bible doctrine
2. To have courage and boldness
   (confrontation is not easy)

The attitude of many is: "So what if he isn't doing right? -- That's his business, not mine."

If you are a believer, he is your business! In our church family, no one is an isolated island separated from the rest.

If you see someone going astray and you do nothing about it, you are an accomplice to the crime by default and become guilty with that person, and have bloody hands (Exek. 3:17-18).

Paul could say he was "pure from the blood of all men" (and he was referring to believers) - Acts 20:26

Paul could say this because he did not look the other way; or sweep sin under the carpet. He personally dealt with it in people's lives. This is love! He loved them enough to keep them from the wages of sin.

B. GOD PRESCRIBES COMFORT FOR THOSE WHO ARE EASILY DISCOURAGED
(We must strengthen the hearts of those who are easily discouraged)

The word translated "feeble-minded" does not refer to someone with a mental deficiency, but to someone who has a mind and heart filled with worry, fear, and discouragement (the word literally means "little-souled).

Why do people get discouraged?

1. Adverse circumstances
   (financial misfortune, physical suffering, opposition for the faith, family hardships)

2. Struggle with sin
   (a deep consciousness of their own sinfulness which causes them to despair of being able to live the Christian life - Hiebert, p. 235)

Many people seem by nature (old nature, of course) to be negative. Perhaps through parental example they learned to fear the worst. They

face each trial in life with apprehension and timidity.

What they don't need is for you to pound them over the head and say, "I can't understand how you can be this way! Don't you know the Bible says that `God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power and love and of a sound mind?'" (II Tim. 1:7)

I'm not saying this verse is not a good one for this type of person. It's excellent! It's how you say it that matters!

Don't blast him! (he needs to be cheered up, not chopped down).

The discouraged Christian does not need to be rebuked like those who are deliberately walking disorderly.

He needs to be cheered up; softly and tenderly encouraged; stimulated by caring words, well-thought-out words, to continue in the battle, to not give up, to re-focus his eyes on Christ and the promises of God!

C. GOD PRESCRIBES SUPPORT FOR THOSE WHO ARE WITHOUT STRENGTH
(We must support the weak knees of those who can't stand on their own)

It is said of Job that he was a man who "strengthened the weak hands." His words had held up "him that was falling." And he had strengthened the feeble knees (Job 4:3-4).

"Weak" = does not refer to physical weakness in context, but to moral and spiritual weakness.

"Weak" = lit. "without strength"

ILLUS: of someone who is about to be sucked into a cult

ILLUS: of someone who is about to fall off the deep end (into sexual immorality, etc.)

Weak areas are often problems of the lust of the flesh.
Examples:

1. Poor self-discipline
2. Out of control appetites
3. Sinful thought life

"Support" = lit. to "hold on firmly" or to "cling on" to someone

It means to give support to someone by putting your arms around the weak

and holding him up.

Some of us from time to time will experience low points or valleys in our walk with Christ. Sometimes we will experience knock-out blows by the evil one. Sometimes we will be at our "wits end" and will be without spiritual stamina. We will feel like we can't fight the fight of faith another round.

It is at that point that we need someone to lift us up, someone to cling on to us. We need someone who will not despise us because of our seeming helplessness.

God is <u>not</u> calling on us to condone sin!

We are never to sympathize with the sin, but with the struggling sinner.

We are not to smear the sin in their face, but we are to lift them up out of it!

Do you know what type of person will never do this? (one who refuses to help those in spiritual weakness?) ANSWER: the <u>self-righteous</u>.

How can we support (hold up) those whoa re sapped of spiritual vigor or moral muscle?

1. They must <u>confess</u> their weak areas to you (James 5:16)

2. You must keep the information confidential and <u>pray</u> for your brother or sister (James 5:16)

3. In an encouraging way, you must hold that person <u>accountable</u>. (Periodically check up on that person)

Why isn't this done in churches today? <u>PRIDE</u>

Don't write him off! (as a useless nothing, with no hope)
How big is your God?
How strong is your God?

God can infuse him with strength (Phil. 4:13)

D. GOD PRESCRIBES <u>PATIENCE</u> IN ALL CASES
(We must suffer long with everyone we care for)

Patience is how you apply the medicine. It's your attitude in putting on the needed balm.

A doctor can operate with correct tools and medicines etc., but the way he does it, and the time he is willing to put in -- that is what makes the difference.

"Patient" = to be long-fused; long-tempered; lit. to be able to put up with "much internal heat" without "blowing your tope" or "Losing you cool" with someone.

"Patient <u>toward all</u>" - would specifically include those 3 types of people just mentioned.

It would be easy to lose your patience with the unruly, feeble-minded, and weak.

But remember how patient god was (and is) with us (II Pet. 3:9; Ro. 2:4).

A pastor needs patience more than anything else (cp. II Tim. 4:2)

Patience is needed when:

1) You have "told them 1,000 times" before

2) They are back where you just lifted them out

To be a "people person," the key ingredient is patience!

But you will not have it without-

1. love (I Cor. 13:4)
2. The Spirit (Gal. 5:22)

II. GOD'S PRESCRIPTION FOR <u>TROUBLESOME</u> PEOPLE (v. 15)

A. GOD PRESCRIBES <u>WITHHOLDING EVIL</u> FROM THE EVIL-DOERS

V. 15

"See" = see to it; be on the look out; be watchful and alert that no one pays back evil in return for evil.

The combination of the second person ("you see to it") with the third person ("none renders") shows that the whole Body is responsible for each individual part of the Body.

As a church we are to see to it that none in our membership retaliates (seeks to get back at someone).

God does not want you to abstain from getting back at someone, but He wants you to keep anyone else from getting even with someone else.

We are to be the neutral person who steps in to break up the fight (EX - Guardian Angels of NYC)

All of us are to stand guard and make sure that this worldly, devilish, selfish, unloving practice of retaliation ("getting even" "paying back") does not gain entrance into our church.

Of all sinful tendencies, this one is the easiest to give into and justify. We think: "He stabbed me, I'll stab him. He gossiped about, robbed, cheated, slandered, spoke against my child . . . I will do same to him. He didn't give to me . . . I won't to him."

No doctor would fight poison with poison! Or disease with disease. That is not a cure. [NOTE: A vaccine when you are well is given so that you will build up antibodies; no one gives a vaccine to someone who has the virus already. You give an anti-biotic - the opposite of the virus.]

Jesus taught against retaliation - SEE Mt. 5:38-48

NOTE: The Sermon on the Mount is personal exhortation for individual believers and does not nullify the responsibility of govt. to see that justice is fulfilled.

I Pet. 3:9 - "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing."

Paying back evil with evil is wrong on 3 counts:

Those who retaliate are:

1. Saying that sin justifies sin

   Your sin gives me a right to sin (one wrong deserves another)

EX: Divorce - "You committed adultery...I'm going for a divorce"

EX: Lawsuits - "You ruined my reputation (injured my character), etc. so I am going to sue you!"

EX: Cheating employer - "He doesn't pay me or treat me like he should, so I'm not going to do my best on the job."

2. Taking God's prerogatives in their own hands.

SEE Rom. 12:17-21 ("Vengeance is mine..." - quoting Deut. 32:35, 41)

3. Not practicing the Law of Love

SEE Mt. 5:43-48 "Love your enemies..."

Remember if God commands us not to "get even," even the thought or desire to get even is wrong (sinful)

B. GOD PRESCRIBES DOING GOOD FOR THE UNDESERVING

We are not merely to stop the negative (not give evil for evil) but we are to go a step further and replace it by doing the positive ("do good").

To do good to those who do evil to you means:

1) No exceptions - "ever" = always, on every occasion and circumstance.

2) Great effort - "follow" = to pursue after with great effort; to seek eagerly; to hung after (ILLUS: a hunter pursuing a deer; or a hound dog pursuing a rabbit)

3) Impartiality - saved and lost alike

CONCLUSION:

I. God's prescription for burdensome people:

A. God prescribes confrontation of those who go astray

B. God prescribes comfort for those who are easily discouraged

C. God prescribes support for those who are without strength

D. God prescribes patience for all cases

II. God's prescription for troublesome people:

A. God prescribes withholding evil from the evil doers

B. God prescribes doing good for the undeserving.

"To live above with saints we love
Oh, that will be glory;
To dwell below with saints we know,
Well, that's another story."

You <u>are</u> your brother's keeper!

Keep his best interest in mind!

Phil. 2:3-4 - "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

"SPIRITUAL CONSISTENCY"

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

4-8-2026

*** We must always remember that <u>consistency is God's desire</u>.**

I. God Desires Consistency In Our <u>Rejoicing</u> (V. 16)

II. God Desires Consistency In Our <u>Prayer Life</u> (V. 17)

III. God Desires Consistency In Our <u>Giving of Thanks</u> (V. 18)

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"SPIRITUAL CONSISTENCY"

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

4-8-2026

INTRODUCTION:

What is God's will for you?

What is it that God desires from us as His children? What can we give to God that would please His heart?

READ I Thess. 5:16-18

V. 18

For "this" is the will of God.

The word "this" refers to the three imperatives stated previously.

In the commands found in verses 16-18, that which God is emphasizing is not the words "rejoice," "pray," or "give thanks," but rather the words "evermore," "without ceasing," and "in everything."

(NOTE: these modifiers come before the verbs in the Greek)

It's relatively easy to rejoice, but to always rejoice is not so easy.

To pray is not such a great demand; what is remarkable is the command to "without ceasing" pray.

To give thanks is not too much to ask, but to "in everything" give thanks is another story.

What God desires of us is consistency.

There is too much "fair weather" Christianity today.

Too much "on/off" "up/down" "in the valley or on the mountaintop" Christianity.

"Consistency" = faithfulness; to do something without fail; to be steady, day in and day out; to be like clockwork.

In Verses 16-18, God outlines for us a "trio" of internal experiences that we are to be involved in consistently.

*** We must always remember that consistency is God's desire.**

I. GOD DESIRES CONSISTENCY IN OUR REJOICING (v. 16)

"Evermore" = always

It's easy to rejoice when things are going smooth; when circumstances are favorable; when our agenda is falling into line as planned.

But what happens to our joy when trials fall, when opposition arises, when suffering knocks at our door? (cp. Ja. 1:2ff)

The command "rejoice always" is remarkable when you consider what the Thess. believers had already gone through (1:6; 2:14; 3:2-4).

Peter rejoiced that he had the privilege to suffer shame for Christ (Acts 5:41).

What keeps us from rejoicing? ANSWER: A bad reaction to bad circumstances.

If you study the life of Paul, you find a man who was consistent. He had joy when he was abased and when he abounded (Phil. 4:12). He could rejoice when he was out preaching the Gospel freely, and when he was whipped, chained, and imprisoned for reaching the Gospel (Acts 16:25).

For Paul, suffering and rejoicing were not mutually exclusive.

He knew that the Christians could have both at the same time. Though these two human experiences are seemingly contradictory or paradoxical, Paul could rejoice while suffering *SEE II Cor. 6:4-10 **v. 10).

Was Paul a "blind optimist"?

Did he merely believe in the "power of positive thinking?" NO.

Unlike the man-centered theologians of today, he had a Biblical basis for his positive attitude.

How did Paul and how can we rejoice no matter what?

Paul had full confidence in three facts about his Lord Jesus Christ:

1. He was assured of God's unwavering love for him

   Gal. 2:20 - I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

   "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? [shall] tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:35-39).

2. He knew that God had sovereign control over his life

   Acts 9:14-15 - 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: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name s sake.

   Acts 18:9-10 Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.

   Acts 20:24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

   Peter had the same confidence: 1 Peter 4:19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

3. He knew that All things work together for good in God's perfect will (Romans 8:28)

SEE II Cor. 4:16-18.

a. Paul had a daily spiritual renewal (v. 16)
"Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." (II Cor. 12:10).

b. Paul knew the final score (v. 17)
"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).

HYMN - "It Will Be Worth It All When We See Jesus."

c. Paul kept his eyes on the eternal (v. 18). He lived for Christ and His Church.
"Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body's sake, which is the church" (Col. 1:24).

Polycarp was an early Christian martyr and bishop of Smyrna, living from approximately A.D. 69 to A.D. 155. He is known for his strong faith and his direct connection to the Apostle John, making him a significant figure in early Christianity.
During his trial for his faith, the proconsul urged Polycarp to deny Christ to save his life. Polycarp's response emphasized his unwavering faith and loyalty to Jesus, whom he had served faithfully for 86 years.

“Eighty and six years have I served Christ, nor has He ever done me any harm. How, then, could I blaspheme my King who saved Me?....I bless Thee for deigning me worthy of this day and this hour that I may be among Thy martyrs and drink the cup of my Lord Jesus Christ.”
Polycarp (Bishop of Smyna)

--They can take away our money, but not our riches in Christ.

--Our earthly house may burn down, but our heavenly home will not.

--Our present health may deteriorate, but our future body is incorruptible.

--They may kill the body, but not the soul.

When John Chrysostom (ca. 347-407) was brought before the empress Eudoxia, she threatened him with banishment if he insisted on his Christian independence as a preacher.

"You cannot banish me, for this world is my Father's house."

"But I will kill you," said the empress.

"No, you cannot, for my life is hid with Christ in God," said John.

"I will take away your treasures."

"No, you cannot, for my treasure is in heaven and my heart is there."

"But I will drive you away from your friends and you will have no one left."

"No, you cannot, for I have a Friend in heaven from whom you cannot separate me.

I defy you, for there is nothing you can do to harm me."

We need to rejoice in times of need and in times of abundance.

We need to rejoice when life is easy and when it's difficult.

We need to rejoice when people respond readily to the Gospel, and when they don't respond to our witness.

As long as we are doing right (obeying God), we can know that God is working, whether external circumstances reveal it or not.

This requires FAITH. The Christian who remains in depression and sadness is in sin, because in one way or another he is disbelieving (mistrusting) God.

II. GOD DESIRES CONSISTENCY IN OUR PRAYER LIFE (v. 17)

"The prayer of the upright is His delight" (Prov. 15:8)

God is pleased (receives joy) when we pray.

Those who please God even more are those who consistently pray.

To pray "without ceasing" does not mean to pray non-stop or to be on our knees 24 hours a day.

Such an interpretation would be inconsistent with Paul's own claim that he prayed "unceasingly" (Rom. 1:9; I Th. 1:2-3) while he was still a busy missionary (church planter) (Hiebert, p. 241).

We need a spirit of unceasing prayer; we need to be in constant communion with God (throughout the day; with our eyes open; while we do our daily jobs), wherever we are and whatever we do.

God is not speaking here about prayer int he sense of bowing the head, closing the eyes, moving the lips, but about the lifting up of our hearts to Him in repeated utterances throughout our daily routine.

Though we do need seasons of prayer and set-apart appointments with God like Daniel and David, our praying should not be limited by time and place or to set hours of prayer.

When God brings someone to your mind, that is a time to pray.

When God burdens you with spiritual need, that is a time to pray.

When you are worried, that is a time to pray.

When you think a sinful thought, that is a time to pray and confess it.

Throughout the day, pause and pray.

III. GOD DESIRES CONSISTENCY IN OUR GIVING OF THANKS (v. 18)

Ps. 92:1-2 - "It is a good thing for us to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, oh Most High. To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night."

A. THANKING GOD FOR OTHERS

Paul begins most of his Epistles by saying how he thanks God for fellow Christians (Rom. 1:8; I Cor. 1:4; Eph. 1:16; Phil. 1:3; Col. 1:3; Philem. 4)

B. THANK GOD FOR MEALS

ILLUS: How Samuel gave thanks (I Sam. 9:13)

ILLUS: How Jesus, when on earth, gave thanks (Mt. 15:36; 26:26)

ILLUS: How Paul, even in front of the heathen, gave thanks- Acts 27:35

Other exhortations to give thanks - Rom. 14:6; I Cor. 10:30; I Tim. 4:3.

We are not to limit our thanks giving to the fourth Thursday in November (We are not to restrict our thanks giving to "Thanksgiving")

C. THANK GOD FOR GOOD TIMES AND HARD TIMES

The only way we can give thanks for everything is by once again knowing God's unwavering Love for us and His sovereign control over all things for His Glory and ultimately for my good.

How can we thank God for everything? (Where is our power to always be thankful?)

1. Letting God take control

   a. God can control us when we are following Christ (Eph. 5:1-4) NOTE: V. 4 - Our tongue is not for foolish, unclean speech but for thanksgiving.

   b. God can control us when we are filled with His Spirit (Eph. 5:18-20)

      When the Spirit is in control we can do that which does not come naturally.

      Thanking God for trying, tough times does not come natural or easy. Even being thankful for good times and expressing it does not come natural.

Why should we thank God for everything? (What is our motive to always be thankful?)

2. Knowing God is in control

   a. Remember: God is in control in good times. TURN TO Col. 3:17.

      Because what we do for God is accomplished through the power of Jesus (Jn. 15:5), we are to thank God the Father by Jesus.

      (Even our power to thank God comes by means of Jesus).

   b. Remember: God is in control in hard times. TURN TO James 1:2ff.

      The trials we experience are for our spiritual maturity.

      1. God is teaching us about ourselves "Trying of your faith" = testing to prove genuineness.

      2. God is producing patience and completeness

CONCLUSION:

During the Iran war, on “Good Friday” April 3, 2026, after a seriously wounded weapons officer ejected from the F-15E fighter jet whose call sign was “Dude Bravo 44,” climbed a 7,000-foot ridge, hid in a crevice for safety and submitted a short, unusual message over the radio — “God is good,” a US defense official told Axios.
The soldier survived for nearly 48 hours in hostile territory before being rescued in a complex operation involving US special operations forces on “Resurrection Sunday” (April 5th).

V. 18

What God commands can only be done by those "in Christ Jesus" (believers).

An unbeliever does not have the desire or ability to rejoice, pray, and give thanks unconditionally.

"In Christ Jesus" = Our union with Christ gives us the ability to perform what God asks of us.

Remember, though it seems hard to be consistent in performing these activities, God never demands that which He does not give the power to perform.

This power comes only as you abide "in Christ."

Rom. 8:28 - "All things work together for good . . ."

"LISTEN, WHILE THE SPIRIT IS SPEAKING"

1 Thessalonians 5:19-22
4-15-2026

*** Every time you hear a message from the Word of God,**
YOU MUST LISTEN, WHILE THE HOLY SPIRIT IS SPEAKING!

2 Responsibilities that you must fulfill every time you hear a message:

I. ***You are Responsible to:***
ALLOW THE HOLY SPIRIT TO SPEAK TO YOU (v. 19-20)
(Listen with spiritual desire)

A. *We Allow Him to Speak by not:*
SMOTHERING HIS FIRE (v. 19)

B. *We Allow Him to Speak by not:*
BELITTLING HIS MESSAGE (v. 20)

II. ***You are Responsible to:***
MAKE SURE IT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAKING TO YOU (v. 21-22)
(Listen with spiritual discernment)

A. Before You Swallow it:
PUT IT TO THE TEST (v. 21a)

B. If it Passes the Test:
DON'T LET GO OF IT (v. 21b)

C. If it Fails the Test:
DON'T COME NEAR IT (v. 22)

"LISTEN, WHILE THE SPIRIT IS SPEAKING"

1 Thessalonians 5:19-22
4-15-2026

*** Every time you hear a message from the Word of God,**
YOU MUST LISTEN, WHILE THE HOLY SPIRIT IS SPEAKING!

2 Responsibilities that you must fulfill every time you hear a message:

I. ***You are Responsible to:***
_____ THE HOLY SPIRIT TO SPEAK TO YOU (v. 19-20)
(Listen with spiritual _____)

A. *We Allow Him to Speak by not:*
_____ HIS FIRE (v. 19)

B. *We Allow Him to Speak by not:*
_____ HIS MESSAGE (v. 20)

II. ***You are Responsible to:***
_____ IT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAKING TO YOU (v. 21-22)
(Listen with spiritual _____)

A. Before You Swallow it:
_____ (v. 21a)

B. If it Passes the Test:
_____ (v. 21b)

C. If it Fails the Test:
_____ (v. 22)

"LISTEN, WHILE THE SPIRIT IS SPEAKING"

1 Thessalonians 5:19-22

4-15-2026

INTRODUCTION:

Verses 16-22 appear at first to be a string of abrupt, unrelated commands with no theme or common point.

However, a closer look reveals that verses 16-18 have the theme of "consistency" being emphasized (in Gk., the emphasis is on the adjectives - "evermore" "without ceasing" "in everything").

Now verses 19-22 have a theme describing our attitude and responsibility to the message of the Holy Spirit.

Whereas v. 16-18 deal with our inner (private) spiritual life, verse 19-22 describe our outward (public) spiritual life (when we hear preachers proclaim God's Word).

If God has one command for His churches that He makes very clear, it is the command found 7 times to 7 churches in Revelation 2 & 3. At the end of each message to each church, jesus Christ says: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (cp. Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).

PROPOSITION: Every time you hear a message from the Word of God,
YOU MUST LISTEN, WHILE THE HOLY SPIRIT IS SPEAKING!

2 Responsibilities that you must fulfill every time you hear a message:

I. You are Responsible to:
ALLOW THE HOLY SPIRIT TO SPEAK TO YOU (v. 19-20)
(Listen with spiritual desire)

A. We Allow Him to Speak by not:
SMOTHERING HIS FIRE (v. 19)

"The Spirit" = the Holy Spirit of God.

"Quench" = to extinguish, or put out like you do a fire; to smother or stifle

The Spirit is likened unto a flame in Acts 2:3; and a purifying fire in Is. 4:4.

It is the Spirit who burns into our hard hearts with His convicting power (Luke 24:32). It is the Spirit who warms our cold hearts with His encouraging power.

He convicts and encourages by the Word (the Scriptures).

Many things can quench the Spirit's working in a church. Such as:

1. Sinful actions (on the part of members) (immorality, idleness, etc.) (Sin in the camp keeps God from working; EX: Achan's sin, Josh. 7)

2. Sinful attitudes (pride, self-righteousness; bitterness; anger)

3. Coldness
   --Mechanical singing, praying, and worshipping (The Spirit is not free to work; He is put in a box, confined)

   --Unfriendliness

**But the way He is quenched according to this context is by your having an apathetic attitude toward the preaching of the Sword of the Spirit (v. 20).

B. We Allow Him to Speak by not:
BELITTLING HIS MESSAGE (v. 20)

V. 20

"Despise" = to treat something lightly; to consider something to be nothing; to down-grade, or treat with contempt.

While N.T. prophets did foretell the future and proclaimed new revelation from God (Acts 11:27-28; 21:10-11), their primary function was like that of a Pastor: they exhorted (Acts 15:32) and proclaimed God's Word in simple language that everyone could understand (I Cor. 14).

Apparently, the Thessalonians -- who had welcomed Paul's message "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God" -- were rejecting their own prophets' (or pastors) messages.

Today, many will travel many miles to hear a noted Bible teacher or radio or TV preacher, but when their own pastor presents the same truths, they will turn him off (Walton, R.B.P., I Th., p. 63).

Disrespect for the preacher
Distrust in the preacher

--Some treat lightly what is said because they treat lightly the one who said it (disrespect). (They belittle the preacher because of his lack of degrees, his young age, etc.)

--Others treat lightly what is said, because of others who have spoken the Word in the past, but proved to be false prophets (distrust) (They close themselves off to all preaching because of others who failed).

Your attitude toward a meal affects how you will like the meal. EX: If you were told that _____ was a tremendous cook (her recipes were great, etc.), because you come with positive anticipations, the meal, though not perfect, will seem great to you!

If you come to church and expect nothing, you will get nothing.

If you come to church full of what the world gave you, you won't be hungry for what the Spirit can give you.

Your attitude toward a meal affects how others will like a meal. EX: Suppose you came to a banquet and a plate of spaghetti and meatballs sat right in the middle of a table.

1. How much would you eat if everyone else only ate 1 meatball?
2. How much would you eat if the others had a disgusting look on their faces as they took a bite?
3. Or what would you think of this so-called banquet if only a few guests showed up?

APPLICATION - Your hunger for the Word is catching; so is your indifferent, cold, uninterested attitude toward it.

1. When you come to church, others will know if you are hungry or not.

2. When you listen to a message and yawn or sleep through it, others will be turned off.

3. If you don't come, your absence will also affect others.

II. You are Responsible to:

MAKE SURE IT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAKING TO YOU
(v. 21-22)
(Listen with spiritual discernment)

While God wants us to be hungry to learn His truth, He does not want us to swallow it unless we are sure it is edible.

(ILLUS: baby's tend to eat anything and everything -- Warning to new Christian: Beware of what you eat!

A. Before You Swallow it:
PUT IT TO THE TEST (v. 21a)

V. 21

The Thessalonian believers seemed to be easily swayed or prone to accept anyone's doctrine without checking it out first with other Scripture.

Therefore, Paul showed concern about the stability of their faith, and had to warn them about deceivers and false doctrine that was floating around (II Th. 2:2-3).

NOTE: The early Church did not have a completed N.T., so they had to compare what they learned with the O.T. and the oral teaching of Christ and the Apostles. (Satan could more easily slip in false prophecies; therefore, people had to measure what was heard with the God-breathed standard!)

"Prove" = to test or examine what is spoken, to see if it is genuine truth.

You are to abound more and more "in knowledge and in all judgment (insight), that ye may approve things that are excellent" (Phil. 1:9-10).

We need spiritual discernment - especially in our day!

--New religious teachings are springing up
--More books are published than every before
--The world-wide media (TV & radio) is being used to promote much false doctrine.

All of the varieties of cults, religious, viewpoints, etc., don't surprise me because God has told us it would be this way in the last days.

I Tim. 4:1-2 - "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times

some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils: Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron"

II Tim. 4:3-4 - "For 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; And they shall turn away their own ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

God does not place a premium on ignorance!
"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man . . ." (Prov. 16:25)

The Bereans searched the Scriptures! (Acts 17:11)

We are to test the Spirits (SEE: I Jn. 4:1-3, 6)
(How: By comparing what we hear with the Word of God).

We don't trust a spirit by how it "looks" or how it "feels," but by what it says!

You test a spirit by putting it to the objective doctrinal test and a subjective emotional test!

Put everything you hear (messages, advice, counsel) to the acid test of Scripture!

NOT to the test of your likes and dislikes (don't accept it just because someone's doctrine may suit your lifestyle)

NOT to the test of what you heard in the past (what you learned previously may have been incorrect).

NOT to the test of your own theological presuppositions.

The Roman Catholic church deliberately kept men blind from the truth; ignorant of their mishandling of Scripture by telling the people: "You are not qualified to discern on your own; you cannot interpret without us, etc."

However, "in Christ" we all have the Holy Spirit who teaches us.

I Jn. 2:26-27 - "These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

(NOTE: This verse does not relieve us from being taught, going to church,

etc. What God is saying is that God's Spirit will teach you how to distinguish between truth and error. **The Holy Spirit also uses men to do this teaching with Him - Eph. 4:11-14).

How do you examine what you hear?
Follow these simple hermeneutical principles:
As you listen to a message, ask yourself:

1) Is this person interpreting this passage in a <u>normal</u> (literal) way, or is he making it say something it really does not say?

2) Is this interpretation supported by the <u>context</u>? (does his view follow the line of thought here?)

3) How does this teaching <u>compare with other Scripture</u> that I know? (does it contradict?)

B. If it Passes the Test:
<u>DON'T LET GO OF IT</u> (v. 21b)

God does not merely want us to approve what is good, but to hold firmly on to it and retain it (make it a part of your life).

Hold on to it like you would a precious gem that was examined and found genuine.

C. If it Fails the Test:
<u>DON'T COME NEAR IT</u> (v. 22)

In the Greek, we see that God deliberately sets up a contrast:

1) "Hold fast" ( ) the Good
2) "Hold off" ( ) the Evil

V. 22

"Abstain" = keep yourself away from; separate yourself.

God is not saying here: Don't do what "looks" like evil (EX: Don't drink soda out of a can because someone might think you are drinking beer).

While the principle is true that we should avoid appearing to do wrong even

though we actually are not (Rom. 14:16), this is not the point being made in this context.

God is saying: After you have proven (tested) someone's teaching, if it has any shade, form, or visible evidence of evil in it, "spit it out" and throw it away! Stay away from it.

We are to avoid doctrinal error no matter what form or appearance in which it may present itself.

False teaching may dress itself up in many various sizes, shapes, and colors (don't be deceived!).

The Holy Spirit only works with Truth!

--A book may veil itself in an attractive cover and title, but the Spirit can only use it if it has pure doctrine inside.

--A preacher may be eloquent and say many good things...

--A church may be large and have many attractive features . . . but all that matters is: Is the truth being taught?!

"The worse forms of wickedness consist of perversions of the truth, of spiritual lies." (Lenski, p. 370-71).

The most destructive sin is false doctrine, because it deals with your soul; your relationship to God; your present life, and your eternal destiny!

CONCLUSION:

Listening to God's Word is serious business.

You cannot be passive about it.

Every time you hear a message from the Word of God, you must listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying!

2 Responsibilities we must fulfill every time we hear a message:

1. You are responsible to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you

   --Don't smother His fire

   --Don't belittle His message

2. You are responsible to make sure it is the Holy Spirit speaking to you

   --Before you swallow it, put it to the test

   --If it passes the test, don't let go of it

   --If it fails the test, don't come near it

"WHOLLY HOLY"

I THESSALONIANS 5:23, 24

4-22-2026

*** ONLY GOD CAN MAKE US WHOLLY HOLY!**

(In verses 23 and 24, we find a prayerful desire for God to do for us what we cannot do alone)

I. GOD'S PART IN OUR BEING WHOLLY HOLY IS A <u>NECESSITY</u> (v. 23)
(We <u>need</u> God to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves)

A. WE MUST DEPEND UPON GOD TO <u>SANCTIFY</u> OUR <u>ENTIRE BEING</u> (v. 23a)

B. WE MUST DEPEND UPON GOD TO <u>PROTECT</u> <u>EACH ASPECT OF OUR BEING</u> (v. 23b)

II. GOD'S PART IN OUR BEING WHOLLY HOLY IS A <u>CERTAINTY</u> (v. 24)
(We <u>know</u> that God will do for us what we cannot do for ourselves)

A. OUR CONFIDENCE IS BASED UPON GOD'S <u>FAITHFULNESS</u>

B. OUR CONFIDENCE IS BASED UPON GOD'S <u>CALLING</u>

"WHOLLY HOLY"

I THESSALONIANS 5:23, 24

4-22-2026

*** ONLY GOD CAN MAKE US WHOLLY HOLY!**

(In verses 23 and 24, we find a prayerful desire for God to do for us what we cannot do alone)

I. GOD'S PART IN OUR BEING WHOLLY HOLY IS A _____ (v. 23)
(We <u>need</u> God to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves)

A. WE MUST DEPEND UPON GOD TO _____ OUR _____ (v. 23a)

B. WE MUST DEPEND UPON GOD TO _____ _____ (v. 23b)

II. GOD'S PART IN OUR BEING WHOLLY HOLY IS A _____ (v. 24)
(We <u>know</u> that God will do for us what we cannot do for ourselves)

A. OUR CONFIDENCE IS BASED UPON GOD'S _____

B. OUR CONFIDENCE IS BASED UPON GOD'S _____

"WHOLLY HOLY"

I THESSALONIANS 5:23, 24

4-22-2026

INTRODUCTION:

After Paul expressed our need to have spiritual discernment (and separate ourselves from every shade of evil - v. 21, 22), he now expands and shows us that in actuality God must be the One who separates us from all evil.

Paul expresses a hopeful prayer that God would make us "wholly holy" (v. 23, 24).

ILLUS: As children become more and more independent of us as parents, they are quick to learn the phrase: "I can do it." You try to help them and they respond: "No, let me do it."

Even as adults we are that way. We don't like being told how to do things. We often refuse help because of pride.

This independent spirit about us is due to our pride.

Our pride, however, deceives us into thinking we can do some things that we actually cannot do.

There are some things we can do and some things we cannot do.

Man has the potential to do virtually anything in the natural realm. He can invent, fly to the moon, build skyscrapers, etc.

Man cannot, however, save himself from death or hell, or remove his sin and condemnation before God. Praise God - God can do this for us.

We know salvation is all of God, not of our works, etc. But somehow we are deceived into thinking that we can manage our sanctification without God.

We know God has no other plan for men to be saved than to totally yield to and depend on Christ. But we fail to remember that God has no other plan for our practical every-day holiness than to totally yield and depend on Him!

Our salvation is all of God, and our sanctification is all of God.

All our efforts to live holy (separated) lives are futile without God!

*** ONLY GOD CAN MAKE US WHOLLY HOLY!**

(In verses 23 and 24, we find a prayerful desire for God to do for us what we cannot do alone)

I. GOD'S PART IN OUR BEING WHOLLY HOLY IS A NECESSITY (v. 23)

(We need God to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves)

A. WE MUST DEPEND UPON GOD TO SANCTIFY OUR ENTIRE BEING (v. 23a)

KJV - "And the very God..."

Greek - "Now may the God of peace Himself..."
(the word "Himself" is emphatically placed first in the sentence to put the emphasis on God)

Our holy living is in a sense our work ("Be ye holy for I am holy"0.

cp. II Cor. 7:1 - "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

NOTE: When we keep ourselves pure, it is God giving us the desire and ability to do so (Phil. 2:12, 13)

Our holy living is ultimately God's work -
Jesus sanctifies His church - Eph. 5:26, 27
The Holy Spirit sanctifies His church - Rom. 15:16
Now God the Father is sanctifying His church

"Wholly" means "entirely and completely."

The request is that God may do a thorough job of separating us from sin, and that God may do a complete job (a finished job) of separating us from sin.

When God does a work, He does it right, and He finishes it! We are foolish not to yield to Him daily for sanctification.

How many of us remember to ask God daily to sanctify us (set us apart from sin unto Himself)?

According to Jesus, this should be our prayer: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One" (Mt. 6:13).

Do you think God would do it? Sure He would, because this is His will! (I Thes. 4:3, with I Jn. 5:14-15).

God's will is our sanctification from sexual immorality (4:3-8).

Everything that is God's will for us, He is with us to accomplish it (cp. 3:13).

No area of our life should go untouched by God.

No door in our life should be closed to the hand of God.

Don't be satisfied with some parts of your life being holy, while being worldly in others.

Let God have control of everything!

God does <u>not</u> want part of you but <u>all</u> of you!

You can't say:

"God took away my whiskey . . . God doesn't mind my beer"

"God freed me from drugs . . . It's okay to smoke."

You can't be satisfied with God saving you from:

Idolatry . . . but hold on to covetousness

Thievery . . . but still be materialistic

Sexual immorality . . . but still have a lustful thought life.

B. WE MUST DEPEND UPON GOD TO <u>PROTECT</u> <u>EACH ASPECT OF OUR BEING</u> (v. 23b)

While the first word "wholly" referred to the whole self collectively, this word "whole" looks at the parts that make up the whole.

Does man have 3 aspects to his nature (trichotomous) or 2 (dichotomous)?

Scripture clearly reveals man to:

be physical and spiritual
be material and immaterial
have that which is seen and unseen

The Bible describes us as being "body and spirit" (Ja. 2:26; II Cor. 7:1), and "body and soul" (Mt. 10:28).

But here we are said to have body, soul, and spirit.

The question is: "What is the difference between soul and spirit?" -- "Is

there a difference?"

1. Yes, there is a difference. Proof:

   a. God does not use words without purpose (especially in this detailed context).

   b. The conjunction "and" in between each noun is the same -

   c. The word "whole" describes the parts or portions that make up the whole.

      = entire, whole
      = portion, assigned part or lot

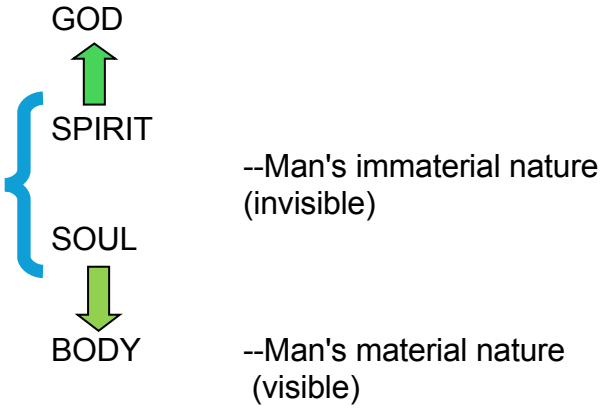
   d. God divides "soul and spirit" in Heb. 4:12 and I Cor. 2:14-15 and 15:44.

2. What is the difference?

   The "Spirit" is the immaterial (invisible) part of man that can relate to <u>God</u> (the spiritual realm).

   The "soul" is the immaterial part of man that relates to <u>this life</u> (the natural realm).

   The order (1. spirit 2. soul 3. body) is significant. The <u>highest</u> aspect of man is his spirit, the <u>lowest</u> is the body (which is corruptible - I Cor. 15).



   The word "spirit" does <u>not</u> refer to the Holy Spirit but to our spirit. God does not need to <u>keep</u> the Holy Spirit sanctified and preserved.

Some wrongly believe that man does not have a spirit until he is saved. This is not true (SEE Num. 16:22; Heb. 12:9).

All would be dead if they didn't have a spirit (Jms. 2:26).

All unsaved do have a spirit, the problem is that it is not working in relationship to God.

Our human spirit (since the fall when Adam died spiritually) is dead in its relation to God, but alive in its relation to man (to the natural realm) (SEE I Cor. 2:11).

In other words, an unsaved man can communicate and understand the thinking of another man, via his spirit. But only an saved man who has had his spirit brought to life in relation to God by the Holy Spirit can communicate and understand the thinking of God.

The word "soul" refers to the natural life of man. In the N.T. 40 times it is translated "life," 3 times mind, one time heart (in the KJV).

Our soul thinks, feels, and desires (Lk. 1:46, 2:35; Heb. 12:3). Our soul controls our desire to do things (it is closely related to our mind and heart; cp. Mt. 22:37; Eph. 6:6; Acts 4:32).

Our soul seems to be like a mediator between the spirit and body, receiving information from our spirit, responding to it, and then sending impulses to our body.

SPIRIT -- Our power to know and communicate with God
[NOTE: the "spirit" of unbelievers is “dead” in relation to God; whereas the believer’s spirit has been made alive in Christ and can now know and communicate with God]

SOUL -- Our life with its ability to think, feel, and choose (intellect, emotion and will). The “mind” operates here.

BODY -- Our material vessel that moves and responds to the impulses of the soul

The spirit controls the soul and the soul controls the body.

Note: Theologically man’s “heart” is the inner core of his being (the “control center”) from which the spirit/soul in combination operate.

1) What does it mean to have a sanctified and blameless spirit?

It means that nothing should be allowed in our life that would defile (dirty) our spirit, that would keep the Holy Spirit from talking to us via our spirit.

The Holy Spirit can "bear witness to our spirit" (Rom. 8:16).

When we sin, it has an affect on our spirit. It dulls our spiritual perception and our ability to understand Scripture.

Our only channel to God is through our spirit, so don't block the channel!

2) What does it mean to have a sanctified and blameless soul?

It means to let God set apart and protect our internal life (our ability to think, feel, and do). It is God controlling our motives, our thoughts, and our wants (desires).

God commands us to "abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (I Pet. 2:11).

3) What does it mean to have God sanctify and preserve our body?

It means for us to rely upon God to keep us from fornication (I Cor. 6:18), and from anything that would do damage or harm to these temples that belong to Him (I Cor. 6:19-20).

Why should we be holy and blameless in spirit, soul, and body?

Our wedding day in the clouds is coming. We are expecting our Groom, Jesus Christ.

Just as a groom has every right to a virgin (pure, chaste) bride at the wedding altar, Christ expects the same!

A beautiful parallel:

Just as it is a father's responsibility to do all in his power to keep his daughter(s) sanctified and preserved for their future husband (I Cor. 7:36-38), God (our heavenly Father) has taken it upon Himself to keep us pure before our wedding day with Christ at His coming!

II. GOD'S PART IN OUR BEING WHOLLY HOLY IS A CERTAINTY (v. 24)

(We know that God will do for us what we cannot do for ourselves)

A. OUR CONFIDENCE IS BASED UPON GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

Paul showed a similar confidence when he said to the Philippians: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1:6)

God is faithful to those He saves. Those whom He saves He makes persevere.

This does not mean we don't commit acts of sin from time to time (I Jn. 1:10); nor does it mean that we don't do battle with our old nature and sometimes lose (Rom. 7).

What it does mean is that a true believer when knocked down by blows of sin gets up again. He does not deny his faith! He does not return as a dog to its vomit or a pig to its mud (II Pet. 2:22).

B. OUR CONFIDENCE IS BASED UPON GOD'S CALLING

NOTE: Paul did not say that he was sure that God would sanctify the Thessalonians because he had prayed for them, but because of God's calling!

Those whom God calls out, He keeps out!

Jude closes his epistle with a similar statement about God: "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." (Jude 24-25).

(cp. Rom. 16:25)

CONCLUSION:

Only God can make us wholly holy!

1. God's part in our being wholly holy is a necessity.

2. God's part in our being wholly holy is a certainty.

Four Essentials We All Need

I Thessalonians 5:25-28

5-13-2026

INTRODUCTION:

***As a church, we must see the essentials that <u>all</u> of us need.**

In verses 25-28, we will see

4 essentials we <u>all</u> need:

I. All of us need:
THE _____ OF FELLOW-BELIEVERS (v. 25)

II. All of us need:
THE _____ OF FELLOW-BELIEVERS (v. 26)

III. All of us need:
THE _____ OF GOD (v. 27)

IV. All of us need:
THE _____ OF GOD (v. 28)

CONCLUSION:

Four Essentials We All Need

I Thessalonians 5:25-28

5-13-2026

INTRODUCTION:

***As a church, we must see the essentials that <u>all</u> of us need.**

In verses 25-28, we will see

4 essentials we <u>all</u> need:

I. All of us need:
THE <u>PRAYERS</u> OF FELLOW-BELIEVERS (v. 25)

II. All of us need:
THE <u>AFFECTION</u> OF FELLOW-BELIEVERS (v. 26)

III. All of us need:
THE <u>WORD</u> OF GOD (v. 27)

IV. All of us need:
THE <u>GRACE</u> OF GOD (v. 28)

CONCLUSION:

Four Essentials We All Need

I Thessalonians 5:25-28

5-13-2026

INTRODUCTION:

Last words are very important!

EX: Christ - "I am with you always..."
EX: A friend who says: "I'll be praying for you..."
EX: A mother who says: "Be careful."

*They are usually an expression of your heart.

(EX: When we write a letter, our closing remarks, promises, etc., are usually choice words and sincere words)

When we come to an end of a N.T. epistle, the tendency is to skim through the closing benediction without thinking about it. That should not be the case.

As Paul closes this letter, he does not waste words.

He succinctly describes four essentials that we all need. The emphasis is the idea of "all" - NOTE: "All" (v. 26); "All" (v. 27).

We all have needs (sometimes we are confused as to priority of needs; or in distinguishing needs from wants).

But all of us have needs. As a Christian, can you think of four things you need?

If you could think of 2 things you need from others and two things you need from God - what would come to your mind?

In any church, the four essentials that Paul lists in verses 25-28 must exist.

Without them we will have a powerless church, a cold (unfriendly) church, a heretical church, and a struggling church.

***As a church, we must see the essentials that all of us need.**

In verses 25-28, we will see

4 essentials we all need:

I. All of us need: THE PRAYERS OF FELLOW-BELIEVERS (v. 25)

"Brethren" = is emphatic (this is the only instance in the epistle when it is placed first in the sentence).

Not only should the need to pray compel us to our knees, but the fact that we are "brethren" should motivate us. That tie (bond) of Christian brotherhood should cause a sincere desire in us to pray for each other.

"Pray" = present tense, denoting continual prayer.
A practice or habit of praying.

The words "for us" - refers to Paul, Silvanus (Silas), and Timothy (1:1).

NOTE: How Paul begins each epistle assuring the readers that he prayed for them; now he asks for prayer support also, because no mortal is beyond the need for prayer!

Paul was an apostle, but he still needed prayer.

Paul was chosen by God for a special task, but he still needed prayer.

Paul is enjoying a prosperous ministry, but he still needed prayer.

The only one who never needed to ask anyone to pray for Him was Jesus Christ.

In the Garden, He asked Peter, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" (Mt. 26:40). But note: He then said, "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (v. 41).

Years ago, I never through it was necessary for me to pray for my pastor or Sunday school teacher.
After all, I had to pray for those who "really needed it": unsaved or "backslidden" relatives and acquaintances.
My thinking changed, however, when I began to understand the nature of the ministry; the importance of the pastor; the fact that even spiritual leaders at times face unpleasant experiences, internal struggles, discouragement, frustration with people, trials that test the faith, hindrances to studying the Word, etc.
What specifically would Paul, Silas, and Timothy need prayer about?

Cp. Paul's specific request -

--For his preaching:

SEE Eph. 6:18-20:

1. That God would <u>give him the **words to say**</u> (v. 19 - "utterance")

2. That God would give him the **<u>boldness</u>** to say it (v. 19b -20)

   SEE Col. 4:3-4:

3. That God would <u>open doors of opportunity</u> for him to speak (v. 3 - NOTE: Paul is in prison, desiring God to use him even in difficult circumstances).

4. That God would give him <u>clarity in his speaking</u> (v. 4 - "manifest" - to speak so that people can <u>clearly see</u> what you are saying; remember, Paul relied on God's power not his speaking ability - I Cor. 2:1-5).

In praying for my ministering of the Word, you should remember to pray about everything that would give credibility to the message I preach.

With people (pastors included) falling into immorality left and right, I urge you to ask God to put a hedge about me (I Tim. 4:16).

By your praying for your pastor, you are actually praying for yourself, because what God gives to me--in response to your prayers--I give back to you by the messages I preach and teach.

These preachers of the Gospel believed in the effectiveness (power) of prayer because:

1. They knew it was the means of gaining the <u>blessing of God</u>.

   Why was Paul so prosperous? The same way Spurgeon was: the <u>prayers</u> of the people.

   Paul was constantly asking people to pray for him - Rom. 15:30 - "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me"

   He said that through his trials the Corinthians were actually <u>"helping together</u> by prayer for us." (II Cor. 1:11).

   Why was Paul so successful and effective in his ministry? Was it because of his charisma? NO (Paul said "in presence [I] am <u>base</u> [lowly, timid] among you..." - II Cor. 10:1).

   Was it because of his preaching ability? NO (I Cor. 2:1-5).

   Was it because of all of his rabbinical training in the Scriptures? NO (Even though he was taught by the great Gamaliel - Acts 22:3).

   Paul depended, not on the flesh, not on zeal, not on his religious background (as a matter of fact, he considered all of that "dung" - Phil. 3:8).

He was a believer in prayer because he depended on God!

2. They believed in the effectiveness of prayer because they knew they wee in a battle with an enemy stronger than they were.

Paul "knew of no faster way to get the Gospel through enemy lines than by recruiting Christian converts into the secret service of prayer . . . He depended upon it as his basic weapon" (Cooper, cited in Hiebert, p. 256).

They knew the devil as a roaring lion was prowling around seeking someone to devour (I Pet. 5:8).

The need to be sober and vigilant in prayer is therefore a necessity!

Jesus said: "Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation."

II. All of us need:
THE AFFECTION OF FELLOW-BELIEVERS (v. 26)

ILLUS: Secular song of the early 1970's: "What the world needs now is love, sweet love."

"Greet" = to give a friendly welcome.

The word "kiss" = lit. an "expression of affection." From , which referred to the love or affection that friends have (a friendship love. EX: Jonathan and David; the Apostle John and Jesus; Lazarus and Jesus; Paul and Timothy).

Different cultures express friendship in different ways. The Italians hug; Americans shake hands; the Jews kiss on the cheek.

The "kiss" in the N.T. referred to:

1) a friendly sign of greeting where one would kiss another on the cheek.

a. The Rabbis were greeted this way (EX: Judas called Jesus "rabbi", then kissed Him - Mt. 26:48; Lk. 22:47)

b. It was to express your willingness to show hospitality to visitors (lk. 7:45).

2) The kiss also was an emotional sign of farewell - Lk. 15:20; Acts 20:37 (cf. DNTT, p. 548).

It is important to note that Paul qualifies the "kiss." A holy kiss." It is set apart from all impurity or sin. This means:

1. It is "not to be an expression of romantic love but of distinctly Christian love toward fellow believers" (Hiebert, p. 257).

NOTE: "Some believe that at this time the sexes were segregated in the church and the men greeted the men with a kiss and the women the women. (Falkner cited by Hiebert, p. 257; cp. also Vine's Exp. Dict. p. 296).

2. It was not to be a cold formality nor a hypocritical gesture that covered up one's true feelings.

In the N.T. there was an "absence of formality and hypocrisy, a freedom from

prejudice arising from social distinctions, from discrimination against the poor, from partiality toward the well-to-do. In the churches, masters and servants would thus salute one another without any attitude of condescension on the one part of disrespect on the other" (Vine, p. 296).

"All the brethren" = no one should be excluded from receiving gestures that show you care; to show your unity in Christ with them.

All would include - young, old, rich, poor, black, white, Spanish, English!

All would include even those Paul had to rebuke in this letter (4:11-12).

--A kiss shows that we are family
--A kiss shows that we are friends.
--A kiss shows that we are not distant, stand-offish, as is so often the case in fundamental churches in our country.

Should we greet each other with an expression of affection? Yes. Does it have to be a kiss on the cheek? No. But nothing is wrong with this so long as it is a "holy" kiss.

The problem is that in our culture, a kiss always has sexual connotations. In our city, you don't know if the one you are kissing has a communicable disease (Ex: AIDS).

The point being made is that, however we express it, we must be letting each other know that we care about each other! That we have feelings for each other. ours is the "church with a heart."

III. All of us need:
THE WORD OF GOD (v. 27)

"I Charge you" = to bind by an oath. Paul is saying: "I am telling you with all seriousness, promise me that you will have this letter read to everyone."

This word for "charge" is only used here in the N.T. - This command shows the extreme importance of this letter; for you see, this epistle (like the other epistles of Paul) was not just an ordinary letter!

They are the inspired words of God, and the people were to accept it as such! (SEE I Thes. 2:13).

"By the Lord" = supports again the authority behind Paul's command, and justifies the authoritative nature of this letter!

Paul wanted it read to all because he wanted no one to miss its message. If the letter was passed from hand to hand, some people might have been omitted, or others possibly could not read it for themselves (Hiebert, p. 258).

NOTE: Paul did not say: "Quote it, summarize it, expand upon it, put your own ideas into it" etc. but "Read it; and read it to all!"

Bible Christianity recognizes that the Word of God is for all, its principles are for all, its truths are for all!

The Scriptures were not limited to the "clergy." The Bible's message is not secret. The written Word of God does not require a special person to interpret it or properly understand it (unlike the practice of the Roman Catholic church).

God's Word is to all and for all.

None of us can "make it" without the Word of God!

In the same way a marriage will not remain stable if communication is blocked, a Christian's fellowship with God will suffer without a daily reading and meditating on the Word.

In the same way, your physical health is maintained by a daily consumption of balanced meals, your spiritual health depends on your daily intake of the Word.
Mt. 4:4 - "But He answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."
I Pet. 2:2 - "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby"
Job. 23:12 - "Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food."

IV. All of us need: THE GRACE OF GOD (v. 28)

Paul's inspired letters did not end with a mere "Farewell" (cp. Acts 15:29) or "See you soon." They focused on God! They focused on the greatest need of man - the grace of God.

In all of Paul's epistles, he begins and ends by referring to the grace of God.

The "grace of Christ" was, you might say, the front and back cover of his books. Grace is, in a sense, the bread that surrounded the meat on the inside of the sandwich.

The grace of Christ is "the alpha and omega of Paul's letters." (Hiebert, p. 260).

NOTE: Every time Paul closes a letter by saying "Grace be with you," it is always the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.
(Exceptions: Col. 4:18, I Tim. 6:20; II Tim. 4:22 - where He just says "Grace be with you.")

Why is it always the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ?

God's grace only comes through Christ!

All of the blessings God ever gives to anyone come from the second Person of the Triune Godhead.

NOTE: Paul is writing to believers who have already experienced the saving grace of God.

God's grace is not merely needed by the lost but by the saved.

God's grace does not come only to gain salvation, but to live out your salvation (Phil. 2:12-13).

Eternal life is not the only gift Christ gives to us who don't deserve it; but abundant life comes to His children also!

We all need His grace day by day!

As the hymn goes, "I Need Thee Every Hour"

What greater blessing could we wish on anyone than the grace of Jesus?

What greater prayer request could we pray for someone than the grace of Christ?

What greater conversation could you have with anyone, than to share how gracious our Lord Jesus is?

CONCLUSION:

A church can go without bulletins on Sunday, picnics, banquets, and dinners, a library or bookstore, or even a beautiful building to meet in.

But we cannot go without

1) Prayer
2) Affection
3) The Word of God
   &
4) The grace of God!

"THE BLESSINGS OF TRIBULATION"

2 Thessalonians 1:1-5

6-3-2026

INTRODUCTION: V. 1 – 2

***Realize that hardship, trouble, persecution, trials, and any other form of Tribulation can <u>benefit</u> you!**

What happens when we successfully endure Tribulation?

I. We <u>GROW</u> in our faith and love (v. 3)
(God can use tribulations to <u>expand</u> [increase] His grace in us)

II. We <u>SHOW</u> others a model to follow (v. 4)
(God can use tribulations to <u>exemplify</u> [exhibit/display] His grace in us)

III. We <u>KNOW</u> that we are citizens of God's Kingdom (v. 5)
(God can use tribulations to <u>certify</u> [confirm] His grace in us)

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(God can use tribulations to _____ [confirm] His grace in us)

"THE BLESSINGS OF TRIBULATION"

2 Thessalonians 1:1-5

6-3-2026

INTRODUCTION: V. 1 – 2

I and II Thessalonians are known as the eschatological epistles of Paul.

"All of II Thes. centers around the truth of the second coming of Christ." (Hiebert, p. 263)

The Thessalonian church suffered intense oppositions for their faith (SEE: I Thes. 2:14, 3:2-4; II Thes. 1:4-5).

The persecution grew so bad for the poor Thessalonians that they thought they were living in the Tribulation and that the Day of the LORD was at hand (2:2); such a prospect caused confusion (2:2) and caused others to quit working so as to spend their time waiting for Christ's return (3:5-13).

V. 1

"Paul" - the Apostle with the help of Silas and Timothy was used of God to plant the church at Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-14). These missionaries were then forced to leave the church and found it difficult to get back into Thessalonica because of Satan's hindrances (I Thes. 2:180. Eventually Timothy was sent to find out how the church was going, and the report he brought back to Paul was thrilling! He reported how their faith had kept them faithful through all sorts of tribulation and how they grew in the Lord (I Thes. 3:1-8).

Silvanus is a variant name for Silas who began travelling and working with Paul on his second missionary journey (Acts 15:22-18:5).

"In God our Father" - Every church, like that of Thessalonica, belongs not to man or men, nor to a denominational headquarters, but belongs to God and is *"in God"* == meaning that the saved people are related to God, joined to God and safe in God.

A Biblical church belongs to the Father and the Son. The triune Godhead possesses, controls, fills, empowers, directs and protects the Bride of Christ.

"And the Lord Jesus Christ" - An indication of the Deity of Christ

The Church (saved saints) is not only in God the Father but also in God the Son. You see, to be in Christ is to be in God, and vice-versa. To have Christ is to have God; to not have Christ is to not have God.

V. 2

"Grace to you" - God's grace (unmerited kindness and favor) is not only needed by the lost but also by the saved. We are dependent on God's grace to save us and to keep us; to give us eternal life and to empower us for daily life.

"And peace" - peace is a result of grace. Paul's order is always grace before peace (cp. Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; Ro. 1:7; Phm. 1:3; cp. I Pet. 1:2) - perhaps because no one can experience the peace of God until they first have the grace of God.

The peace of God is the serenity, calmness of soul, and blessed comfort that God gives to His own by grace.

NOTE: Such peace would be especially needed by a church (like Thessalonica) that was in a "pressure cooker" filled with the heat and difficulty of Tribulation.

NOTE: Not only is *"God our Father"* the source of grace and peace but *"the Lord Jesus Christ"* is as well. How can Jesus be the One who gives grace and peace? Reason: He is equal in essence to the Father, and anything the Father gives, He gives <u>through</u> His Son. Christ is the means by which we tap into all of God's blessings!

Persecution should not come as a shock to God's people, since Jesus warned us *"in the world ye shall have tribulation"*

Jesus said: Matthew 5:11 - *"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."*

Paul said: Phil. 1:29 - *"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake."*

Peter said: I Pet. 4:12 - *"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you."*

The question is this: Can anything good come out of tribulation? Is it really beneficial?

We can defeat Satan and gain victory over his attempts to defeat us by persecution, when we instead see the good benefits caused by such trouble and <u>praise God</u> for it!

***Realize that hardship, trouble, persecution, trials, and any other form of Tribulation can <u>benefit</u> you!**

What happens when we successfully endure Tribulation?

I. We GROW in our faith and love (v. 3)
(God can use tribulations to expand [increase] His grace in us)

"We are bound" - we are obligated; we owe it to God.

The reason why god must be thanked is because He is the One who granted the Thessalonians their salvation,a nd He is the One who is active in their sanctification.

Do you ever thank God for what He does in the lives of others?

"As it is meet" - It is appropriate, fitting, a worthy act of appreciation (Ps. 92:1 - *"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High"*)

"Because" - Paul's reason for thanking God always (even after someone's salvation) is because of the great work God does in those who belong to Him.

The Apostle thanks God specifically for 2 things that the Lord gave to the Thessalonian Christians: He thanks God for their

1) *"faith"*
and
2) *"charity"* (love)

While tribulation does cause one's true colors to show, such afflictions don't have to dampen our faith or dry up our love; these virtues can actually be enhanced by such hardship.

"Your faith" - One's faith is the crux of the Christian life. The quality of your Christian life can be measured by the greatness of your faith.

Paul had previously been very concerned about the faith of the Thessalonians and was comforted to hear how strong it remained (I Th. 3:2-7, 10).

"Groweth exceedingly" - their faith had grown abundantly; literally - over and beyond normal [average] proportions.

1) Your faith is not static (it has the potential for change)

2) Your faith should never level off or go down, but should increase

   "Faith, like a muscle, must be exercised to grow stronger. Tribulation and persecution are God's ways to strengthen our faith" (Wiersbe, p. 125).

3) Your faith can grow even in adverse circumstances

   In fact, rarely does one's faith grow without hardships, trials, oppositions, etc.

"An easy life can lead to a shallow faith. The great men and women of faith in Hebrews 11 all suffered in one way or another" (Wiersbe, p. 125)

I believe one of the reasons why God allows trials is to refine our faith (I Pet. 1:7 - *"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."*)

Another reason is to show us the genuineness of it (Ja. 1:2-3 - *"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience."*)

"A faith that cannot be tested cannot be trusted" (Wiersbe, p. 125)

How can tribulation increase our faith?

1. Tribulation reminds us of the Bible truth that we have an adversary (I Pet. 5:8)

2. Tribulation shows us our desperate need for God's help (strength and power)

3. Tribulation drives us into the Arms of our Heavenly Father

4. Tribulation helps us see things in perspective and live for things above (not temporal but eternal)

5. Tribulation helps us see God's faithfulness as He gives comfort and deliverance

"Charity" - (agape - sacrificial, giving love)

The love was reciprocal (a mutual, unselfish giving one toward another).

Each member (***"everyone"***)

All members loved each other ***("you all")***

"Charity . . . aboundeth" - their love increased

This word "abound" means to increase or become greater in quantity.

How does love grow in quantity?

It's easy to understand how love can grow in quality (it becomes more unselfish, more unconditional, more sacrificial, etc.).

But how can love grow numerically in quantity?

1) You express it more often
2) You express it to more people

How can love increase in the midst of persecutions and tribulations?

*Tribulation creates needs and needs provide opportunity for others to meet their needs

(One of the "curses" of an affluent society is that there exists fewer opportunities to tangibly show that you care for someone)

When no one is hurt, no one is needed to help.

When no one is needy, no one is needed to give.

When no one is suffering, no one is needed to comfort.

(EX: When someone is ill or suffering material need, that is a golden opportunity to let them know you care)

I believe one of the reasons why God allows trials in people's lives (misfortunes, physical injury, sickness, and accidents, losses etc.) is to give us a chance (a chance we would not ordinarily have) to come to the rescue, to come to the aid -- to simply come! And offer practical help (I Jn. 3:18 - *"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.")*

II. We SHOW others a model to follow (v. 4)
(God can use tribulations to exemplify [exhibit/display] His grace in us)

"So that" - with the result that

The tremendous expansion of the Thessalonians' faith and love in the heat of battles (in the midst of fiery trials) gave Paul and His associates an opportunity to testify and glory in what God was doing in their lives.

Whereas Paul help up the churches of Macedonia for their sacrificial giving (II Cor. 8:1-6) and the church at Corinth for their ambitious zeal (II Cor. 9:2) to provoke others to do the same, he now holds up Thessalonica as a model of endurance under pressure.

"In the churches of God" - As Paul traveled to various churches, he held up the Thesslonian church as a model of endurance and faith.

"Patience" - the ability to remain under or bear up under pressure without caving in, blowing up, or giving up.

"Faith" - Full dependance (reliance, trust) ont he Word of God, and the faithfulness of God.

"<u>All</u> your persecutions" - There was no persecution too great that could shake their faith or crumble their endurance.

"Persecutions" - This word means to <u>pursue</u> someone with the intent of doing them injury. It means to hunt down, causing the pursued to flee.

"Tribulations" - This word refers tot he intense <u>pressures</u> that come upon someone when they experience affliction and trouble.

III. We <u>KNOW</u> that we are citizens of God's Kingdom (v. 5)
(God can use tribulations to <u>certify</u> [confirm] His grace in us)

"Which is" - An implied reference to the unjust persecution and tribulation that is

wrongly fired at God's people by the unsaved.

The point is this: Their unjust treatment of you will show God's judgment of them to be just. Their wrongs will vindicate God's righteous judgment of them.

"Manifest token" - clear evidence; plain proof; undeniable indication

When God judges those who have mistreated, abused, tormented, betrayed, etc., His people, the evidence brought up against them will be undeniable!

God's severe yet righteous judgment to fall upon the "Beast" (Antichrist) worshippers (Rev. 14:9-11) will be a great incentive for God's people to remain patient through severe Tribulation (Rev. 14:12-13).

This mistreatment endured by God's people will not only condemn those who did it, but it will confirm those who received it.

In other words, God may allow you to receive persecution for your faith with a goal (*"eis")* toward you being proven worthy or declared worthy of the Kingdom of God (SEE: I Peter 4:12-14).

Your endurance of unjust suffering is God's way of showing you that you indeed are worthy (via God's grace) to enter His heaven!

Paul is not teaching us that enduring suffering will earn you eternal life, but that enduring suffering will demonstrate that you have eternal life.

Your faithfulness will demonstrate your worthiness to receive what is already yours.

CONCLUSION:

"PAYDAY - SOMEDAY"

2 Thessalonians 1:5-10

6-10-2026

INTRODUCTION:

***Those who bring tribulation upon God's people (v. 4) will be paid back some day.**

I. The <u>JUSTICE</u> of God's Payday (v. 5, 6)

II. The <u>EXEMPTION</u> from God's Payday (v. 7)

III. The <u>GROUNDS</u> for God's Payday (v. 8)

IV. The <u>SEVERITY</u> of God's Payday (v. 9)

A. Eternal <u>destruction</u>

B. Eternal <u>abandonment</u>

C. Eternal <u>hopelessness</u>

V. The <u>TIMING</u> of God's Payday (v. 10)

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6-10-2026

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I. The _____ of God's Payday (v. 5, 6)

II. The _____ from God's Payday (v. 7)

III. The _____ for God's Payday (v. 8)

IV. The _____ of God's Payday (v. 9)

A. Eternal _____

B. Eternal _____

C. Eternal _____

V. The _____ of God's Payday (v. 10)

"PAYDAY - SOMEDAY"

2 Thessalonians 1:5-10

6-10-2026

INTRODUCTION:

SEE: II Thes. 1:4-5

God's persecuted and martyred saints have long asked the question: *"How long O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"* (Rev. 6:10).

One day the tables will be turned. And the oppressor will become the oppressed. The troubler will be troubled. The hunter will be hunted.

***Those who bring tribulation upon God's people (v. 4) will be paid back some day.**

I. The <u>JUSTICE</u> of God's Payday (v. 5, 6)

The key thought of verses 5-11 centered around the word *"righteous."*

[*Righteous* (v. 5). . . *righteous* (v. 6) . . . *vengeance* - lit. that which proceeds from righteousness (v. 8) . . . *punished* - lit. to endure a righteous sentence or penalty (v. 9)]

Paul's point is that God will be totally righteous when His "payday" arrives; when His judicial wrath is unleashed upon the deserving world.

V. 5

***"Manifest token"* =** clear, undeniable proof, indisputable evidence.

One day (in the Day of the Lord), God will be perfectly just and right to punish those who tormented His people (v. 4).

V. 6

It is right (morally and legally correct and just) for God to repay affliction (*"tribulation"*) to those who afflicted *("caused tribulation to")* His saints.

Intense pressure awaits those who intensely pressured God's people. They troubled you, God will trouble them. They persecuted you, God will persecute them.

The recompense (payback or repay) will be deserved.

NOTE: Paul does not call upon the Thessalonians to "get even" (pay back) those who troubled them, but he calls upon them to realize that God would vindicate them, God will defend, God will straighten the records, God will balance the account. Romans 12:19 - *"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."*

The law of Sowing & Reaping is always ultimately upheld and fulfilled. God will see to it that no one will escape this law.

God's law of compensation: "Pharaoh tried to drown all the male babies born to the Jews, and his own army was drowned in the Red Sea. Haman plotted to wipe out the Jews, and he and his own sons were wiped out. The advisors of King Darius forced him to arrest Daniel and throw him into a lions' den, but later they themselves were thrown to the lions. The unbelieving Jewish leaders who sacrificed Christ in order to save the nation (See John 11:49-53) in a few years saw their city destroyed and their nation scattered.

In Rev. 20:11-15 several facts point to a righteous judgment (at the Great White Throne, which will occur 1,000 years after the fulfillment of the second coming):

1. The purity of the throne and judge (v. 11)
2. The impartiality of the judgment (v. 12a)
3. The evidence in the books (v. 12b)
4. The works of the sinners (v. 12c, 13)

II. The EXEMPTION from God's Payday (v. 7)

In verse 7 God contrasts the end for the saints with the end of the sinners (v. 6).

"To them" will be ***"tribulation"*** (v. 6), but ***"to you"*** will be ***"rest"*** (relaxation) (v. 7).

This same contrast is found in Rev. 14 - wrath for sinners (v. 9-11)
rest for saints (v. 12-13)

"Rest with us" - the Thessalonians were told that they would rest with Paul, Silas, and Timothy. While the Godless (Beast-worshipping) world will be enduring the fury of God (trumpet and bowl judgments), the Godly ("saved") will be enjoying rest, peace, and relaxation. At the very time (the exact day) that the believers' Tribulation ends, the unbelievers' Tribulation begins!

"Rest" -"The word carries the picture of the loosening or relaxing of a taut bowstring; hence suggests the through of relief through the relaxing of tension or pressure." (Hiebert, p. 287).

What will be the occasion for this rest (cessation from trouble)?

Answer: *"When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed"* (*apokalupsis* - unveiled) -- THE RAPTURE!

[The word *apokalupsis* is used preeminently of the Rapture -

> I Cor. 1:7 - "So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."
>
> I Pet. 1:7, 13 - That the trying of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. . . Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."
>
> I Peter 4:13 - "But 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."
>
> Luke 17:30 - "Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."

"The cessation of affliction for believers will be brought about by a supernatural invasion from outer space by the righteous Judge" (Hiebert, p. 287-288)

One reason why the *"blessed hope"* (Titus 2:13) is so blessed is because that even will mark the end of unjust suffering for God's people.

God's people, though they may endure the wrath of man (or Satan via Antichrist - Rev. 12; Lk. 21:23) are exempt from the wrath of God. (I Th. 1:10 - *"And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."* I Th. 5 9 - *"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ"*)

Why would God give the suffering Thessalonians a promise of the Rapture if God knew that the Rapture would not occur at the time they lived?

Answer: Because God knew that a host of saints (who would suffer in like manner as the Thessalonians) would live in the future and need this promise of Rapture and retribution of their oppressors.

The promise of deliverance (Rapture) shows that this Epistle had a much wider application and was to reach a much wider audience than the Thessalonian church.

This letter to Thessalonica is to <u>you</u>!

"With His mighty angels" - At the Rapture, Christ will employ the power of angels to gather His elect (Mt. 24:31 - *"And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."*).

Enoch prophesied that *"the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints"* (Holy ones - perhaps angels) (Jude 14).

III. The <u>GROUNDS</u> for God's Payday (v. 8)

"In flaming fire" - This phrase shows how Christ will give back vengeance when He returns. His vengeance will be by fire!

He whose eyes are as a *"flame of fire"* (Rev. 1:14; 2:18; 19:12) will personally judge the lost of the world by fire.

People's bodies will actually melt at the Battle of Armageddon because of the intense heat.

> Is. 30:26 - "Moreover the light of the mood shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be seven-fold, as the light of seven days, in the Day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people and healeth the stroke of their wound."
>
> Is. 66:15-16 - "For behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh; and the slain of the LORD shall be many."
>
> Zech. 14:12 - "And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away int heir mouth."
>
> Rev. 16:9 - "And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory."
>
> Cp. Micah 1:3-5

"Fire" - SEE: II Peter 3:10-12

When Jesus purges His floor (the world) and gathered the wheat (Christians) into His barn, He will *"burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire"* (Mt. 3:12).

The Antichrist also will be destroyed by the brightness of His coming (II Th. 2:8).

"Vengeance" - The word literally means *"that which flows out of righteousness"*

"On them" - Paul is describing those unbelievers who tormented His people who will be alive at the return of Christ.

Two phrases describe the unbelievers:

1) *"They know not"*
2) *"They believe not"*

"Know not" - perfect participle - They did not know God and still (at the time of Judgment) do not.

The word *"know"* (*oida*) refers to a full knowledge; an intimate knowledge that one has toward someone he has a personal relationship with (cp. Mt. 25:12). Whereas the other word for *"know"* (*ginosko*) refers to a progressive comprehension or mental understanding of something.

Oida means to "know," whereas *ginosko* means to "know about."

All people "know about" God (cp. Ro. 1:18-20, 2:14), but not all "know" God.

Perceptual knowledge differs from personal knowledge.

"And" **-** Should be understood in the sense of "even."

Paul describes the <u>same</u> people from two angles. They both do not know God nor do they submit to His Gospel. The only way one can ever get to know God is if they bow the knee to His Gospel.

"They are ignorant of God because they have deliberately rejected the knowledge of His offered in the Gospel" (Hiebert, p. 290).

"Obey" **-** lit. to listen with submissiveness. This word refers to someone who has a tender heart to hear and need (respond to) the Gospel.

"Obey not" **-** the present tense indicates that this refusal to submit to the Gospel was a willful and continual characteristic of their lives.

"The Gospel of our Lord Jesus" **-** Two possible meanings:

1. It's a Gospel <u>about</u> Him
   (i.e. about His substitutionary death and bodily resurrection - I Cor. 15:3-5)

2. It is <u>His</u> Gospel
   (the Gospel is His message)

POEM: "You Call Me LORD"

IV. The <u>SEVERITY</u> of God's Payday (v. 9)

"Punished" - to pay a righteous sentence or a just penalty.

Since God is just, He will not give an unbeliever less or more than his guilt deserves.

Anyone who says that they don't believe that a "God of love" could send anyone into "hell" either does not understand the justice of God or the enormity of sin. (ILLUS: Wiersbe, p. 130 - A Christian doctor tried repeatedly to witness to a very moral woman patient who thought God was too loving to condemn people or make a place of fire. Then the woman developed cancer and needed surgery. The doctor entered her hospital room and said, "I wonder if I really should operate. I love you too much to cut into you and give you pain." The patient quickly answered, "If you really loved me, you would do everything possible to save me. How could you let this awful cancer remain in my body?" It was easy then for the Christian doctor to explain that what cancer is to the body, sin is the world. And both must be dealt with radically and completely. Just as a physician cannot love health without hating disease and dealing with it, so God cannot love righteousness without hating sin and judging it.)

"Everlasting" - eternal, never ending, lit. into the ages of ages

Cp. Mt. 25:41 - *"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."*

The righteous sentence of God will be so severe because it will involve these 3 horrible features:

--Eternal <u>destruction</u>
--Eternal <u>abandonment</u>
--Eternal <u>hopelessness</u>

A. Eternal <u>destruction</u>

"Destruction" = utter ruin and death. To be "dead" forever.

To be "without the life of God" forever

When we picture something being destroyed, we think of a demolition or something being broken down so that it is ruined -- of no use. Many things, though wrecked and ruined, can be reconstructed again. These lost souls, however, are pictured as demolished never to be rebuilt; broken down never to be renewed; consciously dead never more to live.

B. Eternal <u>abandonment</u>

"From" - lit. away from (*apo*)

The picture is of something being removed away from one's presence (EX: the heaven and earth flee from His holy face - Rev. 20;11).

"From the presence of the LORD" - Away from the face of the Lord.

Question: If the Lord is omnipresent, how can anyone be removed from His presence? Answer:

--They are forever removed from His <u>presence to help</u> (now He is a "*very present help in trouble"* - Ps. 46:1).

--They are forever removed from His <u>grace and mercy</u> (*"Now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation"*)

C. Eternal <u>hopelessness</u>

"<u>From</u> the glory" = away from

"His strength" = power, might, sheer muscle.

The word glory tied to strength points to the beauty of His strength and the praise He will receive for exercising His strength.

Though Christ has all strength (Rev. 5:12) to save, His strength will be forever restrained from delivering the condemned souls who rejected His gracious gospel.

Though God has all power (omnipotent - Rev. 19:6), His righteousness will prevent Him from using His power to save t hose who ignore or rebel against His plan of salvation.

Once trapped in the Day of the Lord, *"They shall not escape"* (I Th. 5:3).

V. The <u>TIMING</u> of God's Payday (v. 10)

"When" (*hotan*) - This adverb describes the phrase *"shall be punished"* (v. 9) and gives the timing of that awful punishment.

They will be punished <u>when</u> Jesus comes for His saints.

The wicked do not always receive their just payment immediately or in this life.

But payday will not tarry forever. Sin will pay its wages eventually.

ILLUS: the two farmers (Wiersbe, p. 129)

The word "<u>when</u> plus the <u>subjunctive</u>" (meaning: "whenever He may come") - indicates that the time is undetermined and unknown.

"When He comes" - the "coming" is referring to Christ's return immediately after the Rapture.

The return marks the time when Christ will be glorified by His saints and marvelled ("admired") by His saints.

"Christ will be glorified when it is openly displayed what He has wrought in His saints, now assembled with Him in glorified bodies" (Rom. 8:17, 30) (Hiebert, p. 293).

As God's saints see Him face to face and as they see His awesome power they will admire Him (marvel at Him, be struck with awe at Him).

"<u>All</u> them" - all believers of all ages will wonder at Christ when He returns

(This will be one spectacular scene that no believer will miss!)

The Thessalonian Christians who will be raptured will join you and me for an unbelievable display of Christ's glory and power.

"In that day" - i.e. the day when Jesus comes - the Day of the Lord.

Only "them that believe" will admire Him, the rest will tremble before Him; they will seek to hide from Him (Rev. 6:16).

CONCLUSION:

"INTERCESSORY PRAYER"

II Thessalonians 1:11-12
6-17-2026

***We need to intercede on behalf of believers!**

I. <u>HOW</u> do I intercede? (v. 11a)
(The <u>manner</u> of our praying)

A. Pray <u>purposefully</u>

B. Pray <u>continually</u>

C. Pray <u>specifically</u>

II. <u>WHAT</u> do I intercede about? (v. 11b)
(The <u>content</u> of our praying)

Pray that:
A. God's children would <u>measure up</u> to the great salvation God called them to.

Pray that:
B. God's children would <u>accomplish</u> the good <u>will</u> of God

Pray that:
C. God's children would <u>accomplish</u> the good <u>work</u> of God

III. <u>WHY</u> do I intercede? (v. 12)
(The <u>motive</u> behind our praying)

*Christ's <u>glory</u> is the goal of our prayers. How is He glorified?

A. By what <u>He</u> does in <u>you</u>

B. By what <u>you</u> do in <u>Him</u>

IV. <u>WHAT</u> do I rely on as I intercede?
*God's <u>grace</u> is the power of our prayers.

"INTERCESSORY PRAYER"

II Thessalonians 1:11-12
6-17-2026



***We need to intercede on behalf of believers!**

I. **<u>HOW</u> do I intercede? (v. 11a)**
(The <u>manner</u> of our praying)

A. Pray _____

B. Pray _____

C. Pray _____

II. **<u>WHAT</u> do I intercede about? (v. 11b)**
(The <u>content</u> of our praying)

Pray that:
A. God's children would _____ _____ to the great salvation God called them to.

Pray that:
B. God's children would <u>accomplish</u> the good _____ of God

Pray that:
C. God's children would <u>accomplish</u> the good _____ of God

III. **<u>WHY</u> do I intercede? (v. 12)**
(The <u>motive</u> behind our praying)

*Christ's _____ is the goal of our prayers. How is He glorified?

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B. By what <u>you</u> do in <u>Him</u>

IV. **<u>WHAT</u> do I rely on as I intercede?**

*God's _____ is the power of our prayers.

"INTERCESSORY PRAYER"

II Thessalonians 1:11-12
6-17-2026

INTRODUCTION:

Prayer unites puny man to the omnipotent God.

Prayer is:
most essential, the most needed thing, yet the most neglected

*The most important person in your church is the one who prays the most

*The most influential person in your church in the one who prays the most

Definition "intercessory Prayer" -

To "intercede" is to meet with God, and to plead on behalf of others.

The Holy Spirit intercedes for us - Rom. 8:27.

Jesus Christ intercedes for us - Rom. 8:34.
Lk. 22:32c - "I have prayed for them"
Heb. 7:25 - "He ever liveth to make intercession for them"

As Baptists, we believe in the "priesthood of the believer" - we all can approach God on behalf of each other.

Intercessory prayers are found throughout the Scriptures:

Abraham prayed for Abimelech (Gen. 20:7).
Moses prayed for Israel (Ex. 32:11-14; Num. 14:11-21).
Moses prayed for Aaron (Deut. 9:20).
Samuel prayed for Israel (I Sam. 7:5-8 *I Sam. 12:23)
David prayed for Israel (Ps. 25:22, 28:9).
Job prayed for his family (Job 1:5) and friends (42:8, 10).
Israel prayed for Babylon (Jer. 29:7).
Daniel prayed for Israel (Dan. 9:3-19).
Jesus Christ prayed for all believers. (Jn. 17)

Whom should we intercede for?
"For all men" (I Tim. 2:1)

--Political leaders (v. 2-3)
(Mayor, governor, senators, President)

--Unsaved people (v. 4)
Paul prayed for his people Israel to be saved (Rom. 10:1).

--Your enemies (Mt. 5:44)
EX: Stephen Acts 7:60 - "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge"

--Especially pray for fellow-believers (Eph. 6:18)
Pray for physical and spiritual healing (Ja. 5:14-f)

Why should we intercede?

"Help, LORD, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men" (Ps. 12:1).

None of us is exempt from our need for other's prayers.

Prayer support is needed even by spiritual leaders.

Paul needed it - Rom. 15:30-32, II Cor. 1:11, Eph. 6:19-20; I Th. 5:25, II Th. 3:1 (cp. Heb. 13:18).

The only One who never needed prayer was Jesus Christ.

"Pray for us" (Heb. 13:18).

***We need to intercede on behalf of believers!**

I. HOW do I intercede? (v. 11a)
(The manner of our praying)

A. Pray purposefully

"Wherefore" - lit. unto this end (NASV); toward this goal

The "wherefore" evidently refers back to vv. 3-4. In light of their salvation and growth in the midst of trials and tribulations, the missionaries prayed for them.

B. Pray continually

"Always" - Paul, Silas, and Timothy had a regular, habitual, consistent, and continual pattern of praying for the Thessalonians.

C. Pray specifically

The word ***"you"*** is emphatic.

"For you" - the prayer was not a general or vague request, but was specific and personal.

II. WHAT do I intercede about? (v. 11b)
(The content of our praying)

"that" - in order that - introduces the specific content of Paul's prayer.

Pray that:

A. God's children would <u>measure up</u> to the great salvation God called them to.

"In verse 5, Paul had stated that he wanted them to be worthy of the kingdom when they entered glory in the future. But here he emphasized their present situation" (Wiersbe, p. 133).

"Count you worthy" - to consider equal to; to measure up to a certain standard.

Paul prayed that the Thessalonians Christians would live like Christians; that they would measure up tot heir high calling of salvation.

Their lifestyle was to suit their high and noble position in Christ.

Some things are unbecoming to a Christian; some practices are unworthy of us to partake of.

Ephesians 4:1 -

Pray that:

B. God's children would <u>accomplish</u> the good <u>will</u> of God

"Fulfill" - to accomplish or complete. We have a job to carry out and to bring to fulfillment.

"The good pleasure of His goodness" - we live not to please ourselves, but the One who saved us.

What matters is that God is pleased with us.

The servant is not content to do a job to his own satisfactions, but to the satisfaction of his master.

"To know God's will is life's greatest lesson; to do God's will is life's greatest privilege."

God's will is ***"goodness" -*** just as Paul said in Rom. 12:2, *"...that you might know what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."*

When you pray, pray that God would enable his children to accomplish His will (his good desires).

Pray that:

C. God's children would <u>accomplish</u> the good <u>work</u> of God

Along with fulfilling the will of God, the missionaries prayed that the Thessalonians would fulfill the "work" of God.

"Work of faith" - work is tied to faith because faith is the secret of getting the work done!

We work because of our faith. Our works for God are the result of our faith in God. No one serves a God they don't believe in.

It is our faith which inspires us to work.
It is our faith which enables us to work.

Faith works!

Faith is not a stagnant belief but a "powerful" (*"in power"*) belief.

"A living faith is a working faith" (Ja. 2:17).

We were saved by faith to work for God (Eph. 2:10).

Our own efforts are vain without God's power.

God must complete the work of faith in us. Without him, we *"can do nothing"* (Jn. 15).

We age, deteriorate, decay and die. We cannot complete anything of any eternal significance without Him

III. WHY do I intercede? (v. 12)
(The motive behind our praying)

Why pray?

What should move us to pray?

What is the ultimate reason e ask God to work in lives?

Answer: That God would be glorified by the lives through which He worked.

*Christ's glory is the goal of our prayers. How is He glorified?

"That" = for the purpose that; with the motive that.

Paul and his colleagues prayed with the motive of seeing Christ glorified.

"the name" - the name of Christ stands for His reputation.

"glorified" - to receive the honor, praise, credit that He deserves.

"in you" - Jesus is glorified when He works **"in you"**

"ye in him" -Jesus is glorified when you work "in him"

These two phrases point to the intimate unity believers have with Christ.
He is in us and we are in Him. Cp. this phrase in John 10:38; 17:21, 23

A. By what He does in you

B. By what you do in Him

IV. WHAT do I rely on as I intercede?

*God's grace is the power of our prayers.

"according to the grace of our God" - it is by His grace that He answers prayer. None of us "deserve" His answers. It is only by His grace that we bring glory to Him.

"and the Lord Jesus Christ" - both the Father and Son are the source of grace because both the Father and the Son are divine (deity).

"A MODEL PRAYER LIST"
(How to Intercede for Others)
Colossians 1:9-12

Note: The Characteristics of Paul's Prayer -

1. He prayed for spiritual blessings, not mere material or physical things.

2. He did not pray that they would have some new additional spiritual experience; but that they would come to realize the blessings that were already theirs.

3. He prayed that the Colossians would have a balance of knowing right and doing right and being right.

   Note the order:
   Knowledge (v. 9) ------- Walk (v. 10) -------- Strength (v. 11)

   No one can walk right unless they know the truth. And strength is a result of both knowing and walking right.

"Oh that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbor!"
(Job 16:21)

"THE DAY OF THE LORD IS NOT IMMINENT"

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3

7-1-2026



INTRODUCTION: Verses 1 - 2

***Observe the two conditions that must precede the Day of the Lord.**

I. Condition # 1 - THE APOSTASY (v. 3a)

"For that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first…"

II. Condition # 2 - THE REVEALING OF ANTICHRIST (v. 3b)

"For that day shall not come, except … that man of sin be revealed"

IS NOT IMMINENT"

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3

7-1-2026

INTRODUCTION: Verses 1 - 2

***Observe the _____ that must precede the Day of the Lord.**

I. Condition # 1 - THE _____ (v. 3a)

"For that day shall not come, except there come a _____ first…"

II. Condition # 2 - THE REVEALING OF _____ (v. 3b)

"For that day shall not come, except … that _____be revealed"

"THE DAY OF THE LORD

IS <u>NOT</u> IMMINENT"

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3

7-1-2026

INTRODUCTION: Verses 1 - 2

SEE: Wiersbe, Paragraph 1 and 2, page 137

The Thessalonians, who were experiencing *"persecutions and tribulations"* (1:4), thought perhaps they were in the Great Tribulation.

They knew that persecution would precede the Rapture and therefore thought that the Rapture was *"at hand."*

V. 1

"Brethren" - It is only saved people who can benefit from what Paul is about to say.

The *"brethren"*, who are not in darkness, will <u>not</u> be caught by surprise when the Day of the Lord arrives. But the lost world will (I Thess. 5:3-4).

"By the coming" - lit. concerning (*huper*) the coming. The coming of Christ is the subject Paul is about to deal with.

"The coming" = the presence; the personal arrival

"coming" - singular. There are not two separate comings at Christ's return. There are two facets to His one coming: Rapture and Return.

"<u>Our</u> Lord" - The Lord is <u>our</u> personal Savior. For the believer, He is not merely the Lord, He is <u>our</u> Lord (showing the close, intimate, personal relationship we have with Him.

"Lord Jesus Christ" - the fullest title for Him.

"Lord" - shows His deity and sovereignty

"Jesus" - shows that He is Savior (deliver) - Mt. 1:21

"Christ" - shows that He is the anointed Messiah, the King of Israel.

God is coming back! The Savior is coming back! The Messiah is coming back!

Christ's coming and gathering are tied together int his verse, pointing to the same event.

"And our gathering together unto Him" -the subject at hand is not only Christ's personal arrival (*"coming"*), but also the saints' gathering (meeting, assembling [cp. Heb. 10:25], collecting) together unto Him.

The word *"gathering"* unquestionably points to the Rapture.

This verb form is used elsewhere in reference to the Rapture (Mt. 24:31; Mk. 13:27). Mark 13:26-27 - *"And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven."*

"Unto him" - This gathering does not describe believers randomly shooting all over outer space; but rather all aimed at one focal points: The Groom, Jesus Christ.

V. 2

"The verb *"shaken"* denotes a rocking motion, a shaking up and down, like a building shaken by an earthquake (Acts 16:26), or a ship tossed on a stormy sea. The passive voice points to an outside force; they were being shaken by the false eschatological teaching being promulgated there by some false teacher (v. 3)" (Hiebert, p. 301).

"Soon shaken" - hastily or quickly caused to waver or move back and forth

"in mind" - lit. away from your mind. Paul is saying: "Don't allow yourself to be hastily agitated and moved from sound reasoning or proper understanding of an important doctrinal truth.

"Troubled" - the same word was used of the disciples when they were *"terrified and affrighted"* when they saw the resurrected Christ, thinking they were seeing a Spirit (Lk. 24:37). This word was also used of people who in an eschatological context (first half of Trib) are troubled because of *"wars and rumors of wars"* (Mt. 24:6; Mk. 13:7).

"Troubled" - to be inwardly disturbed or frightened.

The Thessalonians were in danger of being suddenly moved from the understanding Paul had given them regarding the Rapture and the result of being startled by wrong teaching was a "jumpy" anxious tense feeling in their stomachs.

These believers needed to "have their mental equilibrium restored" (Hiebert, p. 301).

"Troubled" refers to a nervous excitement (like the feeling you get when you are about to do something big that you have never done before).

"Spirit" - a message supposedly from the Holy Spirit

"Word" - a prophetic utterance, or sermon, or any verbally communicated message

"Letter" -A written epistle which was forged with Paul's name on it

"The day of Christ" - (KJV) Every time this phrase occurs in the Bible, it refers to the Rapture.

Phil. 1:6 , 10 - *"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. . . That ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ."*

Phil. 2:16 - *"Holding forth the Word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."*

I Cor. 1:8 - *"Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

"The day of Christ" - the Critical Text reads: "the day of the Lord."

These phrases are practically synonymous, since the Day of Christ (i.e. the Rapture) kicks off the Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord begins with the Rapture, then proceeds with God's wrath.

NOTE: It is helpful to understand the revelation that the Thessalonians already had regarding the Day of the Lord. Notice the vital link between the Rapture (I Th. 4:13-18) and the Day of the Lord (I Th. 5:1-4).

NOTE: The Bible teaches that the Rapture will immediately precede the Great and dreadful Day of God's wrath (SEE: Luke 17:24-30; 34-36).

Can the "Day of Christ" be imminent (occur at any moment) if two events must occur first? NO!

The Bible does not teach that Christ could return at any moment, but that He could return during any one's generation. Paul expected the possibility of Christ returning in his day (I Th. 4:17 - *"we"*), but that did not negate the reality that certain events would be fulfilled first.

Technically the Scriptures teach expectancy, not imminency.

"at hand" - the perfect tense of this verb most likely means to be "in place," "present" "already here."

V. 3

Paul is saying: You should not let anyone deceive you by any method or way (i.e. whether by spirit, word or epistle -v. 2). Satan uses different means to deceive.

"that day" - implied from v. 2 - "that day of Christ" (i.e. the Rapture followed by God's wrath).

Verse 3 gives two conditions that must be met before the Day of Christ can take place. Two events must be fulfilled before the Rapture will occur.

***Observe the two conditions that must precede the Day of the Lord.**

I Condition # 1 - THE APOSTASY (v. 3a)

"Falling away" - lit. apostasy (Greek *apostasia*)

It means to no longer stand where you once stood; to rebel against and abandon what you once held to. To forsake truth you once professed.

In classical Greek the word *apostasia* was used to "denote a political or military rebellion; in the Septuagint it was used of rebellion against God (Josh. 22:22)" (Hiebert, p. 305)

Many attempt to interpret falling away as "departure" (meaning Rapture). Paul has just referred to the Rapture (v. 1). Why would he say that the Rapture will not occur (v. 1-2) until the Rapture [departure] takes place??

The word is never used in the sense of "catching away" as some would like to say.

It refers to a forsaking of God's word (Acts 21:21).

"A falling away first" - lit. the falling away. The definite article points to a specific apostasy.

Throughout church history, there are always been apostasy. It is on the uprise today.

However, God is speaking about a particular apostasy; a great apostasy; an enormous apostasy; whereby professing Christians abandon Christianity by the droves!

God warned about such a departure to occur in the Last Days. SEE: I Tim. 4:1-3

Mt. 24:9-10 - *"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another."*

This particular reference to "the apostasy" is not being fulfilled today, butt will be fulfilled in the future.

When will it occur? Most likely at the same time as the Mark of the Beast is enforced upon every man, woman, boy and girl. Such intense pressure to give in or die (Rev. 13) will cause the false professors to manifest their true colors. Not all of professing Christianity possesses Christ and salvation.

When the heat is turned up, not all will stand true like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did (Dan. 3).

II. Condition # 2 - THE REVEALING OF ANTICHRIST (v. 3b)

The second condition that must be fulfilled before the Day of Christ will happen, is *"the man of sin"* must first be revealed.

"man" - The Antichrist will not be Satan or some demonic spirit but a "man" A man who will receive authority and power from Satan (Rev. 13:2).

A man who will be thrown into the Lake of Fire 1,000 years before Satan (Rev. 19:20; 20:10)/

"That man" -

***"That"* =** the particular man. There is a specific Antichrist.

The Apostle John recognized the presence of many Antichrists in his time, and one Antichrist that *"shall come"* (I Jn. 2:18) in the future (Rev. 11:7; 13:1-10).

"the man of sin" - the man of lawlessness (cp. Dan. 7:25; 11:37). The Antichrist is one who will live contrary to God's Law (particularly at the mid-point of the Tribulation).

Sin will have such absolute domination over him that he seems to be the very embodiment of it (hiebert, p. 307).

"Revealed" - unveiled; disclosed; uncovered; clearly manifested.

The timing of this "revealing" from the believers' standpoint is when he signs (Dan. 9:27) a 7 year peace treaty with Israel. However, from Israel's viewpoint, his true identity will not be revealed until the mid-point of the 70th week of Daniel 9:27, when he breaks the covenant, abominates the Jewish temple (Mt. 24:15), and sets himself up in it to be worshipped as God (II Th. 2:4).

"the son of perdition" -- the son destined for doom, destruction, and ruin (like that of Judas Iscariot - Jn. 17:12).

CONCLUSION:

Why aren't guillotines dripping with the blood of saints today? Why isn't the Mark of the Beast enforced on people globally? Why isn't the one world order in place? Why isn't the dictator Antichrist at the helm of the kosmos?

Because of the restraining work of God.

(SEE v. 6-8). What is preventing the Antichrist from being revealed? Answer - Two views:
The Holy Spirit
Michael the Archangel

- Daniel 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation [even] to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.
- Revelation 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

NOTE: v. 7 - The Holy Spirit will be "*taken out of the way"* in the sense of His restraint being removed. His ministry of hindering will end.

It is a false unprovable assumption for pre-tribulationalists to say that He is removed at the Rapture. He is not removed at the Rapture. He exists in the world in more ways than simply "in the believer." He restrains sin in more ways than "through believers."

How could it be possible for believers (even with the Spirit) prevent the revelation of Antichrist?

The Day of Christ happens <u>after</u> the great apostasy and <u>after</u> the Antichrist is revealed.

This message is a call to <u>readiness</u>. To get ready for the greatest testing ever to face the church.

To get ready for a time of apostasy and the time of the Antichrist. And in doing so, get ready for the day of Christ's return!

"THE REVEALING OF ANTICHRIST"

2 Thessalonians 2:4-8

7-8-2026

INTRODUCTION:

***How will Antichrist be revealed?**

I. In the future, Antichrist's revealing will be evidenced by his demand for the exclusive worship of Himself (v. 4-5)
(The <u>blasphemy</u> of the man of sin)

II. In the present, Antichrist's revealing is restrained by the sovereign working of God (v. 6-7)
(The <u>withholding</u> of the man of sin)

III. In the end, the revealed Antichrist will be terminated by the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 8)
(The <u>doom</u> of the man of sin)



CONCLUSION:

"THE REVEALING OF ANTICHRIS

2 Thessalonians 2:4-8
7-8-2026

INTRODUCTION: See Daniel 7

***How will Antichrist be revealed?** *(2 Thess. 2:4-8)*

I. In the _____, Antichrist's revealing will be _____ by his demand for the exclusive _____ of _____ (v. 4-5)
(The _____ of the man of sin)

II. In the _____, Antichrist's revealing is _____by the sovereign _____ of _____ (v. 6-7)
(The _____ of the man of sin)

III. In the _____, the revealed Antichrist will be _____ by the _____ (v. 8)
(The _____ of the man of sin)

"THE REVEALING OF ANTICHRIST"

2 Thessalonians 2:4-8
7-8-2026

INTRODUCTION:

Read and comment on verses 1-3.

***How will Antichrist be revealed?**

I. In the future, Antichrist's revealing will be evidenced by his demand for the exclusive worship of Himself (v. 4-5)
(The blasphemy of the man of sin)

"Opposeth" - (*antikeimai)* to be set over against; to be situated opposite; to withstand and be adverse to something.

The Antichrist will not only stand against Christ (hence "Antichrist"), but he will also stand against *"all that is called God."*

"Exalteth himself" - to lift himself up above and over every "god" and religion

In total pride Antichrist (like Satan who energizes him did - Is. 14:13-14) will elevate himself to the place of deity. He will be escalated to the point of global worship (this will occur at the midpoint of the 70th week of Daniel 9:27; cp. with Rev. 13).

"All that is called God" - Antichrist will oppose and replace all of the "gods" that the pagans worshipped. He will exalt himself above Allah, above the 30 million gods of the Hindus, above the New Age philosophy that each person is a god.

"Or that is worshipped" - this egotistical maniac will oppose and elevate himself above every object or person of worship.

The pagan world will cease from its worship of people (Mary, saints), places (shrines and holy places), and things (statues, idols, etc.), and will willingly give all worship to Antichrist (Rev. 13).

All other religion will be banned. "Every so-called god will be deposed of in favor of himself" (Hiebert, p. 308).
It is my view that at the mid-point of the 70th week, the Antichrist who rode the harlot/mystery Babylon religion (the RCC and its ecumenical ties) will along with the 10 kings who give him global authority, burn that false mystery religion and will replace it with himself (Rev. 17:16-18).

"sitteth in the Temple' - Antichrist will take his seat in the rebuilt Jewish inner

sanctuary of their Holy Place

--The Jews perhaps with Antichrist permission and covenant will rebuild their temple (note: It is called here *"the temple of God"* NOT because it will have God's approval or that it will be God's temple; but because from Israel's standpoint, it will be dedicated to jehovah God. Note: God will not put His stamp of approval on any rebuilt Temple until that one which Ezekiel 40-48 speaks about is build in the Messianic kingdom).

--This desecration of Israel's temple is spoken about in Daniel 9:27 and Matthew 24:15.

This abomination (like that of the Grecian ruler Antiochus Epiphanies) will desecrate (pollute) their Holy Place.

At this time (the mid-point of the 70th week), Jesus warned Israel to flee from the holocaust to follow.

"Shewing himself" - to show off; to display; to proclaim; to exhibit.

Antichrist will exhibit to the world his lie - that "He is God."

SEE: Daniel 7:17-28

V. 5

This question expects a positive answer: *"You do remember, don't you, that when I was with you, I used to tell you these things?"*

Paul asks this question because apparently the Thessalonians had forgotten. Their forgetfulness let them give heed to the false teaching that was going around: namely, that the Day of the Lord had begun (v. 2).

Paul is now saying that is impossible, since the man of sin has not yet been revealed. Paul is saying, "You don't see a global religious figure who demands the world to worship him, do you? Then how could you be in the Day of the Lord?"

II. In the present, Antichrist's revealing is restrained by the sovereign working of God (v. 6-7)
(The withholding of the man of sin)

"What withholdeth" - the One who is restraining, holding [Antichrist] back

"In his time" - This phrase points to a very exact, specific, appointed moment or season when the Antichrist will be manifested.

The reason God has such restraint upon the unveiling of Antichrist is because God, in fulfilling His sovereign plan and prophecy has His calendar marked for a specific time period. When that exact moment in history occurs, the man of sin will be manifested.
"Letteth" - to hinder or hold back
The same word is used in Rom. 1:18 in describing men who *"hold down"* or *"suppress"* the truth in unrighteousness.

Even since the days of Paul, the mystery of lawlessness was already at work, already in operation, already in motion. The gradual development of the world scene over the centuries and the rapid and recent development of the "New World Order," the sovereignty of the U.N., the rapid advancement for a cashless society, the unification of Europe, peace talks with Israel, the moral degeneration of the world (II Tim. 3:1ff), the technological advances (of bar-coding, microchip inplantations), the quest for an ecumenical-one-world religion, are all events that are setting the stage for the devilish work of Antichrist.

"The mystery of iniquity" was already at work because of the appearance of *"many Antichrists"* (I John), all of which were minor characters compared to the Antichrist who shall come!

God's control of man's sin is due to His "common grace" or His undeserved goodness experienced by all men (Psalm 145 - note the repeated word "All").

Examples of God's "common grace":
--God sends rain on the just and unjust (Mt. 5:44, 45)
--God provides food and gladness even for pagans (Acts 14:15-17)
--God restrains man's acts of sin (Gen. 20:6)
--God restrains the effects of sin
Examples:
a. Through law and government - Rom. 13
b. Through discoveries of medicines
c. Through believing Christians - I Cor. 7:14
NOTE: Believers to a large extent are the "moral conscience" of society. A society will reflect the beliefs of its people. God's children are to be salt and light - Mt. 5:13-16.
NOTE: God withheld his catastrophic judgment on Sodom because of the presence of the righteous man Lot (Gen. 18:23-32, 19:21-22)

The person of the Godhead most closely associated with the exercise of "common grace" -- and in particularly controlling sin -- is the Holy Spirit.

Genesis 6:3 - "My Spirit shall not always strive with man . . ."

God's Spirit patiently strove with man prior to the flood, but because they did not respond, but rather increased and continued in wickedness (Gen. 6:5-6), God judged that generation (v. 7).

Note: Though God in His mercy and grace does exercise control over the proneness of man's depraved heart, He is under no obligation to do so.

When men persist in sin, and rebel against the "light" God gives them (Ex: creation and conscience), God will let go of them and let them plunge into the depths of sin and subsequent ruin (Romans 1:18-32).

II Thess. 2:6-8

The Holy Spirit Who today CONTROLS sin is keeping back the Antichrist from appearing on the World scene. No doubt Satan for a long time has desired to energize a man to fulfill his diabolical plan.

V. 6 - "What withholdeth" - Lit. "The One who is restraining" (definite article plus a present, active participle that is neuter in gender, and singular in number).

The word "withhold" means to hold back, to restrain; to grab something and hold it tightly so that it does not get loose and out of control (Ex: holding on the leash of a vicious dog).

V. 7 - "He who now letteth" - the old English way of saying: "He who now restrains or holds back" (same Greek word as in verse 6 - "withholdeth").

Who is the Restrainer?

Some view the restrainer as being Michael the Archangel (Dan. 12:1-2), who at the mid-point of the Tribulation releases his grip on Satan and lets him persecute Israel (Rev. 12:1-17 *v. 7) via his Antichrist (Rev. 13:3-7). At this point the Antichrist's true identity is revealed to Israel (Rosenthal, The Pre-wrath Rapture - Nelson Pub., p. 256-260).
*Another view is that the restrainer is the Holy Spirit.

Though many explanations for the restrainer have been offered (such as a government, etc.), here are a couple of proofs that the Restrainer is either

Michael the Archangel or the Holy Spirit:

1. The phrase *"what withholdeth"* (V. 6) has a neuter article because the Greek word for "Spirit" is neuter.

2. In verse 7 the masculine article points to a person (not a force; but evidently the Michael or Holy Spirit) - *"he..."*

3. The supernatural character of the *"one holding back"* points to the Michael or Holy Spirit ("Only a supernatural person can truly frustrate the supernatural workings of Satan" - Hiebert)

"Until he be taken out of the way" - lit. until He removes Himself out of the midst.

We are not to view the Holy Spirit as departing from the earth, but as removing Himself from His present ministry of restraining the appearance of Antichrist.

The Holy Spirit has been holding back the appearing of the Antichrist and the onslaught of sin. One day the Holy Spirit's restraint will be removed.

Note: Scripture does not teach that the Holy Spirit Himself will be removed prior or during the Tribulation period; indeed, He will be on earth sealing and saving souls and performing signs (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-21; Rev. 7:4; Zech. 12:10; Ezek. 39:29; cp. Is. 44:3 with Rev. 22:17).

The Biblical understanding, therefore, is not that the Spirit Himself is removed, but that His restraining power is removed.

The Holy Spirit's hand, which has been holding back Satan's wickedness and wicked one, will one day be withdrawn. At that time the world will experience the full force of man's evil.

III. In the end, the revealed Antichrist will be terminated by the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 8)
(The doom of the man of sin)

"And <u>then" -</u> At a specific time, when the Spirit's restrain is lifted, that lawless one will be uncovered.

Jesus Christ alone will abruptly <u>terminate</u> Antichrist.

Put your trust in the omnipotent, sovereign Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Consume" - the word is used of the consuming power of fire (Lk. 9:54). It is also used of what happens to that which is chewed up and devoured (Gal. 5:15).

"With the <u>Spirit</u> of His mouth" - i.e. with His <u>word</u>. All Christ will have to do is say the "words" and it is done

--God's Word is called the <u>Sword</u> of the <u>Spirit</u>

--When Christ returns a sharp <u>sword</u> will proceed out of His mouth (Rev. 19:15).

"Shall destroy" - to bring to nothing; to render inactive; Jesus will bring Antichrist's ability to operate to a screeching halt. He will have exactly 3 1/2 years of global tyranny and that will be it! He will be put out of commission.

"The brightness of his coming" - the shining splendor or glorious manifestation of His presence.

The glow of the beaming appearance of Christ will end the Antichrist's career.

SEE: Rev. 19:11-21

With God's people safe in Heaven (19:6-9), the wrath of God is then outpoured (v. 11-21)

NOTE: especially Rev. 19:20, 20:10

Daniel 7:11, 26 - *"I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even until the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. . . But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end."*

CONCLUSION:

Characteristics of the <u>Antichrist</u>

He will be:

1. **A <u>fearsome leader</u>** (Dan. 7:20).
   "More stout" = more imposing or fearsome. Antichrist will impress the godless world by his clout, power, personality, and boastful mouth.

2. **A <u>cruel persecutor</u>** (v. 21)
   He will war against the saints (Jew & Christian) during the <u>second half</u> the Tribulation (cp. v. 25; Rev. 13:7, 12:11-13)

3. **An <u>arrogant blasphemer</u>** (v. 25)
   He will talk about God with contempt and set himself up as God) - See Daniel 11:36

4. **A <u>powerful despot</u>** (v. 25)
   He will attempt to change that which only God has the right to change).
   He will rule globally for 3-1/2 years.

5. **A <u>military-obsessed</u> idolater**
   (Dan. 11:37-38)

6. **A <u>Satanic deceiver</u>**
   (II Thes. 2:9; Rev. 13:3, 4)

7. **A man of <u>lawlessness</u>** (II Th. 2:3)

"THE DECEIVER AND THE DECEIVED"

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12

7-15-2026

INTRODUCTION:

***Like those who will live in the future Tribulation,**
WE MUST BEWARE OF SATANIC DECEPTION!

Four characteristics about religious deception:

I. The <u>SOURCE</u> of the Deception (v. 9a)
("After the working of Satan")

II. The <u>SUBSTANCE</u> of the Deception (v. 9b)
("Power, signs, and lying wonders")

III. The <u>REASON</u> for the Deception (v. 10-11)
(Refusal to receive the Truth)

IV. The <u>RESULT</u> of the Deception (v. 12)
(Eternal damnation)

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(Eternal _____)

"THE DECEIVER AND THE DECEIVED"

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12

7-15-2026

INTRODUCTION:

In the context, Paul is comforting the Thessalonians with the fact that they are not entering the Day of the Lord, as some false teachers had deluded them into believing (v. 1-2).

The reason he gives, is that two conditions must be met before that Day can come.

The two conditions are: 1) the Apostasy must occur first
And 2) the Man of Sin must be revealed first (v. 3)

To prove to them that this man of sin (Antichrist) has not been revealed, Paul gives a lengthy description of Antichrist's activities and character. Such a description gives us insight into the Antichrist and his deception to come.

The Bible explicitly teaches that *"Antichrist shall come"* (I Jn. 2:18).

This man of wickedness is also called *"The Beast"* and is spoken about in Rev. 11:7; 13:4-8; 14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2; 10; 17:3, 11, 16-17; 19:20).

Satan is a master counterfeit. He is well known for his ability to <u>imitate</u> (EX: the counterfeit miracles in Egypt - Ex. 7:11, 22; 8:7; Satan's counterfeit messengers - II Cor. 11:13-15).

In a sinful world where there exists the true, there also exists the false; where there is the honest truth, there also exists the lie; where there is the genuine, there also exists the imitation, where there is the real, there also exists the counterfeit.

Satan is a deceiver (Rev. 12:9; 20:3) and a liar (Jn. 8:44).

SEE: Christ's warning against the counterfeit Messiahs to come (Mt. 24:21-27).

***Like those who will live in the future Tribulation,**
WE MUST BEWARE OF SATANIC DECEPTION!

Four characteristics about religious deception:

I. The SOURCE of the Deception (v. 9a)

("After the working of Satan")

"Even him whose" - Refers to the *"wicked"* one (v. 8), the *"man of sin"* (v. 3) = i.e. the Antichrist

"Coming" - (*parousia)* lit. presence, appearing.

The same word is used of Christ's *"coming"* (v. 8).

This word proves that the *"Wicked One"* is not some invisible force or spirit, but that he is one who will be visible. He will be a person who will be *"revealed"* (v. 3, 6, 8).

"After the working of Satan" - The Antichrist is not Satan as some have suggested, because he will be empowered by Satan.

"After" - in accordance with

The word ***"working"*** (*energia)* means to have supernatural energy. Antichrist will be energized by Satan; Satan will not only give him his authority (power to rule - Rev. 13:4), but will also give him power to come back to life (Rev. 13:3) and ascend out of the bottomless pit (Rev. 11:7); power to speak great things and blasphemies (Rev. 13:5); power to rule the world for 42 months (Rev. 13:5); and power to conquer the world (13:7).

II. The SUBSTANCE of the Deception (v. 9b)
("Power, signs, and lying wonders")

"All" - has two ideas:

1) "Every," "every kind or variety of"
(Antichrist will perform all kinds of false miracles)
2) "It may signify the highest degree or the maximum of what is referred to" (Vine, p. 46)

"Power" - ability; explosive power and strength

"Signs" -a supernatural miracle designed to validate, authenticate or prove the reality of the one who performs it. Usually, a statement is made and then a miraculous act is done to validate the statement. Antichrist will claim to be "God" (v. 4) and will "prove" it by signs (v. 9).

"Wonders" - something strange (out of the ordinary) which causes the beholder to marvel or be amazed.
It is an amazing feat which appeals to the senses (you can see it, hear it, experience it, etc.).

- The word *"power"* shows the energy behind the miracles (they will be undeniable)
- The word *"signs"* shows the significance behind the miracles (they will "prove")
- The word *"wonders"* shows the astonishment produced by the miracles (they will amaze)

Antichrist's spectators will be held spellbound; they will watch with their jaws hanging open in amazement.

Satan will play with men's minds (by sending *"signs"*) and their emotions (by causing *"wonders")*.

"Lying" - false, fake, pseudo
The Greek word *"lying"* perhaps modifies not only the word *"wonders,"* but also the words *"power"* and "*signs."*

"The purpose of God's miracles was to lead people to the truth; the purpose of Antichrist's miracles will be to lead people to believe his lies. Paul called them *"lying wonders"* (v. 9), not because the miracles are not real, but because they persuade people to believe Satan's lies" (Wiersbe, p. 145).

The Antichrist will not be the one who will perform such signs and wonders, but he will be the ultimate one. (Mt. 24:24 - *"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."*; cp. Mark 13:22).

III. The REASON for the Deception (v. 10-11)
(Refusal to receive the Truth)

V. 10

"Deceivableness of unrighteousness" -

Two possible ideas:

1) Deception caused by unrighteousness (Antichrist's unrighteous lies and false wonders will deceive)

2) Deception which leads to unrighteousness (what one believes will always manifest itself by how one behaves. Because the world will believe a lie, they will oppose the truth and those who stand on the truth).

The deception will not be believed by everyone, but it will be believed by those who are going to perish.

The word *"perish"* is a participle in the middle voice and refers to the ones who are causing themselves to perish; they are destroying themselves; they are fitting themselves to eternal ruin. No one can blame God when they spend eternity in the Lake of fire. They chose to perish when they chose to reject the truth and believe the lie.

"His own iniquities shall take the wicked, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sin" (Prov. 5:22).

"Paul does not imply that those perishing are the unfortunate victims of "predestination unto damnation." The cause for their perishing lies not in God but in themselves" (Hiebert, p. 317).

"Because" - gives the reason why they were deceived and would inevitably perish

"They received not" - they did not welcome the truth into their life; they did not grasp on to it; they did not accept it.

NOTE: God's truth evidently will be heard by those who will not receive it. They will hear it from the lips of the believing Church (Rev. 12:11) and the Two Witnesses. (Rev. 11:6, 7).

"And this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Mt. 24:14).

"The love of the truth" - what they will reject is <u>the truth</u> and its message of love (Jn. 3:16; Ro. 5:8).

God's truth is a message inspired by His love for men's souls, whereas Satan's lie will be a message inspired by hate for men's souls.

God, as it were, has stretched out His arms to a lost world and said, "I Love you; I gave My Son for you; I long to save you." Yet the world (outside of a small remnant) ignores and refuses to receive His invitation.

Not merely did they refuse *"the truth"* but they refused the loving saving truth of the gospel (cp. Hiebert, p. 318).

"That they might be saved" - salvation; deliverance from Satan's lies; rescue from the doom of eternal fire -- is a matter of <u>receiving the Truth</u> of God's Word. Salvation is a matter of embracing God's gospel message. Faith is what God requires for salvation.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (jn. 8:32).

Some teach that those who reject Christ in this dispensation (before the Tribulation) cannot be saved after the Tribulation begins.

Does this passage teach this? Not exactly. The timing of the rejection is not stated. It is true, at least, that those who have heard the gospel and yet reject Christ at any time prior to or up until the time of the revealing of the Man of sin, and who take his mark, will have no chance of salvation (Rev. 14:9-13).

V. 11

"For this cause" - because they refused to receive the love of the truth, God is sending to them strong delusion.

NOTE: It is a serious thing to turn your back on God's truth (Rom. 1:28 - *"Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.")*

God will sovereignly allow those who reject His truth to believe the delusion of Antichrist.

NOTE: God is not responsible for the delusion (He does not tempt any man - Ja. 1:13). He is responsible for keeping men's eyes from seeing it, once they have decided to not see it.

"Strong delusion" - a powerful working of Satan designed to lead someone astray. An operation that causes one to err in judgment and to make a wrong decision.

The lost Antichrist-worshipping world will have no spiritual discernment whatsoever.

"A lie" - lit. the lie; the particular false lie; namely - that Antichrist is God (v. 4), and that his lying power, signs, and wonders (v. 9) prove that he is.

"The lie" according to Rom. 1:25 is to worship and serve the creature (man and other created things) rather than the Creator.

IV. The RESULT of the Deception (v. 12)

(Eternal damnation)

"That" = with the result that

The end result of those who will believe Antichrist's lie is damnation (condemnation, judgment which proves that they are worthy of the sentence of eternal torment - SEE: Rev. 14:9-11).

The deluded are damned for two reasons:

1) They did not put their truth (dependance) int he truth of God's Word. They *"believed not the truth."*

2) They rejected such truth because they delighted in sin. They *"had pleasure in unrighteousness."* John 3:19 - *"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

Never forget that the "pleasures of sin" only last for a short "season" (Heb. 11:25).

That which they took pleasure in (v. 12) deceived them (v. 10).

Whatever you look for pleasure in, outside of God (Ps. 16:11), will always end up hurting you!

"What will take place in those deceived by Antichrist, is seen on a smaller scale every day" (Findlay, cited by Hiebert, p. 318).

Many today refuse to bow to the truth of the Gospel, and thereby subject themselves to lies and ultimate damnation.

Everyone who ends up in hell will be there because they were deceived while on earth.

--deceived regarding self (Rom. 3; Mt. 13:22 - self-righteous and self-sufficient)

--deceived regarding sin (Heb. 3:13 - *"But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin)*

--deceived regarding salvation(II Cor. 11:3 - *"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so that your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ")*

CONCLUSION:

Three truths every Christian must remember to avoid being deceived:

1. **Seeing is not believing**
   (a mirage looks like water but it is not)

2. **Satan has power to perform the miraculous** (he can do the supernatural) (Lk. 4:5; Mt. 24:24; Mk. 5:4; II Th. 2:9)

3. **Our only authority is the Bible**

   Our authority is not experiential in nature (just because you can see it, feel it, speak it [ex. tongues] etc. does not mean it is from God).

   a. God's true prophets (apostles) prophesied with 100% accuracy (anything less demanded stoning - Deut. 18:20-22)

   b. Miracles (even undeniable ones) do not authenticate someone if their message is contrary to the Word of God - Deut. 13:1-3.

      Sometimes a convincing miracle (that is not from God) is a test of your l

for God and your loyalty to His Word.

Today, we need to have spiritual discernment.

**"Believe not every spirit." (I Jn. 4:1-3)*

The way to discern a spirit is to listen to what they say. Put them to a doctrinal test.

*The best way to know a lie, is to know the truth! (Jn. 8:31, 32; cp. I Jn. 4:4-6).

You must know your Bible!

"Chosen From the Beginning"

2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

7-22-2026

INTRODUCTION:

***Let the truth that God picked you to salvation impact your life!**

I. God's Choice of You is:
A TRUTH WORTHY OF <u>THANKS</u> (v. 13-14)

A. The <u>Basis</u> of His Choice
(*"Beloved"* - He loved you!)

B. The <u>Timing</u> of His Choice
(*"From the beginning"*)

C. The <u>Goal</u> of His Choice
(*"To salvation"*)

D. The <u>Means</u> of His Choice
(*"The Spirit and belief. . . He called you by our gospel"*)

E. The <u>End Result</u> of His Choice
(*"The obtaining of the glory"*)

II. God's Choice of You is:
A TRUTH FROM WHICH YOU MUST <u>NEVER DEPART</u> (v. 15)

III. God's Choice of You is:
A TRUTH THAT WILL GIVE YOU <u>NEEDED STRENGTH</u> (v. 16-17)

"Chosen From the Beginning"

2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

7-22-2026

INTRODUCTION:

***Let the truth that God picked you to salvation impact your life!**

I. God Chose You: You should _____ (v. 13-14)

A. The _____ of His Choice
(*"Beloved"* - He loved you!)

B. The _____ of His Choice
(*"From the beginning"*)

C. The _____ of His Choice
(*"To salvation"*)

D. The _____ of His Choice
(*"The Spirit and belief. . . He called you by our gospel"*)

E. The _____ of His Choice
(*"The obtaining of the glory"*)

II. God chose you: You should _____ for Him (v. 15)

III. God chose you: You should _____ by Him (v. 16-17)

"Chosen From the Beginning"

2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

7-22-2026

INTRODUCTION:

ILLUS: The thrill of being picked (chosen) for a special task or to receive a special prize.

V. 13

"But" - this word marks a sharp contrast between the horrible doom of the unbelievers (v. 10-12) and the wonderful bliss of believers (v. 13-17).

"Because" - This word introduces the reason why God must be thanked.

"Chosen" - (*haireo)* = to take to oneself. Another Greek word *eklego* means to pick out, select, or choose; whereas the special significance of *haireo* "is to select rather by the act of taking, than by showing preference or favor" (Vine, p. 189).

The Septuagint uses this word to describe how God took the nation of Israel unto himself. (Dt. 7:6, 7; 26:18 - *"For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God; the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the fact of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people." . . . And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep his commandments."*)

***Let the truth that God picked you to salvation impact your life!**

I. God's Choice of You is: A TRUTH WORTHY OF <u>THANKS</u> (v. 13-14)

V. 13

"We are bound to give thanks" - We are obligated or indebted to thank God whenever someone trusts Jesus Christ as Savior. The reason why God gets the glory is because salvation is of Him. He is salvation's originator and applicator. He planned it for us and imparts it to us. No man (soulwinner, prayer warrior, etc.) can take the credit for another's salvation. All the thanks goes to God.

"Thanks alway to God for you" - Do you have an unselfish practice of thanking God for the salvation of others? Who have you thanked God for lately?

A. The <u>Basis</u> of His Choice
(*"Beloved"* - He loved you!)

The Thessalonians are described in two ways which shows their special relationship to each other and to the Lord.

"Brethren" - As adopted children of God we are related. We are brethren because we have the same Father, share the same name ("Christian"), have inherited the same blessings, will live eternally int he same house (Heaven).

"Beloved" - the Lord has loved us in the past and still does. The perfect passive participle points to a continual love that belongs to God and is outpoured on us. Nothing can separate us from it (Rom. 8). The same word is used of God the Father's love for His Son (Eph. 1:6).

B. The Timing of His Choice
(*"From the beginning"*)

"From the beginning" - This phrase gives us the timing of when God chose (took) you to Himself.

Before you were born, even before sinful man populated the earth, God planned to take you unto Himself. The Bible teaches that people's names were either written or not written *"in the book of life from the foundation of the world."* (Rev. 17:8)

God's pretemporal beginning of the program of redemption:

> I Cor. 2:7 - *"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory"*
>
> Eph. 1:4 - *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love"*
>
> II Tim. 1:9 - *"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."*
>
> Titus 1:2 - *"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began"*

C. The Goal of His Choice
(*"To salvation"*)

"To salvation" - This salvation in context describes not only the deliverance of our souls from eternal damnation (cp. v. 12), but also the deliverance of our lives from Satanic deception (v. 10-11).

Since the Thessalonians were shaken over lies that they were in the Day of the Lord (v. 2), Paul now assures them that they cannot enter that day because God has saved them from His wrath.

D. The Means of His Choice

(*"The Spirit and belief. . . He called you by our gospel"*)

Paul describes two ways by which God took you unto Himself and His salvation:

1) *"Through sanctification of the Spirit"*
2) *"And belief of the Truth"*

"The salvation unto which they were chosen does not operate automatically; the electing purpose of God is carried out *"in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth"* (Hiebert, p. 323).

In two brief phrases God unveils one of the greatest paradoxical mysteries of salvation: namely, God's part and man's part in salvation.

God's activity is seen by the work of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5), who sanctifies (or sets apart) those whom the Father has selected to be saved (cp. I Pet. 1:2).

Since the belief is subsequent to salvation, it is apparent that the reference to the sanctifying work of the Spirit is a work subsequent to salvation.

God's work and man's response is also evident in other passages:

> Acts 13:48 - *"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."*
>
> John 6:37 - *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."*

How does the Holy Spirit "sanctify" us so that we would be saved?

--He <u>preserves</u> our lives long enough so that we will be saved
(Physically, He kept us alive; spiritually, He guards us from deception)

--He <u>provides</u> contact with Christians and the Gospel

--He <u>prompts</u> our heart and draws us

--He <u>persuades</u> us of the truth of the Gospel

"Belief of the truth" - faith, trust, reliance, dependance on the Truth. This phrase describes man's responsibility toward God's salvation.

Note: This phrase is in stark contrast to those who *"believed not the truth"* (v. 12).

The working of the Spirit is subjective, but belief is objective.

The reason why you can know you are saved is if you *"believe the truth."* Your belief is the objective evidence of the Spirit's working. Belief is not a "work," it is a response. All who believe are saved (Acts 16:31; SEE: John

3:15-16, 18, 36; 5:24).

"The truth" - Note: that it is not mere belief that saves; it is belief in "the truth" as revealed in the Holy Bible. *"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God"* (Rom. 10:17).

"The same God who ordained the end (salvation) also ordained the means to the end ("belief of the truth")" (Wiersbe, p. 153).

I agree with Warren Wiersbe, who said: "It is dangerous to engage in idle speculation about divine sovereignty and human responsibility. Both [mysteries] are taught in the Bible. . . we must not use the doctrine of election to divide the Church or disturb the weak, but to glorify the Lord" (Wiersbe, p. 153).

"Whereunto" - unto which salvation He [God] called (invited) you.

How does God "call"? Answer: *"By our gospel"* - which means by the Good News we preach.

God's only method of calling lost souls to salvation is by the Gospel (which according to I Cor. 15:1-3 is the substitutionary death of Christ for sinners and His bodily resurrection).

E. The <u>End Result</u> of His Choice
(*"The obtaining of the glory"*)

"To the obtaining of the glory" - The goal or end result of the salvation God called us to is the obtaining (total possession or complete attainment) of the glory (which includes our glorified bodies when we meet Christ in glory at the Rapture).

II Thes. 5:9 uses the word "obtain" this way: *"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."*

The word "obtain" is a beautiful word describing the security of the believer. Christianity is not theory; it is fact that will actually realize its promises.

Our future glory is something we will literally lay hold of and completely and certainly possess (Rom. 8:17, 18, 21, 29-30).

"Of our Lord Jesus Christ" -

--He is the One who <u>gives</u> us the "glory"
--It is <u>His glory</u> that we will have imparted to us because of our oneness with Him.

II. God's Choice of You is:

A TRUTH FROM WHICH YOU MUST <u>NEVER DEPART</u> (v. 15)

"Therefore" - in light of the blessed promises (v. 13-14), God draws a practical application. The Christian life should not be a weak, down in the dumps, drift through the swamps of despair!

"Stand fast" - Because of confidence in God's love and salvation, stand on these precious promises. Don't let anything move you, stumble you or blow you off course. Hold your ground! Remain firm in your confidence.

God's encouragement for us to STAND:

I Cor. 16:13 - *"Watch ye, **STAND fast in the faith**, quit you like men, be strong"*
Galatians 5:1 - *"**STAND fast** therefore **in the liberty**, wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."*
Ephesians 6:11- *"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **STAND against the wiles of the devil**"*
Philippians 4:1- *"...**STAND fast in the Lord**, my dearly beloved"*
Colossians 4:12- *"...**STAND** perfect and complete **in all the will of God**"*
I Thess. 3:8 - *"For now we live, if ye **STAND fast in the Lord**"*

"Hold the traditions" - firmly grasp and don't let go of that Word of God which was passed on or handed down to you.

The word "traditions" is referring to God's teaching, not man's (Mk. 7:1-13; Col. 2:8). God's Word which has been instilled in your hearts either by *"word"* (preaching) or by *"epistle"* (written letter).

"Traditions" - that which is passed on or handed down from one to another (not necessarily referring to oral tradition but God's word as passed on through any means).

Never let it slip. "Each generation of Christians must receive the truth from others, guard it, and make sure it is kept intact for the next generation" (Wiersbe, p. 155).

III. God's Choice of You is:
A TRUTH THAT WILL GIVE YOU <u>NEEDED STRENGTH</u> (v. 16-17)

V. 16

This verse begins a wish; a desire that Paul has for the Thessalonians.

"...Christ <u>Himself</u>" - It is amazing that Jesus personally encourages us! He sends no vicar; He needs no angel. He *"Himself"* as our Master lifts our burdens and consoles our spirits.

"<u>Loved</u> us and hath <u>given" -</u>God's love is not theoretical but practical. it <u>gives</u>! (Jn. 3:16).

That which God gives is always good (Ja. 1:17) and it glows from His agape love.

What does God give?

1) *"Everlasting consolation"* - eternal, never-ending comfort and encouragement (His encouragement never ends because our relationship to Him never ends)

2) *"Good hope"* -Good confidence. Since our hope will never let us down or fail, it is called "good." What good would a hope be that was not guaranteed? Or that was not eternal? Or that was not knowable? (I Jn. 5:13).

The two names *"Jesus Christ"* and *"God the Father"* (v. 16) are governed by the same verb action (v. 17), indicating that the Father and the Son are one (equal) (cp. I Thes. 3:11).

"Comfort" - the same Greek word as "consolation" (v. 16) meaning encouragement

Our hearts need God's rousing encouragement!

V. 17

"Stablish" - to support, strengthen, to steadfastly set something in a fixed position. The word "comfort" points to our need for <u>emotional</u> encouragement, whereas the word "stablish" points to our need for <u>physical</u> stamina.

"Good" - God does not bless the words and works of the pagans (ILLUS: how worldly entertainers and singers credit God for their words and works).

"Every <u>word</u> and <u>work</u>" - Whatever we <u>say</u> for God or <u>do</u> for God, we need His strength.
The greatest impetus or incentive for good words and works is a blessed assurance of God's abiding love and eternal salvation!

"GOD'S PEOPLE NEED THE LORD"

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

8-5-2026

INTRODUCTION:

***Even you who are saved desperately need the Lord.**

I. We need the Lord for successful ministry (v. 1-2)

We need to pray to Him that:

--His Word may run!

--His Word may shine!

--His messengers may be unhindered (v. 2)

II. We need the Lord for supernatural protection (v. 3)

III. We need the Lord for simple obedience (v. 4)

IV. We need the Lord for spiritual virtue (v. 5)

"GOD'S PEOPLE NEED THE LORD"

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II. We need <u>the Lord</u>
for supernatural _____ (v. 3)

III. We need <u>the Lord</u>
for simple _____ (v. 4)

IV. We need <u>the Lord</u>

for spiritual _____ (v. 5)

"GOD'S PEOPLE NEED THE LORD"

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5
8-5-2026

INTRODUCTION:

It is obvious that the unsaved need the Lord.

They Him to be forgiven, adopted, justified, redeemed, unshackled (free).

But we often forget how much we as believers need Him.

Note the emphasis in verses 1-5 involves the believer's desperate need for *"the Lord."*
--

V. 1-2 *"The Lord"* is implied by the requested prayer to Him
V. 3 *"The Lord"*
V. 4 *"The Lord"*
V. 5 *The Lord"*

Jesus said: *"Without me, ye can do nothing"* (Jn. 15:5).

However, we frequently think that certainly there must be some things I can do without needed God's help.

ILLUS: the Hymn: "I Need Thee Every Hour"

***Even you who are saved desperately need the Lord.**

I. We need <u>the Lord</u>
for successful <u>ministry</u> (v. 1-2)

We need to pray to Him that:

--His Word may <u>run</u>!
--His Word may <u>shine</u>!
--His messengers may be <u>unhindered</u> (v. 2)

V. 1

"Finally" - Paul now wraps up this epistle with some practical exhortation. The Christian life is not merely theoretical; it is practical.

"Pray" - Be praying; not a one-time prayer; but continual prayer support.

"For us" - Even the great Apostle Paul and his highly acclaimed co-workers Timothy and Silas needed prayer!

No one is beyond the need of prayer. If God doesn't do it, the job will not get done!

The frequent requests Paul makes for prayer (Ro. 15:30-31; Eph. 6:18-19; Col. 4:3; Philemon 22; I Th. 5:25) reveal that he was deeply convinced of the power of prayer (Hiebert, p . 330).

"The word of the Lord" - the Lord's Word

As Paul preached, he did not preach His word, but God's Word. The only word worthy of *"free course"* is God's.

"Free course" - (*treko)* - lit. that the Word of the Lord (The Lord's Word) may <u>run</u>; may have <u>swift progress</u>.

The Word was used in the LXX of the running of a warrior in battle. . . and. . . is further applied to the [Old Testament] prophets as His 'runners'" The image being portrayed is that of the herald in his urgency (Linguistic Key, p. 611).

Paul by using an athletic metaphor drawn from the race track, shows that God's
Word is:--active
--living *("quick")*
--powerful (Heb. 4:12)

"Free course" - pray that God's Word would: --be unhindered
--move quickly

Paul is perhaps alluding to Psalm 147:15 - *"HE sent forth His commandment upon the earth: His Word runneth very swiftly"*

Paul was bound in chains, but he said that God's Word is not bound (II Tim. 2:9).

*"**Glorified" -*** God's Word is glorified (well thought of; adored and praised) when it reveals its power to swiftly move into hearts and minds and radically transform people.

Acts 13:48-49 - *"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the Word of the Lord was published throughout all the region."*

God is concerned that His Word the Bible is glorified. God's Word is glorified when it is: believed (trusted) and obeyed (followed).

"As it is with you" - God's Word was glorified by the Thessalonians because they did not receive it as the word of men, but as it is the word of God. God's Word came to them in power (SEE: I Th. 1:5-10).

V. 2

Paul requests prayer that he and his companions (as they preach, witness, evangelize, and disciple) might be *"powerfully delivered [rescued] from unreasonable* (lit. "out of place" - outrageous, perverse) *and evil* (morally wicked) *men."*

Satan has his cultists, con-artists, poisonous humanists, and question-infested agnostics-- who have no desire for solid truth -- positioned to waste the precious time and disrupt the important work of God's servants.

Paul faced trouble in almost every city he visited (SEE: Acts 17:5-10; 18:6-17)

"For all men have not faith" lit. "the faith" Two possible ideas:

1) They don't have <u>saving</u> faith
(they don't have <u>true</u> faith, the faith to believe)

2) They don't have the capacity to believe the body of truth regarding Jesus Christ

In contrast to men not having faith, Paul says God is faithful (worthy of faith).

II. We need <u>the Lord</u>
for supernatural <u>protection</u> (v. 3)

"The Lord is faithful" - He is trustworthy, reliable, worthy of your faith. "Great is thy faithfulness."

"Stablish" - We need the Lord to support, strengthen, "prop us up" in *"every good word and work"* (2:17).

Our strength - *"I can do all things <u>through Christ</u> which strengtheneth me."*

"Keep" = to protect or guard

"Evil" = lit. "The evil"
1) The Evil One - Satan
2) The particular evil that continually stumbles you.

III. We need <u>the Lord</u>
for simple <u>obedience</u> (v. 4)

Observe how Paul's confidence (persuasion) is not in the Thessalonians but in the God of the Thessalonians.

Paul's confidence was never in the power of believers, but in the power of <u>God</u> in believers (Phil. 1:6 - *"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."*)

Your obedience to God depends on:
1. Your relationship to Him
2) Your reliance on Him

The word *"command"* means: a military order passed down from a superior officer. . . He (Paul) repeats this word in 3:6, 10, 12 (Wiersbe, p. 160).

"We command you" - via this epistle, which Paul implicitly raises to the status of the rest of Scripture (since it is God who would enable such obedience).

IV. We need <u>the Lord</u>
for spiritual <u>virtue</u> (v. 5)

The word *"Lord"* is used with god (i.e. the Father) and Christ because both the Father and Son are one <u>Lord</u>.

Paul is expressing a wish (desire) that the Lord will guide you into His own love and endurance.

"The verb '*direct*' conveys the picture of opening up the way by the removal of obstacles so that the desired goal may be reached" (Hiebert, p. 336)

"Direct your hearts" - to guide the core of one's being. Our hearts being *"deceitful above all things and desperately wicked"* (Jer. 17:9) need God to prompt them to have the right affections and stability.

"The Love of God" - God's love. The same love that God has.

God is the only source for true (*agape*) love.

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is <u>of God</u>" (i.e. from God) (I Jn. 4:7).

Loving others is a matter of letting God love through you.

"The patient waiting" - lit. the endurance (*hupomonane*), the ability to remain under pressure without giving up or giving in.

"The patience of Christ" means to have the same ability to endure that Christ had (Heb. 12:2 - *"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."*)

This ability to endure hardship will be most needed prior to the second coming of Christ.

CONCLUSION:

Where does our confidence rest?

Is our reliance on self or God?

God warns us: *"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall"*

***Even you who are saved desperately need the Lord.**

I. We need the Lord
for successful ministry
(v. 1-2)

II. We need the Lord
for supernatural protection
(v. 3)

III. We need the Lord
for simple obedience
(v. 4)

IV. We need the Lord
for spiritual virtue (v. 5)

"SEPARATION FROM A BROTHER"

2 Thessalonians 3:6-7, 13-16

8-12-2026

INTRODUCTION:

The doctrine of Biblical separation is rooted in a passion for holiness.

***What do we do when a Christian brother persists in a sinful lifestyle?**

I. We must be convicted of:
The SERIOUS <u>MATTER</u> of Separation (v. 6)

A. Separation is an <u>important</u> matter (v. 6a)

B. Separation is an <u>impartial</u> matter (v. 6b)

II. We must understand:
The RIGHT <u>REASONS</u> for Separation (v. 6, 14)

A. A disorderly walk (v. 6)

B. A disobedience to the Word (v. 14)

III. We must follow:
The RIGHT <u>METHOD</u> of Separation (v. 6, 14a)

A. *"Withdraw yourselves"* (v. 6)

B. *"Note that man. . . have no company"* (v. 14)

IV. We must have:
The RIGHT <u>MOTIVE</u> for Separation (v. 14b)

V. We must practice:
The RIGHT <u>MANNER</u> of Separation (v. 15)

2 Thessalonians 3:6-7, 13-16
8-19-2026

INTRODUCTION:

The doctrine of Biblical separation is rooted in a passion for holiness.

***What do we do when a Christian brother persists in a sinful lifestyle?**

I. We must be convicted of:
The SERIOUS _____ of Separation (v. 6)

A. Separation is an _____ matter (v. 6a)

B. Separation is an _____ matter (v. 6b)

II. We must understand:
The RIGHT _____ for Separation (v. 6, 14)

A. A _____ (v. 6)

B. A _____ (v. 14)

III. We must follow:
The RIGHT _____ of Separation (v. 6, 14a)

A. *"*_____ *yourselves"* (v. 6)

B. *"*_____ *that man. . . have* _____*"* (v. 14)

IV. We must have:
The RIGHT _____ for Separation (v. 14b)

V. We must practice:
The RIGHT _____ of Separation (v. 15)

"SEPARATION FROM A BROTHER"

INTRODUCTION:

Psalm 1:1 - *"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."*

When so-called "believers" or "Bible believing churches" do not take a stand on that which is clearly revealed in Scripture, they must first of all be exhorted (in a loving spirit) to repent and come to a Biblical position; and secondly, if reconciliation will not be arrived at, they must be separated from.

What are the clearly revealed issues over which a believer must separate?

1. **Unbelief** (II Cor. 6:14-7:1)

2. **Unrepentant wickedness** (Eph. 5:11 - *"And have no fellowship with the unfaithful works of darkness, but rather reprove them")*

   SEE: I Cor. 5:9, 11

   "Fornicator" (sexually immoral person)
   "Covetous" (a lustful heart for material things)
   "Idolater" (a worshipper of things)
   "Railer" (a foul mouth)
   "Drunkard" (an alcoholic)
   "Extortioner" (a thief)

3. **Divisiveness & offensiveness** (Rom. 16:17 - *"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them")*

4. **False doctrine** (Titus 3:10 - *"A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition, reject")*

   SEE: I Tim. 6:3-6

   Compare: Gal. 1:9; II Tim. 2:16-19; II Jn. 10; Rev. 2:2, 6, 14-16

5. **Disrespect for the church** (Mt. 18:17 - *"And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican")*

6. **Lazy spongers** (the intentionally unemployed) (II Thes. 3:6-16)

Wrong behavior is always the result of wrong beliefs.

"Some members of the assembly had (evidently) mis-interpreted Paul's teachings about the return of Christ, left their jobs, and were living off the generosity of the church. They

were idle while others were working. (They were victims of false teaching -- II Thes. 2:2 -- believing that since the 'Lord was coming soon' they need not work). Misinterpretations and misapplications of the truth of God's Word can cause endless trouble. History records the foolishness of people who set dates, sold their possessions, and sat on mountains waiting for the Lord to return. Any teaching that encourages us to disobey another divine teaching is not Bible teaching" (Wiersbe, p. 165).

The doctrine of Biblical separation is rooted in a passion for holiness.

***What do you do when a Christian brother persists in a sinful lifestyle?**

I. You must be convicted of:
The SERIOUS <u>MATTER</u> of Separation (v. 6)

A. Separation is an <u>important</u> matter (v. 6a)

"Command" - to pass on an authoritative order

"Brothers" - this injunctions applies only to believers. Church discipline is a "family" matter.

The unsaved may tolerate evil doers in their assemblies, but the *"brethren"* cannot!

"They speak *'in the name of'* as the official <u>representatives</u> and with the <u>authority</u> of *'our Lord Jesus Christ'*." (Hiebert, p. 338)

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" - This command is not Paul's - it is Christ's! It is on behalf of Christ that Paul commands God's people to practice Biblical separation. To ignore this command is to ignore clear orders from Christ, the Head of the Church.

"Our" - He is personal (personally related)
"Lord" - He is Jehovah God
"Jesus" - He is Savior
"Christ" - He is Messiah

The command "is <u>not</u> a suggestion which is open to debate or modification. . . but is a binding order which they are expected to obey" (Hiebert, p. 338).

"To separate ourselves from those who separate themselves from the truth of God is not [only] our liberty, but our duty" (Spurgeon, "The Drift of the Times: Sound the Alarm!")

B. Separation is an <u>impartial</u> matter (v. 6b)

"<u>Every</u> brother" - The word "every" shows that there is to be no exceptions, no partiality, and no favoritism in the matter of biblical separation.

It doesn't matter who they are, what position they hold, how much money

they give or how well-known they are. God's command to separate must be upheld.

II. You must understand: The RIGHT REASONS for Separation (v. 6, 14)

A. A disorderly walk (v. 6)

"Disorderly" - (*ataktos*: *a* = no
tasso = order, arrangement)

This word was a military term denoting not keeping rank;' to be out of one's place; to be out of order and insubordinate (Vine).

God is referring to someone who is "out of line," someone who is not submitting to the rules of Christianity (hence - "unruly" - NASV).
(cp. its use in I Thes. 5:14; II Thes. 3:7)

In the context, the disorderly walk specifically refers to someone (a male believer) who refuses to work for a living (v. 7-12). This lifestyle might not seek too offensive to many today, yet it is to God! Such a command shows the importance of practical every day living in Christianity.

"To walk disorderly is to live in violation of a set code of conduct" (Bruce Compton, Detroit Seminary).

"Walketh" - does not refer to an occasional, temporary step out of line, but a continual, persistent, present, daily misconduct.

When someone goes astray and is confronted in love (following Mt. 18:15-17), yet still remains unrepentant, then the severance is to occur.

Some of these Thessalonians were "addicted to deliberate loafing" (Hiebert, p. 339).

"Not after the tradition" - This phrase further defines what is meant by a "disorderly walk." It is a lifestyle that is inconsistent with the authoritative teachings that were passed down (hence *"traditions"* - cp. 2:15) by Paul, Silas, and Timothy from God.

"Received" - aorist tense indicating a time in the past when such "tradition" was given.

This teaching was no doubt given in the first epistle to Thessalonica (cp. I Thes. 4:11-12), but was also given by the very lifestyle and example of the missionaries (v. 7).

"Ye ought to follow us" - It is necessary for you to mimic or imitate (cp. I Th. 1:6) us.
If your life is not worth imitating, it means you are walking disorderly.

A LIVING SERMON

I'd rather see a sermon
than hear one any day.
I'd rather have you walk with me
than merely point the way.

The eye is a more ready pupil
than ever was the ear;
Good advice is often confusing
but example is always clear.

B. A disobedience to the Word (v. 14)

"Obey" - to listen with a submissiveness. To hear with a heart to heed.

It's not enough to learn the truth, but to live it. If it is not lived, this is the greatest evidence that it was not truly believed.

"This epistle" - The command to separate if this letter is not obeyed shows the authority of this letter. This epistle came via Paul, but it is from God!

One must hear the truth (of God's Word) before he is required to obey the truth. (You can't hold someone accountable for something you never told them).

III. You must follow:
The RIGHT <u>METHOD</u> of Separation (v. 6, 14a)

A. *"Withdraw yourselves"* (v. 6)

"Withdraw" - to <u>draw back</u> or to <u>shrink back</u> from a professing believer who is living in sin.

The word was used of pulling together the sails on ships and gathering them up. It meant to recoil or pull back.

What God is commanding us to do is to not be "buddy-buddy" with an erring brother. It does not mean to sever all ties, but to become somewhat "cold" toward the offender, so as to break off intimate fellowship with him/her.

This "withdrawing" was for the purpose of showing them that their behavior was unacceptable and that it produced a gap between them and the other members.

B. *"Note that man. . . have no company"* (v. 14)

"Any man" - anyone regardless of who they are

"Note" - from *semeion*, a sign. It means to note for one's self (middle voice); to mark out; to take special precautions towards.

What God is saying is this: "Put a tag on that man" (Robertson)

The verb *"note"* "does not imply that the congregation had a blackboard on which it wrote the names of its black sheep" (Lenski, cited by Hiebert, p. 350).

"Have no company with him" - lit. do not mix together with him; do not mingle; do not associate with; do not combine with.

"This probably meant that these believers were not permitted to share in the Lord's supper, and that the church members would not invite them to their homes" etc. (Wiersbe, p. 172-173)

IV. You must have:
The RIGHT MOTIVE for Separation (v. 14b)

"Ashamed" -lit. "to turn in" (*entrepo: en* = in; *trepo* = to turn). That is, to turn one upon himself and so produce a feeling of shame, a wholesome shame which involves a change of conduct (I Cor. 4:14; Titus 2:8). (Vine, p. 77).

The purpose of avoiding the intimate fellowship of a believer is that they will

become ashamed of their ways and turn from their error.

By associating and being close "buddy-buddy" and acting as if nothing is wrong is the worse thing you can do for him/her. Your life is in no way a source of conviction, but rather you are indirectly condoning their practice by default.

The purity of the church body is a motive for practicing Biblical separation (I Cor. 5:6-9).

When problems in people's lives are not solved, they grow and become worse. "A sliver left int he finger can become infected and cause a toxic condition so serious that surgery may become necessary. If you tell your doctor you stepped on a rusty nail, he will immediately give you a tetanus shot, even though the wound may appear insignificant to you. Church problems are like physical problems: If left unsolved, they grow and become worse, and they infect more people. The local church is a Body; and what germs are to the physical body, sin is to the spiritual body." (Wiersbe, p. 163).

"That which is tolerated in moderation in one generation is excused in excess in the next generation."

However, remember that the restoration of the offender is always an ultimate goal when separation must take place.

Yes, the purity of the Body is a motive, but lets never forget that Christ's desire is that the straying believer come back to the truth and back to the church and back to right living!

There is a lot of pressure in "group disapproval."

It can be very helpful if the intent is not malicious, self-righteously critical, or personally hostile.

V. You must practice: The RIGHT MANNER of Separation (v. 15)

One who is forced to separate from a sinning brother does not do so with a proud, holier-than-thou vindictiveness, but with a humble sadness and grief.

"Count" - to consider, to deem, to reckon, to view. Paul is saying, Don't look at him as an enemy.

"Enemy" - This is where many fundamentalists err in the matter of separation. We tend to write off, isolate ourselves from, and verbally blast those brethren with whom we differ.

"Admonish" - (*noutheteo)* - lit. to place in the mind; to confront and correct the thinking of someone.

Wrong behavior is always the result of wrong thinking. You are what you think. As you think, you do.

The heart of every problem is the problem of the heart.

The authoritative source from which we seek to correct the inner man is the inspired, written Word of God (II Tim. 3:16).

God expects us to "*admonish the disorderly"* (I Thes. 5:14).

We must admonish, not neglect or abandon the misguided and failing brother.

The command to *"admonish"* is not limited to the pastor or "clergy." The command is to the *"brethren"* (plural) (v. 6).

Each believer is responsible to admonish other believers to go astray (Rom. 15:14 - *"And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another."*)

"Church discipline is to the church member what family discipline is to a child: it is an exercise of, and evidence of correcting love when a parent disciplines his child. It is not a judge punishing a criminal; it is a loving father seeking to make his child a better person" (Wiersbe, p. 170).

"As a brother" - How should we treat a brother?

1) With <u>love</u> (*agape* - unselfish love, which demands our time and energy)

2) With <u>respect</u> (we respect them, not the wrong they are doing)

3) With <u>prayer</u>

4) With <u>patience</u> (v. 13)

5) With peace (knowing that we are doing the right thing (v. 16)

6) With humility (Gal. 6:1 - *"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted")*

The Courage to Be Separate
By Douglas McLachlan, p. 19-20

b. We must show love and oneness that is observable (Jn. 13:34-35) while at the same time refusing to participate in a brother's mistakes or sins. This can be done in several ways:

1) We should exhibit grief rather than anger when dealing with the mistakes or sins of true Christians.

a) Often we are all too anxious to expose the faults and mistakes of others.

b) Occasionally it is necessary to do this, but we should not be anxious to do it, nor belligerent in doing it.

2) The deeper the wrong in our brother, the greater should be our compassion for him or his group.

a) We have a tendency to reverse this. If the difference is minor, we find it relatively easy to show love; if it is crucial, we can become hotbeds of ugliness.

b) This negative response can be devastating to the testimony of Christ before a watching world.

c) We must never sanction his deed, but we must deal with it from a context of love.

3) We should approach the problem with a desire to solve it, rather than with a desire to win.

a) We live in a competitive culture in which we all develop the desire tow in.

b) This desire to win has been especially characteristic of theologians from time immemorial.

c) Our real desire should be to find a solution to the problem, if at all possible a solution that will achieve three goals:

(1) Give glory to God's name
(2) Be true to the Bible
(3) Exhibit the love of God simultaneously with the holiness of God.

"A BIBLICAL WORK ETHIC"

2 Thessalonians 3:8-12

8-26-2026

INTRODUCTION:

***Christians must have a Biblical work ethic!**

I. When you work, you are not a <u>BURDEN</u> to others (v. 8)

II. When you work, you set a good <u>EXAMPLE</u> for others (v. 9)

III. When you don't work, you don't <u>DESERVE</u> to eat (v. 10)

IV. When you don't work, you have idle time to get into <u>TROUBLE</u> (v. 11)

V. When you work, you get the <u>SATISFACTION</u> of enjoying the fruit of your labor (v. 12)

CONCLUSION:

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8-26-2026

INTRODUCTION:

Our sinful nature does not want to work. By nature we tend toward ease, leisure, and luxury without earning it. We are afraid of work. This four-letter word is practically a curse word in the 20th century. What do you say when you leave someone? "Don't work too hard!"

America once believed in "earning your bread."

Today America's philosophy is centered around putting in less and less time for more and more money.

Our nation will sooner or later pay for this attitude. No one wants to invest. Everyone wants to take, take, take.

Work was part of God's plan from creation (Gen. 2:15 - Adam was put into the Garden of Eden to dress [cultivate] it and to keep it); then after the fall, man was still to work, only this time it would not be as easy (Gen. 3:18-19).

Note: Context (v. 6-16) describes deliberate unemployment as a reason for Biblical separation and church discipline.

***Christians must have a Biblical work ethic!**

I. When you work, you are not a <u>BURDEN</u> to others (v. 8)

"for nought" - for nothing; for free; without paying.

If Paul stayed at someone's house for any length of time, he would not sponge off the company, but would renumerate them for living expenses.

"Wrought" - energetically worked.

"Labor and travail" - toil and hardship; wearisome work and struggle.

"Night and day" - Because Paul was ministering at night, he had to work a job during the day.

Perhaps his tent-making trade was what he leaned on for employment (Acts 18:3)

"Chargeable" - burdensome

Paul did not want to be a weight to anyone (no matter how well off they were). What consideration for others!

Our goal in life ought to be that we might be burden bears not burden givers. "weight lifters" not "weight leavers."

Today our government welfare socialistic system of taking from those who earn money to give to those who did not puts a tremendous unnecessary burden on the middle and lower class workers and his family.

Paul did not take advantage of people. His life was one of giving, not taking.
Paul was not a draining parasite; he was not a loafing leach.

Those who "deliberately impose upon the generosity of others are not living in love" (Hiebert, p. 185).

There are times when we do need each other
(EX: Acts 2, 4).

"While believers must always be ready to help others (Gal. 6:2) (as an act of love), believers must also shoulder their own burden (Gal. 6:5)." (Morris, p. 88)

But these times should be the exception not the rule.

We are seeking to give, not get! Eph. 4:28 - "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

II. When you work, you set a good <u>EXAMPLE</u> for others (v. 9)

Paul did not work night and day because he did not have authority ("*power")* which deserved the financial support of each church he planted. His reason for working was not because he did not deserve to be supported, but because as an apostle (who would only be a temporary preacher for each church he established), he wanted to set an example or model of hard work for others to follow.

People had already wrongly accused him of enough ministerial infidelity. Pedalling the Gospel for filthy lucre was not to be added to the list (II Cor. 11:7-9).

The Apostle "voluntarily waived this right" (Hiebert, p. 343).

I Thes. 2:9 - *"For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God."*

It is right and proper for full-time ministers to be financially taken care of by the people to whom they minister.

I Cor. 9:11, 14 - *"If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather?"*

I Tim. 5:17-18 - *"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his reward."*

Gal. 6:6 - *"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things."*

When you work hard and honestly for a living, you give many people a model to copy, mimic, imitate or pattern after.

You become a good testimony to:
--Your co-workers
--Your family (children)
--The unsaved who watch your life

When you are lazy on the job, you are discrediting the cause of Christ.
When you are dishonest (steal time, extra-long breaks, late, etc.) on the job, you are discrediting the cause of Christ.

When you are unproductive on the job, you are discrediting the cause of Christ.
When you do a poor job (sloppy work) you are discrediting the cause of Christ.
A Christian should never be known as being slothful, unfaithful, etc. in his job.

A hard worker will win the respect of outsiders.

III. When you don't work, you don't DESERVE to eat (v. 10)

This command (imperfect) came repeatedly by Paul. Perhaps the "inspired and far-seeing wisdom of the Apostle had detected the seeks of disorder," laziness, and busy-body-ness in some of the Thessalonians (Hiebert, p. 344).

"Would not" - *(thelo)* will not - to be unwilling. Note: it says "would not" not "could not."

Those who cannot work (the elderly and disabled) should be provided for; but not those who can but won't work.

Every adult is to work! Married women are to work also! Their place of employment is at home!

God commands them to be *"keepers [workers] at home"* (Tit. 2:5). They are to *"guide the house"* (I Tim. 5:14).

God gives an order: If anyone is unwilling to work. . . do not feed him! By feeding him, you are reinforcing his laziness, and will do more harm to him than good.

Most if not all of the homeless people in NYC are not innocent victims of circumstances, but are suffering the consequences of their own sin (usually drugs and alcohol).

The panhandlers of our city do not all suffer from lack of employment opportunities (for anyone who is legally a citizen here can make an opportunity if none exist); rather, they are all "self-inflicted paupers."

IV. When you don't work, you have idle time to get into TROUBLE (v. 11)

"Some" - Perhaps not many, but just a few could be a dangerous *"hurtful leaven"* (I Cor. 5:6) to the rest.

"Walk" - to conduct their life; to have a lifestyle of not working.

"Disorderly" - to be out of God's order; to be idle.

This is the person who does nothing and is going nowhere. His life is in "park"! And his car is off the road. This man watches while the rest of the world goes whizzing by.

***"Working** (ergazomai) **not. . . busybodies** (periergazomai)* - a deliberate play on words -- lit. "not working but working around" or "not busy but a busybody"

They became "busybodies who do no business" (Conybeare).

They did not work, but worked around at meddling and obnoxious, troublesome behavior.

"Idle hands are the devil's workshop."

That which turned Sodom to homosexuality was "*abundance of idleness"* (Ezek. 16:49).

"Almost every culture has its saying about idleness. The Romans said, "By doing nothing, men learn to do evil." The Jewish rabbis taught, "He who does not teach his son a trade teaches him to be a thief." (Wiersbe, p. 169).

A major problem with our city is we have too many busybodies. People wouldn't have time to get into so much trouble if they were busy working a consistent job.

V. When you work, you get the <u>SATISFACTION</u> of enjoying the fruit of your labor (v. 12)

"Command" - a binding order

"Exhort" - an encouraging plea

"Quietness" - a calmness produced by a contentedness to work. This feeling is the opposite of the agitated, meddlesome, and troublesome busybody.

"quietness" refers to having a calm, peaceful life; it's the opposite of being disorderly and disturbed, which always will lead to your causing disturbances.

Being quiet is tied to working in I Thess. 4:11.
You have an inner peace; because when you are working you are concentrating your energy on something without divided interests.

"Your body, mind, and emotions were designed for hard work, and will break down without it" ("Last Days" Journal, 1986, p. 25). The phrase "Use it or lose it" is true!

EX: of people who don't have a job. They have energy that isn't being used, so they are restless (an honest day's work gives you a good night's sleep), tense, flustered, in a tempest - going this way and then that, but accomplishing nothing!

Work is God's invention. It's good for you!

"Salt from the sweat of work preserves the soul" ("Last Days" p. 27).

I am miserable (depressed, etc.) when I don't get things done.

Man needs a sense of accomplishment.

The happiest people in a church are those that serve the most.

If you want something to get done, give it to someone who is already busy (If you give it to someone who isn't doing anything, chances are he won't get at what you give him to do).

Working hard has great therapeutic value for those of you who are "sick" all the time. Work is really a great healer!

--You get your mind off yourself
--You use muscles and tone them (lose weight)
--You get circulation going
--You have a sense of accomplishment

"Eat their own bread" - to eat the bread they earned.

There is great satisfaction to know you honestly worked for the bread you are eating.

Those who live off of food stamps and welfare checks do not appreciate the food they eat, like those who worked for it.

CONCLUSION:

SEE: I Thes. 4:11-12

How should we work?

1) Enthusiastically David says in I Chron. 29:2, "I have prepared with all my might for the house of God"

2) Cheerfully - Col. 3:23 - "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."

3) Be thorough - finish the job

4) Go the extra mile = Do it right! We are ambassadors for Christ! You will really shock the unsaved world! (leave things cleaner when you are finished with them than when you started)