

February 14, 2021 Valentines Day

All verses are copied from <https://biblehub.com/> in King James.

Thessalonians is the first letter that Paul wrote to any church. It is located in Greece and was then and is today still the second most populated city in Greece. Paul was there for a total of 3 weeks before a riot broke out and he was forced out of the city.

Paul went to Athens and became concerned about the new converts in Thessalonica. Paul sent Timothy and Silas to see how they were doing.

The report comes back that they are doing very well, but there was confusion about the end times, the rapture. Apparently while Paul was there for a short 3 weeks, he taught them about the “end times”. The end times was of great interest to these new believers and continues to be so today with new and older believers. That interest is partly based on tremendously volatile end time events that every believer since the Cross had looked on as possibly being in their lifetime. That has spanned centuries and is considered highly likely in our time today. Paul will address that issue as one of the main topics of his letter to the Thessalonians.

1 Thessalonians

Greetings from Paul, Silas and Timothy

([2 Thessalonians 1:1-2](#); [Philemon 1:1-3](#))

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

Paul includes Silas and Timothy in his opening remarks in this letter as they had been with him when he introduced Christ to the Thessalonians. This would have been Paul's third missionary journey from his home in Galatia. It is covered in Acts 17.

Acts 17:1-4 1Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: 2And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, 3Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. 4And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

Paul was successful in bringing a number of Jews and gentiles to the Saving knowledge of Jesus Christ in a short 3 (Sabbath days) in vs 2, means three weeks of sabbath days or three weeks.

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

The apostle Paul and the disciples Timothy and Silus were always excited to see men and women come to Salvation. It is no little thing to be involved in sharing the Gospel of Christ and seeing a response, especially in an area where there is great resistance to Christianity. It is a big thing to “mention” someone in a prayer. It is telling us that we don’t need long drawn-out prayers to get God’s attention, just the mere mention of someone’s need is vital to God and to the one mentioned.

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

Three striking elements of a Believer; working through Faith; If you did not have Faith to believe would you even step out a little to carry out God’s Great Commission? Without Faith would you have the courage to share your Faith with anyone? Without Faith would you even believe that you are saved? Without Faith would you heart still break for those who are lost?

You may remember I’ve mention this once or twice.

Ephesians 2:8For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10For we are his workmanship,

created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Laboring in Love.

Any labor we do is not for Salvation our laboring is fruitless if it is not directed from God for God for His Glory, not for anything of our own or for ourselves.

Patient in our Hope.

Being patient in our Hope in our Lord Jesus Christ is a virtue and will be rewarded.

Isaiah 40:31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

God through His own patience with us had demonstrated His Love for us; His Grace is a manifestation of His Patience.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

All of this done in God's purview and vision in and for our lives as believers. His Patience is first extended that we might be saved, He then extends His Patience as we walk through life and sanctification. Always prodding us onward and upward.

Romans 13: 11And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. 12The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. 13Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. 14But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Prodding us onward and upward.

4Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

Romans 8:30 30Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

God knew millions of years before you were born that you would say yes to His offer of Eternal Life through the Blood of the Lamb His Son Jesus Christ. Just like He knew millions of years before everyone that would refuse the free Gift of Life. There are those among us, even family members that will never accept the Free Gift of Life. It is heart breaking and it is our job to simply pray for them. If there is any hope it is in Jesus and what He did on the Cross for all mankind. It is sufficient, but no one will be taken kicking and screaming into Heaven.

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

Paul came to Thessalonica, driven by God to bring the Good News of Salvation to an unsaved city. Along with Paul and his fellow workers came the Holy Ghost filled with the Power of God. Bringing assurance to those who heard the Truth just as He does today, as Believers when you hear the Truth you know it is the Truth and believe it.

As Paul did in numerous locations, he would work to earn his own way and not depend upon handouts from those he taught. He makes mention of it here “what manner of men we were among you for your sake”.

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

A riot broke out toward the end of the three weeks Paul was in Thessalonica. These new believers were caught up in this hatred of Paul and the Word of God he brought. As they began their walk in Christ their lives became more challenging due to persecution. Now you might think if walking with Christ is going to be persecution why do it? The simple answer is Life for ever with Christ. The alternative of denying Christ and perhaps not enduring persecution has an equally simple answer. Eternal life without Christ in the Lake of Fire. Pretty simple choice.

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

The Romans divided Greece into the Northern and Southern provinces or regions each governed by a “proconsul”.

Thessalonica was the capital of the norther province and Corinth was the capital of the southern province. Paul was pointing out that those in Thessalonica were to be examples of what walking and living in Christ was to the whole of Greece and modern-day Europe.

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

The Gospel was spread mightily by those in Thessalonica and they delt with persecution from almost the first day of receiving the Word of God from Paul and his fellow Christians.

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

They turned to God from idols; but they heard the Word, and it was True in their hearing; it drew them away from years of idol worship. Put in another way they turned from the darkness to the light.

There are those who have experienced a meeting with God, some recognize their errors right away and turn from the idol worship to the True and Living God. Others are a little slow on the uptake and many die in their errors of Idol worship.

Dagon;

1 Samuel 1: 1And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Ebenezer unto Ashdod. 2When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon. 3And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again. 4And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him. 5Therefore neither the priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day.

6But the hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and smote them with emerods, even Ashdod and the coasts thereof.

“emerods” is an antiquated term translated in today’s English vernacular; “hemorrhoids”.

7And when the men of Ashdod saw that it was so, they said, The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god.

8They sent therefore and gathered all the lords of the Philistines unto them, and said, What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel? And they answered, Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto Gath. And they carried the ark of the God of Israel about thither. ***9***And it was so, that, after they had carried it about, the hand of the LORD was against the city with a very great destruction: and he smote the men of the city, both small and great, and they had emerods in their secret parts. ***10***Therefore they sent the ark of God to Ekron. And it came to pass, as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our people. ***11***So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to his own place, that it slay us not, and our people: for there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there. ***12***And the men that died not were smitten with the emerods: and the cry of the city went up to heaven.

This is an example of not turning toward the Truth of God but to continue to look upon a manmade god; a Lie.

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

Each Chapter of 1 Thessalonians masterfully ends with a reference to the coming of the Lord. If not the final verse it is the next verse to the last verse or close to it.

For all Christians for all time, it has been the same encouragement; “wait for His Son from heaven”

The idea of waiting on Christ will be explored further in this letter from Paul to the Thessalonians as it was the essence of their question to him that brought about this letter.

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