

Cornerstone Faith of West Liberty
1 Thessalonians 1:1-4 – Greetings

I. The Church in...

- The church is not primarily an organization but a living organism located in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
 - o You cannot have a church that self-exists outside of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 16:18)

A. ...God the Father (a few attributes)

- So pure He cannot look at sin (Hab. 1:3)
- The one Jesus turns everything over to (1 Cor. 15:23-24)
- Lord God Almighty—The Jehovah Names of God (Ex. 6:2-3)
- Creator of All (Gen. 1:1)
- God the Father describes the one to whom we are to pray (Matt. 6:9-13)
- He is one of a few we are to worship (John 4:23-24)

B. ...The Lord Jesus Christ

- Scepter of righteousness is the scepter of His throne (Heb. 1:8-9)
- Attributes of Lord Jesus Christ from John's encounter in Revelation (1:11-18)
- He is coming King—co-regent with God the Father (Rev. 19:11-16; Heb. 10:12)
 - o To change a command of Scripture you must be greater than God who wrote the Scripture—we are not! (Deut. 4:2; Rev. 22:18-19)
 - o This is why Jesus calls those His friends who obey Him (John 15:14)
 - o This is why Jesus says that those who obey Him love Him (John 14:15)
 - o This is why Jesus says those who obey Him the Father and He will manifest themselves in them (John 14:21)

II. Grace and peace from...

- Grace and peace are from God the Father and Jesus Christ to the church that is in them **Philippians 1:2 (NKJV)** *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

A. Grace (Luke 1:30, 2:51-52; John 1:16-17; Rom. 5:1-2; Tit. 2:11-14)

- Grace is God's unmerited divine influence upon our lives making us more like Him.
 - o We cannot earn it, we do not deserve it, we cannot demand it—It is freely given by God to us **John 1:16-17 (NKJV)** *And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

B. Peace (Luke 10:5-6; Rom. 14:17, 15:13, 16:20; Phil. 4:6-7; Matt. 6:25-34)

- Peace—The OT equivalent word *shalom* meant wholeness, soundness, hence health, well-being, prosperity; more particularly, peace as opposed to war. CWS.D. **Philippians 4:6-7 (NKJV)** *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

III. We give thanks and pray for you

A. Remembering without ceasing

1. Your work of faith

- Faith is not passive—it requires action based on what one has been shown by God (Heb. 11)
- Even the armor of God, such as the shield of faith, must be taken up (Eph. 6:13-18)

2. Your labor of love

- Love-agape—the love of God not known by the world (1 Cor. 13:4-8a)
- What this tells me is putting genuine God-love into action is not going to be easy, may bring grief and hardship yet we must try

3. Your patience of hope (Tit. 2:13, 3:7; John 16:33)

- Patience- to persevere, remain under, bear up under endurance to things or circumstances (different from 1 Cor. 13:4 which is longsuffering toward people)
- Hope-desire for some good with expectation of obtaining it especially in regards to salvation and Christ's return

Titus 2:13 (NKJV) *looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,*

B. How?

1. In the Lord Jesus Christ

2. In the sight of God the Father (2 Cor. 5:10; Luke 21:36)

- Sight—before, in front of, ahead, in the presence or sight of,
2 Corinthians 5:10 (NKJV) *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

3. Because of your election in God (Elect—all believers—Isa. 45:4; Rom. 11:5-7; Col. 3:12)

- Elect is not just Israel (as in the Old Testament) but now those redeemed by the Lamb—Jew and Gentile in Christ Jesus

Colossians 3:12 (NKJV) *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;*

- Election is based on what one does with Jesus Christ—those who accept are elect those who refuse Him are not elect (John 1:12-13)

IV. Challenge—to live as a church

- These are tough admonitions of appreciation by the apostles to the church then and now
 - o It requires genuine repentance from sin and the first Adam nature
 - o It requires allowing the Holy Spirit who dwells in every true believer to have full sway over our lives
 - o It requires being willing to live dependent on God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in full submission to Him