

1 Thessalonians

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Translation

1 Thess. 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church [royal family] of the Thessalonians [which is] in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ [positional truth]. Grace and prosperity to you.

1 Thess. 1:2 We always give thanks to God concerning all of you [you are not forgotten], continually making mention of you during our prayers,

1 Thess. 1:3 While unceasingly remembering your production [priestly function] from doctrine [application of the truth in your souls] and your labor [ambassadorship function] from the love complex [virtue love from the filling of the Spirit] and your patient endurance [passing momentum tests] based on confidence which rests on our Lord Jesus Christ [as opposed to self-confidence] in the face of God, even our Father,

1 Thess. 1:4 Knowing, brethren, that you who were loved in the past and continue to be loved in the present by God are the election [chosen by God in eternity past and cared for logistically at this very moment],

1 Thess. 1:5 For our gospel [message of good news] did not come to you in the sphere of word only [mere human philosophy], but also in the sphere of power [divine backing], even in the Holy Spirit [baptism of the Spirit placed all believers in union with Christ] and accompanied by full assurance [eternal security], even as you know beyond a shadow of a doubt the kind [quality] of men we showed ourselves to be for your benefit [example].

1 Thess. 1:6 And as for you [new believers], you became imitators of us [we stayed in Thessalonica as long as we could and taught you Bible doctrine] and of the Lord, having received [positive volition] the Word [Bible doctrine] while under frequent pressure [persecution] with inner happiness from the Holy Spirit [pressure caused them to utilize doctrine and grow to maturity],

1 Thess. 1:7 So that you became a pattern [Christian blueprint] to all those who are believers in Macedonia [northern Greece] and in Achaia [southern Greece].

1 Thess. 1:8 For from you the Word of the Lord blasted out like a trumpet in the past and is still sounding forth in the present not only in Macedonia and Achaia [within Greece], but in every place [outside Greece] your application of doctrine towards God [faith rest] has gone forth [worldwide evangelism], so that we [Paul's missionary team] do not have a need to say anything [in many cities Paul did not have to evangelize because the Thessalonians had gotten there first].

1 Thess. 1:9 Because they themselves [new converts] continue to report about you: what kind of reception we [Paul, Silas and Timothy] had in your presence [when we first came to Thessalonica], and how you turned to God from idols for the purpose of serving as bondslaves to the living and true

God,

1 Thess. 1:10 And to be waiting expectantly for His Son out from the heavens [at the rapture of the Church], Whom He [the Father] raised out from the dead [resurrection], Jesus, the One Who will deliver us out from the wrath [the Church will not go through the tribulation] which is coming [imminency of the rapture prior to the tribulation].

1 Thess. 2:1 For you will recall, brethren, our initial visit among you [in Thessalonica], that it did not prove to be futile [believers did come to Christ],

1 Thess. 2:2 But having suffered before [beaten and tortured] and having been disgracefully mistreated [imprisoned], as you know, in Philippi, we [nevertheless] spoke boldly and freely [with courage] in our God when we proclaimed the good news of God to you [in Thessalonica] while in a state of great conflict [opposition].

1 Thess. 2:3 For our declaration [of the gospel] did not come from the source of [doctrinal] error nor impure motive [from living in the cosmic system] nor by means of deceit [treachery],

1 Thess. 2:4 But since we were tested and approved by God [for blessing] as being faithful with reference to the good news, in the same manner we keep on speaking, not as pleasing men [emptying the gospel message of its offensive content], but to God [motivational virtue from love for God in spiritual autonomy], Who ultimately tests and approves the mentality [thinking] of our souls [for rewards and blessings in eternity].

1 Thess. 2:5 Indeed, neither at any time did we become a flatterer in word, as you know, nor a pretext for covetousness [using the gospel as a cover-up to obtain money]. God is witness [to our proper motivation].

1 Thess. 2:6 Nor did we seek glory [special treatment] from men, neither from you [Thessalonians] nor from others of the same kind [believers in other geographical locations]. When we were able to be burdensome [financially] on the grounds that we were apostles of Christ [legitimate authority],

1 Thess. 2:7 Instead, we became innocent and gentle [genuine humility] in your midst, as though [we were] a nursing mother taking care of her own children.

1 Thess. 2:8 So longing to be with you, we took delight in sharing with you not only the gospel of God [evangelistic message], but also our own souls [the doctrinal content in our thinking], because you have become dear [close friends] to us.

1 Thess. 2:9 For you remember, brethren, our travail [mother's birth pangs] and labor [father's toil]: night and day we engaged in manual labor for your benefit [self-supporting missionary team], so that we would not have to financially burden you [as new believers] whenever we proclaimed the good news of God [Bible doctrine] to you.

1 Thess. 2:10 You are witnesses and so is God, concerning how we conducted ourselves in a manner pleasing to God [divine viewpoint], both just [with virtue] and blameless [with integrity] towards you who are believers [execution of the royal family honor code].

1 Thess. 2:11 As you know, like a father with his own children [with authority orientation], we exhorted [with doctrine] and comforted [with encouragement] every one of you [individually],

1 Thess. 2:12 As well as urging you to walk [conduct yourselves] in a manner worthy of God [according to divine standards] Who called you into His own royal power [divine sphere of power] and glory [strategic and tactical victory in the angelic conflict].

1 Thess. 2:13 Moreover, for this cause [to spur your spiritual momentum forward], we constantly thank God in our prayers, because when you received the Word [Bible doctrine] from us, you welcomed the teaching as from God [divine origin], not from man [human origin], and not only this but because it is truly the Word [doctrine] of God which also continues to operate in you who continue to believe [exercise positive volition].

1 Thess. 2:14 For you, brethren [members of the royal family], became imitators of the assemblies of God which are in Judea [the first wave of persecution] in Christ Jesus, for you yourselves also suffered similar things from your own countrymen [conspirators], even as they themselves [the Judeans] suffered from the Jews.

1 Thess. 2:15 Those [Jewish legalistic & criminal element] who murdered both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and harshly persecuted us [Paul and his missionary team] to the point of driving us out [of the region], and are not pleasing to God [cosmic 1: antagonism towards God] and are hostile to all men [cosmic 2: hating His evangelists],

1 Thess. 2:16 Who have forbidden us from talking to the Gentiles so that they might be saved, with the result that they [the legalistic Jews] are filling up the cup of their sins at all times [getting drunk on them over and over again]. But wrath [divine judgment] will come upon them at the end [the Great White Throne Judgment].

1 Thess. 2:17 But we, brethren [members of the royal family], although we have been separated from you for a short time [due to hostile forces in Thessalonica], physically but not mentally [we wanted to stay], we have spared no effort with great enthusiasm [desire to be with them again] to see you physically all the more [in spite of the hostility].

1 Thess. 2:18 As a matter of fact, we wanted to return face-to-face to you, even I, Paul, and not just once but twice [we began our journey], but Satan prevented [detained] us.

1 Thess. 2:19 For what is our hope [seeing friends in heaven] or happiness [receiving our resurrection body] or crown of rejoicing [victory wreath: a reward for witnessing]? Is it not particularly [especially] you yourselves in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His return [at the

rapture]?

1 Thess. 2:20 As for you [Thessalonian believers], you are our glory [rewards in eternity] and happiness [blessings in time].

1 Thess. 3:1 For this reason, when we could no longer endure it [wondering how things were going with you in Thessalonica], we resolved [thought it best after conferring with each other] to remain in Athens alone,

1 Thess. 3:2 But we sent Timothy [to you in Thessalonica], our brother [fellow believer] and ministering servant [member of our missionary team] of God in the gospel of Christ, for the purpose of stabilizing and encouraging you for the sake of your doctrine [you are ready to go beyond basic Bible teaching],

1 Thess. 3:3 So that no one will be disturbed or upset [if they have attained spiritual self-esteem] by these outside pressures, for you yourselves know that we [Paul's missionary team, as well as all other believers] are appointed for this purpose [suffering is a requirement for spiritual growth].

1 Thess. 3:4 For indeed, when we were with you [in Thessalonica], we warned you repeatedly in advance that we are destined to suffer [as part of God's plan to bless us and propel our spiritual growth], just like what began to occur in the recent past [testing has officially started] and you are continuing to experience at the present time [the pressure is still on].

1 Thess. 3:5 Because of this [suffering], when I could no longer endure in silence [wondering how things were with you], I sent [Timothy] for the purpose of checking out [validating] your faith [whether you were successfully applying the faith rest technique or not], just in case by some means the one who tempts [Satan] had tempted you [caused you to reside in the cosmic system instead of the filling of the Spirit] and my labor to the point of exhaustion [teaching you doctrine] turned out to be in vain [wasted effort].

1 Thess. 3:6 But just now [as I'm writing this letter], Timothy has returned to us [in Corinth] from you [in Thessalonica] and has brought to us the good news concerning your [application of the] faith rest technique and your [residence and function inside the] love complex, and that you continue to have a good remembrance of us always, having a desire to see us just as we [have a desire to see] you [reciprocal relationship].

1 Thess. 3:7 Because of this [favorable report on your spiritual progress] we were encouraged, brethren, by all of your necessary trouble [trials & testing] and outside pressure [suffering through difficult circumstances], our encouragement due to your application of doctrine [correct use of the faith rest technique],

1 Thess. 3:8 For now we are beginning to come back to life again [living life more enthusiastically], since you continue to stand firm in the Lord.

1 Thess. 3:9 For what thanks [sufficient gratitude] are we able to return to God concerning you, for all the inner happiness which we are pleased to possess because of you in the presence of our God,
1 Thess. 3:10 Praying exceedingly above and beyond, night and day, that we might see your face [in Thessalonica] and complete those things [advanced teachings] which are lacking with reference to your doctrinal framework?

1 Thess. 3:11 Now may God Himself, even our Father, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way [road, journey] to you.

1 Thess. 3:12 And may the Lord [Holy Spirit] cause you to grow [to supergrace maturity] and superabound [reach ultra-supergrace status] in the love complex toward one another [fellow believers in Thessalonica] and toward all others [believers in other geographical locations], just as we [Paul and his missionary team] also [exercise virtue love in the love complex] towards you [reciprocal relationship],

1 Thess. 3:13 To the end that He [the Holy Spirit] might complete the stabilization of the mentality of your souls [sanctification salvation] - blameless [fully sanctified] in the sphere of holiness [glorification salvation] before God [at the Judgment Seat of Christ], even our Father - before the coming [at the rapture] of our Lord Jesus with all of His saints [the dead in Christ whom He brings with Him to meet those who are alive].

1 Thess. 4:1 For the rest then, brethren [members of the royal family], we keep on requesting and exhorting you in the sphere of the Lord Jesus [appealing to their positional status in Christ], so that just as you received from us how [the method] you ought to walk [precise protocol for the Church Age believer] and please God [by residence and function in the love complex], even as you are currently walking [they are on the right track spiritually], that you might abound all the more [grow to supergrace and beyond],

1 Thess. 4:2 For you already know what instructions [mandates for living the Christian way of life] we gave you through the Lord Jesus [divine authority].

1 Thess. 4:3 For this continues to be the will of God with reference to your experiential sanctification: You should abstain from sexual immorality,

1 Thess. 4:4 Each one of you should understand [learn how] that he is to possess [have sexual relations with] his own [not another man's] wife with dedication [fulfill her sexual desires] and honor [recognition of her sexual needs],

1 Thess. 4:5 Not with an uncontrollable urge of sexual lust [sinful rather than sanctified desire] in the same manner as unbelievers who indeed do not know God,

1 Thess. 4:6 That no man antagonizes [by flirting or making sexual advances towards another man's

wife] or cheats [by committing adultery with another man's wife] his brother [fellow believer] in this matter [sins of sexual arrogance], because the Lord is the One who disciplines with reference to all of these things [sexual sins], even as we previously warned and charged you with a solemn oath [this wasn't the 1st time Paul had warned them of this category of sins and the resultant divine discipline].

1 Thess. 4:7 For God did not call us to immorality [sexual impurity], but into the sphere of holiness [sanctification].

1 Thess. 4:8 For this very reason [due to our call to sanctification rather than immorality], he who continues to reject [ignore] this warning [to avoid sexual sins], is not rejecting man [cosmic 1: arrogance complex of sins], but God [cosmic 2: hatred complex of sins], Who has given His Holy Spirit to us [divine provision for spiritual growth].

1 Thess. 4:9 Now, concerning brotherly love, you have no need for me to write you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to exercise virtue love towards one another,

1 Thess. 4:10 For indeed, you are doing it [exercising basic impersonal love] toward all the brethren in the whole area of Macedonia. However, we urge you, brethren, to superabound [exercise advanced impersonal love] all the more [there's always room for improvement],

1 Thess. 4:11 And that you consider it a point of honor [aspiration] to live a quiet life [free from turmoil and disturbances] and mind your own business [respect the privacy of others] and work with your hands [continue your career or vocation], just as I charged you,

1 Thess. 4:12 In order that you may walk respectably [in your workplace and community] towards those on the outside [unbelievers] and have need of nothing [financial self-support].

1 Thess. 4:13 Now, we do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren [members of the royal family of God], concerning those [fellow believers] who are dying, so that you are not distressed, even as others [unbelievers] who do not have hope [of resurrection life].

1 Thess. 4:14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, then in the same manner [by resurrection], God will bring along with Him [at the rapture] those [believers] who have died with Jesus.

1 Thess. 4:15 For this [doctrine] we communicate to you by the Word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord [the rapture generation] shall not precede those who have died,

1 Thess. 4:16 Because the Lord Himself [Jesus Christ] will descend from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of an archangel [Michael or Gabriel commands the believers who are alive on earth to receive their resurrection bodies] and with the trumpet of God [God the Father gives

those believers who are already dead their resurrection bodies], and the dead in Christ will rise first [to meet the Lord in the air at the rapture],

1 Thess. 4:17 Then we who are living [the rapture generation] and who remain [on earth] shall be caught up [transported] together [at the same time] with them [the resurrected dead] in the clouds to a meeting [royal reception] of the Lord in the air [lower atmosphere], and in this manner [in resurrection bodies] we shall always be together with the Lord [ultimate sanctification throughout eternity].

1 Thess. 4:18 Therefore keep on encouraging each other with these doctrines [concerning our resurrection bodies and the rapture].

1 Thess. 5:1 But concerning the extended period of time [times of the Gentiles] and the appointed seasons [Tribulation & Millennium], brethren [members of the royal family], you do not have the need for me to write to you [you already understand the order of divine dispensations],

1 Thess. 5:2 For you yourselves know with accuracy that the Day of the Lord [Tribulation & Millennium] will come in the same manner as a thief in the night [suddenly and without warning after the rapture].

1 Thess. 5:3 When they [the international community] say, “Peace and safety,” then sudden destruction comes upon them [peace efforts without God always fail] like the birth-pains of a pregnant woman in labor [periodic suffering and agony coming at closer and closer intervals]. Moreover, they [those living during the Tribulation] will not by any means escape.

1 Thess. 5:4 But you, brethren [members of the royal family], are not in the sphere of darkness [seed of the serpent], that this day [the Tribulation] might overtake you like a thief,

1 Thess. 5:5 Because all of you are sons of light [related to Jesus Christ] and sons of the day [part of the Church Age dispensation]. We [Church Age believers] are not of the night [unbelievers destined to live during the Tribulation] nor of the darkness [related to Satan].

1 Thess. 5:6 Therefore, let us not sleep [ignore Bible doctrine] as others [in Thessalonica], but let us be alert [apply Bible doctrine] and self-controlled [stabilized mentally and emotionally].

1 Thess. 5:7 For those who are asleep [ignorant of eschatology], sleep at night [continue to be clueless right up to the Rapture], and those who are drunk [focused on the things of the world], drink at night [go through the Tribulation].

1 Thess. 5:8 But let us who are of the day [Church Age dispensation] be habitually stabilized [mentally and emotionally], putting on the breastplate of doctrine and virtue love, and for a helmet, the confidence of deliverance [from the Tribulation],

1 Thess. 5:9 Because God did not appoint us [Church Age believers] to wrath [in the Tribulation], but to obtain deliverance [at the rapture] through our Lord Jesus Christ,

1 Thess. 5:10 Who died for us [believers] so that as a result, whether we are awake [alive during the Rapture] or asleep [dead before the Rapture], we will live together with Him [as the Bride of Christ at the wedding feast in heaven rather than going through the Tribulation].

1 Thess. 5:11 Therefore, keep on encouraging [by means of eschatology] one another of the same kind [fellow believers] and continue to build up [strengthen by means of Bible doctrine] one [pastor or teacher] to another [member of the congregation], just as you are indeed doing.

1 Thess. 5:12 Moreover, we urge you, brethren [members of the royal family], to fully appreciate those [pastors & teachers] who diligently labor to the point of exhaustion [studying] among you and who periodically exercise authority [leadership that cares] over you in the Lord [legitimate delegated authority] and who teach you on a regular basis [continual doctrinal instruction],

1 Thess. 5:13 And to appreciate them [pastors & teachers] very highly in virtue love [love complex] because of their work [not their personality]. Live in peace with one another.

1 Thess. 5:14 Now we exhort you, brethren [pastors of the local churches]: Keep on warning the rebellious ones [those who are rejecting Bible doctrine]; keep on encouraging the emotionally discouraged ones [those who are hysterical or otherwise out-of-balance]; keep on supporting the weak ones [new believers, babes in Christ]; keep on being patient with everyone [exercising impersonal love & the faith rest technique].

1 Thess. 5:15 See to it that no one returns [retaliation] evil for evil [revenge motivation] to anyone, but make it a practice to pursue good towards each other [fellow believers] and all others [even unbelievers].

1 Thess. 5:16 Always maintain inner happiness.

1 Thess. 5:17 Make it a habit to pray on a regular basis.

1 Thess. 5:18 In all things [situations in life] give thanks [gratitude], because this [being happy, praying and giving thanks] is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thess. 5:19 Stop quenching the Spirit [with cosmic II involvement].

1 Thess. 5:20 Stop treating prophecies [such as the rapture, tribulation, 2nd advent, millennium] with contempt.

1 Thess. 5:21 Test for the purpose of approval [by the absolute standard of the Word of God] all things [the philosophical and psychological content provided by various communication mediums];

hold fast to [keep as a prized possession] the good [things which agree with Bible doctrine].

1 Thess. 5:22 Keep yourself free from every form of evil [avoid any type of activity in Satan's cosmic system].

1 Thess. 5:23 Now, may the God of peace Himself sanctify [ultimate sanctification] every part of you [the totality of your being]. As a matter of fact, may your spirit and soul and body be blamelessly maintained [experiential sanctification] until the coming [rapture] of our Lord Jesus Christ [when ultimate sanctification will occur].

1 Thess. 5:24 Faithful is He [God the Father] Who called you [through positional sanctification into experiential sanctification], Who will also accomplish it [guaranteed ultimate sanctification].

1 Thess. 5:25 Brethren [members of the royal family], keep on praying for us [Paul's missionary team].

1 Thess. 5:26 Greet all the brethren [fellow believers] with a sanctified [respectful] kiss [shake hands].

1 Thess. 5:27 I solemnly charge you [pastors & teachers] by the authority of the Lord that you make this letter known publicly [read or teach its contents in detail] to all the brethren.

1 Thess. 5:28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Introduction

The Gospel was first preached in Thessalonica by Paul and his co-worker Silas. They visited there after they were released from prison in Philippi. They passed through other cities on the journey, but went directly to Thessalonica – probably because there were many Jews there. Everywhere Paul went, they had a revival or a riot. Somebody was either saved or jailed every time he invaded a city with the bombshells of the Gospel ... There was a misunderstanding concerning the Rapture and the Revelation of the Lord Jesus; therefore, Paul wrote the 2nd epistle to clear up the difference between the catching away of the saints and the revelation of the Lord with His saints. Paul declares that at the coming of the Lord Jesus in the Rapture, all who are living or dead will participate in His glory. The dead in Christ will be raised first, then we who are alive will be changed, and together we will be caught up to meet the Lord in the clouds in the air (1 Thess. 4:13-18). You may rest assured that the devil will warp and twist the truth in the mind of a believer if it is possible to do so. If the devil cannot damn you, the next best thing for him to do is to rob you of your spiritual birthright – and it is the spiritual birthright of every believer to experience abundant life and full joy. (O. Greene)

The church of Thessalonica was established comprising a majority of former pagans. Paul and his colleagues gave the members of the young church such instruction in the Christian faith and way of life as they were accustomed to give their converts elsewhere. But their stay in Thessalonica was interrupted. A demonstration was staged against them by the first-century counterparts of our modern “Rentamob” – in the delightful idiom of King James’s translators, “certain lewd fellows of baser sort” (Acts 17:5) ... Their practices are contrary to Caesar’s decrees; they are proclaiming a rival emperor, Jesus (Acts 17:6-7) ... The fact that the rival emperor whom Paul and the others were accused of proclaiming had been sentenced to death by a Roman judge on a charge of sedition – as any one could ascertain who took the trouble to inquire – spoke for itself ... To protect his friends, Paul had no option but to leave, but he left most reluctantly. He believed that the new Christians in Thessalonica had received insufficient instruction to prepare them for the life which they would henceforth have to lead, but successive attempts which he made to return to them were thwarted. (F.F. Bruce)

The Jews, resenting perhaps the loss of influential God-fearers such as Jason and the “prominent women,” determined to rid the city of the Christian missionaries and to destroy the Christian church. They formulated a plan to bring the missionaries before the assembly on a charge of sedition. To give some grounds for this charge, they “rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace” and organized them into staging a riot. (D. Williams) Paul reminded them that they were to remember the charges he had left them with and live as saints should. He then discusses the thrilling hope of the rapture awaiting all believers, living or dead, at the Lord’s coming. This truth was to be a source of comfort and satisfaction to all ... Unfortunately, some believers had become so convinced that the Lord’s return was to take place immediately that they had given up working for a living, thereby bringing the faith into disrepute. Paul told them plainly that the Lord’s coming was not to be immediate and commanded them to get back to work. Waiting and working go hand in hand ... The last dispensation ended in the rejection of the true Christ; the present dispensation will end in the world’s acceptance of the antichrist. (H. Ironside)

Corinth suggests itself as the place from which the letters to the Thessalonian church were sent ... By the time these words were written, Timothy had been sent back by his colleagues to Thessalonica to find out how the infant church was faring, and had returned to them with good news. The members of the church were standing firm indeed. (F.F. Bruce) We cannot say with certainty how long Paul and his companions preached in the city. But it was certainly a short period, and may have been as little as about a month. The preaching was strikingly successful. (L. Morris) At Thessalonica, Paul preached both inside and outside the local synagogue. For three Sundays, Paul accepted the customary invitation, extended to visitors, to address the synagogue congregation. He sought to prove to the Jews that it was necessary for the Christ to “have suffered, and risen again from the dead” (Acts 17:2-4). The few Jews who did believe were soon well nigh swamped by the vast host of Gentile “God fearers” who believed along with a considerable number of high-ranking women. The Jewish religious authorities greatly resented this and stirred up the rabble ... Although Paul deplored Greek morals, he admired the Greek mind. (J. Phillips)

The doctrinal burden of the epistle is based on the truth of the Lord's future presence. Some had died and some were indifferent. Would these two classes be left out when He comes? The answer is that those who are asleep will be roused first and accompany the living when they are caught up to meet the Lord in the air. They will not be left behind. (A.E. Knoch) At Thessalonica the exemplary character of the Christians, their rapid growth, their exceptional opportunities, and their widespread reputation, moved him to a pardonable pride. But, as he learned, they had been suffering persecution since he left, and this awakened sympathy as well as concern for its effects on their faith. Unable to return himself, he had at last sent Timothy to them. (W.R. Nicoll) The apostle obviously had emphasized the second coming of Christ for believers and had taught that the return of Christ was imminent; for during the period of time since Paul had left, some of the saints who had come to know and believe in Christ Jesus had died, and this had naturally raised the question in the minds of the Thessalonians as to whether these saints would be in the Rapture or not. Paul presents the second coming of Christ in relationship to believers as a comfort, and this forms the theme of the epistle. (J. McGee)

Thessalonica was founded by Cassander and named after his wife, the daughter of Philip II of Macedon and the half-sister of Alexander the Great. Because it sided with the eventual victors of the battle of Philippi in 42 BC, Thessalonica was granted the status of a free city, governing itself on Greek rather than on Roman lines by its own magistrates. (D. Williams) In Christian thought, the act of God by which the great rebel would be overthrown was identified with the Advent of Christ. Both orally and in writing the missionaries taught the Thessalonians this. But if the great rebel was to be consumed in the blaze of Christ's Advent-glory, it followed that the Advent would not take place before the great rebel had made his appearance and played his brief but frightful part on the stage of history. At His Advent, Christ would gather His people to Himself to give them their reward for faithfulness and recompense for suffering; their manifestation with Him would indeed enhance His glory, and from then on they would be with Him forever. (F.F. Bruce) The epistle has a threefold purpose: (1) To confirm young converts in the elementary truth of the gospel; (2) to condition them to go on unto holy living; and (3) to comfort them regarding the return of Christ. (J. McGee)

These epistles are designed to correct two mistakes made by the Thessalonian believers. (1) Their first error was, that the saints departed and laid in the tomb could have no part in the millennial kingdom of Christ. (2) The second mistake was that the living saints must pass through the Great Trouble that is coming on the earth, and that its terrors had already begun. (R. Govett) The first chapter unfolds the great theme of the Lord's coming in relation to salvation. In chapter 2 the Lord's coming in relation to Christian service is presented. Chapter 3 relates sanctification to the Lord's coming. In chapter 4 the Lord's coming is revealed as the surety of resurrection of our loved ones who have died in Christ. Chapter 5 deals with the safety of the believer in the days of the wrath of God preceding the second coming of Christ. (J. Walvoord) Although Paul had been in Thessalonica less than a month, he had touched on many of the great doctrines of the church, including the second coming of Christ. It is interesting that Paul did not consider this subject to be above the heads of the new converts. Yet there are churches today that have been in existence for more than one hundred years whose members have but a vague understanding of the Rapture of the church and the coming of Christ to establish His kingdom here on earth. (J. McGee)

1 and 2 Thessalonians are not only written to the same church, but they present basically the same subject matter. Both deal with the doctrine of the Rapture and end-time events. These two letters have, therefore, often been called Paul's eschatological epistles. (M. Couch) In 1 Thessalonians the Parousia is spoken of as if it were likely to take place in the lifetime of most of the readers (and writers); it will come when least expected, "like a thief in the night" (1 Thess. 5:2). This may have led some readers to conclude that it was so imminent that there was no point in going on with the ordinary concerns of daily life; perhaps, indeed, it had already arrived. To correct this error the writers say in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2, "The Parousia is imminent indeed, but not so imminent as all that. Do not be misled into thinking that the great day is already with us. It will come soon enough, but certain things must first take place. (F.F. Bruce) In 1 Thessalonians the emphasis is upon the Rapture of believers, the coming of Christ to take His church out of the world. The fact that the coming of Christ is a purifying hope should lead to sanctification in our lives. (J. McGee)

The Thessalonian letters deal exclusively with issues that are important to this current dispensation, that is, the Church Age. The doctrine of the Church deals with "those in Christ" and what constitutes the body of Christ. The Church is neither the kingdom of God nor the kingdom or heaven so prominently mentioned in the Gospels. The Church is neither a replacement theologically for Israel, nor is the Church spiritual Israel. Paul in no way suggests such a correlation between the Church and Israel ... If understood dispensationally, the term "kingdom of God," as used in the Gospels and later by Paul, always means the earthly, Davidic kingdom reign of Jesus, the promised Messiah of the OT. With this understanding, the reader suffers no confusion. One must also pay careful attention to what Paul does not say. In both Thessalonian references to the kingdom of God, he does not say the Church is that kingdom. But all believers in all past dispensations will be resurrected to enjoy that 1,000 year future kingdom reign of Christ, which occurs on earth at the second coming of Christ, following the horrors of the 7-year tribulation. (M. Couch)

The imminence of Christ's return is the predominant theme in 1 Thessalonians. (J. Phillips) Paul had been a Christian for 17 or 18 years by the time he wrote 1 Thessalonians. (C. Ryrie) These two letters are the two oldest books in the NT. The date of the letters was around AD 50, and the city from which they were written was Corinth. (C. Erdman) I am not interested in how enthusiastic and excited you get over the truth of the Rapture of the church; I want to know how you are living ... In 2 Thessalonians the emphasis shifts to the coming of Christ to the earth to establish His kingdom. There is a great deal of difference in our being caught up to meet the Lord in the air and His coming down to the earth to establish His kingdom. I think there is a lot of upside down theology today. We need to make a distinction between our being caught up and His coming down. (J. McGee) One interesting fact about this letter is that it does not contain a single OT quotation. (J. Phillips)

CHAPTER 1

LWB 1 Thess. 1:1 Paul and Silas and Timothy, to the church [royal family] of the Thessalonians [which is] in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ [positional truth]. Grace and prosperity to you.

KW 1 Thess. 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the [local] assembly of Thessalonians [which assembly is] in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. [Sanctifying] grace to you and [tranquilizing] peace.

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

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul introduces himself to the Thessalonians without stating his office as an apostle because there was no need to emphasize the authority of his office. They recognized him as their apostle without issue, even though he was writing to them from Corinth and was not present. He was also not alone, since Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy were with him during the writing of the epistle. Paul's mention of them "in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" is a reminder of positional truth, their membership in the royal family of God. An entire treatise could be written on each of the words "grace" and "peace," or they can be simply accepted as a common greeting (salutation) addressing both Gentiles (grace) and Jews (peace) in the Christian community. It is a spiritual elaboration on the traditional "pax vobiscum" used by the Romans.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Greek word "ekklesia" was a thoroughly secular word. It was the name used of the citizens of a Greek town when they assembled to conduct their governmental affairs. The Holy Spirit (and Jesus Himself) took over the sacred use of the word in Matt. 16:18. The church at Thessalonica was God's ekklesia. (J. Phillips) There are two situations in the church which are dangerous. One is a minister who tries to exalt himself. The other is a layman who tries to be an authority on the Bible and has not really studied the Bible, but has gone off on a tangent ... It isn't possible to ride one hobbyhorse and emphasize one theme to the exclusion of all others if one teaches the entire Bible. I wish we had that kind of discipline in our churches today. I wish every church would go through the entire Bible. (J. McGee)

Thessalonica was a large, wealthy, and populous city. Even at the present day, under the name of Saloniki, it is one of the chief cities of European Turkey. (C. Ellicott) Silvanus is this missionary's proper name in Latin. His name in Greek is Silas. (M. Couch) Paul was chiefly responsible for the form the letter took. We need not doubt that he consulted the others, nor that they endorsed what he wrote. (L. Morris) The church is grounded in and exists in the sphere and power of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (A.T. Robertson) Paul reveals his humility when he joins these men with himself. Silas and Timothy would have been unknown had not Paul associated himself with them.

This is a very noble gesture on the part of Paul. He is always identifying himself with the brethren. (J. McGee)

1 Thess. 1:1 Paul (Nom. Absolute) and (connective) Silas (Nom. Absolute) and (connective) Timothy (Nom. Absolute), to the church (Dat. Address) of the Thessalonians (Poss. Gen.) which is (ellipsis) in God (Loc. Sph.) the Father (Dat. Appos.) and (connective) the Lord Christ Jesus (Loc. Sph.). Grace (Subj. Nom.) to you (Dat. Adv.) and (connective) prosperity (Subj. Nom.; peace).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 1:1** Παῦλος καὶ Σιλουανὸς καὶ Τιμόθεος τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ Θεσσαλονικέων ἐν θεῷ πατρὶ καὶ κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 1:1** Paulus et Silvanus et Timotheus ecclesiae Thessalonicensium in Deo Patre et Domino Iesu Christo gratia vobis et pax

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 1:2** We always give thanks to God concerning all of you [you are not forgotten], continually making mention of you during our prayers,

^{KW} **1 Thess. 1:2** We are always giving thanks to God concerning all of you, making mention of you in our prayers,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 1:2** We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul, Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy made it a habit (Customary Present tense) to thank God for the Thessalonian believers when they prayed together. This doesn't mean they pray for them before every meal, since praying for the sanctification of food is not intended to be a revival. Nor does it mean they pray for them every time they need to acknowledge their personal sins before the Lord in order to be restored to fellowship, which is a prayer to be filled with the Spirit again – part of our continued experiential sanctification. The Iterative Present tense means they mention the Thessalonian believers in their prayers on a regular basis, probably daily (Latin: intermittently), but only during those prayers that are appropriate for the occasion. The adverb “always” is not intended to mean every single time they pray, but it does mean that when they are praying together for others (Latin: oration), they never forget (Latin: memory) to include the Thessalonians.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The plural form implies that all three missionaries were (in a real sense) joint authors of the letter. In other letters where the name of one of Paul's companions is conjoined with his own in the prescript,

the use of the singular (I give thanks) makes it plain that Paul himself is the author. (F.F. Bruce) Paul's regard for his converts is deep and sincere. He includes them all in the thanksgiving, which is a mark of his satisfaction at their spiritual progress. (L. Morris) In brief, election invokes gratitude. It is God's gracious and loving action to which we contribute nothing and for which, therefore, God receives all the glory. (T. Schreiner) Distance lends enchantment to the memory of slight drawbacks. Paul is fond of the phrase "you all." (A.T. Robertson)

1 Thess. 1:2 We always (Adv. Time) give thanks (εὐχαριστέω, PAIIP, Customary) to God (Dat. Ind. Obj.) concerning all (Gen. Measure) of you (Gen. Adv.), continually making (ποιέω, PMPTc.NMP, Iterative, Modal) mention (Adv. Acc.) of you (Gen. Adv.) during our (Poss. Gen.) prayers (Adv. Gen. Ref.),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 1:2** Εὐχαριστοῦμεν τῷ θεῷ πάντοτε περὶ πάντων ὑμῶν μνείαν ποιούμενοι ἐπὶ τῶν προσευχῶν ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 1:2** gratias agimus Deo semper pro omnibus vobis memoriam facientes in orationibus nostris sine intermissione

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 1:3** While unceasingly remembering your production [priestly function] from doctrine [application of the truth in your souls] and your labor [ambassadorship function] from the love complex [virtue love from the filling of the Spirit] and your patient endurance [passing momentum tests] based on confidence which rests on our Lord Jesus Christ [as opposed to self-confidence] in the face of God, even our Father,

^{KW} **1 Thess. 1:3** Remembering unceasingly your work produced and characterized by the faith which is yours, and your toil motivated and characterized by your divine and self-sacrificial love, and your patient endurance under trials which finds its source in your hope which rests in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God, even the Father,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 1:3** Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his promise to the Thessalonians that they constantly remember (Durative Present tense) the contributions they are making to the spread of Christianity. He lists three things in particular that they are pursuing with great success. First, they are succeeding in their priestly function by the application of Bible doctrine in their souls. Second, they are succeeding in the ambassadorship function by laboring in the gospel with virtue in the love complex. Third, they are succeeding in the spiritual life by passing momentum tests based on their confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Thessalonians are executing the spiritual life by the intake, metabolization and application

of Bible doctrine. They are witnessing, evangelizing and pastoring new believers in the filling of the Spirit, manifesting the virtue of both personal and impersonal love. They are making progress in experiential sanctification by passing providential preventative suffering and momentum testing; this forward momentum is based on the confidence they have in the Lord Jesus Christ. Everything they are thinking and doing is manifest to God the Father. Yes, there is a Trinitarian reference in this verse, though the Spirit is only hinted at by their residence in the love complex.

The only way to properly understand this verse is to recognize the Greek idiom when subjective genitives are used. "If the term in the genitive would serve as the subject if the governing term were a verb, or if the term in the genitive would be the initiator of the action in some way, then it may be a subjective genitive." (S. Porter) As Dr. Porter suggests, the translation should be "remembering your work of (produced by) faith and labor of (produced by) love and endurance of (produced by) hope." Accordingly, I have translated "work, labor, endurance" as objective genitives and "faith, love, hope" as subjective genitives or genitives of origin.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Faith is based on the assurance that God has acted for his people's salvation in Christ; love is the present (and continuing) relationship between God and His people through Christ; hope is bound up with the conviction that (Phil. 1:6) "He who has begun a good work" in them "will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ." (F.F. Bruce) The believer longs for the prospect set before him of the second coming of Christ. So Paul mentions their "patience of hope." The great hope of the church is the Rapture, what Paul calls our "blessed hope" in Titus 2:13. He keeps this hope before the Thessalonians throughout his letter. (J. Phillips) While the faith referred to certainly includes their ongoing faith in Christ for eternal life, Paul is not thinking merely of that belief. He is thinking of their *belief system*. Beliefs matter for ongoing service to God. (R. Wilkin)

The hope has to do with the coming of the Lord for His own in the Rapture, which subject Paul will address in more detail later. "Elpidos" would be better translated "anticipation," because it is not a wishful hope that may not happen; it is an assured expectation of something that will certainly take place. (M. Couch) So here Paul has brought together faith and love and hope, the three tenses of the Christian life: the work of faith, which looks back to the Cross and produces good works in the life; the labor of love, which is the present basis and motivation on which a child of God is to serve Christ; and the patience of hope, which looks into the future. (J. McGee) "Work of faith" is a work produced by or proceeding from and having its origin in their faith, when they turned to God from idols. "Labour of love" is the labor or service proceeding from love, as manifested in a desire to serve the living and true God. "Patience of hope" is the patience which was the outcome of the hope, while they waited for God's Son from heaven. (E.W. Bullinger)

The believers in this church had made such a deep impression upon Paul with their stewardship, love, devotion, evangelistic fervour and missionary endeavor in spreading the gospel to other communities that as he stood in the presence of the omnipresent God who witnessed all of his

thoughts, he prayed unceasingly for the believers at Thessalonica ... The second coming of the Lord Jesus and the final judgment of the wicked was Paul's main theme in his preaching there. The doctrine of the Rapture and the final judgment of the wicked had gripped the hearts and minds of the Thessalonian believers, for these dear people believed every word of their beloved preacher Paul. Paul had drilled into their hearts the doctrine of Christ's second coming, declaring that He would come as a thief in the night; and he had preached that truth to them so consistently that they knew it perfectly. (O. Greene)

There is a climax here; faith manifests itself by its works, its active exertion; love by its toils, its works of self-denial; and hope by its patience, its endurance amid trials and discouragements. (P. Gloag) If your hope is in this world, you are chasing a will-o'-the-wisp of happiness that will shatter like a bubble when you get it in your hands. You are following a Pied Piper who is playing, "I'm forever blowing bubbles." God put man out of Paradise because man was a sinner, and man has been trying to build a paradise outside ever since ... What is your hope today? Is your hope in some political party or in some man-made organization? God have mercy on anyone whose hope rests upon some little, frail bark that man is paddling! I don't think that any man or any party or any group down here can work out the problems of this world. The scepter of this universe is in nail-pierced hands, and He will move at the right time. (J. McGee)

1 Thess. 1:3 While unceasingly (temporal adv.) remembering (μνημονεύω, PAPtc.NMP, Durative, Temporal) your (Poss. Gen.) production (Obj. Gen.; priestly function) from doctrine (Gen. Origin; application of the truth in your souls) and (connective) your (Poss. Gen.) labor (Obj. Gen.; ambassadorship function) from the love complex (Gen. Origin; the virtue of personal and impersonal love) and (connective) your (Poss. Gen.) patient endurance (Obj. Gen.; passing momentum tests) based on confidence which rests on (Abl. Source; ground or basis of hope) our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus Christ (Obj. Gen.; as opposed to self-confidence) in the face of (prep.; before) God (Gen.), even (ascensive) our (Gen. Rel.) Father (Gen. Appos.),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 1:3** ἀδιαλείπτως μνημονεύοντες ὑμῶν τοῦ ἔργου τῆς πίστεως καὶ τοῦ κόπου τῆς ἀγάπης καὶ τῆς ὑπομονῆς τῆς ἐλπίδος τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 1:3** memores operis fidei vestrae et laboris et caritatis et sustinentiae spei Domini nostri Iesu Christi ante Deum et Patrem nostrum

LWB 1 Thess. 1:4 **Knowing, brethren, that you who were loved in the past and continue to be loved in the present by God are the election [chosen by God in eternity past and cared for logistically at this very moment],**

^{KW} **1 Thess. 1:4** Since we know, brethren, that you who have always been loved by God and at the present are the objects of His affection, are the subjects of the divine selection [in which God

in sovereign grace selected you out for salvation],

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 1:4** Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses an Intensive Perfect tense to point to the absolute knowledge that all believers should have that they are indeed members of the royal family of God. All believers were loved by God in eternity past (Dramatic Perfect tense) and continue to be loved by God to this very moment. We know He loved us in eternity past because that is when He selected us (Latin: elected) to be part of the bride of Christ. We know He loves us at this very moment because He continues to provide us with logistical grace support – everything we need to grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The passive voice points to our utter helplessness in this matter, both now and in eternity past. Our election is by God’s grace and our continued support in life is by His grace.

In eternity past, before the clock started ticking and time began, God elected us out from the mass of sinful humanity based on His love. We did not become believers in Christ Jesus by accident or by our own enslaved-to-sin will; God made us believers. He knew you before time began. He loved you before time began. He chose you before time began. You were not there. You did not know Him. He did not ask your opinion. There was no compromise or agreement between you and God, because you were not yet born. He did not exalt you to a position in eternity past where you were capable of choosing Him. He did not lower Himself to a position where He waited for you to choose Him. He loved you and He chose you. Let God be God and be content to be His clay.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

They know that the Thessalonian believers are truly among the elect people of God because the unmistakable signs of the new life have become apparent in them. This knowledge enhances the writers’ sense of gratitude to God ... While the act of election took place in God’s eternal counsel, its effects are seen in the lives of the elect, as they were seen now in the lives of the Thessalonian believers. (F.F. Bruce) Your election is a reference to the sovereign decree of God made before the foundation of the world. To refer this merely to the manner of their election to the Gospel, or to any internal renewing of the Spirit, is in a high degree forced and unsatisfactory. (C. Ellicott) The word for election is always used in the NT of the divine action, though sometimes it is used of other things than election to salvation. Here it is clearly God’s choice of the Thessalonians to salvation that gives Paul matter for thanksgiving. Anything less is inadequate. (L. Morris) By election is meant that act of free grace by which God destines individuals to become believers in Christ. Thus the Thessalonian converts were chosen or elected by God from among their heathen countrymen to become Christians. The ultimate reason of their Christianity was their election of God. (P. Gloag)

The love that makes us sons of God was in the beginning, but becomes ours when we embrace

Christianity by faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The sovereignty of God, Bible election, Bible predestination and the foreknowledge of God have nothing to do with the free will of man. Jesus said to His own people, "And you will not come to me that you might have life." Yet He loved them so tenderly that He sat outside Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives and wept bitter tears ... In this dispensation of grace, God's true election no longer applies to a specific nation or body of men as such, but concerns individuals. Regardless of race or social standing, each believer in Christ is the personal object of God's loving choice known in Paul's epistles as "the election of grace" in Romans 11:5. God has chosen all who believe in His Son Jesus Christ, to final deliverance from sin, death and all evil; each believer is destined to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son. This will take place when Jesus returns in the Rapture, and because of the great love bestowed upon us we will then receive a body just like His glorious resurrection body! (O. Greene)

The Holy Spirit makes perfectly clear that divine election is based solidly on God's foreknowledge (1 Peter 1:2). Our lives are conditioned by the fact that we live in a space, time, and matter universe. We express our mode of being in three tenses of time – "I was, I am, I will be." God is not thus confined. He lives and moves and has His being in eternity. He expresses His mode of being, however, as existing in the eternal present tense – "I am" (Exod. 3:14). God gathers all time into the present tense. Thus, the exact moment we choose Christ is the same exact moment God chooses us. As far as God is concerned, the two acts are simultaneous. (J. Phillips) Election is one of the great concepts of the Bible, and it looms large in both Testaments. It is often misrepresented. God is pictured as an arbitrary tyrant, damning or saving men without rhyme or reason. Against all such views we must insist that election, as Paul's words imply, proceeds from the fact of God's great love. (L. Morris) He that loves God may be sure that he was first loved of God; and he that chooses God for his delight and portion may conclude confidently that God has chosen him to be one of those that shall enjoy Him and be happy in Him forever; for our love of Him is but the return and repercussion of the beams of His love shining upon us. (B. Caffin)

True Bible election implies two things: (1) selection out of others – that is, from nations or peoples – a people for His very own. God is the one who provides the power to prepare these people spiritually to be presented to Him, spotless and without wrinkle; and those who come to God cannot come unless drawn by the Holy Spirit as in John 6:44. (2) These peoples, drawn by the Holy Spirit to God, thus embracing the finished work of Christ by hearing the Word and obeying the Spirit, are appropriated by God for His very own love and protect, and for His very own in spiritual service ... Believers are not in jeopardy as having to do with their eternal destiny; all true believers are predestined to be conformed to the image of God's beloved Son. The God who loved us so much that He chose us did not choose and save for the purpose of surrendering us to the evil one. (O. Greene) How do people know that they are chosen for salvation? Not by trying to discern the eternal counsels of the Almighty, for He has not revealed them to us. Rather, it is when people turn to Christ in faith that they know God has chosen them for salvation ... Why must God's sovereign decision to love some be considered arbitrary? All deserve His wrath; none deserve His grace. He freely chooses to bestow saving grace on billions of undeserving sinners. That is not arbitrary; the Bible itself teaches that election is the result of God's love and will. His gracious choosing ultimately transcends our reason, but it is not arbitrary. (R. Peterson)

“Election” is a divine act that causes salvation, the Lord actually bringing spiritually dead sinners to Him. The cause is not in man but is in God’s mysterious providence. It is part of the work of predestination, “to before encircle,” that is a sovereign work “through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.” The agent of election is the Holy Spirit, Who so operates in the individual that faith and belief is initiated and consciously uttered. The sanctification of the Spirit and faith are but results of God’s initial choosing. (M. Couch) Election protects us from thinking of salvation as dependent on human whims, and roots it squarely in the will of God. Left to ourselves we do not wish to leave our state of untroubled sinfulness. It is only because God first convicts us and enables us that we can make even the motion of wanting to turn from our sins. From Eph. 1:4 we see that this is no afterthought of God, no sudden change in His plans. He has chosen His own from before the foundation of the world. Nothing gives security to the idea of salvation like the concept of election. Salvation, from first to last, is a work of God. (L. Morris)

Bunyan states, “I believe that saving faith is effectually wrought in none, but those which before the world were appointed to glory.” Clearly, Bunyan rests effectual calling upon the foundation of unconditional election. Bunyan states, “I believe that election is free and permanent, being founded in grace, in the unchangeable will of God.” Election, since it is unconditional, looks neither to foreseen faith nor foreseen works as a stimulus. (T. Nettles) It is worth noting how regularly the term “to elect” serves as a synonym for God’s gracious love both in Paul and elsewhere in the NT. Luke substituted “elect” for “beloved” in God’s baptismal designation for his Son in the formula of the other Synoptics. And Paul, as he does in Ephesians 1:4-5 and 2:4-6, also directly associates the two terms in Romans 11:28 and here. It is fitting that Paul, who considers God’s merciful love the pinnacle of the glory that God gives His saints to praise, should equate God’s call and its divine purpose with the exercise of that glory. (T. Schreiner)

All those who in the fullness of time are effectually called and sanctified were from eternity elected and chosen to salvation. The election of God is of His own good pleasure and mere grace, not for the sake of any merit in those who are chosen. The election of God may be known by the fruits thereof. Whenever we are giving thanks to God for His grace either to ourselves or others, we should run up the streams to the fountain, and give thanks to God for His electing love, by which we are made to differ. (M. Henry) In Jeremiah 31:2-3, “I have loved you with an everlasting love, therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you,” there is the preciousness of everlasting (electing) love that secures not just the offer of help, but the commitment of covenant faithfulness. To know this kind of love is God’s will for His people. But it is not likely to be known where the truth of election is neither taught nor known. The covenant love of God is not only a response to our faith, but a resurrecting power of grace that made us alive when we were dead and could not yet exert faith. (J. Piper) Paul doesn’t attempt to argue election or to prove election; he simply states it as a fact. (J. McGee)

That God has chosen to bless some individuals with eternal life is clearly taught in many places in both the Old and New Testaments. (T. Constable) The secret counsel of God is a labyrinth to those who disregard His calling, so those act perversely who, under pretext of faith and calling, darken this

first grace, from which faith itself flows. “By faith,” they say, “we obtain salvation: there is, therefore, no eternal predestination of God that distinguishes between us and reprobates.” It is as though they said – “Salvation is of faith: there is, therefore, no grace of God that illuminates us in faith.” Nay, rather, as gratuitous election must be conjoined with calling, as with its effect, so it must necessarily, in the mean time, hold the first place. (J. Calvin) We need to get back to that place where we recognize that we are mere creatures. Not only creatures, but we are totally depraved creatures. The fact that God even considers us as a nation is due to the early Puritans who founded this country. They are being downgraded in our day, but we have this great country because of them. Other men have labored, and we have entered into their labors. (J. McGee)

The Creator has His sovereign right. Dr. Albert Hyma, of the University of Michigan, said that for the past fifty years America has been under the control of men who do not know the origin and the beginning of our nation. They do not realize that the Puritans had a tremendous impact upon this nation. One of the great truths that the Puritans stood for, and which was basic to their entire lifestyle, was the sovereignty of God. Behind election and all of life is the sovereignty of God. The Creator has His sovereign right. Now there are those who are willing to say He created, but they deny Him the right to direct the universe. They deny Him the right to give it a purpose. May I say to you that we live in a universe that was created by God and exists for His glory. May I say especially to you, my Christian friend, that God is the Creator, and this universe exists for His glory. He is God, and beside Him there is none other. He doesn’t look to anybody for advice. He is running this universe for His own purpose. He is directing it for His own glory. You and I live in a universe which is theocentric, that is, God-centered. It is not anthropocentric, man-centered; nor is it geocentric, earth-centered; but it is uranocentric, heaven-centered. This is God’s universe, and He is running it His way. (J. McGee)

Election is an old word from “eklegomai” used by Jesus of His choice of the twelve disciples (John 15:16) and by Paul of God’s eternal selection (Eph. 1:4). The word “ekloge” is not in the LXX and only seven times in the NT and always of God’s choice of men. (A.T. Robertson) Today you and I enjoy the freedom that we have because of our Puritan forefathers. The present generation of politicians doesn’t even know what it’s all about, which is the reason democracy isn’t working. There is no way democracy can work unless the people understand the sovereignty of God, recognize they are His creatures, and fall down before Him. “Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.” Maybe you don’t like this verse, but this is the way it happened. And God is running this universe. Instead of joining a protest march against Him, I suggest that you fall down on your face before Him and thank Him that He has brought you into existence. (J. McGee)

1 Thess. 1:4 **Knowing** (οἶδα, Perf.APtc.NMP, Intensive, Modal, Manner or Causal), **brethren** (Voc. Address; members of the royal family), **that you** (Gen. Appos.) **who were loved in the past and continue to be loved in the present** (ἀγαπάω, Perf.PPtc.NMP, Dramatic, Substantival & Temporal) **by God** (Abl. Source) **are** (ellipsis) **the election** (Pred. Acc.; chosen by God in eternity past).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 1:4** εἰδότες ἀδελφοὶ ἠγαπημένοι ὑπὸ [τοῦ] θεοῦ τὴν ἐκλογὴν ὑμῶν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 1:4** scientes fratres dilecti a Deo electionem vestram

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 1:5** For our gospel [message of good news] did not come to you in the sphere of word only [mere human philosophy], but also in the sphere of power [divine backing], even in the Holy Spirit [baptism of the Spirit placed all believers in union with Christ] and accompanied by full assurance [eternal security], even as you know beyond a shadow of a doubt the kind [quality] of men we showed ourselves to be for your benefit [example].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 1:5** Inasmuch as our message of good news came to you not only in the form of discourse but also in the sphere of power and of the Holy Spirit and in much certainty and assurance, even as you know positively what sort of men we showed ourselves to be among you for your sakes.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 1:5** For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The gospel did not come (Constative Aorist tense) to the Thessalonians in the sphere of mere human philosophy (Latin: sermon), like the various cultic messages prevalent in the area at that time. Paul and his entourage did not make this message up. It came in the sphere of divine power; it was divinely created and given to them to preach to others. It was not preached without having divine backing or support behind it. The power of the Holy Spirit made the message of grace irresistible to the elect, and at the moment of regeneration, this same divine power placed them into union with Christ, i.e., the baptism of the Spirit. Nor was this message left in the will of man to later repudiate. It was accompanied by the full assurance of deity (eternal security) that it would continue to hold them forever. God has never lost one of His elect.

The Thessalonians themselves should know that they are being kept by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This indwelling never ceases as long as we are alive; it is our personal testimony that we are eternally secure. Does any believer indwelt by the Holy Spirit have a chance of going to hell? No, that a ridiculous notion! How can someone who is indwelt by the Spirit live in hell? Even if this was possible, he'd make Satan miserable due to the divine power indwelling him! The Thessalonian believers know they are safe in God's hands. But that's not the only proof that the gospel is true. They also know (Intensive Perfect tense) how effective the gospel is by their observation of Paul, Timothy and Silas when they lived among them. They exhibited (Culminative Aorist tense) impeccable behavior to the Thessalonians - near perfect examples to live by.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Word alone” here means speech unaccompanied by the convincing power of the Holy Spirit. Such

speech, however eloquent and moving, would be ineffective in evoking faith from the hearers ... By the standards of secular wisdom the gospel had nothing to commend it to the pagans of Thessalonica and other Greek cities: the message of salvation through a crucified Savior was more likely to arouse derision than admiration. (F.F. Bruce) The apostle argues they must be elect, because he and his companions were enabled to preach the Gospel among them with such power, and, secondly, because they received it with such joy. (C. Ellicott) The devil does not care how much we preach, how often we preach, how long nor how fervent our message may be, so long as it is not the sure Word of God, bathed in and permeated by the Holy Spirit. (O. Greene) God will see to it that His elect hear the invitation and respond the way they should. (J. Piper) The Spirit enables the reader to hear God's sovereignly chosen message found in His Word. The Word provides the objective authority, the witness of the Spirit provides the subjective authority. (G. Osborne)

The importance of speaking in the power of the Holy Spirit should never be ignored. To mistake human eloquence or oratory for preaching in the power of the Spirit of God is a great mistake. (H. Ironside) All sorts of "shortcuts" and "innovative ideas" are being introduced as substitutes for the proclamation of the Word of God. These substitutes include relational theology, transactional therapy, fellowship groups, "what do you think" (pooled ignorance) Bible study groups, topical seminars, and just plain Christian entertainment in music, films, and variety programs. Some of these (in their most wholesome form) may have a function in the body of Christ, but never as substitutes for the declaration of the Word of God! The formula of the Reformation epitomized in this verse still holds: The Word of God plus the convicting work of the Holy Spirit equals dynamite, the power of God and full conviction of men and women. (W. Kaiser, Jr.)

Power is not in the message itself. Power is in the message only as it is brought to the heart of an individual by the Holy Spirit. The person God regenerates was dead in trespasses and sins. He was passive to spiritual things; therefore, God acted upon him. The only persons who will hear are those in whom God has done a work of grace ... Objective faith concerning the Person and Work of Jesus Christ gives subjective faith assurance, power, and victory. Assurance does not come from activity or from listening to music, but from the Word of God. (W. Best) It is not always the most brilliant orator who is the great preacher. Only as a man has received the gift can he minister the same with power. This is the distinction Paul is making here. It is the power and not the speech that brings the blessing. (R. Baxter) As "power" produces faith, so the Holy Spirit, "love." (R. Jamieson) The Word of God went into Thessalonica, that Roman colony which was pagan and heathen and was controlled by one of the greatest political and military powers this world has known, and there it reached the hearts and lives of people and transformed them. That is what happened in Thessalonica, and it can still do the same today. (J. McGee)

1 Thess. 1:5 **For** (causal) **our** (Poss. Gen.) **gospel** (Subj. Nom.; message of good news) **did not** (neg. particle) **come** (γίνομαι, API3S, Constativ, Deponent) **to you** (Acc. Adv.) **in the sphere of** (could be Instr. Means; by) **word** (Loc. Sph.) **only** (adv.; mere human philosophy: like that of the cults), **but** (contrast) **also** (adjunctive) **in the sphere of power** (Loc. Sph.; divine creation: irresistible grace), **even** (ascensive) **in the Holy Spirit** (Loc.

Sph.; baptism of the Spirit placed all believers in union with Christ) and (continuative) accompanied by full (Dat. Measure; great) assurance (Dat. Accomp.; eternal security), even as (comparative) you know beyond a shadow of a doubt (οἶδα, Perf.AI2P, Intensive) the kind (Qualitative; type, quality) of men (ellipsis) we showed (γίνομαι, API1P, Culminative, Deponent) ourselves (Dat. Ind. Obj.) to be (ellipsis) for your benefit (Acc. Adv.; for the sake of you).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 1:5** ὅτι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν οὐκ ἐγενήθη εἰς ὑμᾶς ἐν λόγῳ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν δυνάμει καὶ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ πληροφῶρῃ πολλῇ καθὼς οἴδατε οἱοὶ ἐγενήθημεν ὑμῖν δι' ὑμᾶς

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 1:5** quia evangelium nostrum non fuit ad vos in sermone tantum sed et in virtute et in Spiritu Sancto et in plenitudine multa sicut scitis quales fuerimus vobis propter vos

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 1:6** And as for you [new believers], you became imitators of us [we stayed in Thessalonica as long as we could and taught you Bible doctrine] and of the Lord, having received [positive volition] the Word [Bible doctrine] while under frequent pressure [persecution] with inner happiness from the Holy Spirit [pressure caused them to utilize doctrine and grow to maturity],

^{KW} **1 Thess. 1:6** And as for you, you became imitators of us and of the Lord, having welcomed the Word while under much pressure of affliction which [act of welcoming] was accompanied by joy that had its source in the Holy Spirit,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 1:6** And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Thessalonian believers became imitators (Ingressive Aorist tense) of Paul, Silas and Timothy for as long as they were able to remain in town. They listened attentively during daily Bible study and modeled their life after the apostles and the Lord. They received Bible doctrine with open arms even while (Temporal Participle) being persecuted by legalistic Jews, former family and friends, and a myriad of cultists. They continued to study and metabolize doctrine under the worst possible environment (Dramatic Aorist tense). But in spite of this outer pressure (Latin: tribulation) to abandon the Christian life, they maintained their positive volition to the Word of God with inner happiness from being filled with the Holy Spirit. Moreover, the constant outside pressure required them to apply what they were learning on a frequent basis, spurring them forward towards spiritual maturity.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This union of joy with suffering was illustrated indeed in the life of Paul, and more impressively still in the life of the Master. Joy as an accompaniment of pain is not natural. It is attributed to divine power. Its source is the indwelling Holy Spirit. (C. Erdman) Their ready imitation of the apostle and his colleagues – which was, in truth, an imitation of Christ, so far as they were connected with Him in His life and truth – was a practical proof of the sincerity of their conversion. (T. Croskery) Persecution of Christians, a blatant form of injustice, will bring upon its perpetrators the certain wrath of God. (D. Carson) Because they already knew they were chosen of God, the Thessalonians lived consistently with the intended purpose of the election and became examples to the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. (J. Dillow)

1 Thess. 1:6 And as for (continuative, emphatic) you (Subj. Nom.; new believers), you became (γίνομαι, API2P, Ingressive, Deponent) imitators (Pred. Nom.) of us (Gen. Rel.; we stayed in Thessalonica as long as we could and taught you Bible doctrine) and (connective) of the Lord (Gen. Rel.), having received (δέχομαι, AMPtc.NMP, Dramatic, Temporal, Deponent; welcomed with open arms: positive volition) the Word (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Bible doctrine) while under frequent (Dat. Measure; many) pressure (Loc. Sph.; persecution) with inner happiness (Gen. Manner or Attendant Circumstances) from the Holy Spirit (Abl. Source),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 1:6** καὶ ὑμεῖς μιμηταὶ ἡμῶν ἐγενήθητε καὶ τοῦ κυρίου δεξάμενοι τὸν λόγον ἐν θλίψει πολλῇ μετὰ χαρᾶς πνεύματος ἁγίου

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 1:6** et vos imitatores nostri facti estis et Domini excipientes verbum in tribulatione multa cum gaudio Spiritus Sancti

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 1:7** So that you became a pattern [Christian blueprint] to all those who are believers in Macedonia [northern Greece] and in Achaia [southern Greece].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 1:7** So that you became a pattern to all those who are believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 1:7** So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul pays a wonderful compliment to the Thessalonian believers. By imitating his lifestyle and exhibiting positive volition towards his Bible teaching, they became (Culminative Aorist tense) patterns for all the new believers in their geographical area. Believers in the area of Macedonia and Achaia did not need to look far for a good example to live by. The Thessalonian believers were the perfect example, a blueprint in fact, for successful Christian living.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Being a pattern” points to the spiritual progress of the Thessalonian converts. They were not only imitators of the example of their teachers, but themselves an example to others. (C. Ellicott)

I Thess. 1:7 So that (Result) you became (γίνομαι, AMInf., Culminative, Result, Deponent) a pattern (Pred. Acc.; example, blueprint, type) to all (Dat. Measure) those (Dat. Adv.) who are believers (πιστεύω, PAptc.DMP, Descriptive, Substantival) in Macedonia (Loc. Place; northern Greece) and (connective) in Achaia (Loc. Place; southern Greece).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 1:7** ὥστε γενέσθαι ὑμᾶς τύπον πᾶσιν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ἐν τῇ Μακεδονίᾳ καὶ ἐν τῇ Ἀχαΐᾳ

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 1:7** ita ut facti sitis forma omnibus credentibus in Macedonia et in Achaia

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 1:8** For from you the Word of the Lord blasted out like a trumpet in the past and is still sounding forth in the present not only in Macedonia and Achaia [within Greece], but in every place [outside Greece] your application of doctrine towards God [faith rest] has gone forth [worldwide evangelism], so that we [Paul’s missionary team] do not have a need to say anything [in many cities Paul did not have to evangelize because the Thessalonians had gotten there first].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 1:8** For from you there has been caused to sound forth in a loud, unmistakable proclamation the word of the Lord, the echo of which still rolls on with a great sound; not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith which is directed toward God has gone forth, so that we are not under any necessity to be saying a thing,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 1:8** 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The impact of the Thessalonian believers had blasted forth like a trumpet (Intensive Perfect tense) all over Greece and was now extending well beyond the borders of their country. They were highly successful worldwide evangelists and this lifestyle was also the standard in many cities before Paul and his missionary team arrived. Their application of Bible doctrine, in the form of the faith rest drill, had been delivered (Dramatic Perfect tense) well beyond the borders of Greece. The Thessalonian evangelists had done such a great job that when Paul and his missionary team entered some cities for the first time, they did not have to preach the gospel (Customary Present tense) because some Thessalonian believers had gotten there first! That would have given Paul the opportunity to teach many new believers advanced doctrines, since the ground work had already been laid.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The word for “sounded out” occurs only here and refers to the sounding of a herald’s trumpet. Such was the boldness of their witness in a hostile world! They did not hide timidly behind closed doors and whisper the gospel into the ears of their most trusted friends. They shouted it from the housetops. They preached the Good News loudly in the marketplace. They told it to everyone. Everyone sat up and took notice. (J. Phillips) There is here a certain use of the figure hyperbole. The words “in every place” are not to be taken in their full literal sense, but are merely a strong expression for the wide diffusion of the faith of the Thessalonians. (P. Gloag)

After Pentecost, if God had anything to say, He said it in Greek. He spoke in a Gentile language that most people could understand. The Jews did not like that. They did not want the gospel themselves, and they did not want the Gentiles to have it. They bitterly resented this massive movement of the Holy Spirit that was bypassing the rabbinical schools, the synagogue, traditional Judaism, and entrenched Jewish traditions. They hated Paul, Christ, Christianity, and they hated to see Gentiles preaching “the word of the Lord.” (J. Phillips)

1 Thess. 1:8 For (explanatory) from you (Abl. Source; as missionaries) the Word (Subj. Nom.) of the Lord (Abl. Source) blasted out like a trumpet in the past and is still sounding forth in the present (ἐξηγέω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive) not (neg. particle) only (adv.) in Macedonia (Loc. Place) and (connective) Achaia (Loc. Place), but (adversative) in every (Dat. Measure) place (Loc. Place; outside Greece) your (Poss. Gen.) application of doctrine (Subj. Nom.; faith rest) towards God (Acc. Rel.) has gone forth (ἐξέρχομαι, Perf.AI3S, Dramatic, Deponent; worldwide evangelism), so that (Result) we (Paul’s missionary team) do not (neg. particle) have (ἔχω, PAInf., Customary, Result) a need (Acc. Dir. Obj.; necessity) to say (λαλέω, PAInf., Customary, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) anything (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Paul did not have to evangelize in many cities because the Thessalonians had gotten there first),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 1:8** ἀφ ὑμῶν γὰρ ἐξήχηται ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου οὐ μόνον ἐν τῇ Μακεδονίᾳ καὶ Ἀχαΐᾳ ἀλλ ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν ἢ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἐξελήλυθεν ὥστε μὴ χρεῖαν ἔχειν ἡμᾶς λαλεῖν τι

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 1:8** a vobis enim diffamatus est sermo Domini non solum in Macedonia et in Achaia sed in omni loco fides vestra quae est ad Deum profecta est ita ut non sit nobis necesse quicquam loqui

LWB 1 Thess. 1:9 Because they themselves [new converts] continue to report about you: what kind of reception we [Paul, Silas and Timothy] had in your presence [when we first came to Thessalonica], and how you turned to God from idols for the purpose of serving as bondslaves to the living and true God,

^{KW} **1 Thess. 1:9** For they themselves keep on reporting concerning you what kind of an entrance we had as we came to you, and how you turned around to God from your idols for the purpose of serving a living and genuine God as His bondslaves,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 1:9** 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;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The impact of the Thessalonian believers is best told by their new converts (Latin: announced), who never cease talking about (Iterative Present tense) the missionaries they have sent. They tell the true story of how Paul, Silas and Timothy first came to Thessalonica and what a wonderful reception (Latin: conversation) they received (Dramatic Aorist tense) from the people of the city. They tell their own story during the course of witnessing, how they turned to God (Dramatic Aorist tense) from a lifetime of worshipping idols. They emphasize that now they are serving the living God (Customary Present tense), the one and only true God. Every place Paul and his entourage seem to go, the Thessalonian evangelists have already been there. In every city they enter, they hear stories about their previous evangelical success in Thessalonica. The Thessalonian evangelists were beating Paul to the punch, so he was undoubtedly one proud and happy apostle.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is plain that the community addressed in such terms as these consisted predominantly of converted pagans. (F.F. Bruce) God is life. God lives. He does not possess life as we do – life that began at some point. There was never a time when God did not live. He has always existed; His life is called eternal life. Eternal life has no beginning and no end, in contrast to the life of the believer, technically called “everlasting life,” which has no end but began at the moment of faith in Christ. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) By abandoning idol worship in an idolatrous culture, their new faith led them to risk ridicule, censure, and financial loss. But they knew this was necessary in order to serve God ... All Christians should turn from whatever idols capture their attention (money, horoscopes, power, fame, acclaim) to serve God while they wait for Jesus to deliver them from the Tribulation via the Rapture. (R. Wilkin)

1 Thess. 1:9 **Because** (causal) **they themselves** (Subj. Nom.; new converts) **continue to report** (ἀπαγγέλλω, PAI3P, Iterative) **about you** (Gen. Adv.): **what kind of** (Qualitative Acc.) **reception** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; entrance) **we** (Paul, Silvanus and Timothy) **had** (ἔχω, AAI1P, Dramatic) **in your presence** (Acc. Rel.; when we first came to Thessalonica), **and** (continuative) **how** (interrogative) **you turned** (ἐπιστρέφω, AAI2P, Dramatic) **to God** (Dat. Adv.) **from idols** (Abl. Separation) **for the purpose of serving as bondslaves to** (δουλεύω, PAInf., Customary, Purpose) **the living** (ζάω, PAPtc.DMS,

Descriptive, Attributive) and (connective) true (Dat. Ref.; genuine) God (Dat. Ind. Obj.),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 1:9** αὐτοὶ γὰρ περὶ ἡμῶν ἀπαγγέλλουσιν ὅποιαν εἴσοδον ἔσχομεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ πῶς ἐπεστρέψατε πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἀπὸ τῶν εἰδώλων δουλεύειν θεῷ ζῶντι καὶ ἀληθινῷ

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 1:9** ipsi enim de nobis adnuntiant qualem introitum habuerimus ad vos et quomodo conversi estis ad Deum a simulacris servire Deo vivo et vero

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 1:10** **And to be waiting expectantly for His Son out from the heavens [at the rapture of the Church], Whom He [the Father] raised out from the dead [resurrection], Jesus, the One Who will deliver us out from the wrath [the Church will not go through the tribulation] which is coming [imminency of the rapture prior to the tribulation].**

^{KW} **1 Thess. 1:10** And to be expectantly waiting for His Son from heaven, whom He raised out from among the dead, Jesus, the One who delivers us from the wrath which is coming.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The word was also out about the Thessalonians waiting expectantly (Customary Present tense) for Jesus Christ to come out from the heavens at the rapture of the Church. This is the same Jesus that was resurrected by the Father (Dramatic Aorist tense), and Who will deliver us out from (Futuristic Present tense) the wrath of the coming tribulation. The preposition “ek” with the Ablative Case means “separation from” not “through.” The Church will not go “through” the tribulation. Jesus Christ is coming soon (imminency), and He will take His bride away from the earth at the rapture (Futuristic Present tense). What loving husband puts his bride through tribulation before the wedding?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The tendency of some modern exegetes to treat the wrath of God as an impersonal process of retribution operating in the universe does insufficient justice to Paul’s thought. For Paul, God is personal, and His wrath must be as personal as His grace. (Rom. 3:5-6) “What shall we say? That God is unjust to inflict wrath? By no means! For then how could God judge the world?” (F.F. Bruce) God’s wrath is without the imperfections that seem bound up with the purest of righteous indignation among men. But it gives strong expression to the active opposition of a holy God for all that is evil. We cannot do without this conception. (L. Morris) The Thessalonians had been taught the truth of the Rapture, the truth of the imminent coming of the Lord Jesus. They were expecting Him at any moment. They were waiting up for Him. That is how real the truth of the Rapture was to the Thessalonians. It spurred them on to win souls to Christ. They wanted to be found active in His service, in the center of His will, waiting up for Him when He came. (J. Phillips)

In the resurrection of Christ from His unique physical death, two categories of divine power were displayed. The omnipotence of God the Father restored our Lord's human spirit from heaven to His body in the grave. The Father thereby became an agent of the resurrection of Christ. The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit restored Christ's soul from Hades to His body in the grave. Hence, the Holy Spirit also became an agent of Christ's resurrection. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) When we read that the Thessalonian saints were "waiting for God's Son from heaven," it is well to note what they were not waiting for. It does not say that they waited for the "Spirit of God," but for the Son of God. (E.W. Bullinger) The Bible so clearly defines the Middle East hostilities of the future as to rule out all conjecture. But the Christian simply cannot superimpose future conflicts on the present situation and assume that prophecy is being fulfilled before his eyes. The Church Age is an era when there is no biblical prophecy to be fulfilled. The next prophetic event will be the Rapture or the removal of the Church from the earth. The Rapture includes the resurrection of all believers who have died during the Church Age. Then those believers who are alive at that time will be caught up with the newly resurrected believers to meet Christ in the air. The Rapture terminates the Church Age and initiates the Tribulation. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The Jews of Jesus' day failed to recognize the fact that their OT Scriptures foretold two comings. There are to be two comings of Christ. The Lord is coming first in the air to receive His own to Himself. Later, He is coming to the earth to set up His millennial kingdom. He is coming first for His saints; He is coming later with His saints. His coming for His saints we call the Rapture. His coming with His saints is called the return. The coming of the Lord for His saints is an imminent, undated event, something that can take place at any moment. The coming of the Lord with His saints is a dated event. Certain things have to happen before it can happen. The Antichrist, for instance, must come and briefly rule the world. There is no point "waiting up" for an event that, right from the start, is a long time off. But every reason exists to wait up for an event that could take place at any time. (J. Phillips) The Church is not a continuation of Judaism, and has no right to the promises of God to Israel. The Church is not looking for a kingdom on earth, but is waiting and longing for the Bridegroom from heaven, and will reign with Christ over the millennial earth. (O. Greene)

Sir Robert Anderson has shown that the period of 483 years expired the day Jesus rode in triumph into Jerusalem ... The Thessalonians were not looking for the return of the Lord to reign; there was no point in "waiting up" for that event. Although there was no point in waiting up for the return of Christ to set up His kingdom, there was every reason to "wait up" for the Rapture. Having thus mentioned the Rapture, Paul mentions the resurrection, which is closely connected with the Rapture – "to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus." His resurrection is the guarantee of our resurrection ... The main resurrection harvest will be at the time of the Rapture, when the Lord takes His beloved church to be with Himself. Paul develops this truth later in this letter. After the harvest came the gleaning. The poor were allowed into the field to gather what remained. The gleaning anticipates the various subsidiary resurrections of kingdom-age believers at various times. The rapture of the church and the resurrection of God's saints are closely associated truths. (J. Phillips) Paul was referring to the wrath that will come upon the world. Evidently the apostle had intimated to the Thessalonians that such a time of trouble is coming, but he had also told

them that Jesus will come to snatch His own away before this wrath is let loose. (H. Ironside)

When the Gentile bride is taken out of all peoples the Lord Jesus will return and build again the tabernacle of David. He will sit on the throne of David, and the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters now cover the sea. There will be peace on earth, good will toward men, but this can happen only when Jesus returns for His Church, and that is the event for which the believers at Thessalonica are waiting ... We will not receive our glorified bodies until Jesus comes in the Rapture and the first resurrection. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord in a conscious state with some form of spiritual body – but we will not receive our glorified bodies until He comes for us in the Rapture. (O. Greene) We are sometimes told that focusing on the 2nd coming of the Lord has a tendency to throttle Christian activity. It is said that people with such a focus can become dreamers who are sidetracked with prophetic questions and are no longer interested in living for God and seeking to win others for Christ. Frankly my own experience teaches me that the contrary is true. My observation is that the more this blessed truth grips a man's soul, the more concerned he is about serving God and winning others to Christ. This was true of the young Thessalonian believers. They lived day by day in the expectation of Christ's return. (H. Ironside)

Finally, Paul mentions the rescue: “even Jesus,” he continues, “Who delivered us from the wrath to come.” The church is to be delivered from the wrath. Certain false teachers had tried to persuade them otherwise, but this only called forth Paul's second letter to them in which he reemphasizes the pretribulation rapture of the church. We are delivered, rescued from all of these coming horrors by the Rapture. (J. Phillips) The waiting is for the Rapture, a point that Paul will develop later in this letter. The Rapture of the Church saints would be a mystery revealed primarily to Paul (I Cor. 15:51-54), and it is a now expectation for the body of Christ. The Rapture is to rescue the believers before the terror of the tribulation begins. The “wrath to come” refers to the coming or approaching Tribulation. This wrath is not the divine wrath that hangs over the heads of mankind because of sin (Rom. 1:18), as in the final judgment, but it is the wrath of Daniel's Seventieth Week that purges Israel and also become a judgment upon the world (Rev. 6:12-17). The Church, the body of Christ, is rescued by Jesus before that day comes (1 Thess. 5:9). The strong emotional desire of these believers to be taken home to Him in the Rapture should be prevalent among us today. (M. Couch)

The clear implication of this verse is that Paul hoped in the Lord's imminent return. Otherwise Paul would have told his readers to prepare for the Tribulation. In the phrase “from the coming wrath” the word translated “from” means that Christians are kept from it, not taken out of it. The same verb (rescues) and preposition (from) are used in 2 Corinthians 1:10 where Paul said he was delivered from a deadly peril. Obviously this does not mean Paul died and was resurrected. Christians will be kept away from God's wrath, not just kept safe through it. (T. Constable) Wescott says regarding “ek sozo” (to save from) that it does not necessarily imply that that is actually realized out of which deliverance is granted, though it commonly does so. This “from the wrath” can hardly mean protection in it; it must mean exemption from it. It would seem, then, to be perfectly clear that the preposition “from” may be taken to mean complete exemption from that which is predicted. It is clear from the context and other statements in Scripture require that this be the interpretation. (J. Pentecost) There is no evidence that the church is in the tribulation period as no distinctive term is

ever used connecting saints in the period with the church. The tribulation concerns Israel and the Gentiles, not the church, and the church is promised deliverance from the time of tribulation. The rapture is presented as an imminent event with no intervening prophecies and as such is offered as a ground of comfort and a basis of exhortation. (J. Walvoord)

There are a number of words used in both the Old and New Testaments to describe the seventieth week period, when considered together, give us the essential nature or character of this period. Wrath is one of them ... many signs were given to the nation Israel, which would precede the 2nd advent, so that the nation might be living in expectancy when the time of His coming should draw nigh. Although Israel could not know the day nor the hour when the Lord will come, yet they can know that their redemption draweth nigh through the fulfillment of these signs. To the church no such signs were ever given. The church was told to live in the light of the imminent coming of the Lord to translate them in His presence. This passage warns the believer to be watching for the Lord Himself, not for signs that would precede His coming. It is true that the events of the seventieth week will cast an adumbration before the rapture, but the object of the believer's attention is always directed to Christ, never to these portents. The doctrine of imminence, or "at any moment coming," is not a new doctrine with Darby, as is sometimes charged, although he did clarify, systematize, and popularize it. Such a belief in imminency marked the premillennialism of the early church fathers as well as the writers of the New Testament. (J. Pentecost)

1 Thess. 1:10 And (continuative) to be waiting expectantly (ἀναμένω, PAInf., Customary, Purpose) for His (Gen. Rel.) Son (Acc. Dir. Obj.) out from the heavens (Gen. Place; at the rapture of the Church), Whom (Acc. Appos.) He (the Father) raised (ἐγείρω, AAI3S, Dramatic; resurrection) out from the dead (Abl. Separation), Jesus (Acc. Appos.), the One (Acc. Appos.) Who will deliver (ῥύομαι, PMPTc.AMS, Futuristic, Substantival, Deponent) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) out from the wrath (Abl. Separation; the Church will not go through the tribulation) which (Adv. Gen. Ref.) is coming (ἔρχομαι, PMPTc.GFS, Futuristic, Attributive, Deponent; imminency of the rapture prior to the tribulation).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 1:10** καὶ ἀναμένειν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν ὃν ἤγειρεν ἐκ [τῶν] νεκρῶν Ἰησοῦν τὸν ῥυόμενον ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς ὀργῆς τῆς ἐρχομένης

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 1:10** et expectare Filium eius de caelis quem suscitavit ex mortuis Iesum qui eripuit nos ab ira ventura

CHAPTER 2

LWB 1 Thess. 2:1 For you will recall, brethren, our initial visit among you [in Thessalonica],

that it did not prove to be futile [believers did come to Christ],

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:1** For you yourselves know positively, brethren, our entrance which was into your midst, that it has not proved futile,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:1** For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul reminds the Thessalonians that their initial visit (Latin: intro) to Thessalonica was not a fruitless one. The Thessalonian believers themselves are proof of his success! If they carefully recall the circumstances and the result of his visit (Intensive Perfect tense), they will remember that it did not turn out empty-handed (Descriptive Perfect tense). It produced fruit and was not, therefore, devoid of purpose. Paul did not waste their time in a city without converts. Many believers came to know Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is clear that Paul had been accused of insincerity. His enemies said that he was more concerned to make money out of his converts than to present true teaching. The accusation would be made easier in virtue of the well-known fact that itinerant preachers concerned only to feather their own nests were common in those days. Paul was being represented as nothing more than another of this class of preaching vagrants. Neither Paul nor the Thessalonians had need to search for material to prove his *bona fides*. An accusation of insincerity could hardly stand in the light of such public knowledge of the man and his work. (L. Morris)

Every pastor watches wistfully to see what will be the outcome of his work. (A. Robertson) The subject matter of the apostle's preaching was not vain and idle speculations about useless niceties and foolish questions, but sound and solid truth, such as was most likely to profit his hearers. (M. Henry) Paul's work was not in vain; it was not empty. When he came to Thessalonica, it rocked a great many folk, bringing many to a saving knowledge of Christ. And it brought a church into existence. (J. McGee)

1 Thess. 2:1 **For** (explanatory) **you** (Subj. Nom.) **will recall** (οἶδα, Perf.AI2P, Intensive; know, remember), **brethren** (Voc. Address), **our** (Poss. Gen.) **initial visit** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; access, entrance) **among you** (Acc. Rel.; in Thessalonica), **that** (conj.) **it did not** (neg. adverb) **prove to be** (γίνομαι, Perf.AI3S, Descriptive, Deponent; end up, turn out) **futile** (Pred. Nom.; empty-handed, vain, without result),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:1** Αὐτοὶ γὰρ οἶδατε ἀδελφοί τὴν εἴσοδον ἡμῶν τὴν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ὅτι οὐ κενὴ γέγονεν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:1** nam ipsi scitis fratres introitum nostrum ad vos quia non inanis fuit

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 2:2** But having suffered before [beaten and tortured] and having been disgracefully mistreated [imprisoned], as you know, in Philippi, we [nevertheless] spoke boldly and freely [with courage] in our God when we proclaimed the good news of God to you [in Thessalonica] while in a state of great conflict [opposition].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:2** The evidence of its success being still in existence, but although we had previously suffered and had been mistreated in an arrogant and spiteful manner as you know well in Philippi, we became bold in our God to speak to you the good news of God in the midst of much conflict.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:2** But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul knows that the Thessalonian believers know (Intensive Perfect tense) about the violent struggle he had in Philippi. He was beaten and tortured there (Dramatic Aorist tense) and ultimately imprisoned (Dramatic Aorist tense) even though he was a Roman citizen. Most people, after suffering and being shamefully mistreated in public, would have become timid in their proclamation of the gospel or perhaps abandoned it entirely. But when Paul came to Thessalonica, he reminds them that he spoke boldly and freely (Constative Aorist tense) in their midst. He used the problem-solving device called the faith rest drill and became even more courageous in God to proclaim the gospel (Ingressive Aorist tense). He had just as much opposition to his preaching in Thessalonica as he had in Philippi, but it did not deter him. He met the conflict head-on and God the Holy Spirit supported him through spiritual no-man's land. He did not back down, nor did he become pusillanimous because of his struggle in Philippi.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The insult lay not simply in their being mistreated as Roman citizens, but in the treatment itself. They were publicly stripped, evidently at the hands of the magistrates themselves, and beaten, without any inquiry into the charges. (D. Williams) The modern Israeli army expunged the words "Forward march!" from its vocabulary and replaced them with the words "Follow me!" Soldiers who are not prepared to lead their men into battle are not considered suitable officer material. Paul felt the same way. His boldness was intellectual as well as physical. He was unintimidated by the pomp and ceremony by which he was surrounded. He was undeterred by his chains and his uncertain future. He was unperturbed by the scornful and slanderous outburst of the Roman governor Festus. This boldness came from prayer. Paul's boldness came from God. It was not just natural boldness. (J. Phillips)

“Waxed bold” denotes the state of mind when the words flow freely, the attitude of feeling quite at home with no sense of stress or strain. The boldness and confidence it denotes are not natural attributes. Because he lived “in” his God he was always at home, no matter what the outward circumstances, and thus always had that attitude of ready speech we have been thinking of. (L. Morris) Suffered and mistreated are strong words that show the intensity of the hatred against Paul preaching the gospel. The truth is not popular and satanic opposition against it is always bitter. But Paul travels from one city to another and refuses to stop speaking the gospel regardless of the opposition encountered. (M. Couch) Ministers who seek only to please men are enemies of the men whom they please. The dirtiest thief this side of hell is a preacher who compromises the Gospel and allows people to go to hell under his preaching – when, if he would preach the whole truth, that truth would set men free! When we please men in any way that displeases God, it is to man’s destruction. (O. Greene)

Paul didn’t slow down because of his previous experience. He didn’t play down the gospel. After his terrifying experience, Paul didn’t say, “Now I’m going to be more tactful and less outspoken about the gospel.” No, Paul was not a secret believer. He spoke right out, just as he had done at Philippi. You see, it would have been easy for Paul to rationalize. He could have decided that he had better be more careful to win friends and influence people. Excessive tact and the soft sell were not Paul’s method. He boldly declared the gospel, and his experiences did not affect his approach. (J. McGee) The Christian life is compared to an athletic competition in which the participants strive to win. Christians need this same spirit if they are to be winners. (R. Earle) Paul and his companions were not on a vacation trip. They had come to Thessalonica after having suffered, been insulted, beaten, and imprisoned for preaching the gospel in Philippi. (T. Constable)

1 Thess. 2:2 But (contrast) having suffered before (προπάσχω, AAPtc.NMP, Dramatic, Temporal; beaten and tortured, treat insolently) and (continuative) having been disgracefully mistreated (ὕβριζω, APpTc.NMP, Dramatic, Circumstantial; personal indignity, imprisoned), as (adv.) you know (οἶδα, Perf.AI2P, Intensive), in Philippi (Loc. Place), we spoke boldly and freely (παρρησιάζομαι, AMI1P, Ingressive, Deponent; with courage) in our (Gen. Rel.) God (Loc. Sph.) when we proclaimed (λαλέω, AAInf., Constative, Temporal) the good news (Acc. Dir. Obj.; gospel) of God (Gen. Origin) to you (Acc. Adv.) while in a state of great (Dat. Measure) conflict (Loc. Sph.; struggle, opposition).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:2** ἀλλὰ προπαθόντες καὶ ὑβρισθέντες καθὼς οἴδατε ἐν Φιλίπποις ἐπαρρησιασάμεθα ἐν τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν λαλῆσαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν πολλῷ ἀγῶνι

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:2** sed ante passi et contumeliis affecti sicut scitis in Philippis fiduciam habuimus in Deo nostro loqui ad vos evangelium Dei in multa sollicitudine

LWB 1 Thess. 2:3 For our declaration [of the gospel] did not come from the source of [doctrinal] error nor impure motive [from living in the cosmic system] nor by means of

deceit [treachery],

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:3** Four our exhortation did not have its source in error nor even in immorality, nor even in deceit,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:3** For our exhortation *was* not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to defend the manner in which he and his colleagues preached (Latin: exhortation) the gospel. They were continually filled with the Spirit, operating from the sphere of divine power. They taught absolute truth exactly as they were taught; they did not spread any false doctrines (Latin: error). They did not operate with impure motives from Satan's cosmic system, but operated instead with integrity. They did not preach from a position of political intrigue, conspiracy or other treacherous *modus operandi*. They did not spout the latest human viewpoint philosophy or psychology as a means of gaining an entrance to certain groups of people.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Uncleanness denotes moral impurity. Sexual impurity was a regular feature of many of the cults of antiquity, especially those from the East. Trickery or guile originally had reference to catching fish by means of a bait. The wandering sophists and jugglers resorted to all manner of devices to attract people and so get their money. (L. Morris) So many wandering charlatans made their way about the Greek world, peddling their religious or philosophical nostrums, and living at the expense of their devotees, that it was necessary for Paul and his friends to emphasize the purity of their motives and actions by contrast with these. (F. Bruce)

While uncleanness expresses impure purpose or motive, guile has reference to improper means. (M. Vincent) Deceivers do not expose themselves to danger. (R. Jamieson) Had the apostles yielded to feelings of irritation and despondency, giving up their task in Macedonia, after the troubles at Philippi, or had they conducted themselves at Thessalonica in such a way as to secure ease and profit – in either case, they would have proved their mission to be ambitious or selfish, and therefore undivine. (W.R. Nicoll) When he came to Thessalonica, his transparent honesty as to motive, method, and message was evident. (J. Phillips)

1 Thess. 2:3 **For** (explanatory) **our** (Poss. Gen.) **declaration** (Subj. Nom.; of the gospel) **did not** (neg. particle) **come** (ellipsis) **from the source of error** (Gen. Origin; doctrinal deception from false teachers or self-deceivers) **nor** (neg. adv.) **impure motive** (Gen. Origin; rottenness, impurity, sexual misconduct; from living in the cosmic system) **nor** (neg. adv.) **by means of deceit** (Instr. Means, Manner; treachery from roaming philosophers, fakers, swindlers),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:3** ἡ γὰρ παράκλησις ἡμῶν οὐκ ἐκ πλάνης οὐδὲ ἐξ ἀκαθαρσίας οὐδὲ ἐν δόλῳ

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:3** exhortatio enim nostra non de errore neque de inmunditia neque in dolo

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 2:4** But since we were tested and approved by God [for blessing] as being faithful with reference to the good news, in the same manner we keep on speaking, not as pleasing men [emptying the gospel message of its offensive content], but to God [motivational virtue from love for God in spiritual autonomy], Who ultimately tests and approves the mentality [thinking] of our souls [for rewards and blessings in eternity].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:4** But even as we have been approved by God as worthy of being entrusted with the good news, that approval being based upon the fact that we had met His requirements, thus we are speaking, not as pleasing men but as pleasing God who puts His approval upon our hearts after we have met the test to which He has subjected us.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:4** But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The gospel message and manner of its delivery by Paul and his colleagues was impeccable, because it was tested and approved (Intensive Perfect tense) by none other than God Himself. So once they received the approval of the highest possible standard from the justice, veracity and righteous standard of God, there was no reason they could not keep on preaching it (Iterative Present tense) just as they had been doing. After all, they had not watered the message down to accommodate the sinful flesh of man (Customary Present tense: become men pleasers), but preached it in its entirety. They preached the gospel as if God was listening, which of course, He was. They were motivated from within to preach the truth. They had passed a number of providential tests and were now in spiritual autonomy. They loved God and His message just the way it was, and were proud to be chosen as His speaking instruments.

Since God administers all testing for growing believers (Iterative Present tense) and places His ultimate approval or disapproval on His servants (Result Participle), it stands to reason that the innermost thoughts of our right lobes are under His close scrutiny. We will all receive rewards (or shame and embarrassment) at the Judgment Seat of Christ according to our motivation to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. We will all receive rewards for those things we have done while functioning in the filling of the Spirit, or see the loss of them when we are not. The Lord will reveal the content of our thoughts and lives on earth and dispel any false notions of self-worth in that day. He knows how much time we have resided in the sphere of His power and how much time we have resided in Satan's cosmic system, and He will reward us accordingly.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

To be a slave to public opinion is not to be the servant of God, whether it is in ignorance or whatsoever. A minister called of God, sincere in heart and loyal to God, will never fear the audience before which he stands. (O. Greene) God who approved them, tests our hearts, he declares. This is, in effect, an invocation to God to witness to the purity of their motives. The heart is a comprehensive term for the inner self, the seat of the rational as well as the emotional and volitional elements in human life. (D. Williams) Something is either true or false, right or wrong, of the flesh or of the Spirit, good or bad. The gospel is concerned with the truth; anything that contradicts the gospel is a lie. Truth is truth and error is error. We have no mandate to water down the truth to please men. Bold men in fields other than the ministry have dared to speak the truth at all costs. (J. Phillips)

We are apt to misunderstand references to the heart in the Scriptures, for we are fond of using the term to denote the affections. But the affections in ancient times were thought of as located in the intestines (bowels of compassion). The heart, even though occasionally it might be used in a sense not far removed from our own, stood for the whole of the inner life, comprising thought and will as well as emotions. Here the meaning is that God searches out the whole of our inner life. Nothing is hidden from Him. (L. Morris) Paul did not care the least about the criticisms or opinions of men. (M. Couch) The definite commission of the gospel excluded any weak attempt to flatter men's prejudices or to adapt oneself to their tastes. (W. Nicoll) Since God had tried their inner motives and had approved them and entrusted them with the gospel, they were concerned to please Him and not men. (C. McCown)

The pulpit must never be intimidated by the pew. The preacher must always be courteous, but at times he is honor bound to say things that will likely offend someone who holds a different view or who is guilty of some particular sin. That is not his primary concern. He is to speak the truth in love. So often the truth is trimmed because it might upset a rich benefactor, an influential deacon, or a prominent and powerful citizen. John preached against Herod and Herodias at the cost of his life. Jesus denounced the religious establishment, and it never stopped plotting against Him until it had Him dead and buried in His tomb. Paul's testimony to the Thessalonians was that when he preached in their city, he was not concerned whether his message pleased men. His preaching was such as could stand the test of God's examination. Compromise, so beloved by the politician, has no part in the gospel. The gospel is not presented to us in the NT in accommodating shades of gray; it is presented in stark black-and-white. (J. Phillips)

We have one responsibility when occasion is offered, we must warn men of their position before God. If we fail to do this we are disobedient. Yet such disobedience is not essential for the fulfillment of God's purposes in election, for He is sovereign. This is not why we are called to share our faith, as though without this active ministry the hands of the Lord would be tied. It is a privilege which the Lord allows ... In evangelism it is not that God is dependent upon us who already know the Lord; rather it is that our growth is dependent upon our obedience to evangelize, and God does not give commands to us which are without purpose. When our ministry occasionally succeeds in bearing fruit unto everlasting life, we can only say with Paul that "we were allowed of God to be put

in trust with the Gospel.” There is no other way for those very few who by grace are to respond except somebody in some direct or indirect way provide them with the occasion. The same message which is rejected by the unsaved is the means whereby the elect are brought into salvation. Elect and non-elect are indistinguishable as targets until the parting of the ways. The same message must therefore be presented to the elect and the non-elect alike, though the response will be exactly opposite. (A. Custance)

In spiritual autonomy the believer is motivated by his love for God. In any system to which he belongs, he does his job “not as pleasing men but God.” He does not rely on the organization to furnish his motivation because he is self-motivated. The organization cannot destroy motivation that it did not create in the first place. Only the believer himself can destroy his own motivation through negative volition to the protocol plan of God. With personal love for God as his motivational virtue, the spiritually autonomous Christian can contribute to the organization even when it may treat him unfairly. Needless to say, he does the best possible job regardless of injustice, unfair criticism, or job discrimination. He does not complain or join in organizational conspiracies. Man is frequently unfair, but God is always fair. Man’s systems are flawed, but God’s protocol plan is perfect. Human beings in authority may be despicable, but God is always worthy of respect. The spiritually autonomous believer’s personal love for God motivated impersonal love for mankind, which enables him to be tolerant of the weaknesses and failures of others. When he is a victim of unfair leadership, unjust management, or an inefficient system, he deals with personality conflicts on the basis of impersonal love. In other words, he takes the attitude that the people who inflict systems testing on him are simply contributing to his spiritual advance. The inventory of Bible doctrine in the believer’s soul enables him to submit to authority and be an asset to any organization. That same doctrine strengthens him to endure system testing and through his professionalism to be a stabilizing influence for others who also may suffer from the organization’s pettiness, shortsightedness, or ineptitude. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

I Thess. 2:4 But (adversative) since (correlative adv.) we were tested and approved (δοκιμάζω, Perf.PI1P, Intensive; for blessing) by God (Subj. Gen.) as being faithful (πιστεύω, PAInf., Descriptive, Result) with reference to the good news (Acc. Gen. Ref.), in the same manner (adv.) we keep on speaking (λαλέω, PAI1P, Iterative), not (neg. adv.) as pleasing (PAPtc.NMP, Customary, Attributive; catering to) men (Dat. Adv.; emptying the gospel of its offensive content), but (adversative) to God (Dat. Adv.; motivational virtue from love for God in spiritual autonomy), Who ultimately tests and approves (δοκιμάζω, PAPtc.DMS, Iterative, Result; for blessing) othe mentality of our (Poss. Gen.) souls (Acc. Dir. Obj.; for rewards and blessings).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:4** ἀλλὰ καθὼς δεδοκιμάσμεθα ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πιστευθῆναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον οὕτως λαλοῦμεν οὐχ ὡς ἀνθρώποις ἀρέσκοντες ἀλλὰ θεῷ τῷ δοκιμάζοντι τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:4** sed sicut probati sumus a Deo ut crederetur nobis evangelium ita loquimur non quasi hominibus placentes sed Deo qui probat corda nostra

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 2:5** Indeed, neither at any time did we become a flatterer in word, as you know, nor a pretext for covetousness [using the gospel as a cover-up to obtain money]. God is witness [to our proper motivation].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:5** For neither were we found using flattering discourse, even as you know assuredly, nor a pretext to cover up the desire to have more than one already has, God is witness,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:5** For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God *is* witness:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also asserts that neither he nor any of his colleagues ever became (Constative Aorist tense) a “word flatterer.” The Thessalonians knew this well (Intensive Perfect tense) and should not need to be reminded. Neither did Paul or any of his colleagues use the gospel as a pretext (Latin: occasion) or cloak (hiding their avarice) for obtaining money. The Greek word points to greed while the Latin word points to avarice. God is his witness (Latin: testifier) that they had only the highest form of motivation for the service they rendered.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Greek term “flatterer” has rather the idea of using fair words as a means of gaining one’s own ends. It is a matter of using insincerity as an instrument of policy, as a means of persuading another to do one’s will. (L. Morris) It is worth stopping to reflect that this covetousness almost invariably comes with a cloak. We never admit to covetousness. Some specious reason can always be found to cloak our real motive even from ourselves. We are warned to be rigorous in our self-examination. (ibid) As masters of character assassination, the opponents of the apostles built argument upon argument to make them look evil. (M. Couch) He shunned all guile, all gain, and all glory – the three things that religious deceivers most commonly seek. (J. Phillips) The flatterer habitually employs flattery to gain some advantage for himself. He trades on the fact that people naturally like to hear things which set them in a favorable light, and by telling them such things he expects to gain a following. (F. Bruce)

We did not pander to your feelings. (P. Gloag) In *Twelfth Night* Shakespeare has his clown say, “Marry, sir, they praise me and make an ass of me; now my foes tell me plainly I am an ass: so that by my foes, sir, I profit in the knowledge of myself, and by my friends I am abused.” Our friends are probably more dangerous at times than our enemies! (J. McGee) Paul never used flattery. There is a group of wealthy laymen across this country who are literally owned by the people who flatter them. If a Christian work or program doesn’t butter them up, they are not the least bit interested in helping that program financially. God pity the church or the work that must depend on men who require

flattery and compliments before they will give their support to the work. I think this is one of the curses in the Christian church today. (J. McGee)

1 Thess. 2:5 Indeed (emphatic), neither (neg. conj.) at any time (temporal particle) did we become (γίνομαι, API1P, Constativ, Deponent) a flatterer (Gen. Disadv.) in word (Loc. Sph.), as (adv.) you know (οἶδα, Perf.AI2P, Intensive), nor (neg. conj.) a pretext (Dat. Disadv.) for covetousness (Adv. Gen. Ref.; greediness, self-interest, using the gospel as a cover-up to obtain money). God (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis) witness (Pred. Nom.).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:5** οὔτε γάρ ποτε ἐν λόγῳ κολακείας ἐγενήθημεν καθὼς οἴδατε οὔτε προφάσει πλεονεξίας θεὸς μάρτυς

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:5** neque enim aliquando fuimus in sermone adulationis sicut scitis neque in occasione avaritiae Deus testis est

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 2:6** Nor did we seek glory [special treatment] from men, neither from you [Thessalonians] nor from others of the same kind [believers in other geographical locations]. When we were able to be burdensome [financially] on the grounds that we were apostles of Christ [legitimate authority],

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:6** Nor seeking glory from men, neither from you nor from others, when we might have stood on our dignity as Christ's ambassadors.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:6** Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also asserts that neither he nor his colleagues tried to obtain special treatment (Customary Present tense) from men, as was common among false apostles. They did not “pull rank” on the Thessalonians, nor on any other group of believers. They did have legitimate authority as apostles of Christ to ask for financial assistance, but when the occasion for that arose, they did not exert their prerogative. They did have the power (Customary Present tense) to become a weight on the shoulders of other believers, but they exercised genuine humility instead.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul had a right to be supported by those to whom he had brought the gospel and to whom he ministered in things spiritual. The Thessalonians, however, could recall that he had not claimed this right, but had labored at tentmaking so that he might not be a burden to the church. (C. Erdman) Early use of the term “apostle” appears to be restricted to the Twelve, or, at least, this is how Luke

generally uses the term. Only twice, in Acts 14:4,14, does he extend the category to include Paul and Barnabas. (D. Williams) Many colleges have attempted to buy men by giving them honorary doctoral degrees. They have been given out by the score. The college then hopes for a donation or some other type of support. That is one reason it would be well if all doctoral degrees had to be earned. (J. McGee)

1 Thess. 2:6 Nor (neg. conj.) did we seek (ζητέω, PAPtc.NMP, Customary, Modal) glory (Acc. Dir. Obj.; praise, honor, special treatment) from men (Gen. Origin), neither (neg. conj.) from you (Gen. Origin; Thessalonians) nor (neg. conj.) from others of the same kind (Abl. Source; believers in other geographical locations). When we might have been able (δύναμαι, PMPTc.NMP, Customary, Temporal, Deponent; by exerting our legitimate authority) to be (εἰμί, PMInf., Descriptive, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) burdensome (Dat. Disadv.; a financial weight on your shoulders) on the grounds that (prep.) we were (ellipsis) apostles (Pred. Nom.) of Christ (Gen. Rel.),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:6** οὔτε ζητοῦντες ἐξ ἀνθρώπων δόξαν οὔτε ἀφ' ὑμῶν οὔτε ἀπ' ἄλλων δυνάμενοι ἐν βάρει εἶναι ὡς Χριστοῦ ἀπόστολοι

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:6** nec quaerentes ab hominibus gloriam neque a vobis neque ab aliis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 2:7** Instead, we became innocent and gentle [genuine humility] in your midst, as though [we were] a nursing mother taking care of her own children.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:7** But we became gentle in your midst, even as a nursing mother cherishes her own children.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:7** But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Instead of being a royal pain in the behind, and pulling apostolic rank, Paul and his colleagues exercised genuine humility and lived quietly (Ingressive Aorist tense) among the Thessalonians. When they preached the gospel, they drew attention to the Word of God. They did not draw attention to themselves. They took care of the Thessalonians and other believers like a nursing mother takes care of (Customary Present tense) her own children. Rather than ask the Thessalonian believers to cater to their needs, Paul and his colleagues took care of them. The variant “nepios” (infants or babes) is well attested, as well as “teknon” (children or students).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The two words “gentle” or “babes” are very similar in the Greek. The oldest and best manuscripts usually read “babes.” But against this it is urged that this involves an intolerable

mixing of the metaphors, for Paul would be comparing himself to a nurse and a babe in the same sentence. (L. Morris) Paul took the Lord's instructions to mean that his servants were entitled to their maintenance, but not compelled to require it. His reasons for forgoing the right to material support may have been manifold: partly his rabbinical upbringing which forbade him to make religious teaching a means of livelihood, partly his native independence of spirit, which made it embarrassing for him to even acknowledge a voluntary gift, and in large measure his desire to set his converts a good example. (F. Bruce)

The spiritual diet of a parent Christian is vitally important to the health of a newer Christian. The gentleness and unselfishness of Paul as a spiritual parent shines through in this illustration. (T. Constable) Verses 7-12 are a defense of the apostles against the charges, current against them evidently in some circles at Thessalonica, of having given themselves airs and unduly asserted their authority, as well as having levied or at any rate accepted contributions for their own support. (W.R. Nicoll) Paul was willing to work day and night to nurture them as a little bird is nurtured by its mother. (J. McGee)

1 Thess. 2:7 Instead (contrast) we became (γίνομαι, APIIP, Ingressive, Deponent) innocent and gentle (Pred. Nom.; genuine humility) in your (Poss. Gen.) midst (Loc. Place), as (comparative) though (comparative conj.) we were (ellipsis) a nursing mother (Subj. Nom.) taking care of (θάλπω, PASubj.3S, Customary, Potential) her own (Gen. Poss.) children (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:7** ἀλλὰ ἐγενήθημεν νήπιοι ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν ὡς ἐὰν τροφὸς θάλπη τὰ ἑαυτῆς τέκνα

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:7** cum possimus oneri esse ut Christi apostoli sed facti sumus lenes in medio vestrum tamquam si nutrix foveat filios suos

LWB 1 Thess. 2:8 So longing to be with you, we took delight in sharing with you not only the gospel of God [evangelistic message], but also our own souls [the doctrinal content in our thinking], because you have become dear [close friends] to us.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:8** Thus having a kindly feeling for you, we constantly took delight in imparting to you not only the good news of God but also our own souls, because you became beloved ones to us.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:8** So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul and his colleagues longed to be with (Latin: desired) the Thessalonian believers (Durative Present tense), but the timing is not right for them to be there. In the past, they were greatly pleased (Descriptive Imperfect tense) to share the gospel (Constative Aorist tense) with them. They had done their evangelistic duty (ambassadorship function) with a relaxed mental attitude and zeal to share the gospel. They also remained in town long enough to share some of the doctrinal content of their souls, so they had a basic framework to live the Christian way of life by. The word “animas” (Latin) points to the “life principal” they held within. They shared their deepest thoughts, emotions and experiences in their Christian walk with their new converts. They carried on this activity by utilizing impersonal love, to be sure, but Paul adds a personal tone to his greeting. The Thessalonian believers had become (Ingressive Aorist tense) close friends to his traveling missionary group. They were beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, members of the same royal family of God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

By “souls” he means their whole personalities. It is an expression which sums up the inmost being of a man. (L. Morris) Paul seemed to have all of the gifts. He was a superb scholar and a first-class theologian. He had a giant intellect. He loved to study. Books were an important part of his life. People who are like that are often neglectful of people. Paul was also an able organizer, a capable manager, and a strategic planner. Often, those who have such talents use people. But Paul loved people. He loved lost people, which is what made him a gifted evangelist and an unsurpassed missionary. He loved saved people, and that trait made him a warmhearted pastor. His companions, Silas and Timothy, were the same. (J. Phillips) The apostle not only nourished his spiritual children with the pure milk of the gospel, but was ready to sacrifice his own life for their spiritual maintenance. (P. Gloag) As a nursing mother would impart not only her milk to her children, but her life for them, so we not only imparted gladly the spiritual milk of the Word to you, but risked our lives for your spiritual nourishment, imitating Him who laid down His life for His friends, the greatest proof of love. (R. Jamieson)

1 Thess. 2:8 So (adv.) longing to be with (ὁμείρομαι, PMPTc.NMP, Durative, Attributive, Deponent) you (Gen. Rel.), we took delight in (εὐδοκέω, Imperf.AI1P, Descriptive; were pleased) sharing with (μεταδίδωμι, AAInf., Constative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; giving, imparting) you (Dat. Adv.) not (neg. particle) only (adv.) the gospel (Acc. Dir. Obj.; good news) of God (Abl. Source), but (adversative) also (adjunctive) our own (Poss. Gen.) souls (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the Bible doctrine in the mentality of our soul), because (causal) you have become (γίνομαι, API2P, Ingressive, Deponent) dear (Pred. Nom.; beloved, close friends) to us (Dat. Ind. Obj.).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:8** οὕτως ὁμειρόμενοι ὑμῶν εὐδοκοῦμεν μεταδοῦναι ὑμῖν οὐ μόνον τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς ἑαυτῶν ψυχὰς διότι ἀγαπητοὶ ἡμῖν ἐγενήθητε

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:8** ita desiderantes vos cupide volebamus tradere vobis non solum evangelium Dei sed etiam animas nostras quoniam carissimi nobis facti estis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 2:9** For you remember, brethren, our travail [mother’s birth pangs] and labor [father’s toil]: night and day we engaged in manual labor for your benefit [self-supporting missionary team], so that we would not have to financially burden you [as new believers] whenever we proclaimed the good news of God [Bible doctrine] to you.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:9** For you remember, brethren, our fatiguing labor and hardship, night and day working at manual labor that we might not burden any of you while we proclaimed to you the good news of God.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:9** For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul reminds (Latin: memory) the Thessalonian believers (Historical Present tense) that his missionary team went through great trouble and hardship (Latin: fatigue) for them. He compares their evangelical efforts to the pangs of a mother in childbirth. He compares their teaching of doctrinal basics to the toil of a father in a difficult job. There is a distinct possibility that Paul is thinking of Genesis 3:15-16, using it as a metaphor for teaching Bible doctrine. Day and night (Latin: nocturnal) the apostle and his team served the Thessalonians. The Jews measured a day from sunset to sunset, which is why Paul places night before day in this passage.

When they weren’t evangelizing and teaching the Word of God, they were engaged in manual labor (Iterative Present tense) so they would be a self-sufficient team. Paul did not want to burden the new believers in Thessalonica with financial support. So rather than ask them for food, clothing and shelter, they found jobs and paid their own way. They did this while they proclaimed (Constative Aorist tense) the gospel, which made every 24-hour period a long, long working day. Paul was completely opposed to any notion of mandatory tithing - which in the OT was an income tax, not a “donation” to the church.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

As God is my witness, I did not come to make merchandise of you; I did not come because you promised me an honorarium, or a high salary, or any of the things that pertain to the comforts of life. I did not come that way to you and you know it. (J. Walvoord) During his time at Thessalonica, more than once he received gifts from the church in Philippi to support his ministry. While the Thessalonians may have known this, rather than embarrass them, Paul may have chosen to not mention that outside help, since he had not accepted the support of the Thessalonians. (D. Willams) Making money out of teaching the Law is expressly discouraged in the Mishnah. Thus Rabban Gamaliel said, “Excellent is the study of the Law together with worldly occupation, for toil in them

both puts sin out of mind. But all study of the Law without (worldly) labor comes to naught at the last and brings sin in its train. He that makes profit out of the words of the Law removes his life from the world. (L. Morris)

These words may give some encouragement to those latter day missionaries who find that the only way into some communities is by using their technical skills. (D. Williams) There were no paid teachers in Palestine. It was necessary therefore for a Rabbi to have some other means of income than the gifts that might now and then be made to him. It was natural accordingly for teachers to stress the importance of a trade. Paul's particular trade was tentmaking. What is plain is that Paul and his companions had worked, and had worked hard, to support themselves, and to see that no burden was placed on their converts ... The work which the preachers had done had not been token work, something in the nature of a public show to demonstrate their willingness. It had been laborious toil. They had to work hard. They had also to work constantly, night and day. (L. Morris) At no time do the believers appear to believe the lie. Paul simply wants to remind them of the truth lest they become confused. (M. Couch) How many are willing to work for such wages today? (A. Knoch) Paul, to the very last, seems to have been sensitive on this point of independence. (W.R. Nicoll)

The gospel of the kingdom will be preached after the rapture of the church. Those to whom this gospel will be preached will be saved, but they will not be in the church – the church will already be raptured to heaven – but they will be in the kingdom (Rev. 7). The kingdom and the church are two separate entities in God's dealings with mankind. Failure to distinguish between "salvation" truth and "kingdom" truth leads to many errors. Then there is the everlasting gospel (Rev. 14:6-7) entrusted to an angel. This gospel is to be preached to men just before the outpouring of God's wrath upon this planet. It is the gospel stripped to its bare essentials. It contains no mention of Christ, no mention of the blood, and no mention of any of the elements that we normally associate with the gospel. It is simply a call upon men to acknowledge God as the Creator and to fear and glorify Him. It is just the kind of gospel that we would expect God to proclaim to heathen who have no knowledge of Christ and no time to learn. It is similar to what we have in Romans 1:18-23. It is God's last attempt to save some souls before the judgment falls. Here we have the gospel of God. Paul calls it the gospel of God because that was exactly what it was to the Thessalonians, most of whom had been raw pagans when first they heard it. What a motley collection of gods these old Greeks and Romans had! And what a riotous crew they were who crowded the pantheon: what a scheming, lustful, quarrelsome, warring, vengeful, malicious dynasty of deities! What good news it was that God was not like that at all. Nor was God like the god imagined by the Jews, a god mostly concerned with circumcision; Sabbaths; dietary restrictions; animal sacrifices; and endless rules, rituals, and requirements. The "gospel of God" swept aside all such false notions of God. (J. Phillips)

1 Thess. 2:9 **For** (explanatory) **you remember** (μνημονεύω, PAI2P, Historical), **brethren** (Voc. Address), **our** (Poss. Gen.) **travail** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; trouble, hardship, mother's birth pangs) **and** (connective) **labor** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; father's toil; weariness): **night** (Gen. Extent of Time) **and** (connective) **day** (Gen. Extent of Time) **we engaged in manual labor** (ἐργάζομαι, PMPTc.NMP, Iterative,

Modal, Deponent; worked) for your benefit (Acc. Adv.), so that we would not (neg. particle) have to financially burden (ἐπιβαρέω, AAInf., Constative, Purpose, Articular) you (Gen. Adv.; as new believers) whenever (Acc. Time) we proclaimed (κηρύσσω, AAIP, Constative) the good news (Acc. Dir. Obj.; gospel) of God (Descr. Gen.) to you (Acc. Adv.).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:9** μνημονεύετε γάρ ἀδελφοί τὸν κόπον ἡμῶν καὶ τὸν μόχθον· νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐργαζόμενοι πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐπιβαρῆσαι τινα ὑμῶν ἐκηρύξαμεν εἰς ὑμᾶς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:9** memores enim estis fratres laborem nostrum et fatigationem nocte et die operantes ne quem vestrum gravaremus praedicavimus in vobis evangelium Dei

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 2:10** You are witnesses and so is God, concerning how we conducted ourselves in a manner pleasing to God [divine viewpoint], both just [with virtue] and blameless [with integrity] towards you who are believers [execution of the royal family honor code].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:10** As for you, you are those who bear testimony to what you have seen, also God [who bears witness to what He has seen], how devoutly in a manner pleasing to God, how uprightly according to standards set by God, how blamelessly we ordered our lives among you who are believers,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:10** Ye *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Thessalonians, as well as God Himself, are witnesses to the impeccable behavior of Paul and his missionary team when they were in town. They lived in a manner pleasing to God (Constative Aorist tense), which means they behaved with divine viewpoint always in mind. Living under divine viewpoint means they exhibited both virtue and integrity in the filling of the Spirit. They adhered to all the mandates of the royal family honor code when serving those who became believers (Descriptive Present tense) in Thessalonica. This qualifying statement, “towards you who are believers” points to the royal family honor code, as contrasted with the customary relaxed mental attitude and impersonal love we are commanded to live by when in the presence of unbelievers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul is saying in effect, “Ask anybody in Thessalonica; they’ll tell you that I’m telling the truth when I say that I behaved holily, justly, and unblameably all the time I was in the city. (C. Ryrie) God is my witness that my heart was right about this thing. Not only was his message pure in its content, but his whole purpose was pure in the sight of God. (J. Walvoord) Paul is not asking them to testify,

but they could do so if necessary. His greatest comfort is that God knows his truthfulness and steadfastness as an evangelist and teacher. (M. Couch) If someone were to bring a charge against the missionaries, the allegation would never get off the ground. The entire body of believers would testify to their blameless conduct. Nothing less will do in those who serve the Lord. (J. Phillips) The servants of Christ cannot avoid calumnies, and unfavorable reports; for being hated by the world, they must of necessity be evil-spoken of among the wicked. Hence, he restricts this [witness] to believers, who judge uprightly and sincerely, and do not revile malignantly and groundlessly. (M. Couch)

1 Thess. 2:10 You (Subj. Nom.) are (ellipsis) witnesses (Pred. Nom.) and so (connective) is (ellipsis) God (Subj. Nom.), concerning how (subordinate) we conducted ourselves (γίνομαι, AMI1P, Constativē, Deponent; became something) in a manner pleasing to God (Adv. Manner; divine viewpoint), both (adjunctive) just (adv.; with virtue) and (connective) blameless (adv.; with integrity) towards you (Dat. Adv.) who (Dat. Ref.) are believers (πιστεύω, PAPTc.DMP, Descriptive, Substantival; execution of the royal family honor code).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:10** ὑμεῖς μάρτυρες καὶ ὁ θεὸς ὡς ὀσίως καὶ δικαίως καὶ ἀμέμπτως ὑμῖν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ἐγενήθημεν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:10** vos testes estis et Deus quam sancte et iuste et sine querella vobis qui credidistis fuimus

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 2:11** As you know, like a father with his own children [with authority orientation], we exhorted [with doctrine] and comforted [with encouragement] every one of you [individually],

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:11** Even as you know how as a father exhorts and encourages his own children, exhorting and encouraging and bearing witness to each one of you,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:11** As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father *doth* his children,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

As the Thessalonian believers well knew (Intensive Perfect tense), Paul and his colleagues treated them with the care of a father with his own children. This is a reference to authority orientation in life, a necessary component of the Christian life. They exhorted the Thessalonian believers with Bible doctrine (Iterative Present tense) and comforted them with encouragement from the Word (Iterative Present tense), just like an honorable father would do for his children. “Each one of you” emphasizes personal instruction, individual exhortation and comfort. A father often addresses his family as a group, but most of the time he gives undivided attention to each of His children. Their needs differ from one another and often require special attention. In the

local church, the pastor-teacher teaches doctrine en masse; rarely does a pastor have time to hold the hand of every member of his congregation. That isn't his job!

The reason we are all given one or more spiritual gifts is so everyone with differing needs is taken care of. Other members of the assembly, just like other members of Paul's missionary team, exercise their spiritual gifts so the body of Christ is well cared for. The function of spiritual gifts in an assembly allows a pastor to pursue his spiritual gift, which is studying and teaching the Word of God. That is his primary role, although every minister of the Word should remember to treat each member of his congregation as if they are his elect students ... because they are! God provides a teacher for a positive student, and He provides students for every teacher. Both teachers and students are commanded to live the Christian life according to the protocol plan of God for the Church Age dispensation. It is a reciprocal grace relationship with virtue and integrity requirements for all parties.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul purposely stresses "each single one of you" and then combines all of them in "you." He does this regularly with the singular and the plural, with individuals and with the whole group. (M. Couch) The ideas of exhortation, entreaty, and instruction are all incorporated in this word. Paul would call various ones to his side. After asking a few penetrating questions, he would know at what stage his companion was in the spiritual life. He would build on that. His great aims were to impart doctrine, to develop Christian character, to teach the principles of life in Christ, and to encourage submission to the will of God. (J. Phillips) As a mother he nourished their spiritual life, and as a father he superintended their spiritual education. (P. Gloag) Father-love is expressed in discipline. We are not to have comfort alone; we also need discipline. I'm afraid that the father-side, the discipline-side, is woefully lacking, not only in our homes and in the state, but also in the church. (J. McGee)

Paul "charged" them. This has a note of severity in it – it involves discipline. It is a virile word, a robust, firm, masculine work. I'm afraid that we find a lot of sissy preaching in our pulpits today. The popular thing is to have a little sermonette given by a preacherette to Christianettes. There is so little urgency. Someone has defined the average church service in a liberal church as when a mild-mannered man gets up before a mild-mannered people and urges them to be more mild-mannered. Oh, that is sickening, my friend! No wonder there are so many sick saints when they are being fed such watered down soup. "Some sermons don't have enough gospel in them to make soup for a sick grasshopper." In contrast, what a glorious thing the ministry of the apostle Paul was! (J. McGee)

1 Thess. 2:11 **As** (subordinate) **you know** (οἶδα, Perf.AI2P, Intensive), **like** (comparative) **a father** (Subj. Nom.) **with his own** (Poss. Gen.) **children** (Acc. Rel.; authority orientation), **we exhorted** (παρακαλέω, PAPtc.NMP, Iterative, Modal; charged, with doctrine) **and** (continuative) **comforted** (παραμυθέομαι, PMPTc.NMP, Iterative, Modal, Deponent; with encouragement) **every** (Acc. Measure) **one** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **of you** (Acc. Gen. Ref.;

individually, particularly),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:11** καθάπερ οἴδατε ὡς ἕνα ἕκαστον ὑμῶν ὡς πατήρ τέκνα ἑαυτοῦ παρακαλοῦντες ὑμᾶς καί παραμυθούμενοι

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:11** sicut scitis qualiter unumquemque vestrum tamquam pater filios suos

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 2:12** As well as urging you to walk [conduct yourselves] in a manner worthy of God [according to divine standards] Who called you into His own royal power [divine sphere of power] and glory [strategic and tactical victory in the angelic conflict].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:12** That you should be habitually ordering your behavior in a manner worthy of the God who summons you into His own kingdom and glory.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:12** That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul and his colleagues also urged the Thessalonian believers (Iterative Present tense) on many occasions to walk (Latin: ambulate) in a manner worthy of God (Latin: dignity). They continually urged them to conduct themselves according to divine protocol in the sphere of divine power. They were not only elect in eternity past positionally, but they were also called (Dramatic Present tense) to reside in His royal palace experientially, and share in His strategic and tactical victory in the angelic conflict. The Greek word “basileian” which is often translated “kingdom” refers to the sphere of divine power that we are commanded to reside and function in. It is also called the royal palace or divine dynasphere.

Kingdom and glory are not the same concept in this passage. The Granville Sharp rule, of course, is a man-made translation device and care should be taken when using it. In this case, “kingdom” means “royal power” or the sphere of divine power. “Glory” refers to the glory Christ will receive during the millennium and eternity future. We are called to share in His glory, both temporally and eternally. As D.A. Carson says, “we are not to understand that kingdom and glory are identical, but that kingdom and glory must be taken together as a package, in this case a package referring to the eschatological blessing comprehensively summarized by the two nouns in tandem.” So they are different concepts, but closely related ones.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

As the “election” of the Thessalonians is the ground of the thanksgiving with which the epistle opens, so here that which has been a proof of the election is given again as a reason for praise. (C. Erdman) It is God acting in His kingly power, expressing sovereignty and, in particular, asserting His rule both for the overthrow of Satan and for the restoration of humanity to a relationship with Himself. But this was conceived of in various ways: sometimes in terms of God’s eternal

sovereignty and sometimes in terms of our present experience of Him, but chiefly in terms of the kingdom's future manifestation. (D. Williams) In a spiritual sense, "pateo" (walk) describes how one exists and what one makes of one's life while on earth ... The present tense of "called" expresses the idea that God is in the business, through time, or calling His own elect to Him. (M. Couch)

Election is the sovereign work of God in calling forth His own whom He marked out to be His redeemed. The believer should now live worthily of that divine appointment. (M. Couch) This calling is not simply an external one, but an internal and effectual one by the powerful and efficacious grace of God. Since it is a call from darkness to light, the children of God must then walk in that light and away from the dictates of a corrupt nature. (J. Gill) It must be remembered that in the Gospels, the future Messianic Kingdom is called "the Kingdom of God" (Luke 4:43), that is, "the kingdom belonging to God." Christ made it very clear that the kingdom of God is yet future, saying to members of the Laodicean church, "He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne" (Rev. 3:21). The ultimate realization of the Messianic Kingdom with its future glory is in view here. (M. Couch)

One glorifies God the Father through a daily life that is lived in conformity to the Person of Jesus Christ. The fact that we have been graced with salvation puts upon us the obligation to walk worthy of God, so that through that transformed walk God will be revealed and glorified. The apostle was concerned with the daily life of these believers, and his great desire for them was that those who had been brought to Christ through a salvation which glorified God, should so conduct themselves in their manner of daily life that their lives should bring glory to God. (J. Pentecost) This participle displays no duration but looks back to the initial call of these readers, which in Paul is always effectual. (Lightfoot) The greatest mistake Christians are inclined to make is to minimize the injunctions and warnings about not inheriting the kingdom of God. In other words, if you, the reader, are now saying to yourself, "I'm just glad to know I'm eternally saved – I can't be too bothered by a reward or inheriting the kingdom of God," you could not be more mistaken. (R. Kendall)

1 Thess. 2:12 As well as (ascensive) urging (μαρτύρομαι, PMPTc.NMP, Iterative, Modal, Deponent; admonishing) you (Acc. Adv.) to walk (περιπατέω, PAInf., Iterative, Purpose; conduct yourselves) in a manner worthy of (Adv. Manner) God (Gen. Standards; in the sphere of His divine power) who called (καλέω, PAPtc.GMS, Dramatic, Substantial; elected) you (Acc. Adv.) into His own (Gen. Poss.) royal power (Acc. Dir. Obj.; kingdom, palace, the divine dynasphere) and (connective) glory (Acc. Dir. Obj.; strategic and tactical victory in the angelic conflict).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:12** καὶ μαρτυρόμενοι εἰς τὸ περιπατεῖν ὑμᾶς ἀξίως τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καλοῦντος ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ βασιλείαν καὶ δόξαν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:12** deprecantes vos et consolantes testificati sumus ut ambularetis digne Deo qui vocavit vos in suum regnum et gloriam

LWB 1 Thess. 2:13 Moreover, for this cause [to spur your spiritual momentum forward], we constantly thank God in our prayers, because when you received the Word [Bible doctrine] from us, you welcomed the teaching as from God [divine origin], not from man [human origin], and not only this but because it is truly the Word [doctrine] of God which also continues to operate in you who continue to believe [exercise positive volition].

KW 1 Thess. 2:13 And on this account, as for us, we also are constantly giving thanks to God, and that unceasingly, because when you appropriated to yourselves the word of the message which came from us, even the word of God, you welcomed it, not as a word finding its source in men but as it truly is, God's word which is being constantly set in operation in you who believe.

KJV 1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Because Paul has heard of their forward progress in the spiritual life, he and his missionary team make it a practice (without intermission) to pray for their continued momentum (Iterative Present tense). Because when they first heard and received the Word of God from Paul, they welcomed his Bible teaching (Culminative Aorist tense) into their souls and treated it as something that came from God and not man. A believer with true positive volition towards the Word of God understands that Bible doctrine comes from God and is absolute divine viewpoint. A believer who does not exhibit true positive volition towards the Word of God does not treat Bible doctrine as something of divine value, but rather treats it as something on par with a daily newspaper. If you tell yourself every day that you can “take it or leave it,” because you think there is something more important in life, you are in reversionism. You do not know the Lord and He does not know you (experientially).

The Thessalonian believers had maximum positive volition towards the Word of God (Latin: acceptance) because they understood it not only as divine truth, but they saw it continually operating in (Durative Present tense) their lives. Those who believed the Word every day (Latin: gave credence to it) and never ceased to learn, study, metabolize and apply it in daily life understood its crucial role in the believer's spiritual walk. Without the maximum intake, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine, there is no spiritual life. Without this daily process called the grace apparatus for perception (GAP), there is nothing but distraction and reversionistic activity opposed to true experiential sanctification. Without it there will be nothing but shame and embarrassment at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Word brought forth love, energy and blameless living. Luke 8:11 tells us that “the seed of Christian fruit and Christian stewardship is the Word of God.” We will never know this side of

eternity the importance of God's holy Word. No wonder the devil is trying to destroy and discredit the Word today! The Word of God brings life, and the Word working in the believer produces fruit. (O. Greene) When he speaks of believing, Paul uses the present tense to convey the idea of a continuous process of belief (rather than the aorist, which would single out the act of decision). It is the condition of the working of God in men that they continue to exercise faith. Or to put it another way, we cannot live today on the spiritual capital of yesterday. (L. Morris) By using the "word" (logos) of God, Paul places the emphasis on the entire body of the message. The body of the written and spoken word that comes through the prophets and apostles is made up of words. These words then form the concept and doctrine of "the Word," that is, all that God has to reveal to mankind in a package of truth or cluster of books that form our Bible. (M. Couch)

You heard us speaking, but in reality it was God's Word that you heard, not a piece of interesting human wisdom, but the very word of God. That is the important thing. The gospel is God's word, not a human invention. (D. Williams) There were philosophical points of view which were at variance with the stark simplicity of the preaching of the cross. The pressure to accommodate his message to the demands of the "modern thought-world" of the day must have been great. But Paul rejected all this. His drive and forcefulness came not from some thought that he was abreast of contemporary trends in philosophy or religion or science, but the deep-seated conviction that he was simply God's mouthpiece, and that what he spoke was the veritable word of God. (L. Morris) The idea, then, is that God's Word is set in operation in those who believe. (A. Robertson) The word of human beings, however wise in substance or eloquent in expression, cannot produce spiritual life: this is the prerogative of the Word of God, which works effectually in believers. (F. Bruce)

They received the truth at its face value in all of its actuality as God's inspired and inerrant Word. They never doubted what Paul preached. It was not some religious philosophy that he had evolved. What he preached had the ring of truth and the ring of authority about it. It was not man's word; it was, in very truth, the Word of God. The Word of God is like the word of man in that it reveals the one who speaks and partakes of his nature, character, and personality. By listening to someone's ordinary conversation, we can tell if that person is educated or illiterate, good or bad, moral or immoral, cultured or profane, pure or vile, virtuous or vicious, and saved or lost ... The Word of God is made energetic in you that believe. It is a power in the lives of those that believe. The words are in the present continuous tense. What they had heard was alive; it was living seed. It worked away in the believer's life, effecting a change of character. The Spirit of God energizes the Word of God and so transforms the child of God. (J. Phillips) Nothing is more important than that the Scriptures, in their pristine purity, be received as the Word of God. (A. Knoch)

Paul is not suggesting prayer can alter the pre-temporal divine choice described here. Our prayers do not increase the number of the elect nor does our disobedience to the command of 1 Thessalonians 3:1 deprive God's kingdom of those whom He otherwise wished to save. (T. Schreiner) Arminians attribute higher abilities to the mind and will of the natural man than Scripture allows. They are therefore tempted to make faith an act of will instead of a response to testimony. The biblical solution is to admit that for the natural man faith is impossible and to attribute it to the gift of God. This gift is not communicated mechanically. Rather, it is given through the creation of a capacity for

faith on the basis of the evidence submitted. It starts with illumination, softening of the heart, and a quickening of the will. As a result, a man freely believes on the basis of evidence submitted to him in the Gospels. This creation of capacity is called regeneration. The biblical evidence that faith itself is a gift is impressive only to those who are chosen of God for its reception; hence, it is a gift. It comes through Christ, by means of the Spirit, and by means of the preached Word. Because it is thus obtained from God, thanks are to be returned to God for it. (J. Dillow)

1 Thess. 2:13 Moreover (continuative), for this cause (causal), we constantly (adv.) thank God (Dat. Adv.) in our prayers (εὐχαριστέω, PAI1P, Iterative), because (explanatory) when you received (παραλαμβάνω, AAPtc.NMP, Constative, Temporal) the Word (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Bible doctrine) from us (Abl. Source), you welcomed (δέχομαι, AMI2P, Culminative, Deponent) the teaching (Obj. Gen.; report, preaching, news) as from God (Abl. Source; divine origin or viewpoint), not (neg. particle) from man (Abl. Source; human origin or viewpoint), and not only this but (continuative, emphatic) because (causal) it is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Gnostic) truly (adv.) the Word (Acc. Dir. Obj.; doctrine) of God (Gen. Author) which (Nom. Appos.) also (adjunctive) continues to operate (ἐνεργέω, PMI3S, Durative) in you (Loc. Sph.) who continue to believe (πιστεύω, PAPtc.DMP, Durative, Substantival; exercise positive volition).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:13** Καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἡμεῖς εὐχαριστοῦμεν τῷ θεῷ ἀδιαλείπτως ὅτι παραλαμβάνοντες λόγον ἀκοῆς παρ ἡμῶν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐδέξασθε οὐ λόγον ἀνθρώπων ἀλλὰ καθὼς ἀληθῶς ἐστὶν λόγον θεοῦ ὃς καὶ ἐνεργεῖται ἐν ὑμῖν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:13** ideo et nos gratias agimus Deo sine intermissione quoniam cum accepissetis a nobis verbum auditus Dei accepistis non ut verbum hominum sed sicut est vere verbum Dei qui operatur in vobis qui credidistis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 2:14** For you, brethren [members of the royal family], became imitators of the assemblies of God which are in Judea [the first wave of persecution] in Christ Jesus, for you yourselves also suffered similar things from your own countrymen [conspirators], even as they themselves [the Judeans] *suffered* from the Jews.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:14** For as for you, you became imitators, brethren, of the assemblies of God which are in Judaea in Christ Jesus, because as for you, you also suffered the same things at the hands of the Jews,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:14** For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they *have* of the Jews:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul reminds the Thessalonian believers that they are not the only ones who are suffering for the Lord Jesus Christ. He compliments them by calling them imitators (Constative Aorist tense) of the assemblies of God in Judea who were among the first wave of believers to be persecuted (Dramatic Aorist tense) for the sake of the gospel. The Thessalonian believers are suffering some of the same types of things at the hands of their fellow countrymen that the Judeans had suffered at the hands of the Jews in their vicinity. Neighbors who used to be friends became conspirators, turning the new believers in to the authorities for one fictitious reason or another. Their goal was to remove the new believers from their city, dead or alive.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

One of the hardest experiences in life when you stand for Christ is to have your own loved ones oppose you. If friends and neighbors and relatives – one’s own loved ones – oppose a young Christian, it makes it very difficult, but this was often true in the early church. It is also true in modern times. What a young Christian does under these circumstances is a test of the reality of his faith. The Thessalonians had stood true, no matter who opposed them. (J. Walvoord) When men’s eyes are blinded to the truth, there is no limit to what their religious prejudice will cause them to do. (H. Ironside)

Paul could never forget his own part in persecuting God’s churches, and this no doubt came to mind now as he wrote. (D. Williams) The transforming power of the Word of God in the lives of the believers made them some natural enemies. It also enabled them to face the bitter hostility that arose around them. Paul knew whereof he spoke. In the early days of Christianity, he had been the Sanhedrin’s chief accredited agent to spread death and destruction far and wide among Jewish believers in Christ. (J. Phillips) When a person is in Christ Jesus, he is a brother to all others who are in Christ. Outside of Christ there is only the brotherhood of sinners. (J. McGee)

1 Thess. 2:14 For (explanatory) you (Subj. Nom.), brethren (Voc. Address; members of the royal family), became (γίνομαι, API2P, Constative, Deponent) imitators (Pred. Nom.) of the assemblies (Adv. Gen. Ref.) of God (Poss. Rel.) which are (εἰμί, PAPtc.GFP, Descriptive, Attributive) in Judea (Loc. Place; first wave of persecution) in Christ Jesus (Loc. Sph.), for (explanatory) you yourselves (Subj. Nom.) also (adjunctive) suffered (πάσχω, AAI2P, Dramatic) similar (Acc. Spec.; the same) things (Acc. Dir. Obj.) from your own (Gen. Rel.) countrymen (Abl. Source; conspirators), even (ascensive) as (comparative) they themselves (Subj. Nom.; the Judeans) suffered (ellipsis) from the Jews (Abl. Source).

WHO **1 Thessalonians 2:14** ὑμεῖς γὰρ μιμηταὶ ἐγενήθητε ἀδελφοί τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν οὐσῶν ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ὅτι τὰ αὐτὰ ἐπάθετε καὶ ὑμεῖς ὑπὸ τῶν ἰδίῳ συμφυλετῶν καθὼς καὶ αὐτοὶ ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:14** vos enim imitatores facti estis fratres ecclesiarum Dei quae sunt in Iudaea in Christo Iesu quia eadem passi estis et vos a contribulibus vestris sicut et ipsi a Iudaeis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 2:15** Those [Jewish legalistic & criminal element] who murdered both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and harshly persecuted us [Paul and his missionary team] to the point of driving us out [of the region], and are not pleasing to God [cosmic 1: antagonism towards God] and are hostile to all men [cosmic 2: hating His evangelists],

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:15** Those who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out, and are not pleasing to God, and are hostile to all men,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:15** Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In the same way that Daniel was delivered from a night in the lion's den, believers today are often preserved from human and satanic attacks. In this case, Paul is not indicting the entire Jewish race, but is rather pointing to a "criminal element" within the Jewish race. And when I say "criminal element," I am not pointing to thieves and robbers, but rather the legalistic, religious Jews - who in spite of their adherence to the Law, managed to rationalize their hatred of Christians to the point of actually murdering them to shut them up. He is pointing specifically to those Jews who murdered (Dramatic Aorist tense) the Lord Jesus and the prophets. He also points to those Jews who harshly persecuted him and his missionary team to the point of driving them out of some cities. He is pointing specifically to those Jews who are not pleasing God, who are completely immersed in cosmic 1 of Satan's system: antagonism towards God.

In cosmic 1 they speak against God, but they are not necessarily participants in anything overt against His representatives. But Paul also points specifically to those Jews who are enemies to Christian evangelists and missionaries, who are completely immersed in cosmic 2 of Satan's system: fighting his ambassadors whenever they can. These are not your "every day" Jewish citizens who listen to the gospel message, reject it, and go about their business. These are the Jewish citizens (Latin: adversaries) who listen to the gospel message, hate the God in the message as well as those who preach the message, and make it their sworn duty to run them out of town. "All men" does not refer to all men without exception; it refers to a specific category of men, Christians - especially those who are spreading the gospel.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The mention of the Jews as persecutors led Paul to make a brief but bitter indictment of his fellow countrymen, unparalleled in severity by any other reference to them in all his writings. He declares that they "killed the Lord Jesus." This was the supreme sin of the nation. Yet it was in accordance with their uniform treatment of the messengers of God. They also had "killed the prophets," before

the coming of Christ; they “drove out” the apostles who followed Him. In their opposition to the work of the Christian missionaries, in their persecution of the Thessalonian believers, and in the endeavor to discredit Paul and his companions, they were opposing the will of God and depriving men of their highest good. In so doing they were filling to its brim their cup of iniquity. (C. Erdman) “Drove us out” is used to describe chasing after a wild animal. (M. Couch) The rabbis and the hoodlums from the agora chased him out of Thessalonica by the help of the politarchs. (A. Robertson)

The hatred and contempt the Jews bore to other nations is noticed by Tacitus, Juvenal, and other heathen writers. Thus Tacitus writes of them: “They are faithful to obstinacy, and merciful toward themselves, but toward all others are actuated by the most irreconcilable hatred.” And Juvenal says, “They will not show the road to one who was not of their religion, nor lead the thirsty person if uncircumcised to the common spring.” Perhaps, however, the apostle refers here, not to the enmity of the Jews to the human race in general, though perfectly cognizant of their bigotry and intolerance; as this enmity was a perversion of their peculiar distinction as the people of God; but rather to their opposition to his preaching the gospel to the Gentiles – to their extreme reluctance that the Gentiles along with themselves should be admitted into the kingdom of God. (P. Gloag) Persecution need not disturb their faith, for the Lord Himself as well as the ancient prophets and the present missionaries of the gospel had been compelled to endure it. (C. McCown)

1 Thess. 2:15 Those (Gen. Appos.; criminal element) who murdered (ἀποκτείνω, AAPtc.GMP, Dramatic, Substantival) both (adjunctive) the Lord Jesus (Acc. Dir. Obj.) and (connective) the prophets (Acc. Dir. Obj.), and (continuative) harshly persecuted us (Paul and his missionary team) to the point of driving us out (ἐκδιώκω, AAPtc.GMP, Dramatic, Substantival), and (continuative) are not (neg. particle) pleasing (ἀρέσκω, PAPtc.GMP, Descriptive, Attributive) to God (Dat. Ind. Obj.; cosmic 1: antagonism towards God) and (continuative) are (ellipsis) hostile (Gen. Disadv.; enemies) to all (Dat. Measure) men (Dat. Ind. Obj.; cosmic 2: hatred towards man),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:15** τῶν καὶ τὸν κύριον ἀποκτεινάντων Ἰησοῦν καὶ τοὺς προφήτας καὶ ἡμᾶς ἐκδιωξάντων καὶ θεῷ μὴ ἀρεσκόντων καὶ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ἐναντίων

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:15** qui et Dominum occiderunt Iesum et prophetas et nos persecuti sunt et Deo non placent et omnibus hominibus adversantur

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 2:16** Who have forbidden us from talking to the Gentiles so that they might be saved, with the result that they [the legalistic Jews] are filling up the cup of their sins at all times [getting drunk on them over and over again]. But wrath [divine judgment] will come upon them at the end [the Great White Throne Judgment].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:16** Forbidding us to tell the Gentiles that they [also] may be saved, with the result that they fill up the measure of their sins always. And there came upon them the wrath to the

utmost.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:16** Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The legalistic, religious Jews prevented Paul and his missionary team (Durative Present tense) from talking to the Gentiles (Constative Aorist tense) about the gospel. In their religious arrogance, they forbade (Latin: prohibited) any Christian to preach the gospel in their city. They did everything they could do, overt and covert, to stop the Christian message from spreading. Paul and his colleagues did not have any ulterior motives; they continued to preach the gospel because they wanted to give all Gentiles an opportunity to hear the gospel, believe it, and be saved (Ingressive Aorist tense). The religious Jews, however, did have an ulterior motive. They were not being faithful to Judaism, which demanded that they make converts out of the Gentiles, so they were particularly incensed when faithful Christians came to town and stole their prospective converts. The temporary result of their interference with Paul was a success – Paul was forced to leave town.

But in the process of harassing the ambassadors of Christ, the religious Jews were filling up the cup of their sins on a daily basis. The Greek word “anapleroo” means to fill up to the point of overflowing. The legalistic Jews were drinking and filling up their cups over and over again. What were they drinking? They were drinking sins. They were intoxicating themselves daily on their own sins. So while they thought they were doing a good thing by ridding their town of Christians, they were actually sinning to the point of overflowing by their harassment. Paul reminds the Thessalonian believers that divine judgment from the justice of God would eventually come upon these legalistic and murderous Jews (Futuristic Aorist tense). The futuristic aorist tense points to the absolute certainty of judgment. He was looking towards the future to the Great White Throne Judgment when all unbelievers will be judged and sentenced to the Lake of Fire forever.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Their violent and rancorous rejection of the gospel was being brought to its climax by their jealous and cruel determination that this gospel should not be preached to the Gentiles. In every step taken they were acting in accordance with the stubborn unbelief shown by their fathers. They were proceeding “to fill up their sins always.” However, if the cup of guilt was overflowing, so was the cup of judgment. The spiritual blindness of the nation and the very depth of its depravity showed that its day of grace must have ended. (C. Erdman) Paul is saying that God allows His people to be persecuted sometimes in order to prove the evil nature of man and show the righteous character of His judgment when it comes. God allows the wicked to fill to the brim in order to demonstrate to all that His sure judgment is a righteous one. (C. Ryrie) The particular wrath Paul speaks of here is not the wrath of the Tribulation. The wrath Paul writes about here comes crashing down suddenly upon

the nation Israel, specifically for their rejection of Christ. (M. Couch)

A minister called of God, ordained of God and sent by God with God's message – faithfully proclaiming that message – is indestructible until God is through with him! The devil cannot kill him, nor can all the demons in hell stop him. (O. Greene) The plural “sins” points to the aggregate of their separate evil acts, and not to the general abstract concept of “sin.” The consequence is sure. Paul speaks of the wrath coming on them. Indeed, so sure is their punishment, that he uses the aorist tense which might be rendered “came” upon them. The use of this tense does not refer to the imminence of the punishment. It refers rather to its certainty, for Paul is thinking of wrath in an eschatological setting. (L. Morris) Whether as conscious and willful, or blinded and unconscious agents, Paul is referring to the eternal purpose of God which unfolded itself in this last, judicial blindness on the part of His chosen people. The Jews were always blind and stubborn, but when they slew their Lord, and drove forth His apostles, they filled up the measure of their iniquities. (C. Ellicott) This is the reason why the punishment of the wicked is often delayed – because their impieties, so to speak, are not yet ripe. (J. Calvin)

This dog-in-the-manger attitude of the Jewish people toward the gospel was a constant problem to Paul in his crusades. The Jews did not want the gospel themselves, a fact that they made very obvious. But neither did they want the Gentiles to have it. They obstructed the gospel at Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:45, 50), at Iconium (Acts 14:1-5), and at Lystra (Acts 14:9) on Paul's first missionary journey. They hindered him at Berea (Acts 17:13), at Thessalonica (Acts 17:5-10), and at Corinth (Acts 18:12) on his second missionary journey. They constituted themselves his bitterest enemies and hounded him to imprisonment and death. They did not want Gentiles to be saved. They did everything in their power to prevent Paul from evangelizing them. (J. Phillips) They have reached the point of no return in their opposition to the gospel and final, irremediable retribution is inevitable; indeed, it has come ... Paul is thinking not of the Jewish people as a whole, but of unbelieving Jews who have violently hindered the gospel. (F. Bruce)

What an exhibition of God's sovereign grace! The Jews, with all their advantages and their divine ritual, suffer a foretaste of God's indignation as it will be displayed in the day of the Lord. The Thessalonians, who had no such claims on God's mercy, suffer, indeed, from their countrymen, but are promised immunity in the day of His indignation. (A. Knoch) The eternal purpose of God developed itself in their willful, and so judicially-permitted infatuation. Their hindrance of the gospel-preaching to the Gentiles was the last measure added to their continually accumulating iniquity, which made them fully ripe for vengeance. (R. Jamieson) God often delays national judgment until the sin of the nation is great enough ... At the time Paul wrote, wrath was rising near the brim of the cup against Israel ... In the years 66-70 the nation of Israel, including its temple, would be destroyed because of their rejection of God's Word. That would not be the final outpouring of God's wrath. The whole world was and continues to fill up another cup one drop at a time. When it is full, the Rapture will occur and wrath will be loosed on mankind. (R. Wilkin)

1 Thess. 2:16 Who have forbidden (κωλύω, PAPtc.GMP, Durative, Substantival; hinder, prevent) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) from talking

(λαλέω, AAInf., Constative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) to the Gentiles (Dat. Adv.) so that (purpose) they might be saved (σῶζω, APSubj.3P, Ingressive, Potential), with the result that (result) they are filling up the cup of (ἀναπληρόω, AAInf., Culminative, Result) their (Poss. Gen.) sins (Acc. Dir. Obj.) at all times (Temporal Adv.; drinking and getting drunk on them over and over again). But (adversative) wrath (Subj. Nom.; divine judgment, retribution from the justice of God) will come (φθάνω, AAI3S, Futuristic) upon them (Acc. Disadv.) at the end (Acc. Time; at the Great White Throne Judgment).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:16** κωλυόντων ἡμᾶς τοῖς ἔθνεσιν λαλήσαι ἵνα σωθῶσιν εἰς τὸ ἀναπληρῶσαι αὐτῶν τὰς ἀμαρτίας πάντοτε ἔφθασεν δὲ ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἡ ὀργὴ εἰς τέλος

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:16** prohibentes nos gentibus loqui ut salvae fiant ut impleant peccata sua semper praevenit autem ira Dei super illos usque in finem

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 2:17** But we, brethren [members of the royal family], although we have been separated from you for a short time [due to hostile forces in Thessalonica], physically but not mentally [we wanted to stay], we have spared no effort with great enthusiasm [desire to be with them again] to see you physically all the more [in spite of the hostility].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:17** But as for us, brethren, having been bereaved of you for a short season so far as our presence with you is concerned, not in heart, we did our best all the more with much desire to see your face.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:17** But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul contrasts the desire of the legalistic, religious Jews to run them out of town with their desire to be back in town with their Christian friends. Although he and his colleagues have been separated from the Thessalonian believers for a short time (Concessive Participle), they still hold their fellow Christians in their mind's eye. They may be separated physically (Latin: desolation), but they are with them mentally. The Greek word "aporphanizo" means to be separated like an orphan from his parents. Paul compares his absence from the new Thessalonian believers to the emotionally painful experience of an orphan who has lost his parents. On the one hand, the Thessalonian believers are separated from their true parents (Paul and his team) like orphans. On the other hand, Paul and his team as parents are separated from their children. Paul informs them, however, that he has spared no efforts (Constative Aorist tense) to find a way back to Thessalonica to see them (Latin: video) in person.

It's a marvelous thing to be connected to fellow believers in the Spirit from a great distance, but

it is even a better thing to get to visit with them in person. In spite of the hostility towards Christian evangelists and missionaries, Paul and his team is eager to find a way back to town. They are doing their best to find a way to return without putting the Thessalonian believers in harm's way. Paul wants them to understand that he has not stopped trying to return, and that he is most eager to do so. And the adverb of degree "all the more" means the hindrances put in his way makes him want to return even more, not less. Their refusal to allow him back into the city only makes him more defiant and determined to return. In effect, when the legalistic Jews ran him out of town, it only made Paul want to return all the more – reminiscent of Gen. Douglas MacArthur's "I shall return" promise.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The piling up of words expressing eager longing emphasizes their ardent desire. There is nothing merely rhetorical about this language: Paul in particular, having no children of his own, found his unbounded capacity for paternal affection amply employed in his relationship with his converts, where he wishes he could be present right then with his converts and show them by his tone of voice the intensity of feeling which could not be adequately expressed in written words. (F. Bruce) Paul was torn from the Thessalonians long before he wished to go, but God had other work for him to do, especially in Corinth, where he wrote this letter. It does not seem that his desire was gratified till some years later, when he went over to Macedonia on his way to Greece. (A. Knoch) To Paul it was as though his family were being torn apart when he left them. It broke his heart to leave them as infant babes in Christ. (T. Constable) Men of business are not masters of their own time. (M. Henry)

1 Thess. 2:17 But (contrast) we (Subj. Nom.), brethren (Voc. Address; members of the royal family), although we have been separated (ἀπορφανίζω, APpTc.NMP, Constative, Concessive; orphaned) from you (Abl. Separation) for a short (Gen. Measure) time (Acc. Extent of Time), physically (Instr. Manner; presence) but not (contrast) mentally (Instr. Manner), we have spared no effort (σπουδάζω, AAIIp, Constative; done our best, eager endeavor) with great (Dat. Measure) enthusiasm (Instr. Manner; longing, desire) to see (ὁράω, AAInf., Constative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) you (Gen. Adv.) physically (Acc. Manner; face-to-face, presence) all the more (Adv. Degree).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:17** Ἡμεῖς δὲ ἀδελφοί ἀπορφανισθέντες ἀφ' ὑμῶν πρὸς καιρὸν ὥρας προσώπῳ οὐ καρδίᾳ περισσοτέρως ἐσπουδάσαμεν τὸ πρόσωπον ὑμῶν ἰδεῖν ἐν πολλῇ ἐπιθυμίᾳ

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:17** nos autem fratres desolati a vobis ad tempus horae aspectu non corde abundantius festinavimus faciem vestram videre cum multo desiderio

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 2:18** As a matter of fact, we wanted to return face-to-face to you, even I, Paul, and not just once but twice [we began our journey], but Satan prevented [detained] us.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:18** On this account we set our heart on coming to you, indeed, I, Paul, not only

once but twice, but Satan cut in on us and by that means thwarted us.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:18** Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul adds further emphasis to his desire (Constative Aorist tense) to see the Thessalonian believers again. Not just once, but twice, he had started on his way back to Thessalonica. But in spite of their desire to return, Satan prevented (Latin: impeded) them from completing their journey, blocking or impeding their progress. He doesn't go into details on how Satan detained them from their objective, but just the mention of him by name explains a great deal to the Thessalonians. Paul did not just have travel difficulties, but actually had satanic opposition during two prior attempts to reach them. Satan is alive and well, operating in the sphere of his cosmic dynaspheres on planet earth.

The fact that Paul had satanic opposition on many occasions is also proof that the amillennial philosophy "Satan is currently bound" is ludicrous. Moreover, since Satan cannot do anything that God doesn't give him permission to do, it was ultimately not God's will for Paul to return to Thessalonica at this time. God allowed Satan to prevent Paul from returning to Thessalonica by placing wicked men in his planned travel path. You can be sure that Paul and his missionary team prayed on more than one occasion for a safe journey and return to Thessalonica, but the answer to those prayers was negatory. The Lord had other plans for them. Thessalonica was not in God's geographical will for Paul at this time.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is unwise to interpret events too narrowly, but the inspired writers usually point to a personal embodiment of evil as the ultimate source of those forces and conditions which tend to thwart the cause of Christ and to occasion his followers disappointment and distress. (C. Erdman) Paul wanted to go back to Thessalonica, but Satan hindered him by stirring up persecutions against him. All the efforts of the devil would have accomplished nothing, however, if God had not permitted him to work. When there are obstacles in our way and we wonder whether it is Satan or God who is hindering us, we need to distinguish between God's direct will and His permissive will. Very often people suffer at the hands of Satan and his emissaries, but only if God has given His permission. We may therefore take all suffering as from God Himself. (H. Ironside) It is certainly reasonable to envision Paul as being actually stalked by the Devil. Satan is not omnipresent, however, and cannot be at every place at all times. Thus, it is unlikely that he so personally attacks believers today on an individual basis. (M. Couch)

Paul was a great apostle, but that did not save him from disappointment and heartbreaks, nor did it exempt him from the onslaughts of the devil. The deeper meaning of "Satan hindered us" is, "I strove eagerly to find a way to return. As for me, I made up my mind more than once to return to you

dear believers whom I love; but I was blocked by Satan.” There is no need to speculate as to what kind of hindrance Satan used here. No doubt it embraced Jewish hatred and malice against Paul, and through hook or crook they prevented his return to Thessalonica. The devil is a murderer, a deceiver, and a slanderer; if he cannot damn an individual he will do everything he can to hinder that individual as he travels life’s journey to heaven after becoming a believer. (O. Greene) Paul knew the difference between the restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit and the restricting opposition of the Evil One. Paul very likely recognized the personal activity of Satan behind the rioting that had driven him out of Thessalonica. Certainly Satan has his hand in every governmental pie, either directly or through fallen angelic delegates who are loyal to him. (J. Phillips)

In one sense, the hindrances arose in the way of God’s providence, for under its direction all the journeys of Paul were placed, and Satan could not have hindered him from preaching the gospel in any quarter, unless by the Divine permission. (P. Gloag) Satan never appears before the Christian as he really is. He is a deceiver appearing as an angel of light. Using clever devices he tries every possible strategy to trick the child of God. He hinders the work of God and seeks to frustrate the work of God in the believer’s life. The believer’s downfall is his highest concern and his efforts are always corrupt and evil. (R. Lightner) Satan and his hosts exist by influencing the world and mankind at every level. Satanic power, though hidden, is no less real for all that. The evil one works through the events of history. Even here Paul’s intended visits to the Thessalonians were stopped by Satan. (D. Carson)

1 Thess. 2:18 As a matter of fact (explanatory), we wanted (θέλω, AAIP, Constative; desired, hoped) to return (ἔρχομαι, AAInf., Culminative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb, Deponent) face-to-face to you (Acc. Adv.), even (ascensive) I (Subj. Nom.), Paul (Nom. Appos.), and (continuative) not just (postpositive, emphatic) once (adv.) but (adversative) twice (adv.; we started our journey), but (adversative) Satan (Subj. Nom.) prevented (ἐγκόπτω, AAIS, Dramatic; detained) us (Acc. Disadv.).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:18** διότι ἠθελήσαμεν ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐγὼ μὲν Παῦλος καὶ ἄπαξ καὶ δὶς καὶ ἐνέκοψεν ἡμᾶς ὁ Σατανᾶς

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:18** quoniam volumus venire ad vos ego quidem Paulus et semel et iterum et inpedivit nos Satanas

LWB 1 Thess. 2:19 For what is our hope [seeing friends in heaven] or happiness [receiving our resurrection body] or crown of rejoicing [victory wreath: a reward for witnessing]? Is it not particularly [especially] you yourselves in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His return [at the rapture]?

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:19** For what is our hope or joy or victor’s laurel wreath of glorying? Are not even you yourselves such in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming?

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:19** For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Are* not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul asks the Thessalonian believers a rhetorical question related to their motivation to preach the gospel in spite of human and satanic opposition. What is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing? Is our hope to see friends in heaven? Yes. Is our happiness receiving our resurrection body and not having to deal with sin any longer? Yes. Is our crown of rejoicing as a reward for witnessing our primary future benefit? Yes and No. All three of these ideas are true, but they are not the main reason we preach the gospel. Isn't the real reason we preach the gospel because we cannot wait to be in the presence of the Lord Jesus when He returns for us at the rapture (Latin: advent)? Yes! We cannot wait to see Him and we want to share that experience and future life with others. And not only that, but we also want to share the marvelous spiritual life that has been given to us here on earth. As Paul relates to us in the next verse, there is certainly glory to be had in eternity, but there is also the potential for happiness here on earth.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul's failure to revisit the Thessalonians was due to no lack of love on his part. These dear friends are the objects of his highest hopes, the source of his deepest joy, and of them he is more proud than a champion is of his chaplet or a monarch of his crown. (C. Erdman) There is no doctrine in all of the Word of God that is any clearer than that of the return of the Lord Jesus. In the two Thessalonian letters and in 1 Corinthians 15:23 we learn just about all Paul gives concerning the second coming – the rapture, when Jesus comes for His bride, the New Testament Church. In Matthew 24:36-44 Jesus taught His disciples concerning the Rapture. It is also referred to in the epistle of James; Peter speaks of it, and so does John the Beloved. (O. Greene) Paul is looking forward to that glad day when this life's journey will be over and he would be in the presence of the Lord along with all the other Christians. He is picturing the time of the translation of the church, when Christ will come for His own to take them home to glory. (J. Walvoord)

When this word is used in a prophetic sense, it covers a very specific period of time. The word "parousia" refers to a future period that will begin with the Rapture, the arrival of the Lord in the air, and that will end with His return, with His unveiling of Himself in power and glory to the world. During this interim period, the parousia of the Lord in the air (and the rapid development on earth of the mystery of iniquity), we shall appear before the judgment seat of Christ. Here, in this epistle, Paul anticipates that event with a great deal of eagerness, thanks to the victorious lives of his Thessalonian converts. (J. Phillips) This is the occasion of final review and reward. Paul, as we know, was content to ignore assessments of his ministry made by others, and to abide the Lord's adjudication. When the time came, he was sure that the Lord's adjudication would depend on the quality of his converts. (F. Bruce)

They were his hope; their development was what he lived for as a parent lives to see his children

grow up to maturity. From inner spiritual resources, not by the flesh, these Christians are standing for the truth. (M. Couch) The judgment seat of Christ is inescapable for the believer. It is a time of reward and rebuke. It will be possible for believers to suffer conscious loss at the judgment seat although their works, not their persons, will be judged there. Our life-work since we became Christ's will be weighed. Paul elsewhere warns that what is "wood, hay, and stubble" will be burned. He encourages us, too. All that is "gold, silver, and precious stones" will be rewarded. It is tragically possible for a believer to have a saved soul and a lost life. The judgment seat will determine our place and power in the coming kingdom. The judgment seat of Christ is to be feared. It is not going to be a Sunday school picnic. It is not a mercy seat but a judgment seat. (J. Phillips)

Christ will in some way give special honor to those who have faithfully labored at bringing people to Christ. (J. Dillow) The coming of Christ for His church is called the Rapture of the church. It is not a doctrine to argue about; it is a doctrine to live ... The expectation of the return of the Lord should be a motivating factor in the life of the believer. (J. McGee) Crowns are nowhere promised in Scripture as rewards for any but those who are in the church. (C. Feinberg) This crown is the wreath of the victor in a game. (O. Greene)

1 Thess. 2:19 For (explanatory) what (interrogative) is (ellipsis) our (Poss. Gen.) hope (Pred. Nom.; seeing friends in heaven) or (coordinating) happiness (Pred. Nom.; receiving our resurrection body) or (coordinating) crown (Pred. Nom.; victory wreath) of rejoicing (Adv. Gen. Ref.; reward for witnessing)? Is it (ellipsis) not (neg. particle) particularly (ascensive; especially) you yourselves (Subj. Nom.) in the presence of our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus (Gen. Place) at His (Poss. Gen.) return (Loc. Time; at the rapture, arrival)?

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:19** τίς γὰρ ἡμῶν ἐλπὶς ἢ χαρὰ ἢ στέφανος καυχήσεως ἢ οὐχὶ καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ παρουσίᾳ

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:19** quae est enim nostra spes aut gaudium aut corona gloriae nonne vos ante Dominum nostrum Iesum estis in adventu eius

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 2:20** As for you [Thessalonian believers], you are our glory [rewards in eternity] and happiness [blessings in time].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 2:20** For as for you, you are our glory and joy.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 2:20** For ye are our glory and joy.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul compliments the Thessalonian believers once again, calling them his glory and happiness. Glory refers to the rewards in eternity Paul and his colleagues will receive for their evangelistic endeavors (Judgment Seat of Christ), and happiness refers to the blessings they are now

experiencing in time watching their new converts grow in the spiritual life. Both categories of blessings and rewards, temporal and eternal, are obtained by us (just like Paul) as we grow in the spiritual life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

His delight was not only a matter of hope when the Rapture occurs and believers are rewarded; but he also delighted in the believers at Thessalonica at that very moment. (O. Greene) The passage suggests that there will be mutual recognition between the soul-winner and those he has led to the Saviour in his work for Christ here on earth. There will be both prizes and surprises at the Bema. (M. Couch) Works in the believer's life are produced by both God and man, and not by man alone, and are meritorious. Paul is the one doing the work (Phil. 4:13), Christ helps (Heb. 4:16), and at the judgment seat Paul can boast about what he has done. (J. Dillow) Distribution of both categories of escrow blessings – for time and eternity – depends on the believer's execution of the protocol plan of God in time. The precondition for receiving escrow blessings dramatizes God's objective for the Church Age believer on earth: Learn Bible doctrine, gain spiritual momentum, grow up, attain maturity! In other words, come to love and glorify Christ. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

1 Thess. 2:20 As for (confirmatory, emphatic) you (Subj. Nom.; Thessalonian believers), you are (εἰμί, PMI2P, Descriptive) our (Poss. Gen.) glory (Pred. Nom.; rewards in eternity) and (connective) happiness (Pred. Nom.; blessings in time).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 2:20** ὑμεῖς γὰρ ἐστε ἡ δόξα ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ χαρά

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 2:20** vos enim estis gloria nostra et gaudium

CHAPTER 3

LWB 1 Thess. 3:1 For this reason, when we could no longer endure it [wondering how things were going with you in Thessalonica], we resolved [thought it best after conferring with each other] to remain in Athens alone,

^{KW} **1 Thess. 3:1** Wherefore, being no longer able to bear it, we thought it good to be left behind in Athens alone,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 3:1** Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Because the Thessalonian believers were the glory and happiness of Paul and his missionary team, they did not want to cause them any grief by returning to Thessalonica too soon. They conferred with each other and decided it best (Culminative Aorist tense) to stay where they were in Athens (Constative Aorist tense) until things cooled-off a bit. Rather than return immediately and stir-up another round of animosity for the Thessalonian believers, they would remain in Athens (Latin: solitaire) and send somebody to Thessalonica that wouldn't be noticed. But Paul prefaced this decision with their desire to know how things were going with his new converts (Durative Present tense). When they could not take the guessing game anymore (Temporal Participle), they held a small conference to decide what to do. The decision was made to send Timothy to Thessalonica, because he could come and go as he pleased without causing any problems for the new believers with the legalistic authorities in town.

REVELANT OPINIONS

Such deep affection for his friends made separation from them, and ignorance of their welfare, intolerable. (E. Erdman) It was certainly a trial and heartache to Paul to be left alone, particularly at this time; but he was so anxious about the Thessalonians that he was willing to suffer loneliness in order to send his fellow ministers to comfort and strengthen those who were being sorely tested and tried by the enemy. (O. Greene) The verb "stego" means to keep watertight, to contain, to endure. He could contain himself no longer, with the present participle underlining the intensity of his feeling. So desperately does he want to be in touch with the Thessalonians that he is prepared to be abandoned. (D. Williams) It was a relief to act, to dispatch at least Timothy. (Lenski) Since Paul names his colleagues in the address, that dictates the use of "we" throughout the letter. (D. Williams)

As much as Paul loved the Thessalonians, he hated to see Timothy leave him, for he used a word that literally means "abandon," showing the sense of desolation which overcame Paul in Athens as he faced the philosophers of that city. (C. Ryrie) The separation Paul has been speaking of became unendurable, and thus he took action. It points here to something in the nature of a resolve, but the word has definite emotional content. (L. Morris) The theme of this chapter is that the coming of Christ is a purifying hope. It will change your life, affect your lifestyle, if you hold to the hope of the rapture of the church; that is, the imminent coming of Christ for His own. If that doesn't affect your life, you don't really believe it. It is just sort of a theory or a philosophy with you. (J. McGee)

1 Thess. 3:1 For this reason (inferential; wherefore), when we could no longer (adv.) endure it (στέγω, PAPtc.NMP, Durative, Temporal; wondering how things were going with you), we resolved (εὐδοκέω, AAI1P, Culminative; thought it best after conferring with each other) to remain (καταλείπω, APInf., Constative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) in Athens (Loc. Place) alone (Descr. Nom.),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 3:1** Διὸ μηκέτι στέγοντες εὐδοκήσαμεν καταλειφθῆναι ἐν Ἀθήναις μόνοι

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 3:1** propter quod non sustinentes amplius placuit nobis remanere Athenis solis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 3:2** But we sent Timothy [to you in Thessalonica], our brother [fellow believer] and ministering servant [member of our missionary team] of God in the gospel of Christ, for the purpose of stabilizing and encouraging you for the sake of your doctrine [you are ready to go beyond basic Bible teaching],

^{KW} **1 Thess. 3:2** And we sent Timothy, our brother and a ministering servant of God in the good news of the Christ, with a view to stabilizing and encouraging you concerning your faith,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 3:2** And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Even though Paul couldn't come to Thessalonica himself, he did not abandon them; he sent Timothy to them (Constative Aorist tense) for the purpose of stabilizing and encouraging them (Ingressive Aorist tense) in doctrine. The Thessalonians were new converts and needed someone to teach them advanced doctrine. They were ready to go beyond the basics. There were also some believers who misunderstood the doctrine of the Rapture and had quit their jobs in order to wait for this spectacular happening. Timothy was needed to correct this misapplication and get them back to work. Paul calls him a fellow believer and a servant, a member of his missionary team. Paul is confident he can provide what they need in his absence through Timothy. Also please note that the Textus Receptus has the Greek word "sunergon" (fellow worker) instead of "diakonon" (minister or table waiter).

REVELANT OPINIONS

It was his impatience to know how they fared that made him send Timothy back to visit them, together with his concern that their faith should be strengthened amid their afflictions. (F. Bruce) The purpose of sending Timothy was "to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith." Timothy was to do what Paul longed to do himself, but could not. (J. Walvoord) Timothy was sent to fix firmly the faith of the Thessalonians. He was to teach them more of God's Word. (J. Phillips) This was a great act of self-sacrifice on the part of Paul, because to be without an assistant and fellow-laborer in the gospel in such a city as Athens, the very center and stronghold of heathenism, full of temples and idols, must necessarily have brought upon him many discomforts; and yet his anxiety for the Thessalonians overcame all motives of personal convenience. (P. Cloag)

1 Thess. 3:2 But (adversative) we sent (πέμπω, AAI1P, Constative) Timothy (Acc. Dir. Obj.; to you in Thessalonica), our (Gen. Rel.)

brother (Pred. Acc.; fellow believer) and (connective) ministering servant (Pred. Acc.; a member of our missionary team) of God (Gen. Rel.) in the gospel (Loc. Sph.) of Christ (Gen. Origin), for the purpose of stabilizing (στηρίζω, AAInf., Ingressive, Purpose; strengthening) and (connective) encouraging (παρακαλέω, AAInf., Ingressive, Purpose) you (Acc. Adv.) for the sake of your (Poss. Gen.) doctrine (Obj. Gen.; they needed to go beyond the basics),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 3:2** καὶ ἐπέμψαμεν Τιμόθεον τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶν καὶ διάκονον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς τὸ στηρίζαι ὑμᾶς καὶ παρακαλέσαι ὑπὲρ τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 3:2** et misimus Timotheum fratrem nostrum et ministrum Dei in evangelio Christi ad confirmandos vos et exhortandos pro fide vestra

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 3:3** So that no one will be disturbed or upset [if they have attained spiritual self-esteem] by these outside pressures, for you yourselves know that we [Paul's missionary team, as well as all other believers] are appointed for this purpose [suffering is a requirement for spiritual growth].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 3:3** That is, that no one be shaken or disturbed and caused to break down in the midst of these afflictions, for you yourselves know with a positive assurance that for this we are destined.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 3:3** That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Testing and suffering (Latin: tribulation) is a requirement for experiential sanctification. None of us can grow spiritually without it, even though we don't like it when it comes. But Paul isn't so sure that many of the Thessalonians have grown to the stage of spiritual self-esteem yet, so he is sending Timothy to them to teach them how to pass "providential preventative suffering" tests (Purpose Infinitive). After they reach the next level of doctrinal instruction from Timothy, none of them should be disturbed or upset (Futuristic Present tense) when the next round of outside pressure hits. He further explains by example that he and his missionary team were appointed by God to endure suffering, and that will eventually include them as well (Customary Present tense). There is a correct method of passing tests when they overtake you, and Paul wants them to know how to apply the appropriate problem-solving devices so they may pass those tests.

REVELANT OPINIONS

The believers at Thessalonica were appointed this particular position (post) in the army of the Lord in defense of the Gospel against the enemies of Christ, and Paul is saying to them, "You know that you are called to fiery trials, and strange things will happen to you." (O. Greene) Tribulation is not to

be wondered at by Christian people as though some strange and unusual thing befell them. Under the conditions of this world, with so many opposed to the gospel, tribulation is inevitable. More, it is the means of teaching us many lessons. Human nature being what it is, there are some things that we will only learn the hard way. Suffering, then, is part of the very process of living out the Christian life, and we should not regard it as something strange and alien. The God who is over all watches over His children, and the affliction that comes to them is only such as He permits. There is always some lesson to be learned from it. It is always part of our being shaped into what God would have us be. It is inevitable. We are appointed unto it. (L. Morris)

Disturbed means to be continually wavering, upset, shaken, or even deceived. Paul is encouraging that no one in the midst of these troubles, desert the rough path of the truth, drawn aside and allured by the enticing prospect of an easier life. (J. Lightfoot) It is a mistake to think that in this dispensation of grace – that is, in this Church Age – we should have it easy. Through the centuries, most of the pages of church history have been stained with the blood of martyrs. Only briefly, and only in some blessed locations, have the churches of God found peace. By God’s own providence, afflictions are, in their very nature and even duration, appointed for the saints of the Lord, and in turn, the saints are destined for such afflictions. This is the case of all who live godly lives, and particularly for those on the front lines, such as evangelists and missionaries. (M. Couch) It is natural for believers to suffer; it would be unnatural for Christians to live in this world and NOT suffer. (O. Greene)

Another purpose of Timothy’s visit was that the Christians would not lose their spiritual balance and stability as a result of the trials they were experiencing. The word “sainesthai” translated “unsettled,” is used of a dog wagging its tail and paints a picture of the Thessalonians going back and forth because of their persecutions. Paul added his own stabilizing reminder that trials are not necessarily a sign of God’s disfavor, but are part of every Christian’s legacy. When trouble comes, Christians often react by doubting that they are where God wants them to be; they often think that they have done something wrong and that God must be displeased with them. Even some mature Christians react this way, as evidenced by Paul’s words of reassurance to Timothy many years later. “Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Tim. 3:12). Yet storms often come to believers to make them able to stand firm, rather than to blow them away. (T. Constable)

If you are a believer, you are not going to escape trouble. To accept Christ does not mean to take out an insurance policy against suffering. The fact of the matter is that you will have trouble after you become a child of God, even if you haven’t had any trouble before. He has never promised that we would miss the storm, but we will go through all the storms of life. There are no “ifs,” “ands,” or “buts” about it. The time to be concerned is when there is no cloud in the sky, no ripple on the sea, and everything is smooth and nice. Such troubles are for the purpose of bringing us closer to God. They promote sanctification in the life of the believer. (J. McGee) Although all Christians desire to escape the persecution exemplified in the cross, Paul teaches that we should not be caught off guard when such troubles come. Persecution is what God has designed for us. (M. Couch)

1 Thess. 3:3 so that (def. article) no one (Subj. Acc.) will be
disturbed or upset (σαίνω, PPInf., Futuristic, Purpose, Articular;

due to attaining spiritual self-esteem) by these (Dat. Spec.) outside pressures (Instr. Means; hard circumstances, testings, tribulation), for (explanatory) you yourselves (Subj. Nom.) know (οἶδα, Perf.AI2P, Intensive) that (result; as a consequence) we (Paul's missionary team) are appointed (κείμαι, PPI1P, Customary; destined) for this purpose (Acc. Purpose; suffering is a requirement for spiritual growth).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 3:3** τὸ μηδένα σαίνεσθαι ἐν ταῖς θλίψεσιν ταύταις αὐτοὶ γὰρ οἶδατε ὅτι εἰς τοῦτο κείμεθα·

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 3:3** ut nemo moveatur in tribulationibus istis ipsi enim scitis quod in hoc positi sumus

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 3:4** For indeed, when we were with you [in Thessalonica], we warned you repeatedly in advance that we are destined to suffer [as part of God's plan to bless us and propel our spiritual growth], just like what began to occur in the recent past [testing has officially started] and you are continuing to experience at the present time [the pressure is still on].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 3:4** For also when we were with you, we kept on telling you beforehand that we are destined to be suffering affliction, even as also it came to pass and you know well.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 3:4** For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul reminds them that he had warned them on many occasions (Iterative Imperfect tense) about suffering when he was with them in person in Thessalonica. He wasn't in town for a long time, but he was there long enough to notify them about the trials and tribulations that would eventually come their way. Why was Paul so certain that this would happen to them? Because he understood that we are all going to experience trouble and difficulties (Customary Present tense) as part of God's plan to bless us and spur our spiritual growth forward. Suffering for blessing is God's protocol for the Church Age believer, whether we like it or not. So the best thing we can do is learn to utilize the problem-solving devices he has given to us so we can pass these tests and endure the difficulties ahead of us with flying colors.

Paul then takes his prior warnings and in a way says to them, "I told you so." In other words, why are you acting so surprised? I told you this was going to happen many times before. His use of the imperfect tense means they obviously didn't get it the first time, because they are shocked to see it actually happening. Evidently the Thessalonian believers weren't paying close attention in Bible class that day! In their recent past, these difficulties had begun to occur (Ingressive Aorist tense) and some of them were still experiencing trials and tribulations at that very moment

(Iterative Perfect tense). His use of the perfect tense means they are experiencing difficulties now and they are going to keep on experiencing difficulties in the future. It (Latin: tribulation) isn't going to stop, so they might as well get used to it.

REVELANT OPINIONS

We are appointed to afflictions in order that by them our fitness for heaven and our relish for our everlasting rest may be increased. We are also appointed to afflictions in order that we may thus learn the blessed graces of patience and resignation – graces which we could not learn in health and prosperity, and which will be useful to us in a world of glory. (P. Gloag) They were but neophytes, Christians of a few months. It is hard to persevere; we know it from our own experience. The cross was coming. They were but babes in Christ; they shrunk from its sharpness. The sentimental religion of mere poetry and feeling is a weak and sickly exotic; it will never bear the cold blasts of temptation, it will not stand in the evil day. (B. Caffin)

The suffering of sickness and persecution has this in common: they are both intended by Satan for the destruction of our faith, and governed by God for the purifying of our faith. Satan is not the only designer in this affair. God rules over Satan and gives him no more leash than can accomplish His ultimate purposes. (J. Piper) Paul reminded his readers that when he was with them he kept telling them to expect persecution. And circumstances had turned out just as he had predicted. This reminder would have helped calm them down. (T. Constable) It is the duty of ministers to forewarn their converts of coming affliction, lest they should be offended thereby. Converts, when forewarned, ought to be forearmed, so that they may not sink under them. (P. Gloag)

1 Thess. 3:4 For (explanatory) indeed (emphatic), when (temporal) we were (εἰμί, Imperf.AI1P, Descriptive) with you (Acc. Accompaniment; in Thessalonica), we warned you (Dat. Adv.) repeatedly in advance (προλέγω, Imperf.AI1P, Iterative) that (conj.) we are destined (μέλλω, PAI1P, Descriptive; going) to suffer (θλίβω, PPIInf., Customary, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; to experience trouble and difficulties; as part of God's plan to bless us and propel our spiritual growth), just like (comparative) what began to occur in the recent past (γίνομαι, AMI3S, Ingressive, Deponent; happen) and (connective) you are continuing to experience at the present time (οἶδα, Perf.AI2P, Iterative).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 3:4** καὶ γὰρ ὅτε πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἦμεν προελέγομεν ὑμῖν ὅτι μέλλομεν θλίβεσθαι καθὼς καὶ ἐγένετο καὶ οἴδατε

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 3:4** nam et cum apud vos essemus praedicebamus vobis passuros nos tribulationes sicut et factum est et scitis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 3:5** Because of this [suffering], when I could no longer endure in silence [wondering how things were with you], I sent [Timothy] for the purpose of checking out

[validating] your faith [whether you were successfully applying the faith rest technique or not], just in case by some means the one who tempts [Satan] had tempted you [caused you to reside in the cosmic system instead of the filling of the Spirit] and my labor to the point of exhaustion [teaching you doctrine] turned out to be in vain [wasted effort].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 3:5** Because of this, when I also could bear it no longer, I sent [him] that I might come to know your faith, lest by any means the tempter had solicited you to do evil and my labor would turn out to be in vain.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 3:5** For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul knew that trials and tribulations would arrive soon after there were new converts in Thessalonica, especially since legalistic Jews had him run out of town. He was concerned that these new believers were not sufficiently grounded in doctrine to withstand these first tests. Eventually the time came (Temporal Participle) when Paul could not wait in silence any longer (Durative Present tense); he had to know what was happening to them. So he sent Timothy (Culminative Aorist tense) to find out (Ingressive Aorist tense) if they were correctly applying the faith rest technique he had taught them, or whether the tempter (Satan) had tempted them to leave the sphere of divine power (in the filling of the Spirit) for residence in the cosmic system. The Customary Present tense points to the pattern of Satan, by which he drags believers into his *cosmos diabolicus*.

Paul had warned the Thessalonian believers over and over again. He had worked among them night and day, teaching them the appropriate doctrines that would help them withstand future satanic onslaughts. But because he was forced to leave town sooner than he wanted, he needed someone to report back to him on whether his efforts were a success or a failure. He would have loved to remain in Thessalonica longer, to teach them better how to utilize the spiritual problem-solving devices designed for Church Age believers. And he knew that it was ultimately up to the individual believer to apply what they had learned correctly. His greatest concern was the possibility that they were overcome by their first round of testing (Potential Subjunctive mood) and his teaching had been a waste of time – or at least a futile effort because it was too little, too soon.

REVELANT OPINIONS

Paul remained anxious, however, because he knew that Satan was a very real being and that he was doing everything in his vast power to destroy the infant church at Thessalonica. But Timothy returned to Paul, brimming over with the good news. The Thessalonians were doing well. Satan had been unable to shake their faith. Their love was triumphant. What a good thing it was that Paul had not preached the false “name-it-and-claim-it” message that is so popular today: “God wants you to be healthy and wealthy.” The so-called “prosperity gospel” of the “charismatics” would not have

taken the Thessalonians through the onslaught of the persecution that burst upon them soon after they were saved. “Possibility thinking” was no foundation for a faith that was to be tested by temptation. What they needed was a faith based on realities. “The power of positive thinking” and all other such psychological spells ignore the stark reality of Calvary and the bottomless hatred of this world toward God. (J. Phillips)

Satan is the main source of danger in these afflictions. The only security against Satan’s temptations is faith. (P. Gloag) The devil is a subtle and unwearied tempter, who seeks an opportunity to beguile and destroy us, and takes all advantages against us, both in time of prosperity and adversity; and he has often been successful in his attacks upon persons under afflictions. He has often prejudiced the minds of men against religion on account of the sufferings its professors are exposed to. We have reason, therefore, to be jealous over ourselves and others, lest we be ensnared by him. If he cannot hinder ministers from labouring in the Word and doctrine, he will, if he be able, hinder them of the success of their labours. (M. Henry)

1 Thess. 3:5 Because (causal) of this (Causal Acc.; suffering), when I (Subj. Nom.) could no longer (adv.) endure in silence (στέγω, PAPtc.NMS, Durative, Temporal), I sent (πέμπω, AAI1S, Culminative; Timothy) for the purpose of checking out (γινώσκω, AAInf., Ingressive, Purpose, Articular; learning, knowing, validating) your (Poss. Gen.) faith (Adv. Acc.; were you successfully applying the faith rest technique), just in case (neg. particle) by some means (enclitic) the one who tempts (πειράζω, PAPtc.NMS, Descriptive, Substantival, Articular; Satan) had tempted (πειράζω, Imper.AI3S, Customary) you (Acc. Disadv.; cause you to reside in the cosmic system instead of the sphere of divine power) and (continuative) my (Poss. Gen.) labor to the point of exhaustion (Subj. Nom.; hard work, teaching you doctrine) turned out to be (γίνομαι, AMSubj.3S, Culminative, Potential, Deponent) in vain (Acc. Disadv.; useless, a waste of time, futile).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 3:5** διὰ τοῦτο καὶ γὰρ μηκέτι στέγων ἔπεμψα εἰς τὸ γινῶναι τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν μή πως ἐπείρασεν ὑμᾶς ὁ πειράζων καὶ εἰς κενὸν γένηται ὁ κόπος ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 3:5** propterea et ego amplius non sustinens nisi ad cognoscendam fidem vestram ne forte temptaverit vos is qui temptat et inanis fiat labor noster

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 3:6** But just now [as I’m writing this letter], Timothy has returned to us [in Corinth] from you [in Thessalonica] and has brought to us the good news concerning your [application of the] faith rest technique and your [residence and function inside the] love complex, and that you continue to have a good remembrance of us always, having a desire to see us just as we [have a desire to see] you [reciprocal relationship].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 3:6** But even now, Timothy having come to us from you also brought to us the good

news of your faith and divine and self-sacrificial love, and that you have a kindly remembrance of us always, passionately desiring to see us even as we also are passionately desirous to see you,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 3:6** But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also *to see* you:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

At the very moment Paul was engaged in writing this epistle, Timothy returned to him in Corinth (Constative Aorist tense) from Thessalonica, bringing good news (Constative Aorist tense). There are two participles in the Greek, a combination of temporal and circumstantial, which are translated almost as if they didn't exist as participles. The good news Timothy brings is related to their successful application of the faith rest drill and their continued residence and function inside the love complex. The Thessalonian believers are not stumbling in Paul's absence; they are successfully applying the doctrinal principles he taught them previously. Faith and love are problem-solving devices in the spiritual life. They are not "infused" into every believer without a volitional aspect. The Thessalonians had to apply their volition daily in order to exercise the faith rest technique and live inside the love complex.

The filling of the Spirit is a requirement for the spiritual life; without it, there is no true faith or love. Without the filling of the Spirit, there is no sharing of the spiritual life with believers in other geographical locations. Timothy also brings gratifying news that the Thessalonian believers are as desirous to see Paul and his missionary team (Constative Aorist tense) as they are to return to Thessalonica. They have a continued favorable memory (Durative Present tense) of Paul's last visit. This reciprocal relationship from different geographical locations is exactly as it should be. All believers are members of the universal church. Those who are in fellowship (filled with the Spirit) should desire to have social life with other believers who are in fellowship. When this desire breaks down, you can be assured that the believers in question are in carnality (reversionism) of one kind or another.

REVELANT OPINIONS

The moment Timothy returned and gave the good report concerning the steadfastness of the believers at Thessalonica, Paul sat down and wrote the epistle to the church there. He wrote from a heart filled with gratitude and love, for Timothy brought glad tidings concerning the pure, steadfast faith and fervent love to other people manifested in the lives and stewardship of the Thessalonian believers. (O. Greene) Timothy had gone to Thessalonica and had brought encouragement to them, continuing to teach them the Word of God. Now Timothy has returned to Paul with the message that the Thessalonians were standing fast in the faith, that they longed to see Paul, and that they were just as he had left them – their hearts fixed upon the Lord Jesus Christ and looking for His coming. (J. Walvoord) If the Thessalonians had been beginning to fall away, they would not have cared to see their teachers so much. (M. Couch)

The Thessalonians had not allowed hostile propaganda to distort their recollections of the visit of the great apostle. They still looked back on it with joy. They did more. They looked forward with eager longing to a reunion, and were just as anxious to see Paul again as he was to see them. (L. Morris) The primary meaning of the word “euangelion” is not preaching but communicating good news. The nuance of the word is on the communication of a message of good news. This communication may be done by the act of preaching, but it is also done in private conversation or in a letter. (G. Johnson) When we have the privilege of bringing sinners to Christ, it cheers the heart, but what a joy it is to learn afterward that they are maintaining a bright, consistent testimony. (H. Ironside)

1 Thess. 3:6 But (adversative) just now (temporal; at the present moment), Timothy (Subj. Gen.) has returned (ἔρχομαι, AAPtc.GMS, Constative, Temporal & Circumstantial, Deponent) to us (Acc. Place; in Corinth) from you (Gen. Place; in Thessalonica) and (continuative) has brought to us (Dat. Adv.) the good news concerning your technique (Gen. Poss.; application of the) faith rest technique (Acc. Gen. Ref.; doctrinal application) and (connective) your (residence and function inside the) love complex (Acc. Gen. Ref.; virtue love), and (continuative) that (conj.) you continue to have (ἔχω, PAI2P, Durative) a good (Acc.; favorable, affectionate) remembrance (Acc. Dir. Obj.; memory) of us (Obj. Gen.) always (temporal), having a desire (ἐπιποθέω, PAPtc.NMP, Descriptive, Circumstantial) to see (ὁράω, AAInf., Constative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) just as (comparative) we (Subj. Nom.) also (adjunctive) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.; reciprocal desire to see each other).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 3:6** Ἄρτι δὲ ἐλθόντος Τιμοθέου πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀφ' ὑμῶν καὶ εὐαγγελισαμένου ἡμῖν τὴν πίστιν καὶ τὴν ἀγάπην ὑμῶν καὶ ὅτι ἔχετε μνησίαν ἡμῶν ἀγαθὴν πάντοτε ἐπιποθοῦντες ἡμᾶς ἰδεῖν καθάπερ καὶ ἡμεῖς ὑμᾶς

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 3:6** nunc autem veniente Timotheo ad nos a vobis et adnuntiante nobis fidem et caritatem vestram et quia memoriam nostri habetis bonam semper desiderantes nos videre sicut nos quoque vos

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 3:7** Because of this [favorable report on your spiritual progress] we were encouraged, brethren, by all of your necessary trouble [trials & testing] and outside pressure [suffering through difficult circumstances], our encouragement due to your application of doctrine [correct use of the faith rest technique],

^{KW} **1 Thess. 3:7** Because of this we were encouraged, brethren, in your every distress and crushing affliction, this encouragement finding its source in your faith,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 3:7** Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul and his missionary team were encouraged (Constative Aorist tense) when they received the favorable report from Timothy on the status of the Thessalonian's spiritual growth. They were worried that because of their abrupt departure, the new Thessalonian believers did not have enough time to metabolize the basic Bible doctrine they had been taught. This short allotment of time concerned them because many trials (Latin: necessities) and difficult circumstances (Latin: tribulations) came upon these new believers immediately after their departure. Quite simply, Paul was worried that when the first round of testing hit them, the Thessalonian believers would "crash and burn." But the spiritual report Timothy brought them was so good, that Paul could actually say he was now encouraged by their trouble and suffering!

Was Paul being sadistic? Why would he be excited by tough times coming to the Thessalonians? He calls them "brethren," meaning members of the royal family of God, so if they were indeed "brethren," why would he be encouraged (Latin: consoled) by their trials and tribulations? He is encouraged because of their correct application of doctrine to these trials and pressures. He would not have been encouraged if they had been falling on their spiritual faces. Paul knew that the only way they could grow spiritually was to utilize the faith rest technique when testing came their way. The only way any of us can grow spiritually is by passing spiritual tests, which Paul calls "necessary trouble," emphasis on "necessary." The only way we can grow spiritually is by not allowing outside pressure (suffering) to become inside stress in the soul.

When outside pressure (perilous experience) is met with the appropriate problem-solving device, in this case the faith-rest technique, spiritual growth occurs. When outside pressure is not met with the appropriate response, it becomes inside stress (extreme oppression) on the soul and no spiritual growth occurs. If the Thessalonian believers had failed to correctly apply the faith rest technique to the difficult circumstances that fell upon them, Paul would have been discouraged, not encouraged. He would not have an acceptable comfort level in their forward momentum and would have had even more anxiety about his unfortunate rapid departure from them. But since they are doing so well with the little doctrine he taught them, he can relax a bit and actually be thankful that the Lord is providing them with this testing. In this scenario, the troubles that have come upon them are necessary for their spiritual growth and they are passing the test.

REVELANT OPINIONS

This good report brought comfort and life itself to Paul. The word "comfort" means more than soothing; it means strengthening. Paul was in the midst of affliction and distress. Both words imply trouble from without – "affliction" meaning choking, pressing care, and "distress" signifying the crushing kind of trouble. It is easy to see why he speaks of his situation in such terms, for he was at Athens alone and had just suffered four successive experiences of apparent defeat since he set foot in Europe - at Philippi, at Thessalonica, at Berea, and at Athens. (C. Ryrie) "Thlipsis" and "ananke" imply pressure from without ... and perhaps describing the missionaries' mental state. (D. Williams) We were altogether miserable and crushed; but your faith has recovered us. (L. Morris)

1 Thess. 3:7 Because (causal) of this (Causal Acc.; favorable report) we were encouraged (παρακαλέω, API1P, Constative; comforted), brethren (Voc. Address; members of the royal family), by all (Dat. Measure) of your (Dat. Poss.) necessary trouble (Dat. Ind. Obj.; trials & testing) and (connective) outside pressure (Dat. Ind. Obj.; suffering, difficult circumstances), our (Poss. Gen.) encouragement (ellipsis) due to (explanatory; on account of) your (Poss. Gen.) application of doctrine (Abl. Means; especially the faith rest technique),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 3:7** διὰ τοῦτο παρεκλήθημεν ἀδελφοί ἐφ ὑμῖν ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ ἀνάγκῃ καὶ θλίψει ἡμῶν διὰ τῆς ὑμῶν πίστεως

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 3:7** ideo consolati sumus fratres in vobis in omni necessitate et tribulatione nostra per vestram fidem

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 3:8** For now we are beginning to come back to life again [living life more enthusiastically], since you continue to stand firm in the Lord.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 3:8** Because now we are [really] living, if, as for you, you are standing fast in the Lord.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 3:8** For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

This is a very unusual sentence in the Greek. Paul and his missionary team are beginning to come back to life again (Tendential Present tense) because of the favorable report they have received from Timothy. Their level of anxiety over the Thessalonian believers has decreased, and they are able to relax and enjoy their evangelistic ministry with greater enthusiasm. This is not a settled state with them yet, but one which has started and Paul hopes it will continue – as shown by the potential indicative mood which expresses a wish or impulse on their part. Paul wants to return to a state of normalcy, meaning without anxiety or worry, but it is contingent to a great degree on how well the Thessalonian believers are progressing in the spiritual life. The one contingency in Paul’s statement is that he and his team will only come back to a full and enthusiastic life (Latin: vivified) if (since) the Thessalonian believers continue to stand fast (Durative Present tense) in the Lord.

Paul uses the conjunction “ean” in an unusual manner by connecting it with the Potential Indicative mood as a 1st class condition. “Ean” is usually paired with the Subjunctive mood as a 3rd class conditional clause. What does this mean? If he had used the subjunctive mood, Paul would have been saying, “Maybe you will or maybe you won’t continue to stand firm.” The 3rd class condition presents a strong element of an unknown outcome. The 1st class condition, however, gives the Thessalonians the benefit of the doubt, since Paul has just received a

favorable report on their progress. He is hinging his team's return to an enthusiastic mindset upon the continued success of the Thessalonian believers to make spiritual progress. But he is not expressing this condition with any sense of doubt as to their ability to continue standing firm in the Lord.

REVELANT OPINIONS

His whole spiritual joy and happiness is linked with the experience of victory in this Thessalonian church. His whole heart was wrapped up in the spiritual prosperity of these his children in the faith. (J. Walvoord) Let me assure you that when we stand at the judgment seat of Christ, no one will be sorry because he was completely yielded to the Lord. On that day there will be many who would give worlds, if they possessed them, to have another chance to be more devoted, more truly separated from the world, more out-and-out for their Savior in this world. (H. Ironside) The "if" here was not intended to question their stability; it was simply a reminder to them that his peace of mind depended on their bold stand for Christ. (J. Phillips)

The news of your unwavering faith and love is the very breath of life to us. Paul's concern for his converts and sense of oneness with them breathes through all his correspondence. When they were led astray, he was indignant; when they slipped back, he was distressed; when they showed evidence of living lives worthy of the gospel, he was overjoyed. (F. Bruce) "To live" is used not merely of being alive, or having life, but of having all that makes life worth living, flourishing and prospering. (E.W. Bullinger)

1 Thess. 3:8 For (explanatory) now (temporal; ethical: under these circumstances) we are beginning to come back to life again (ζάω, PAI1P, Tendential, Potential Ind. Expressing a Wish or an Impulse; beginning to live enthusiastically again), since (protasis, 1st class condition, "if and it's true") you (Subj. Nom.) continue to stand firm (στήκω, PAI2P, Durative, Potential Ind. Expressing a Condition) in the Lord (Loc. Sph.).

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 3:8** quoniam nunc vivimus si vos statis in Domino

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 3:9** **For what thanks [sufficient gratitude] are we able to return to God concerning you, for all the inner happiness which we are pleased to possess because of you in the presence of our God,**

^{KW} **1 Thess. 3:9** For what thanks are we able to give back to God in return concerning you for all the joy with which we are rejoicing on account of you in the presence of our God,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 3:9** For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul and his missionary team are so pleased (Descriptive Present tense) with the spiritual report they have received from Timothy that they thank God for the privilege of ministering to them. The success of these new believers while under distressing circumstances has made Paul and his colleagues very happy. They are so proud of their new converts that Paul asks a rhetorical question as a means of complimenting the Thessalonian believers. What he essentially asks is, “How are we able to express our profound gratitude to the Lord for the pleasure of ministering to the Thessalonians?” We are in debt to the Lord for such an opportunity and we don’t know how to repay it (Constative Aorist tense). Paul’s “gratitude gauge” (Thieme) is at an extremely high level and he wants to express this fact to both God and the Thessalonian believers.

REVELANT OPINIONS

Words fail him to express his gratitude to God for this gladness which fills his heart. (C. Erdman) So many Christians are ignorant of the great truths of Scripture and are not going on with the Lord. They do not have a real prayer life; they do not give themselves to the study of the Word. It is a tragedy that in our hearts there can be such coldness and such a lack of response to spiritual need. (J. Walvoord) He commended the Thessalonians, but also recognized and acknowledged the hand of God at work in their lives. (T. Constable)

1 Thess. 3:9 For (explanatory) what (Interrogative Acc.) thanks (Acc. Dir. Obj.; sufficient gratitude, restitution, payback) are we able (δύναμαι, PMI1P, Descriptive, Deponent) to return (ἀνταποδίδωμι, AAInf., Constative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; repay) to God (Dat. Adv.) concerning you (Gen. Adv.), for all (Dat. Measure) the inner happiness (Dat. Ind. Obj.) which (Dat. Ref.) we are pleased to possess (χαίρω, PAI1P, Descriptive; happy, rejoice) because of you (Causal Acc.) in the presence of our God (Obj. Gen.),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 3:9** τίνα γὰρ εὐχαριστίαν δυνάμεθα τῷ θεῷ ἀνταποδοῦναι περὶ ὑμῶν ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ χαρᾷ ἣ χαίρομεν δι ὑμᾶς ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 3:9** quam enim gratiarum actionem possumus Deo retribuere pro vobis in omni gaudio quo gaudemus propter vos ante Deum nostrum

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 3:10** Praying exceedingly above and beyond, night and day, that we might see your face [in Thessalonica] and complete those things [advanced teachings] which are lacking with reference to your doctrinal framework?

^{KW} **1 Thess. 3:10** Night and day asking in prayer quite beyond measure and as earnestly as possible that we might see your face and complete the things which are lacking in your faith?

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 3:10** Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his expression of gratitude to God for the opportunity to minister to the Thessalonian believers. He tells them that he is praying for them (Customary Present tense) with great fervor, night and day. He uses a superlative construction (beyond measure, superabundantly) to point to the almost insane level of emotional fervor he exudes when petitioning the Lord to allow him to return to Thessalonica to see them (Intended Result) in person. It is Paul's desire to return and teach them as much advanced doctrine as they can take (Culminative Aorist tense), because he knows they have an incomplete doctrinal framework in their soul. He wants to finish the job he started, so they are able to withstand the next round of providential preventative suffering as well as momentum testing.

REVELANT OPINIONS

It means to be completely equipped, with all details in order. Their faith needed to be enlarged. Their lives were not complete in their spiritual experience. Paul wanted God to deal with them and to bring them on to that further step of perfection. Nowhere in the Bible is the word "perfect" used to mean sinlessly perfect. In fact, that is not the idea at all. There is need for another word in English into which we could translate these words, because the word "perfection" in the ordinary sense is not exactly the idea. (J. Walvoord) The best thanks that Paul could render to God for the Thessalonian church would be for him to complete the job of their spiritual upbringing. (M. Couch) We live in an age of feverish activity. We think that we are wasting precious time and neglecting privileges, opportunities, and responsibilities if we are not actively engaged in some form of Christian work in every spare moment. "Go hide thyself," God said to Elijah. The prophet needed time for rest, reflection, and realizing God's daily provision of care and protection from the malice of Jezebel. (J. Phillips)

In the fundamentals of faith and love, the Thessalonians are a model for others. But clearly, there are some areas of the faith – in which they do need further instruction. The nature of these areas emerges from chapters 4 & 5. Paul must have realized that he would not be able to come to them in the short term and decided, therefore, that his written instructions must substitute for face-to-face teaching. Notice how he emphasizes the positive, giving thanks for what has been achieved before mentioning what remains to be done. (D. Williams) The word "perfect" signifies fully furnished, fully equipped, fully fitted out. He wanted them to be full grown in the inner man. (O. Greene) They were ignorant of many of the doctrines of the gospel, and had formed erroneous views of other doctrines. It was defective in application; they had not yet renounced all the corrupt practices from their former heathen life, nor had they embodied all the precepts of the gospel in their actual life. The Thessalonians were as yet but novices. (P. Gloag)

The plural points us to the fact that more than one thing needed rectification. Paul has dwelt with obvious delight on the state of the Thessalonians, but that did not mean that he was blind to their failings. As a true pastor he knew that there was much that had to be done for them. It was his aim to play some part in seeing that they were set forward on the right road. (L. Morris) From this we may infer that those who far surpass others are still far distant from the goal. Hence, whatever progress

we may have made, let us keep in view our deficiencies, that we may not be reluctant to aim at something further. (P. Gloag) The deficiencies in their spiritual condition are due more to immaturity than to waywardness. (T. Constable) The prominent idea is fitting together, reconciling factions, like a political umpire who adjusts differences between contending parties. It is a surgical term for setting bones, military and naval preparation, manning a fleet, or supplying an army with provisions. (J. Lightfoot) The maturing of the Thessalonians' faith does not depend on the presence of their apostles. (W.R. Nicoll)

1 Thess. 3:10 Praying (δέομαι, PMPTc.NMP, Customary, Modal, Deponent) exceedingly (adv.; abundantly, insanely) above and beyond (prep.), night (Gen. Time) and (connective) day (Gen. Time), that we might see (ὁράω, AAInf., Culminative, Intended Result, Articular) your (Poss. Gen.) face (Acc. Dir. Obj.; in Thessalonica) and (continuative) complete (καταρτίζω, AAInf., Culminative, Intended Result; perfect) those things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; advanced teachings) which are lacking (Acc. Gen. Ref.) with reference to your (Poss. Gen.) doctrinal framework (Adv. Gen. Ref.; faith)?

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 3:10** νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ὑπὲρ ἐκπερισσοῦ δεόμενοι εἰς τὸ ἰδεῖν ὑμῶν τὸ πρόσωπον καὶ καταρτίσαι τὰ ὑστερήματα τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 3:10** nocte et die abundantius orantes ut videamus faciem vestram et compleamus ea quae desunt fidei vestrae

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 3:11** Now may God Himself, even our Father, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way [road, journey] to you.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 3:11** Now, our God and Father Himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 3:11** Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul utters a small prayer to God the Father and the Lord Jesus, asking them to guide his steps or chart his next journey (Constative Aorist tense) back to Thessalonica. He petitions the Lord in the optative mood (I wish to go there, if it is possible), pleading his cause with a sense of desire and urgency.

REVELANT OPINIONS

The disposition of such matters is in the hands of God. With him is left the question whether or not Paul is to return to Thessalonica. Rather, from him he asks that such a desired visit may be made possible. (E. Erdman) This is the first of two “wish-prayers” to be found in the epistle. (G. Wiles)

God ultimately makes His will clear to us by means of His Word. Even here we must be careful. Flinging the Bible open at random, plunging a finger on a text, and seeking thus to obtain guidance is insulting alike to God and our own intelligence! Playing that kind of Russian roulette with the Holy Scriptures is foolish. We must read the Bible steadily and systematically. When our circumstances, our inward convictions, and our reading of the Word of God all line up - we are usually on a safe course. So Paul waited for the Lord's leading. He preferred to be sure rather than sorry. (J. Phillips)

Paul does not forget that God rules in the affairs of men. Even his incidental expressions reveal how much the sovereignty of God means to him. (L. Morris) Paul looks to God to remove the obstacles which up till this time had prevented him from paying the longed-for visit to the Thessalonians. (L. Morris) When considering God's will, common sense (as we call it) is not necessarily set aside. God does want us to act rationally. The majority of our daily decisions we can make by far on the basis of our own thoughts and feelings. (J. Phillips) One could hardly conceive of a stronger way for Paul to indicate his unquestioning acceptance of the lordship of Jesus and His oneness with the Father. (T. Constable) The unity of the Father and Son appears here, and in 2 Thess. 2:16-17. The verb is singular, as the subject, the Father and Son, are but one in essential Being, not in mere unity of will. (R. Jamieson)

1 Thess. 3:11 Now (transitional) may God (Subj. Nom.) Himself (Nom. Appos.), even (ascensive) our (Gen. Rel.) Father (Nom. Appos.) and (connective) our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus (Subj. Nom.), direct (κατευθύνω, AAOpt.3S, Constative, Independent Clause; guide) our (Poss. Gen.) way (Acc. Dir. Obj.; road, journey) to you (Acc.).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 3:11** Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ ἡμῶν καὶ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς κατευθύνει τὴν ὁδὸν ἡμῶν πρὸς ὑμᾶς·

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 3:11** ipse autem Deus et Pater noster et Dominus Iesus dirigit viam nostram ad vos

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 3:12** And may the Lord [Holy Spirit] cause you to grow [to supergrace maturity] and superabound [reach ultra-supergrace status] in the love complex toward one another [fellow believers in Thessalonica] and toward all others [believers in other geographical locations], just as we [Paul and his missionary team] also [exercise virtue love in the love complex] towards you [reciprocal relationship],

^{KW} **1 Thess. 3:12** And as for you, the Lord cause you to increase and superabound in your divine and self-sacrificial love for one another and toward all, even as also we have this divine and self-sacrificial love for you,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 3:12** And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all *men*, even as we *do* toward you:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his prayer by petitioning the Holy Spirit to assist the Thessalonian believers (Constativ Aorist tense) in their growth to supergrace maturity and beyond to ultra-supergrace status. Anyway you look at it, growth (Latin: multiply) and superabounding refers to forward momentum in the spiritual life. What teacher doesn't want this for his students? And Paul knows there is only one way to get there, even with the Holy Spirit as our mentor - and this is by residence and function inside the love complex. We are to exercise basic impersonal love, also called a relaxed mental attitude, towards our fellow man. We are to exercise advanced impersonal love towards those in our immediate vicinity.

The difference between basic and advanced impersonal love is one of degree and of either remote or near vicinity. Paul instructs them to exercise this virtue (impersonal) love towards their fellow believers in Thessalonica, as well as their fellow believers who live in other cities around the globe. Paul and his colleagues exercise virtue love inside the love complex toward the Thessalonian believers, so he is able to use himself as an example. The commands from the Lord to do this are not just for apostles, not just for missionaries, and not just for the Thessalonians. All of us are commanded to live inside the sphere of love, the love complex.

Virtue (impersonal) love is a reciprocal command for all believers regardless of where they live. Impersonal love as a problem-solving device (relaxed mental attitude) should be applied first to fellow believers in our immediate family. Then it should be extended to believers in other geographical locations. And ultimately, it should be our modus vivendi around unbelievers. As a further note, the reason I choose the Holy Spirit as the "Lord" who is being addressed here is not to "fill in a Trinitarian formula," but because living in the sphere of the love complex requires us to be filled with the Holy Spirit. They are intimately connected spheres.

REVELANT OPINIONS

"The Lord" may here be the Holy Spirit, so the Three of the Trinity will be appealed to, as in 2 Thess. 3:5. So the Holy Spirit is called "the Lord" in 2 Cor. 3:17. (R. Jamieson) The goal of Paul's prayers and labors for the church is that they will be full grown in the inner man – spotless, blameless and unashamed when they stand before the righteous Judge to receive their reward for the deeds done in the body. (O. Greene) As long as we are here on earth, there will always be higher heights to reach and deeper depths to sound; there will always be sins over which we will need to have victory. But it is the will of God that by prayer we continue to make progress until at last we stand before our blessed Lord at the judgment seat. (H. Ironside)

Love is a gift of God: He gives both the motive and the model in His own love for us, and He provides the means – the ability to love – by His Spirit. (D. Williams) The first reference is to spiritual enlargement, the second to spiritual abundance. (C. Ellicott) The love of God poured into the believers' hearts by the Holy Spirit could not be reserved for members of their own fellowship; it must overflow to others without restriction. (F. Bruce) We have reason to desire to grow in every

grace, and have need of the Spirit's influence in order to grow in grace, and the way to obtain this is by prayer. (M. Henry)

1 Thess. 3:12 And (continuative) may the Lord (Subj. Nom.; Holy Spirit) cause you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to grow (πλεονάζω, AAOpt.3S, Constative, Independent Clause; to supergrace maturity) and (continuative) superabound (AAOpt.3S, Constative, Independent Clause; exceed supergrace status) in the love complex (Loc. Sph.; virtue love, impersonal love) toward one another (Acc. Rel.; fellow believers in Thessalonica) and (connective) toward all others (Acc. Spec.; believers in other geographical locations), just as (comparative) we (Subj. Nom.; Paul and his missionary team) also (adjunctive; exercise virtue love inside the love complex) towards you (Acc. Rel.),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 3:12** ὑμᾶς δὲ ὁ κύριος πλεονάσαι καὶ περισσεύσαι τῇ ἀγάπῃ εἰς ἀλλήλους καὶ εἰς πάντας καθάπερ καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς ὑμᾶς

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 3:12** vos autem Dominus multiplicet et abundare faciat caritatem in invicem et in omnes quemadmodum et nos in vobis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 3:13** **To the end that He [the Holy Spirit] might complete the stabilization of the mentality of your souls [sanctification salvation] - blameless [fully sanctified] in the sphere of holiness [glorification salvation] before God [at the Judgment Seat of Christ], even our Father - before the coming [at the rapture] of our Lord Jesus with all of His saints [the dead in Christ whom He brings with Him to meet those who are alive].**

^{KW} **1 Thess. 3:13** To the end that He might stabilize your hearts blameless in the sphere of holiness in the presence of our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 3:13** To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul completes his prayer with the intended result that the Holy Spirit might stabilize (Culminative Aorist tense) the mentality of their souls in the sphere of holiness. What Paul has begun he prays the Holy Spirit will finish. He taught them basic doctrine before he left Thessalonica. He sent Timothy to them to reiterate those doctrines so they might be strengthened by them. He is so concerned that they get all the teaching they need, and is so helpless to return to them personally, that he now prays that the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit might complete the job he began. He started their doctrinal foundation, and prays that the Spirit will complete the doctrinal structure on that foundation.

The only way our souls can be truly stabilized is by continued residence and function inside the love complex – also known as the power sphere or the sphere of holiness. This is a process, a gradual approach, a spiritual state or frame of mind. Using the doctrinal crumbs that Paul gave them, the Thessalonians are doing their best to live inside the love complex. Because he cannot return to Thessalonica at this time, Paul prays that the Holy Spirit might complete the job he started, stabilizing their souls and presenting them blameless before God. “Blameless” in this context means personal sin has been taken care of and is not a barrier between them and the presence of God the Father. “Blameless” means according to divine standards, not human standards.

The entire phrase “blameless in the sphere of holiness before God, even our Father” is a parenthesis, describing in greater detail what the “stabilization of the mentality of their souls” should ultimately accomplish. The intake, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine (stabilization of the mentality of their souls) is a process called sanctification salvation; the intended result of that process is a completed state called glorification salvation – being “blameless in the sphere of holiness before God the Father.” The culminative aorist points to the intended result of this long and continuous process. Paul doesn’t know how long it will take for the Thessalonian believers to grow to maturity. But he does pray that this process of sanctification will be completed by the Spirit before the coming of Jesus Christ at the rapture.

Some of you might object to my designating “the Lord” in the prior verse as the Holy Spirit. Many scholars identify Him as Jesus; a few identify Him as the Father; even fewer identify Him as the Spirit. This is the verse (3:13) that leads me to identify Him as the Spirit. In my opinion, identifying “the Lord” as the Father or the Son in this verse is forced, whereas a petition for the Spirit to “complete their stability and blamelessness in the sphere of holiness” aligns well with the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit on our behalf. The Holy Spirit is in charge of the sanctification process, and this is a prayer for continued sanctification all the way to the end, i.e., glorification. I do see this as the completion of a Trinitarian passage begun in the prior verse, but only as a secondary matter, not the primary reason for my choice of the Holy Spirit as “Lord.”

I’ve been back-and-forth on this verse, laying out the pros and cons for whether it represents the rapture or the 2nd advent. There are a host of scholars on both sides of the debate. The issue centers on the phrase “with all of His saints.” I am not completely comfortable with either option, so I have quotes below from both sides of the debate. However, after sharing some of the possible interpretations with a fellow seminary student (Danny Williams), I think this “coming” (Gk: parousia, Latin: advent) is the rapture. I’m also in agreement with Dr. Mal Couch; I think the “saints” that the Lord Jesus will be returning “with” are the dead in Christ whom He brings with Him at the rapture (Gal. 4:16). They will meet those believers who are alive (on earth at that time) in the air. Those who are dead in Christ and those who are alive in Christ meet in the air and then return to heaven with Him – escaping the tribulation that is brought upon the earth. The “before” the presence of our Lord Jesus in 2:19 and the “before” the presence of our God and (even) Father in 3:13 are speaking of the same event – the Judgment or Bema Seat of Christ.

REVELANT OPINIONS

This verse clearly is a Rapture passage. With “emprosthen” (before) Paul uses the very same construction concerning “presence” as he does in 2:19. There, as here, His presence is used to mean a face-to-face encounter ... This “before” in 3:13 has to be the Bema seat judgment when believers’ works are judged in heaven. And that takes place sometime after the Rapture ... “The coming” with all His saints, then (in Gal. 3:13), is clearly the Rapture. The “saints” are certainly not angels, as some commentators think, but the souls of believers who return with Him during that event. These saints would be the souls of those who return from heaven to receive their new glorified bodies. In all of his writings “not once does [Paul] employ [saint] to indicate angels, always the redeemed” (NTC). These are the dead in Christ (4:16) who “God will bring with Him,” that is, “those who have fallen asleep in Jesus (v. 14). Those who are alive then join those in this resurrection, when the souls who come with Jesus are given a new body, and are caught up to meet the Lord in the air (v. 17). (M. Couch)

We believe that at the end of the great tribulation Christ is coming back in power and glory from heaven with the saints and with the holy angels and that He will establish His righteous government on the earth as predicted many times in the Bible, which will last, according to Revelation 20, for 1,000 years and ultimately be followed by the eternal state after the judgment of the great white throne. Many expositors have distinguished His coming FOR His saints (the rapture) and His coming WITH His saints (the 2nd coming to establish the millennial kingdom). There are at least three great words in the NT used to express the truth about the coming of the Lord: epiphaneia, apokalupsis, and parousia. All three of these words are used of Christ coming for His church. They are also used of His coming to set up His kingdom on earth. Epiphaneia simply speaks of His appearing, apokalupsis the revelation of His glory, and parousia His coming. According to Scripture, Christians are going to meet Christ in the air. After we meet Him in the air, He will take us home to glory to be in the presence of the Father and the holy angels. After that we are coming back to the earth with Christ. It is this return to earth that is referred to here. (J. Walvoord)

In Christ, believers are already holy in terms of status. God accepts them as blameless. But this prayer has to do with practice. Their practice should match their status – that they might be who they are. (D. Williams) If Jesus is to come with His saints, He must first have come for them. (ibid) When will this “before” the Father take place? This “before” has to be the Bema seat judgment when believers’ works are judged in heaven. And that takes place sometime after the Rapture. The bema of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10) is also the bema of God (Rom. 14:10), because Christ in his present session is with the Father in his heavenly throne (Rev. 3:21; Rom. 8:34). In his writings not once does Paul employ “saint” to indicate angels, always the redeemed. (M. Couch) The parousia includes the ordeal of the judgment seat of Christ. Paul never lost sight of that fact. It was his spur here to the Thessalonians to urge them on to stability and holiness of life. (J. Phillips) Angels has no connection with anything in this Epistle, but glorified believers is closely connected with the matter which was troubling the Thessalonians. (M. Vincent)

The holy ones accompanying Christ at His coming are probably the souls of the saints who have

departed this life and gone to be with Christ, whose bodies will be resurrected when He comes. (T. Constable) Most schools of thought would agree that this verse indicates that the saints are going to come with Christ when He comes to the earth to establish His kingdom. (J. McGee) “Parousia” is used frequently of the rapture of the church, but it is also used of the return of Christ to the earth with the church in a number of passages (Matt. 24:3,27,37,39; 2 Thess. 2:8; 2 Peter 1:16), including here ... His saints (the church) shall come with Him at the Second Advent. (J. Pentecost) The confusion in this verse is largely due to the fact that students of Prophetic Truth do not distinguish between Christ’s coming “for” His saints, and “with” His saints. The former is called the rapture, the latter the revelation. Between the two is an interval of at least seven years. Numerous passages in Scripture speak of Christ coming “with” His saints (Zech. 14:5, Col. 3:4, 1 Thess. 4:14, Jude 14, 1 Thess. 3:13), but it is evident that they cannot come “with” Him, if they had not been previously caught out “to” Him. All such passages refer therefore to the revelation and not the rapture. (C. Larkin)

1 Thess. 3:13 To the end (prep.) that (def. article) He (the Holy Spirit) might complete the stabilization of (στηρίζω, AAInf., Culminative, Intended Result, Articular; strengthening) the mentality of your (Poss. Gen.) souls (Acc. Dir. Obj.; solid doctrinal framework) - blameless (Compl. Acc.; sanctified) in the sphere of holiness (Loc. Sph.; acceptable to divine standards) before God (Adv. Gen. Ref.; at the Judgment Seat of Christ), even (ascensive) our (Poss. Gen.) Father (Gen. Appos.) - before the coming (Loc. Time; arrival, parousia: at the rapture) of our (Poss. Rel.) Lord Jesus (Adv. Gen. Ref.) with all (Gen. Measure) of His (Poss. Gen.) saints (Gen. Accompaniment; the dead in Christ whom God brings with Him to meet the alive saints in the air).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 3:13** εἰς τὸ στηρίξαι ὑμῶν τὰς καρδίας ἀμέμπτους ἐν ἀγιωσύνῃ ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατὴρ ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ μετὰ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων αὐτοῦ

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 3:13** ad confirmanda corda vestra sine querella in sanctitate ante Deum et Patrem nostrum in adventu Domini nostri Iesu cum omnibus sanctis eius amen

CHAPTER 4

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 4:1** For the rest then, brethren [members of the royal family], we keep on requesting and exhorting you in the sphere of the Lord Jesus [appealing to their positional status in Christ], so that just as you received from us how [the method] you ought to walk [precise protocol for the Church Age believer] and please God [by residence and function in the love complex], even as you are currently walking [they are on the right track

spiritually], that you might abound all the more [grow to supergrace and beyond],

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:1** Finally, therefore, brethren, I request you and I beg of you, please, in the Lord Jesus, that even as you received from us the particular way in which it is necessary in the nature of the case for you to be ordering your behavior and to be striving to please God, even as also you are conducting yourselves, that you superabound yet more and more.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:1** Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort *you* by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, *so* ye would abound more and more.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul and his colleagues are continually asking and encouraging the Thessalonian believers (Iterative Present tense) in the sphere of the Lord Jesus to live the Christian way of life. They appeal to their positional sanctification in order to encourage them to pursue experiential sanctification. Paul encourages them to follow precisely correct protocol (Iterative Present tense) for the Church Age believer. He urges them to walk in the same manner that he had previously taught them. Paul and his missionary team taught all their new converts how to live the Christian life (Potential Indicative mood) in a manner that is pleasing to God. This means they taught the Thessalonians how to reside and function inside the love complex. That is the only spiritual protocol acceptable to God.

This isn't the first time the Thessalonian believers have heard these teachings from Paul and other members of his team, because they are currently (Static Present tense) walking according to the precisely correct protocol that they learned from them during their initial visit. Paul is proud of their progress so far, but it is his desire that they might abound in the spiritual life even more. He hopes they will remain in fellowship long enough, and execute the protocol plan of God consistently enough, to reach supergrace and beyond (Durative Present tense). They have the ability to abide in the sphere of divine power, to continue executing the protocol plan of God, and to make forward momentum in the spiritual life - if they obey His divine mandates. It is up to them (Potential Subjunctive mood) to be obedient.

REVELANT OPINIONS

The figure suggests that the Christian life should be marked by progress (spiritual growth); it is itinerant, always on the march. (D. Williams) The word "ought" denotes moral necessity, lying in the relationship presupposed. Pleasing God is not a matter of choice for the Christian; it is a necessity which grows out of his relationship to Christ. Furthermore, pleasing God is something which is never final in this life, for we must continually be abounding in it. The Christian life should be marked by constant growth. (C. Ryrie) We like to look forward to the day when we shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. But, my friend, in the meantime our feet are down here on the ground and we need to do some walking. We are to walk in a way that will please God. We should

keep improving. We should grow in grace and in the knowledge of Him. The walk of the believer is very important. It is emphasized in many portions of Scripture, and it is the emphasis here. (J. McGee)

The injunction to holiness concentrates on the matter of sexual morality. This is not the whole of holiness, but it is an important aspect of it, and one which needed to be especially stressed when converts from Greek paganism were being instructed in the Christian way. The idea of confining sexual intercourse within marriage was foreign to Greek conventional morality of the period. The general attitude is frequently illustrated by a quotation from Demosthenes's oration "Against Neaera:" We keep mistresses for pleasure, concubines for our day-to-day bodily needs, but we have wives to produce legitimate children and serve as trustworthy guardians of our homes. (F. Bruce) Though things are going well, there is room for improvement in the Christian experience. We are continually learning, maturing, growing in Christ. (M. Couch) The Christian can never rest satisfied. So Paul urges them to further endeavor. Specific instructions are to follow, but here he is concerned with the thought that the Christian is to grow continually. His life is far from static. (L. Morris)

It is Paul's habit to treat of doctrinal matters, answers to correspondents, and the like, in the earlier parts of his epistles. Then at the end he deals with the practical implications for the living of the Christian life. In this epistle "Finally then" is the expression which marks this transition. It does not mean, as the English might suggest, that he is in the process of ending the epistle. (L. Morris) We are the children of God, and the world judges God by our daily living. Those who will not read the Bible will read every move we make and every word we speak. Someone has said, "You are the only Bible this careless world will read. You are the sinner's Gospel, you are the scoffer's creed." Paul has this truth in mind as he begs the believers at Thessalonica to be sanctified in soul, spirit and body. (O. Green) The transition seems to mean that the main argument has been concluded, though other, not unimportant, matters are now to be dealt with. (D. Williams)

1 Thess. 4:1 **For the rest then** (Nom. Gen. Ref., transitional; finally, now as I wrap up, as to what remains), **brethren** (Voc. Address; members of the royal family), **we keep on requesting** (ἔρωτάω, PAI1P, Iterative) **and** (connective) **exhorting** (παρακαλέω, PAI1P, Iterative) **you** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **in the sphere of the Lord Jesus** (Loc. Sph.; appealing to their position in Christ), **so that** (conj.) **just as** (comparative) **you received** (παραλαμβάνω, AAI2P, Constative) **from us** (Abl. Source) **how** (interrogative; the particular method) **you ought** (δει, PImpersonalI3S, Potential Ind., Articular) **to walk** (περιπατέω, PAInf., Iterative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; precise protocol for the Church Age believer) **and** (continuative) **please** (ἄρέσκω, PAInf., Iterative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) **God** (Dat. Adv.; residence and function inside the love complex), **even** (ascensive) **as** (comparative) **you are currently walking** (περιπατέω, PAI2P, Static; they are making some progress according to divine protocol), **that** (conj.) **you**

might abound (περισσεύω, PASubj.2P, Durative, Potential) **all the more** (Adv. Degree; grow to supergrace and beyond),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:1** Λοιπὸν ἀδελφοί ἐρωτῶμεν ὑμᾶς καὶ παρακαλοῦμεν ἐν κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ [ἵνα] καθὼς παρελάβετε παρ ἡμῶν τὸ πῶς δεῖ ὑμᾶς περιπατεῖν καὶ ἀρέσκειν θεῷ καθὼς καὶ περιπατεῖτε ἵνα περισσεύητε μᾶλλον

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:1** de cetero ergo fratres rogamus vos et obsecramus in Domino Iesu ut quemadmodum accepistis a nobis quomodo vos oporteat ambulare et placere Deo sicut et ambulatis ut abundetis magis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 4:2** For you already know what instructions [mandates for living the Christian way of life] we gave you through the Lord Jesus [divine authority].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:2** For you know with a positive assurance what charges we gave you through the Lord Jesus,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:2** For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Thessalonian believers already know well (Intensive Perfect tense) the basic instructions for living the Christian way of life (Latin: precepts). Paul and his colleagues had taught them exactly what to do during their prior visit, and they have been making forward progress in the spiritual life ever since. Repetition is the price of knowledge, and they were exercising some of it. But there was a lot they didn't know yet, and Paul was determined to give them that opportunity through Timothy.

REVELANT OPINIONS

It is plain that the readers' memories are being refreshed. They are now being told something for the first time, but reminded of what they know already ... The apostolic tradition does not derive from the apostles themselves; it is the commandment of the Lord and to be obeyed as such. (F. Bruce) "Parengelia" is military language, carrying with it connotations of weight and authority. Paul is not giving orders on his own responsibility. They are following a chain of command, from the supreme commander, the Lord Jesus through Paul, His servant, to the embattled Christian soldier, fighting the battle of purity against the wiles of the wicked one. (Ritchie) These instructions, though given by Paul, did not originate with him. They were given through the Lord Jesus. (L. Morris)

Sometimes Christians want to hear new truth when what they need is exhortation to excel still more, to press on to greater experiencing of old truths which they are already practicing to a limited degree. (T. Constable) Let me say this very carefully: The Ten Commandments have no part in a sinner's salvation, nor are they the standard for Christian conduct. The Ten Commandments were not given

to save us; they were given to show us that we are sinners and that we need a Savior. That is their purpose. However, there are commandments for believers, and the standard for Christian conduct which they set is on a much higher plane than the Ten Commandments. In chapter 5 we will find 22 commandments for believers given. (J. McGee)

1 Thess. 4:2 For (explanatory) you already know (οἶδα, Perf.AI2P, Intensive) what (Acc. Spec.) instructions (Acc. Dir. Obj.) we gave (δίδωμι, AAI1P, Constative) you (Dat. Adv.) through the Lord Jesus (Abl. Source; divine authority).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:2** οἴδατε γὰρ τίνας παραγγελίας ἐδώκαμεν ὑμῖν διὰ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:2** scitis enim quae praecepta dederimus vobis per Dominum Iesum

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 4:3** **For this continues to be the will of God with reference to your experiential sanctification: You should abstain from sexual immorality,**

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:3** For this is the will of God, your being set apart [from sin to holiness], that you should hold yourselves off from fornication;

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:3** For this is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Knowing some of the problems the Thessalonian believers had personally, Paul now gives them some spiritual advice. It is the will of God for each of them to continue living the Christian way of life (Durative Present tense). The Lord is interested in the experiential sanctification of all believers. And the first advice Paul has to give us with reference to our sanctification is that we should avoid sexual immorality (Gnomic Present tense) of any kind. The infinitive supplies the colon in the sentence structure.

REVELANT OPINIONS

Christianity from the outset has sanctified sexual union within marriage (as in Judaism); outside marriage it was forbidden. This was a strange notion in the pagan society to which the gospel was first brought; there, various forms of extra-marital sexual union were tolerated and some were even encouraged. A man might have a mistress who could provide him also with intellectual companionship; the institution of slavery made it easy for him to have a concubine, while casual gratification was readily available from a harlot. The function of his wife was to manage his household and be the mother of his legitimate children and heirs. There was no body of public opinion to discourage porneia, although someone who indulged in it to excess might be satirized on the same level as a notorious glutton or drunkard. (F. Bruce)

Sexual relations are to be practiced exclusively within marriage, and any form of sexual aggression against the family life of others is condemned. The Spirit whom Christians have received is the Spirit of holiness, and nothing unholy can be tolerated in one whom he indwells: self-control is part of the fruit which his presence yields in a believer's life. (F. Bruce) The will of God stated here is the Lord's desire that the church be sanctified experientially and thus be strengthened by Him in order to avoid the terrible sin life of Thessalonica ... The word "porneia" likely includes all the grossly immoral practices taking place in the Roman and Greek cultures. Sexual impurity was part of their cultic religious life and it surrounded and overwhelmed Christians as they attempted to live new lives in Christ. Paul knew the Thessalonians could easily fall back into such a life. (M. Couch)

The Greek culture gave wide approval to all forms of sexual misbehavior. The idea that any kind of extramarital sex was wrong was quite foreign to the Greek mind. A blatant double standard existed. Wives were expected to be chaste, mothers of children, and keepers at home. Married men, however, could do as they pleased. They could keep mistresses and concubines and frequent prostitutes with the full approval of society. Conventional morality saw nothing wrong in having affairs, committing sodomy, or indulging in premarital and extramarital sex. Prostitution was legalized, and the state brothels' profits were often used to build temples - hence the need for teaching on sanctification. (J. Phillips)

Positional sanctification means Christ has been made unto us sanctification. We are accepted in the Beloved, and we will never be more saved than at the moment we put our trust in Christ. Practical sanctification is the Holy Spirit working in our lives to produce a holiness in our walk. This practical sanctification will never be perfect so long as we are in these bodies with our old sinful flesh. Total sanctification will occur in the future when we are conformed to the image of Christ Jesus. Then both the position and the practice of sanctification will be perfect. (J. McGee) God has a right to command our sanctification – our complete surrender and entire devotion. We should be completely set apart and dedicated to Him – soul, spirit and body – in every phase of life. Believers need to recognize and confess that the physical frame (as well as the spirit and soul) belongs to God, and will share in the glorious resurrection through Christ when He comes in the Rapture and the first resurrection. Here Paul is referring to bodily sanctification. (O. Green)

1 Thess. 4:3 **For** (explanatory) **this** (Subj. Nom.) **continues to be** (εἰμί, PAI3S, Durative) **the will** (Pred. Nom.) **of God** (Poss. Gen.) **with reference to your** (Poss. Gen.) **experiential sanctification** (Nom. Gen. Ref., Apposition): **You should abstain** (ἀπέχω, PMInf., Gnostic, Command; avoid, stay away from) **from sexual immorality** (Abl. Separation; adultery, fornication),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:3** τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ ἁγιασμός ὑμῶν ἀπέχεσθαι ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ τῆς πορνείας

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:3** haec est enim voluntas Dei sanctificatio vestra ut abstineatis vos a fornicatione

LWB 1 Thess. 4:4 Each one of you should understand [learn how] that he is to possess [have sexual relations with] his own [not another man's] wife with dedication [fulfill her sexual desires] and honor [recognition of her sexual needs],

KW 1 Thess. 4:4 That each one of you should know that he is to procure his own vessel [wife] in [personal] holiness and honor,

KJV 1 Thessalonians 4:4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul wants every man to understand (Intensive Perfect tense) that he is to have sexual relations (Infinitive of Command) only with his own wife (Durative & Iterative Present tense), not with another man's wife. In the prior verse, a man is prohibited from having sex with a single woman (classified as sexual immorality); in this verse a man is prohibited from having sex with another man's wife. The Greek word "ktaomai" is often translated as "possess" or "acquire," but in this context it refers to having sexual relations with one's spouse. The vast majority of commentators are too squeamish to tell it like it is. The address here is to men, but it likewise includes women: wives are not to have sex with single men nor with another wife's husband. Sex outside of marriage (fornication) and sex with another person's spouse (adultery) are both condemned by God. Purity in physical life is commanded again and again in both the OT and NT.

The words translated "sanctification" and "honor" in the KJV are not referring to the manner in which you choose your wife during the dating process. They are words that instruct each husband in how he should treat his own wife when engaging in sex. He should be dedicated to fulfilling her sexual desires and he should recognize and value her sexual needs. She has the same desires and needs for physical intimacy as he does, and as the husband in the relationship, he should acknowledge them and respect them as blessings from the Lord specifically designed for both him and her. In other words, the man is to control his own sexual urges and not treat his wife like a slot machine, but as a partner who has desires and needs of her own that need to be fulfilled. He is not to tend to his own "selfish desire for satisfaction" to the exclusion of his wife's desires for sexual fulfillment. (TDNT: Delling) If this respect is mutual, neither spouse will be interested in "straying."

"Timei" in the Greek can mean many things. When addressing the sexes in general, it has the idea of honoring the marriage partner. When addressing sex between the sexes specifically, it has the idea of honoring the intimate needs of your spouse and not maltreating them. The opposite of "honor" would be to treat your spouse as though they had no intimate needs, no sexual desires that need to be fulfilled. If you understand that your spouse's desires were given to him/her by God for your mutual pleasure, that fact should make you honor and respect what God has given to your spouse. The worst thing you can do as a husband is to ignore your wife's sexual desires; the worst thing you can do as a wife is to ignore your husband's sexual desires. Paul is warning

believers that a broken marriage can result by ignoring this intimate facet of life.

REVELANT OPINIONS

Relevant to the discussion of marriage relationships is the paraenetical passage in 1 Thess. 4:3-8 which treats sexual ethics in the wider context of sanctification. “Skeuos” normally means “vessel” and “ktasthai” may mean to “possess,” hence the passage has been understood to mean that Paul is urging the men among the Thessalonian believers that sanctification also involves knowing how to possess their sexual organs or their bodies ... Maurer adduces rabbinic evidence for “vessel” being used of women in sexual contexts, and suggests that “ktasthai” here corresponds to become lord or master of a wife with specific reference to sexual intercourse. The thought, therefore, would be parallel to 1 Cor. 7:2 ff, where Paul urges marriage as the divinely appointed provision for man’s sexual needs. If it be pointed out that Paul seems to be concerned here with male sexual needs rather than the concerns of the woman [a fact I disagree with], the reason for this appears to be that it was precisely the male sexual needs and lack of sanctification that constituted the problem at Thessalonica ... The reference to giving honor may be compared with Paul’s statement that the wife rules over the husband’s body in 1 Cor. 7:4. (C. Brown)

The self-giving of the wife acquires a new dedication, and the impulse of the husband a new content and standard, in agape. The wife is no longer surrendered to the husband; she is entrusted to him. He does not have rights of lordship over her; he takes responsibility for her. In the story of Joseph and Asenath the reference is to the relationship between the Messiah and the community, but it is here to the sensual and supra-sensual experiences of the individual soul. (Stauffer) The context of the Greek in this passage must be compared to the Greek word “pragma” in verse 6 which is a euphemism for sex. (TDNT) The Hebrew equivalent in Egyptian Aramaic texts and the Targums has the oriental understanding of “vessel” as sexual intercourse on the part of the male as the using of a container or vessel ... meaning not only “to use someone,” but is a euphemism for coitus in the sexual sphere. The husband becomes the wife’s lord and master in marriage primarily by possessing her sexually. Thus the saying that the husband makes the wife a completed vessel is again very close to a sexual euphemism. (TDNT)

The best support for this word surfaces in 1 Samuel 21:5, where David assures the priest of Nob that his young men have kept themselves from women. Their “vessels (LXX skene) are holy,” he said. The reference is, broadly, to their bodies and, perhaps, specifically to their genitalia. (D. Williams) The question was not of procuring a wife, but of living honorably and decently with her, paying her the respect which was her right. (M. Vincent) It is impermissible to adduce 1 Corinthians 7:2 as a parallel, for there fornication is avoided by each man’s having his own wife and each woman’s having her own husband; the relationship is mutual and neither is the “skeuos” of the other, both being persons in their own right. (F. Bruce) The durative sense of “possess” yields the sense “to have the body in one’s power.” Those who are married are being told to hold their own wives in esteem ... by the continuation of sexual relations in the marriage ... wooing a woman during cohabitation. The physical marriage relationship is linked to the ordination of the partners to the future inheritance. In this way it receives its supreme justification and also its ultimate profundity. (TDNT)

Some scholars think that the word “vessel” here refers to a man’s wife. (J. Phillips) Usually “vessel” has been understood to mean “body,” but there are some ancient and many modern commentators who maintain that in this passage it signifies “wife.” The big difficulty in the way of accepting “body” as the meaning of the verb, which really means “to acquire,” and it is not easy to see how a man can “acquire” his own body. However, there is evidence from the papyri that it could be used in the sense “possess.” (L. Morris) As in these and other languages the ideas of acquisition and possession are expressed by the same word. Setting aside all arbitrary and untenable interpretations, we have two explanations: his body or his wife. (C. Ellicott) The honor to be shown to one’s wife is not a form of sexual pathos or perversion, i.e., illicit erotic passion, but a mutual passion which grows out of the marriage relationship. (TDNT)

1 Thess. 4:4 Each one (Subj. Acc.) of you (Adv. Gen. Ref.) should understand (οἶδα, Perf.AInf., Intensive, Command, Epexegetic; learn how to know) that (Acc. Gen. Ref.) he is to possess (κτάομαι, PMInf., Durative & Iterative, Command, Deponent; idiom for sexual relations) his own (Poss. Gen.; not another man’s) wife (Acc. Dir. Obj.) with dedication (Instr. Manner; sanctification, holiness, consecrate) and (connective) honor (Instr. Manner; respect, recognition, value),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:4** εἰδέναι ἕκαστον ὑμῶν τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σκεῦος κτᾶσθαι ἐν ἀγιασμῷ καὶ τιμῇ

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:4** ut sciat unusquisque vestrum suum vas possidere in sanctificatione et honore

LWB 1 Thess. 4:5 **Not with an uncontrollable urge of sexual lust [sinful rather than sanctified desire] in the same manner as unbelievers who indeed do not know God,**

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:5** Not in the passion of an inordinate desire even as also the Gentiles do who do not know God,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:5** Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

There is a legitimate, sanctified sexual desire that a husband and wife should have for each other. It is not to be confused with the wanton, uncontrollable urge exhibited by unbelievers who do not have an intimate relationship with God. The sinful desires common in the Greek cults were the prevalent standard in Thessalonian society. It was uncontrollable, animalistic and disrespectful for Christians. This might be called today the arrogant “me first” syndrome, where sex is nothing but an act instead of a relationship. The husband is warned not to behave like an animal, treating his wife in a shabby manner during their sexual relationship. There should be

mutual respect and legitimate, controllable desire for each other.

REVELANT OPINIONS

The body must be treated as the Lord's property and not used as a means of wanton self-indulgence. (F. Bruce) The apostle knows the environment of Thessalonica and is doing everything he can to make the believers aware of the temptations surrounding them. He knows the destructive nature of sexual sin and how it can destroy marriages. The word "lustful" is sexual passion in the passive sense, an ungovernable force like a firestorm that begins all by itself. "Passion" is active desire that can be fed and further encouraged by the individual. (M. Couch) This conduct, he says, is typical of "the Gentiles." It is not usual to find it in the sense of "non-Christians," but that is evidently the meaning here. (L. Morris) "Not in the passion of lust" is a plain picture of the wrong way for the husband to come to marriage. (A.T. Robertson) Even where "ktasthai" is taken as "possess," a usage not quite impossible for later Greek, it would only extend the idea to the duties of a Christian husband. (W. Nicoll)

We are not to regard the body as an instrument of self-gratification. When Adam sinned, the Holy Spirit vacated the human spirit, leaving man without the divine direction and drive needed to live according to God's plan. Our empty and yearning spirits can never find rest apart from God. People seek to fill that internal void with religion, education, pleasure, sex, ambition, power, and human love and affection. The "Gentiles which know not God" are lost. They are spiritually dead. When we accept Christ, however, we are "born again" - born of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit once more takes up His abode within (1 Cor. 3:16-17) so that we can once again be indwelt by the Holy Spirit. It is the indwelling Holy Spirit who makes it possible for the regenerated believer to keep his body as a sacred vessel and not to defile it by sexual sin. Because we know God, a clear-cut line of separation must exist between our behavioral standards and those of the Gentiles. (J. Phillips)

1 Thess. 4:5 **Not** (neg. particle) **with an uncontrollable urge** (Instr. Manner) **of lust** (Adv. Gen. Ref.; sinful desire, passion) **in the same manner as** (comparative) **unbelievers** (Subj. Nom.) **who** **indeed** (emphatic) **do not** (neg. particle) **know** (οἶδα, Perf.APtc.NNP, Descriptive, Substantival) **God** (Acc. Dir. Obj.),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:5** μή ἐν πάθει ἐπιθυμίας καθάπερ καὶ τὰ ἔθνη τὰ μὴ εἰδότα τὸν θεόν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:5** non in passione desiderii sicut et gentes quae ignorant Deum

LWB 1 Thess. 4:6 That no man antagonizes [by flirting or making sexual advances towards another man's wife] or cheats [by committing adultery with another man's wife] his brother [fellow believer] in this matter [sins of sexual arrogance], because the Lord is the One who disciplines with reference to all of these things [sexual sins], even as we previously warned and charged you with a solemn oath [this wasn't the 1st time Paul had warned them of this category of sins and the resultant divine discipline].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:6** That no one be transgressing and defrauding his brother [Christian] in the aforementioned matter because the Lord is the One who inflicts punishment with reference to all these things, even as also we told you before and charged you.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:6** That no *man* go beyond and defraud his brother in *any* matter: because that the Lord *is* the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues with two prohibitions (Infinitives) related to treating another man's wife with respect. A Christian is not to antagonize another man (Latin: supergradient, going beyond what he is able to tolerate) by flirting or making sexual advances towards his wife (Dramatic Aorist tense) or by actually taking advantage of him (Latin: circumventing his authority) by committing adultery with his wife (Dramatic Aorist tense). It doesn't matter whether it is innocent flirting or outright advances, it is forbidden by the Lord. If the husband finds out, he might do something rash out of revenge motivation. But an even worse scenario is the divine discipline the Lord will bring upon you for defrauding a brother by taking advantage of or "stealing" his wife.

Sins from a state of sexual arrogance are extremely detrimental to a believer's spiritual life. All forward momentum is destroyed by engaging in them, especially when another man's wife is caused to sin and stumble as well. The divine discipline for sexual sins (Latin: vindication) is more than you can imagine and more than you ever want to experience. The reverse is also true; women are not to flirt, make sexual advances or commit adultery with another woman's husband. Paul primarily addresses men because this was a serious problem in Thessalonica. He has warned them about this category of sins before (Constative Aorist tense), even to the point of charging them with a solemn oath to discontinue the practice!

REVELANT OPINIONS

The force of "huperbaino" is of crossing a boundary – here of crossing a forbidden boundary, and hence trespassing (sexually) on territory which is not one's own. Jerome has a phrase which aptly expresses the sense: to transgress the permitted bounds of marriage ... "Pleonektein" is the desire to possess more than one should in any area of life, and the cognate nouns repeatedly occur in association with words denoting fornication or impurity. No one is to enrich himself in this matter at his brother's expense, by taking his wife away from him ... "En to pragmati" translated "in the matter under discussion" refers to sexual relations. (F. Bruce) The delicacy of Paul makes him refrain from plainer terms. (A.T. Robertson) There is no change of subject from licentiousness to dishonesty. The asyndeton and the euphemism show that Paul is still dealing with the immorality of men, but now as a form of social dishonesty and fraud. (W. Nicoll)

There are many ways of viewing sexual license. The way Paul chooses here is that it is a matter of defrauding another of his rights. You cannot break this rule without in some way cheating your fellow-man. Joined with "wrong" it reminds us that all sexual looseness represents an act of injustice

to someone other than the two parties concerned. Adultery is an obvious violation of the rights of another. But promiscuity before marriage represents the robbing of the other of that virginity which ought to be brought to a marriage. The future partner of such a one has been defrauded. (L. Morris) Compare the saying of rabbi Simon ben Zoma (on Deut. 23:25): Look not on thy neighbor's vineyard. If thou hast looked, enter not; if thou hast entered, regard not the fruits; if thou hast regarded them, touch them not; if thou has touched them, eat them not. But if thou hast eaten, then thou dost eject thyself from the life of this world and of that which is to come. (W. Nicoll)

The context is still sexual transgressions. Such sins are often practiced in secret: the father or the husband does not know what is going on and his rights are being denied; he is being defrauded. But God knows, and he will prove to be the Avenger in both this life and at the bema judgment where the believer's works are to be tested. (M. Couch) Immorality is a sin against God the Son. God has written "No trespassing" over every man or woman who is not one's own wife or husband. He has done more. He has posted the warning "Trespassers will be prosecuted." The word for "defraud" means to "wrong" or "overreach." The idea is that of crossing over a forbidden frontier, trespassing on territory that is clearly posted "Out of bounds." The Lord Jesus is the One who deals out judgment to those who transgress God's moral laws. Punishment for sexual sin is severe. (J. Phillips) The idea connotes greed, to want to have more than one should, and here, to want the spouse of another. (D. Williams)

1 Thess. 4:6 That (definite article) no (neg. particle) man (ellipsis) antagonizes (ὑπερβαίνω, PAInf., Dramatic, Prohibition; trespasses against, goes beyond) or (ascensive) cheats (πλεονεκτέω, PAInf., Dramatic, Prohibition; takes advantage of, defrauds, infringes upon) his (Gen. Rel.) brother (Acc. Dir. Obj.; fellow believer) in this matter (Loc. Sph.; flirting, sexual advances, even adultery with his wife), because (conj.) the Lord (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis) the One who disciplines (Nom. Appos.; punishes) with reference to all (Gen. Measure) of these things (Adv. Gen. Ref.; sexual sins), even (ascensive conj.) as (comparative adv.) we previously warned (προλέγω, AAI1P, Constativ; informed you beforehand) and (connective) charged you (Dat. Adv.) with a solemn oath (διαμαρτύρομαι, AMI1P, Dramatic, Deponent).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:6** τὸ μὴ ὑπερβαίνειν καὶ πλεονεκτεῖν ἐν τῷ πράγματι τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ διότι ἕκδικος κύριος περὶ πάντων τούτων καθὼς καὶ προείπαμεν ὑμῖν καὶ διεμαρτύραμεθα

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:6** ut ne quis supergrediatur neque circumveniat in negotio fratrem suum quoniam vindex est Dominus de his omnibus sicut et praediximus vobis et testificati sumus

LWB 1 Thess. 4:7 For God did not call us to immorality [sexual impurity], but into the sphere of holiness [sanctification].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:7** For God did not issue His divine summons [into salvation] to you for uncleanness but within the sphere of holiness.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:7** For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Lord did not unconditionally elect us to salvation so we could afterwards indulge in sins of sexual arrogance and destroy our spiritual life. God did not call us (Dramatic Aorist tense) to sexual immorality, but to a legitimate sexual relationship inside the boundary of marriage. The words “immorality” and “holiness” are direct references to the topic at hand - sexual arrogance. But they are also remote references (by way of application) for residence and function inside the sphere of divine power (holiness) versus residence and function inside the cosmic system (immorality). A believer who is involved in sexual sins is out of fellowship and therefore not residing or functioning in the sphere of divine power. A believer who is involved in sexual sins is residing and functioning in Satan’s cosmic system. God did not summon us into His divine plan so we could crash-and-burn in the cosmic system through sexual arrogance.

REVELANT OPINIONS

The mention of “akatharsia” confirms that the subject of verse 6 is sexual rather than commercial behavior. (F. Bruce) “Called” in its usual use by Paul, is the sovereign act of election whereby a believer is brought to salvation. Election relates to divine predestination, by which the Father draws unto Him those specifically called to salvation. In the Thessalonian letters, Paul uses “called” to mean the divine, sovereign work of grace. We are saved by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit but also are called to live a sanctified and pure life. (M. Couch) Immorality is a sin against God the Holy Spirit. Paul takes immorality so seriously that he seems almost unable to stop warning against it. He calls all three members of the Trinity to witness against it. (J. Phillips) The very “vessel” with which sexual sin might be committed, is the dwelling place of the God who forbids it. (D. Williams) God has “called” us all for a decent sex life consonant with his aims and purposes. (A.T. Robertson)

1 Thess. 4:7 For (explanatory) God (Subj. Nom.) did not (neg. particle) call (καλέω, AAI3S, Dramatic; summon) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to immorality (Dat. Disadv.; sexual impurity), but (contrast) into the sphere of holiness (Loc. Sph.; sanctification).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:7** οὐ γὰρ ἐκάλεσεν ἡμᾶς ὁ θεὸς ἐπὶ ἀκαθαρσίᾳ ἀλλ' ἐν ἁγιασμῷ

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:7** non enim vocavit nos Deus in inmunditia sed in sanctificatione

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 4:8** For this very reason [due to our call to sanctification rather than immorality], he who continues to reject [ignore] this warning [to avoid sexual sins], is not rejecting man [cosmic 1: arrogance complex of sins], but God [cosmic 2: hatred complex of sins], Who has given His Holy Spirit to us [divine provision for spiritual growth].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:8** Therefore, he who rejects [this], not man is he rejecting but God who also gives His Holy Spirit to us.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:8** He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses an inferential particle to remind us that our call from God was to sanctification, not immorality. We are supposed to reside and function inside the sphere of divine power, not in Satan's cosmic system. So the person who outright rejects (ignores, spurns) Paul's warning to avoid sexual sins (Iterative Present tense) is not merely ignoring his advice, but is ignoring God's mandates. Paul did not make-up these mandates against sexual immorality by himself. They came from God as a source. That shouldn't be a "hard sell" to the Thessalonian believers who are actively involved in such sins, because they know that God gave them His Holy Spirit (Historical Present tense). Moreover, the ministry of the Spirit is to guide us into sanctification, not immorality.

While the immediate reference in this verse is the continuation of divine mandates against sexual immorality, the remote reference is to the sphere of divine power versus the sphere of satanic power. Satan has two spheres of power to deceive us with: one related to arrogance and another related to hatred. When we succumb to arrogance sins, we are fighting man; when we succumb to hatred sins, we are fighting God. Those who are ignoring Paul's warning and are pursuing their former life of sexual sins, are not merely fighting Paul and his colleagues, they are fighting God Himself. They may have entered carnality by thinking they were only rejecting Paul's questionable advice, but their repeated sinful behavior has thrust them into a losing battle with the Lord Himself.

This attitude is quite common today. When teenagers, for example, are warned about premarital sex, they roll their eyes and mutter something under their breath such as "Whatever." They think the warnings have no teeth. They do not understand that this type of continued behavior forces them out of fellowship and destroys forward momentum in their spiritual life. Paul met with the same ridicule in his day and was no doubt called a "prude" or "legalist" when he gave such warnings. Perhaps his best response to those ill-conceived murmurings is the reminder that God gave them the Holy Spirit as a gift. And what was the Holy Spirit given to us for? They have two choices: to pursue sanctification or to pursue immorality. One leads to blessing, the other leads to cursing.

REVELANT OPINIONS

In 1 Corinthians 6:19 fornication is a sin committed against the believer's body which is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit. (F. Bruce) Paul is thus using strong language, perhaps to stave off trouble before

it develops. He sees the dangers, knows the temptations, and is afraid that lustful sins that are practiced in the dark may return and trap some of those in the Thessalonian church as it may have done before that. He is fearful his converts will fall and then try to justify their licentiousness and not hesitate to set aside their God. (A.T. Robertson) The apostle reminds the Thessalonian church that if some are rejecting the truth about impurity and sanctification, they are not rejecting the teacher of the Word; indeed, their rejection is of the Lord. (M. Couch) This gift of the Spirit leaves you in a different position with regard to God from that which you held before. It is a witness in your souls against impurity. It is a token that He has consecrated you to Himself. (J. Lightfoot)

In Adam, we are controlled by the Fall; in Christ, we are controlled by the Call. Controlled by the dynamics of the Fall, we obey the dictates of a ruined nature; controlled by the dynamics of the Call, we obey the dictates of a redeemed nature. The characteristic of our ruined nature is sin; the characteristic of our redeemed nature is sanctification (holiness), because God has not called us unto uncleanness. Uncleanness is what we inherit by reason of our natural birth, but God has called us unto holiness. That is what we inherit by reason of our new birth. The natural man delights in vileness; the new man delights in virtue ... The indwelling Holy Spirit makes it possible for a believer to live a chaste life. In our ignorance and inexperience, we might grieve Him at times – He will warn us. We might skate on some thin ice at times – He will warn us. But let us beware of persisting. We might go too far. The Holy Spirit is outraged when we defile our body, His temple, by sexual misbehavior. He is not to be trifled with in this matter. (J. Phillips)

1 Thess. 4:8 For this very reason (inferential; due to our call to sanctification rather than immorality), he (Subj. Nom.) who continues to reject (ἀθετέω, PAPtc.NMS, Iterative, Substantival; ignores) this warning (ellipsis), is not (neg. particle) rejecting (ἀθετέω, PAI3S, Iterative, Substantival; ignoring) man (Acc. Dir. Obj.; cosmic 1: arrogance complex of sins), but (adversative) God (Acc. Dir. Obj.; cosmic 2: hatred complex of sins), Who has given (δίδωμι, PAPtc.AMS, Historical, Substantival) His (Poss. Gen.) Holy Spirit (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to us (Acc. Adv.).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:8** τοιγαροῦν ὁ ἀθετῶν οὐκ ἄνθρωπον ἀθετεῖ ἀλλὰ τὸν θεὸν τὸν διδόντα τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ τὸ ἅγιον εἰς ὑμᾶς

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:8** itaque qui spernit non hominem spernit sed Deum qui etiam dedit Spiritum suum Sanctum in vobis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 4:9** Now, concerning brotherly love, you have no need for me to write you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to exercise virtue love towards one another,

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:9** Now, concerning brotherly affection you are not having any need that I should be writing to you, for as for you, you yourselves are those taught by God with a view to loving one another with a love that impels you to deny yourselves for the benefit of the one whom you love,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:9** But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a transitional particle to switch topics from a negative prohibition on sexual sins to a positive affirmation of their utilization of impersonal love as a problem-solving device. Concerning the topic of brotherly love (Latin: fraternity, Gk: philadelphia), they are doing great and he does not need to command them to do so. He does not need to write (Latin: scribe) a treatise to them (Purpose Infinitive) to remind them of this mandate. They have been taught by God to exercise virtue love (Customary Present tense) towards each other (Historical Present tense), so he does not need to remind them. As with all believers, there are things we succeed at and things we fail at. Some of the Thessalonian believers were succumbing to their old life of sexual sins, but as a whole, they were making progress in their reciprocal relationship towards other believers.

REVELANT OPINIONS

The superhuman manner of life under grace is not addressed to some spiritual company alone within the whole body of Christ; it is addressed to all believers alike. The imposition of this superhuman manner of life upon all believers alike carries with it the revelation that all have the supernatural power by which to live according to the superhuman standards. (L. Chafer) They had been informed of their duty. They knew their Master's will, and could not plead ignorance as an excuse. (M. Henry) To cultivate this philadelphia for one another is to apply it to the Christian brotherhood. (J. Lightfoot)

1 Thess. 4:9 **Now** (transitional), **concerning brotherly love** (Adv. Gen. Ref.), **you have** (έχω, PAI2P, Static) **no** (neg. adv.) **need** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **for me** (Subj. Nom.) **to write** (γράφω, PAInf., Static, Purpose) **to you** (Dat. Adv.), **for** (explanatory) **you yourselves** (Subj. Nom.) **have been** (είμι, PPI2P, Historical) **taught by God** (Pred. Nom.) **to exercise virtue love** (ἀγαπάω, PAInf., Customary; impersonal love) **towards one another** (Acc. Adv.; reciprocal),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:9** Περὶ δὲ τῆς φιλαδελφίας οὐ χρεῖαν ἔχετε γράφειν ὑμῖν αὐτοὶ γὰρ ὑμεῖς θεοδίδακτοὶ ἐστε εἰς τὸ ἀγαπᾶν ἀλλήλους

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:9** de caritate autem fraternitatis non necesse habemus scribere vobis ipsi enim vos a Deo didicistis ut diligatis invicem

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 4:10** For indeed, you are doing it [exercising basic impersonal love] toward all the brethren in the whole area of Macedonia. However, we urge you, brethren, to superabound [exercise advanced impersonal love] all the more [there's always room for improvement],

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:10** For you also are doing the same with respect to all the brethren in the whole of Macedonia. Now, as for you, I beg of you, please, brethren, that you see to it that you continually are increasing more and more [in this love],

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:10** And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses an emphatic conjunction to communicate to the Thessalonian believers his knowledge that they are indeed being faithful in their exercise of impersonal love (Iterative Present tense) towards their fellow believers who live in the geographical area (Latin: universe) of Macedonia. They have reached out to believers in other cities in their region, assisting them in their missionary work and church building activities. Paul compliments them on their successes, and then encourages them (Iterative Present tense) to exercise advanced impersonal love (Purpose Infinitive). There is always room for improvement; there is always another stage to pursue in the spiritual life. The superlative “all the more” points to continued spiritual growth (Latin: abundance) in the area of virtue love.

REVELANT OPINIONS

Love for the brethren is an area for growth and development. Very candidly, some of the saints are not very lovely. But these Thessalonians did love the brethren, but evidently their love had not reached the *summum bonum* of life. They weren't perfect in their love, and there was still room for improvement. (J. McGee) The love complex is unique to the Church Age, that period of human history from the day of Pentecost, circa A.D. 30, to the resurrection or Rapture of the Church, which is yet future. We possess the entire divine sphere of power (dynasphere), a privilege never extended to believers of other dispensations. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

1 Thess. 4:10 For (explanatory) indeed (emphatic), you are doing (ποιέω, PAI2P, Iterative; exercising) it (Acc. Dir. Obj.; basic virtue love) toward all (Acc. Measure) the brethren (Acc. Dir. Obj.; fellow believers) in the whole area (Dat. Measure; geographical region) of Macedonia (Loc. Place). However (adversative), we urge (παρακαλέω, PAI1P, Customary & Durative; encourage) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.), brethren (Voc. Address), to superabound (περισσεύω, PAInf., Iterative, Purpose; exercise advanced virtue love) all the more (Adv.; advanced impersonal love),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:10** καὶ γὰρ ποιεῖτε αὐτὸ εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς [τοὺς] ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ Μακεδονίᾳ παρακαλοῦμεν δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀδελφοί περισσεύειν μᾶλλον

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:10** etenim facitis illud in omnes fratres in universa Macedonia rogamus autem vos fratres ut abundetis magis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 4:11** And that you consider it a point of honor [aspiration] to live a quiet life [free from turmoil and disturbances] and mind your own business [respect the privacy of others] and work with your hands [continue your career or vocation], just as I charged you,

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:11** That you make it your ambition to be living a quiet life, that you are cultivating the habit of attending to your own private affairs, and that you are working with your hands, even as I gave you a charge,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:11** And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul also encourages them to make it a life's aim or ambition (Durative Present tense) to live a quiet life (Customary Present tense). Their desire should be to live peaceably with their family, friends and neighbors. This is the opposite goal that most people have today, that of "living in the fast lane" or "trying to keep up with the Joneses." While there is nothing inherently wrong with seeking advancement in your career or living in a big city versus a small rural community, there can be a motivational problem for believers if the end result is a stressful or intrusive life. Plato used this word as "relief from pain" and "the tranquility of the philosopher who escapes from the turmoil of politics." Xenophon used it as an escape to "a place of solitude." Since I often work in an office on Wall Street in NYC, I can definitely relate to escaping to a place of solitude and trying to keep the outside pressure of business from creating inside stress in my soul.

Herodotus used the Greek word "hesychia" to describe a disposition that is quiet. It was also used to denote a cessation of speech, work or conflict, a calming of oneself, the imposition of silence, ceasing from a course of action, relaxation, or even refraining culpable inaction. Does your career or vocation allow you any privacy or peaceful space? I dare say few of us have that luxury. So what are we to do when our boss (or organization in general) keeps applying pressure upon us, a never-ending list of increasing demands? This is where we should be applying two problem-solving devices: impersonal love and the faith rest technique. I believe I am reasonably successful in applying these problem-solving devices in my vocation, but don't believe for a minute that I don't fail miserably on occasion. We all have strengths that often become weaknesses; one of mine is that I'm a fighter, so I tend to fight first and seek peace later.

For example, when my superiors in the corporation are making a bad decision, I sometimes have a difficult time being quiet. It is my responsibility to offer a dissenting opinion, since I am an expert (SME) on topics in my field. At some point, I need to cease in my efforts to convince my

superiors that their decision is incorrect. That is so easy for me to say, and so difficult for me to do. Another example that often occurs in my profession is when competing viewpoints are being voiced in a strategy session. It is sometimes difficult for me to stop “silencing the opposition” when I know my project or system is superior to theirs. It is difficult for me to be “peaceable” when I am so excited about my system or software package. The Lord wants me to lead a life of tranquility, and I am not making matters easy for myself when I create turmoil rather than state my opinion and then give it up. “Balance” is a key word my wife and I continually cite to each other when the going gets tough. But it is so elusive.

Paul also encourages them to mind their own business (Customary Present tense), respecting the privacy of others and tending to their own affairs. This idiom includes avoiding office politics, which almost always involve sins of the tongue: maligning, slandering and other forms of subtle character assassination. Along with these two goals in life, he also encourages the Thessalonian believers to continue working with their hands (Customary Present tense). Everyone has a career or vocation in life, and we should not abandon it for any superficial reason. Like some cultic groups in California, there were some Thessalonian believers who thought the Lord was going to return on a specific day, so they quit their jobs, sold everything they had, and “lived it up” waiting for the rapture or 2nd coming. Paul had taught them the doctrines of the rapture and 2nd advent, but a few of them were misapplying those doctrines and abandoning their vocations. Paul is essentially saying, “The Lord is not here yet, so get back to work!”

REVELANT OPINIONS

Peter uses the word “hesychia” to portray a spirit which calmly bears the disturbances created by others and which itself does not create disturbances. Paul uses it here as an oxymoron, to make it their ambition to be free of inordinate ambition. Moreover, they are to avoid the disorderliness of busybodies and to attend quietly (attendant disposition) to their business, and earn their own living. Any excitement that produces corporate turmoil or individual laziness is here repudiated. And the Christian should pray for conditions that will permit a quiet and tranquil manner of life, a life free from outward disturbance and marked by inner tranquility. (M. Harris: Colin Brown) Outside Christianity the verb, when applied to work, does not in the first instance lay emphasis on sloth but rather on an irresponsible attitude to the obligation to work. (TDNT) This sedate and tranquil spirit is in contrast to the excited and unquiet bustle that often marks ill-defined or mistaken religious expectation. (C. Ellicott)

We should aim at doing much good without attracting attention to ourselves. The Christian should not clamour for recognition. He should be content that his work prospers, though he remains obscure. We should be too busy with work to have much time for talk. Busybodies are generally drones. How silent is the work of God in nature! Silently the forest grows. So let our work be done. We should work peaceably. The noisy man is too often the quarrelsome man. In the ambition to sound a name abroad, bitter envy and jealousy are excited. (W. Adeney) Christianity has something to say on the industrial life. It has been charged with discrediting industry. No calumny could be more false. It certainly discourages engrossing worldly cares, and bids men remember their heavenly

citizenship. But it only inculcates a more faithful discharge of earthly duty by insisting on lofty views of life and the pure principles which should inspire it. (W. Adeney)

For Paul and for all believers all work is the fruit of faith. This work is sacred to the degree that at least indirectly it serves the Christian community in respect of its good repute in the world. All work in the Christian community (and not merely in the organized church) is finally God's work through men. (TDNT). The conduct of one member of the community affects the welfare of the whole community; the reputation of the community suffers if a few members gain notoriety as idle busybodies, instead of minding their own affairs. (F. Bruce) If some in the assembly had been previously well off, this injunction to work may imply that they had lost their position of wealth and now had to perform manual labor in order to survive. Or the apostle may have been telling them to carry their own load and continue to do a fair day's work. Christians must never evade their daily responsibilities under the pretense of proclaiming or preparing for Christ's return. To do so is to distort this great hope. (M. Couch)

Most covenant or amillennial theologians assume this section is dealing with the 2nd coming of Christ. Often they make no comment about the reference to the Church going up to meet Christ in the air, whereas the doctrine of His 2nd coming pictures Him returning to earth to rule and reign. The 2nd advent is not in view in 1 Thessalonians 4:13 ... Imminence means that there is nothing hindering the Rapture from taking place right now. And "now" could have come even upon those early Christians in the NT church. (M. Couch) The Holy Spirit calls for something that is the very opposite of the spirit of the age. In the world, people are ambitious to make money, achieve business success, and ascend the social ladder. We urge our children to "succeed." In the Bible, the only reference to "success" has to do with the kind of life that results from meditation on the Scriptures. "Study to be quiet," says Paul. "Make it your ambition to stay out of the limelight." One suggested rendering of this statement is "Make it your ambition to have no ambition." (J. Phillips) Paul recognizes labor as the law of Providence, that if any man does not work, neither shall he eat. (P. Gloag)

The Greeks were eager, bustling, restless, each longing to be first. The apostle seeks to turn the ambition of the Thessalonians into another channel. Their ambition should be to be quiet – to keep themselves free, as far as might be, from political excitement and social rivalry, that they might cultivate the inner life of love and peace and communion with God. It is not wealth or rank that is truly respectable, but virtue and holiness. (B. Caffin) We are not to thrust upon our neighbor our advice, reprove him unbecomingly, or rashly, or unreasonably, or harshly. We are not to interpose in the contentions of others so as to make ourselves parties, or so as to raise or foment dissensions. We have plenty of business of our own to employ us: to study and exercise the mind, to provide for all the necessities and conveniences of life, to look to the interests of our soul, to be diligent in our calling, to discharge carefully and faithfully all our duties relating to God and man, and to seek not to be distracted. So it is vain for us to take on more than our load by engaging in the affairs of others; otherwise we will be forced to either shake off our own business, or to become overburdened and oppressed with more than we can bear. (R. Finlayson)

Christian ambition rejoices to be quiet. To be quiet is not necessarily to be without strong force in our nature; but it is to have those forces so placed under Divine restraints, so moderated by reason, justice and charity, modesty and sobriety, as that we can do our own business, can confine ourselves to the sphere of our own proper duties. We may indeed interpose, when the honour and interest of God is much concerned, when the public weal and safety are much endangered. We may interpose for the succour of right against palpable wrong, for our own just and necessary defence. We may interpose when our neighbor is plainly going to ruin. We may also interpose when we can do our neighbor considerable good. For all that is really doing our own business. But we are not to be impelled by ambition, or covetous desire, or self-conceit, or any other disturbing influence, beyond our own proper bounds. (R. Finlayson) One of the things he commands is to study to be quiet. God honors the person who is quiet, particularly about his own exploits. (J. Walvoord)

1 Thess. 4:11 And (continuative) that you consider it a point of honor (φιλοτιμέομαι, PAInf., Durative, Purpose, Deponent; aim, ambition, aspiration, motivation) to live a quiet life (ἡσυχάζω, PAInf., Customary, Purpose; rest, work in peace) and (continuative) mind (πράσσω, PAInf., Customary, Purpose; practice) your own (Acc. Spec.) business (Acc. Dir. Obj.; things, affairs; respect the privacy of the priesthood) and (continuative) work (ἐργάζομαι, PAInf., Customary, Purpose, Deponent; trade, invest) with your (poss. Gen.) hands (Instr. Means; activity, authority; continue your vocation or career), just as (comparative) I charged (παραγγέλλω, AAI1P, Constative; commanded) you (Dat. Adv.),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:11** καὶ φιλοτιμείσθαι ἡσυχάζειν καὶ πράσσειν τὰ ἴδια καὶ ἐργάζεσθαι ταῖς χερσὶν ὑμῶν καθὼς ὑμῖν παρηγγείλαμεν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:11** et operam detis ut quieti sitis et ut vestrum negotium agatis et operemini manibus vestris sicut praecepimus vobis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 4:12** In order that you may walk respectably [in your workplace and community] towards those on the outside [unbelievers] and have need of nothing [financial self-support].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:12** In order that you may be conducting yourselves in a manner becoming to you [as children of God] toward those who are on the outside, in order that you may not be having need of anything.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:12** That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and *that* ye may have lack of nothing.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul charged them at the end of verse 11 to continue working in their career or vocation. He

gives two reasons for his command in this verse. They should continue working so that they might conduct themselves (Potential Subjunctive mood) with honor and respect (Latin: honesty) in their workplace and community (Iterative Present tense) towards unbelievers. On the one hand, every day you go to work you are a witness to unbelievers. If you quit your job and isolate yourself in some remote geographical location, how are you going to witness to anyone? On the other hand, if you quit your job, how is any unbeliever going to see you from day-to-day and wonder what makes you tick? Your mere presence in the workplace can be a powerful force for the Lord if you behave honorably and respectably when others around you are not.

The second reason for continuing to work in your vocation is so you are financially self-supporting (Potential Subjunctive mood) and do not need assistance from others. The durative present tense also points to the long-term nature of your job: retirement. It is an honorable goal to provide for your needs in the present, meaning housing, food, clothes and discretionary income. It is also an honorable goal to provide for your future retirement (Latin: liquidity), and not sit back with the idea that the government will provide for you when you get old, or you will live off a family inheritance. This lazy-minded thinking is dishonoring to yourself and your witness to unbelievers. Listen to me on this: It is irresponsible to quit working if all you have to retire on is the questionable income you expect to receive via social security. If it doesn't materialize, you will no longer "have need of nothing."

REVELANT OPINIONS

If all the able-bodied members worked with their hands they would be able to support themselves and their dependents, and not fall into destitution and become a charge on the generosity of others. (F. Bruce) A believer is to be a profitable and productive member of society, not a drone, always sponging and taking advantage of other people's charity. Paul offers a timely word for those who would prefer to live on welfare and charity rather than get a job and pay their own way. God wants us to "lack nothing." But He also expects us to do an honest day's work for an honest day's pay. (J. Phillips) Paul refused to bring reproach upon the Gospel by being lazy or depending on others to do for him what God had given him the strength to do himself. He trusted God in every detail of his life, but by the same token he believed in honorable independence. (O. Green) The idea includes honest financial transactions. People outside the church have a right to watch the conduct of professing Christians in business, domestic life, social life, and politics. (A.T. Robertson)

The situation clearly was that those who were not working were depending on their more industrious brethren for their means of livelihood, and Paul is counseling them to work so that this undesirable state of affairs may be ended. He is making the point that the Christian cannot be a parasite. Those who imposed on the generosity of their fellows were not living in love. The exhortation to brotherly love carries with it the necessity for providing for one's own needs, that undue strain be not placed on the brother. (L. Morris) They were not by the neglect of their proper occupations to live dependent upon others, whether heathens or (more probably) fellow Christians. (C. Ellicott) There is evidence that some of these believers were restless because they believed that there was no need to work since the Lord would come very soon. Therefore, they may have been sponging off the other

Christians in the church. Paul undoubtedly had these people in mind when giving these instructions. (C. Ryrie)

1 Thess. 4:12 In order that (purpose) you may walk (περιπατέω, PAsubj.2p, Iterative, Potential; conduct yourselves) respectably (adv.; in your workplace and community) towards those (Acc. Gen. Ref.) on the outside (adv.; unbelievers) and (continuative) have (έχω, PAsubj.2P, Durative, Potential) need (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of nothing (Adv. Gen. Ref.; financial self-support).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:12** ἵνα περιπατῆτε εὐσημῶνως πρὸς τοὺς ἔξω καὶ μηδενὸς χρείαν ἔχητε

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:12** et ut honeste ambuletis ad eos qui foris sunt et nullius aliquid desideretis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 4:13** Now, we do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren [members of the royal family of God], concerning those [fellow believers] who are dying, so that you are not distressed, even as others [unbelievers] who do not have hope [of resurrection life].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:13** Now, we do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who from time to time are falling asleep [dying], in order that you may not be mourning in the same manner as the rest who do not have a hope.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:13** But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses another transitional conjunction to change the topic from continuing your given vocation in life to understanding the difference between dying as a believer and dying as an unbeliever. Believers who are dying (Descriptive Present tense) have confidence in attaining resurrection life, but unbelievers do not have (Static Present tense) hope of resurrection life. This is a profound difference between those who are in the process of dying. So as believers, we are not to be overly distressed (Potential Subjunctive mood) when a fellow believer is dying, because we know they will be face-to-face with the Lord soon, possessing resurrection life. This is not true of unbelievers. Paul is also setting the Thessalonian believer up for elaboration on the doctrine of the rapture. Believers who were in a process of dying at that time, as well as millions of believers since then, will still receive resurrection life even though they died before the rapture.

REVELANT OPINIONS

Sleep as a euphemism for death was commonplace in antiquity. Death was viewed by Christians as a sleep from which one would awake to resurrection life. (F. Bruce) Some commentators believe that

the survivors were distressed by the fear that these [who died] would have to occupy a position secondary to those who lived until the advent of the Lord. (W. Nicoll) Others believe that the Thessalonians were concerned that their relatives and friends might have to wait in an intermediate state before going to the Lord, a concern derived from pagan teaching. Thus, shades of teachings from other religions and cultures placed a great gloom over the prospect of death. (M. Couch) They had misunderstood his teaching on the resurrection of the saints who had died, and the translation of living saints; and because of the terrible persecution they were undergoing, some of them had concluded that they were in the tribulation and that the day of the Lord was upon them. Paul wrote the second Thessalonian epistle almost in its entirety to clear up this misunderstanding. (O. Green)

There is ample evidence that among pagans generally there was a sad sense of hopelessness in the face of death. Indeed, even in a Christian environment this sense of hopelessness finds expression where the hope of the gospel is not cherished as a lively inward conviction. (F. Bruce) Sleep is a common way of picturing the death of a believer. (M. Couch) Paul has not arrived at the central truth of this great epistle, a thrilling and comprehensive revelation of the pretribulation rapture of the Church ... Death is indeed a hopeless tragedy for those who were outside of Christ, regarding both those who die and those who are left behind to mourn. For those who are outside of Christ, death is final, cold, cruel, callous, and utterly uncaring. It is ugly, menacing, and inescapable. Paul calls it "the last enemy." When he arrives, it's all over. The only consolation we have is in the Word of God. (J. Phillips)

In a way it is true – the body of a believer is asleep. A sleeper does not cease to exist, and the inference is that the dead do not cease to exist just because the body is asleep. Sleep is temporary; death is also temporary. Sleep has its waking; death has its resurrection. It is not that life is existence and death is non-existence, you see. The spirit or the soul does not die, and therefore the spirit or the soul is not raised. Only the body can lie down in death, and only the body can stand up in resurrection. There are three kinds of death in Scripture. There is physical death, which is the separation of the spirit from the body. There is spiritual death, which is separation from God through carnality. And there is eternal death, which is eternal separation from God. (J. McGee) There can be written across the tombstone of every unbeliever the sobering words, "No Hope." (R. Morey)

When he is bereaved, the mature believer remembers the attributes of God. God is sovereignty: no one departs from this life without divine permission. God's plan calls for each person to die at precisely the right time and in the right manner. God is absolute righteousness and justice: He is always fair to every individual, both the departed and the bereaved. And if the one who has died was a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, he possesses God's righteousness forever; he is qualified to reside in heaven in the presence of God. The believer who has lost a loved one also remembers that God is love and eternal life: if the deceased was a believer, he possesses eternal life and is at this very moment face to face with the Lord. God is omniscience: He has chosen the most advantageous moment for him to depart from the earth. God is omnipotence: He has infinite power to fulfill all His promises concerning death. God is omnipresence: He has overlooked no detail of this situation, and His comfort is as near as Bible doctrine in the soul. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

1 Thess. 4:13 Now (transitional), we do not (neg. particle) wish

(θέλω, PAI1P, Static) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to be ignorant (ἀγνοέω, PAInf., Descriptive, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb), brethren (Voc. Address; members of the royal family), concerning those (Adv. Gen. Ref.; fellow believers) who are dying (κοιμάομαι, PPpTc.GMP, Descriptive & Iterative, Substantival, Deponent; asleep), so that (purpose) you are not (neg. particle) distressed (λυπέω, PPSubj.2P, Descriptive, Potential; sorrowful, grieving), even (ascensive) as (comparative) others (Nom. Appos.; unbelievers) who do not (neg. particle) have (ἔχω, PAPtc.NMP, Static, Substantival) hope (Acc. Dir. Obj.; of resurrection life).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:13** Οὐ θέλομεν δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν ἀδελφοί περὶ τῶν κοιμωμένων ἵνα μὴ λυπήσθε καθὼς καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ οἱ μὴ ἔχοντες ἐλπίδα

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:13** nolumus autem vos ignorare fratres de dormientibus ut non contristemini sicut et ceteri qui spem non habent

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 4:14** For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, then in the same manner [by resurrection], God will bring along with Him [at the rapture] those [believers] who have died with Jesus.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:14** For in view of the fact that we believe that Jesus died and arose, thus also will God bring with Him those who have fallen asleep through the intermediate agency of Jesus.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:14** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Since we believe (Static Present tense) that Jesus died (Historical Present tense) and rose again (Dramatic Aorist tense), then we should understand that God will bring (Predictive Future tense) those who have died (Culminative Aorist tense) with Jesus along with Him at the rapture. In the same manner that Jesus was resurrected, believers who died before the rapture will also be resurrected from the dead. The generation of believers who are alive at the rapture are not the only members of the Bride of Christ. The Church is composed of believers who have died before the rapture and those who will be alive during the rapture. As a corporate entity, the Bride of Christ will include all Church Age believers; not a single one will be left behind. They will be resurrected at the rapture and will return with the Lord Jesus Christ to earth at the 2nd advent.

REVELANT OPINIONS

The continuing life of His people depends on, and is indeed an extension of, His own risen life. (F. Bruce) It is evident that Paul had taught them that there would be a number of resurrections in a chronological order as the Scriptures portray – not just one general resurrection as some believe

today. The question in their minds was: When, in the order of the various resurrections, would the loved ones in Christ be raised? Apparently they thought they would be caught up to be with the Lord at any time and that the resurrection of their loved ones would be delayed, possibly until after the great tribulation when Christ came back to establish His kingdom. They wanted some instruction on this point. (J. Walvoord) Unlike all other dispensations, the postcanon Church Age is the only era in which no biblical prophecy will be fulfilled. The only prophetic events concerning the Church Age are its beginning, which was prophesied by Christ, and its termination at the resurrection, or Rapture. And the only prophecies fulfilled in the precanon Church Age deal not with the Church but with Israel, whose national discipline culminated in A.D. 70. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The “sleep” the apostle writes about is the sleep of the body in the earth until it is resurrected, changed into a glorious body, and reunited with the soul. It is in 1 Corinthians 15:51-54 where Paul writes so much about the body being changed from perishable to imperishable, an event that occurs at the Resurrection/Rapture. Those asleep will be given their new bodies and those who are alive will be instantly transformed and also given their new bodies at the same time as those who had previously died. This instant change takes place at the Rapture. (M. Couch) Sleep is a softened expression for death, which for a Christian is very much like sleep. We understand from Scripture that it refers to bodies which are laid in the grave. As far as our souls and spirits are concerned, we go immediately into the presence of God, into the conscious enjoyment of heaven, for “to be absent from the body” is “to be present with the Lord.” We believe in the sleep of the body, but we do not believe in the sleep of the soul. Those whose bodies are sleeping in the grave, according to this Scripture, will be resurrected when Christ comes back. (J. Walvoord)

We sorrow! But we have God’s Word for it, that our loved ones are only asleep – a reference to the state of the body. The soul does not sleep; the body does. The soul is made of the same stuff of eternity. It never gets tired, never gets old, never gets ill, and never sleeps. The body of the departed believer is asleep. The IF here is not the IF of doubt. It actually means “since.” The hypothesis is assumed to be a fact. Paul does not mean to cast doubt upon their belief in the resurrection of Christ. He takes that for granted. (J. Phillips) Note that the figurative expression “sleep” is followed by an explanatory literal statement “died” in verse 16. Sleep is a euphemism, the substituting of an inoffensive or mild expression for an offensive or personal one. In English we speak euphemistically of death by saying that a person “passed on” or “kicked the bucket” or “went home.” The Bible speaks of the death of Christians as falling asleep. (R. Zuck)

1 Thess. 4:14 **For** (explanatory) **since** (conj., 1st class condition) **we believe** (πιστεύω, PAI1P, Static) **that** (conj.) **Jesus** (Subj. Nom.) **died** (ἀποθνήσκω, AAI3S, Historical) **and** (connective) **rose again** (ἀνίστημι, AAI3S, Dramatic), **then** (conj.) **in the same manner** (comparative; by resurrection), **God** (Subj. Nom.; the Father), **will bring** (ἄγω, FAI3S, Predictive) **along with Him** (Dat. Association) **those** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; believers) **who have died** (κοιμάομαι, APPtc.AMP, Culminative, Substantival, Deponent; fallen asleep) **with Jesus** (Gen. Assoc.).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:14** εἰ γὰρ πιστεύομεν ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἀπέθανεν καὶ ἀνέστη οὕτως καὶ ὁ θεὸς τοὺς κοιμηθέντας διὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἄξει σὺν αὐτοῖς

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:14** si enim credimus quod Iesus mortuus est et resurrexit ita et Deus eos qui dormierunt per Iesum adducet cum eo

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 4:15** **For this [doctrine] we communicate to you by the Word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord [the rapture generation] shall not precede those who have died,**

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:15** For this we are saying to you by the Lord's word, that as for us who are living and are left behind until the coming of the Lord, we shall by no means precede those who fell asleep,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:15** For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now communicates (Static Present tense) the doctrine of the rapture to the Thessalonian believers by the Word of the Lord. Those believers who are alive and remain on earth (Futuristic Present tense) until the rapture of the church (Latin: residual) will not be caught up into the air to meet the Lord (Constativ Aorist tense) ahead of those who have already died (Culminative Aorist tense). The subjunctive of prohibition points to the divine impossibility for the rapture generation to precede those who have already died in the air. There is an order of progression at the rapture, and those who are alive on that day are not the first ones to be caught up with the Lord. Believers who have died will be resurrected first. They will shed their interim resurrection body and will receive their permanent resurrection body before those believers who are still alive at the moment of the “snatching away” known as the rapture.

REVELANT OPINIONS

The subject will be the resurrection (those who have fallen asleep) and the rapture (we who are alive) both of which subjects, for the Church saints, cannot be separated. Thus, they are, in a sense, treated as one ... Parousia must be interpreted in context. The 2nd coming of Christ refers to His arrival upon the earth for the kingdom reign. But in the context of Thessalonians it is a reference to the coming Rapture. Christ's coming at the Rapture does not imply that He will remain upon the earth. The believers will suddenly be caught away, following the resurrection of those who lie in the grave. From the last clause we can see that the Thessalonians feared that their dead would lose out on the chance to be assumed to heaven at the time of the parousia. (M. Couch)

The verb here has its regular meaning involving the idea of a priority in respect of time, and thence, derivatively, of privilege. (C. Ellicott) At the Rapture, billions of Church Age believers, called “the

dead in Christ,” will accompany the Lord from heaven to a rendezvous in space above the earth, where they will be joined by the living generation of believers. There they will receive their resurrection bodies. Immediately after the Rapture, there will be a period of fantastic happiness and celebration, a reunion of the entire royal family, assembled for the first time in spontaneous mass recognition of Christ. I call this the big genuflection. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

1 Thess. 4:15 For (explanatory) this (Acc. Dir. Obj.; doctrine) we communicate (λέγω, PAI1P, Static) to you (Dat. Adv.) by the Word (Instr. Means) of the Lord (Abl. Source), that (conj.) we (Subj. Nom.) who are alive (ζάω, PAptc.NMP, Descriptive, Substantival) and (connective) remain (περιλείπομαι, PMptc.NMP, Futuristic, Substantival, Deponent) until the coming (Adv. Acc.) of the Lord (Adv. Gen. Ref.; the rapture generation) shall not (neg. particle) precede (φθάνω, AASubj.1P, Constative, Prohibition) those (Acc. Dir. Obj.) who have died (κοιμάομαι, APptc.AMP, Culminative, Substantival, Deponent; fallen asleep),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:15** Τοῦτο γὰρ ὑμῖν λέγομεν ἐν λόγῳ κυρίου ὅτι ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες οἱ περιλειπόμενοι εἰς τὴν παρουσίαν τοῦ κυρίου οὐ μὴ φθάσωμεν τοὺς κοιμηθέντας·

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:15** hoc enim vobis dicimus in verbo Domini quia nos qui vivimus qui residui sumus in adventum Domini non praeveniemus eos qui dormierunt

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 4:16** Because the Lord Himself [Jesus Christ] will descend from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of an archangel [Michael or Gabriel commands the believers who are alive on earth to receive their resurrection bodies] and with the trumpet of God [God the Father gives those believers who are already dead their resurrection bodies], and the dead in Christ will rise first [to meet the Lord in the air at the rapture],

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:16** Because the Lord Himself with a cry of command, with an archangel's voice, and with a call of a trumpet sounded at God's command, shall descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ shall be raised first,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:16** For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to elaborate on who gets their resurrection bodies first, as well as the progression at the rapture. The Lord Jesus Christ will descend (Predictive Future tense) from heaven with a shouted command, accompanied by the voice of Michael or Gabriel the archangel, and all believers who are still alive on earth will receive their resurrection bodies. At the same point in time, God the Father issues a command by way of a trumpet (Latin: tuba) and those believers who are already dead will receive their resurrection bodies. All believers, alive or dead, will then

have their resurrection bodies! Then the dead in Christ will rise first (Predictive Future tense) to meet the Lord in the air. This is probably Paul's main point in this verse, since it would comfort those Thessalonian believers who for some reason, thought their loved ones who were already dead or dying might not participate in the rapture. The comforting fact is that believers who have already died get to meet the Lord first.

REVELANT OPINIONS

Here it is the Lord Himself who shouts the quickening word, which commands a ready and obedient response. (F. Bruce) In "with a shout," shout is a classical and a military term meaning to command, and is used for the purpose of gathering together. The word speaks of a summons to all, both living and dead, to meet their Lord. (Lightfoot) In attendance was the voice of the archangel, who is none other than Michael, the chief of the angels, and the special protector of Israel ... The sounding of the trumpet here is like the sounding of the trumpet to an army. It is the call to forward march. So in this passage there is the shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God. These are three separate things, but they picture to us one grand event: the coming of Christ for His church, and the translation of the church living and dead from scenes of earth to the scenes of heaven. God is dealing with His saints only in this trump and there is absolutely no connection with judgment upon unbelievers. (J. Walvoord)

There will follow a wholesale exodus from the tomb. This mighty shout will ring out across the five continents and the seven seas. Its vibrant echoes will comb the mountain peaks, the arctic poles, the desert wastes, the ocean caves, the pampas and the prairies, the crowded urban graveyards, and the world's great battlefields. And the dead in Christ will rise! The voice of the archangel means ruin for the world. That voice sends the angels forth to war. The Rapture means that the amnesty is over, that God has broken off diplomatic relations with the world that murdered His Son. The trump of God means repatriation for Israel. It sounds the alarm for the Jews. Once the church age is complete, the focus of God's dealings reverts to the nation of Israel. The church was injected supernaturally into history on the Day of Pentecost and it is to be supernaturally ejected back out of history at the Rapture. At that point, God will resume His OT dealings with the nation of Israel and will fulfill the many prophecies concerning Israel, which is still awaiting their time. (J. Phillips)

Paul assures them that the saints who have already passed on actually rise in the Rapture before the living. Their souls are joined to their new immortal bodies and they are transformed to receive a body like Christ's. (M. Couch) What the world is witnessing, in this mysterious silence, is the infinite patience of God. When God breaks this silence, it will be with a shout! He has spoken once in grace by sending His Son to this planet. And they murdered Him. He sent His Spirit, and the world ignores Him. The next time, He will speak in wrath. The whole creation today is holding its breath, waiting for that shout. Jesus is waiting for the moment when He can descend the stellar spaces, burst through the clouds of the sky, and give that shout ... This should be sufficient answer to the concern of the Christians at Thessalonica about their deceased loved ones. They had not missed the Rapture! On the contrary, they would have priority; they would actually rise first. (J. Phillips)

The “dead in Christ” clearly distinguishes those who have died in this age from believers who have died before Christ’s first advent, thus marking the Church off as distinct to this age and a mystery hidden in OT times but not revealed. (C. Ryrie) The rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4 says nothing about the Tribulation. The valid reason is that the church will not be there. There is not a single rapture passage that warns of an impending Tribulation for the church. The saints of the church will not be kept through the Tribulation, but removed from it ... The Bride of Christ who will reign with Christ will be constituted of translated and resurrected saints, the two companies now joined forever. (C. Feinberg) The “dead in Christ” by no means clearly includes all saints. The expression “in Christ” is uniformly used in the NT as a reference to those who have been baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ, and is never used in reference to saints before the Day of Pentecost. (J. Walvoord)

1 Thess. 4:16 Because (causal) the Lord (Subj. Nom.) Himself (Nom. Appos.; Jesus Christ) will descend (καταβαίνω, FMI3S, Predictive) from heaven (Gen. Place) with a shout of command (Dat. Manner), with the voice (Dat. Accompaniment) of an archangel (Gen. Poss.; Michael or Gabriel commands the believers who are still alive on earth to receive their resurrection bodies) and (connective) with the trumpet (Dat. Accompaniment) of God (Poss. Gen.; God the Father gives those who are already dead their resurrection bodies), and (continuative) the dead (Subj. Nom.) in Christ (Loc. Sph.) will rise (ἀνίστημι, FMI3P, Predictive) first (adv.; to meet the Lord in the air at the rapture);

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:16** ὅτι αὐτὸς ὁ κύριος ἐν κελεύσματι ἐν φωνῇ ἀρχαγγέλου καὶ ἐν σάλπιγγι θεοῦ καταβήσεται ἀπὸ οὐρανοῦ καὶ οἱ νεκροὶ ἐν Χριστῷ ἀναστήσονται πρῶτον

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:16** quoniam ipse Dominus in iussu et in voce archangeli et in tuba Dei descendet de caelo et mortui qui in Christo sunt resurgent primi

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 4:17** Then we who are living [the rapture generation] and who remain [on earth] shall be caught up [transported] together [at the same time] with them [the resurrected dead] in the clouds to a meeting [royal reception] of the Lord in the air [lower atmosphere], and in this manner [in resurrection bodies] we shall always be together with the Lord [ultimate sanctification throughout eternity].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:17** Then as for us who are living and who are left behind, together with them we shall be snatched away forcibly in [masses of saints having the appearance of] clouds for a welcome-meeting with the Lord in the lower atmosphere.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:17** Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a generic “we” to represent those believers who are living (Futuristic Present tense)

and who are still on planet earth (Futuristic Present tense) when the rapture occurs. Since none of us have the divine attribute of omniscience, none of us know when the rapture will occur. Paul did not know either, but understood that it could happen at any time. It might have included him and the Thessalonian believers, but as we know, it did not. But at some unknown day in the future, there will be a generation of believers alive on earth who will participate in the rapture (Predictive Future tense). This is called the great “snatching away” or being “caught up” or as I prefer (being in the Star Trek generation), “transported.”

All believers alive on the day of the rapture will be “beamed up” into the clouds for a meeting – not with Scotty, but with the Lord Jesus Christ. There is debate on whether “clouds” is a reference to the weather phenomenon as we know it, or whether it represents a host of angels that come with the Lord from heaven. There is also a debate on where exactly the “air” is located. Is it in stellar space or in the lower atmosphere above the earth. If it was in stellar space, I would expect to see the Greek word “ouranos” instead of “aera.” In my opinion, the combination of the words “air” and “clouds” in the same sentence also points us in the direction of the lower atmosphere, rather than a metaphorical use of “clouds” as humans or angels.

I have a real problem for those believers who think this is a verse referring to the 2nd advent rather than the rapture. As noted by some scholars in my “Relevant Opinions” section, it makes absolutely no sense at all that we will meet the Lord in the air and then immediately return to earth. I have even more issues with those who don’t see the Bride of Christ rising to meet her Husband for the wedding feast. Once we receive our resurrection bodies, a great celebration is in order. And once the resurrected dead and the raptured living receive their resurrection bodies, they (we) will remain in this state for the rest of eternity. We will always be together with the Lord (Predictive Future tense) in this state of ultimate sanctification. That’s why it is called “eternal” life!

REVELANT OPINIONS

The Latin word “rapio” is used to describe the word in English. Opponents of the doctrine of the Rapture argue that the word “rapture” is not in the Bible. Neither, however, is the word “trinity” in the Bible, yet both words apply to what the Bible teaches on these subjects. Calvin translates the word “carried up.” Others translate it as “snatches away” or “caught up.” Going up into the sky, into the air, is an unmistakable description. Jesus is not coming down to establish His kingdom nor to judge men on earth. The Church saints are going upward. The reason seems to be clearly stated in 5:9 – to escape the coming wrath or Tribulation that falls upon the earth. (M. Couch) This rapture of the saints (both risen and changed) is a glorious climax to Paul’s argument of consolation ... This is the outcome, to be forever with the Lord. (A.T. Robertson)

Those who espouse the tribulation Rapture generally think it necessary to attack John Nelson Darby. Darby was a prominent leader among the so-called Plymouth Brethren. He did much to rescue the truth of the Lord’s coming from the rubbish heap on which the professing church at large had dumped it. Darby was a scholar, a theologian, an intellectual, and a spiritual giant who

was thoroughly at home in Hebrew and Greek as well as a number of European languages ... Many able expositors (e.g., Dwight Pentecost, John Walvoord, and Charles Ryrie) have taken in hand the defense of the pretribulation Rapture. Any position on the second coming of Christ that takes the edge off our expectancy and intrudes all kinds of prior events between the believer and the Rapture is a wrong position. The element of surprise is a key element in all NT teaching regarding the Rapture; hence, the repeated exhortations that we should be watchful ... Suddenly, the pull of glory will exert its power, and the church will be gone. We shall assemble in the Lord's presence in the clouds of the air, and the parousia will have begun. The Lord will draw to Himself only those who have the same nature as Himself. (J. Phillips)

The expression for "to meet" may be used of commonplace meetings. But it has also a more formal use, for example, the formal reception of a newly arriving magistrate. It implies welcome of a great person on his arrival. It may well be that there is a touch of the formal here, with the thought of a royal reception. They were to be presented to the King. (L. Morris) We shall be caught up with them at the same time that they shall be caught up. (C. Ellicott) For all practical purposes, the resurrection of the dead and the Rapture of the living (as this incident of the Parousia is sometimes called) will be simultaneous. (D. Williams) When we meet the Lord in the air, we shall assemble in the atmospheric heaven and from there go to the third heaven, which is the immediate presence of the Father. (J. Walvoord) At the Rapture, the Church as a spiritual building is transformed into a spiritual temple (Eph. 2:20-22). The Rapture achieves ultimate sanctification for every member of the royal family. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Christ's second coming will consist of two separate events (comings) with seven intervening years between. The first will be His coming for His saints (here). The second will follow the seven-year period in which the gospel of the kingdom will again be preached (by believing Jews), widespread conversion effected (though not universal), Israel reconstituted, and in the latter part of this period Antichrist revealed and God's wrath poured out upon the human race. After this period Christ will come with His saints. The living nations will then be judged, the saints that died during the great tribulation raised up, Antichrist destroyed, and Satan bound. (E. Hulse) When the Lord returns to the earth with His bride to reign, the bride (Rev. 19:8) is seen to be already rewarded. (J. Pentecost) When the royal family is complete, the Rapture will occur. At the Rapture, every Church Age believer, whether dead or still living, whether winner or loser, will receive his resurrection body. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Rapture means the act of conveying a person from one place to another and thus is properly used of this transport of the living to heaven. Paul used it of his own experience of being caught up into the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2,4 and Rev. 12:5). It would appear from these other occurrences of the word that Paul had in mind being taken into heaven and not just into the mid-air to turn around suddenly and return to the earth ... A "yo-yo" rapture (post-tribulation theory), where the raptured believers on the way to the Father's house are intercepted and carried back to earth by the Lord as He comes to glory, does not harmonize well with the concept that He will come and take the believers to His Father's house. (C. Ryrie) From the Latin equivalent of "arpazein" (rapere) this incident in the Parousia is sometimes called the "Rapture" (snatching away) of

believers. The verb implies violent action, sometimes to the benefit of its object, as when the Roman soldiers snatched Paul from the rioters in the Jerusalem council-chamber. (F. Bruce)

1 Thess. 4:17 Then (Temporal; next, afterwards) we (Subj. Nom.) who are living (ζάω, PAPtc.NMP, Futuristic, Substantival, Articular; the rapture generation) and who remain (περιλείπομαι, PPPtc.NMP, Futuristic, Circumstantial, Deponent; on earth) shall be caught up (ἀρπάζω, FPI1P, Predictive; transported, snatched) together (Temporal; at the same time) with them (Dat. Association; the resurrected dead) in the clouds (Loc. Place; symbol for divine glory) to a meeting (Acc. Place) of the Lord (Poss. Gen.) in the air (Acc. Place; lower atmosphere), and (continuative) in this manner (adv.; in resurrection bodies) we shall always (Temporal) be (είμι, FMI1P, Predictive) together with the Lord (Dat. Association; ultimate sanctification throughout eternity).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:17** ἔπειτα ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες οἱ περιλειπόμενοι ἅμα σὺν αὐτοῖς ἀρπαγησόμεθα ἐν νεφέλαις εἰς ἀπάντησιν τοῦ κυρίου εἰς ἄερα· καὶ οὕτως πάντοτε σὺν κυρίῳ ἔσόμεθα

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:17** deinde nos qui vivimus qui relinquimur simul rapiemur cum illis in nubibus obviam Domino in aera et sic semper cum Domino erimus

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 4:18** **Therefore keep on encouraging each other with these doctrines [concerning our resurrection bodies and the rapture].**

^{KW} **1 Thess. 4:18** So that – be encouraging one another with these words.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 4:18** Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Both the obtaining of our resurrection bodies and the imminence of the rapture are problem-solving devices for the Church Age believer. They are not superfluous doctrines. Paul commands (Imperative mood) the Thessalonian believers to continue encouraging (Iterative Present tense) each other with these very doctrines.

REVELANT OPINIONS

As a result of what has been stated there should be no sorrowing but rather comfort concerning those who have died. Notice how Paul sticks to the subject – the dead in Christ. He says nothing in this passage about the resurrection of the wicked, the intermediate state, judgment, means of translation, or reign with Christ. In this passage our hope is centered on the assurance of the resurrection of the dead in Christ, the change in the living, and the eternal union with our Lord. Of what comfort would the hope of the rapture be if the church is to pass through the tribulation if that time is as terrible as it

is described to be? (C. Ryrie) This rapture of the saints (both risen and changed) is a glorious climax to Paul's argument of consolation. (A.T. Robertson) The work of the Holy Spirit as the restrainer of sin cannot be terminated until the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way. This would be impossible unless the church was also raptured, and requires a pretribulational chronology. (J. Walvoord)

Not only do Christians not grieve like unbelievers, but followers of Christ can actually look forward eagerly to that great day. (T. Constable) When the believer fully realizes all the glory that is his future, it makes him satisfied to be nothing now. Prophetic truth is the only thing which can give true comfort in the time of sorrow and bereavement. (C. Ryrie) Here, the apostle sees the Rapture as spiritual comfort for those who especially struggle through the heavy trials of life. Ellicott says the Rapture is balm for sorrow. (M. Couch) If the church were going through the tribulation it would be better to be with the Lord than to have to await the events of the seventieth week. They would be praising the Lord that their brethren were spared these events instead of feeling that those had missed some of the Lord's blessings. (J. Pentecost) A post-tribulational rapture would leave no saints in their natural bodies to dwell upon the earth and fulfill millennial predictions. (J. Walvoord)

1 Thess. 4:18 Therefore (subordinate) keep on encouraging (παρακαλέω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command) each other (Acc. Dir. Obj.) with these (Dat. Spec.) doctrines (Instr. Means; the obtaining of our resurrection bodies and the rapture are problem-solving devices).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 4:18** ὥστε παρακαλεῖτε ἀλλήλους ἐν τοῖς λόγοις τούτοις

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 4:18** itaque consolamini invicem in verbis istis

CHAPTER 5

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:1** But concerning the extended period of time [times of the Gentiles] and the appointed seasons [Tribulation & Millennium], brethren [members of the royal family], you do not have the need for me to write to you [you already understand the order of divine dispensations],

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:1** But concerning the duration of the successive intervals of time and the epoch-making periods of time, brethren, you have no need that I should be writing to you,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:1** But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Even though there is a chapter division here, Paul continues his discussion on the rapture with additional information on the tribulation and millennium. The Thessalonians already have a firm grasp on dispensational theology (Static Present tense) and did not need Paul to repeat those doctrines in detail at this time. They were confused about who would be raptured and resurrected, but they at least had the basic flow of the times and seasons correct. The passive voice with the infinitive is rather awkward to translate literally, but the idea is that if they needed a lot of detailed theology on dispensations, Paul would do the writing (Customary Present tense) and they would receive the written instructions.

The extended period of time they were living in (Greek: chronology) is often called “the times of the Gentiles,” which will end at the rapture of the Church when Israel will return to the forefront of God’s plan. The appointed seasons is a reference to future dispensations - the one that would begin after the rapture (the Tribulation or Jacob’s Trouble), and the Millennial Reign of Christ. Some commentators do not make a distinction between the “times” and the “seasons.” I think the “times” is a reference to the “times of the Gentiles,” but I’m not a stickler for that point of view. I see considerable merit in the idea that both the “times and the seasons” is a representation for the Jewish dispensations following the rapture.

REVELANT OPINIONS

Christ presented Himself to the Jews as the Son of David, the King of the Jews, the fulfillment of all God’s unconditional covenants with Israel. When Israel refused to accept her rightful king, the promised earthly kingdom of God was postponed until the Millennium, which God will establish at His own perfect time regardless of human acceptance or rejection. The disciples were still thinking in terms of an immediate Jewish kingdom on earth after Jesus had already shifted His focus temporarily away from the Jews, who had rejected Him, to a new body of believers, the Church. The Church consists of all individuals who believe in Jesus Christ as personal Savior during the Church Age. God is forming the Church to play a special role in the eternal glorification of Christ. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The times and seasons refer to the divine dealing with Israel, in contrast to the times of the Gentiles which refer to the divine dealings with the Gentiles. (J. Pentecost)

Twenty-one years after Christ’s ascension, Paul would describe believers who were oriented to the times and epochs. Paul had previously taught the Thessalonians about that change of dispensations which the disciples had been so eager to see and which is still future today. The exact timing of our Lord’s return is not disclosed through Paul or any other writer of Scripture. But a study of Scripture reveals a great deal about the sequence of times and epochs from the beginning of human history to the end. This is the doctrine of dispensations. To know this doctrine “full well” makes the Christian alert to the plan of God for his life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The unrestrained, sovereign purpose of God is

seen in the ordering of the succession of the ages. That God has a program of the ages is disclosed in many passages. Likewise, there are well-defined periods of time related to the divine purpose. (J. Pentecost)

The Church has nothing to do with the times and seasons. That day has to do with those whom it will thus overtake. All that is said and done in that coming dispensation is appropriate to, and in harmony with, the great principle which will characterize God's administration in that day. It will then be right for Israel to rejoice over the judgments inflicted on all their enemies. Then, the "Imprecatory Psalms" will be in their appropriate place. That dispensation of judgment will have its own peculiar characteristics; and language is therefore used of it which could never have been used in any former dispensation. (E.W. Bullinger) The combination of the two (times and seasons) is a way of bringing before the mind both the duration of the time that must elapse before the coming of the Lord, and also the nature of the events that will characterize the end time. (L. Morris)

The terms "kronos" and "kairos" are not synonymous. (C. Ellicott) Times refers to the various time periods involved in God's dealings with the human race. Seasons refers to the special characteristics, features, highlights, and signs that mark the end times. Many of these are becoming clearer to us now that we are approaching the end of time – the rebirth of the state of Israel, the rise of Russia, the impending revival of the Roman Empire, the dawn of the nuclear age, the persistence of malignant anti-Semitism, global catastrophes, the emergence of a pornographic and sodomite society, the apostasy of the professing church, the spread of terrorism, persecution, famine, and earthquakes are all features of the end times. These are the "seasons" that herald His coming. (J. Phillips) No passage can be found to alleviate to any degree whatsoever the severity of this time that shall come upon the earth. (M. Couch)

1 Thess. 5:1 **But** (adversative) **concerning the extended period of time** (Gen. Time; times of the Gentiles) **and** (connective) **the appointed seasons** (Gen. Time; epochs, Church Age and Tribulation dispensations), **brethren** (Voc. Address), **you do not** (neg. particle) **have** (έχω, PAI2P, Static) **the need** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; necessity) **for me** (ellipsis) **to write** (γράφω, PPIInf., Customary, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) **to you** (Dat. Ind. Obj.),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:1** Περὶ δὲ τῶν χρόνων καὶ τῶν καιρῶν ἀδελφοί οὐ χρεῖαν ἔχετε ὑμῖν γράφεσθαι

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:1** de temporibus autem et momentis fratres non indigetis ut scribamus vobis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:2** **For you yourselves know with accuracy that the Day of the Lord [Tribulation & Millennium] will come in the same manner as a thief in the night [suddenly and without warning after the rapture].**

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:2** For you yourselves know positively that the day of the Lord comes in the same

manner as a thief at night.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:2** For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul knows they remember his prior teaching on the Day of the Lord, because he taught it to them thoroughly and accurately (Intensive Perfect tense) when he was in Thessalonica. The Day of the Lord is a reference to the period of time from the Tribulation through the Millennium. They will occur in planned sequence (Futuristic Present tense) immediately after the rapture. And in the same manner as a thief, the Day of the Lord will arrive without warning. The word “day” does not refer to a specific 24-hour period, but rather an extension of time covering the seven-year tribulation and the one thousand year millennial reign of Christ. Together, these two dispensations are the “Day” (or “Time”) of the Lord. The Day of the Lord is mentioned in the OT in Isaiah 13:9-11 and Zephaniah 1:14-16.

REVELANT OPINIONS

The assertion that the Church is “Israel” can generate a potentially disastrous political activism as believers work to establish the kingdom of God on earth. Only Jesus Christ, not fallible Christians (nor Satan), can bring about the Millennium. Christ will do so in God’s own perfect timing and not according to any human schedule. During the Church Age, believers can live in the confidence that the future rests in God’s powerful hands, as outlined in biblical eschatology, while turning their primary attention to His plan for glorifying Christ in this present dispensation. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The Day of the Lord is the day of the Lord’s judging and ruling. Whatever may be the dealings of God with men, and whatever may be His judgments, this is the end and aim and object of them all: The abasement of man and the exaltation of Jehovah. The whole of that dispensation is called “the Day of the Lord.” It is the day which has to do with “times and seasons,” with Israel and the Gentiles – but which has nothing to do with the Church of God. (E.W. Bullinger)

The Day of the Lord is a future period of time in which God will be at work in world affairs more directly and dramatically than He has been since the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. That day begins immediately after the rapture of the church and ends with the conclusion of the Millennium. This day is a major theme of prophecy with its fullest exposition in Revelation 6-19. (T. Constable) The Lord Jesus does not come to the church like a thief in the night. The church is looking for and waiting for the Lord to come. However, the Lord Jesus does come like a thief to the world after the church has been raptured. (J. McGee) The Day of the Lord is a period of time in which God will deal with wicked men directly and dramatically in fearful judgment. Today a man may be a blasphemer of God, an atheist, can denounce God and teach bad doctrine. Seemingly God does nothing about it. But the day designated in Scripture as “the Day of the Lord” is coming when God will punish human sin, and He will deal in wrath and in judgment with a Christ-rejecting world. (J. Walvoord)

If the Day of the Lord did not begin until the 2nd advent - since that event is preceded by signs - the Day of the Lord could not come as a thief in the night, unexpected and unheralded, as it is said it will come in this verse. The only way this day could break unexpectedly upon the world is to have it begin immediately after the rapture of the Church. It is thus concluded that the Day of the Lord is that extended period of time beginning with God's dealing with Israel after the rapture at the beginning of the tribulation period and extending through the second advent and the millennial age unto the creation of the new heavens and new earth after the millennium. (J. Pentecost) The Day of the Lord is definitely not the day of the rapture, which precedes it. Note the difference in the pronouns: "You have no need;" "Yourselves know;" "When they are saying;" "Cometh upon them" and "they shall in no wise escape." It is crystal clear that Paul has placed believers in the first category, not to be touched by the calamities (the "you"), and the unbelievers in the second division, which is to know judgment (the "they"). The significant alternation between "you" and "they" runs through this passage (1 Thess. 5). It is a telling portion in proof of the position that the church will not pass through the Tribulation. (C. Feinberg)

We are now living in "man's day" (1 Cor. 4:3). Right now, man exalts himself and tries to rule God out of His own world. In the "day of the Lord," the Lord reasserts His claim over this planet. It is primarily a day of wrath and judgment. It does, however, extend on into the millennial age and to the dramatic climax and end of that magnificent era. The focal point of the "Day of the Lord" is the Apocalypse (the book of Revelation) and the judgments that follow the Rapture, especially the terrible vial judgments when God will pour out His undiluted wrath upon this world that murdered His Son. The Thessalonians knew "perfectly" about these things. The word that Paul used means literally "accurately." (J. Phillips) The Day of the Lord as revealed in the OT includes first a time of wrath and judgment on the wicked, followed by the era of peace when Christ will rule over the earth. (C. Ryrie) This day displays the sovereignty of God whereby He overthrows His enemies. Joel 2:31 calls this "the great and terrible day of the Lord" as distinguished from ordinary days. (M. Couch)

1 Thess. 5:2 For (explanatory) you yourselves (Subj. Nom.) know (οἶδα, Perf.AI2P, Intensive) with accuracy (adv.) that (conj.) the Day (Subj. Nom.) of the Lord (Poss. Gen.; tribulation & millennium) will come (ἔρχομαι, PMI3s, Futuristic, Deponent) in the same manner (comparative) as (comparative) a thief (Pred. Nom.) in the night (Loc. Time; suddenly after the rapture).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:2** αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἀκριβῶς οἶδατε ὅτι ἡμέρα κυρίου ὡς κλέπτῃς ἐν νυκτὶ οὕτως ἔρχεται

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:2** ipsi enim diligenter scitis quia dies Domini sicut fur in nocte ita veniet

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:3** When they [the international community] say, "Peace and safety," then sudden destruction comes upon them [peace efforts without God always fail] like the birth-pains of a pregnant woman in labor [periodic suffering and agony coming at closer and closer intervals]. Moreover, they [those living during the Tribulation] will not by any

means escape.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:3** When they are saying, Peace and safety, then comes sudden destruction upon them as birth-pains upon a woman with child. And they shall by no means escape.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:3** For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

When the international community (Temporal Subjunctive) says (Futuristic Present tense), “Harmony and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them (Futuristic Present tense). Another possible translation of that last phrase is, “sudden destruction will be known and understood by them.” While the international community is planning for peace and safety for everyone (without God), the Lord has other plans for them. The closer they think they are getting to a state of peace without God, the closer destruction comes to their door. There is definite irony in Paul’s statement, leveled at the antichrist and his followers. There is also a contrast being communicated between the imminence of the rapture (escape for believers) and the imminence of destruction (no escape for unbelievers). Those who remain on earth after the rapture will face terrible judgment from God.

Unbelievers during the Tribulation will not escape (Culminative Aorist tense) judgment, because there is no sanctuary. The Subjunctive of Prohibition means God will not allow anyone to escape. Paul could have worded it differently: “You can run, but you cannot hide.” The destruction will take many forms and arrive without prior warning; it will come upon them like the birth-pains of a pregnant woman in labor. The intense suffering will come at closer and closer intervals, culminating in unbelievable agony. Other passages in Scripture talk about these very people seeking to find a way to end the suffering, perhaps even by suicide – but like the experience of a mother in childbirth, she remains alive through the worst of it. The analogy can be elaborated on by any woman who has given birth; unfortunately the unbelievers will not have access to a pain killer.

REVELANT OPINIONS

This false security will lull many into a state of lethargy in relation to the Day of the Lord so that that day comes as a thief. The fact that the visitation of wrath, judgment and darkness is preceded by the announcement of such a “peace and safety” message indicates that the church must be raptured before that period can begin. (J. Pentecost) This “destruction” is not annihilation, but the breaking up of their peace and security through the outpouring of God’s wrath on earth in the Great Tribulation. The wrath of God that will have been building up over some time will suddenly break forth. The signs of its coming are discernible, even though the moment of its arrival is unpredictable. (T. Constable)

When the world talks of security and peace, when governments imagine they have drawn up councils of nations who will set up rules and regulations through which peace will come – that is the very hour in which God is about ready to throw the switch and lower His great boom of judgment upon mankind! (O. Greene) The Day of the Lord will delude and destroy. At the very moment when the world feels secure and people are assuring themselves and each other that all is well, sudden destruction will come upon them. (C. Ryrie) Apparently the world situation at the beginning of the Day of the Lord will provide a false basis for peace. This may be accomplished by a strengthened United Nations or world organization. In that very time sudden destruction comes. (J. Walvoord)

Many recent translations use “security” here instead of “safety.” In this day of constant emphasis on “social security” and “national security” it would seem that this rendering is more meaningful. No vaunted “security” can guarantee against sudden disaster. (R. Earle) The world expects to enter a great era of peace, the Millennium, but they will find themselves plunged into the Great Tribulation, which will include the greatest war the world has ever seen. It will come upon them suddenly like a thief in the night. (J. McGee) There will be no possible means for them to avoid the terror or the punishment of that day. (M. Henry)

1 Thess. 5:3 When (conj.) they (the international community) say (λέγω, PASubj.3P, Futuristic, Temporal), “Peace (Ind. Nom.; harmony) and (connective) safety (Ind. Nom.; security),” then (temporal) sudden (Descr. Nom.; unexpected) destruction (Subj. Nom.) comes (ἐπίσταμαι, PPI3S, Futuristic, Deponent; is known, understood) upon them (Dat. Disadv.; peace efforts without God always fail) like (comparative) the birth-pains (Nom. Appos.; agony, periodic intense suffering coming at closer and closer intervals) of a pregnant woman in labor (Instr. Manner). Moreover (continuative), they (those under judgment during the Tribulation) will not (neg. particle) by any means (solemn assertion) escape (ἐκφεύγω, AASubj.3P, Culminative, Prohibition).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:3** ὅταν λέγωσιν Εἰρήνη καὶ ἀσφάλεια τότε αἰφνίδιος αὐτοῖς ἐπίσταται ὀλεθρος ὥσπερ ἡ ὠδὴν τῆ ἐν γαστρὶ ἐχούση καὶ οὐ μὴ ἐκφύγῃσιν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:3** cum enim dixerint pax et securitas tunc repentinus eis superveniet interitus sicut dolor in utero habenti et non effugiet

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:4** But you, brethren [members of the royal family], are not in the sphere of darkness [seed of the serpent], that this day [the Tribulation] might overtake you like a thief,

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:4** But as for you, brethren, you are not in darkness, that the day shall come down upon you as a thief,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:4** But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul informs the Thessalonian believers that since they are not (Descriptive Present tense) in the sphere of darkness, the Tribulation will not overtake them (Dramatic Aorist tense). The sphere of darkness is the realm of Satan, as opposed to the sphere of light which is the Lord's. This is a positional truth statement – they are now and always have been the Lord's. Because the Thessalonians are believers, they are the seed of the woman (belonging to the Lord) as opposed to the seed of the serpent (belonging to Satan). They will not go through the Tribulation, which means it obviously won't come upon them like a thief.

REVELANT OPINIONS

The Day of the Lord is a day of judgment and darkness, and the believers do not belong to the realm of darkness. The Day of the Lord shall not overtake them. Believers will not be here when it comes. (W. Willis) The rapture of the church actually does two things: (1) It ends this day of grace in which we are today, this calling out a people for His name and bringing many sons home to glory. This is what God is doing in our day. The rapture not only ends that, but (2) it begins the Day of the Lord. The Great Tribulation will get under way when the church leaves the earth. The one event of the rapture will end the day of grace and begin the Day of the Lord. It closes one day and opens another. (J. McGee) The immediate post-rapture horrors depicted under the seals will take the world unawares. (J. Phillips)

Christians will not be here. When the Day of the Lord comes, we will be in glory. We belong to a different dispensation, to a different day. We belong to the day of grace. Why should a child of God's grace – who is saved by grace, who is kept by grace, who has all the wonderful promises of God – be forced to go through a period which according to Scripture is expressly designed as a time of judgment upon a Christ-rejecting world? We belong to the day; they belong to the night. (J. Walvoord) The Holy Spirit draws emphatic attention to the marked difference between the nature and destiny of Christians and the nature and doom of unbelievers. Unbelievers will be listening to the siren voices of the humanists, the New Agers, the evolutionists, and, supremely, the Antichrist and his False Prophet. (J. Phillips)

1 Thess. 5:4 **But** (adversative) **you** (Subj. Nom.), **brethren** (Voc. Address; members of the royal family), **are** (εἰμί, PAI2P, Descriptive) **not** (neg. adv.) **in the sphere of darkness** (Loc. Sph.; seed of the serpent), **that** (coordinating) **this day** (Subj. Nom.; the Tribulation) **should overtake** (καταλαμβάνω, AASubj.3S, Dramatic, Result; come upon, seize) **you** (Ac. Dir. Obj.) **like** (comparative) **a thief** (Comp. Acc.),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:4** ὑμεῖς δὲ ἀδελφοί οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐν σκότει ἵνα ἡ ἡμέρα ὑμᾶς ὡς κλέπτας καταλάβῃ·

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:4** vos autem fratres non estis in tenebris ut vos dies ille tamquam fur comprehendat

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:5** Because all of you are sons of light [related to Jesus Christ] and sons of the day [part of the Church Age dispensation]. We [Church Age believers] are not of the night [unbelievers destined to live during the Tribulation] nor of the darkness [related to Satan].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:5** For as for all of you, sons of light you are and sons of day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:5** Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

All of the Thessalonian believers are sons of light, meaning they are (Descriptive Present tense) related to and are representatives of Jesus Christ. They are also sons of the day, meaning they are alive during the Church Age dispensation. By contrast, this means they are not (Descriptive Present tense) of the night, and they will not live through the Tribulation. They are also not of the darkness, meaning they are not related to Satan and are not his representatives.

REVELANT OPINIONS

Christians live in a different sphere of life from non-Christians; it is the difference between day and night. (T. Constable) The repetition of the pronoun “you” and “ye” in verses 1,2,4 and 5 stands in marked contrast to the repetition of the pronouns “they” and “them” in verse 3, thus pointing out to us the significant lesson that those who are “waiting for God’s Son from heaven” are not concerned with “times and seasons” which have to do with the “Day of the Lord,” and His coming as “a thief” on the ungodly. (E.W. Bullinger) Christians are “sons of the light” in that they are characterized by light, that is, they do not consistently live in the darkness of sin. (R. Zuck) “You are all the children of light.” In other words, you don’t belong to that dispensation which is coming in the future. You belong to the dispensation of grace in which we are today. (J. McGee)

Friend, if you do not learn these distinctions which are made in the Scripture, you will be hopelessly confused. I know of no one so hopelessly confused as some theologians in seminaries today. I’ve talked to them. One man told me that he had simply given up on the study of prophecy and would have nothing to do with it. Why? Because he was not willing to sit down and study the entire Scriptures. When the Day of the Lord comes, we are going to be with the Lord. We are not in darkness. That day will not overtake us as a thief in the night. He doesn’t come as a thief to take His church. The church is looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior. (J. McGee) All born again believers have been translated out of darkness into light, out of spiritual ignorance into spiritual truth. (O. Greene)

1 Thess. 5:5 Because (causal) all (Subj. Nom.) of you (Nom. Gen.)

Ref.) are (εἰμί, PAI2P Descriptive) sons (Pred. Nom.) of light (Adv. Gen. Ref.; representatives of Jesus Christ) and (connective) sons (Pred. Nom.) of the day (Gen. Time; part of the Church Age dispensation). We (believers) are (εἰμί, PAI1P, Descriptive) not (neg. particle) of the night (Gen. Time; the Tribulation) nor (neg. adv.) of the darkness (Gen. Source; representatives of Satan).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:5** πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς υἱοὶ φωτός ἐστε καὶ υἱοὶ ἡμέρας οὐκ ἐσμέν νυκτὸς οὐδὲ σκότους·

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:5** omnes enim vos filii lucis estis et filii diei non sumus noctis neque tenebrarum

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:6** Therefore, let us not sleep [ignore Bible doctrine] as others [in Thessalonica], but let us be alert [apply Bible doctrine] and self-controlled [stabilized mentally and emotionally].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:6** So then, let us not go on sleeping as do the rest, but let us be constantly on the alert, and let us be mentally and spiritually well-balanced and self-controlled.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:6** Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

This is an experiential sanctification passage. But who are the “others?” The Greek word is not “heteros” (others of a different kind: unbelievers), nor “allos” (others of the same kind: believers who are alert and sober), but “loipos” (the rest: believers who are not alert and sober). Paul encourages (using 3 Hortatory Subjunctive moods) the Thessalonian believers to be alert and self-controlled as opposed to asleep (3 Customary Present tenses). Believers who are asleep (Latin: dormant) are those who continually ignore Bible doctrine; it is not part of their daily life. They are carnal, sinful Christians who are “living it up” as if there were no tomorrow, indifferent to the mandates of divine protocol for the Church Age.

These reversionistic believers are indistinguishable from unbelievers who live in perpetual sleep (carelessness) as far as spiritual matters are concerned. Believers who are alert (Latin: vigilant) continually apply Bible doctrine in their daily life (vigilant). Believers who are self-controlled are stabilized mentally and emotionally (Latin: sober). Growing, maturing believers follow their customary protocol, while reversionistic believers follow theirs. Drunkenness is yet another metaphor that warns believers not to live their final days like an unbeliever. Watching is a mental issue; being sober is a moral issue. We are not to abandon the spiritual life because the rapture is near.

REVELANT OPINIONS

The previous context (4:13-18) dealt with the Rapture. The immediate context (5:1-11) deals with the things preceding the Second Coming. The first is related to the Day of Christ and the second to the Day of the Lord. Whereas many have had a difficult time explaining the relationship between these two passages, the pretribulationist has an adequate explanation. If the terrible judgment of the Day of the Lord is to begin shortly, or immediately, after the Rapture, then it is possible to explain 5:1-11 logically as pertaining to our conduct in light of the future program. This is a very acceptable motivation. The fact that Christians are to be delivered from the prophesied day of wrath ought to be a compelling motive to live lives characterized by vigilance and sobriety. Peter uses this same motivational principle in 1 Peter 4:7 and 2 Peter 3:10-12. (W. Willis) Christians should not be indifferent to the reality of the Lord's return; they should not be asleep on the job. (T. Constable) Be alert and stable is what Paul is enjoining. (C. Ryrie)

1 Thess. 5:6 Therefore (inferential), let us not (neg. particle) sleep (καθεύδω, PASubj.1P, Customary, Hortatory; ignorance of Bible doctrine, spiritual carelessness) as (comparative) others (Subj. Nom.; in Thessalonica), but (contrast) let us be alert (γρηγορέω, PASubj.1P, Customary, Hortatory; apply Bible doctrine, spiritual vigilance) and (connective) self-controlled (νήφω, PASubj.1P, Customary, Hortatory; stabilized mentally and emotionally).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:6** ἄρα οὖν μὴ καθεύδωμεν ὡς οἱ λοιποὶ ἀλλὰ γρηγορῶμεν καὶ νήφωμεν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:6** igitur non dormiamus sicut ceteri sed vigilemus et sobrii simus

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:7** **For those who are asleep [ignorant of eschatology], sleep at night [continue to be clueless right up to the Rapture], and those who are drunk [focused on the things of the world], drink at night [go through the Tribulation].**

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:7** For those who are sleeping, sleep in the night time, and those who are intoxicated, are intoxicated at night.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:7** For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The “night” is a metaphor for the Tribulation, as covered in the previous verse. “Being asleep” and being “drunk” are metaphors for unbelievers who have no idea that the Tribulation is about to fall upon them. But Paul has a secondary idea in mind by using these metaphors – how they relate to reversionistic believers. Some believers have no idea what is going on either; they are living like unbelievers, asleep when they should be studying the Word of God, and drunk with the things of the world when they should be focused and prepared for the Lord's return.

Reversionistic believers are asleep (they ignore Bible doctrine), and they will continue to sleep at

night (continue to ignore doctrine right up to the beginning of the Tribulation). They have not learned the prophetic portions of Scripture called eschatology.

Reversionistic believers are also drunk (focused on the things of the world), and they continue to drink (Latin: inebriate) through the night (they are completely unprepared for the Lord's return). Both categories of people, reversionistic believers and unbelievers, have their respective customary behavior. Both live lives of rejection: one rejects the application of Bible doctrine, the other rejects the Gospel message. The primary meaning of the metaphors relates to unbelievers, while the secondary meaning of the metaphors relates to believers who are living like unbelievers. None of the Thessalonian believers would go through the Tribulation (the night), but many of them are apparently living like unbelievers who are "of the night."

REVELANT OPINIONS

Those who received Paul's gospel of faith apart from deeds, find their salvation a matter of pure unadulterated grace. This is true of the future as well as the past. The death of Christ, not our conduct, our watchfulness or the lack of it, is the foundation on which our future salvation rests just as really as the salvation which we already enjoy. (A. Knoch) The Christian is living in the light of day. He not only need not fear the thief in the night, but he must live in the light of day. He must be neither drunken nor asleep, as people are at night, but awake and sober. (C. McCown) They were not sensible of their danger, therefore, they slept. They were not sensible of their duty, therefore, they were drunk. But it ill becomes Christians to do this. What! Shall Christians, who have the light of the blessed gospel shining in their faces, be careless about their souls, and unmindful of another world? (M. Henry) We are so prone to be intoxicated, not necessarily by liquor but by the stimulants of the world – its glamour, pleasures, and appearance. (J. Walvoord)

1 Thess. 5:7 **For** (explanatory) **those** (Subj. Nom.; reversionistic believers) **who are asleep** (PAPtc.NMP, Descriptive, Substantival; ignorant of eschatology) **sleep** (καθεύδω, PAI3P, Customary) **at night** (Gen. Time; clueless when the Tribulation begins) **and** (connective) **those** (Subj. Nom.; reversionistic believers) **who are drunk** (μεθύσκω, PPPtc.NMP, Descriptive, Substantival; focused on the things of the world) **drink** (μεθύω, PAI3P, Customary) **at night** (Gen. Time; unprepared for the Lord's return).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:7** οἱ γὰρ καθεύδοντες νυκτὸς καθεύδουσιν καὶ οἱ μεθυσκόμενοι νυκτὸς μεθύουσιν·

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:7** qui enim dormiunt nocte dormiunt et qui ebrii sunt nocte ebrii sunt

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:8** **But let us who are of the day [Church Age dispensation] be habitually stabilized [mentally and emotionally], putting on the breastplate of doctrine and virtue love, and for a helmet, the confidence of deliverance [from the Tribulation],**

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:8** But as for us who are of the day, let us be mentally and spiritually well-balanced and self-controlled, having clothed ourselves with a breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet, a hope of salvation,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:8** But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In contrast to the unbeliever (of the night) who will go through the Tribulation, Paul encourages (Hortatory Subjunctive mood) all Church Age believers (of the day) to be habitually stabilized (Iterative Present tense) mentally and emotionally (Latin: sober). He also encourages us to put on the breastplate of doctrine and virtue love, our protective armor when we enter the world system. And for a helmet, he encourages us to wear the confidence of our deliverance from the Tribulation and the Lord's provision for us in eternity future. This protective gear is a metaphor for living in the love complex and utilizing the problem-solving devices for the Church Age. This is the *modus vivendi* we should be engaged in as the Lord's return approaches. The Lord does not want us to be asleep or drunk when He returns; He wants us to be alert and prepared.

REVELANT OPINIONS

The believer's armor is defensive. His only weapon is the Spirit's sword, the Word of God. No other weapon should be used. For defense we rely on faith and love for the present and on the blessed expectation of our gathering together unto Him for the future. This is figured by the helmet. (A. Knoch) Our spiritual enemies are many, and mighty, and malicious. They draw many to their interest, and keep them in it, by making them careless, secure, and presumptuous, by making them drunk – drunk with pride, drunk with passion, drunk and giddy with self-conceit, drunk with the gratifications of sense: so that we have need to arm ourselves against their attempts, by putting on the spiritual breast-plate to keep the heart, and the spiritual helmet to secure the head; and this spiritual armor consists of three great graces of Christians – faith, love and hope. (M. Henry) Perhaps the mention of vigilance suggested the idea of a sentry armed and on duty. (J. Lightfoot)

1 Thess 5:8 **But** (contrast) **let us** (Subj. Nom.) **who are** (εἰμί, PAPtc.NMP, Descriptive, Substantival) **of the day** (Gen. Time; Church Age dispensation) **be habitually stabilized** (νήφω, PASubj.1P, Iterative, Hortatory; mentally and emotionally), **putting on** (ἐνδύω, AMPtc.NMP, Constative, Modal; clothing ourselves) **the breastplate** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **of doctrine** (Adv. Gen. Ref.) **and** (connective) **virtue love** (Adv. Gen. Ref.) **and** (continuative) **for a helmet** (Acc. Purpose), **the confidence** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **of deliverance** (Adv. Gen. Ref.; from the Tribulation),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:8** ἡμεῖς δὲ ἡμέρας ὄντες νήφωμεν ἐνδυσάμενοι θώρακα πίστεως καὶ ἀγάπης καὶ περικεφαλαίαν ἐλπίδα σωτηρίας·

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:8** nos autem qui diei sumus sobrii simus induiti lorica[m] fidei et caritatis et galeam spem salutis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:9** Because God did not appoint us [Church Age believers] to wrath [in the Tribulation], but to obtain deliverance [at the rapture] through our Lord Jesus Christ,

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:9** Because as for us, God did not appoint us to wrath but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:9** For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

God did not appoint (Constative Aorist tense) Church Age believers to retribution and wrath in the Tribulation, but to receive deliverance at the rapture through our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no simpler way for Paul to say “believers will not go through the Tribulation” than this statement. Believers are going to be delivered by the Lord at the rapture before the Tribulation begins. They are not going to suffer through one minute of retribution. Why would the Bridegroom put his bride through wrath before the wedding? You would think this verse would silence all theories about the rapture happening at the middle or the end of the Tribulation, but there are some who will never be convinced in spite of unequivocal statements in Scripture.

REVELANT OPINIONS

This is salvation as a definite prophetic event, the Rapture. Likewise, the wrath is an explicit prophetic event oriented to the time of the context. This is confirmed by its juxtaposition to the salvation mentioned in this verse; wrath is expressly opposed to the Rapture. The “wrath” in this passage is the destruction of the Day of the Lord. The believer’s hope is the Rapture. We are not watching for wrath, but for the Lord ... In the sovereign purpose of God they have not been appointed to wrath but to full and complete deliverance. (W. Willis) The wrath of God referred to here clearly refers to the Tribulation; the context makes this apparent. Deliverance from that wrath is God’s appointment for believers. This temporal salvation comes through the Lord Jesus Christ just as does eternal salvation. (T. Constable)

Our appointment is to be caught up to be with Christ; the appointment of the world is for the Day of the Lord, the day of wrath. One cannot keep both of these appointments. (J. Walvoord) The word “not” is emphatic. It indicates a full and direct negation, absolute and independent of all conditions. We are not appointed to go through the Tribulation or any part of it. No Christian has an appointment with either God’s eternal wrath or His dispensational wrath. (J. Phillips) The tribulation concerns Israel and the Gentiles, not the church, and the church is promised deliverance from the time of tribulation. (J. Walvoord) The contrast in this passage is between light and darkness, between wrath and salvation from that wrath. This wrath and darkness is that of the Day of the Lord.

(J. Pentecost) God, according to His own good will and pleasure has decreed that we shall escape the outpouring of His wrath. No idea of sanctification or of a partial rapture is found here. (M. Couch)

“God has not appointed us to wrath” – that ought to be clear even to amillennialists, but for some reason they miss the point. God hasn’t appointed us to the day of wrath, the Great Tribulation. It is a time of judgment, and the church is not going through it because Christ bore our judgment. (J. McGee) Do not be deceived by the teachers of error who advocate mid-tribulation or post-tribulation rapture. The Lord Jesus will take His bride out of this earth before the appearing of Antichrist, as we will clearly see in the Second Thessalonian epistle. Here Paul assures the believers that God has not appointed believers to wrath – the word “wrath” as used in this verse pointing to the Tribulation period, the time when the Antichrist will reign. (O. Greene) The wrath in this context is the tribulation wrath of the Day of the Lord. (J. Dillow)

Reprobation is the counterpart of election. The Bible teaches that some men are ordained to salvation (Acts 13:48, 1 Thess. 5:9), but it also teaches in 1 Peter 2:8 and Jude 4 that others are ordained to condemnation. Preterition is negative. It is God refusing to elect some. Appointment to wrath for sin is positive. The truth that God has not appointed the elect to wrath indicates that He has appointed others to wrath. Hardening must be distinguished from determinism. Hardening is an act of God’s judicial judgment on man’s self-determination. Man is not sovereign. Failing to distinguish between God’s sovereignty and determinism, man assumes one of two erroneous ideas: (1) He will make man the sovereign of history and salvation. (2) He will make history a Divine game in which human beings are moved about like checkers, void of responsibility. (W.E. Best)

1 Thess. 5:9 Because (causal) God (Subj. Nom.) did not (neg. adv.) appoint (τίθημι, AMI3S, Constativ) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Church Age believers) to wrath (Adv. Acc.; retribution, in the Tribulation), but (contrast) to obtain (Adv. Acc.) deliverance (Obj. Gen.; at the rapture) through our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus Christ (Abl. Means),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:9** ὅτι οὐκ ἔθετο ἡμᾶς ὁ θεὸς εἰς ὀργὴν ἀλλὰ εἰς περιποίησιν σωτηρίας διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ [Χριστοῦ]

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:9** quoniam non posuit nos Deus in iram sed in adquisitionem salutis per Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:10** **Who died for us [believers] so that as a result, whether we are awake [alive during the Rapture] or asleep [dead before the Rapture], we will live together with Him [as the Bride of Christ at the wedding feast in heaven rather than going through the Tribulation].**

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:10** Who died for us in order that whether we are awake [alive] or asleep [dead] we might live together with Him.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:10** Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Jesus Christ died for us (Dramatic Aorist tense) so that we might live together with Him (Culminative Aorist tense) in heaven as opposed to going through the Tribulation. He died for us whether we are those who will be alive when the Rapture comes (awake: vigilant) or whether we will have already died before the Rapture comes (asleep: dormant). Both categories of Church Age believers will be together with Him as the Bride of Christ at the wedding feast in heaven. Christ died (Latin: mortus) so that we will live (Latin: vivify). His spiritual death on the cross in the past, guarantees that all believers will live together with Him in the prophetic future. This living with Him will occur throughout the Millennium and eternity future, but the contextual emphasis here is that we are participating in the wedding feast in heaven while the Tribulation is occurring on earth. There is another explanation of “awake” and “asleep” given by many commentators. I believe they are relevant and have included some opinions below, but I still prefer the interpretation above.

REVELANT OPINIONS

All of the exegetical evidence supports the view that sleep means “not watching.” A different verb, often used for death, occurs in 1 Thess. 4:13 in a context discussing dead believers. The verb in this verse is seldom used for death in biblical Greek. Out of 22 occurrences there is not one unequivocal case in the NT. This context is an exhortation to watch. It concerns living believers, not dead ones. (W. Willis) The references to being “awake” and “asleep” do not refer to being alive and dead but, rather, to being watchful for our Lord’s return or being indifferent to it. (J. Dillow) Our deliverance from end-times wrath by means of the rapture is secured for us by the Lord Jesus “who died for us.” It is the law of the burnt offering. That is what secures us our great escape from wrath and woe. (J. Phillips)

1 Thess. 5:10 Who (Adv. Gen. Ref.) died (ἀποθνήσκω, AAPtc.GMS, Dramatic & Historical, Substantial) for us (Gen. Adv.; believers) so that as a result (Result), whether (conj.) we are awake (γρηγορέω, PASubj.1P, Descriptive, Potential; alive during the Rapture) or (conj.) asleep (καθεύδω, PASubj.1P, Descriptive, Potential; dead before the Rapture), we will live (ζάω, AASubj.1P, Culminative & Prophetic, Result) together (adv.) with Him (Dat. Relationship; as members of the royal family in heaven rather than going through the Tribulation).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:10** τοῦ ἀποθανόντος περὶ ἡμῶν ἵνα εἴτε γρηγορῶμεν εἴτε καθεύδωμεν ἅμα σὺν αὐτῷ ζήσωμεν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:10** qui mortuus est pro nobis ut sive vigilemus sive dormiamus simul cum illo vivamus

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:11** Therefore, keep on encouraging [by means of eschatology] one another of the same kind [fellow believers] and continue to build up [strengthen by means of Bible doctrine] one [pastor or teacher] to another [member of the congregation], just as you are indeed doing.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:11** Wherefore, be encouraging one another and be building one another up, one believer the other believer, even as also you are doing.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:11** Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul commands the Thessalonian believers (Imperative mood) to keep on encouraging one another (Latin: console) by means of eschatological doctrine. The rapture and the resurrection are doctrinal teachings that can be shared at any social occasion. They have been doing this (Customary Present tense) so far, so Paul merely encourages them to continue doing so. He also commands the pastors and teachers in the area (Imperative mood) to continue building up the saints (Durative Present tense) by teaching the members of their congregation all of the other important categories of Biblical doctrine. The Greek word “oikodomeo” refers to building an edifying structure (Latin: edifice) of doctrine in the soul so you can not only withstand the trials and tribulations of being a Christian in a hostile world, but to do so with a smile on your face. This edifying doctrinal structure in the mentality of the soul is often called an “edification complex of the soul.”

REVELANT OPINIONS

Edify or build up as a temple for the Holy Spirit is a metaphor which runs throughout the different chronological groups of Paul’s epistles, the figure of a temple being applied sometimes to the individual believer, sometimes to the collective church. (J. Lightfoot) Edify means to build a house. (R. Earle) The question whether the Parousia was to happen sooner or later was no longer of paramount importance. The important thing was to cultivate that attitude of mind which the writer of this epistle recommended. (W. Nicoll) The word for “edify” means to build a house. It is used to depict the development of spiritual growth and the building of Christian character. It implies that spiritual progress results from patient and diligent labor. (J. Phillips)

1 Thess. 5:11 Therefore (inferential), keep on encouraging (παρακαλέω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command; by means of eschatology) one another of the same kind (Reciprocal Acc.; fellow believers) and (continuative) continue to build up (οικοδομέω, PAImp.2P, Durative, Command; strengthen by means of Bible doctrine) one

(Subj. Acc.; pastor & teacher) to another (Acc. Adv.; member of the congregation), just as (comparative) you are indeed (emphatic; already) doing (ποιέω, ΠΑΙ2Ρ, Customary; practicing).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:11** Διὸ παρακαλεῖτε ἀλλήλους καὶ οἰκοδομεῖτε εἰς τὸν ἕνα καθὼς καὶ ποιεῖτε

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:11** propter quod consolamini invicem et aedificate alterutrum sicut et facitis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:12** Moreover, we urge you, brethren [members of the royal family], to fully appreciate those [pastors & teachers] who diligently labor to the point of exhaustion [studying] among you and who periodically exercise authority [leadership that cares] over you in the Lord [legitimate delegated authority] and who teach you on a regular basis [continual doctrinal instruction],

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:12** Now, we request of you, brethren, that you recognize those for what they are and as entitled to the respect due them who work to the point of weariness among you and who are in authority over you in the Lord and admonish you,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:12** And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

There should be no paragraph break between verse 11 and 12. The same pastors and teachers who are commanded to build-up believers in the Word of God in verse 11 are here diligently laboring to the point of exhaustion (Durative Present tense) in their Bible studies. Paul covers the three most important functions of the pastor and teacher: study, exercise authority, and teach. There were pastors and teachers in the geographical area around Thessalonica who were studying the Word of God to the point of total exhaustion. Since this is an early church, the chances are great that these pastors and teachers are working a full-time job and are engaged in studying during the evening. And because new churches like the ones in Thessalonica are bound to have many problems, these pastors are required to exercise authority now and again (Iterative Present tense) over unruly or carnal believers in the congregation.

Americans today are very anti-authority in their thinking. Evidently the Thessalonians were, too, because Paul adds the phrase “in the Lord” to meet the objections he thinks will be made. The pastors and teachers he is referring to are those who were given this spiritual gift by the Lord, so they are the recipients of legitimate, divinely delegated authority over the local church. It is customary for them to exercise this authority on occasion in order to protect neophyte Christians and other weak brethren in their local church. They are also called to teach what they have been studying (Iterative Present tense) on a regular basis. Every single night would be great, if possible, because there is no limit or saturation point attainable when it comes to metabolized

Bible doctrine in the soul. Paul urges the Thessalonian believers (Dramatic Present tense) to fully appreciate those with the pastor and teacher gifts (Intensive Perfect tense) in their locality.

REVELANT OPINIONS

The ecclesiastical nomenclature of the Pauline Epistles is unsettled, corresponding with the fact that the primitive church was not a homogenous body throughout Christendom. The primitive Pauline church consisted of a number of separate fraternities which were self-governing. The recognition of those who ministered to the congregation depended on the free choice of their members. (M. Vincent) We live in a rebellious age, and unfortunately the spirit of the age sometimes invades our churches. It is important for all of us, therefore, to give thought to the biblical teaching on the respect our Lord enjoins from His people for their pastors. It does not take a great exposition of this passage to explain the meaning of “esteem them very highly.” God expects His churches to appreciate His gifts to them. Do not be misled by those who would depreciate the office. (R. Baxter)

The Greek word for “know” often carries the sense of “appoint” or “know intimately.” To be “known” by God is to enjoy His favor (1 Cor. 8:3) and to be honored or respected by Him. It means to know by observation and experience, by reflection; it is a mental process based on information. It sometimes means “respect” or “appreciate.” When the Lord says He does not know them, He means He does not appreciate, respect, or honor them. (J. Dillow) They are called laborers and should not be loiterers. They must labor with their people, to instruct, comfort, and edify them. They must rule, not with rigor, but with love. They must not exercise dominion as temporal lords, but rule as spiritual guides, by setting a good example to the flock. (M. Henry) The verb from “nous” refers to putting sense into the heads of people – a thankless, but necessary task. (A.T. Robertson) It is the duty of a minister to put some sense in the heads of the people. (M. Couch)

An instinct of rebellion against authority is not confined to any one class, but artisans and tradesmen are notorious for a tendency to suspect or depreciate any control exercised over them in politics or in religion, especially when it is exercised by some who have risen from their own ranks. The community at Thessalonica was largely recruited from this class, and Paul, with characteristic penetration, appeals for respect and generous appreciation towards the local leaders. (W. Nicoll) There is no hint given in Scripture of a time when pastors would cease to be necessary, and when the Church would be served by an “any man ministry.” (T. Croskery) The remaining verses of this section present us with a triple series of brief instructions. The first instruction consists of five pastoral exhortations ... the second consists of three directions for working out the will of God in one’s life. (D. Williams)

You should not support any minister until you know him well enough to know what he believes and preaches. You should not blindly support any religious group, nor should you support any radio minister until you investigate and know that he is preaching the pure, unadulterated Word of God. Never give your money just to be giving, nor with the attitude that by giving in the right spirit it is up to the one to whom you give, to use that gift to the glory of God. God will hold you responsible – not only for what you give, but for where you give His money. Know the man who is your pastor –

know what he believes and what he stands for. If you belong to a church and do not know what the minister stands for, make it your business to find out! (O. Greene) Love will lead us to acknowledge those who are over us and to bear with those below us. (A. Knoch)

1 Thess. 5:12 Moreover (conj.), we urge (ἑρωτάω, PAIIP, Dramatic; request, beg) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.), brethren (Voc. Address; members of the royal family), to fully appreciate (οἶδα, Perf.AInf., Intensive, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) those (Acc. Dir. Obj.; pastors and teachers) who diligently labor to the point of exhaustion (κοπιῶω, PAPtc.AMP, Durative, Substantival; studying and teaching) among you (Dat. Assoc.) and (continuative) who periodically exercise authority (προΐστημι, PMPTc.AMP, Customary & Iterative, Substantival; leadership that cares) over you (Gen. Adv.) in the Lord (Loc. Sph.; legitimate, divinely delegated authority) and (continuative) who teach you (Acc. Adv.) on a regular basis (νουθετέω, PAPtc.AMP, Iterative, Substantival; instruct),

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:12** Ἐρωτῶμεν δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀδελφοί εἰδέναι τοὺς κοπιῶντας ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ προϊσταμένους ὑμῶν ἐν κυρίῳ καὶ νουθετοῦντας ὑμᾶς

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:12** rogamus autem vos fratres ut noveritis eos qui laborant inter vos et praesunt vobis in Domino et monent vos

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:13** **And to appreciate them [pastors & teachers] very highly in virtue love [love complex] because of their work [not their personality]. Live in peace with one another.**

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:13** And be esteeming them most highly with a divine and self-sacrificial love because of their work.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:13** And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his exhortation by telling the Thessalonian believers to appreciate (Customary Present tense) their pastors, teachers and evangelists in virtue love. He adds a superlative to this exhortation, meaning they should appreciate them abundantly and exceedingly while residing and functioning inside the love complex. He adds a reason for being so appreciative for those who have the communication and teaching gifts – because of their work. This is a reference to their ministry, their studying and teaching Bible doctrine and their preaching the gospel. The Greek word “ergon” refers to their spiritual production and has nothing to do with their personality. It is the fulfillment of their ministry that the Lord is concerned with, not whether their personality agrees with yours. Paul also commands us (Imperative mood) to live in peace

with one another. It should be our custom to choose a faithful pastor to study under and to avoid wrangling, debates and a competitive attitude – not badmouthing other pastors or stirring up trouble in church.

REVELANT OPINIONS

A pastor should be respected for his sound knowledge and conscientiousness in teaching. His “diligent labor” consists of hours every day in disciplined, concentrated study, complemented by an appropriately full teaching schedule. He is an authority on doctrine; he has authority in the local church. Members of the congregation demonstrate their appreciation for the pastor by submitting to his authority and concentrating on his teaching. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The Thessalonian church being newly planted, the ministers were novices, which may account for the people treating them with less respect ... Let there not only be peace between ministers and their flocks, but also no party rivalries among yourselves – one contending in behalf of one favorite minister, another in behalf of another. (R. Jamieson) If church members bite and devour one another, they are spiritual cannibals, always destroying instead of building up God’s Word in the church. (O. Greene)

We still have the problem today that very few people in the church pay any attention to the teachers God has given them. People say they believe the Bible is the Word of God and they believe every word of it. Then why don’t they obey it? Why don’t they listen when it is being taught? One man said to me very candidly, “I believe the Bible from cover to cover, and I am ignorant of what is between the covers.” Now that is an untenable position to hold. I think if people knew what was between the covers, they would believe it. But it is a hypocritical position to say you believe it and then be ignorant of what it says. Anyone who says he believes the Bible is the Word of God is obligated to know what it says. Therefore, those who are preaching and teaching the Word of God should have the attention of believers. (J. McGee)

We need wise leadership today, but still more wise following. An army of captains and colonels never won a battle. (A.T. Robertson) When a congregation becomes carnal and spiritually callous, they take out their sinfulness on their pastors and teachers. Church splits follow quickly, and some of the saints never recover emotionally. Paul knew well the carnal nature of believers and realized problems could fester and burst forth quickly. We see daily how pastors are hated by their churches for some trivial reason, or for no reason whatever, because this desire for the cultivation of peace, which Paul recommends so strongly, is not exercised as it ought. (M. Couch) It is not a matter of personalities. It is the good of the church that is the important thing. (L. Morris)

1 Thess. 5:13 And (continuative) to appreciate (ἠγέομαι, PAInf., Customary, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb, Deponent; hold in high regard, esteem) them (Acc. Dir. Obj.; pastors & teachers) very highly (superlative adv.; abundantly, exceedingly) in virtue love (Loc. Sph.; love complex) because (causal) of their (Poss. Gen.) work (Acc. Gen. Ref.; not their personality). Live in peace (εἰρηνεύω, PAImp.2P, Customary, Command) with one another (Dat. Assoc., Reciprocal).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:13** καὶ ἠγείσθαι αὐτοὺς ὑπὲρ ἐκπερισσοῦ ἐν ἀγάπῃ διὰ τὸ ἔργον αὐτῶν εἰρηνεύετε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:13** ut habeatis illos abundantius in caritate propter opus illorum pacem habete cum eis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:14** Now we exhort you, brethren [pastors of the local churches]: **Keep on warning the rebellious ones [those who are rejecting Bible doctrine]; keep on encouraging the emotionally discouraged ones [those who are hysterical or otherwise out-of-balance]; keep on supporting the weak ones [new believers, babes in Christ]; keep on being patient with everyone [exercising impersonal love & the faith rest technique].**

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:14** Now, we beg of you, please, brethren, be admonishing those who are rebellious, be encouraging the fainthearted, be a mainstay to those who are [spiritually] weak, be always patient toward all with that patience which endures ill-treatment meekly and without retaliation.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:14** Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all *men*.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now changes his exhortation (Customary Present tense) from the congregation showing appreciation for their pastors, teachers and evangelists to the pastors of the local churches in the geographical area around Thessalonica. Paul commands them (Imperative mood) in this verse to do four important things; they are to continue doing (Iterative Present tense) each of these as part of their authoritative ministry over their local assembly. All believers can participate in these commands, and the ones that follow, but the transitional emphasis on this pericope points to the primary exhortation for pastors and teachers. The first command is that the pastor and teacher should continue warning the rebellious ones. This refers to believers who are rejecting Bible doctrine as the key to the spiritual life. These believers are lazy, disorderly, and unruly (Latin: corrupt). They can be troublemakers for others in the congregation, or they may be those who are on self-destruct.

The second command is to make it a practice to encourage (Latin: console) those who are emotionally discouraged (Latin: pusillanimous). These believers are fainthearted, sometimes even hysterical, but most definitely out-of-balance in their walk with the Lord. Some of these believers may have such a bad case of emotional revolt of the soul that they are psychopathic. The third command is that they should also assist new believers in learning doctrine and applying spiritual principles in daily life. Babes in Christ need extra attention beyond that given to mature believers in church. The fourth command is more general in nature: the pastor and teacher must try to be patient with everyone in his congregation. This requires the continual

application of the faith rest technique and impersonal love as problem-solving devices.

REVELANT OPINIONS

There probably was friction between the leaders and some whom they had admonished, and the latter are urged to know, respect, appreciate and love their leaders who labor to weariness for the church. Verse 14 is intended to support the leaders in their efforts to discipline the disorderly and also to suggest the variety of needs with which they must deal. (C. McCown) Some are cowardly, afraid of difficulties, and disheartened at the thoughts of hazards, and losses, and afflictions; now such should be encouraged; we should not despise them, but comfort them. (M. Henry) We must not fail to moderate our anger: and this duty must be exercised towards all men, good and bad, high and low. We must not be high in our expectations and demands, nor harsh in our resentments, nor hard in our impositions, but endeavor to make the best we can of every thing, and think the best we can of every body. (M. Henry)

The restoration of carnal Christians is in view ... We recover a sinner (a backslidden brother) in this way, by intercession and exhortation. (J. Dillow) They must also admonish the people, and that not only publicly, but privately, as there may be occasion. They must instruct them to do well, and reprove when they do ill. (M. Henry) There are folk who are weak in the faith. They cannot get in step because they are little babies. They are not able to march with the rest; so help them. Lift them up, and carry them along. Be patient toward all men. That means don't lose your temper. That is so difficult! In business or in our other relationships with people, we meet ungodly, unholy, cantankerous, unsaved people who are definitely trying to trip us or abuse us in some way, and it becomes very difficult to be patient and not to lose our tempers. But God commands us to be patient with everybody. (J. McGee)

In our churches there are those who are faint-hearted on account of the loss of friends, as the Thessalonians were faint-hearted on account of the supposed fate of Christian friends taken away before the Coming. There are those who are depressed by the state of their temporal affairs, as the Thessalonians would have a depressing influence in the way in which maintenance and home and even life were affected by persecution. There are always those who are apt to be faint-hearted on account of their spiritual state. Have they a real interest in Christ? Are they making progress in the Christian life? Are they doing any good? Are they having an influence for good upon those over whom they are immediately placed? The command of Christ, laid on all, is that such are to be encouraged. Let them be encouraged by the thought of the kind Providence that is exercised over them. (R. Finlayson)

Within the fellowship of the local church, we find all kinds of people. Many of them are, by nature, quite incompatible. They would never be found grouped together anywhere else. In the fellowship of the church, doctors, lawyers, and professionals rub shoulders with plumbers, clerks, and shop hands. Cultured socialites sit down with farmers and fishermen. People of opposite temperaments seek to work together for the cause of Christ. We are bound together by a common faith. With so many and varied natural differences, and with each person at a different stage of spiritual development, no

wonder Paul calls for longsuffering toward all men. (J. Phillip) Put sense into the unruly mob who breaks ranks. This is a challenging task for any leader. (A.T. Robertson)

1 Thess. 5:14 **Now** (transitional) **we exhort** (παρακαλέω, PA1P, Customary; encourage, request) **you** (Acc. Dir. Obj.), **brethren** (Voc. Address; pastors of the local churches): **Keep on warning** (νουθετέω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command) **the rebellious ones** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; lazy, disorderly, those who are rejecting Bible doctrine); **keep on encouraging** (παραμυθέομαι, PMImp.2P, Iterative, Command, Deponent; comforting) **the emotionally discouraged ones** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; fainthearted, hysterical, out of balance, quitters, psychopaths); **keep on supporting** (ἀντέχω, PMImp.2P, Iterative, Command; assist, help) **the weak ones** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; new believers); **keep on being patient** (μακροθυμέω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command; faith rest technique and impersonal love) **with everyone** (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:14** παρακαλοῦμεν δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀδελφοί νουθετεῖτε τοὺς ἀτάκτους παραμυθεῖσθε τοὺς ὀλιγοψύχους ἀντέχεσθε τῶν ἀσθενῶν μακροθυμεῖτε πρὸς πάντας

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:14** rogamus autem vos fratres corripite inquietos consolamini pusillianimes suscipite infirmos patientes estote ad omnes

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:15** See to it that no one returns [retaliation] evil for evil [revenge motivation] to anyone, but make it a practice to pursue good towards each other [fellow believers] and all others [even unbelievers].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:15** Be seeing to it constantly that a person does not return evil in exchange for evil to anyone, but always be striving for that which is beneficial for one another and for all men.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:15** See that none render evil for evil unto any *man*; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all *men*.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul commands (Imperative mood) all pastors and teachers to make sure (Durative Present tense) that nobody in their congregation gets involved in revenge motivation. Believers are not to return evil for evil (Culminative Aorist tense), even if the circumstances seem to justify such behavior (Potential Subjunctive mood) in the eyes of men. Retaliation for a real or perceived injury (Latin: malice) is not the Christian standard. This is a prohibition for believers in the congregation; do not confuse this command as referring to legitimate judicial authority in a courtroom. If somebody has done you wrong, the natural response is to retaliate, to get even at all costs. That may be what the Godfather might do, but that is not what God the Father wants us to do.

We are commanded (Imperative mood) to pursue good, not evil (Iterative Present tense). We should strive to return good towards those who rendered evil to us. This means we should pray for something good or beneficial to come to those who wish to harm us, as David prayed for Saul when he was trying to kill him. We should obviously operate from this level towards our fellow believers, but Paul even includes unbelievers (possible ascensive use of “kai”) within the realm of this command. If we are able to do this, we might end up making a friend out of a former enemy. I’m not naïve enough to believe that this will always happen, but it is often within the realm of possibilities.

REVELANT OPINIONS

If we are inwardly contaminated, fulfilling God’s will toward others is impossible. When wronged, we must refuse to nurse a grudge or to retaliate. Our joy is not dependent on favorable circumstances or on how we are treated by others. Suffering is the rule of Christian living, but we need not allow anything to disturb our composure. (D. Black) The first step, therefore, in the exercise of patience is, not to revenge injuries; the second is, to bestow favors even upon enemies. (J. Calvin) Injustice done, injustice returned. Dirty tricks done, dirty tricks done in return. Violence suffered, revenge paid back in kind. The Christian norm, however, is to do good. (D. Williams) Because to do this is, humanly speaking, almost impossible, the Holy Spirit must be working within to bring such a response. (M. Couch)

1 Thess. 5:15 See to it (ὁράω, PAImp.2P, Durative, Command; make sure, take care) that (ellipsis) no (neg. particle) one (Subj. Nom.) returns (ἀποδίδωμι, AASubj.3S, Culminative, Potential; pay back, retaliates) evil (Acc. Dir. Obj.) for (prep.) evil (Gen. Reciprocation) to anyone (Dat. Disadv.), but (contrast) make it a practice to pursue (διώκω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command; follow, strive for) good (Acc. Dir. Obj.; beneficial) towards each other (Acc. Reciprocation; fellow believers) and (connective) all others (Acc. Gen. Ref.; unbelievers).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:15** ὁρᾶτε μή τις κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ τινὶ ἀποδῶ ἀλλὰ πάντοτε τὸ ἀγαθὸν διώκετε εἰς ἀλλήλους καὶ εἰς πάντα

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:15** videte ne quis malum pro malo alicui reddat sed semper quod bonum est sectamini et in invicem et in omnes

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:16** Always maintain inner happiness.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:16** Always be rejoicing.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:16** Rejoice evermore.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul commands (Imperative mood) pastors and teachers, as well as all believers in general, to maintain a state of continual inner happiness (Iterative & Durative Present tense). This command can only be fulfilled by residence and function in the sphere of divine power and virtue love. It can only be fulfilled by the consistent intake, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine. This is not the temporary happiness of the world, but the inner happiness of the Lord. It is a function of our priestly ministry. The “semper fidelis” of the Marine Corp (always faithful) is supplemented here by the “semper gaudete” of the mature believer (always happy). This is not a command to act silly – a misconstruing of the word “rejoice” - as is the practice in some Pentecostal circles.

REVELANT OPINIONS

This is a command. A Christian’s joy does not spring from his circumstances, but from the blessings that are his because he is in Christ. The Christian who remains in sadness and depression really breaks a commandment: in some direction or other he mistrusts God – His power, providence, forgiveness. (T. Constable) Christian rejoicing is a deep, calm joy. The surface may be ruffled while the depths are still; cross-currents may vary while the undercurrent runs steadily on. Surface pain may conceal sacred joys which it cannot destroy. The secret of Christian joy is inwardness. These Christians do not depend on external circumstances for their happiness. The spiritual sources of rejoicing in the love and presence of God are not disturbed by earthly calamities. (W. Adeney)

This verse is the shortest verse in the Bible. Some think that “Jesus wept” in John 11:35 is the shortest, and in the English it is. In the NT Greek, 1 Thess. 5:16 is the shortest verse in the Bible. It contains two words and they are short words, whereas in the original for “Jesus wept” there are three words and they are longer words. (J. Walvoord) We may blame others for our lack of joy, but the truth of the matter is that if our joy has gone, we have no one to blame but ourselves. It shows that we are out of fellowship with God. (H. Ironside) The child of God has no right to go around with a sour puss. The child of God has no right to be a cantankerous individual. (J. McGee)

1 Thess. 5:16 Always (temporal) maintain inner happiness (χαίρω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command; keep on being in a state of happiness).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:16** Πάντοτε χαίρετε

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:16** semper gaudete

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:17** Make it a habit to pray on a regular basis.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:17** Be praying unceasingly.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:17** Pray without ceasing.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul commands (Imperative mood) us to pray on a frequent or regular basis. This is to be a habit, a daily practice (Iterative Present tense). In the case of confession of sin, it should be as often as needed throughout the day. Every time you catch yourself in a mental, verbal or overt sin of any kind, you should be utilizing the promise in 1 John 1:9 by acknowledging your sin to God in prayer. This covers prayer to God for yourself to maintain fellowship with the Lord, but prayer should also extend to others. The “sine intermissione” in the Latin (without ceasing, no intermission) lends itself to the unfortunate idea that we pray all day and night long without ceasing.

The iterative present tense, however, means a habit or continuous practice. It refers to a series of dots, with intervals in between - not an unbroken line, with no intervals for living the rest of our daily life. In short, Paul is telling us to make prayer part of our daily life. This is part of our priestly function, just like maintaining inner happiness. Don't wait for Sunday morning to pray; don't wait for late evening when you are ready for bed. If you do that, you may be out of fellowship all day long! Even if you can't identify a specific sin that you may have committed during the day, it is safe to assume that since we all have the sin nature dwelling within us, we can always acknowledge the sin of an arrogant mental attitude.

REVELANT OPINIONS

It means to pray regularly and to be constantly in the attitude of prayer. (J. McGee) Paul was speaking of maintaining continuous fellowship with God as much as possible in the midst of daily living in which concentration is frequently broken. (T. Constable) We can pray with the upward glancing of the eye. We can pray when waiting for a bus or when driving the car. We can pray as we meet someone or say goodbye. Prayer does not have to be sermonic or even structured. It does not even need words. God can read the unformed words of a praying heart. (J. Phillips)

One unfailing weapon possessed by the Christian warrior is prayer – the prayer for protection. In modern warfare a successful tactical operation is prefaced with a barrage of artillery. When artillery fire pins down, disorganizes, confuses, or routs the enemy, casualties are minimized and battles are won. One of the greatest weaknesses of the Church today is the lack of a prayer barrage – prevailing prayer. Prayer is every believer's means of direct petition to God the Father for logistical and fire support in the advance of the Christian life. We are commanded to pray without ceasing – to pray consistently. I stand as a recruiting officer looking for faithful prayer warriors to enlist in the Lord's Artillery. In the privacy of our royal priesthood pray for those encountering combat pressure. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

1 Thess. 5:17 Make it a practice to pray (προσεύχομαι, PMImp.2P, Iterative, Command, Deponent; recurring prayer) on a regular basis (adverb).

^{WHM} **1 Thessalonians 5:17** ἀδιαλείπτως ἀδιαλείπτως βο προσεύχεσθε προσεύχομαι vdpn2p

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:17** ἀδιαλείπτως προσεύχεσθε

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:17** sine intermissione orate

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:18** In all things [situations in life] give thanks [gratitude], because this [being happy, praying and giving thanks] is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:18** In everything be giving thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:18** In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

No matter what the situation in life that befalls you, it is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus to give thanks (Iterative Present tense) for it. This is not an option; this is a command (Imperative mood) from Paul. But is that the only thing expressed by “this” (Gk: touto) in the verse? We do not have three separate imperatives in verses 16-18, but a group of three summarized by the word “this.” All three (being happy, praying and giving thanks) are the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. All three are encompassed by the sovereign will of God. If we understand the sovereignty of God properly, we know that nothing that comes our way is an accident.

We understand that God is active in controlling and running His creation; He is not sitting on the sidelines, wringing His hands wondering how things are going to turn out. He is not waiting for billions of human wills to make decisions independent of His plan to see the outcome of each day. No, God is in control, just like the bumper sticker suggests. So when good things and unpleasant things happen to us, we should be grateful for the opportunity to apply Bible doctrine in the situation. This does not mean we sit on a park bench and do nothing, waiting to see what is in store for the day. We should go about our business and see the Lord’s hand at work throughout our day.

REVELANT OPINIONS

The NT formulates the thought of divine foreordination in another way, by telling us that what motivates and determines God’s actions in His world, and among them the fortunes and destiny which He brings upon men, is His own will, i.e., His own deliberate, prior resolve. This is not, indeed, the only sense in which the NT speaks of the will of God. The Bible conceives of God’s purpose for men as expressed both by His revealed commands to them and by His ordering of their circumstances. His “will” in Scripture thus covers both His law and His plan; hence some of the terms for “will” are also used with reference to particular divine demands. (J.I. Packer) The Christian

is indeed counseled to give thanks IN everything, but surely not FOR everything. The evils of wicked men are not included ... This seems reasonable enough if the tribulations are not due to our own disobedience. But most of our tribulation seems to be of our own engineering. When it is not our fault we may not find it hard at all. Martyrdom can actually be quite rewarding! It is when the martyrdom takes on the appearance of punishment that it becomes burdensome. (A. Custance)

Divine sovereignty ought to make a difference in our lives. It ought to give us courage when we encounter adversity of any sort. It ought to help us to obey Jesus' command, "don't be afraid," and even Paul's command to "give thanks in all circumstances." It ought to cause us to live our lives and make our plans in all humility, knowing that only "if the Lord wills" can we do even the most mundane things of life. Above all, it will give us the confidence that no plan of God's can be thwarted by either human actions or acts of nature and that, therefore, God is indeed working out all things in conformity with the purpose of His will – for His glory and the good of His people. (T. Schreiner & B. Ware) This is one form of Paul's constant practice of referring all our thoughts and actions, all the dispensations of providence, to the glory of God, as their ultimate end and aim. For what is thanksgiving but a recognition of His Majesty, and a tribute to His divine power? (J. Lightfoot) We find ourselves in indigent circumstances, facing persecution or bereavement, or pressured by events beyond our control. We can complain, worry, or rebel, or we can thank God that He is still on the throne and that He is too wise to make any mistakes. (J. Phillips)

The saints are chastened and the rest are punished; and in both cases God in His sovereignty uses men as his weapons, as His sword, His razor, His battle-axe, His rod, and His staff. And sometimes He uses the saints to chasten one another. When we are chastened by the world we are apt to see it as a form of persecution. In our conceit we may imagine that this persecution comes because the world finds our "righteousness" offensive. But in point of fact it may be because it is the Lord who is displeased with us, with our "unrighteousness," and determines that it must be corrected. When our friends, our brothers and sisters in the Lord, are chastened we may very well be tempted to mistake it for punishment. We are terribly confused in our thinking about these things. But what a tremendously comforting thing it is to remind ourselves when "the boss" comes down hard on us (even if we deserve it) that this same boss is the Lord's rod or staff which is really intended to comfort us, to chasten us, not for our hurt but for our good. Rightly understood, such persecution ought to be a source of thankfulness, not complaint. A life lived in such a spirit would make it somewhat easier for us to fulfill Paul's injunction to "give thanks in every thing." (A. Custance)

1 Thess. 5:18 In all things (Loc. Sph.; situations in life) give thanks (εὐχαριστέω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command), because (causal) this (Subj. Nom.; being happy, praying and giving thanks) is (ellipsis) the will (Pred. Nom.) of God (Poss. Gen.) for you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) in Christ Jesus (Loc. Sph.).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:18** ἐν παντὶ εὐχαριστεῖτε· τούτο γὰρ θέλημα θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰς ὑμᾶς

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:18** in omnibus gratias agite haec enim voluntas Dei est in Christo Iesu in omnibus vobis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:19** Stop quenching the Spirit [with cosmic II involvement].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:19** Stop stifling and suppressing the Spirit.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:19** Quench not the Spirit.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's next command is to stop (Imperative of Prohibition) quenching the Holy Spirit. Apparently some of the Thessalonian believers were still involved (Iterative Present tense) in their former lifestyle, some activities which involved them in Satan's cosmic system. When a believer locks into cosmic II, the hatred complex of sins, he extinguishes the power of the Holy Spirit in his life. The indwelling of the Spirit still exists, but the Spirit is put on hold – unable to fulfill any of His designed ministries as mentor to the growing believer. “Grieving” the Holy Spirit occurs when a believer locks into cosmic I, the arrogance complex of sins. Both spheres of operation are satanic traps that destroy the forward momentum of the believer.

REVELANT OPINIONS

Experiential sanctification has both absolute and progressive aspects. The filling of the Spirit is an absolute status. At any given time, the believer is either 100% filled with the Spirit or he is not filled with the Spirit at all. Either he is in fellowship with God, or he is out of fellowship. If he has confessed his sins to God, the believer is entirely inside the divine dynasphere (1 John 1:9), but when he sins, and as long as he does not confess to God, he is entirely outside the divine dynasphere. Outside the divine dynasphere he “grieves” or “quenches” the Holy Spirit and resides instead in Satan's cosmic system. This absolute but invisible status – in or out – has a cumulative effect, which is the progressive aspect of experiential sanctification. The power of the divine dynasphere is essential for spiritual growth. Only in the divine dynasphere can the believer learn Bible doctrine or accurately apply spiritual truth. What is the dominant trend of his decisions at any given time? Is he more often in or out of fellowship with God? (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Two mandates (“Stop grieving the Holy Spirit” in Eph. 4:30 and “Stop quenching the Spirit” in 1 Thess. 5:19) define the power struggle in which the Church Age believer must rely on the Holy Spirit. God commands us to resist the power and influence of Satan. These two mandates warn us that, when we sin, we cut off the power of the divine dynasphere, permitting the old sin nature to seize control of the soul. The divine dynasphere and Satan's cosmic system are mutually exclusive. We always reside in one or the other: if not in God's system, we live in Satan's power system. We “grieve” the Spirit when we enter Satan's system of arrogance; we “quench” the Spirit when we live in Satan's system of antagonism toward God, truth, and the divine plan. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The word “quench” when related to the Spirit, does not imply that He is extinguished, or that He withdraws; it is rather the act of resisting the Spirit. The Spirit does not remove His presence. He has come to

abide. (L. Chafer) You and I quench the Holy Spirit when we take matters into our own hands. (J. McGee)

The Christian way of life is more demanding than the establishment life of the unbeliever. The believer's life has a divine purpose; the unbeliever's life does not – except to become a believer. Hence, the Christian suffers from violations of establishment principles, as would any unbeliever, but he also suffers when he ignores the mandates of God's protocol plan. He is commanded to reside and function in the palace, the divine dynasphere, under the enabling power of God the Holy Spirit, but if he "quenches" or "grieves" the Holy Spirit through sin, he cuts himself off from God's purpose for his life and enters the dungeon of Satan's system ... Grieving the Holy Spirit is carnality, a one-time sin followed by rebound; quenching the Holy Spirit is perpetual carnality without rebound, which is reversionism. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The manner of life which is enjoined under grace is superhuman. The demand is for a superhuman manner of life, and the power of the Holy Spirit is required to fulfill this manner of life ... The Spirit is "quenched" by any unyieldedness to the revealed will of God. It is simply saying "no" to God, and so is closely related to matters of the divine appointments for service; though the Spirit may be "quenched" as well, by any resistance of the providence of God in the life. (L. Chafer)

We cannot quench the Spirit in Scripture. The Book remains, whatever we may think of it. But to ourselves we may quench the Spirit. A dry, hard, critical examination of the Bible, ignoring all devotional, practical, and spiritual uses of it, will rob it of all inspiration for the reader. With some the fires are burnt out; they only grope among the ashes, and cannot find a lingering spark. To such people the Bible is the most dreary book in the world. In order that the fire of inspiration should touch us, the fire of love and faith must be kept alive on the altar of our hearts. (W. Adeney) Grieving the Holy Spirit of God through personal sin is a serious thing. So is quenching His ministry. This means to stifle His ministry on behalf of the child of God through sin. The Spirit of God is quenched when the Christian says "no" to Him. The context of this passage deals with sin in the believer, especially in relation to the return of the Lord. The Thessalonian believers were enduring severe persecution because of their faith in Christ. This no doubt caused some to become impatient and short-tempered with each other and thus to sin by refusing to allow the Spirit to work in their lives. (R. Lightner)

1 Thess. 5:19 Stop (neg. particle) quenching (σβέννυμι, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Prohibition; stifling, extinguishing) the Spirit (Acc. Dir. Obj.; with cosmic II involvement).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:19** τὸ πνεῦμα μὴ σβέννυτε

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:19** Spiritum nolite extinguere

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:20** Stop treating prophecies [such as the rapture, tribulation, 2nd advent, millennium] with contempt.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:20** Stop counting as nothing divine revelations given in the local assembly by the

one who receives them,

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:20** Despise not prophesyings.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's next command is to stop (Imperative of Prohibition) treating prophecies with contempt (Latin: spurn). Evidently some Thessalonian believers had heard so many conflicting views of end-time events that they had decided to reject them all (Iterative Present tense) out of frustration. There were probably arguments and debates between theological groups on when the rapture would occur - if they even agreed that there was a rapture. There were probably debates on whether there was a literal 1,000 year millennial reign of Christ or whether it was just an allegory. There were probably disagreements on what various trials and tribulations were really going to happen during the tribulation or whether they were merely superlatives for an overall "bad" time.

I do not believe this verse has anything to do with the "gift of prophecy," although it may have been in operation at that time. The gift of prophecy ended with the completed canon of Scripture, around 90-95 A.D., and the canon was far from completed when the epistle to the Thessalonians was written. A good case can be made (and it has by many commentators) that this is what Paul is referring to here. But I believe it is a prohibition leveled at those we would today call amillennialists or post-millennialists. These two philosophical schools have not studied eschatology with the same hermeneutical principles used in other portions of Scripture. Both schools of thought present a confusing mess of contradictory scenarios, rejecting the true prophetic events outlined in the Word of God.

Men who are otherwise good scholars of the Bible have rejected the prophetic portions of Scripture over the centuries. I studied under both amillennial and post-millennial pastors during my early Christian life, and ended up leaving more than one congregation when I could no longer tolerate such a loose handling of the Word of God. I consider both philosophical schools to be "non prophecy" groups, since their eschatological outline is no outline at all but merely an attempt to reject any lucid prophetic outline presented by dispensational scholars. If you are in any way connected with a church that follows one of these labyrinths of non-prophecy, I recommend that you depart immediately and find a pastor who "rightly divides the Word of truth." Eschatology is too great a portion of Scripture to be completely ignorant of it.

REVELANT OPINIONS

They had overreacted to an influx of false prophecies that were confusing them and threatening to lead them astray. Consequently, Paul corrects the Thessalonians' overreaction by directing them to test everything and, having done so, to adhere to what is good and avoid what is evil. (G. Johnson) By prophecies here we understand the preaching of the Word, the interpreting and applying of the Scriptures; and this we must not despise, but should prize and value, because it is the ordinance of

God, appointed of Him for our furtherance and increase in knowledge and grace, in holiness and comfort. We must not despise preaching, though it be plain, and not with enticing words of men's wisdom, and though we be told no more than what we knew before. (M. Henry)

Do not look upon Bible study as something that is beneath you. Do not be indifferent to the Word of God. We have a lot of folk who are in Christian service, but they are ignorant of the Bible and they look down on Bible study. Occasionally I hear such a person saying, "You just spend all your time in Bible study and you don't do anything. What you need to do is get out and get busy." Well, what is needed is to get busy studying the Word of God, and after you do that you will see how to get busy and really be effective. (J. McGee) The verb means "forth-telling" rather than "fore-telling." (A.T. Robertson)

This sentence is appropriately added to the preceding one, for as the Spirit of God illuminates us chiefly by doctrine, those who give not teaching its proper place, do, so far as in them lies, quench the Spirit, for we must always consider in what manner or by what means God designs to communicate Himself to us. Let every one, therefore, who is desirous to make progress under the direction of the Holy Spirit, allow himself to be taught by the ministry of prophets. By the term prophecy, however, I do not understand the gift of foretelling the future, but as in 1 Corinthians 14:3, the science of interpreting Scripture, so that a prophet is an interpreter of the will of God. Let, therefore, prophecy in this passage be understood as meaning – interpretation made suitable to present use. Paul prohibits us from despising it, if we would not choose of our own accord to wander in darkness. The statement is a remarkable one for the commendation of external preaching. (J. Calvin)

1 Thess. 5:20 Stop (neg. particle) treating prophecies (Acc. Dir. Obj.; such as the rapture, tribulation, 2nd advent, millennium) with contempt (ἐξουθενέω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Prohibition; looking down upon, despising, rejecting).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:20** προφητείας μὴ ἐξουθενεῖτε

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:20** prophetias nolite spernere

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:21** Test for the purpose of approval [by the absolute standard of the Word of God] all things [the philosophical and psychological content provided by various communication mediums]; hold fast to [keep as a prized possession] the good [things which agree with Bible doctrine].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:21** But be putting all things to the test for the purpose of approving them, and finding that they meet the requirements, put your approval upon them.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:21** Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Thessalonian believers probably had one thing in common with us today – they heard every kind of crazy philosophy or psychology that came along. We have our television and newspapers, they had their marketplace and other public forums. They had their false prophets, we have our false prophets. They had their cults of gods and goddesses that contradicted Scripture, we have our Hollywood crowd that espouses all kinds of gutter nonsense that contradicts Scripture. Paul commands them (Imperative mood) to test everything (Latin: probe) they heard or saw firsthand (Customary Present tense) according to the absolute standard of the Word of God. And the ultimate purpose of this practice of testing was to place their stamp of approval on those things which agreed with the Word of God and to reject what did not line up with Scripture.

The world system with all its philosophies and psychologies does not adhere to the absolute standard of the Bible. The world system not only does not care what the Bible says, it is in most cases completely antagonistic to any divine standard. Paul also commands us (Imperative mood) to keep as a prized possession (Customary Present tense) the good, meaning those things which agree with Bible doctrine. Even in the United States, our television and newspapers spread propaganda according to the needs of the world system at any given time. There is no interest by journalists or publishers to adhere to any standard of truth. The only way to protect yourself is to saturate your mind with Bible doctrine. Then you will be able to evaluate the morning newspaper and the evening news and discern where the facts end and the propaganda begins.

REVELANT OPINIONS

When we are satisfied that any thing is right, and true, and good, we must hold it fast, and not let it go, whatever opposition or whatever persecution we meet with for the sake thereof. Every Christian has and ought to have, the judgment of discretion, and should have his senses exercised in discerning between good and evil, truth and falsehood. We must not always be seekers, or fluctuating in our minds. (M. Henry) Don't be taken in. To put it crudely, don't be a sucker. Don't be misled into supporting a project just because somebody sends you a picture of pathetic looking orphans. Don't contribute to things you know nothing about. Don't fall for some promotion job. Investigate. Investigate anything to which you give your support. Christians ought not to be gullible. We are to prove all things. (J. McGee) Paul was expecting the church to test multiple prophecies, among which they would find false prophecies as well as true ones. (G. Johnson)

As to this, there is a twofold error that is wont to be fallen into, for there are some who reject every kind of doctrine indiscriminately, while there are others that by a foolish credulity embrace, without distinction, everything that is presented to them in the name of God. Both of these ways are faulty, for the former class, saturated with a presumptuous prejudice of that nature, close up the way against their making progress, while the other class rashly expose themselves to all winds of errors. The course of doctrine ought not, by any faults of mankind, or by any rashness, or ignorance, or, in fine, by any abuse, to be hindered from being always in a vigorous state in the Church. (J. Calvin) We should not rest our faith on the authority of others. The right of private judgment is the characteristic

and privilege of Protestantism. We ought thoroughly to examine all doctrines by the test of Scripture, and then, discerning their reasons, we shall be able to take a firmer hold of them. (P. Gloag)

We cannot shelter ourselves in error under the aegis of high authority. Paul abandoned with contempt the errors which he cultivated while he sat at the feet of Gamaliel. It is our duty as well as our right to have independent personal convictions. We have not to carry on elaborate, original inquiries to establish every point of our belief. There are beliefs which are best proved without any such inquiry. But all must be proved. It is not reasonable, nor happy, nor healthy to live in a permanent condition of unsettled conviction. It is useless to inquire at all if our inquiry is not to lead us to some decisive issue. When we have arrived at a truth, we need not repeat the process of seeking for it over and over again. Having proved certain things to be good, we may rest satisfied with the result – always preserving an open mind for new light, for it is a great mistake to confound an open mind with an empty mind. When the good is discovered, it should be held firmly. Then the seeker after light is to become the guardian and champion of truth. (W. Adeney)

1 Thess. 5:21 Test for the purpose of approval (δοκιμάζω, PAImp.2P, Customary, Command) all things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; by the absolute standard of Bible doctrine); hold fast to (κατέχω, PAImp.2P, Customary, Command; retain, keep as a prized possession) the good (Acc. Dir. Obj.; things which agrees with Bible doctrine).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:21** πάντα [δὲ] δοκιμάζετε τὸ καλὸν κατέχετε

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:21** omnia autem probate quod bonum est tenete

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:22** **Keep yourself free from every form of evil [avoid any type of activity in Satan's cosmic system].**

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:22** Be holding yourselves back from every form of perniciousness.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:22** Abstain from all appearance of evil.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul commands the Thessalonian believers (Imperative mood) to avoid any type of activity in Satan's cosmic system or any prolonged engagement with the old sin nature (Customary Present tense). Evil is a system with a myriad of entrances. Satan has a way of alluring each and every one of us into something that is opposed to the will of God. He has had thousands of years to perfect his system of evil. He also uses the world at large to trick us into many seemingly innocent activities that end up destroying our spiritual life. We are to avoid all contact with his world system, by keeping ourselves from the arrogance (cosmic I) or hatred (cosmic II) complexes of sin.

REVELANT OPINIONS

Seductive evil may fool many young Christians who lack discernment. With the middle voice, this verse could read “be always distancing yourself” from every form of evil. (M. Couch) Anything that smacks of evil must be resisted, that is, anything that men consider evil and that would give offense. (J. Lightfoot)

1 Thess. 5:22 Keep yourself free from (ἀπέχω, PMImp.2P, Customary, Command; abstain, avoid) every (Gen. Measure) form (Obj. Gen.; appearance, category, kind, species) of evil (Adv. Gen. Ref.; any gate in satan’s cosmic system).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:22** ἀπὸ παντὸς εἴδους ποιηροῦ ἀπέχεσθε

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:22** ab omni specie mala abstinete vos

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:23** Now, may the God of peace Himself sanctify [ultimate sanctification] every part of you [the totality of your being]. As a matter of fact, may your spirit and soul and body be blamelessly maintained [experiential sanctification] until the coming [rapture] of our Lord Jesus Christ [when ultimate sanctification will occur].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:23** Now, may the God of peace himself consecrate you, every part of each one of you, to His worship and service, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved in their entirety blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:23** And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The voluntative optative mood expresses a wish or prayer. Paul prays that God Himself will sanctify (Culminative Aorist tense) every part of the Thessalonian believer: body, soul and spirit. This is a reference to ultimate sanctification, when the entire believer will indeed be completely sanctified. This is also called glorification salvation by some theologians. This will happen to every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ without exception. We are already positionally sanctified, so Paul is not praying that believers who are already positionally sanctified might become positionally sanctified. We are being experientially sanctified, but that is an ongoing process which would not be described by the aorist tense.

The Futuristic Optative mood points to a time in the future when all believers will be glorified and our spiritual struggle between the spirit, soul and body will come to an end. That is what Paul is looking forward to (desires) and is praying for in this part of the passage. In the second part of this passage, Paul desires and prays (Voluntative Optative mood) for the experiential sanctification of our spirit, soul and body. From this moment forward Paul’s desire is that we

maintain our entire being (Culminative Aorist tense) in a blameless fashion all the way to the rapture of the church. The “parousia” or next coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is a reference to the rapture. We are already positionally sanctified, we are in the process of being experientially sanctified, and at the rapture we will be ultimately sanctified.

Paul is moving in groups of three – covering all three stages of sanctification and all three parts of our being. Believers are tripartite beings, having three parts: spirit, soul and body. The word “spirit” in this verse refers to our human spirit, not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does take up residence in our human spirit, but this is a reference to the totality of our human form without the indwelling Spirit. When we receive our resurrection body, we will finally be freed from the old sin nature. Our body will be completely sanctified. Our spirit and soul will have no further battle with the old sin nature which lives in our body, therefore they will be completely sanctified. In the meantime, Paul wants us to maintain ourselves with integrity and purity with the assistance of the Holy Spirit. God is a trinity in unity, and He created man in the same manner.

Are we dichotomous or trichotomous beings? If you really want to enter into a theological debate, ask this question in a seminary class on biblical anthropology and see what you get! There are many views to choose from. My view is that Adam and Eve were originally trichotomous – having a spirit, soul and body. After the Fall, they became dichotomous, the spirit being dead. At the point of regeneration, the spirit is made alive again and is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The born-again believer, therefore, is once again a trichotomous being. The unbeliever remains a dichotomous being, unable to have a legitimate spiritual life.

REVELANT OPINIONS

After our post-salvation lives on earth have ended, God will achieve our ultimate sanctification at the resurrection, or Rapture, of the Church. In that future moment He will provide the resurrection body, making us physically like Christ. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) I do not believe that the Bible allows for the possibility of living without sin, even without willful sin, in this life, and therefore I do not accept Wesleyan teaching about entire sanctification. We are in Christ, to be sure, and we need to be more and more filled with the Spirit. But we are not yet perfect, either in love or in consecration. We are genuinely new but not yet totally new. (A. Hoekema) The spirit, which is the ruling faculty in man and through which he holds communication with the unseen world - the soul, which is the seat of all his impulses and affections, the center of his personality - the body, which links him to the material world and is the instrument of all his outward deeds – these all the apostle would have presented perfect and intact in the day of the Lord’s coming. (J. Lightfoot)

This aspect of the work of God for the believer is progressive in some of its aspects, and is quite in contrast to the positional sanctification which is “once for all.” It is accomplished by the power of God through the Spirit and through the Word: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth.” Experiential sanctification will be perfected when the saints are gathered into His presence in glory. All believers are positionally sanctified in Christ “once for all” at the moment they are saved. This sanctification is as perfect as He is perfect. All believers are being sanctified by the power of God

through the Word and this sanctification is as perfect as the believer is perfect. All believers will be sanctified (ultimate sanctification) and perfected in the glory into the very image of the Son of God. The Bible, therefore, does not teach that any child of God is wholly sanctified in daily life before that final consummation of all things. (L. Chafer)

If resurrection will not occur until the end of the Church Age, what happens to Church Age believers who do not die prior to the Rapture? Remember that the believer's real self is his soul and human spirit. The body is simply a house or temporary residence for the real person. The departed Church Age believer's soul and human spirit, with eternal life intact, are united with an interim body (Luke 16:19-31) to dwell in heaven with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:1-6). Each individual is fully conscious; indeed, no longer limited by a mortal body, his perceptive ability is enhanced. He is completely recognizable and perfectly happy – but as yet minus a resurrection body. At the Rapture, these billions of Church Age believers, called “the dead in Christ,” will accompany the Lord from heaven to a rendezvous in space above the earth, where they will be joined by the living generation of believers. There they will receive their resurrection bodies. Immediately after the Rapture, there will be a period of fantastic happiness and celebration, a “reunion” of the entire royal family, assembled for the first time in spontaneous mass recognition of Christ. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Who accomplishes sanctification? This would seem to be the work of God's Spirit, as in this verse and 2 Corinthians 3:18-19. There are scores of such references. People who emphasize these Scriptures speak of “letting go” of ourselves and “letting God” do the work of sanctification in us. But there are other verses that speak of our role in sanctification, such as Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 5:1 and 6:11. Which of these is right and which is wrong? If we mean by “letting go” that we may therefore abandon Bible study, prayer, Christian fellowship and the worship of God and still expect to grow in the Christian life just because we have “let go,” we are greatly mistaken. We will stagnate in the Christian life and drift away from Christian circles. But we are also wrong if we think that by making use of these means we can automatically achieve our own sanctification. The correct understanding is a combination of the two, working as fully and consistently as possible: God working in us and being as diligent and obedient as possible in these areas. (J. Boice)

Sometimes we are asked: “Where do you get the expression, ‘entire sanctification’? I don't find it in the New Testament.” This verse is the answer. It is compounded of “holos” – whole, entire, complete – and “telos” – end. So it would require some hyphenated expression as “wholly completely” or “completely entirely” to bring out the full force of this compound adjective. (R. Earle) God creates in the new believer a human spirit. Then, He furnishes the Bible as the infallible revelation of Himself, the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher, the local classroom where doctrine is taught, the privacy of each believer's priesthood that allows him to be objective as he learns. The human spirit, in conjunction with the soul, completes the “inner equipment” of GAP (grace apparatus for perception) which is needed to convert doctrine from something merely comprehended into something thoroughly understood and usable for both spiritual advance and application to life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

When people tell me that they are already sanctified completely, I ask them, “Have you ever read

through your Bible?” Some of them say, “No, I am afraid I cannot say that I have read it through all the way, but I have read a good deal of it.” Then I reply, “Since sanctification is by the Word, how can you be sanctified completely if you have never read through your Bible?” (H. Ironside) Paul is desiring that the believers progressively move toward greater maturity of character with the ultimate and final sanctification in mind. (M. Couch) Blameless means there is no legitimate ground for accusation. (T. Constable)

1 Thess. 5:23 Now (transitional), may the God (Subj. Nom.) of peace (Descr. Gen.) Himself (Nom. Appos.) sanctify (ἀγιάζω, AAOpt.3S, Culminative, Voluntative & Futuristic; ultimate sanctification or glorification salvation) every part (Partitive Acc.; whole) of you (Acc. Dir. Obj.). As a matter of fact (emphatic), may your (Poss. Gen.) spirit (Subj. Nom.) and (connective) soul (Subj. Nom.) and (connective) body (Subj. Nom.) be blamelessly (adv.; integrity, without reproach) maintained (τηρέω, APOpt.3S, Culminative, Voluntative & Futuristic; kept, guarded) until the coming (Loc. Time; presence at the rapture) of our (Gen. Rel.) Lord Jesus Christ (Adv. Gen. Ref.).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:23** Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης ἀγιάσαι ὑμᾶς ὁλοτελεῖς καὶ ὁλόκληρον ὑμῶν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα ἀμέμπτως ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τηρηθεῖν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:23** ipse autem Deus pacis sanctificet vos per omnia et integer spiritus vester et anima et corpus sine querella in adventu Domini nostri Iesu Christi servetur

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:24** Faithful is He [God the Father] Who called you [through positional sanctification into experiential sanctification], Who will also accomplish it [guaranteed ultimate sanctification].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:24** Faithful is He who gives you the divine summons [into salvation], who also will do it.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:24** Faithful *is* he that calleth you, who also will do *it*.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

God the Father called every believer (Gnomic Present tense) into the ongoing process of experiential sanctification after making us positionally sanctified in Jesus Christ. He was faithful in the past and He will continue to be faithful in the future. He will accomplish His purpose in us by bringing every one of us to the state of ultimate sanctification (Predictive Future tense). He did not ask our opinion when He sanctified us positionally; He will not ask our opinion when we are ultimately sanctified. The only time our will, our positive volition, is part of the divine picture is during experiential sanctification. This is the period of time allotted to each of us to reside and function inside the sphere of divine power by the filling of the Holy Spirit. This is the

period of time in which we are to utilize the filling of the Spirit and Bible doctrine to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. He began the process and He will complete it; this is yet another proof-text for the doctrine of eternal security – sometimes called perseverance of the saints.

REVELANT OPINIONS

God must forsake His integrity before He would abandon one of His people. But that cannot be, because of this verse. They who affirm that any of God's children will perish are guilty of the fearful sin of charging Him with perjury. (A. Pink) Under the term sanctification is included the entire renovation of the man. The Thessalonians, it is true, had been in part renewed, but Paul desires that God would perfect what is remaining. From this we infer, that we must, during our whole life, make progress in the pursuit of holiness ... When the Lord has once adopted us as His sons, we may expect that His grace will continue to be exercised towards us. For He does not promise to be a Father to us merely for one day, but adopts us with this understanding, that He is to cherish us every day afterwards. (J. Calvin)

1 Thess. 5:24 Faithful (Pred. Nom.) is (ellipsis) He (Subj. Nom.; God the Father) Who called (καλέω, PAPTc.NMS, Gnostic, Substantival; through positional sanctification into experiential sanctification) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.), Who (Nom. Appos.) will also (adjunctive) accomplish (ποιέω, FAI3S, Predictive; perform, complete) it (ellipsis; ultimate sanctification).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:24** πιστὸς ὁ καλῶν ὑμᾶς ὃς καὶ ποιήσει

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:24** fidelis est qui vocavit vos qui etiam faciet

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:25** Brethren [members of the royal family], keep on praying for us [Paul's missionary team].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:25** Brethren, be praying definitely for us.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:25** Brethren, pray for us.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the imperative mood again, this time to either command (or beg) the Thessalonian believers to continue praying (Iterative Present tense) for his missionary team. There is also a durative effect here, because Paul not only wants them to pray for his team when the occasion arises, but he also wants their prayers to continue indefinitely into the future. There is no occasion or timeframe when ministers of the Word of God do not need prayer.

REVELANT OPINIONS

Doubtless much of the success of Paul's missionary work could be attributed to the prayers of the Thessalonians and other believers. Paul understood both his personal insufficiency and God's sufficiency. He requested prayer for his fellow workers as well as for himself. (T. Constable)

1 Thess. 5:25 Brethren (Voc. Address; members of the royal family), keep on praying (προσεύχομαι, PMImp.2P, Iterative, Command, Deponent) for us (Gen. Adv.; Paul's missionary team).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:25** Ἀδελφοί προσεύχεσθε [καὶ] περὶ ἡμῶν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:25** fratres orate pro nobis

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:26** Greet all the brethren [fellow believers] with a sanctified [respectful] kiss [shake hands].

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:26** Greet all the brethren with an affectionate kiss.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:26** Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul commands the Thessalonian believers (Imperative mood) to greet all fellow believers (Latin: salute) with a sanctified, respectful, polite kiss. That was the tradition of the day; it is not a traditional greeting in our day. The custom today is to greet other believers with a handshake or perhaps a hug. The idea behind the greeting is to treat one another with respect and to be polite when you are being introduced to a believer you don't know. Don't press the idea of a literal kiss to the extreme. And don't even think of greeting me with a kiss! I cannot promise that my self-defense reflexes won't kick-in; I might punch you in the nose or even worse. Try shaking my hand with a smile on your face – that works for me. I suppose a high-five might work for some of you, but I'm not on that "cultural" bandwagon either.

REVELANT OPINIONS

Paul's directive to greet one another, perhaps with a holy kiss, was intended to encourage the individual who had received the letter to inform as many members of the church as possible that the letter had arrived. (W. Stenger) This was the customary salutation for rabbis. (A.T. Robertson) An acceptable alternative in Western culture today might be an embrace, a pat on the back, or a handshake. (T. Constable)

1 Thess. 5:26 Greet (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Constative, Command, Deponent; pay your respects, greet with politeness) all (Acc. Measure) the brethren (Acc. Dir. Obj.; fellow believers) with a sanctified (Instr. Manner; polite, respectful) kiss (Instr. Means; shake hands).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:26** Ἀσπάσασθε τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς πάντας ἐν φιλήματι ἁγίῳ

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:26** salutate fratres omnes in osculo sancto

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:27** I solemnly charge you [pastors & teachers] by the authority of the Lord that you make this letter known publicly [read or teach its contents in detail] to all the brethren.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:27** I adjure you by the Lord that the [foregoing] letter be read to all the brethren.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:27** I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul issues a solemn charge (Dramatic Present tense) to all pastors and teachers to make the contents of this letter (Latin: epistle) known publicly to all believers. Neither this letter, nor any other book of the Bible, is to be kept from any Christian. The Bible was written for all believers, not for a self-appointed, special interest group. All believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are to read and study the Bible. It is not reserved for a small cadre of professors. It is the ministry of pastors and teachers to teach this letter and others (Constatative Aorist tense) in great detail to the members of their congregation. If you are in a church that does not encourage you to read the Bible for yourself, get out now. If you are a pastor or teacher, Paul has charged you with the authority of the Lord to teach this letter to your congregation.

REVELANT OPINIONS

Later usage of “anaginosko” extended this reading to “reading aloud with comments, with a view to persuade.” (E.W. Bullinger) The earnestness of the adjuration that the letter be read unto all the brethren suggests more of division and quarreling in the church than one would otherwise suspect. (C. McCown) We find that the Spirit of God would have those things which He had set forth in this epistle, through the ministry of Paul, to be published throughout the whole Church. (J. Calvin)

The sacred Scriptures, neither one part nor another, nor the whole of them, are to be kept from private (individual) Christians, but may be read, and heard, and used by all. (J. Gill) They urge them also to take care that no one be missed when their letter is read: all must hear its contents, not the least those who are disposed to play truant. The letter would fail to achieve its purpose if such people did not get the message especially meant for them. (F. Bruce) Clearly Paul wrote for the church as a whole and wished the epistles read aloud at a public meeting. (A.T. Robertson)

1 Thess. 5:27 I solemnly charge (ἐνορκίζω, PAIS, Dramatic) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.; directed towards pastors and teachers) by the

authority of the Lord (Authoritative Acc.) **that you make this letter** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **known publicly** (ἀναγιγνώσκω, APInf., Constativ, Result; read, teach in great detail) **to all** (Dat. Measure) **the brethren** (Dat. Adv.).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:27** Ἐνορκίζω ὑμᾶς τὸν κύριον ἀναγνωσθῆναι τὴν ἐπιστολὴν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:27** adiuro vos per Dominum ut legatur epistula omnibus sanctis fratribus

^{LWB} **1 Thess. 5:28** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

^{KW} **1 Thess. 5:28** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

^{KJV} **1 Thessalonians 5:28** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen. <*The first epistle to the Thessalonians was written from Athens.*>

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul closes this letter to the Thessalonians with his traditional closing: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. This grace is a possession of the Lord which He brings to us. When we share His thoughts (the mind of Christ), we participate in His grace. Paul wants us all to experience His continuing grace.

1 Thess. 5:28 **The grace** (Subj. Nom.) **of our** (Gen. Rel.) **Lord Jesus Christ** (Abl. Source, Gen. Poss.) **be** (ellipsis) **with you** (Gen. Assoc.).

^{WHO} **1 Thessalonians 5:28** Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μεθ ὑμῶν

^{VUL} **1 Thessalonians 5:28** gratia Domini nostri Iesu Christi vobiscum amen

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