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“Precious Memories”
I Thessalonians 1:1-5

Introduction: Of the six churches that would receive an epistle from Paul, the church at Thessalonica was one of them. Founded in Paul’s second missionary journey, Thessalonica was the place that God chose for Paul to be an example of faithfulness in times of affliction. Thessalonica was the capital of Macedonia and contained a large industrial populace. Therefore, it drew in many crowds of Jews, which would build many synagogues in the area. These synagogues would lead to the persecution of the church at Thessalonica. Knowing the attack that happened at the house of Jason, and what the converts at Thessalonica faced, this first letter is written with encouragement. Notice how this great epistle is unveiled to this newly birthed congregation of both Jew and Gentile.

1. The Servants to the Thessalonians v. 1- “Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus”
 - a. The Servant of the Father- *“Paul”* Romans 1:1
 - b. The Symbol of Faithfulness- *“Silvanus”* (Silvanus is the Roman spelling of Silas) II Corinthians 1:19, I Peter 5:12
 - c. The Son in the Faith- *“Timotheus”* Acts 16:1-3, I Timothy 1:2
 - (1) After the persecution that took place at Thessalonica, Paul fled to Berea. When some of the Thessalonians followed Paul to Berea, he fled to Athens, thus leaving Timothy and Silas behind. While in Athens, Paul sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to assist the work there. I Thessalonians 3:1-3
 - (2) In Acts 18:1-6, Timothy came back to Paul (in Corinth) to report to him concerning the work at Thessalonica.
2. The Sanctuary of the Thessalonians v. 1- “unto the church of the Thessalonians”
 - a. The Discovery of Thessalonica Acts 17:1-4
 - b. The Disruption of Thessalonica Acts 17:5-9
 - c. The Departure from Thessalonica Acts 17:10
 - d. The Disgrace of Thessalonica Acts 17:11-12
 - (1) Because of the Readiness for the Word- *“in that they received the word with all readiness of mind”*
 - (2) Because of the Reading of the Word- *“and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so”*
 - e. The Deliverance to Thessalonica Philippians 4:16- *“For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.”*
 - f. The Departure into Thessalonica II Timothy 4:10- *“For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.”*
3. The Standing of the Thessalonians v. 1- “which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ”
 - a. We are in the Sovereign- *“in God the Father”*
 - b. We are in the Son- *“in the Lord Jesus Christ”*
4. The Supply to the Thessalonians v. 1- “Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ”
 - a. The Description of the Supply

- (1) The Favor in our Life- *“grace”*
 - (a) Grace (Strong’s)- *“good will, loving-kindness, favour”*
 - (b) Grace (Webster’s)- *“Appropriately, the free unmerited love and favor of God, the spring and source of all the benefits men receive from him.”*
 - (2) The Foundation in our Life- *“peace”*
 - (a) Peace (Strong’s)- *“of Christianity, the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is”*
 - (b) Peace (Webster’s)- *“In a general sense, a state of quiet or tranquility; freedom from disturbance or agitation; applicable to society, to individuals, or to the temper of the mind. Heavenly rest; the happiness of heaven.”*
- b. The Deliverer of the Supply
- (1) From the Sovereign- *“God our Father”*
 - (2) From the Son- *“Lord Jesus Christ”*

Body: In this small epistle, Paul praised the believers at Thessalonica for many things. The Thessalonians had a faith that worked. This caused great comfort and memories in the life of Paul. Notice his precious memories.

- I. Memories of the Supplication for the Thessalonians v. 2- *“our prayers”*
 - A. The Contents of the Prayer- *“We give thanks to God”*
 - B. The Consistency of the Prayer- *“always for you”*
 - C. The Collection of the Prayer- *“all”*
 - D. The Conversation of the Prayer- *“making mention of you in our prayers”*
- II. Memories of the Service of the Thessalonians v. 3- *“your work”*
 - A. It was a Memorable Service- *“Remembering without ceasing”*
 - B. It was a Mighty Service- *“work...labour...patience”* I Corinthians 13:13
 1. Mighty in its Labor- *“work of faith”* v. 9- *“ye turned to God from idols”*
 2. Mighty in its Love- *“labour of love”* v. 9- *“to serve the living and true God”*
 3. Mighty in its Look- *“patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ”* v. 10- *“to wait for his Son from heaven”*
 - C. It was a Manifest Service- *“in the sight of God and our Father”*
- III. Memories of the Selection of the Thessalonians v. 4- *“your election”*
 - A. The Surety of the Election- *“Knowing, brethren beloved, your election”*
 1. Election (Strong’s)- *“the act of picking out, choosing; of the act of God's free will by which before the foundation of the world he decreed his blessings to certain persons”*
 2. Election (Webster’s)- *“In theology, divine choice; predetermination of God, by which persons are distinguished as objects of mercy, become subjects of grace, are sanctified and prepared for heaven.”*
 3. Dr. H.L. Willmington describes *“election”* as:

- a. “In regard to the Father: we were saved before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4; 2 Tim. 1:9)
 - b. In regard to the Son: we were saved at the cross (Gal. 2:20)
 - c. In regard to the Holy Spirit: we were saved at the moment of our decision to accept Christ (1 Cor. 12:13; Titus 3:5)”
4. Warren W. Wiersbe describes election as, “The word *church* in 1 Thessalonians 1:1 means “a called-out people.” Whenever you read about a call in the Bible, it indicates divine election—God is calling out a people from this world (Acts 15:13-18). Seven times in John 17, our Lord referred to believers as those whom the Father gave to Him out of the world (John 17:2, 6, 9, 11-12, 24). Paul stated that he knew the Thessalonians had been chosen by God (1 Thes. 1:4).”
 5. Wiersbe further states, “The doctrine of divine election confuses some people and frightens others, yet neither response is justified. A seminary professor once told me, ‘Try to explain election, and you may lose your mind. But explain it away—and you may lose your soul!’”
- B. The Source of the Election- *“of God”*
1. The Declaration of Election II Thessalonians 2:13- *“...because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:”*
 2. The Decision of Election John 15:16- *“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit...”*
 3. The Desire of Election Ephesians 1:4- *“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:”* (“Those whom God chooses, He changes.”)
- IV. Memories of the Salvation of the Thessalonians v. 5- *“our gospel came”*
- A. The Preaching that Led to Salvation- *“our gospel came not unto you in word only”*
 1. A Preacher Must Go- *“in word”*
 2. A Preacher Must Get- *“not unto you in word only”* I Corinthians 2:4
 - B. The Power that Led to Salvation- *“but also in power”*
 - C. The Person that Led to Salvation- *“and in the Holy Ghost”*
 - D. The Persuasion of Salvation- *“and in much assurance”* Colossians 2:2, Hebrews 6:11
 - E. The Promoters of Salvation- *“ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake”*
 1. The Description of these Men- *“what manner of men”*
 2. The Devotion of these Men- *“for your sake”*

Conclusion: Idolatry was a major problem in Thessalonica. Assuredly, it was a thrill to the heart of Paul to know how the Thessalonians had turned from their idols to serve the true and living God. In this first epistle, Paul made known to them that he had precious memories of their faith and service to God.

“The Tremendous Testimony of the Thessalonians”

I Thessalonians 1:6-10

Introduction: We will now look at the testimony and example that the Thessalonian converts possessed. Keep in mind, at one time they were not as noble as those in Berea (Acts 17:11- “*These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*”). Yet now, they are receiving the Word of God and applying it to their lives (I 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.*”). This growth in God’s Word allowed them to have a tremendous testimony. In chapter one, let us notice:

1. Their Elders v. 1- “*Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus*”
2. Their Encouragement v. 2- “*thanks...prayers*”
3. Their Enthusiasm v. 3- “*work...labour...patience*”
4. Their Election v. 4- “*your election of God*”
5. Their Enlargement v. 5- “*much assurance*”
6. Their Extremities v. 6- “*much affliction, with joy*” (There is a contrast between afflictions and joy.)
7. Their Example v. 7- “*ye were ensamples*”
8. Their Evangelization v. 8- “*from you sounded out the word*”
9. Their Experience v. 9- “*ye turned to God from idols*”
10. Their Expectation v. 10- “*to wait for his Son*”

Body: When a blinded sinner turns from their wicked life of idolatry and unrighteousness, it leaves behind a testimony. However, when they begin to follow the Lord in everything, it leaves behind a tremendous testimony. This is the case of the Thessalonians. They were growing in the Lord at a quick rate! Soon, they became examples of the faith in Macedonia and Achaia. What was it in the lives of these believers in Thessalonica that produced their powerful witness?

- I. They Followed the Preacher vs. 6-7- “*ye became followers of us*”
 - A. They Followed a Man v. 6- “*ye became followers of us*”
 1. “followers” (Strong’s)- “an imitator; to imitate: any one (to mimic)”
 2. “follower” (Webster’s)- “One that takes another as his guide in doctrines, opinions or example; one who receives the opinions, and imitates the example of another; an adherent; an imitator.”
 3. “followers” (RWP)- “It is a daring thing to expect people to ‘imitate’ the preacher, but Paul adds ‘and of the Lord,’ for he only expected or desired ‘imitation’ as he himself imitated the Lord Jesus, as he expressly says in I Corinthians 11:1. The peril of it all is that people so easily and so readily imitate the preacher when he does not imitate the Lord.”
 4. “The word ‘followers’ is actually ‘imitators.’ These new believers not only accepted the message and the messengers, but they also imitated their lives. This led to severe persecution.” (Warren Wiersbe)

- B. They Followed the Master v. 6- “*and of the Lord*”
1. The Endurance during Following v. 6- “*having received the word in much affliction*” I Thessalonians 2:14, 3:3, Acts 17:1-9
 - a. “Just as the Jewish unbelievers persecuted the believers in Judea, so the Gentile unbelievers persecuted the Thessalonian believers (1 Thes. 2:14-16).” (Warren Wiersbe)
 - b. “Faith is always tested, and persecution is one of the tests (Matt. 13:21; 2 Tim. 3:12).” (Warren Wiersbe)
 2. The Enjoyment during Following v. 6- “*with joy of the Holy Ghost*”
 3. The Example because of Following v. 7- “*ye were ensamples*”
 - a. “It properly denotes anything caused or produced by the means of ‘blows’ (from τύπτω tuptō), and hence a mark, print, or impression, made by a stamp or die; and then a resemblance, figure, pattern, exemplar—a model after which anything is made. This is the meaning here. They became, as it were, a model or pattern after which the piety of others should be moulded, or showed what the piety of others ought to be.” (Barnes Notes)
 - b. “Christians either encourage or discourage each other. This principle applies also to churches. Paul used the churches of Macedonia as a stimulus for the Corinthian church to give to the missionary offering (2 Cor. 8:1-8).” (Warren Wiersbe)
 - c. “Macedonia and Achaia; mentioned together as adjoining Roman provinces, comprising the whole of Greece. Achaia comprised the southern part of Greece, of which Corinth was the capital.” (FNTN)

II. They Fulfilled their Purpose v. 8- “*from you sounded out the word of the Lord*”

A. The Sounding of their Faith- “*from you sounded out the word of the Lord*”

1. “This is said to have ‘sounded out’, alluding to the blowing of a trumpet, to which the Gospel is sometimes compared,”
 - a. “as to the silver trumpet under the law, for the gathering of the people of Israel;”
 - b. “or to the trumpet blown in the years of jubilee, which proclaimed liberty, release of debts, and restoration of inheritances, as the Gospel in a spiritual sense does;”
 - c. “or to the trumpet used in war to prepare for the battle, and therefore should not give an uncertain sound;”
 - d. “or as used musically, the Gospel being a joyful sound; and this sounding of it may denote the clear publication and open declaration, and large spread of it far and near” (John Gill)
2. “The verb *sounded out* actually means ‘to sound as a trumpet’.” (Warren Wiersbe) Isaiah 58:1
3. “A recent survey of church growth indicated that 70 to 80 percent of a church’s growth is the result of friends witnessing to friends and relatives to relatives.” (Warren Wiersbe)
4. “As I write this, 2.4 billion people in our world have no visible witness of the Gospel in their midst, or no church body.” (Warren Wiersbe)

- B. The Spreading of their Faith- *“in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad”*
 - C. The Standing of their Faith- *“so that we need not to speak any thing”*
- III. They Forsook the Paganism v. 9- *“ye turned to God from idols”*
- A. The Gate that Led to Salvation- *“manner of entering in we had unto you”*
 - B. The God that Led to Salvation- *“ye turned to God from idols”*
 “Paul was told how God had worked in the Thessalonians. It had resulted in their turning to God from idols to serve the living and the true God. This is a very accurate expression and one we should understand. It does not say that they turned *from* idols *to* God. Rather, they turned *to* God *from* idols to serve the living and true God. It was not reformation first and faith in Christ second, but it was faith in Christ first with the result that idols were forsaken. The tense of the word *turned*, as it is found in the Greek New Testament, is in the aorist, which means that they turned once for all. It was a single, definite act.” (*The Thessalonian Epistle*, p. 17)
 - 1. God is Alive- *“living”* Psalm 115:1-8, 135:15-18
 - a. Children of the Living God Romans 9:26
 - b. Containers of the Living God II Corinthians 6:16
 - c. Comforter of the Living God II Corinthians 3:3
 - d. Church of the Living God I Timothy 3:15
 - e. City of the Living God Hebrews 12:22
 - 2. God is Authentic- *“true”* John 15:1
- IV. They Faithfully had Patience v. 10- *“to wait for his Son from heaven”*
- A. The Domain of their Hope- *“to wait for his Son from heaven”*
 - 1. “The word translated ‘wait’ in 1 Thessalonians 1:10 means ‘to await someone with patience and confidence, expectantly.’ Waiting involves activity and endurance.” (Warren Wiersbe)
 - 2. “Some of the Thessalonian believers quit their work and became idle busybodies, arguing that the Lord was coming soon. But if we really believe the Lord is coming, we will prove our faith by keeping busy and obeying His Word. Our Lord’s Parable of the Pounds (Luke 19:11-27) teaches that we must ‘occupy’ (be busy; in this case, invest the money) till He returns.” (Warren Wiersbe)
 - B. The Depiction of their Hope- *“whom he raised from the dead”* I Corinthians 15:12-22
 - C. The Direction of their Hope- *“even Jesus”*
 - D. The Deliverance of the Hope- *“which delivered us from the wrath to come”* I Thessalonians 5:9-10

Conclusion: What a tremendous remembrance (1:3) Paul had when he pondered about the church at Thessalonica. This is a testimony that every church should desire. The Thessalonians simply submitted to salvation, and then surrendered to the Scriptures, which led to them having a tremendous testimony. May we follow their *“ensample”* and commit our lives to our Christ!

“Sincerity in Service”
I Thessalonians 2:1-6

Introduction: In I Thessalonians chapter one, we see the habits of the saints while in chapter two we notice the heart of a shepherd. This chapter reveals the nurture that a pastor has toward his flock. If a bishop is spiritually what he should be, he daily bears upon him the *“the care of all the churches.”* Therefore, in these two chapters we notice:

1. The Conduct of a People Chapter One
 - a. They were Faithful in their Labor 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;”*
 - b. They were Following their Leader 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:”*
 - c. They were Flourishing for their Lord 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 Godward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.”*
2. The Care of a Pastor Chapter Two
 - a. He Desired to Suffer for the Saints 2:1-2- *“For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain: 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.”*
 - b. He Desired to Supply the Saints 2:7- *“But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:”*
 - c. He Desired to Speak to the Saints 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.”*
 - d. He Desired to See the Saints 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.”*

Body: Because of a calling into the ministry (in which the Lord enabled Paul); Paul felt a desperate need to be a faithful steward. He was busy about His Father’s business so that, in the judgment day, he would be counted a faithful minister. When we consider the awesome responsibility of being entrusted with the gospel, we should diligently serve so that we will please our Lord. It should be the desire of every believer to protect, preserve, and propagate the gospel in sincerity. Evidently, there were people around Thessalonica that were not genuine. Paul revealed to the Thessalonian believers how he was not like these hypocrites, and admonished them to be earnest themselves. Observe how Paul did this and was an example to the believers at Thessalonica.

- I. The Entrance of Paul vs. 1-2- *“our entrance in unto you”*
 - A. The Presentation of Paul’s Entrance v. 1- *“it was not in vain”*
 1. “vain” (Strong’s)- “empty handed; without a gift”

2. “vain” (Webster’s)- “Empty; worthless; having no substance, value or importance.”
- B. The Plight of Paul’s Entrance v. 2- “*we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated*”
- C. The Preaching during Paul’s Entrance v. 2- “*we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God*”
- D. The Persecution during Paul’s Entrance v. 2- “*with much contention*”

II. The Exhortation of Paul vs. 3-4- “*For our exhortation*”

A. What It Was Not

1. It was not Concealed v. 3- “*was not of deceit*”
 - a. “deceit” (Strong’s)- “error, that which leads into error, deceit or fraud”
 - b. “deceit” (Webster’s)- “Literally, a catching or ensnaring. Hence, the misleading of a person; the leading of another person to believe; what is false, or not to believe what is true, and thus to ensnare him; fraud; fallacy; cheat; any declaration, artifice or practice, which misleads another, or causes him to believe what is false.”
2. It was not Corrupt v. 3- “*nor of uncleanness*”
 - a. “uncleanness” (Strong’s)- “in a moral sense: the impurity of lustful, luxurious, profligate living”
 - b. “uncleanness” (Webster’s)- “Moral impurity; defilement by sin; sinfulness. Lewdness; incontinence.”
3. It was not Crafty v. 3- “*nor in guile*”
 - a. “guile” (Strong’s)- “craft, deceit”
 - b. “guile” (Webster’s)- “Craft; cunning; artifice; duplicity; deceit; usually in a bad sense. To disguise craftily.”
 - c. “The word translated ‘guile’ carries the idea of ‘baiting a hook.’ In other words, Paul did not trap people into being saved, the way a clever salesman traps people into buying his product. Spiritual witnessing and ‘Christian salesmanship’ are different. Salvation does not lie at the end of a clever argument or a subtle presentation. It is the result of God’s Word and the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Warren Wiersbe)
 - d. “Often we hear, ‘I don’t care what your method is, just so long as your message is right.’ But some methods are unworthy of the Gospel. They are cheap, whereas the Gospel is a costly message that required the death of God’s only Son. They are worldly and man centered, whereas the Gospel is a divine message centered in God’s glory.” (Warren Wiersbe)
4. It was not Cunning v. 4- “*not as pleasing men*” Galatians 1:10- “*for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.*”

B. What It Was

1. It was Allowed by God v. 4- “*we were allowed of God*”
 - a. “allowed” (Strong’s)- “to test, examine, prove, scrutinize (to see whether a thing is genuine or not), as metals; to recognize as genuine after examination, to approve, deem worthy”

- b. “allowed” (Webster’s)- “Granted; permitted; assented to; admitted; approved; indulged; appointed; abated.”
- 2. It was Approved by God v. 4- *“to be put in trust with the gospel”*
 - a. “trust” (Strong’s)- “place confidence in; to entrust a thing to one, i.e. his fidelity; to be entrusted with a thing”
 - b. “trust” (Webster’s)- “Confidence; a reliance or resting of the mind on the integrity, veracity, justice, friendship or other sound principle of another person.”
- 3. It was Appealing to God v. 4- *“even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God”*
- 4. It was Analyzed by God v. 4- *“which trieth our hearts”* (“*trieth*”—“*allowed*”)

III. The Example of Paul vs. 5-6- *“neither at any time”*

- A. In His Conversation v. 5- *“For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know”*
 - 1. “flattery” (Webster’s)- “False praise; commendation bestowed for the purpose of gaining favor and influence, or to accomplish some purpose.”
 - 2. “I once read that a flatterer is a person who manipulates rather than communicates. A flatterer can use either truth or lies to achieve his unholy purpose, which is to control your decisions for his own profit.”
 - 3. “Flattery is another form of lying. It means saying one thing to God with our lips while our hearts are far from Him (Mark 7:6- *“He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.”*). (Warren Wiersbe)
- B. In His Clothing v. 5- *“nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness”*
- C. In His Character v. 6- *“Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others”*
- D. In His Calling v. 6- *“when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ”*

Conclusion: Some ministries focus on pleasing the crowd and gaining favor through flattery. However, this was not the case with Paul at Thessalonica. He was sincere in his words and ways. This is the example that we should follow. Our need is a genuine Christian completely dedicated to the Lord spreading the gospel around the world. This is the type of service that God will bless.

“The Care and Concern of a Pastor”
I Thessalonians 2:7-12

Introduction: The man of God must meet many obligations when he is a pastor of a church. If he does not fulfill his duties, then shipwreck is certain for the flock of God. Scriptures offer several duties in which the faithful minister is to accomplish if he expects his congregation to thrive. These are:

1. He is to Guide the Flock I Corinthians 11:1- *“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.”*
2. He is to Give to the Flock I Peter 5:2- *“Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;”*
3. He is to Guard the Flock John 10:11- *“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”*
4. He is to Govern the Flock Hebrews 13:7- *“Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.”*

Body: If a church is to thrive, then they must have a qualified minister. Further, not only must he be qualified, but he must also know how to care for the congregation. If there is a lack of love and dedication to the church, then disaster is certain. The only reason that Thessalonica was successful is because they had a preacher that cared for them. Paul had on his shoulders *“the care of all the churches”*. Notice what the care of the church will make a pastor do.

- I. The Gentleness of the Minister v. 7- *“we were gentle among you”*
 - A. Gentleness in Conversation- *“But we were gentle among you”*
 - B. Gentleness in Cherishing- *“even as a nurse cherisheth her children”*
 1. “As an apostle, Paul was a man of authority; but he always used his authority in love.” (Warren Wiersbe)
 2. “It takes time and energy to care for children. Paul did not turn his converts over to baby-sitters; he made sacrifices and cared for them himself.” (Warren Wiersbe)
 3. “A nursing mother imparts her own life to the child. You cannot be a nursing mother and turn your baby over to someone else. That baby must be in your arms, next to your heart.” (Warren Wiersbe)
 4. “The nursing mother eats the food and transforms it into milk for the baby. The mature Christian feeds on the Word of God and then shares its nourishment with the younger believers so they can grow (1 Peter 2:1-3). A nursing child can become ill through reaction to something the mother has eaten. The Christian who is feeding others must be careful not to feed on the wrong things himself.” (Warren Wiersbe)
- II. The Giving of the Minister vs. 8-9- *“we were willing to have imparted unto you”*
 - A. He Gave His Lord v. 8- *“not the gospel of God only”*
 - B. He Gave His Life v. 8- *“but also our own souls”* I John 3:16

1. Because the People were Desirous- *“So being affectionately desirous of you”*
 2. Because the Preacher was Delighted- *“we were willing to have imparted unto you”* Romans 1:11
 3. Because the People were Dear- *“because ye were dear unto us”*
- C. He Gave His Labor v. 9- *“our labour and travail”*
1. The Remembrance of His Labor- *“For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail”*
 - a. *“It was not easy to make tents and minister the Word at the same time.”* (Warren Wiersbe) Acts 18:3
 - b. *“No wonder Paul toiled “night and day” (Acts 20:31). He toiled because he loved the believers and wanted to help them as much as possible.”* (Warren Wiersbe)
 2. The Reason for His Labor- *“for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you”* II Thessalonians 3:6-12, Acts 20:33-34, I Corinthians 4:12
 3. The Result of His Labor- *“we preached unto you the gospel of God”*
- III. The Godliness of the Minister v. 10- *“holily and justly and unblameably”*
- A. The Preacher had Pious Behavior- *“holily”*
 - B. The Preacher had Proper Behavior- *“justly”*
 - C. The Preacher had Pure Behavior- *“unblameably”* Philippians 2:15
 - D. The Preacher had Proven Behavior- *“Ye are witnesses, and God also...we behaved ourselves among you that believe”*
- IV. The Guidance of the Minister vs. 11-12- *“As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you”*
- A. Guidance through Consoling v. 11- *“As ye know how we exhorted”*
 - B. Guidance through Comforting v. 11- *“and comforted”*
 - C. Guidance through Charging vs. 11-12- *“and charged every one of you”*
 1. It was a Collective Charge v. 11- *“every one of you”*
 2. It was a Concerned Charge v. 11- *“as a father doth his children”*
 3. It was a Cautioned Charge v. 12- *“That ye would walk worthy of God”* Ephesians 4:1
 - a. A Pleasing Walk Colossians 1:10- *“That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing”*
 - b. A Prosperous Walk Colossians 1:10- *“being fruitful in every good work”*
 - c. A Prevailing Walk Colossians 1:10- *“and increasing in the knowledge of God”*
 4. It was a Conscientious Charge v. 12- *“who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory”*
 - a. A Call to Heaven II Thessalonians 2:14
 - b. A Call to Holiness I Peter 1:15

Conclusion: How could the church at Thessalonica prosper in times of persecution? Our answer is found in chapter one and chapter two of I Thessalonians. In chapter one, they were converted right (I 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.”*). Then, in chapter two, they were cultivated right (I Thessalonians 2:7- *“But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children”*). If it were not for the careful attention and concern of a pastor, there is no telling where the believers at Thessalonica would have wound up.

“The Effectual Working of the Everlasting Word”

I Thessalonians 2:13-16

Introduction: As we come to this portion of Scripture in our Study of I Thessalonians, we must remember that the Thessalonians were facing persecution for their faith in the gospel. The trials and afflictions seemed to intensify as they drew closer to the Lord. Nonetheless, they kept serving the Lord in spite of persecution because they had the Word of God that produced joy in their lives as seen in verse six of the first chapter (*“And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost”*). Certainly, the water (the Word) was turned into wine (joy). Notice how the Thessalonians handled the Word of God.

1. The Sending of the Word 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.”*
2. The Suffering from the Word 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”*
3. The Sounding of the Word 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.”*
4. The Service of the Word 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.”*

Body: Now we will look at the Word of God manifested in the lives of the Thessalonians. Assuredly, they accepted His Word, applied His Word, and then were afflicted for His Word. However, it only brought joy in their lives as they realized the glory that should follow. Notice the effectual working of the everlasting Word.

- I. The Performance of the Word v. 13- *“effectually worketh also in you”*
 - A. The Rejoicing Over the Word- *“For this cause also thank we God without ceasing”*
1:2
 - B. The Reception of the Word- *“when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us”*
 1. Concerning the Words of Man- *“ye received it not as the word of men”*
 2. Concerning the Words of the Master- *“but as it is in truth, the word of God”*
 - a. The Infallibility of the Word Psalm 19:7- *“The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.”*
 - b. The Inspiration of the Word II Timothy 3:16- *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:”*

- c. The Inscription of the Word II Peter 1:21- *“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”*
- C. The Results of the Word- *“which effectually worketh also in you that believe”*
1. It Cleanses John 15:3- *“Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.”*
 2. It Changes II Corinthians 3:18- *“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”*
 3. It Converts I Peter 1:23- *“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”*
 4. It Cultivates I Peter 2:2- *“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby”*
- II. The Practice of the Word v. 14- *“ye, brethren, became followers”*
- A. Followers of the Churches- *“For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God”*
 - B. Followers of the Christ- *“which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus”*
- III. The Perils of the Word vs. 14-16- *“for ye also have suffered”*
- A. Suffering from Countrymen v. 14- *“for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews”* Acts 17:5, 13, 14:2
 1. “Not only were the Thessalonian saints imitators of the Lord and of Paul, but they also became imitators of the Jewish believers in their experience of persecution.” (Wiersbe)
 2. “The saints in Judea suffered at the hands of the Jews, and the saints in Thessalonica suffered at the hands of the Gentiles.” (Wiersbe)
 - B. Suffering from Cruelty v. 15- *“Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us”*
 1. The Prince- *“Who both killed the Lord Jesus”* 27:25, Acts 2:23, 3:15, 4:10, 5:30
 2. The Prophets- *“and their own prophets”* Matthew 23:31, 37, Acts 7:52
 - C. Suffering from Controversy v. 15- *“and they please not God, and are contrary to all men”*
 1. “They do not merely differ from other people in customs and opinions—which might be harmless—but they keep up an active opposition to all other people.” (Barnes Notes)
 2. “It was not opposition to one nation only, but to all; it was not to one form of religion only, but to all—even including God’s last revelation to mankind; it was not opposition evinced in their own country, but they carried it with them wherever they went.” (Barnes Notes)
 - D. Suffering from Commandments v. 16- *“Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway”* Acts 18:6
 - E. Suffering will Cease v. 16- *“for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost”*

1. According to Barnes Notes, “*to the uttermost*” means, “to the end; that is, until wrath shall be ‘complete’ or ‘exhausted;’ or wrath in the extremest degree.”
2. “It does not mean ‘to the end of their race or history;’ nor necessarily to the remotest periods of time, but to that which constitutes completion, so that there should be nothing lacking of that which would make indignation perfect...” (Barnes Notes)

Conclusion: Surely, the Thessalonians possessed a tremendous testimony! They had applied God’s Word in their lives and was a living epistle known and read of all men. In reality, the Word became flesh in their days. They were still sounding out this Word that brought persecution in their lives. There is an effectual working of the everlasting Word.

“The Absence of Paul from the Thessalonians”

I Thessalonians 2:17-20

Introduction: One of the greatest concerns of a pastor away from his flock is, “How are they doing?” This was the scenario seen in our text. Paul could not be with the Thessalonians, but he was still concerned for them. The Thessalonians were facing many hardships in Paul’s absence and he could do nothing about it. Notice some of these trials.

1. The Pressure they Faced
 - a. I 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:”*
 - b. I Thessalonians 3:3- *“That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.”*
2. The People they Faced I 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:”*
3. The Persecution they Faced I 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:”*

Body: With this in mind, Paul explained to them the reason he was not able to be with them. He began to share his heart with this people and expressed his concern for them in his absence. Paul tried to inform them that there was no need to give up because one day Jesus would come and get them. Observe how this small paragraph was meant to cheer up the Thessalonians.

- I. The Endeavour of Paul I Thessalonians 2:17- *“...endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face...”*
 - A. The Absence of Paul I Thessalonians 2:17- *“But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence...”*
 - B. The Attitude of Paul I Thessalonians 2:17- *“...not in heart...”*
 - C. The Abundance of Paul I Thessalonians 2:17- *“...endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.”*
- II. The Enemy of Paul I Thessalonians 2:18- *“...but Satan hindered us.”*
 - A. The Will of Paul I Thessalonians 2:18- *“Wherefore we would have come unto you...”*
 1. A Will to be Present I Thessalonians 2:18- *“Wherefore we would have come unto you...”*
 2. A Will to be in Person I Thessalonians 2:18- *“...even I Paul...”*
 - a. I 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:”*
 - b. I 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.”*
 3. A Will that was Persistent I Thessalonians 2:18- *“...once and again...”*

- B. The Warfare of Paul I Thessalonians 2:18- *“...but Satan hindered us.”*
 - 1. Satan Hinders Our Road I Thessalonians 2:18- *“Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.”*
 - 2. Satan Hinders Our Run Galatians 5:7- *“Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?”*
 - 3. Satan Hinders Our Return Romans 15:22- *“For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.”*

- III. The Excitement of Paul I Thessalonians 2:19- *“...our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing...”*
 - A. Explanation of Goodness I Thessalonians 2:19- *“For what is our hope...”*
 - B. Expectation of Gladness I Thessalonians 2:19- *“...or joy...”*
 - C. Expectation of Glory I Thessalonians 2:19- *“...or crown of rejoicing...”*
 - D. Expectation of Going I Thessalonians 2:19- *“...Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?”*

- IV. The Encouragement of Paul I Thessalonians 2:20- *“For ye are our glory and joy.”*

Conclusion: It is possible that some of the Thessalonians were discouraged because of the hardships they faced. Even some of them may have considered quitting. However, Paul reminded them that the coming of the Lord was near. He tried to encourage them to press on because there would soon be glory. Therefore, they must not give up, let up, or shut up until He would take them up!

“Here Comes Help”
I Thessalonians 3:1-5

Introduction: Concerning the development of a human, there are many stages of growth. A child first learns how to eat, and then roll over. The next step is standing, and then finally walking. This is also true in the spiritual realm. John addressed believers in the church on three different levels (I John 2:12-14- “*little children...young men...fathers*”). As we view the Scriptures, we see the different levels of spiritual maturity.

1. The Premature Saint I Peter 2:2- “*As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby*”
2. The Position of the Saint Ephesians 6:14- “*Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness*”
3. The Progression of the Saint II Corinthians 5:7- “*For we walk by faith, not by sight*”

Body: Paul, as a spiritual parent (2:7, 2:11), had a desire that the Thessalonians would grow to the point that they could stand on their own. Therefore, he sent Timothy to help them grow in the grace and knowledge of God. It was now the task of Timothy, because of Paul’s absence, to develop the spiritual growth of the Thessalonians. Observe a few elements about the help sent to the Thessalonica believers.

- I. He was to be Promoting their Strength vs. 1-2- “*to establish you*”
 - A. In Paul’s Absence v. 1- “*Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone*” Acts 17:15
 1. “When Paul and his friends left Thessalonica, they went to Berea and ministered the Word. But the troublemakers from Thessalonica followed them and stirred up opposition. Paul left for Athens while Silas and Timothy remained at Berea (see Acts 17:10-15).” (Wiersbe)
 2. “Apparently, Timothy did join Paul in Athens (note the “we” in I Thessalonians 3:1-2), but Paul sent him back to Thessalonica to help the young church that was going through tribulations.” (Wiersbe)
 3. “This particle [“Wherefore”] is designed here to refer to another proof of his affection for them.” (Barnes Notes)
 4. “One evidence had been referred to in his strong desire to visit them, which he had been unable to accomplish I Thessalonians 2:18, and he here refers to another—to wit, the fact that he had sent Timothy to them.” (Barnes Notes)
 - B. In Paul’s Appointment v. 2- “*And sent Timotheus, our brother*” I Timothy 1:2
 1. Timothy was to Execute- “*and minister of God*” Philippians 2:22
 2. Timothy was to Employ- “*and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ*” I Corinthians 16:10, 3:9
 3. Timothy was to Establish- “*to establish you*”
 4. Timothy was to Encourage- “*and to comfort you concerning your faith*”
- II. He was to be Present in their Sufferings vs. 3-4- “*we should suffer tribulation*”

- A. Because of the Pressure v. 3- *“That no man should be moved by these afflictions”* I Thessalonians 2:14
 - 1. “The word ‘moved’ in I Thessalonians 3 is interesting. It literally means ‘to wag the tail, to fawn over’.” (Wiersbe)
 - 2. “The idea is that Satan often flatters the believer in order to lead him astray. Satan told Eve she would be like God if she ate of the tree, and she fell for his flattery.” (Wiersbe)
 - 3. “Satan is more dangerous when he flatters than when he frowns.” (Wiersbe)
 - B. Because of the Predestination v. 3- *“for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto”* Philippians 1:29
 - C. Because of the Promise v. 4- *“For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation”* I Peter 4:12
 - D. Because of the Passing v. 4- *“even as it came to pass, and ye know”* Acts 17:5-8
- III. He was to be Presenting their Status v. 5- *“I sent to know your faith”*
- A. Because of Secrecy- *“For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith”* I Peter 5:8-9
 - B. Because of Satan- *“lest by some means the tempter have tempted you”*
 - C. Because of Service- *“and our labour be in vain”* Galatians 2:2, 4:11

Conclusion: Now we see the importance of Timothy coming to Thessalonica. It was to strengthen the faith of the saints that Satan would not get an advantage over them. The secret to the victory over the Devil was faith that was developed. Apparently, the only way to conquer sin, Satan, and self is our overcoming faith (I John 5:4- *“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith”*).

“The Good Remembrance of the Thessalonians”

I Thessalonians 3:6-10

Introduction: In the context of this passage, Paul is rejoicing over the fact that, even in his absence, the Thessalonians are continuing in the faith. Therefore, Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, writes them an epistle to strengthen them further. Out of all the spiritual tools used to build up the believer, Paul knew that the Word could accomplish growth in their lives (Acts 20:32- *“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified”*). Thus, we have two epistles written to the Thessalonians. Knowing this, we understand that the Scriptures are:

1. Diet for Our Spirituality Matthew 4:4- *“But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”*
2. Direction for Our Spirituality Psalms 119:105- *“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path”*
3. Defense for Our Spirituality Ephesians 6:17- *“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”*

Body: With the Word being preached unto them by God’s servant Timothy, the Thessalonians were growing by a tremendous rate. Witnessing their progress, Timothy could not wait to report to Paul concerning the testimony of the Thessalonians. When he received word from Paul to come unto him, Timothy went with joy. After informing Paul of the progress of the Thessalonians, the Holy Spirit breathed again on Paul to write them a letter of encouragement. Hence, we see this appreciation for them in the following verses. Notice:

- I. The Good Remembrance of the Thessalonians v. 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”*
 - A. They Remembered Paul’s Report- *“But now when Timotheus came from you unto us”* 3:1-2
 - B. They Remembered Paul’s Request- *“and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity”* 3:2
 - C. They Remembered Paul’s Reproach- *“and that ye have good remembrance of us always”* 2:17
 - D. They Remembered Paul’s Relationship- *“desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you”* 2:17-18
- II. The Given Rest of the Thessalonians v. 7- *“Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith”*
 - A. The Enjoyment of their Comfort- *“Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you”*
 - B. The Extent of their Comfort- *“in all our affliction and distress by your faith”*
- III. The Guarded Righteousness of the Thessalonians v. 8- *“For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord”*

- A. Their Encouragement- *“For now we live”*
 - B. Their Endurance- *“if ye stand fast in the Lord”* II Thessalonians 2:15
- IV. The Gracious Rendering for the Thessalonians v. 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”*
- A. The Praiseworthy Thoughts of the Thessalonians- *“For what thanks can we render to God again for you”*
 - B. The Praiseworthy Trials of the Thessalonians- *“for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God”*
- V. The Growth Required of the Thessalonians v. 10- *“Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?”*
- A. The Prayers for Assembling- *“Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face”* I Samuel 12:23, Acts 6:4
 - B. The Perfecting from Advancement- *“and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?”* Luke 22:31-32, Romans 1:17, II Thessalonians 1:3
 - 1. “Faith that cannot be tested cannot be trusted.” (Wiersbe)
 - 2. “God tries our faith, not to destroy it, but to develop it.” (Wiersbe)

Conclusion: The Thessalonians were certainly blessed to have men of God such as Timothy and Paul working with them and praying for them. Because of their godly example, the Thessalonians were following in their footsteps in the service for the Lord. They were increasing in the faith and progressing in the work of the Lord. Certainly, they had a good remembrance.

“A Recollection on Direction”
I Thessalonians 3:11-13

Introduction: In the closing of chapter three, Paul recollects the direction of the Lord in his life. Paul, being moved by the Holy Ghost, desires direction to and for the Thessalonians. He realizes the importance of knowing God’s way and proceeding down the right path. The Christian’s course must be lead by God in order to live a pleasant life to our Lord. We not only see this in verse eleven, but we also notice it throughout the Bible. Observe:

1. A Sinner’s Direction Psalm 25:8- *“Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way”*
2. A Saint’s Direction Isaiah 48:17- *“Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go”*
 - a. For Restoration Ezra 8:21- *“Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance”*
 - b. For Responsibilities Psalm 25:9- *“The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way”*
 - c. For Righteousness Proverbs 3:6- *“In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths”*

Body: It is important that a believer learn the direction of the Lord and not progress on their own will. Jeremiah revealed this as he penned, *“O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”* Many times our own will gets us into trouble. We need to seek the Lord’s will for our life that we might be sanctified vessels meet for the Master’s use. Therefore, we must seek:

- I. The Directed Way of the Lord v. 11- *“direct our way”*
 - A. Concerning Deity- *“Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ”*
 1. “The reference is particularly to the ‘Father,’ the First Person of the Trinity. It does not refer to the divine nature in general, or to God as such, but to God as the Father of the Lord Jesus. It is a distinct prayer offered to him that he would direct his way to them. It is right therefore to offer prayer to God as the First Person of the Trinity.” (Barnes Notes)
 2. “The Bible pattern of prayer is: to the Father, through the Son, and in the Spirit.” (Wiersbe)
 - B. Concerning Direction- *“direct our way unto you”*
 1. “The idea is that of conducting one straight to a place, and not by a round-about course.” (Barnes Notes)
 2. “Here the petition is that God would remove all obstacles so that he could come directly to them.” (Barnes Notes)
- II. The Directed Work of the Lord v. 12- *“the Lord make you to increase and abound in love”* I Thessalonians 4:9

- A. The Enlargement of Charity- *“And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love”*
 - B. The Equality of Charity- *“one toward another”*
 - C. The Extent of Charity- *“and toward all men”*
 - D. The Example of Charity- *“even as we do toward you”*
- III. The Directed Will of the Lord v. 13- *“he may stablish your hearts”* I Thessalonians 3:2
- A. Concerning the Heart- *“To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable”* I Thessalonians 5:23
 - B. Concerning the Holiness- *“in holiness before God, even our Father”* I John 3:3
 - C. Concerning the Hope- *“at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints”* Jude 1:14

Conclusion: God gave us a promise in Psalm 32:8, *“I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye”*. If we will only draw nigh to Him, then He can direct our lives. It is when the believer moves away from God that they get off course. We must seek the directed way, work, and will of our loving Lord. Learning to follow the Lord is one of the greatest lessons in a saint’s life. Paul had a recollection of direction that he desired to teach the Thessalonians.

“The Will of God: Your Sanctification”

I Thessalonians 4:1-8

Introduction: The opening of the fourth chapter reveals to us the importance of knowing God’s will for our lives. Knowing, doing, and completing the Lord’s will should be the believer’s aim while they live on the earth. The first mention of the “*will of God*” is found in Mark, and is continued 22 more times throughout the New Testament. Saints of God should labor extensively to accomplish what God desires for them. Observe:

1. The Will of God is Service Acts 13:36- *“For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption”*
2. The Will of God is Selected II Corinthians 1:1- *“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia”*
3. The Will of God is Surrender II Corinthians 8:5- *“And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God”*
I Peter 4:2- *“That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God”*
4. The Will of God is Simple Ephesians 6:6- *“Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart”*
5. The Will of God is Satisfying I John 2:17- *“And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever”*
Hebrews 10:36- *“For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise”*

Body: Fulfilling the will of God in our lives is not necessarily easy. Satan places traps and snares along the path that the Lord desires for us to take. The slithery serpent desires nothing more than to trip us up as we progress along this journey. Ruining their testimony and influence is the Devil’s delight. However, it is possible to achieve our Master’s will if we are informed in some areas of importance. Therefore, Paul writes about:

- I. Doing the Will of God v. 1- *“to please God”*
 - A. An Exhortation to Please God- *“Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus”*
 - B. An Example to Please God- *“that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk”*
 - C. An Experience of Pleasing God- *“and to please God, so ye would abound more and more”*
 1. “Everybody lives to please somebody. Many people live to please themselves.” (Wiersbe)
 2. Romans 15:1- *“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves”*
 3. Galatians 1:10- *“For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ”*
 4. Ephesians 6:6- *“Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart”*

5. I 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”*
 6. Our goal should be to please God!
 7. John 8:29- *“And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him”*
 8. II Timothy 2:4- *“No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier”*
 9. Hebrews 11:5- *“By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God”*
- II. Displaying the Will of God v. 2- *“commandments we gave”*
- A. The Sending of the Commandments- *“For ye know what commandments we gave you”*
 1. “The word *commandments* is a military term. It refers to orders handed down from superior officers.” (Wiersbe)
 2. “We are soldiers in God’s army, and we must obey orders.” (Wiersbe)
 - B. The Source of the Commandments- *“by the Lord Jesus”*
- III. Destroying the Will of God vs. 3-5- *“fornication”*
- A. Because of our Passions v. 3- *“fornication”*
 1. The Acknowledgment of Sanctification- *“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification”*
 2. The Abstaining from Sin- *“that ye should abstain from fornication”*
 - B. Because of our Possessions v. 4- *“possess his vessel”*
 1. A Studious Possession- *“That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel”*
 - a. Our Vessels are Priceless II Corinthians 4:7- *“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us”*
 - b. Our Vessels are to be Purged II Timothy 2:21- *“If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work”*
 2. A Spiritual Possession- *“in sanctification and honour”*
 - C. Because of our Perversity v. 5- *“lust of concupiscence”*
 1. The Cravings of a Person- *“Not in the lust of concupiscence”*
 2. The Carnality of a People- *“even as the Gentiles which know not God”*
- IV. Defrauding the Will of God v. 6- *“defraud his brother”*
- A. A Planned Corruption- *“That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter”*
 - B. A Punishing Christ- *“because that the Lord is the avenger of all such”* Galatians 6:7-8

1. Romans 12:19- *“Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord”*
 2. Colossians 3:25- *“But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons”*
- C. A Previous Charge- *“as we also have forewarned you and testified”*
- V. Defaming the Will of God v. 7- *“uncleanness”*
- A. The Sinful Life- *“For God hath not called us unto uncleanness”*
 - B. The Sacred Life- *“but unto holiness”*
 1. I Peter 1:15- *“But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation”*
 2. I Peter 1:16- *“Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy”*
 3. *“A holy walk involves a right relationship with God the Father (who called us), God the Son (who died for us), and God the Spirit (who lives within us).” (Wiersbe)*
- VI. Despising the Will of God v. 8- *“He therefore that despiseth”*
- A. The Probability to Despise- *“He therefore that despiseth”*
 - B. The Person of Despise- *“despiseth not man, but God”*
 1. *“Some might be disposed to say that these were merely the precepts of man, and that therefore it was not important whether they were obeyed or not.” (Barnes Notes)*
 2. *“The apostle assures them in the most solemn manner, that, though communicated to them by man, yet they were really the commands of God.” (Barnes Notes)*
 3. *“That is, he who disregards such commands as these which call him to a holy life, is really rejecting and disobeying God.” (Barnes Notes)*
 4. I Samuel 8:7- *“And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them”*
 5. John 12:48- *“He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day”*
 6. Luke 10:16- *“He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me”*
 7. Proverbs 1:7- *“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction”*
 - C. The Prevention of Despise- *“who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit”*

Conclusion: Immorality is one of Satan’s biggest tools for getting the Christian off the path of God’s will, especially in these last days. He uses sin to blight the character and convictions of the saint. Therefore, we must be careful to do what God has taught us in His Word. Avoiding sin and treating others right is imperative for accomplishing what the Lord wishes for believers. We must never despise what God has laid before us, no matter how much we suffer. In the end we

will be glad that we committed ourselves unto Him, because He doeth all things well. There are great rewards to those who serve Him faithfully.

“Touching the Thessalonians” I Thessalonians 4:9-12

Introduction: Paul, after finishing his instruction on a holy lifestyle (vs. 1-8), proceeds to inform the Thessalonians about the motivator for a sacred way of life. What produces this consecrated walk with God? Evidently, it is brotherly love. This love will stimulate a believer to do some things and refrain from others things. Love is not based on a warm feeling, but on a simple obedience to what God has said. Observe:

1. Love is Cautious John 14:21- *“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him”*
2. Love is Continuous John 14:23- *“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him”*
3. Love is Clear John 14:24- *“He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me”*
4. Love is Cultivated I John 2:5- *“But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him”*

Body: This type of sincere love is what inspires believers to treat each other right. We will love each other with the same love that our Lord has toward us. His love is shed abroad in our hearts and through our lives (Romans 5:5- *“And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”*) A love that does not live is a love that is not alive. Therefore, let us look as some evidences of the true touch of brotherly love concerning the Thessalonians.

- I. The Love of the Thessalonians vs. 9-10- *“brotherly love”*
 - A. Touching Love v. 9- *“But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you”*

I John 3:14- *“We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death”*
 - B. Teaching Love v. 9- *“for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another”*
 1. John 13:34- *“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another”*
 2. Romans 12:10- *“Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another”*
 3. “Have you noticed that animals do *instinctively* what is necessary to keep them alive and safe? Fish do not attend classes to learn how to swim (even though they swim in schools), and birds by nature put out their wings and flap them in order to fly. It is *nature* that determines action. Because a fish has a fish’s nature, it swims; because a hawk has a hawk’s nature, it flies. And because a Christian has God’s nature, he loves, because ‘God is love’.” (Wiersbe)

C. Toward Love v. 10- *“And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia”*

D. Triumphant Love v. 10- *“but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more”* I Thessalonians 1:3, 3:6, II Thessalonians 1:3

1. “How does God cause our love to ‘increase more and more’? By putting us into circumstances that force us to practice Christian love. Love is the ‘circulatory system’ of the body of Christ, but if our spiritual muscles are not exercised, the circulation is impaired.” (Wiersbe)

2. “The difficulties that we believers have with one another are opportunities for us to grow in our love. This explains why Christians who have had the most problems with each other often end up loving one another deeply, much to the amazement of the world.” (Wiersbe)

II. The Language of the Thessalonians v. 11- *“study to be quiet”*

A. Our Conversation- *“And that ye study to be quiet”* (Watch our words!)

1. Ezekiel 2:6- *“And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house”*

2. II Timothy 2:17- *“And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus”*

B. Our Concern- *“and to do your own business”*

1. Correct Business Luke 2:49- *“And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?”*

2. Corrupt Business I Peter 4:15- *“But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters”*

a. I Timothy 5:13- *“And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not”*

b. Acts 17:21- *“(For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)”*

C. Our Confidentiality - *“and to work with your own hands”* Acts 20:34, I Thessalonians 2:6, II Thessalonians 3:6-12, I Timothy 5:8, Ephesians 4:28

D. Our Commandment- *“as we commanded you”*

III. The Lives of the Thessalonians v. 12- *“walk honestly”*

A. Their Walk toward Sinners- *“That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without”*

Colossians 4:5- *“Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time”*

B. Their Wealth of Spirituality- *“and that ye may have lack of nothing”*

Conclusion: We see that the proper love of the Thessalonians produced an acceptable language amongst themselves. Further, conducting themselves in a Christian manner also created a satisfactory lifestyle. They were able to have an effective influence on them that are without and see others saved by their virtuous living. Our dwelling in the world should be that of a shining

light to this dark earth. This is the point David was stressing in Psalm 51:13. “*Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.*” When we are clean and holy we can teach sinners the ways of the Lord.

“Comforting Conversations Concerning Our Coming Christ”

I Thessalonians 4:13-18

Introduction: One of the most sorrowful events in the life of a believer is the death of a loved one. Separation and loneliness often troubles the heart and afflicts the mind of those that lose their family and friends. However, in spite of the anguish felt over the departure of those around us, we have a God of all comfort (II Corinthians 1:3- *“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort”*). Many passages in the Bible refer to God’s comfort to those hurting. Observe:

1. God’s Comforting Staff Psalm 23:4- *“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me”*
2. God’s Comforting Spirit Acts 9:31- *“Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied”*
3. God’s Comforting Scriptures Romans 15:4- *“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope”*
4. God’s Comforting Saints II Corinthians 1:4- *“Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God”*
5. God’s Comforting Servants I 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”*

Body: Along with these comforting tools of the Master, He offers one more in I Thessalonians, and that is the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a blessing to know that we are only planting a loved one instead of burying them. If someone buries a thing, they do not expect it to come up, but if they plant something, they have great expectations that it will sprout up. This is true concerning the death of a saint of God. We have a hope that we will be united again in the air at the Lord’s coming. Notice this study on the Second Advent that Paul offers the Thessalonians. There are:

- I. Comforting Studies v. 13- *“I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren”*
 - A. Our Education- *“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep”*
 1. A Desire for Intelligence- *“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren”*
 2. A Desire for Insight- *“concerning them which are asleep”* John 11:11-13
 - B. Our Expectation- *“that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope”*
- II. Comforting Similarities v. 14- *“Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep”*
 - A. The Resurrection of the Saviour- *“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again”* I Corinthians 15:3-14

- B. The Resurrection of the Saints- *“even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him”* I Corinthians 15:15-26, 55-58, Philippians 3:20-21
1. “However, Paul did not say that the soul went to sleep at death. He made it clear that the soul of the believer went to be with the Lord...” (Wiersbe)
 2. “He cannot bring them when He returns unless they are with Him. It is not the soul that sleeps; it is the body.” (Wiersbe)
 3. “The Bible definition of death is given in James 2:26.” (Wiersbe)
 4. James 2:26- *“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also”*
 5. “At death, the spirit leaves the body, and the body goes to sleep and no longer functions. The soul-spirit goes to be with the Lord, if the person has trusted Jesus Christ.” (Wiersbe)
 6. II Corinthians 5:8- *“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord”*
- III. Comforting Structure v. 15- *“we which are alive...not prevent them which are asleep”*
- A. Concerning the Authority- *“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord”*
 - B. Concerning those that are Alive- *“that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord”*
 - C. Concerning those that are Asleep- *“shall not prevent them which are asleep”*
- IV. Comforting Sounds v. 16- *“a shout, with the voice”*
- A. The Descent- *“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven”*
 - B. The Declaration- *“with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God”*
 1. *“with a shout”*
 - a. Revelation 4:1- *“...which said, Come up hither...”*
 - b. John 5:28- *“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice”*
 - c. John 11:43- *“And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth”*
 - d. It is believed that those that are in the Lord Jesus Christ will only hear this shout. (John 12:27-29)
 2. *“with the voice of the archangel”*
 - a. Revelation 4:1- *“After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard...”*
 - b. Jude 1:9- *“Yet Michael the archangel...”*
 - c. “At any rate, the angelic hosts will share in the victory shout when Jesus Christ comes.” (Wiersbe)
 3. *“with the trump of God”*
 - a. Revelation 4:1- *“...was as it were of a trumpet talking with me...”*
 - b. I Corinthians 15:52- *“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed”*
 - c. “The Jewish people were familiar with trumpets, because trumpets were used to declare war, to announce special times and seasons, and

to gather the people for a journey (see Num. 10). In the Roman Empire, trumpets were used to announce the arrival of a great person. When God gave the Law to Israel, the event was preceded by a trumpet blast (Ex. 19:18-20).” (Wiersbe)

C. The Dead- *“and the dead in Christ shall rise first”* John 5:24-29, II Timothy 1:10

V. Comforting Snatchings v. 17- *“caught up”*

A. The Redemption of the Remaining- *“Then we which are alive and remain”*

1. Romans 8:23- *“And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body”*
2. I 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”*
3. I Thessalonians 5:9- *“For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ”*

B. The Reunion of the Redeemed- *“shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air”* I Corinthians 15:51-54

1. With the Saints- *“shall be caught up together with them in the clouds”* Acts 1:9-11, I Corinthians 13:12
2. With the Saviour- *“to meet the Lord in the air”* I John 3:2

C. The Rest of the Righteous- *“and so shall we ever be with the Lord”* John 14:1-4

VI. Comforting Scriptures v. 18- *“comfort one another with these words”*

A. A Mutual Comfort- *“Wherefore comfort one another”*

B. A Mighty Comfort- *“with these words”*

Conclusion: Our loving Lord understood that the Thessalonians were concerned with what would happen to their loved ones that died. Therefore, the Spirit delivered unto them comforting words revealing the life beyond the grave. To every believer is given a blessed hope that one day we will be reunited with other saints and forever be with our Lord. These were precious promises to a perplexed people.

“Disciples of the Day”
I Thessalonians 5:1-5

Introduction: We see from the creation to the present, the Lord has divided things. In creation, He divided the heaven from the earth, light from the darkness, day from the night, man from woman, etc. Many portray our Lord as a unifier. However, according to the Scriptures, He divides. From nature to religion, God makes distinguishing marks between two extremities. Observe this separation.

1. Separation Over Sociality Matthew 10:35- *“For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law”*
2. Separation Over Sovereignty John 7:43- *“So there was a division among the people because of him”*
3. Separation Over Spirituality John 9:16- *“Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them”*
4. Separation Over Salvation John 10:19- *“There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings”*

Body: It is this last point that Paul is referring to in the opening of chapter five. Our faith in Christ divides the disciples of darkness from the disciples of the day. There is a great contrast between the sinner and the saint. Sinners present a worldly hope offering peace and safety while saints look for a blessed hope consisting of eternal salvation. Therefore, Paul writes to the Thessalonians informing them on what to be cautious about before the rapture so that they will not be deceived by the darkness. We need to watch:

- I. The Times v. 1- *“the times and the seasons”*
 - A. A Perplexing Era- *“But of the times and the seasons, brethren”*
 1. Daniel 2:21- *“And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding”*
 2. Acts 1:7- *“And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power”*
 - B. A Prior Education- *“ye have no need that I write unto you”*
- II. The Thief v. 2- *“the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night”*
 - A. The Awareness of the Thief- *“For yourselves know perfectly”*
 - B. The Assurance of a Thief- *“that the day of the Lord so cometh”*
 1. Amos 5:18- *“Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light”*
 2. Joel 2:1- *“Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand”*

3. Jeremiah 30:7- *“Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it”*
- C. The Approaching of the Thief- *“as a thief in the night”*
1. Revelation 3:3- *“Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee”*
 2. Revelation 16:15- *“Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame”*
- III. The Travail v. 3- *“destruction cometh...as travail upon a woman with child”*
- A. The Declaration of the Sinner- *“For when they shall say, Peace and safety”*
 - B. The Destruction of the Sinner- *“then sudden destruction cometh upon them”*
 - C. The Distress of the Sinner- *“as travail upon a woman with child”*
 - D. The Destiny of the Sinner- *“and they shall not escape”*
- IV. The Triumph v. 4- *“ye, brethren, are not in darkness”*
- A. We are not in Darkness- *“But ye, brethren, are not in darkness”*
 - B. We are not in Deception- *“that that day should overtake you as a thief”*
- V. The Testimony v. 5- *“Ye are all the children of light”*
- A. Our Actuality- *“Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day”*
 - B. Our Abhorrence- *“we are not of the night, nor of darkness”*

Conclusion: Although many will not agree, the Bible offers to us certain facts to distinguish disciples of darkness between disciples of the day. By their fruits we can know them. Therefore, the Lord gives us a rule to determine who is in the faith and who is not born again.

“The Sleeping and the Sober”
I Thessalonians 5:6-10

Introduction: From studying the Scriptures, we find that the Lord gives His beloved rest (Psalm 127:2- *“It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep”*). However, some people take advantage of this and become sluggards, rising not at all. This is also true concerning spiritual matters. Our Lord desires for the believer to be awake spiritually, but most, in the last days, are not. Therefore, we have many admonitions from the Bible concerning the subject of sleeping. Observe:

1. Sleeping is Related to Slumbering Proverbs 6:4- *“Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids”*
2. Sleeping is Related to a Sluggard Proverbs 6:9- *“How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?”*
3. Sleeping is Related to Slothfulness Proverbs 19:15- *“Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger”*
4. Sleeping is Related to Scarcity Proverbs 20:13- *“Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread”*
5. Sleeping is Related to Sinfulness I Thessalonians 5:7- *“For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night”*

Body: In the context of this passage, Paul presents two categories of people. First, there are those that are sleeping. This group is not aware of the coming Christ as found in verse ten. They continue in their sin without any regard to the wrath that is to come. Secondly, there is the sober. They are alert and awaiting the Second Advent. Therefore, from these two groups we must gather:

- I. The Command v. 6- *“let us not sleep”*
 - A. The Plea concerning Sleeping- *“Therefore let us not sleep”*
 - B. The Popularity of Sleeping- *“as do others”*
 - C. The Preparation for Soberness- *“but let us watch and be sober”* Mark 13:33-37, I Peter 1:13, 5:8
- II. The Certainty v. 7- *“they that sleep sleep”*
 - A. Dozing is in the Night- *“For they that sleep sleep in the night”*
 - B. Drunkenness is in the Night- *“and they that be drunken are drunken in the night”* (RWP- The night “is the favorite time for drunken revelries”.)
- III. The Clothing v. 8- *“putting on”*
 - A. Our Circumspection- *“But let us, who are of the day, be sober”* Romans 13:12-13
 - B. Our Covering- *“putting on the breastplate of faith and love”* 1:3, Ephesians 6:14
 - C. Our Cap- *“and for an helmet, the hope of salvation”* Ephesians 6:17, Isaiah 59:17
 1. “Hope is a sturdy helmet that protects the mind.” (Wiersbe)
 2. “The unsaved fix their minds on the things of this world, while dedicated believers set their attention on things above.” (Wiersbe) Colossians 3:1-3

- IV. The Claiming v. 9- *“but to obtain salvation”*
 - A. Concerning a Punishment- *“For God hath not appointed us to wrath”* 1:10
 - B. Concerning a Possession- *“but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ”* John 5:24

- V. The Conclusion v. 10- *“we should live together with him”*
 - A. The Reason for His Death- *“Who died for us, that...we should live together with him”*
 - B. The Roads of Our Dedication- *“whether we wake or sleep”*

Conclusion: After studying the importance of believers to be sober and be looking for the Lord’s coming, we should strive to be faithful in these last days. We must not become slothful and allow sin to drag us down. Christians should wake up and put on the whole armor of God. They must labor until Jesus comes.

“Correct Concepts for a Christian Congregation”
I Thessalonians 5:11-15

Introduction: As we study the Word of God, we find that the Lord desires His churches to behave themselves in a correct manner (I Timothy 3:15- *“But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth”*). The only way to accomplish this is to study what God has said in His Word and obey. Addressing the area of arrangements in the house of God, notice:

1. The Order of the Church Titus 1:5- *“For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting...”*
 - a. I Corinthians 11:34- *“And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come”*
 - b. I Corinthians 14:40- *“Let all things be done decently and in order”*
2. The Ordination of the Church Titus 1:5- *“...and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee”*
3. The Outreach of the Church Matthew 28:19- *“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”*

Body: Accordingly, God expects His church to operate smoothly. Because of our relationship with one another (*“brethren”*), we should live together peacefully. We are a family and we should act like one. This is the emphasis on the following verses. Paul reveals how the saint’s relations with one another ought to be of a godly sort. Therefore, we must:

- I. Watch Our Influence v. 11- *“comfort yourselves together, and edify one another”*
 - A. We are to Encourage- *“Wherefore comfort yourselves together”* 4:18
 - B. We are to Edify- *“and edify one another”* Romans 14:19
 - C. We are to Exemplify- *“even as also ye do”*
- II. Watch Our Instructor vs. 12-13- *“to know them which labour among you”*
 - A. Our Acquaintance with our Pastor v. 12- *“And we beseech you, brethren, to know them”* Hebrews 13:7, 18, I Thessalonians 5:25, II Thessalonians 3:1
 1. Because of their Work- *“which labour among you”* Ephesians 4:11-13, I Corinthians 16:16
 2. Because of their Watch- *“and are over you in the Lord”* Hebrews 13:17, I Peter 5:2
 - a. *“As brothers, the leaders are ‘among us’; and as leaders, they are ‘over us in the Lord’.”* (Wiersbe)
 - b. *“For a pastor to be ‘among’ and ‘over’ at the same time demands grace and the power of the Spirit. If he gets out of balance, his ministry will be weakened and possibly destroyed.”* (Wiersbe)
 3. Because of their Warning- *“and admonish you”* I Corinthians 4:14, Colossians 1:28
 - B. Our Account of our Pastor v. 13- *“And to esteem them”*
 1. In Love- *“very highly in love”*

2. In Labor- *“for their work's sake”*
 - C. Our Attitude toward our Pastor v. 13- *“And be at peace among yourselves” James 4:1-3*
 1. “Selfishness on the inside leads to strife on the outside.” (Wiersbe)
 2. “It is only as we submit to one another in the Lord that we can enjoy His blessing, and peace in the family.” (Wiersbe)
- III. Watch Our Interaction v. 14- *“warn...comfort...support...be patient”*
- A. Our Calling- *“Now we exhort you, brethren”*
 - B. Our Caution- *“warn them that are unruly”*
 1. “This word means ‘careless, out of line.’” (Wiersbe)
 2. “It was applied to a soldier who would not keep rank but insisted on marching his own way.” (Wiersbe)
 3. “It is not difficult, in an army, when soldiers get out of the line, or leave their places in the ranks, or are thrown into confusion, to see that little can be accomplished in such a state of irregularity and confusion.” (Barnes Notes)
 4. “As little difficult is it, when the members of a church are out of their places, to see that little can be accomplished in such a state. Many a church is like an army where half the soldiers are out of the line; where there is entire insubordination in the ranks, and where not half of them could be depended on for efficient service in a campaign.” (Barnes Notes)
 5. II Thessalonians 3:6, 11
 - C. Our Comfort- *“comfort the feebleminded” I Thessalonians 2:11*
 1. “The literal translation of the Greek word is ‘little-souled, fainthearted.’” (Wiersbe)
 2. “These are the quitters in the church family. They always look on the dark side of things and give up when the going is tough.” (Wiersbe)
 - D. Our Cleaving- *“support the weak” (Do not let them fall!) Romans 15:1*
 - E. Our Consistency- *“be patient toward all men”*
 1. “It takes patience to raise a family.” (Wiersbe)
 2. “That weaker member who demands much help may one day be a choice leader, so never give up.” (Wiersbe)
- IV. Watch Our Intentions v. 15- *“See that none render evil for evil”*
- A. Our Deliverance- *“See that none render evil for evil unto any man” Romans 12:17-21*
 - B. Our Duty- *“but ever follow that which is good” Matthew 5:39-44*
 1. Personal- *“both among yourselves”*
 2. Public- *“and to all men” Matthew 5:45*
 - a. “The phrase ‘to all men,’ seems to have been added to avoid the possibility of misconstruction. Some might possibly suppose that this was a good rule to be observed toward those of their own number, but that a greater latitude in avenging injuries might be allowable toward their enemies out of the church.” (Barnes Notes)

- b. “The apostle, therefore, says that the rule is universal. It relates to the pagan, to infidels, sceptics, and persecutors, as well as to the members of the church. To every man we are to do good as we are able—no matter what they do to us.” (Wiersbe)

Conclusion: Although these principles seem hard to perform, our Lord promised us that His commandments are not grievous. We have the indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit that is able to help us overcome the world, the flesh, and the Devil. God has given us the ability to live this lifestyle and it is up to us to practice the godly principles.

“Final Lessons for a Fantastic Life”
I Thessalonians 5:16-22

Introduction: After noticing the care Paul had for the saints at Thessalonica, we perceive some final instructions at the end of this epistle. It was almost like a father giving some important advice to his children (I Thessalonians 2:11- *“As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,”*). As we take an overview of the Bible, we notice several passages offering final counsels. It is important to heed these instructions that we might live for our Lord. The Scriptures offer to us some ways that we can respond to instruction. Notice:

1. Hating Instruction Psalm 50:17- *“Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.”*
2. Having Instruction Proverbs 1:2-3- *“To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;”*
3. Hearing Instruction Proverbs 1:8- *“My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:”*
4. Holding Instruction Proverbs 4:13- *“Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.”*

Body: Understanding the need for godly counsel, Paul offers wise words to the Thessalonians. He reveals to them some final steps they need to take so that their adversary will not take advantage of them. These principals practiced will strengthen their spiritual man to the point tribulations cannot shake them. Observe some thoughtful insights for these believers at Thessalonica.

- I. The Enjoyment of the Believer v. 16- *“Rejoice evermore”*
 - A. The Triumph of Rejoicing- *“Rejoice”* Nehemiah 8:10
 - B. The Timing of Rejoicing- *“evermore”*
 1. Reason for Rejoicing Luke 10:20- *“Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven”*
 2. Responsibility of Rejoicing Philippians 3:1- *“Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord...”*
 3. Repetition of Rejoicing Philippians 4:4- *“Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice”*
- II. The Entreaty of the Believer v. 17- *“Pray without ceasing”*
 - A. The Debt of Prayer Luke 18:1- *“And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint”*
 - B. The Deliverance of Prayer Luke 21:36- *“Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man”*
 - C. The Diligence in Prayer Romans 12:12- *“Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer”*

- D. The Design of Prayer Ephesians 6:18- *“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints”*
 - E. The Duty in Prayer Colossians 4:2- *“Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving”*
- III. The Expectation of the Believer v. 18- *“In every thing give thanks”*
- A. Concerning the Instruction- *“In every thing give thanks”*
 - 1. The Scope of Thanksgiving Ephesians 5:20- *“Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”*
 - 2. The Sending of Thanksgiving Philippians 4:6- *“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God”*
 - 3. The Sacrifice of Thanksgiving Hebrews 13:15- *“By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name”*
 - B. Concerning the Intention- *“for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus”*
 - C. Concerning the Individual- *“concerning you”*
- IV. The Extinguishing of the Believer v. 19- *“Quench not the Spirit”*
- A. The Problem- *“Quench not”*
 - 1. *“This language is taken from the way of putting out a fire, and the sense is, we are not to extinguish the influences of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. Possibly there may be an allusion here to fire on an altar, which was to be kept constantly burning.” (Barnes Notes)*
 - 2. *“Fire may be put out by pouring on water; or by covering it with any incombustible substance; or by neglecting to supply fuel. If it is to be made to burn, it must be nourished with proper care and attention. The Holy Spirit, in his influences on the soul, is here compared with fire that might be made to burn more intensely, or that might be extinguished.” (Barnes Notes)*
 - 3. II Timothy 1:6- *“Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands”*
 - B. The Person- *“the Spirit”*
- V. The Enlightenment of the Believer v. 20- *“Despise not prophesyings”* (Prophesyings refers to “forth-telling” instead of “fore-telling”. RWP)
- A. Despising a Person I Thessalonians 4:8- *“He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit”*
 - B. Despising a Precept Luke 10:16- *“He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me”*
 - C. The Reality of Despite I Samuel 8:7- *“And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them”*
 - D. The Reason for Despite Jude 1:8- *“Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities”*

- E. The Results of Despite Proverbs 1:7- *“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction”*
- VI. The Examination of the Believer v. 21- *“Prove all things”*
- A. Matthew 7:16- *“Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?”*
- B. Matthew 7:20- *“Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them”*
- C. I Corinthians 2:15- *“But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man”*
- D. Ephesians 5:10- *“Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord”*
- E. I John 4:1- *“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world”*
- F. Revelation 2:2- *“I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars”*
- VII. The Embrace of the Believer v. 21- *“hold fast that which is good”*
- A. The Strength of Goodness Deuteronomy 11:8- *“Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye go to possess it”*
- B. The Storage of Goodness Proverbs 3:1- *“My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments”*
- C. The Supply of Goodness Proverbs 4:13- *“Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life”*
- D. The Stability of Goodness Hebrews 10:23- *“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)”*
- E. The Steadfastness of Goodness Revelation 2:25- *“But that which ye have already hold fast till I come”*
- VIII. The Exclusions of the Believer v. 22- *“Abstain from all appearance of evil”*
- A. Because of a Will I Thessalonians 4:3- *“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication”*
- B. Because of a Warfare I Peter 2:11- *“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul”*

Conclusion: Without the joy of the Lord operating in someone’s life, they are doomed to fail. Many grow weak and fall because of their lack of prayer. An ungrateful heart always leads to an unholy life. These spiritual problems smother the fires that the Lord puts in our lives. When this occurs, people start to turn against preaching and actually refuse to hear the Word of God. The only hope for someone in this condition is to judge their spiritual life, only hold on to that which is good, and begin to refrain from the evils that allure them. This is Paul’s final lesson for the Thessalonians to live a fantastic life.

“The Final Sermon to some Faithful Saints”

I Thessalonians 5:23-28

Introduction: Now that we come to the closing section of I Thessalonians, it would be helpful to have a brief recap of our study. In this overview, we see the final point that Paul, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, will drive home.

1. Precious Memories 1:1-5
2. The Tremendous Testimony of the Thessalonians 1:6-10
3. Sincerity in Service 2:1-6
4. The Care and Concern of a Pastor 2:7-12
5. The Effectual Working of the Everlasting Word 2:13-16
6. The Absence of Paul from the Thessalonians 2:17-20
7. Here Comes Help 3:1-5
8. The Good Remembrance of the Thessalonians 3:6-10
9. A Recollection on Direction 3:11-13
10. The Will of God: Your Sanctification 4:1-8
11. Touching the Thessalonians 4:9-12
12. Comforting Conversations Concerning Our Coming Christ 4:13-18
13. Disciples of the Day 5:1-5
14. The Sleeping and the Sober 5:6-10
15. Correct Concepts for a Christian Congregation 5:11-15
16. Final Lessons for a Fantastic Life 5:16-22

Body: After five chapters of wisdom and instruction to the Thessalonians, Paul closes with the most important lesson in the Christian life, consecration. All of these admonitions and instructions will be futile unless the Thessalonians put into practice what they have learned. Therefore, in this final sermon we see:

- I. The Sanctification of the Saints v. 23- *“the very God of peace sanctify you”*
 - A. The Saint’s Tranquility- *“And the very God of peace”* Romans 1:7
 1. II Corinthians 13:11- *“Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you”*
 2. Romans 15:33- *“Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.”*
 3. Philippians 4:9- *“Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you”*
 - B. The Saint’s Transformation- *“sanctify you wholly”*
 1. Sanctify means “to render or to declare holy, to consecrate, to separate from things profane.” (RWP)
 2. Positional Sanctification Hebrews 10:10- *“By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”*
II Thessalonians 2:13- *“But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning*

chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth”

3. Personal Sanctification I Thessalonians 4:3- *“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication”*
I Thessalonians 4:4- *“That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour”*
 4. Progressive Sanctification John 17:19- *“And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth”*
Romans 15:16- *“That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost”*
 5. Perfect Sanctification I John 3:2- *“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is”*
- C. The Saint’s Talking- *“and I pray God”*
- D. The Saint’s Trinity- *“your whole spirit and soul and body”*
1. Spirit
 - a. Matthew 22:37- *“...Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart...”*
 - b. I Corinthians 3:1- *“...speak unto you as unto spiritual...”*
 - c. Hebrews 4:12- *“...and spirit...”*
 2. Soul
 - a. Matthew 22:37- *“...and with all thy soul...”*
 - b. I Corinthians 3:1- *“...but as unto carnal...”*
 - c. Hebrews 4:12- *“...the dividing asunder of soul...”*
 3. Body
 - a. Matthew 22:37- *“...and with all thy mind.”*
 - b. I Corinthians 2:14- *“But the natural man...”*
 - c. Hebrews 4:12- *“...the joints and marrow...”*
- E. The Saint’s Testimony- *“be preserved blameless”* 2:10, 3:13
- F. The Saint’s Triumph- *“unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”*
- II. The Invitation of the Saints v. 24- *“he that calleth you”*
- A. A Faithful Calling- *“Faithful is he that calleth you”* Philippians 1:6
 - B. A Faithful Completion- *“who also will do it”*
- III. The Supplication of the Saints v. 25- *“Brethren, pray for us”*
- A. Unity of the Prayer- *“Brethren”*
 - B. Understanding of the Prayer- *“pray for us”* Ephesians 6:18-19
 1. Romans 15:30- *“Now I beseech you...that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me”*
 2. II Corinthians 1:11- *“Ye also helping together by prayer for us...”*
 3. Colossians 4:3- *“Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance...”*
 4. II Thessalonians 3:1- *“Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course...”*

5. Hebrews 13:18- *“Pray for us...”*
- IV. The Salutation of the Saints v. 26- *“Greet all the brethren”*
- A. The Address- *“Greet all the brethren”*
- B. The Affection- *“with an holy kiss”*
1. Romans 16:16- *“Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you”*
 2. I Corinthians 16:20- *“All the brethren greet you. Greet ye one another with an holy kiss”*
 3. II Corinthians 13:12- *“Greet one another with an holy kiss”*
 4. I Peter 5:14- *“Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.”*
 5. *“The ‘holy kiss’ was not a sensual thing.”* (Wiersbe)
 6. *“Usually the men kissed the men, and the women kissed the women.”* (Wiersbe)
 7. *“A kiss was the sign of affection.”* (Barnes Notes)
- V. The Information for the Saints v. 27- *“this epistle be read”*
- A. The Responsibility for the Information- *“I charge you”*
- B. The Reason for the Information- *“by the Lord”*
- C. The Reading of the Information- *“that this epistle be read”* Colossians 4:16
- D. The Recipients of the Information- *“unto all the holy brethren”*
- VI. The Preservation of the Saints v. 28- *“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ”* II Thessalonians 3:18
- A. The Facts about Grace- *“The grace”*
- B. The Founder of Grace- *“of our Lord Jesus Christ”*
- C. The Fellowship of Grace- *“be with you”* Romans 1:7, 16:20, 16:24, II Thessalonians 3:18
- D. The Faithfulness of Grace- *“Amen”*

Conclusion: In this closing sermon sent by the Spirit of God, we see the importance of the Thessalonians to maintain a consecrated walk with the Lord. They were to sanctify their lives because of the great calling that they have received. Praying and a continual fellowship with the brethren were also important. Finally, they were to give heed to the reading of the Word and realize that the grace of God would assist them in their daily lives.