

The First Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians

The Argument

After that the Thessalonians had been well instructed in the faith, persecution, which perpetually followeth the preaching of the Gospel, arose, against the which although they did constantly stand, yet S. Paul (as most careful of them) sent Timothee to strengthen them, who soon after admonishing him of their estate, gave occasion to the Apostle to confirm them by divers arguments to be constant in faith, and to suffer whatsoever God calleth them unto for the testimony of the Gospel, exhorting them to declare by their godly living the purity of their religion. And as the Church can never be so purged, that some cockle remain not among the wheat, so there were among them wicked men, which by moving vain and curious questions to overthrow their faith, taught falsely, as touching the point of the resurrection from the dead: whereof he briefly instructeth them what to think, earnestly forbidding them to seek curiously to know the times, willing them rather to watch lest the sudden coming of Christ come upon them at unwares: and so after certain exhortations, and his commendations to the brethren, he endeth.

Chapter 1

2 He thanketh God for them, that they are so steadfast in faith and good works, 6 And receive the Gospel with such earnestness, 7 That they are an example to all others.

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

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

3 Without ceasing, remembering your ^beffectual faith, and ^cdiligent love and the patience of *your* hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of God even our Father,

4 Knowing, beloved brethren, that ye are elect of God.

5 For our ^dGospel was not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the holie Ghost, and in much assurance, as ye know after what manner we were among you for your sakes.

6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, and received the word in much affliction, with ^ejoy of the holie Ghost,

7 So that ye were as ^fexamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not in Macedonia and in Achaia only: but your faith also which is toward God, spread abroad in all quarters, that we need not to speak anything.

9 For ^gthey themselves show of you what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols, to serve the ^hliving and true God,

10 And to look for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus which delivereth us from the ⁱwrath to come.

Chapter 2

2 *To the intent they should not faint under the cross,* 2 He

1 a For there is no Church which is not joined together in God.

2 *2 Thess. 1.3

2 *Philip. 1.3

3 b Which declares itself by most lovely fruits.

3 c Whereby you declared yourselves most ready and painful to help the poor.

5 d The effectual preaching of the Gospel is an evident token of our election.

6 e To believe, & to be fully persuaded to have the gifts of the holie Ghost, and joyfully to suffer for Christs sake, are most certain signs of our election.

7 ^aOr, patterns

9 f To wit, all the faithful.

9 g For idols are dead things and only fained fantasies.

10 h Which he shall execute upon the wicked.

commendeth his diligence in preaching, 13 And theirs in obeying. 18 He excuseth his absence, that he could not come and open his heart to them.

For ye yourselves know, brethren, that our entrance in unto you was not in ^avain,

2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated at *Philippi (as ye know) we were bold ^bin our God, to speak unto you the Gospel of God with much striving.

3 For our exhortation was not by deceit, not by uncleanness, nor by guile.

4 But as we were allowed of God, that the Gospel should be committed *unto us*, so we speak, not as they that ^cplease men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

5 Neither yet did we ever use flattering words, as ye know, nor colored covetousness, God *is* record.

6 Neither sought we praise of men, neither of you, nor of others,

7 When we might have been ^dchargeable, as the Apostles of Christ: but we were gently among you, even as a ^enurse cherisheth her children.

8 Thus being affectioned toward you, our good will was to have dealt unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

9 For ye remember, brethren, *our labor & travail: for we labored day and night, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, and preached unto you the Gospel of God.

10 Ye *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how holily, & justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves among ^eyou that believe.

11 As ye know how that we exhorted you, & comforted, and besought every one of you (as a father his children)

12 That ye *would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing,

1 a Not in outward show and in pomp, but in travail and in the fear of God.

2 *Act 16.22

2 b By his help and grace.

4 c Which declares a naughty conscience.

7 ^aOr, in authority

7 d He humbled himself to support all things without all respect of lucre: even as the tender mother which nourishes her children, and thinks no office to vile for her children-s sake.

9 *Act. 20.34, 1 Cor. 4.12, 2 Thes. 3.8

10 e For it is not possible to avoid the reproaches of the wicked, which ever hate good doings.

12 *Eph. 4.1, Philip. 1.27, Col. 1.10

that when ye received of us the word of the preaching of God, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is indeed the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe.

14 For brethren, ye are become followers of the Churches of God, which in Judea are in ^lChrist Jesus, because ye have also suffered the same things of your own countrymen, even as they *have* of the Jews,

15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus & their own Prophets, and have persecuted us, and God they please not, and are contrary ^oto all men,

16 And forbid us to preach unto the Gentiles, that they might be saved, to ^hfulfill their sins always: for the wrath of God is ⁱcome on them, to the utmost.

17 Forasmuch brethren, as we were kept from you for a season, concerning sight, but not in the heart, we ^{*}enforced the more to see your face with great desire.

18 Therefore we would have come unto you (I Paul, at least once or twice) but Satan hindered us.

19 For what is our hope or joy, or crown or rejoicing? are ^knot even you it in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

20 Yes, ye are our glory and joy.

Chapter 3

2 He sheweth how greatly he was affectioned toward them both in that he sent Timotheus to them, 10 And also prayed for them.

Wherefore since we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to remain at Athens ^aalone,

2 ^{*}And have sent Timotheus our brother and minister of God, and our labor fellow in the Gospel of Christ, to stablish you, and to comfort you touching your faith,

3 That no man should be moved with these afflictions, for ye yourselves know, that we are appointed thereunto.

4 For verily when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulations, even as it came to pass, and ye know it.

5 Even for this cause, when ^bI could no longer forbear, I sent *him* that I might know of your faith, lest the ^ctempter had tempted you in any sort, and that our labor had been in vain.

6 But now lately when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and love, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring to see us, as we also *do* you,

7 Therefore, brethren, we had consolation in you, in all our affliction and necessity through your faith.

14 f In his Name and under his protection.

15 g And would hinder all men from their salvation.

16 h And heap up the measure, Mat. 23.32

16 i He means not this of all the Jews in general: but of certain of them particularly which ceased not after they had put Christ to death, to persecute his word and his ministers.

17 ^{*}Rom. 1.11

19 k Therefore I could not forget you, except I would forget myself.

Chapter 3

1 a Rather seeking your commodity, then mine own in sending of Timotheus to you.

2 ^{*}Act 16.1

5 b His great affection toward the small flock.

5 c Meaning Satan

8 For now are we ^dalive, if ye ^estand fast in the Lord.

9 For what thanks can we recompense to God again for you for all the joy wherewith we rejoice for your sakes before our God,

10 Night and day ^{*}praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might ^faccomplish that which is lacking in your faith?

11 Now God himself, even our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, guide our journey unto you,

12 And the Lord increase you and make you abunde in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we *do* toward you:

13 ^{*}To make your hearts stable and unblameable in holiness before God even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his Saints.

Chapter 4

1 He exhorteth them to holiness, 6 Innocency, 9 Love, 11 Labor, 13 And moderation in lamenting for the dead, 17 Describing the end of the resurrection.

And furthermore we beseech you, brethren, & exhort you in the Lord Jesus that ^aye increase more and more, as ye have received of us, how ye ought to walk, and to please God.

2 For ye know what ^bcommandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

3 ^{*}For this is the will of God *even* your sanctification, ^cand that ye should abstain from fornication,

4 That every one of you should know, how to possess his ^dvessel in holiness and honor,

5 *And* not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

6 ^{*}That no man oppress or defraud his brother in any matter: for the Lord *is* a venger of all such things, as we also have told you before time and testified.

7 ^{*}For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

8 He therefore that despiseth ^e*these things*, despiseth not man, but God who hath even given ^{*}you his holie Spirit.

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

10 Yea, and that thing verily ye do unto all the brethren, which are throughout all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more,

8 d If ye remain constant in faith and true doctrine, I shall think that all mine afflictions be so many pleasures, and shalbe restored from death to life.

8 e If ye persevere in faith.

10 ^{*}Rom. 1.10, & 15.23

10 f We must daily grow from faith to faith.

13 ^{*}Chap. 5.23, 1 Cor. 1.8

Chapter 4

1 a And as it were, overcome yourselves.

2 b The Greek word signified such commandments as one receives from some man to give them in his name to others.

3 ^{*}Rom. 12.1, Ephe. 5.17

3 c That is, that you should dedicate yourselves wholly unto God.

4 d That is, his body which is profaned by such filthiness.

6 ^{*}1 Cor. 6.8

7 ^{*}1 Cor. 1.2

8 e By these precepts of godly life it appears what were the commandments which Paul gave unto them.

8 ^{*}1 Cor. 7.40

9 ^{*}John 13.34 and 15.12, 1 John 2.8 and 4.21

11 *And that ye study to be quite, and to meddle with your own business, and to work with your ^fown hands, as we commanded you,

12 That ye may behave yourselves honestly toward them that ^are without, and that nothing be ^hlacking unto you.

13 ¶ I would not, brethren, have you ignorant concerning them which are asleep, that ye ⁱsorrow not even as other which have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus is dead, & is risen, even so them which sleep in ^kJesus, will God ^bring with him.

15 For this say we unto you by the ^mword of the Lord, *that we which live, and are remaining in the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which sleep.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the Archangel and *with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

17 Then shall ⁿwe which live and remain, be ^ocaught up with them also in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18 Wherefore, comfort yourselves one another with these words.

Chapter 5

1 He informeth them of the day of judgement and coming of the Lord, 6 Exhorting them to watch, 12 And to regard such as preach God's word among them.

But of the ^atimes and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For ye yourselves know perfectly, that the *day of the Lord shall come, even as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, Peace, and safety, then shall come upon them sudden destruction, as the ^btravail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should come on you, as *it were* a thief.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night neither of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not ^csleep as do other, but let us ^dwatch and be sober.

11 *2 Thess 3.7

11 f And not be idle.

12 g As strangers and infidels.

12 h But that ye may be able by your diligence to supply your want and necessity.

13 i He does not condemn all kind of sorrow, but that which proceeds of infidelity.

14 k Or, have continued constantly in the faith of Christ.

14 l By raising their bodies out of the grave.

15 m Which is in the Name of the Lord, and as he should speak himself.

15 *1 Cor. 15.23

16 *Mat. 24.31, 1 Cor 15.52

17 n Meaning them which shalbe found alive.

17 o In this sudden taking up there shalbe a kind of mutation of the qualities of our bodies which shalbe as a kind of death.

Chapter 5

1 a So much the more we ought to beware of all dreams and fantasies of men which weary themselves and others in searching out curiously the time that the Lord shall appear, alleging for themselves a vain prophecy, and most falsely ascribed to Elias that 2000 years before the Law, 2000 under the Law and 2000 after the Law the world shall endure.

2 *Mat. 24.44, 2 Peter 3.10, Revel 3.3 and 16.15

3 b That is, suddenly and unlooked for.

6 c Here sleep is taken for contempt of salvation, when men continue in sins and will not awake to godliness.

6 d And not be overcome with the cares of the world.

7 For they that sleep, sleep in the night, and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night.

8 But let us which are of the ^eday, be sober, *putting on the breast plate of faith and love, and of the hope of salvation for an helmet.

9 For God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by the means of our Lord Jesus Christ,

10 Which died for us, that whether we wake or ^fsleep, we should live together with him.

11 Wherefore exhort one another, and edify one another, even as ye do.

12 Now we beseech you, brethren, that ye know them, which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and ^gadmonish you,

13 That ye have them in singular love for ^htheir work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves.

14 We desire you, brethren, admonish them that are unruly: comfort the feeble minded: bear with the weak: be patient toward all men.

15 *See that none recompense evil for evil unto any man: but ever follow that which is good, both toward yourselves, and toward all men.

16 ⁱRejoice evermore.

17 *Pray continually.

18 In all things give thanks: for this *is* the will of God in Christ Jesus toward you.

19 Quench not the ^kSpirit.

20 Despise not ^lprophesying.

21 Try all things, *and* keep that which is good.

22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

23 Now the very God *of peace sanctify you throughout: and I *pray* God that your ^mwhole spirit and soul and body, may be kept blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

24 *Faithful *is he* which calleth you, which will also do it.

25 Brethren, pray for us.

26 Greet all the brethren with an holie kiss.

27 I charge you in the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the brethren the Saints.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you, Amen.

The first *epistle* unto the Thessalonians written from Athens.

8 e That is, lightened by the Gospel.

8 *Isa. 59.17, Ephe. 6.17

10 f Here it is taken only to die, and is meant of the faithful.

12 g As the flock is bound to love the shepherd, so is it his duty to teach them and exhort them in true religion.

13 h Where this cause ceases, that they work not: the honor also ceases, and they must be expelled as wolves out of the flock.

15 *Prov. 17.13 and 20.22, Eccle. 18.12, Mat. 5.39, Rom. 12.17, 1 Pet. 3.9

16 i Have a quiet mind and conscience in Christ which shall make you rejoice in the middes of sorrow. Rom. 5.3, 2 Cor. 6.10

17 *Luk. 18.1, Colos. 4.2

19 k God that hath given his Spirit to his elect, will never suffer it to be quenched, but hath revealed by what means it may be maintained, that is, by such exhortations as these, and by continual increase in godliness.

20 l The preaching of the word of God.

23 *Chap. 3.12, 1 Cor 1.8

23 m Then is a man fully sanctified and perfect, when his mind thinks nothing, his soul, that is, his understanding and will, covet nothing: neither his body doeth execute anything contrary to the will of God.

24 *1 Cor. 1.9