

CHAPTER 1

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

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

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;

4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

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.

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

7 So that ye were ensamples to all

that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

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.

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

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.

CHAPTER 2

FOR yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:

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

3 For our exhortation *was* not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:

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.

5 For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God *is* witness:

6 Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor *yet* of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

7. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

9 For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

10 Ye *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every

one of you, as a father *doth* 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, 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.

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:

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:

16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

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.

18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

19 For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Are* not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

20 For ye are our glory and joy.

CHAPTER 3

WHEREFORE when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;

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:

3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

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

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.

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:

7 Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:

8 For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

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;

10 Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

11. Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

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

13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

CHAPTER 4

FURTHERMORE then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort *you* by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye

ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

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

3 For this is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

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

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

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

7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

8 He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

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

10 And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren,

that ye increase more and more;

11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

12 That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and *that* ye may have lack of nothing.

13. But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

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

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

CHAPTER 5

BUT of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6. Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober.

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

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

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

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

11. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves.

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all *men*.

15 See that none render evil for evil unto any *man*; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all *men*.

16. Rejoice evermore.

17 Pray without ceasing.

18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

19 Quench not the Spirit.

20 Despise not prophesyings.

21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

23. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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

25 Brethren, pray for us.

26 Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.

27 I charge you by the Lord that

this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

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

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

DEVOTIONAL COMMENTS

The modern city of Soloniki is located on practically the same site as was the ancient city of Thessalonica. Thessalonica had originally been named Therma, for the hot springs in the area. But 300 years before Christ it was renamed in honor of the sister of Alexander the Great. It was a free city, with its own government, and it was the capital city of Macedonia. Thessalonica stood on the important Egnation Way, which was Rome's greatest highway. The first record of the church at Thessalonica is found in Acts 17:1-15. Paul ministered in the synagogue there for at least three weeks and saw a number of people converted. The first letter to Thessalonica had several purposes: To encourage and confirm the new believers in the things of Christ; to answer false accusations made about Paul and his ministry (chapter 2:1-12); to explain that the Christian who had died would participate in the second coming of Christ; to warn the Christians against pagan immorality (chapter 4:4); to remind the church members to honor and follow their spiritual leaders (chapter 5:12,13); to warn the church members who had given up their jobs and were idle because they thought Christ would soon return (chapter 5:2-9).

In chapter 2 Paul gives a picture of the ideal Christian worker. He is a faithful steward (verses 1-6). Paul compares himself to a mother in verse 7, showing gentle, loving care for the church at Thessalonica. He shows fatherly concern in verses 9-16. He labored, preached, behaved himself, exhorted, and suffered. A father must watch over his family and make sacrifices for their welfare. Babies are great imitators, and it is important that we, who are spiritual fathers, live lives that are exemplary.

In verses 17-20 Paul shows brotherly love for the saints at Thessalonica. In every area of Paul's life he desired to magnify Christ. Never did he try to bring praise to himself; but in all things, whether being an example of a faithful steward, gentle mother, concerned father, or a loving brother, he sought to build

up the saints at Thessalonica and teach them the successful way of living for Christ.

In chapter 4 we move into the second half of the letter dealing with the practical instructions for these new believers in Christ. The key word in this chapter is "walk." Paul compares the Christian's behavior to a walk for several reasons. It demands life, for the dead sinner cannot walk spiritually; it requires growth, for a little baby cannot walk; it requires liberty, for someone who is bound cannot walk; it demands light, for who wants to walk in the darkness; it cannot be hidden, but is witnessed by all; and, it suggests progress toward a goal.

Paul exhorts Christians to walk in holiness (verses 1-8); to walk in love (verses 9-10); to walk in honesty (verses 11-12); and to walk in hope (verses 13-18).

The final chapter of I Thessalonians gives a series of instructions to the Christians on how to live in the light of the coming of Christ. The Christians in Thessalonica were living carelessly and some were not respecting their church leaders. There were also abuses in the public services and there was a general need for love and harmony among the saints. Just as Paul admonishes the church at Thessalonica as to how to live in harmony and purity and bring glory to Christ, we should take note of these instructions in our own churches and lives. We should be watchful (verses 1-11); be respectful to our leaders (verses 12,13); be mindful to one another (verses 14,15); be thankful (verses 16-18); be careful in worship (verses 19-21); and be faithful in daily conduct (verses 22-28). In verse 22 Paul admonishes the Christians to abstain from all appearances of evil. Of course, no saint should allow anything in his life that others could misunderstand. God is faithful to build us up in holiness if we but yield to Him. Prayer and attention to the Word of God will groom each Christian and keep him ready for Christ's return. Beyond that, it will prepare him for any questions that may come concerning his Christian life, and will prepare his heart for witnessing to the lost as he travels life's journey.

PROVERB FOR TODAY

“All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast” (Proverbs 15:15).

TREASURE PATH TO SOUL WINNING

Spend this month reviewing the previous 13 lessons. For today, review Memory Verse Assignment 38 (found on page 9).

HYMN FOR THE DAY

AWAY IN A MANGER

Source unknown (stanzas 1, 2),

John Thomas McFarland, 1851-1913 (stanza 3)

*The shepherds had an angel
The wise men had a star
But what have I, a little child,
To guide me home from far,
Where glad stars sing together
And singing angels are?
Christ watches me, His little lamb,
Cares for me day and night,
That I may be His own in heaven;
So angels clad in white
Shall sing their “Glory, glory,”
For my sake in the height.*

—Christina Rossetti

No Christmas song is more loved than this tender children’s carol. With its simply worded expression of love for the Lord Jesus and trust in His faithful care, the hymn appeals to young and old alike. It is usually one of the first Christmas songs learned in early childhood; yet its pleasing melody and gentle message preserve it in our affections all through life.

For some time “Away in a Manger” was titled “Luther’s Cradle Hymn.” It was thought to have been written by Martin Luther for his own children and then passed on by German mothers. Modern research discounts this claim, however. Stanzas one and two first appeared in the Little Children’s Book, published in Philadelphia in 1885. The third verse was written by a Methodist minister, Dr. John T. McFarland, in the early 1900’s when an additional stanza for this carol was desired for use at a church children’s day program.

How important it is that we take time to help our children see beyond the glitter of the Christmas season and teach them the true meaning of Christ’s birth. The most thrilling story ever known to man began in Bethlehem at Christmas.

*Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head;
the stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.*

*The cattle are lowing: the Baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes;
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! look down from the sky,
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.*

*Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay
close by me forever, and love me, I pray;
bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with Thee there.*

ON THIS DATE IN HISTORY

1787

PENNSYLVANIA WAS ADMITTED TO THE UNION.

There are many Christians in this state. Let us pray for them. I have a dear friend who is a pastor in Manassen, Pennsylvania, Brother Greg Smith. There are some great Christians, fine preachers, and good churches in this state. Let us hold them up before the throne of grace today.

1901

MARCONI SIGNALLED ACROSS THE ATLANTIC FOR THE FIRST TIME.

1908

THE FIRST BIBLE SOCIETY WAS ORGANIZED.

Let us pray today for all Bible societies who are faithful to the Word of God. As we think of Bible societies, let us think of the Bible. All that God has ever done He has done through His Word. All that God will ever do He will do through His Word. How we need to build our lives, our homes, and our churches on the Word of God. Let us pledge to do the following things with the Bible:

1. Read it every day.
2. Memorize a portion every day.
3. Read it in our homes every day.
4. Pray for God to allow it to be brought back into our schools.
5. Meditate upon its truths.
6. Think about its words.

May we on this birthday of Bible societies realize that it is not the Bible in the hand or the Bible on the table that counts, but the Bible in the heart.

ON THIS DATE IN AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY

1872

Attorney General George Williams sent a telegram to "Acting Governor Pinchback," saying that the black politician "was recognized by the President as the lawful executive of Louisiana."

1900

National Negro anthem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing," composed by James Weldon and James Rosemond Johnson.

1938

U.S. Supreme Court rules in *Missouri ex rel Gaines*

that a state must provide equal educational facilities for blacks within its boundaries. Lloyd Gaines, the plaintiff in the case, disappeared after the decision and was never located.

1961

More than seven hundred demonstrators, including Martin Luther King Jr., arrested in Albany, Ga., in five mass marches on city hall to protest segregation. Arrests triggered militant Albany movement.

1963

Kenya proclaimed independent.

Medgar Wiley Evers awarded Spingarn Medal posthumously for his civil rights leadership.

The Story of the Psalms

PSALMS 140

AUTHOR: David

THE STORY BEHIND THE PSALM:

David was being hunted like a deer on the mountains. He seldom rested. Here we have a pathetic appeal asking for God's protection and God's destruction of his foes.

Notice this Psalm is also "To the chief musician," which means the writer wished that this Psalm be under the care of one of the great masters of song that it might be sung properly. Perhaps David's life was endangered when he came in contact with Saul and Doeg. At any rate, he was running on the mountains and wrote this, one of the more beautiful of the Psalms. Notice in verses 1-5 he is threatened by bitter enemies. In verses 1, 4 and 6 he asks God for help and yet all at the same time he praises God for his protection in the past.

THE WAY IT WAS USED BY GOD'S PEOPLE:

Notice the word "selah" is used, which means it is a Psalm to be sung quietly, slowly, and restfully. Someone has said that the word "selah" bids us pause over the dark colors of a Psalm. Hence, God's people used this Psalm in times of melancholy and loneliness.

MEMORY VERSE ASSIGNMENT 38 (for review):

Please spend time reviewing these memory verses. If you have been completing the assignments in the TREASURE PATH TO SOUL WINNING, then you already have spent a week memorizing the Scriptures below. Now it's time to review!

EVIDENCE OF DIVINE INSPIRATION:

Divine inspiration evident in that the scriptures correct those who are trapped in error.

E. A WARNING TO THOSE INTERESTED IN THIS WORLD ONLY, AND CARE NOT FOR THE WORLD TO COME

() Luke 12:15

And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

() Luke 12:19

And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

() Luke 12:20

But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

() Luke 12:21

So is he that layeth up treasures for himself, and is not rich toward God.

() Luke 16:25

But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.