

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
Jumping in the Deep End
1 Thessalonians 1

Last time...in Acts 18, Paul left Athens and arrived in Corinth

The Lord immediately connected him with like-minded believers, Aquila and Pricilla
Then Paul was re-joined by Silas and Timothy and, being comforted and encouraged by
their fellowship and by the good report of the believers in Thessalonica,
was “pressed in the spirit” to preach the Gospel in Corinth, a wild town

In keeping with the pattern of his previous stops, trouble began when the Jews opposed
themselves and blasphemed the Lord Jesus Christ, God the Father Who sent Him,
and the Holy Spirit Who was sent to testify of Him

But the pattern of being run out of town, as was true in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea,
was broken by the Lord, Who told Paul to settle in and get to work because He
had much people in this wicked city

Paul will stay in Corinth for 18 months, teaching the Word of God

During that time, he would be inspired by the Holy Spirit to write a letter to the
fellowship in Thessalonica

This time...we study to exhibit ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be
ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth written to the Thessalonians

Overview

This is Paul’s first letter, the first Epistle recorded by the Apostle Paul

2 Tim 3:16	All scripture <i>is</i> given by inspiration of God, and <i>is</i> profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness
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1 Peter 1:20-21	holy men of God spake <i>as they were</i> moved by the Holy Ghost
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Doctrine: something God has said

False doctrine: something God has NOT said

“Apostle’s doctrine”, that which they received from the Holy Spirit, now starts to be recorded
as the Holy Spirit increases the revelation of God in His Word, aka the NT

Theme: The Return of Jesus Christ for His own

John 14:2b-3 *I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I
will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye
may be also.*

Purpose: To reassure the believers about the return of Jesus Christ for them
To encourage the believers in their affliction to continue in the faith until then

This letter is as timely today as it was the day it was inspired and recorded!

Please consider the depth of this Epistle:

Doctrines included in this first letter, starting in the first chapter

- The Trinity...the mystery of God, Maker of heaven and earth
- Election...a controversial and misunderstood doctrine to this very day
- Affliction...ear-tingling, NOT ear-tickling
 - Acts 14:22 with John 16:33
 - Phil 1:29
 - 2 Tim 3:12
 - 2 Tim 4:1-5
- The return of Jesus Christ...prophecy
More revelation about what Jesus meant when He said,
"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." (Luke 21:36)

And all these doctrines were previously covered by the Apostle Paul during his 3 week stay in Thessalonica; Paul jumped into the deep end of the pool!

Then why do so many pastors in modern Christianity (the worldly Church)

- tickle the ears of the people with "feel good" sermonettes or life application stories, NOT teaching the Word of God to equip them for "real life" in the world and leaving them dull of hearing the voice of God?
- teach that it is not important, even a waste of time, to study prophecy, keeping the people ignorant of what is most assuredly coming?
- hinder the spiritual growth of the people...giving only milk and no meat because they believe the people "cannot understand" and would not come back to fill the seats and the coffers if they heard the "hard sayings" of God?

This very first letter to an infantile church, written after 3 weeks of teaching in their midst, exposes the ignorance and/or laziness and/or cowardice and/or "brand building" of many pastors in today's worldly Church

My prayer for you is that all of you would hunger and thirst for righteousness...
the Living Word and the Living Water

NOT Heb 5:13 every one that useth milk *is* unskilful in the word of righteousness:
for he is a babe

But Heb 5:14 strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who
by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both
good and evil.

v1 Paul and Silvanus, and Timotheus:

From: Paul, Silas, and Timothy...the 2nd Missionary Journey team

To: the church in Thessalonica

- a 3rd kind of people on earth (1 Cor 10:32): purchased (Acts 20:28b)
- position in heaven and on earth: in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:20-23)

Greeting:

- Grace: “acceptance”, “favor”, “pleasure”...unmerited
1st mention is in Gen 6:8
Noah was not perfect (without sin) but he believed God (the righteousness of God which is by faith) and walked with God, his sins forgiven...and spared the wrath of God in the Ark
- Peace: Matt 5:9, Rom 5:1
- from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: grace and peace come only from God, they of His nature and not fallen man’s nature... why they are so precious and fallen man has such a deep longing for them in his soul

Grace...then peace i.e. no peace without grace

No Jesus, no peace

Know Jesus, know peace

Lord Jesus Christ: God’s greatest revelation of Himself to mankind
The Word made flesh, Immanuel/”God with us”

3x in first 3 verses: Lord Jesus Christ

Lord: Master...His Title

Jesus: Joshua/“Jehovah is salvation”...His Name

Christ: “anointed one”, Messiah or Savior...His Mission
(John 1:29, Acts 4:12, 2 Cor 5:17-21)

v2-4 We give thanks to God always:
How and why was Paul so thankful to God?

1. making mention in prayer
2 Cor 11:28 care, concern, anxiety...as I do for you
2. remembering without ceasing, always mindful of their
 - work of faith: walking by faith and not by sight is work!
Heb 11:1, 2 Cor 5:7 with Heb 11:8, Gal 5:16-17
 - labor of love: selfless love
Matt 16:24-25, Matt 22:36-40, 1 Cor 15:31b
 - patience of hope: cheerful endurance before God and man in existing worldly circumstances awaiting the promises of our Lord Jesus Christ, firmly believing Rom 8:14-18
3. knowing: your (the family of God) election of God
the Doctrine of Election: The choice, selection of God;
adopted children are chosen

Rom 8:28-30

1 Peter 1:2

Eph 1:3-6

The doctrine of Predestination (e.g. Calvinism) in the Church:
God chose who will be saved and who will be damned,
God made the irreversible choice for every person

Using the entire counsel of God in order to rightly divide the Word of Truth:

What comes before “predestined” in Rom 8 and 1 Peter 1?
foreknow...knowing beforehand
foreknowledge...knowing beforehand

God knew and THEN predestined, made a
determination

Does the Bible teach that God chooses? Yes
John 6:64, 71
John 15:6

Does the Bible teach that man also chooses? Yes

Deut 30:19-20

Joshua 24:15

1 Kings 18:21

Gen 15:6 Abraham made a choice, it was not forced upon him, then righteous

Heb 11:6 a choice must be made in order to please; there is no pleasure without a correct choice

Matt 16:25

Matt 7:13-14 “find” implies looking for, as opposed to looking for something else

John 1:11-13 witness given, witness believed, power to be a child given

Man is only pleasing by faith

Faith is pointless without choice

Repentance is meaningless without choice

The death of Jesus Christ on the Cross makes no sense if God made all the choices before the foundation of the world and man can do nothing about what God has chosen (i.e. fatalism, Stoicism);

Why would the Father put the Son thru that?

Why would a loving God unmercifully and cruelly taunt mankind with eternal life, if there was no choice involved by man?

Foreknowledge: The Lord God Omnipotent (Rev 19:6, Acts 2:23), the ALL-knowing Self-Existent and Eternal God knows all choices of every person

God does NOT choose few for salvation and most for damnation with man having “no say” in the matter

1 Tim 2:4

i.e. Choose life!

2 Peter 3:9

i.e. do not choose death!

John 3:16

Whosoever (any and all) is

meaningless without choice

1 John 2:2

he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins* of the whole world.

Why would the Father make His Son pay for the
sins of people He pre-determined to go into
damnation?!

We are not manufactured robots infused with AI, capable
of doing only what we are programmed to do
We have been given free will, a sovereignty,
to make choices...and to be accountable for those
choices

The Lord Jesus Christ did not suffer and die for robots!

The Word of God teaches us that

- God chooses
- Man (every person) chooses
- God foreknew all choices of all people of all time

Therefore, God chooses those who choose (believe, love, obey)
Him, those who choose Life rather than death and Light
rather than darkness

The doctrine of predestination (i.e Calvinism) misses the mark of
sound doctrine

Side note: Pharaoh and God during the plagues of Egypt

God foreknew Pharaoh's choices

(Ex 3:19-20 on Mount Sinai)

Pharaoh hardened his heart, Pharaoh chose

God showed him the folly of his choice

Pharaoh did not make a correcting choice

God hardened Pharaoh's heart

God gave Pharaoh the choice he made

v5 our gospel came:

Paul preached the Gospel to the Thessalonians with

- word...teachings, doctrine
(what the Son of God and God the Holy Spirit said)
- power...*dunamis*/supernatural, Luke 24:46-49
- in the Holy Ghost...Acts 1:5, 8
- in much assurance...Acts 17:30-31, ie the Resurrection of Jesus
- his/their behavior...witness in deeds, "walking the talk" as well as
"talking the walk"
- for your sake...their benefit, not his own i.e. with selfless love of
God and neighbor

v6 became followers of us:

Hearing and seeing the testimony of God, these Thessalonians made a
“course correction” in their lives:

From following the lust of their flesh to following the disciples of Jesus,
who are following the Lord Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd

Note: a leader can only lead to the extent that he/she follows Jesus Christ

having received the word...affliction...joy:

The Thessalonians received/believed the Word of God (James 1:21)

- as Jesus prayed they would...John 17:13-17
- along with the affliction that accompanied it (Acts 17:1-9) as foretold by Paul (Acts 14:22); no sugar-coating by Jesus or Paul
- with joy of the Holy Spirit, the indwelling Spirit of Christ Who has overcome the world and gives His disciples His joy
John 15:11 *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full*

v7-8 ensamples...sounded out the word:

Paul was very relieved and blessed by the report Silas and Timothy brought to him in Corinth regarding this fellowship...and for good cause

1. They were letting their light shine!

Examples, models to other believers in Macedonia (Philippi, Berea) and Achaia (Corinth)

“model citizens”

2. They were sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ, “echoing” what they had heard and learned and believed, throughout their “neighborhood”, as well in all the places they travelled

“vocal citizens”

Both, “model citizens” and “vocal citizens”, are proof of v6...and...

v9-10 turned...serve...wait:

Both in word and in deed, this very young but very healthy fellowship is
“walking the walk” and “talking the talk”,
bearing witness that they

- have turned (chose to repent as exhorted ala Acts 17:30-31)
from idols to the True and Living God
(evidence the fellowship is mostly Gentile)
- are serving the True and Living God (Rom 6:16-18, 22)
- while they are waiting for the return of Jesus Christ, Whom
 - they have not seen (John 20:29)
 - is risen from the dead (1 Cor 15:13-23)
 - will deliver us from the wrath of God to come upon the earth
for not believing in the Lord Jesus Christ

The snatching of the Body of Christ off the earth before the
wrath of God falls in judgement of the world
More on that in Ch 2 and Ch 3 and Ch 4 and Ch 5

Rom 5:8-10

Application/Lessons

Because our sins were borne by Jesus on the Cross and judged by the wrath of the offended God
upon Jesus on the Cross, we are

- “in Christ” (v1)
- turned from darkness unto Light and from the power of Satan (death) unto God (Life)
- forgiven...given God’s grace and peace (Eph 2:8-9)
- given the power to become the children of God (John 1:11-13)

We also v9-10

As such, we do face the wrath of Satan but we will never face the wrath of God!
Thank you, Jesus!!!

So studying Biblical prophecy is important!

- It is a blessing (Rev 1:3)
- We are expected to know and understand (Luke 19:41-44)
- It gives hope in a hopeless world
- It dictates how we live today
- Because the end times are characterized by
 - deception
 - apostasy, a great falling away from the faith
(more on that in 2 Thes 2)

This nation is in a state of decline

So is the Church in this nation

The worldly Church

- wealthy, in need of nothing
- lukewarm towards Jesus Christ
- will be vomited by Jesus Christ

says studying biblical prophecy is not important and a waste of time

I think a Spirit-filled and Spirit-led Apostle Paul would really “light up” the Church in this nation!

2 Cor 13:5

We need to measure ourselves against these

- “model citizens”
- “vocal citizens”
- who are joyfully enduring affliction, walking the walk and talking the talk while they wait for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ