

1/11/26

2Thessalonians 3:1-5

Paul the apostle is coming close to the end of his letter as we come to third chapter, where he now gives to the Thessalonians practical advice.

He is giving council and application to the local needs and problems that have been taking place at Thessalonica.

1. Paul exhorted encouraging them Jesus will punish those who persecute believers and those who do not know God at His Second Coming. 2Thess. 1

2. Paul taught them doctrine about the Antichrist and their deception about the Day of the Lord having begun and reproved for believing the deception.

2Thess. 2

3. Paul now gave practical application. 2Thess. 3

* This is always the order in the epistles of Paul, the doctrinal first, followed by the practical!

3:1-2 The petition of the apostle Paul for prayer.

3:1 The request of Paul for prayer is for himself and those with him.

1) Paul understood his constant need of prayer to preach and teach the gospel, “Finally, brethren, pray for us.” vs. 1a-c

a) The word finally “liopen” literally means “for the rest” implying the remainder of

the letter and could be translated moreover, furthermore or henceforth.

1)) The word can indicate the letter’s end or conclusion. 2Cor. 13:11; Eph. 6:10; Phil. 4:8

2)) The word can also indicate further material, as is the case in our text that is related to the preceding section about their salvation. Phil. 3:1; 1Thess. 4:1; 2Thess. 2:13-17

b) Once again he is addressing the brethren “adelphus”, those born of the same womb, spirit regenerated by the word of God.

1)) The word brethren appears 19 times in the first letter and 9 times in the second.

2)) The Thessalonians belonged to the family of God, as well as Paul presenting himself as their equal before God, not superior to them, demonstrating his humility and love for them.

3)) The Thessalonians would be the best ones to intercede for Paul and his companions having perfect knowledge their circumstances.

c) Paul requested prayer for him, Silas and Timothy.

1)) The word for prayer “prosukomai” means to supplicate, worship and

always used of God for earnest prayer in general. Rom. 8:26; Eph. 6:18; Phil. 1:9; 1Thess. 5:25; 1Thess. 5:17

2)) The word is emphatic in Greek and is in the present tense, to be praying continuously.

3)) Jesus used the word for the believer praying in secret to God our Father and the Garden of Gethsemane. Matt. 6:6; 26:36, 39, 41, 42, 44

4)) The letters of Paul reveal his constant dependency on the prayers of the saints. Rom. 15:30; Eph. 6:19; Phil. 1:19; Phile. 22

5)) Paul clearly revealed on one occasion that the prayers of the Corinthians were responsible for his deliverance from death, when they even despair of life, but God delivered them. 2Cor. 1:11

2) The purpose for asking prayer regards two things, first is the proclamation, “that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you.” vs. 1d-e

a) Paul was asking specifically for the gospel to be victorious in the hearts of sinners, for “the word of the Lord”. 1))

1)) The phrase he is using to describe the gospel and its content. Eph. 6:19f; Col. 4:3f

2)) The revelation of the Incarnation of God as the substitute for the sins of the world for the redemption of man by grace through faith offered to the world by the person of Jesus Christ and in His name.

3)) The prayerful effectiveness of the gospel is described, “that it may run swiftly.”

* The word swiftly “trecho” means simply to run using the metaphor of the athletic games to have ongoing progress of the gospel and unhindered to win the hearts of the lost. 1Cor. 9:24; Gal. 2:2, Phil. 2:16

4)) The Psalms declare, “He sends out his commandment to the earth: His word runs very swiftly.” Ps. 147:15

5)) Paul told Timothy the word of God in not bound. 2Tim. 2:9-10

b) Second, “that it may be glorified.” vs. 1d

1)) The petition was that it be honored and esteemed by virtue of its inherent quality.

2)) The word glorified “doxazo” means to extol, magnify or to hold in honor.

3)) Theis describes the reception of the gospel by a person who honors the gospel believing it is the word of God for the salvation of sinner, fulfilling what it was purposed for by God.

- * Literally , that it keep on running and keep on being honored!
- 3)) The apostle demonstrates two things in asking prayer for the outreach of the gospel
 - a)) That it was the top priority of his life.
 - b)) That he needed prayer like any other man, being dependent on God. 1Thess. 5:25
- c) Paul gives them an example of glorifying the gospel, “just as it is with you”. vs. 1e
- 1)) The Thessalonians had turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God. 1Thess. 1:9
- 2)) The Thessalonians had embraced the gospel, “you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.” 1Thess. 2:13b-d
 - * The Gentiles glorified the word of God. Acts 13:48
- 3)) We should forever be dependent on God to save sinners, not our own ability of persuasion or methods of evangelism.
- 4)) God is not willing that any should perish, but that all come to repentance. 2Pet. 3:9

- 5)) “But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Rom. 10:8-10
- 6)) The prophet Isaiah tells us that, “the Word does not return void, but accomplishes what he pleases.” Is. 55:11
 - a) If a person believes the gospel and repents, the word of God saves them!
 - b) If a person does not believe the gospel and does not repent, the word of God condemns them, unless they repent before they die.

3:2 The second request of Paul in prayer was for protection.

- 1) Paul wanted the Thessalonians to pray that God deliver him as well as those with him from men who opposed the gospel, “and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith.”

a) The verb delivered has the definite article and the use of the aorist suggests one particular act of deliverance.

1)) Remember Paul was at Corinth with great opposition and the Lord Jesus appeared to him told him to stop being afraid, but to speak boldly and not keep silent, for He was with him and no one would harm him, for Jesus had many people in the city. Acts 18:9-11

2)) Then there is one account recorded when Paul was brought before Gallio the procurator of Achaia by the Jews and God delivered him. Acts 18:12-17
 * Rom. 15:31; 2Cor. 1:10; 2Tim. 4:16-18; 3:12

b) The men opposing the gospel are described in two ways.

1)) The first describes their conduct, unreasonable “atopos” means out of place, improper, perverse, capable of outrageous and harmful acts against others.

a)) This is the only place in the New Testament that it is used of people, instead of things. Lk. 23:41; Acts 28:6; 2Thess. 3:2

b)) The spirit of antichrist is already at work as John says. 1Jn. 4:3

c)) The Antichrist will ultimately appear, “For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.”

2Thess. 2:7-8

2)) The second describes their character, wicked “poneros”, these men are not only corrupt in themselves, but sure in the evil and making others evil with the intent to corrupt and win them over to perdition.

a)) Both their attitude and action being malicious.

b)) The word is used for Satan and the evil in the heart of man. Matt. 6:13; 1Jn. 2:13-14; 5:18-19

c)) There is only one article is for both adjectives, indicating one group of men.

2) The explanation for their conduct and character regards their spiritual state, “For not all have faith.

a) They have not accepted God’s Word, but rejected it becoming more passionate in their attacks.

- a) They have not the Spirit of God and enemies of God and the gospel.

3:3-5 The proclamation of the apostle Paul's assurance.

3:3 The assurance of Paul is based on the character of the Lord.

- 1) Paul was confident in Jesus, “But the Lord is faithful.” vs. 3a
 - a) The word “but” places God in direct contrast to the men just mentioned, who have not faith in the gospel.
 - * This is a confirmation of his previous prayer for them. 2Thess. 2:16-17
 - b) God is faithful “pistos” meaning reliable and trustworthy, due to the fact of His nature and attributes, being eternal, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent and all wise unto perfection.
 - * We can and are to commit ourselves to Him as a faithful Creator in our sufferings. 1Pet. 4:16, 19
 - c) This does not always mean that God will answer or act the way we want, feel or think He should.
 - * His ways and thoughts are beyond ours; He is transcendent! Is. 55:8
- 2) The Lord would be faithful in two ways towards the Thessalonians. vs. 3b
 - a) Paul says first, “who will establish you”.

- 1)) The word establish “sterizo” means to set steadfastly, to strengthen.
- 2)) All that God allows to come to my life has this purpose behind it.
- 3)) All in order to exercise my faith, develop, refine it and stretches me in my spiritual maturity.
 - * “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.” 1Cor. 10:13
- b) Paul says second, “and guard you from the evil one.”
 - 1)) The word guard “phylaxeit” is often used of military protection against a violent assault.
 - a)) Both verbs are future to indicate on ongoing protection for the saint and ambassador of the gospel.
 - b)) This does not mean God is not in control when Christians are persecuted or even killed, only that God knows the days of our lives and we belong to Him. 1Thess. 5:23-24; Phil. 1:6; Jude 24; 2Tim. 1:12,14
 - 2)) The evil one “poneros” is not only from evil things and individuals, but

the very one who is the source of all evil, Satan. 1Thess. 2:18; 3:5

- a)) Satan is as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 1Pet. 5:8
- b)) Jesus as He taught the disciples to pray included the petition, “deliver us from the evil one”. Matt. 6:13
- c)) John tell us that the wicked one does not touch us. 1Jn. 5:18

3:4 The apostle Paul proclaimed his confidence in the Lord to work in and through the Thessalonians.

- 1) The partnership is first declared, “And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you.” vs. 4a
 - a) The source of their confidence was in the Lord, His faithfulness to his people, as mentioned in the previous verse.
 - b) Their confidence was in the Thessalonian because they were “in Christ”.
- 2) The confidence in the Thessalonians personal responsible obedience is declared, “both that you do and will do the things we command you.” vs. 4b
 - a) The Thessalonians were the ones who had to “do” the things they commanded them, presently as they were doing. 1Thess. 1:3, 9-10; 2Thess. 1:3-4

1)) The word command “paraggello” is a military word for order from a superior.

* The tense of the word “do” is the present active indicative

- 2)) The word is used repeatedly in the letter. 2Thess. 3:4, 6, 10, 12
 - a)) Christ is the Captain of our salvation. Heb. 2:10
 - b)) We are His soldiers. 2Tim. 2:3
 - c)) Who He commands, He enables to obey!

b) The Thessalonians “will do” the same in the future.

1)) The tense is the future active indicative to obey the commands given in the letter.

- 2)) So Samuel said: “Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has rejected you from being king.” 1Sam 15:22-23

c) The soul “psuche” refers to the seat of feelings, desires and affections, involving our intellect, emotions and will, once

controlled by our sin nature, doing what we desired with our mind and body because our spirit was dead.

d) But now our spirit is alive and our body is the temple of God, our intellect, emotions and will are now subject to our spirit that is alive to glorify God in our body.

3:5 The apostle Paul prayed for two specific things regarding the hearts of the Thessalonians.

1) First, to yield to the agape love of God, “Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God.”

a) The One enabling is by Jesus, “may the Lord”.

b) The problem area is “your heart”. Jer. 17:9

c) The prayer of Paul is that the Lord Jesus direct “kateuthuno” their hearts, meaning to make straight or guide their hearts to live by God’s agape love.

d) The reason being, so that their hearts not become hard, bitter, indifferent or proud and to remove any hindrances and obstacles that would keep them from yielding to the agape love of God.

* “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner

of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.” Heb. 4:12-13

1)) The agape love of God is the very source of our motivation and power that will be all-sufficient for life. 1Cor. 13:4-8a

2)) Living out God’s quality of agape love against sinners, “He loved us while we were yet sinners.” Rom. 5:8

3)) Paul says the agape love of God was shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Rom. 5:5

4)) The agape love of God constrained Paul to preach salvation. 2Cor. 5:14

5)) John says, “Not that we loved “agapao” Him, but that He loved “agape” us and sent His son to be... 1Jn. 4:10

6)) We love “agapao” Him, because He first loved “agapao” us. 1Jn. 4:19
 * Some say it is subjective genitive, God’s love for them, others say it is objective genitive, their love for God, I lean to the subjective, God’s love for them!

2) Second, to be patient like their Lord, “and into the patience of Christ.”

- a. He wanted the Lord Jesus to “direct their hearts into the patience of Christ”, in order to again, overcome any and every obstacle that would hinder them from being patient like Christ.
 - 1)) The word patience “*hypomone*”, means to remain under, yet not mere uncomplaining submission, but a sustaining effort to bear up, steadfast endurance, not being swerved from one’s deliberate purpose and loyalty to faith, especially under hostility.
 - 2)) The idea is that of bearing up under the greatest of trials and sufferings, as they had already experienced when they received the gospel.
 - 3)) This was the example of the result of the love of Jesus, as He had loving patience with all people.
 - 4)) Some say it refers to the patience of waiting for Jesus by the objective genitive, as the KJV records it, “the patience waiting for Christ.”
 - 5)) But the more likely is that it is the subjective genitive, like the love describing the type and quality of patience exemplified by Christ against the gospel and Himself. Heb. 12:1-2
 - * “Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every

weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

- 6)) Paul knew they would need this patience to obey and carry out the commands given to the church, in a Christ-like manner. vs. 6-15
 - a)) People can be very rude and unkind.
 - b)) People can drive you crazy.
 - c)) The people they would need to confront and correct that would require much patience.
- 7)) Patience is evidence of depending on and yielding to the love of God.
 - a)) Love for God!
 - b)) Love for saints!
 - c)) Love for sinner!