

9/26/99

I Thessalonians 2:13-20

Paul is still dealing with the coming of Christ in relation to service.

We know that one day every person will receive rewards or suffer the loss of reward, at the Bema Seat of Christ.

1. We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Rom. 14:10
2. Everything will be tried by fire to reveal it's sort. 1Cor. 3:13
3. The evaluation will be, according to the motives of our hearts. 1Cor. 4:5
4. For all will give an account of all the things done in our body, whether good or bad. 2Cor. 5:10

Again keep in mind that in the first half of chapter two, Paul has defended his service of character, care and conduct, with the purest of motives. 1Thess. 2:1-12

Now in the last half, Paul defends his sudden departure, due to their persecution. 1Thess. 2:13-20 (apologetical)

2:13-16 **The Thessalonians response to the gospel**

2:13 Thanksgiving for their receptivity.

- 1) Paul is grateful that the Thessalonians embraced the word preached to them as a message from heaven, and not of earthly source.
 - a) The word received "paralabanos" means to accept formerly and outwardly, objectively.
 - b) They did this by hearing the proclamation from the apostles.
 - 1)) The word heard "akoes" from "akouo", the active hearing of the message of grace in the past.
 - 2)) Faith come by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Rom. 10:17
 - b) The word welcomed "dechomai" means to accept willingly and inwardly and appropriate it subjectively. 1Thess. 1:6; 2Thess. 2:10
 - 1)) They thanked God for the gospel coming to them. 1Thess. 1:2
 - 2)) They thanked God for how they received the gospel. 1Thess. 2:13
 - 3)) They thanked God for the Thessalonians. 1Thess. 3:9
- 2) Not as the word of men.
 - a) The gospel was not the product of man's thinking processes.
 - b) The gospel was not able to be fulfilled by man.

- c) The gospel message was not consistent with the evil nature of man, a gospel of love.
- 3) But as it is in truth, the word of God.
 - a) The word “but” provides the sharp contrast between the human and divine.
 - * Literally, as it truly is, God’s word!
1Thess. 2:2, 8, 9
 - b) Inerrant and infallible. 2Tim. 3:16-17
 - c) Not of any private origin but inspired by God. 2Pet. 1:20-21
 - d) The incorruptible seed and eternal. 1Pet. 1:23, 25
 - * For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Rom. 1:16
- 4) Evidence that it is God's word, it effectively works “energeo” means to be at work and is in the present tense, indicating that the work is still going on, in you that believe. 1Thess. 1:5, 9
 - a) The word “works” is almost always used in New Testament for supernatural activity, eighteen of the twenty-one times, it is used by Paul. 1Thess. 1.3, 6, 8, 9; 4:9

- b) The word of God is able to convict and transform a person, regardless of their past. Rom. 12:1-2
* Heb. 4:12; Ja. 1:21; 1Pet. 1:23
- c) The word is active “in you who believe” Paul says, by virtue of welcoming it in their hearts. vs. 13; Eph. 2:8-9
- b) The Word of God is said to be many things in the Scriptures.
 - 1) A seed.
 - 2) Water.
 - 3) Light.
 - 4) Salt.
 - 5) A hammer.
 - 6) A mirror.
- 2:14** The outcome of the word being embraced and the evidence of it effectively working.
 - 1) The result was that they became imitators of churches in Judea in their sufferings.
 - a) They were first imitators of their Lord in suffering and then of the “churches of God”, who are comprised only of those who are “in Christ Jesus”, they are synonymous terms. 1Thess. 1:6
 - b) The churches refer to the Lord’s body on earth, birthed from heaven, the original one being in Jerusalem and then those that sprung out from it

through persecution. Acts 8:1, 4; 11:9, 22

* Not some human organization or assembly, not even the synagogue is included!

- c) The phanamanah of suffering in persecution was due to only one thing, they were Christians.
- b) They clung to the word they received.
- 2) They suffered in the same things from their own countrymen, as the churches of Judea did from the Jews.
 - a) Being persecuted literally, by their own tribe's people, Gentiles, as the Jews persecuted their own.
 - b) Certainly the persecution of Paul at Thessalonica was by the Jews. Acts 17
 - c) Being despised and rejected for rejecting their own beliefs.
 - d) Paul received the afflictions since Christ is not present to receive them Himself. Col. 1:24
 - 1)) Due to his identity with Christ.
 - 2)) Due to his identity with his church.

2:15 Paul declares five accusations against the Jews spiritual crimes.

- 1) They killed the Lord, implying divinity, Jesus, implying humanity. Past tense
 - * Peter said, "You have crucified, both Lord and Christ". Acts 2:36
 - 2) They killed the prophets. Past tense
 - * Matt. 5:11-12; 23:29, 37; Lk. 11:47-51
 - 3) They have persecuted "ekdioko" us, meaning to drive out fiercely or banish. Present tense
 - * Acts 17:1-14; 13:50; 14:5, 19; 17:13; 18:6; 19:9
 - * Jn. 15:18-20; 16:33
 - 4) They do not please God. Present tense
 - a) Because they hinder the work of God and oppose it by their sinful natures. Rom. 8:8
 - b) They were going about to establish their own righteousness. Rom. 10:3.
 - 5) They are contrary to all men.
 - * They not only oppose preaching to the Jews, but also to the Gentile. vs. 16
- 2:16** The grievousness of their sin.
- 1) They were forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles for salvation.
 - a) The prohibition was not merely verbal.
 - b) The prohibition was by a physical and persistent effort to hinder the gospel from getting to the Gentiles.
 - c) The prohibition marks the severity of their sin against God and man.

- 1)) Against God in that they opposed His plan and purpose.
- 2)) Against man in that they not wanting to enter heaven themselves, attempted to keep others out. Matt. 23:13
- 2) The explanation is to fill up “anapleroo”, as a cup, the measure of their sins as always.
 - a) Referring to the outcome or result of rejecting their Messiah, continuously, consistently and callously, being carried over to His followers.
 - * Jesus told of their being blind till he returns. Matt. 23:29
 - b) Jesus said to the Jews, “Fill up then, the measure of your Fathers.” Matt. 23:32; Acts 7:52
 - 1)) There is a well defined limits of sins in the mind of God.
 - 2)) As the iniquity of the Amorites had to be full. Gen. 15:1b
- 3) The consequences is that the wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.
 - a) The wrath is in reference to God's judgment.
 - * The aorist tense is in the indicative mood, connoting past time but in a prophetic context, something as future, something so certain that it can be spoken as past.

- b) The word “uttermost”, means to the end.
 - 1)) Their judgment can not be averted, having reached the extreme limits of their sins, God’s judgment falls. Rom. 1:18
 - a)) God is a gracious, merciful and longsuffering, willing to forgive, judgment is His strange work.
 - b)) The coming judgment. Rom. 2:5; 1Thess. 1:10; 2Thess. 1:7-10
 - 2)) Some see an eschatological sense but the context denies it.
 - a)) The destruction of 70 A.D. by Titus.
 - b)) Jews will make a one week covenant with the anti-Christ. Dan. 9:27
 - * No Christian should be anti-Semitic nor is Paul being so, for in Romans he is willing to be damned if Israel would believe, while knowing of their temporary blindness. Rom. 9:3; 11:25

2:17-20 The anguish of the apostles in their separation from the Thessalonians.

2:17 Paul’s anxiety over them.

- 1) Most commentators break up the chapter here, and it probably is a better break.

* The resolution for the apostles anguish.
1Thess. 3:1-5

2) The word “But”, marks the contrast of the apostles to the Jews who persecuted

3) They having been taken away
“aporphanizo”, means leaving them as orphaned parents, bereaved, of their spiritual children, being torn away from them. 1Thess. 2:7, 11

* The aorist passive participle indicates that the event was forced on them and not of their own choosing!

4) The perspective was for a short time, a season or an hour but it took some five year. Acts 20:2

5) In presence but not in heart, meaning the inner man, the seat of affection.

6) Their personal efforts were endeavoring, having the idea of haste and earnestness on every level with all earnest.

7) Their commitment was with great desire “epithymia”, a word that is used for lust or a strong craving, a passionate longing.

* Paul piles all these descriptive words to express their affectionate love for the Thessalonians.

2:18 The personal attempt to come to them and true source of opposition.

1) Paul and the others wanted to come.

a) They collectively “we” tried.

b) The personal pronoun “I”, give emphasis to Paul individual care.

c) The repeated attempts is marked by the words, time and again, referring to once, even twice. Phil. 4:16

2) Satan is identified as the source of hindrance.

a) Satan means the adversary, he is not a friend of God or saint. Acts 2:36

1)) The word “but” marks the sharp contrast their ongoing attempts to return to them and Satan’s ongoing attempts to hinder them from returning!

2)) The word hindered means to cut into, a military term used of an enemy who destroyed a road so as to make it impassable.

b) Satan was the one behind the persecution by the Jews. Acts 17:5

1)) Paul and Luke at times knew when God hindered them as in Bithynia, distinguishing it from Satan. Acts 16:6-7

2)) Yet God can and does use Satan for His purposes and glory. Job 1-2

c) He is the god of this world but not more powerful than the God who created the world. 2Cor. 4:4

d) He is the prince of the power of the air. Eph. 2:2

- e) He is a spiritual enemy, so we wrestle against flesh and blood but principalities Eph. 6:12
- f) He is as a roaring lion... 1Pet. 5:8

2:19-20 The personal motive of love in their service.

2:19 Their genuine expectation, joy and crown of rejoicing was “who” not “what”, they the Thessalonians,

- 1) The crown “stephanos” means a laurel wreath or garland given as the victor's crown at games.
- 2) They were athletes of Christ, who would one day be rewarded by Christ Himself for soul winning.
- 3) But Paul tells them that they would be their very reward, to be presents together at His coming “parousia”, means presence or arrival. 1Thess. 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2Thess. 2:1, 8

* The word applied to the arrival of a deity, king or emperor, for who game would be held in his honor.

2:20 The Thessalonians were their glory.

- 1) The word “you” is emphatic and identifies them with the Old Testament splendor and magnificence and the New Testament “doxa”,

praise and honor, as well as their joy. vs. 20

- 2) Due to the fact that they had turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God. 1Thess. 1:9b
- 3) Due to the fact that they were waiting for the Son from heaven. 1Thess. 1:10a
- 4) Due to the fact that they had escaped the wrath to come. 1Thess. 5:9
 - * People that get saved and are going to be in eternity is what we are to get excited about,, not our success or events!