

I THESSALONIANS

CHAPTER ONE

1) [This letter is from] **Paul, and Silvanus and Timothy**, [and is being sent] **to the church of the Thessalonians** [Note: This was a town in present-day northeastern Greece] **in** [fellowship with] **God, the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. May God's unearned favor and peace be upon you.**

2) **We always thank God for all of you**, [regularly] **mentioning you in our prayers.** 3) **We continually remember, in the presence of our God and Father, the work produced by your faith, the labor prompted by your love, and your endurance motivated by your hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.**

4) **We know, my brothers who are dearly loved by God, about your election** [i.e., that you were chosen by God because of your obedient faith], 5) **for our Gospel came to you, not merely in words, but also in power, in** [a demonstration of] **the Holy Spirit** [See I Cor. 2:4] **and with** [Aour@ or Ayour@] **deep conviction** [of its truth]. **You people know what kind of men we were while living among you for your benefit.** 6) **And you became imitators of us and of the Lord.** [And even though] **you suffered much affliction, you welcomed the message with joy** [given to you] **by the Holy Spirit,** 7) **and so became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.** [Note: These two provinces make up present-day Greece]. 8) **For the Lord's message sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith toward God** [also] **spread everywhere** [else], **so that we do not have to say anything** [about you]. 9) **For those people themselves report on what kind of a reception we had from you, and how you people turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God.** 10) **And** [they tell how you are] **waiting for His Son** [to come] **from heaven, the One He raised up from the dead --- this Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath** [of God].

CHAPTER TWO

1) For you brothers [should] know that our coming to you was not a waste of time. 2) But [even though] we had already suffered and been mistreated at Philippi [See Acts 16:19-24], as you people know, we had the boldness, [with help] from God, to tell you His message in spite of much struggle [i.e., opposition]. 3) For our appeal [to you was] not based on error, or impure [motives], or deception. 4) Instead, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the Gospel. So, we speak, not trying to please people but God, who examines [the motives of] our hearts. 5) For we were never found using flattering words at any time, as you know, nor did we try to cover up any greedy desires. God can testify [to this]. 6) [And] we were not looking for honor from people, either from you or from anyone else, even though, as apostles of Christ, we could have become a burden [to you]. [Note: The idea seems to be that the apostles could have claimed financial support, but chose not to]. 7) But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother caring for her children. 8) And so, since we have such deep affection for you, we were very pleased to share with you, not only the Gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us. 9) For you brothers remember how we labored and toiled, working hard night and day, so that we would not burden any of you [while] we proclaimed to you the Gospel of God.

10) You can testify, [just] as God can, how holy, righteous and blameless our conduct was toward you believers. 11) For you know that we treated each one of you like a father treats his own children, exhorting you, and comforting you, 12) and urging you to live up to the standards of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and splendor.

13) And because of this we also thank God continually that, when you people received the message of God, which you heard from us, you did not accept it as a message from [mere] human beings, but as it truly is, the message from God, which is at work in you believers. 14) For you brothers became imitators of the churches of God in Judea, which are in [fellowship with] Christ, for you people also suffered the same things from your own countrymen that they did from the Jews, 15) who killed the Lord Jesus and the [Old Testament] prophets and also drove us [apostles] out [of Thessalonica and Berea. See Acts 17]. They are not pleasing to God and are hostile to all people, 16) for they [even] try to prevent us

from speaking to the Gentiles, so that they can be saved. [In doing this] they are always piling up one sin on another. But the wrath [of God] has come upon them at last [or, **completely**].

17) But brothers, after we were separated from you for a short time --- in person but not in spirit --- we became all the more eager [to come to you] and strongly desired to see you in person. [Note: The word **separated** here denotes the traumatic experience of a child being forcibly removed from its parents. It had been about six months since Paul left Thessalonica under adverse circumstances]. 18) For we [really] wanted to come to you [and] I, Paul, [even tried to come] more than once, but Satan prevented us. [Note: This was probably accomplished through the influence of certain people or circumstances]. 19) For what is [the basis of] our hope, or joy, or crown of honor in the presence of the Lord Jesus when He comes back? [Note: By **acrown** Paul alludes to the laurel wreath awarded to the victor in an athletic contest]. Will it not be you people? 20) For you people are [indeed] our [occasion for] honor and joy.

CHAPTER THREE

1) So, when we could not stand it any longer [Note: Paul's concern for the spiritual well-being of the Thessalonian Christians became unbearable], we [i.e., I, See verse 5] thought it best to be left behind, alone, at Athens [Note: Paul was willing to labor alone at Athens, so he could send his fellow-workers to minister to others. See Acts 17], 2) and so we [i.e., I] sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow-worker in [the ministry of] the Gospel, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith, 3) so that no one would be shaken by [having to experience] these difficult times. [See 2:14]. For you yourselves know that we are destined to have such experiences. 4) For even when we were with you, we warned you that we were going to be persecuted, and as you know, it has turned out that way. 5) [So], for this reason, when I could not stand it any longer, I also sent [Timothy] to find out about your faith. I was afraid that somehow the tempter [i.e., Satan] had tempted you [to give up] and that our work [on your behalf] will have become useless.

6) But now Timothy has returned to us from you and brought us good news about your faith and love, and [reported] that you have good memories of us. [He told us that you are] longing to

see us, just as we also long to see you. 7) So, brothers, through all of our distress and persecution, we were encouraged over you because of your faith, 8) for now we [really] live, if you [continue to] stand firm in [the service of] the Lord [i.e., Paul could enjoy life much more in knowing that the Thessalonians were living for the Lord faithfully]. 9) For how can we thank God [enough] for you, in return for all the joy we have over you, in the presence of our God? 10) Night and day we pray very earnestly that we will be able to see you in person, so we can provide what is lacking in your faith.

11) Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, open the way for us to go to you. 12) And may the Lord cause your love for one another, and for everyone, to increase and overflow, just as ours does for you also. 13) May the Lord strengthen your hearts so you will be [found] without just blame and holy, in the presence of our God and Father, when our Lord Jesus Christ returns with all of His holy ones [i.e., angels. See Mark 8:38; II Thess. 1:7].

CHAPTER FOUR

1) Finally then, brothers, we request and urge you, in [the fellowship of] the Lord, that you should live [dedicated lives] and please God. Just as you people received direction from us [on doing this], see that you [continue to] do it more and more. 2) For you know [i.e., are aware of] the instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.

3) For it is God-s will that you should be dedicated to Him, [that is], you should avoid sexual immorality. 4) Each of you should know how to control his own body in a dedicated and honorable way, 5) not in passionate lust, as the [unconverted] Gentiles, who do not know God, do. 6) And none of you should violate and exploit his brother [or sister] in such a matter. For the Lord will punish people for all these things, just as we told you before and warned you. 7) For God did not call us to be morally impure, but to be dedicated to Him. 8) So, the person who rejects [this exhortation] is not [merely] rejecting what man says but God [Himself], who gives His Holy Spirit to you.

9) Now you people do not need anyone to write to you about loving [your] brothers, for you yourselves have been taught by God

to love one another. 10) For you certainly do practice it toward all the brothers [and sisters] **throughout Macedonia.** [Note: This was the province in which Thessalonica was located]. **Yet we urge you, brothers, to continue doing it more and more.**

11) [We also urge you to] make it your aim to live a quiet life, and to attend to your own business matters, and to work with your hands, as we urged you. [Note: Possibly this exhortation was directed toward the tendency of some people there to neglect ordinary responsibilities in view of an imminent return of Christ]. **12) [Do these things] so that you will live in a proper way in front of outsiders** [i.e., non-Christians], **and not have** [to depend on people for] **any needs.**

13) But we want you to be informed, brothers, concerning those who have fallen asleep [in death] **so that you do not grieve, as other people do** [i.e., the unsaved], **who have no hope. 14) For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again** [from the dead], [we also believe] that God will bring [back to life], **along with Jesus, those in** [fellowship with] **Him who have fallen asleep** [in death]. **15) For we say this to you by** [the authority of] **the word of the Lord** [Note: Paul was either quoting what Jesus had previously said, or was giving a revelation he had received from the Lord. See I Cor. 14:37], **that we** [Christians] **who are** [still] **alive, who are left** [on earth] **when the Lord returns, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.** [Note: The point Paul is making is that the living will not be changed (I Cor. 15:51-52) and taken to heaven before the dead are raised]. **16) For the Lord Himself** [i.e., Jesus] **will come down from heaven with a commanding shout** [Note: This probably refers to Jesus=voice. See John 5:25, 28], [and] **with the archangel's voice** [i.e., Michael. See Jude 9] **and with the sound of God's trumpet;** [at this] **the dead in** [fellowship with] **Christ will rise** [from the dead] **first. 17) Then, we who** [will still] **be alive, that are left, will be caught up together with them into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so** [from then on] **we will always be with the Lord. 18) So, encourage one another with these words.**

CHAPTER FIVE

1) Now brothers, you do not need to have anything written to you about the times and dates [i.e., of Christ's second coming], **2) for you know perfectly well that the day of the Lord** [i.e., when He

returns, See II Thess. 2:1-2] **will arrive like a thief coming in the night.** 3) [For] **when people are saying, *Peace,* and *Safety,* then [is when] destruction will come upon them suddenly, like labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not be able to escape it.** 4) **But you brothers are not in the dark about that day, so that it sneaks up on you like a thief,** 5) **for all of you people belong to the light; you belong to the daytime. We do not belong to the night or to darkness.** [Note: In this passage *Alight* and *Adaytime* refer to spiritual illumination, while *Adarkness* and *Anight* refer to spiritual ignorance]. 6) **So then, we should not be [spiritually] asleep, like the rest [i.e., the unsaved world], but we should be alert and sober [i.e., in control of our senses].** 7) **For people sleep at night, and get drunk at night [i.e., generally speaking].** 8) **But, since we belong to the daytime [i.e., are enlightened], we should be sober. We should put on the *Aflack jacket* of faith and love, and for a helmet, the hope of being saved.** 9) **For God did not appoint us to [suffer His] wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ** 10) **who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep [i.e., alive or dead], we could live together with Him.** 11) **Therefore, [continue to] encourage one another, and build each other up [spiritually], just as you are also doing.**

12) **But we urge you, brothers, to know [i.e., appreciate and respect] those who work hard among you, and who lead you and warn you in [the fellowship of] the Lord.** [Note: These men were probably the elders. See Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17]. 13) **And regard them very highly, in a loving way, because of the work they do. You should live at peace with one another.** 14) **And we urge you, brothers, to warn those who are idle** [Note: The word *Aidle* originally meant, *Ainsubordinate*, or *unruly.* See II Thess. 3:6-7, 11], **encourage those who are timid, help the [spiritually] weak and be patient with everyone.** 15) **Make sure that no one does anything wrong to someone who wrongs him, but always look for something good you can do for one another and for everyone.**

16) **You should be joyful at all times.** 17) **Never stop praying.** 18) **Thank [God] for everything, for this is what God wants for you in [the fellowship of] Christ Jesus.** 19) **Do not squelch the [influence of the] Holy Spirit [in your lives].** 20) **Do not look down on prophetic messages.** 21) **Put everything [i.e., speakers and their messages] to the test, [then] hold onto what is good.** 22) **Avoid [the**

practice of] every kind of evil.

23) And may God Himself, who gives peace, dedicate you completely, and may your spirit, soul and body [i.e., your entire person] **be kept without just blame at** [i.e., until] **the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24) God, who calls you** [into His fellowship] **is faithful; He will also do** [what He promises]. **25) Brothers, pray for us.**

26) Greet all of the brothers [and sisters] **with a holy kiss** [i.e., to signify affection, yet without sensuality]. **27) I am ordering you, by** [the authority of] **the Lord, that this letter be read to all the brothers.**

28) May the unearned favor of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.