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PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE CHURCH AT THESSALONICA

A. General Outline On The Theme: THE CHRISTIAN IN CONFLICT WITH, AND TRIUMPH OVER, SATAN AND HIS FORCES.

Part I: Introduction

This brief epistle is the shortest written by Paul to any congregation. It seems to parallel with the case of Philip and the eunuch in Acts 8:26-35. Philip asked the eunuch, "Understandest thou what thou readeest?" The eunuch responded, "How can I, except some one shall guide me?" (vs. 30f). A similar need had arisen at Thessalonica after Paul had written his first letter to them. Undoubtedly, they read his letter with gladsome hearts. The writer and readers were very close, as brethren should be (cf. I Thess. 2:8f, 17-20; 3:6-8). However, they did not understand all they read and may have met up with the wrong person "to guide them" (cf. 2:2f). If you get the wrong guide or, if a misunderstanding leads you, you veer off course. Evidently, this happened at Thessalonica (cf. 3:6, 10-15). Paul hastens to write this second letter before this problem spreads.

The problem centers around the second coming of Christ. First, note Paul's use of "we" in I Thess. 4:15. Paul wrote, "that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep." Also, note verse 17. The Thessalonians seemed to reason, "Did not the "we" show discipely that Paul expected to be alive when the Lord came?" They had mistaken a generic phrase for a specific and individual one. Paul had used the term "we" to mean "we, the living" as opposed to those who will have fallen asleep by the time Jesus comes.<sup>1</sup>

A second contributing factor to the misunderstanding may be found in I Thess. 5:3 where Paul states that the Lord will come suddenly or in an instant. The brethren may have taken the suddenness of the coming to indicate his immediate appearance.<sup>2</sup>

Paul seeks to clarify this and related problems in chapters two and three. Chapter one deals with the second coming of Christ but centers more in an exhortation to remain faithful in the midst of continued persecutions.

THE PLACE of this writing was Corinth, the same as the first letter (cf. Acts 18:1-5; I Thess. 3:1-6).

THE DATE of the writing was shortly after the first letter. This is evident: 1. Because of the same problems existing. 2. Because the 2nd letter was written somewhat as an Appendix to the first-hence, closely following the first. 3. Paul, Silvanus and Timothy are together in both letters (I Thess. 1:1; II Thess. 1:1). Thus, we place the date as the year following the first letter or, in 53 A.D.

AN ABBREVIATED OUTLINE offering a different approach to this epistle is given by William Hendrickson:<sup>3</sup>

II Thessalonians: THE REVELATION OF THE LORD JESUS FROM HEAVEN.

- |        |                                                                                       |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1      | 1. It has a twofold purpose:                                                          |
|        | A. To render vengeance to the disobedient.                                            |
|        | B. To be glorified in the saints.                                                     |
| 2:1-12 | 11. It shall be preceded by the fallings away and the revelation of the "man of sin." |

1. Farrar, F.W., The Messages of the Books, Macmillian & Co., London, 1897, p.197.
2. Hendriksen, William, Bible Survey, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1953, p.341
3. Hendriksen, op. cit., p.342

2:13-3:17      111. Its contemplation should result not in disorderliness, idleness, and excitement; but in sanctification, comfort, and peace.

The approach we are making enlarges on the repeatedly evident fact: Christ's Covenant is ever current. It was in the Yesterday of problems at Thessalonica; it is pertinent for our life in the Lord today; it will be The Guiding Standard for the saints of Tomorrow.

Satan and his forces continue their unrelentless attack in a multiple approach toward the downfall of things divine. In the midst of this constant onslaught, brave-hearted Christians continue to stand. The devil's disciples; Christ's dedicated followers and the unceasing conflict between the two is an ever present problem for which only God can ultimately give the solution. However, because the problem is real and constant, an epistle that echoes the triumph of Truth and Christ's people is a practical and powerful heartening factor for every generation. Thus, may we approach this epistle with a desire and determination to feast on every God given truth in it that we might successfully stand against Satan by it!

PART II: The Christian's Triumph in Face of Persecution (1:1-12).

1. Introductory comments giving:

- A. FROM WHOM: Paul, Silvanus and Timothy (1:1). Be able to give a brief background on all three of these men.  
Paul: Acts 7:58-8:1; 9:1-30; 1 Cor.15:1-10.

Silvanus: Acts 15:22-27, 30-40.

Timothy: Acts 16:1-3; 11 Tim.1:3-5; Phil.2:19-22.

- B. TO WHOM: The church. Which church? (1:1).

- C. GREETINGS: Including two things from two personalities (1:2). Give these and explain what the two things mean to you.

11. The Means of the Triumph (1:3f).

- A. A growing faith (v.3). "Exceedingly"-Gk.-juperauxano-"To overgrow, i.e. to grow exceedingly, to increase greatly, in a good sense." This reminds one of Jesus' comment about the kingdom being like unto a mustard seed (Matt.13:31f). These Macedonian brethren later showed Paul their great faith by their liberality (11 Cor.8:1-5). A faith that leads one to go beyond his power is a great faith.

1. This shows faith is a relative thing that should increase with time. Have you ever prayed the Apostles' desire in Luke 17:5? How could the Lord increase your faith?(cf. Rom.10:17).

What does a growing faith do among brethren? (11 Cor.10:15).

2. How should we feel toward brethren who have a fast growing faith? v.3.

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<sup>1</sup> Robinson, Edward, A Greek and English Lexicon of the New Testament, Harper & Brothers, New York, p.743.

B. A growing love (v.3). "...the love of everyone of you for one another is increasing"-RSV.

1. It was a love like leaven. It was affecting them all (cf. Matt.14:33).

- a. What are at least 4 results Paul presents from thus type love in Ephesians 4:15,16?

- b. What had Paul prayed might happen among the brethren at Thessalonica? (1 Thess.3:11f).

2. What is our condition if we don't love one another? (cf. 1 John 3:11-16). Do you love your brethren as John suggests in these verses?

C. An abiding patience (steadfastness)-v.4. What persecutions and afflictions do we know of that the brethren at Thessalonica had endured? (cf. Acts 17: 1-9; 1 Thess.2:14-16).

111. The MEANS is proof of GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS (1:5). There are many things that can thrive and grow in a good climate. Real strength is seen when one stands while under fire. Faith, love and patience increasing in persecution is proof of God's righteousness for blessing and saving those who adopt this system. It is the best way of life! It works under trial; it grows in people even when persecuted.

A. Such living leaves one "worthy of the kingdom" (v.5).

B. Such living means you will suffer (v.5; 11 Tim.3:12).

IV. The Triumph is certain for God will react against those who afflict His People (1:6-9).

A. This is a righteous act on God's part (v.6; cf. Gal.6:7f; Matt.15:13; 12:30; Rom.1:18-20). By these verses, prove that God's reaction against the afflicters is a righteous things.

B. The nature of the reaction is a sobering revelation (1:7-9).

1. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels" (1:7-KJ). To get an idea of what this could mean, write of the work of just two of these "mighty angels" in a single hour (Gen.19:1,12,23-28); of the work of one angel one night (11 Kings 19:35).

What will it be like when more than 72,000 such angels are loosed at once? (Matt.25:31; 26:53).

2. "in flaming fire" .. Think of Sodom and Gomorrah, then read Matt.10:13-15.
3. "rendering vengeance" (v.8). Gk.-ekdikesis-"...a revenging; vengeance, punishment...to vindicate one from wrongs, accomplish the avenging of...to avenge an injured person, Acts 7:24."<sup>1</sup> There is more here than merciless wrath. It is a just act to balance the scales that have been tilted by evil men. Paul is assuring his brethren that God is aware of the wrong doing enacted against them. The afflictors will be punished. The prayer of Rev.6:9-11 will be answered.
4. "...eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (v.9). Destruction here does not mean annihilation but the eternal separation from the face and glory of God. Thayer gives the following on this word (Gk.-olethros) "ruin, destruction, death; 1 Thess.5:3; 1 Tim.6:9...for the destruction of the flesh, said of the eternal ills and troubles by which the lusts of the flesh are subdued and destroyed, 1 Cor.5:5...the loss of a life of blessedness after death, future misery...11 Thess.1:9."<sup>2</sup> The idea is that the evil nature among men causes them to go into eternal seclusion from God--still alive but ever in pain and punishment (cf.Matt.25:30).

C. The Victims of the reaction (v.8).

1. Those who "know not God" (Gal.4:8; 1 Thess.4:5; 1 John 4:6-8). Know here carries the idea of working with one obediently as Christ responded to God's will for Him (cf.John 10:14f). The Jews are proof that knowing God's name or even knowing much of His Law is not to know God as it is here used (cf. John 16:1-3; 8:54f; 15:21).
2. "Obey not the Gospel". How did the Corinthians obey the Gospel? (cf.1 Cor.1:21; 4:15; Acts 18:8; Mark 16:15f).

What were people called when they obeyed the Gospel? In what organization is one placed if he obeys the Gospel? (1 Pet. 4:16f AS; cf. Acts 2:36 47).

- a. This includes those who know God but will not obey God (cf.Rom.1:18-21; Rom.10:16).
- b. It is possible for people to refuse to know God. These certainly do not obey the Gospel (cf.Rom.1:28-32).

V. The Nature of the Christians Triumph (1:10-12).

- A. The victorious looking unto the Lord on the day of His coming (cf.v.10; 11 Tim.2:12; 18; 4:8).

1. "glorified in his saints" (v.10). The plan of the ages reaches its climax in this scene as the glory of the Lord receives attention (cf.John 17:1-5). Behold those who glorify Him (Eph.5:25-27). Nothing here is tarnished or stained nor, can it ever be.
2. "to be marvelled at in all them that believed" (v.10). Surely these words of Chas. H. Gabriel will never have meant so much as in that marvelous hour (cf.1 John 3:2):

<sup>1</sup>Thayer, J.H., A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1958, p.194

<sup>2</sup>Thayer, J.H., op. cit., p.443.

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"I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus, the Nazarene,  
And wonder how He could love me, A sinner, condemned, unclean.  
How marvelous! how wonderful! And my song shall ever be:  
How marvelous! how wonderful! Is my Savior's love for me!

B. The requirements to be ready (1:11).

1. Constant prayer for each other. The Seeking
2. God's approval. Let no man set his own The Source and  
standard and hope to make it (Matt.15:8f). Standard Maker.
3. A desire of goodness (AS) "Paul does not The Spirit  
mean all the goodness which God is pleased  
to bestow, but the delight of the Thess-  
alonians in goodness. He prays that God may  
perfect their pleasure in goodness."<sup>1</sup>
4. A work of faith which is to be generated by The System  
heavenly power (Gal.5:6).

C. The results of the triumph (1:12).

1. That Jesus be glorified in His saints (cf. John 15:8). The  
great, successful, and triumphant work done by God's people  
through grace brings glory to the Lord (cf. Rev.11:7-13).
2. That His saints be glorified in and by Him, Then, the prayer  
in John 17:22-24 will be fully answered.
3. When grace has completed this glorious work, then will we  
grasp how truly great is the grace of God. How glorious  
the triumph in Him!

<sup>1</sup>Vincent, Marvin R., Word Studies in the New Testament, Wm.B.  
Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan, Vol. IV, p.58.

Part III: The Christian's Triumph In Face Of False Teachers (2:1-3:5).

1. An example of the danger as seen in false teaching being done concerning the second coming of Christ (2:1f). Note the "Introduction" of this outline page one, for a discussion of this problem.

A. Be careful "that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind" (2:2).

1. "Quickly" Note Proverbs 14:29; 21:5; 29:20; Eccl. 5:2.

One who has decisions to make in spiritual matters would do well to linger here and drink deep. How many congregations have suffered strife, shame and sorrow because of the hasty decisions or quickly spoken words that were without foundation or fairness? How many have "quit the church" as a result of rash or hasty action on their part that a little time, patience and prayer would have corrected?

2. "Shaken from your mind" The preposition "from" (KJ "in") is closer to the Greek. In the Greek text is the word "apo" which means, "1. Of separation and cessation; (1) of motion from a place."<sup>1</sup> Thus, the brethren seemed to have reached a state where they were "beside themselves". Sober sense and reason had left them.

Give two examples of the type action that may follow when people are in this state of mind (cf. Acts 14:8-19; Matthew 27:20-26).

3. Surely, the Christian should avoid such rash action in life (cf. Eph. 5:6-10, 15-17). Where would you tend to be more this way: in your home? the church? business?

4. Be careful that you be not "troubled" (2:2). Gk. "Throeo-- to make a noise, clamour, tumult... In N.T... to disturb, to trouble, to frighten."<sup>2</sup> These brethren had not learned one of the central lessons in the sermon on the mount (Matt. 6:25-34 count the number of times you find the word "anxious"). Have you learned that lesson?

We need to live with a faith like Paul (cf. 11 Cor. 2:14). Then, the dangers and fears which presented themselves at Thessalonica would never "sweep us off our feet".

- B. The varied approaches by which the false teaching may present itself (2:2).

<sup>1</sup>

Abbott Smith, G., A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, T. & T. Clark, Edinburg, 1948, p.48.

<sup>2</sup>

Robinson, Edward, A Greek and English Lexicon of the New Testament, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1863, p.339.

Wrong 1. "by spirit". What approach is this? (cf. 1 Cor. 2:11f; 1 John 4:1; Rev. 2:2).

Wrong 2. "by word". What approach is this? (cf. Acts 15:1f, 23-27).  
Words  
 (Oral)

Wrong 3. "by epistle, as from us". What approach is this?  
Writings

4. Does the devil still use these methods to produce strife, division and troubled minds? Can you think of examples of each in recent times? (Avoid name calling in class, please).

## II. The Plague of the man of sin (2:3 12).

### A. The man of sin described and identified (2:3f).

1. Does the "man of sin...son of perdition" refer to one individual or, to a succession of individuals of the same general character, aiming at the accomplishment of the same plans?
  - a. Are there cases where a singular term applies to a succession of people or a group of people in one general category? (cf. 11 John, v.7).
  - b. The reason for believing that the "man of sin" refers to a succession of individuals is because no one individual could live long enough to fit this "man of sin". Paul indicates in verse 7 that the lawlessness which would lead to the apostasy (falling away) was already at work. From this was to come the man of sin. Yet, the man of sin would continue until the Lord comes again (verse 8). The Lord has not come up to the present. However, it is common knowledge that the apostasy came centuries ago. It seems the man of sin was to come shortly after the apostasy and thus be a part of it. This being true, who has lived several centuries to be this man of sin who will continue until Jesus comes again?

Conclusion: The time element demands that it be a succession of individuals who are devoting themselves to a common end.

2. Note #2 Verse 3 informs us that the falling away will come first and then the man of sin will be revealed. Hence the man of sin is not the creator of the apostasy but rather a product of this falling away.
3. Note #3 Verse 4 informs us that the man of sin "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped." This narrows the field. The group of men involved claim for themselves a ranking that is above God or any other pretended gods. The "man of sin" claims divine honors for himself. Also, note that the man of sin opposes all that is called God or that is worshipped. Thus we are confronted with an aggressive force that claims supremacy.

confronted with an aggressive force that claims supremacy. Anyone who exalts himself above God would be one who seeks to set aside God's law to erect his own law. NEED WE GO ANY FURTHER? That the Popes of the Roman Catholic Church make such a claim is evident from these words by James Cardinal Gibbons, former archbishop of Baltimore: "Here the Council of Lyons avows that the Roman Pontiffs have the power to determine definitely, and without appeal, any questions of faith which may arise in the Church; in other words, the Council acknowledges them to be the supreme and infallible arbiters of faith."<sup>1</sup> (This was the Second General Council of Lyons held in 1274-dk). "The Pope, then, as Head of the Catholic Church, constitutes, with just reason, this supreme tribunal.

And as the office of the Church is to guide men into all truth, and to preserve them from all error, it follows that he who is appointed to watch over the constitution of the Church must be infallible, or exempt from error in his official capacity as judge of faith and morals. The prerogatives of the Pope must be commensurate with the nature of the constitution which he has to uphold. The constitution is Divine and must have a Divinely protected interpreter."<sup>2</sup>

Such are some of the claims a recognized leader in the Catholic Church made for the popes. Infallibility and Divinity are claimed. Further, it is common knowledge that to kiss the Popes ring is, for devout Catholics, the event of a lifetime and to bow as his golden "throne" chair passes by is a duty and privilege. When the Pope then adds the claim that such is his right and not for any other of earth he has exalted himself above all that is worshipped. To try to relegate God to heaven, leaving the Pope as the absolute leader of earth is to completely overlook such passages relating to God and Christ as found in Matt.28:20; Acts 17:27f; Matt.18:20; Heb.4:13; Eph.1:22,23; Matt.28:18f.

4. "he sitteth in the temple of God setting himself forth as God!" To show how perfectly this fits the Roman popes, note these words: "Catholics are taught that the Roman Catholic Church is the supreme guardian and purveyor of truth, that the Pope has infallible judgment in moral matters, and that 'union minds requires not only a perfect accord in the one Faith, but complete submission and obedience of will to the Church and to the Roman Pontiff, as to God Himself.' The words are those of Leo XIII in his Chief Duties of Christian Citizens."<sup>3</sup> Leo XIII was pope from 1878 to 1903.

"The following expressions, applied to the Pope of Rome by Catholic writers without any rebuke from the Papacy, will show how entirely applicable this is to the pretended head of the church. He has been styled 'Our Lord God the Pope; another God upon earth; king of kings and lord of lords. The same is the dominion of God and the Pope. To believe that our Lord God the Pope might not decree as he decreed, is heresy. The power of the Pope is greater than all created power, and extends itself to things celestial, terrestrial, and infernal. The Pope doeth whatsoever he listeth, even things unlawful, and is more God'."<sup>4</sup>

1 Gibbons, James Cardinal, The Faith of Our Fathers, John Murphy Company, New York, p. 129.

2. Gibbons, Op. Cit., p. 133. 3. Blanshard, Paul, American Freedom and Catholic Power, The Beacon Press, Boston, 1951, p181.

4. Barnes, Albert, Notes on the Epistles of Paul, Harper & Bro. New York, 1845, p.96.



The idea of "sitteth in the temple of God" may be clarified by Paul's words in II Cor. 6:16. Paul speaks of the church as the temple of God. Thus, Paul was accurate in his prediction for it was in the church as it did "fall away" that there emerged the position of the papacy.

5. CONCLUSION! Because the popes of Rome are a succession of men devoted to a common cause; because they were a product of the "falling away"; because of their claim for such exalted rank and position; because they set themselves forth as God, I conclude Paul predicted the rise of the Roman papacy and branded it as "the man of sin...the son of perdition." If it relates to others, they need to be like minded in claim and like-governing in organization with the papal hierarchy..
- B. The Historical course of the man of sin is prophesied by Paul (2:5-8).
  1. The restraining force considered (2:5-7). Who? or, What?
    - a. It could have been the apostles themselves, who by teaching Truth avoided the rise of corruption in church government. The Apostle John likely died in the late 90's and, not long after this departures were under way (cf. Acts 20:28-30).
    - b. Albert Barnes (Barnes Notes on 11 Thessalonians, p.99f) speculates that in the 4th century when Constantine removed the seat of the Roman Empire to Constantinople this was taking away the only factor that was holding back the rise of the Roman church and its bishops.
    - c. A similar theory is that the Roman emperors were the restraining power before the Western Empire fell in 476 A.D. "When Charlemagne was crowned emperor by Pope Leo III on Christmas day, A.D. 800, usurpation of temporal power by the pope was completed and the restraint ended. From that time the pope of Rome claimed authority to make and unmake kings."<sup>1</sup>
    - d. You may take your pick of these views. Note that all three center in one idea--the man of sin is still the Roman papacy!
  2. "For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work" (2:7). Paul wrote by inspiration. Just as he could predict the coming of the man of sin, so he could tell of a mystery of lawlessness that would later be lawlessness in the real, seen and served by some. (cf. 1 John 3:4 on the term "lawlessness".)
  3. The Lord will triumph over the man of sin when Christ comes again (2:8). To see this in other figures and terms, note Rev. 19:11-21.
- C. The nature and work of the man of sin (2:9f).
  1. The working of Satan (2:9). The devil has many such workers (cf. 11 Cor. 11:13-15; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 11 Pet. 2:1-3).
  2. Is there a certain power in Satan's system to perform signs, wonders, etc.? (2:9; cf. Matt. 24:23f). What kind of wonders?\_\_\_
  3. What are the results of such power, signs and lying wonders? (2:10).

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<sup>1</sup>

4. Who are the deceived? (2:10).  
Did the Lord cause them to be the ones who would perish?  
(cf. John 7:17; Matt. 23:37-39; 11 Cor. 4:3f).

5. Why does Paul say that they perish? (2:10).

What will you do if you love the Truth? (John 14:15).

Do you keep His commandments?

- D. God's reaction to those who submit to the man of sin (2:11f).  
1. What Does God send?  
2. Why?  
3. Give an example of this reaction to God's Word or commands  
(Num. 22:3-21; 31:1f, 8).

4. What did these people fail to believe and in what did they  
have pleasure? (2:12; cf. Heb. 11:24-26).

5. All such people will be what? (2:12).  
How does the Lord judge? (cf. Rev. 16:7; 11 Tim. 4:8).

### III. The Means by which the Christian triumphs over the man of sin

- A. God gave a plan of salvation (2:13). (2:13-17).

GOD'S  
PLAN  
1. What is the "sanctification of the Spirit" (cf. John 17:17; Acts 26:18; Romans 10:17), to whom did it happen  
(cf. Eph. 5:25f; 11 Cor. 6:11) and what else might this be  
called? (cf. John 3:3-5; Tit. 3:4f; 1 Cor. 4:15; 1 Pet. 1:22, 23).

2. Which is the Lord's part and which is man's part in the  
above plan? (2:13).

- B. Did Paul do his part in carrying out the Lord's plan at  
Thessalonica? If so, how did he do it? (2:14). Is this how  
God "chose" them? (cf. v. 13).

1. What does one gain by entering this plan? (2:14).

What can this mean? (cf. Rev. 12:10f; James 4:7).

2. What is one to do who enters this plan? (2:15).

- C. Complete the diagram below as to God's plan and what it  
should mean to us and what we should do (2:16f).

comfort your\_\_\_\_\_ every good\_\_\_\_\_.  
in  
your\_\_\_\_\_ every good\_\_\_\_\_.

A. We must pray for each other (3:1f).

## Response

How does prayer accomplish this?

2. From verse 2, give another reason why we should pray for each other.

B. We must depend on God (v.3)

What are two promises Paul makes relative to what God will do? v.3; cf. Acts 16:4f KJ; 1 Cor.10:13).

C. We must do and be doing the things the apostles commanded (3:4)

D. We must allow the Lord to direct our hearts (3:5). Where will the Lord direct our hearts?

A reason 1.  
to serve

An 2.  
Example  
to follow

E. SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL: "A Christian then must triumph and always rejoice. Our gloomy systems say, Rejoice not always, but afflict your souls: whereas the apostles say, Rejoice in the Lord always, and again, we say, rejoice. The gospel as defined by the angels of God, is, Glad Tidings of Great Joy; and who can believe glad tidings of great joy, and not rejoice? Deists, Atheists, and the whole host of skeptics may doubt, for this is their whole system; the wicked, the guilty, and the vile may fear for this is the natural issue of their actions; but how a christian, knowing the Lord, believing the promises, and confiding in the achievements of the Saviour, can doubt or fear as respects death or the grave, is inconceivable. Thanks be to God who gives us the victory.

Some persons may doubt whether they are christians; and some may fear the pain of dying, as they would the tooth ache, or a dislocated joint; but that a christian should fear either death or the grave is out of character altogether. For this is the very drift, scope, and end of his religion...And why? Because his Lord has gone before him--because his rest, his home, his eternal friends and associates, his heaven, his God, all his joys are beyond the grave. Not to know this is to be ignorant of the favor of God, not to believe this is to doubt the philanthropy of God, not to rejoice in this is to reject the gospel, and to judge ourselves unworthy of eternal life. But the christian religion is not to be reproached because of the ignorance or unbelief of those who profess it. All rivers do not more naturally run down the declivities and wind their courses to the ocean, than the Christian religion leads its followers to the sure, and certain, and triumphant hopes of immortality." (Alexander Campbell, Christian Baptist Vol.V,p.451)

Part IV: The Christian's Triumph In Face Of Satan's Influence Among Brethren (3:6-18).

- I. The distinction that Christians must make (3:6-9). A mixture of bad and good has ever been one of the problems God has been confronted with among His people (cf. Matt. 23:23f; Acts 5:1-11; 11:1-3; Rom. 2:17-25; 1 Cor. 1:10-13; 6:1-7; James 3:9-12). This problem was arising at Thessalonica and Paul was rather blunt and demanding in what action he wanted taken (note the words "we command" or "we commanded" as found in verses 4, 6, 10 and 12).
  - A. The Lord demands that we withdraw from some disciples (3:6).
    1. The direct command--"Now we command you...in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ". "command" in the Gk. -paraggello-" to announce; to notify; to command, direct, charge, Matt. 10:5; Mar. 6:8; 8:6; Lu. 9:21 et. al.; to charge, obtest, entreat solemnly, 1 Tim. 6:13."<sup>1</sup> Both by the word used (command-hence, a solemn entreaty) and the fact it is in the name of the Lord Jesus (stated by His authority), does Paul emphasize that this request is to receive prompt and careful attention.
    2. The action demanded in the command--"that ye withdraw yourselves". The word "withdraw" in the Gk. is from stello-"1. to set, place set in order, arrange; to fit out, to prepare, equip; diminish, check, cause to cease...mid. to remove one's self, withdraw one's self, to depart...to abstain from familiar intercourse with one, 11 Thess. 3:6."<sup>2</sup> This lengthy definition was given to enable you to see the background of the word Paul used. The word "withdraw" is a proper definition. However, it is evident from the root idea of this word that no "turn my back on him" or "holier than thou" attitude would ever fit. This "withdrawing" must be done so as to help this disorderly soul "arrange" his life aright, to set him in order, to "cause to cease" his disorderliness. Any action that does not work to this end is NOT obeying Paul's command to "withdraw". Both the idea of abstaining from evil yourself and encouraging his cessation of the same is inherent in this word.

Word and His ways, wherever, or inwhoever, they may be found. Such is the course Paul outlines in verses 7-9. Look at such as these and become like them:

Avoid  
the  
bad

1. "We behaved not ourselves disorderly among you" (v.7). What happens when brethren do start behaving disorderly among each other? (I Cor. 1:10-13; Gal. 5:15).

What is the condition when brethren are orderly among each other? (cf. Ps. 133:1; Acts 2:44-46; 9:31).

In which atmosphere would you rather be?  
Which atmosphere have you helped to create since you have been a member?  
Would you be "disorderly" if you didn't do anything? (cf. Heb. 5:11f; Jude 12f).

Avoid  
being  
a begger

2. "neither did we eat bread for nought at any man's hands" (v. 8).  
"nought" in Gk. - dorea - "a. freely, as a gift Mt. 10:8; Ro. 3:24; II Cor. 11:7; II Thess. 3:8. . . (b.) in vain, uselessly."<sup>3</sup>  
Anyone who wantonly lives by what others will give them is as foreign to Christ's nature as black can ever be to white (cf. Acts 20:35; Matt. 20:26-28; I Pet. 2:21,24). We may occasionally need help from each other (Gal. 6:2), but that is far from living on "handouts" while never soiling ones hands in service to others.

3. "in labor and travail, working night and day" (3:8). Concerning the words "labor and travail", Abbott-Smith observes, "mochthos, labour; ponos (q.v.), toil, painful effort; in cl., 'p. gives prominence to the effort (work as requiring force), k. to the fatigue, m. (chiefly poetic) to the hardship"<sup>4</sup>. The k. here refers to the Greek word, kopos. translated into English as "labour" whereas "mochthos" is translated "travail". Thus, Paul is stating that he was both weary and suffered hardship among them. From I Thess. 2:9 we know this diligent effort was given to preach unto them the gospel of God. Can you say that you were ever weary because of the teaching of Truth that

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<sup>1</sup>Thayer, op.cit., p. 481.

<sup>2</sup>Robertson, A. T., Word Pictures of the New Testament, Harper & Brothers, New York, Vol. IV, p. 55.

<sup>3</sup>Smith, G. Abbott, A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, p. 125.

<sup>4</sup>Smith, Abbott, op.cit., p. 253f.

you did? \_\_\_\_\_ It should be observed that "weary" in this case is not the same word nor the same idea as the word weary in v. 13 of chapter 3. "that we might not burden any of you" (3:8). This was one of Paul's main goals in life-never to burden others (cf. II Cor. 12:14f; Acts 20:31-35). Did this mean that Paul would never ask others to help him in doing the Lord's work? (cf. 1 Tim. 4:9-13, 19, 21; Eph. 6:21f; Col. 4:7-9, 16f).

Anxious<sup>4</sup>.  
to help  
not  
hinder.

Should you feel free to ask brethren to help you in doing good deeds? (cf. Gal. 5:13; Heb. 3:12-14; 1 Cor. 12:20-27).

Alert to  
lead by  
good  
example

"to make ourselves an example unto you, that ye should imitate us" (3:9). Should every Christian seek to be an example? (1 Tim. 4:12; Heb. 4:11).

Can you be an example and not be a leader in that regard? Should all Christians be leaders among the peoples of the earth (cf. Matt. 5:13f; 1 Pet. 2:9f)? Why do you so conclude?

II. The Disciplining that Christians must do (3:10-15). Note the words "commanded" and "command" in verse 10 and 12.

A. Individual discipline is the ideal (3:10-13). If each member would discipline "self", congregational action would never be necessary in this regard. Note how Jesus' suggestion in Matthew 18:15-17 parallels with Paul's instructions to the Thessalonians.

1. "If any will not work, neither let him eat" (v. 10; cf. Gen. 3:19). Verse 12 connects with this as Paul commands that members "eat their own bread." Two things are here necessary to the Christian life:
  - a. Each member who can, must work!
  - b. As a worker, he must provide his own bread and be content to eat it (cf. Heb. 13:5; 1 Tim. 6:8.)

- c. If a member intentionally lays off work to draw unemployment benefits, would he or she violate this passage?

2. Paul suggests a threefold solution for a triple threat problem:

<u>Problem</u>	<u>(Command &amp; Exhort)</u>	<u>Solution</u>
busybodies		Quietness
work not at all		they work
walk...disorderly		eat their own bread (mind their own business)

Note: "busybodies" in Gk. is- periergazomai - "to bustle about uselessly, to busy one's self about trifling, needless, useless matters."<sup>1</sup>

"The first persecution at Thessalonica had been fostered by a number of fanatical loungers (Acts 17:5)' (Moffatt). These theological dead-beats were too pious to work, but perfectly willing to eat at the hands of their neighbours while they piddled and frittered away the time in idleness."<sup>2</sup>

How many of us have been more free in talking about the Lord's work than we have been in going about the Lord's work?

How many say much but do little?

Would this include the member who enters the church for what he can get out of it instead of what he can contribute to it?

Does this in any way include you?

3. "ye...be not weary in well doing" (3:13). "weary" here in Gk. is "egkakeo (sometimes ekkakeo)"<sup>1</sup> "to be weary in anything, or to lose courage, flag, faint."

This word with the negative carries the idea of "not performing badly or cowardly" as well as to just lose courage. Hence, this may be one of the greatest trials of all. Who can face the disorderly, non-working busybodies and not lose courage? Who can stand alone? Jesus did! Will you be true and active and vigorous in well doing when others fail? Here is truly a great test of "self-discipline".

- B. Congregational discipline follows if self-discipline is not exercised (3:14f).

1. Who was to be disciplined at Thessalonica? (3:14).

2. Would the same command apply to this congregation?

3. What is to be done (according to Paul) before any action is taken relative to the brother (3:14). What does this mean?

<sup>1</sup> Thayer, op. cit., p. 502

<sup>2</sup> Robertson, op. cit., p. 60

<sup>3</sup> Thayer, op. cit., p. 166.

4. Give four actions Paul suggests be taken relative to such a member (3:14f). Some guiding verses are given by which you should enlarge on each of the 4 points.
- a. cf. Acts 16:16-18.

b. cf. 1 Tim.1:18-20; 1 Cor.5:1-5.

c. cf. Rom.12:20

d. cf. Acts 8:20-24.

III. The Delightful life the Lord extends when we are with Him (3:16-18). Verses 16-18 are a very fitting conclusion to this epistle and especially to this last part for so great a contrast is seen between disorderly, non-working busybodies and the loving Lord who came to die for us and ever lives to bless us. Note what good things Jesus extends to those with Him:

Heavenly A. "The Lord of peace himself give you peace"(3:16)  
Contentment 1. When can the Lord give peace?

2. In what ways (or means) can the Lord give peace?  
3. What power is in this peace? (cf.Phil.4:6f)

4. Have you diligently sought this peace?

Heavenly B. "The Lord be with you all"(3:16). In what sense is the  
Companion- Lord now with us? (cf.Heb.4:13;7:25; Phil.4:13;Eph.3:17-  
ship . 19).

C. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."  
Heavenly (3:18).  
Cooperation

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL: "A story is told of the old American Puritans that at one of the gatherings of their state-  
smen the daylight was suddenly obscured by some deep and unusual dark-  
ness; and at last the assembly became so alarmed, that one of them  
got up and moved that the meeting should at once be adjourned, be-  
cause it seemed as if this would be the Judgment Day. Whereupon  
another, and a wiser senator, got up and said: 'If this be indeed the  
Judgment Day, it cannot find us better employed in any respect than  
in quietly doing our duty. I move simply that candles be lighted.'  
Now this calm old man unconsciously gave an epitome of the advice  
which constitutes the very essence of the second Epistle to the Thess-  
alonians...since the Bridegroom delayeth His coming, if we do but  
keep our loins girded and our lamps burning, we, like even the wise  
virgins, so far as immediate expectancy is concerned, may blamelessly  
slumber, provided that when He comes we be but ready to spring up at



once, and to meet His call. The lessons, then, not to be disorderly; not to eat any man's bread for nought; to earn with quietness our own living; not to be weary in well-doing; are as essential to us as to the poor artisans of Saloniki 1,900 years ago. A sailor once leapt overboard to save a comrade at peril of his own life, in a stormy and dangerous sea, and was asked when rescued 'if he had thought that he was fit to die?' 'I should not have been made more fit,' he answered, 'by declining to do my duty;' and he, too, like the old Pilgrim father, gave, unconsciously, the very essence of the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians." These words seem a fitting summary to this outline. The quotation is from F.W. Farrar's, The Messages of the Books, pp.200-202

II THESSALONIANS  
DETAILED OUTLINE

SALUTATION 1:1-2

- I. The senders: "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy,"
- II. The Recipients
  - A. "unto the church of the Thessalonians," 1a
  - B. "in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ," 1b
- III. The Greeting:
  - A. "Grace to you" - God's free, unmerited gift to you.
  - B. "and peace"
  - C. "from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

## BODY

**THEME:** A Call for Patient Firmness (in the Faith)

**Evidences for the theme:**

1. Patience, steadfastness, 1:4; 3:5

2. Establish, 2:17; 3:3

3. Stand fast, 2:15

4. Faith, 1:3,4, 11; 2:13; 3:2

I. Through Commendation of the Thessalonians, 1:3-4

A. In thanksgiving to God, 1:3

1. The strength of feeling behind Paul's offering of thanks:

1) "We are bound"      See also 2:13

2) "always"

3) "for you"

4) "even as it is meet"

2. For what to give thanks:

1) "for that your faith grow exceedingly," 3

2) "the love of each one of you all toward one another aboundeth"

B. In boasting to other churches, 1:4.

1. Who boasts? "we ourselves glory in you"
2. To whom: "in the churches of God"
3. Of what"
  - 1) "for your patience"
  - 2) faith
4. Produced or demonstrated in what?
  - 1) "in all your persecutions," 1:4
  - 2) "and in the afflictions"
5. "which ye endure"

II. Through Encouragement Concerning the Righteous Judgment of God, 1:5-12

A. Encouragement through instruction, 1:5-10

1. Christian endurance of persecution is evidence of God's righteous judgment, 1:5-6.

- 1) Of the worthiness of His disciples, 1:5

- a. "of the kingdom of God," 1:5

*OF REST:*

- b. , "and to you that are afflicted rest with us," 1:7

- 2) Of the punishment of the persecutors, 1:6

- a. God will repay (recompense) them in the same species.

- b. "if so be that it is a righteous *THING*"

2. This judgment will come when Christ returns, 1:7.  
"at the revelation of the Lord Jesus."

- 1) "from heaven," 7

2) "with the angels of his power," 7.

3) "in flaming fire," 7.

3. One basic purpose will be to render vengeance, 1:\*..

1) Subjects of this vengeance.

a. "To them that know not God."

b. "and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus," 8.

2) Nature of the vengeance, 1:9

4. Other basic purposes of His return, 1:10

1) "to be glorified in his saints," 10.

2) "and to be marvelled at in all them that believed..... in that day," 10.

5. Encouragement through prayer, 1:11-12

1. Content of the prayer: "That our God may count you worthy of (his - NIV) calling," 1:11a.

2. "and fulfill... with power," 11

- 1) "every desire of goodness," 11

- 2) "and every work of faith," 1:11

3. Purpose of the prayer:

- 1) "that the name of the Lord Jesus may be glorified in you," 1:12

- 2) "and ye in him." Your own glorification.

- 3) "according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ,"  
1:12

### III. Through Instruction Concerning Events Preceding the Day of the Lord, 2:1-17.

- A. The topic to be treated, 2:1

1. It concerns the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1a



2. It concerns our gathering together unto him, 1b

B. A request by the teacher, 2:1,2

1. "to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind," 2a

2. "nor yet be troubled," 2:2b

C. The false teaching, 2:2c

1. Its possible sources, 2:2c

1) "either by spirit."

2) "or by word" 2d

3) "or by epistle as from us," 2e

4) "Let no man beguile you in anywise," 3a

2. Its content 2:2

3. Its basic error: it ignores intervening events, 2:3  
"for it will not be...."

1) The falling away - "except the falling away come first."

2) The revealing of the man of sin, 2:3-4

a. The son of perdition, 3

b. He opposeth and exalteth himself 2:4

c. He sits in the temple of God, 2:4

d. He sets himself forth as God, 4

D. An appeal to memory, 5, "remember ye not..."

1. Memory of when this was taught, 5a

2. Memory of what was taught, 5b

3. Memory of a significant detail, 2:6

1) Of "that which restraineth."

2) Of how he is to "be revealed in his own season," 6

E. The sequence of events, 2:7-8

1. The mystery of lawlessness doth already work, 7a

2. There is "one that restraineth now," 7b

3. The one restraining will "be taken out of the way," 7c

4. "and then shall be revealed the lawless one," 8a

5. There will be a "manifestation" of the Lord's coming, 8c

1. His coming in judgment:

2. His first appearance on earth:

6. Then the Lord Jesus will slay him with breath of his mouth, 8b

F. Further description of the man of lawlessness, 2:9

1. The source of his power: His coming is according to the working of Satan, 9a
2. The evidences of his power, 9b
  - 1) With all power.
  - 2) And signs
  - 3) and wonders
3. The nature of his power:
  - 1) and lying (wonders)
  - 2) "and with all deceit of unrighteousness;" 2:10a.
4. The followers of his power: "them that perish" 2:10b-12
  - 1) "because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved," 2:10c.
  - 2) "and for this cause God sendeth them a working of error," 11a

3) "that they should believe a lie," 11b

4) "that they all might be judged," 2:12

a. "who believed not the truth," 12a

b. "but had pleasure in unrighteousness," 12b

G. A concluding exhortation, 2:13-15

1. We need to be grateful, 2:13-14

1) that God chose you, 13

2) that God called you, 14

2. You need to be firm, 2:15

1) Stand fast

2) Hold the traditions taught.

H. A concluding prayer, 2:16-17

IV. Through an Expression of Confidence, 3:1-5.

A. Confidence in their prayers, 3:1-2.

1. Concerning the success of the word in Corinth, 3:1.

2. Concerning deliverance, 3:2.

B. Confidence in the Lord's faithfulness, 3:3.

1. In establishing Christians.

2. In guarding Christians from Satan.

C. Confidence in the disciples, 3:4.

1. It is confidence not in men but "in the Lord touching you," 4a.

2. Confidence they are doing as charged, 4b.

3. Confidence in their future - will do as charged, 4c.

D. Confidence in the Lord's directions, 3:5

1. Into the love of God.

2. Into the patience of Christ.

V. Through a Charge to Discipline the Disorderly, 3:6-15.

A. The command to obey, 3:6

1. The substances of the command: "that ye withdraw yourselves," 6

2. The conditions:

1) From "every brother that walketh disorderly," 6

2) And "not after the tradition which they received from us," 3:6

B. The example to imitate, 3:7



1. Its qualities:

- 1) "For we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you."
- 2) "neither did we eat bread for naught at any man's hand," 3:8
- 3) "but in labor and travail"
- 4) "working night and day" 3:8

2. Its purpose:

- 1) "that we might not burden any of you," 3:8
- 2) "not because we have not the right," 3:9
- 3) "but to make ourselves an ensample unto you that ye should imitate us." 3:9

C. The rule to follow, 3:10

1. as previously given: "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you," 10a

2. as now repeated: "If any will not work, neither let him eat," 10b

D. The problems to resolve, 3:11-12

1. The problems:

- 1) Some "that walk among you disorderly," 11.

- 2) They "work not at all," 3:11

- 3) They "are busybodies," 3:11

2. The remedy, 3:12

- 1) Obedience to command and exhortation, 3:12a

- 2) Work with quietness, 3:12b

3) Eat own bread, 12c

E. The attitude to maintain, 3:13

F. The action to take, 3:14-15

1. The subject of the action: "and if anyone obeyeth not our word by this epistle," 3:14a

2. The nature of the action:

1) "Not that man," 3:14b

2) "that ye have no company with him" 3:14c

3. The purpose of the action, 3:14d

4. The tenderness of the action, 3:15

1) "Count him not as an enemy."

- 2) "But admonish him as a brother,"

#### CONCLUSION - 3:16-18

#### I. The final prayer, 3:16

##### 1. For peace

- 1) From the Lord of peace himself.

- 2) at all times

- 3) "In all ways"

2. For companionship: "The Lord be with you all."

#### II. The final greeting, 3:17

1. A greeting by the hand of Paul.

2. A token in every epistle.

#### III. The final benediction: grace: 3:18