

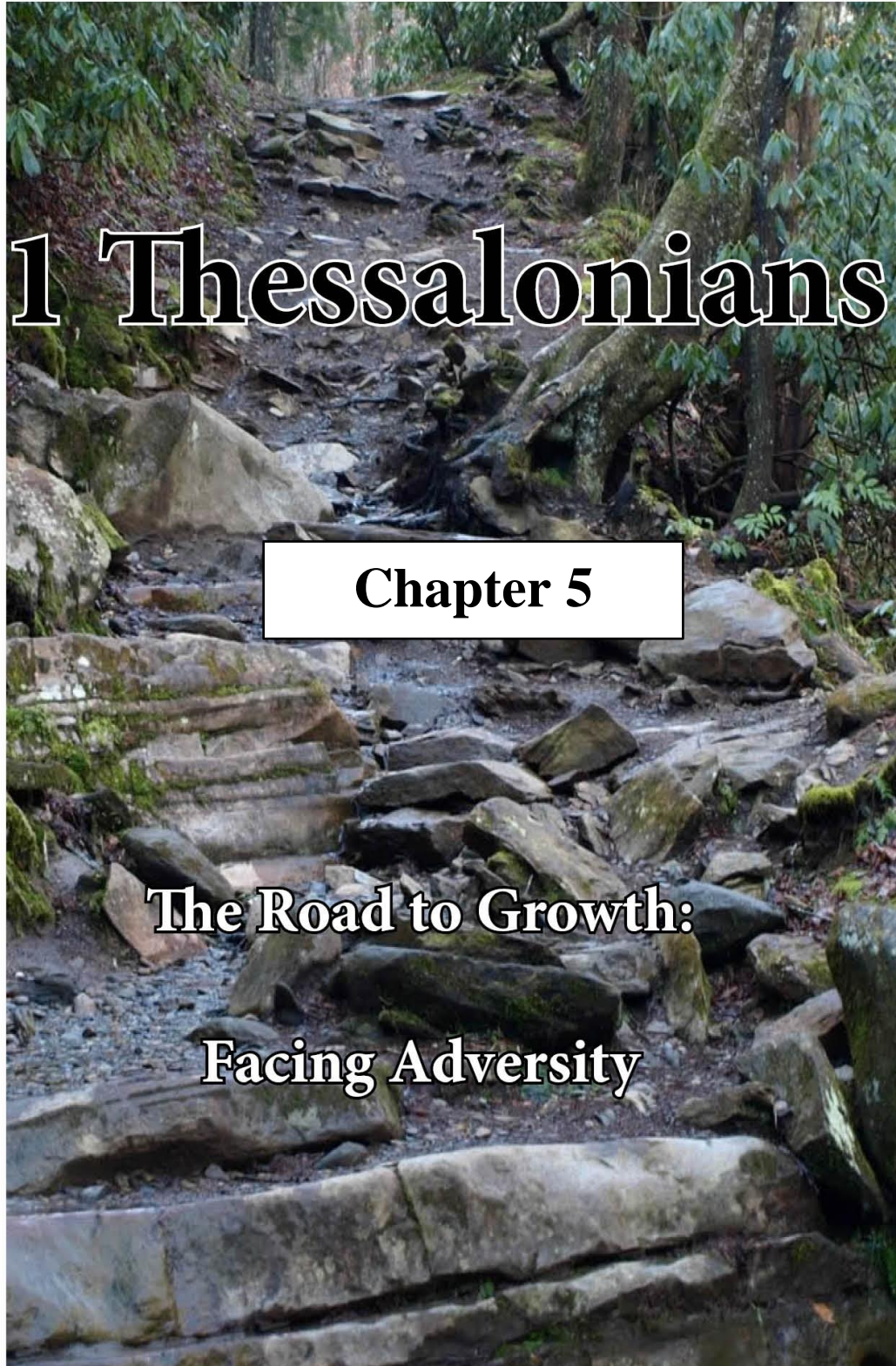
*Journeys With God*

**1 Thessalonians**

**Chapter 5**

**The Road to Growth:**

**Facing Adversity**



## **Chapter 5 Summary**

## 1 Thessalonians 5:1 - Ignorance Versus Knowledge

**But concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need of anything to be written to you.**

### Truth to Learn

There is a distinct difference between the rapture (the day of Jesus Christ) and the tribulation (the Day of the Lord).

### Behind the Words

The word “but” is translated from the Greek particle *de*. It indicates transition or conversion, serving to introduce a new topic.

“Concerning” is translated from the preposition *peri*, which can mean “around” or “with regard to” depending on the form of the word it is referencing. In the current verse, its meaning is “with regard to” or “concerning.”

*Chronos* is the Greek word translated “times” in this verse. *Chronos* is used in reference to “a quantity of time” or “the passage of time.” Thus, this word generally refers to a measurable amount of time, or a specific moment in time.

“Seasons” is translated from another “time” word. This word is *kairos* which implies “a quality or character of a time period.” In other words, it expresses a period of time in a more abstract sense. It is often translated as “a season” or “an hour (not a literal hour, but a general timeframe).”

*Chreia* is the Greek word translated “need.” It is derived from *chreos*, meaning “a debt.” Thus, *chreia* literally refers to one who owes a debt. In New Testament Greek it often refers to “a need.”

### Meaning Explained

In the last six verses of the previous chapter, Paul taught the Thessalonians (and us) about the rapture, referred to elsewhere as “the Day of Jesus Christ.” He now starts off this chapter with “but,” indicating that he is going to make a distinction between the rapture and what he is about to talk about. He refers to it here as “the times and the seasons.” Then in the following verse he will refer to it as “the Day of the Lord.”

So, what does Paul mean by “the times and the seasons?” It is a reference to specific events and a general time period. This phrase only occurs in two other places in the Bible, **Daniel 2:21** and **Acts 1:7**. In both cases it is used in reference to God’s dealing with Israel, and there is no reason to believe otherwise in this case. Therefore, Paul is making a distinction between how God will deal with the church and how he will deal with Israel.

Another reason for seeing the rapture and the Day of the Lord as separate events is given to us in the second half of today’s verse. In **1 Thessalonians 4:13**, Paul said “I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers,” meaning that they were ignorant of the facts surrounding the rapture. In today’s verse he now says, “you have no need that I should write to you,” following in the next verse with, “you yourselves know perfectly,” regarding the Day of the Lord. We will provide more information regarding this distinction of these two in the following verses.

### **Application**

The rapture is an event in which God completes salvation for Christians. The Day of the Lord (the tribulation) is a time in which God will judge the world and provide complete salvation for the believing remnant of Israel.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:2 - Noisily Versus Quietly

**For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord comes like a thief in the night.**

### Truth to Learn

The Day of the Lord will come quietly, the rapture noisily.

### Behind the Words

“**Know**” is translated from the verb *eidō*, which refers to “seeing with perception and comprehension.” Thus, it takes on the meaning of “knowing” or “understanding.” In English someone might explain something and then say, “Do you see what I’m saying?” In such a case, they are not asking about vision but about understanding. This is the sense that *eidō* has in today’s verse.

The word translated “**perfectly**” is *akribōs*, which means “accurately” or “exactly.” It is not an expression about perfection, but of accuracy.

*Hēmera* is the word translated “**day**.” It can refer to a complete twenty-four hour period or, as in today’s verse, it can refer to the timeframe of a specific event.

The word “**like**” is from the Greek word *houtō*, meaning “in this way” or “in this manner.”

The word “**thief**” is from *kleptēs*. This is derived from the verb *kleptō* (from which we get our English word kleptomaniac, meaning someone who has an obsession with stealing things).

*Kleptē* refers to someone who steals things, that is, “a thief.”

“**Night**” is translated from *nux*, which refers to the time period from sundown to sunrise.

### Meaning Explained

In today’s verse we see a couple more reasons why the rapture (the Day of Jesus Christ) and the Day of the Lord are two distinctly different events. When Paul introduced the topic of the rapture back in **1 Thessalonians 4:13**, he said “**I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers,**” meaning that they *were* ignorant of the facts surrounding the rapture. In yesterday’s verse he said, “**you have no need that I should write to you,**” and in today’s verse he completes that thought. The reason that they didn’t need additional information is because, “**For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord comes like a thief in the night.**”

Apparently, Paul had previously taught the Christians in Thessalonica the facts about the Day of the Lord. Since they had accurate knowledge about the Day of the Lord and were ignorant concerning the rapture, they must be two different things. One of the possible reasons for this is that the Old Testament has numerous references to the Day of the Lord, but there are no references to the rapture. Since the Old Testament is the only Scripture the Thessalonians had, they could only have learned about the Day of the Lord from it.

The other thing to note is how these two events occur. The rapture occurs with a loud proclamation and a trumpet blast. The Day of the Lord, on the other hand, comes like a thief in the night. A thief doesn’t announce himself and he doesn’t make a lot of noise; he comes quietly and secretly. In other words, the rapture will come with lots of noise, but the Day of the Lord will come quietly, like a thief.

### **Application**

Christians, keep your ears open, listening for the shout and the trumpet blast. You'll be gone when the Day of the Lord comes.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:3 - Peace and Destruction

**For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, like labor pains of childbirth. And they shall not escape.**

### Truth to Learn

The Day of the Lord will begin with a period of peace.

### Behind the Words

*Hotan* is the Greek word translated “when.” It is composed of *hote*, meaning “when” and the preposition *an*, indicating uncertainty or possibility.

The words “they say” are from *legō*, meaning “to relate in words” or “to say.” It is expressed here in the subjunctive mood, indicating the possibility or probability of action.

“Safety” is translated from *asphaleia*, composed of *a*, meaning “without” or “not” and *sphallō*, meaning “to throw down” or “to fail.” Thus, *asphaleia* refers to “security” or “safety.”

The word “sudden” is from *aiphnidios*. This word is composed of the negative particle *a*, meaning “not” and a form of *phainō*, meaning “to shine” or “to make apparent.” Therefore, *aiphnidios* means “not apparent,” “unexpected,” or “suddenly.”

“Destruction” is translated from *olethros*. This is from *ollumi*, meaning “to destroy.” *Olethros* refers to “destruction” or by implication, “death.”

The words “labor pains of childbirth” are from the Greek words *ōdin en gastri*, which literally translates to “pain in the stomach” or “pain in the womb,” that is, “birth pain.”

The word “not” is from *ou mē*, a double negative indicating “absolutely not” or “no way!”

“Escape” is from *ekpheugō*, made up of *ek*, meaning “out of” and *pheugō*, meaning “to flee.”

### Meaning Explained

Paul is now teaching about the Day of the Lord, called the Tribulation or Daniel’s seventieth week (see **Daniel 9:24-27**). It is a time period in which God will both judge the world (the earth dwellers) and accomplish the final salvation of the “remnant” of Israel (see **Zephaniah 3:13** and **Romans 9:27**).

Keep in mind that Paul is writing this letter to the Christians in Thessalonica and all Christians in general. Back in **1 Thessalonians 4:14-17** Paul repeatedly used the personal pronouns “you” and “we” referring to Christians and the rapture. Now in today’s verse, observe that he is using the personal pronouns “they” and “them.” Paul is not talking about Christians, he is talking about those who will be on this earth when the Day of the Lord arrives. Notice that “they shall not [no way] escape.” This is further evidence that the rapture and the Day of the Lord are separate events. It is also evidence that Christians will not be on earth when the Day of the Lord arrives. This is because, as we have already learned, the rapture will occur before the Tribulation (the Day of the Lord).

Now we learn a little bit about the conditions on earth when the Day of the Lord arrives. This time of God’s judgment will begin with a period of peace (perhaps world-wide, but at least for

Israel.) Then, suddenly, that peace will evaporate and the world will be consumed by destruction (see the first two of the four horses of the Apocalypse in **Revelation 6:1-4**).

### **Application**

Once again, we have an opportunity to give thanks to God for His loving care of His children (Christians). Is it time to pray?

## 1 Thessalonians 5:4 - Spiritual Darkness?

**But you, brothers, are not in darkness, so that this Day should seize you as a thief.**

### Truth to Learn

Christians do not live in darkness.

### Behind the Words

The word “but” is translated from the Greek particle *de*, which we looked at in verse one. It indicates transition or conversion, serving to introduce a new topic.

*Humeis* is the word translated “you.” It is the second person plural pronoun (“you,” plural).

“Darkness” is from *skotos*, which is from the same root as *skia*, meaning “shade or a shadow.” It means “obscurity or darkness.” It can refer to either literal darkness or spiritual darkness as it does here.

The Greek word translated “seize” is *katalambanō*. This word is made up of *kata*, meaning “down,” but used here as an intensifier and the verb *lambanō*, meaning “to take.” *Katalambanō* means “to lay hold of or seize with eagerness or suddenness.” It is expressed here in the aorist tense and subjunctive mood, indicating a single act that has the possibility or probability of happening.

The word translated “thief” is the noun *kleptēs*, which is derived from the verb *kleptō*, meaning “to steal.” Thus, *kleptēs* refers to someone who steals things, a thief.

### Meaning Explained

The Apostle Paul has just talked about how the Tribulation will arrive as a “thief in the night,” taking by surprise those who are living on the earth at that time; however, he starts off the current verse with “but.” This shows that what he is about to talk about is contrasted with what was just said. He says, “but you ... are not in darkness,” meaning that we won’t be surprised by the Day of the Lord. The ones who will experience the Day of the Lord are in darkness, they are spiritually blind. He will tell us in the next verse that we are sons (children) of light; we have been enlightened by the gospel message. Because we are children of light, we will be removed from the earth before that day comes.

People who believe in a mid-tribulation or post-tribulation rapture have to do some fancy footwork in order to explain away what this verse is really saying. Since they confuse the rapture with the Day of the Lord (the tribulation), they try to say that we will be aware of the coming of the tribulation and God will preserve or protect us in it. This doesn’t explain, however, what Paul said at the end of the previous verse, “they shall in no way escape sudden destruction.” Somehow, these people completely miss the message that is given to “the overcomers” (Christians) in Revelation chapter three:

**Because you kept the word of my perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. (Revelation 3:10)**

The word translated “**from**” in this verse is *ek*, which literally means “out of.” We, the overcomers, will be kept “out of” the hour, the **time** of the tribulation. We will not be preserved “in” it; we will be kept “out of” it. This is clear evidence that we Christians will be taken out of the world before the tribulation.

### **Application**

The world is in darkness because it rejects the gospel message. Because they are in darkness, the Day of the Lord will come like a thief and they will in no way escape. However, that day will not overtake us Christians because we are not in darkness and we will be taken out to eternally live in the light.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:5 - Spiritual Enlightenment

**You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of night nor of darkness.**

### Truth to Learn

Christians have spiritual understanding given to us by the Holy Spirit.

### Behind the Words

“You” is from *humeis*, the second person plural personal pronoun. Greek is different from English in that all verbs indicate not only what the action is, but also who performs the action. The verb in this case is “are,” which is the Greek verb *eimi* (the verb of being). The form of the verb in this verse is second person plural (you, plural). Therefore, the personal pronoun *humeis* (you, plural) is not needed to accurately portray what Paul is saying. That fact that he included it indicates emphasis on who are the sons of light.

The word translated “sons” is *huios*, which means “a male descendant.” However, it is often used in the New Testament to refer to a child, male or female.

*Pas* is the root word translated here as “all.” It carries the idea of “oneness” or “the totality of something.” Therefore, *pas* refers to “all of something without anything being left out.”

“Light” is from the Greek word *phōs* (or *phōtos*), which is derived from the verb *phaō*, meaning “to shine” or “to make visible.” This, *phōs* refers to “that which shines” or “that which makes visible.” In other words, it refers to light. It is used both of physical light and spiritual light (enlightenment).

The word “day” is from the Greek word *hēmera*, which can refer to a complete twenty-four hour period or to that portion of the day in which the sun is shining (daytime).

### Meaning Explained

In order to completely understand Paul’s teaching here we need to understand that Paul was brought up as a Hebrew. The Hebrew language, like most other languages, has idiomatic expressions that don’t always translate easily into other languages. For instance, the Hebrew expression “with four eyes,” as in “the two men met with four eyes,” means that the two men met face to face without anyone else present. Paul often uses such Hebrew idioms (called Hebraisms) in his writing, even though he is writing in Greek.

The expression in the previous verse, “you are not in darkness” is a Hebraism meaning “you are not ignorant, unaware, or unenlightened.” Likewise, the expression “sons of light” is a Hebraism meaning “children of God, the heavenly Father, who is light and in whom is no darkness at all.” Throughout the Bible, the metaphor of light (with respect to God) is a reference to His holiness, righteousness, and sinlessness. As His adopted children, we have been given the righteousness of Christ. In **Genesis 15:6** we read that Abraham was credited with righteousness because of his faith. Similarly, a Christian, one who has faith in the saving blood of Christ, is seen by God as completely righteous. In God’s record book we are sinless, righteous, and holy. Hence, we are children of light.

And – because we are righteous children of light, our minds are illuminated by the Spirit of God so that we can understand spiritual things like God’s coming judgment on the world of sinners.

“We are not of night nor of darkness” is another Hebraism meaning that we are not ignorant sinners marching mindlessly towards God’s judgment and destruction.

Finally, note that Paul starts off this verse with “you,” speaking directly to those to whom he is teaching, but then says “we,” indicating that all Christians are in the same category.

### **Application**

Unsaved people cannot understand the Bible because they are not spiritually enlightened like we are (see **1 Corinthians 2:10, 11**). We, on the other hand, are taught by the Holy Spirit, and we can know future things as taught to us in Scripture.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:6 - No Sleep-walking!

Therefore we should not sleep, as others *do*, but we should be alert and be watchful.

### Truth to Learn

Christians need to wake up and stop sleep-walking through life.

### Behind the Words

*Ara oun* are the opening words of this verse in Greek. They are both inferential particles, serving to draw-out a conclusion based on the previous statement. A literal translation of these two words might be “accordingly therefore.”

The word “sleep” is translated from the Greek verb *katheudō*, meaning “to sleep.” It is used to express literal sleep, but it is also used metaphorically, as in this verse, to refer to those who are not aware of what’s happening around them.

The words “be alert” are from the Greek verb *grēgoreō*, which means “to watch” or “to refrain from sleep.” It is expressed here in the subjunctive mood, indicating something that may not be happening but that could or should be happening.

The words “be watchful” are translated from *nēphō*. The original meaning of the word was “to not be drunk.” However, over time the meaning was broadened to mean “to be sober minded” or “to be watchful.” This verb is also in the subjunctive mood, indicating something that needs to be happening.

### Meaning Explained

In the first part of this chapter we learned that the Thessalonian Christians were fully aware of the Day of the Lord, the time of judgment against those who have rejected God. They learned that it will occur at a time when the people on earth believe that they finally have peace and safety. Unfortunately for them, however, God’s judgment will come on them suddenly and there will be no way for them to escape it.

In verses four and five, Paul reminded the Thessalonians that they were aware of the coming judgment and they are not in spiritual darkness. He told them (and us) that instead of being in darkness, they (we) are filled with the light of God and we understand things that those in darkness aren’t aware of.

Accordingly, therefore, since we are not unaware of the coming judgment, we need to stay awake. We need to be aware of what’s happening, and we need to witness to those who aren’t aware. Unfortunately, today as in Paul’s time, there are a lot of Christians who are sleep-walking through life. Being a Christian gives us peace and comfort, knowing that God will take care of us and He will take us to be with Him for eternity. But, to many Christians that means they live with one foot in the world and one foot in the church. We are to be in the world, but not of the world. We need to look different, act differently, and think differently. We need to be sober minded, not getting caught-up in worldly thoughts and actions and not getting radical or hysterical. Instead, we need to pray and read our Bibles to learn all we can so we can serve Him faithfully while there is still an opportunity to do so.

### Application

How is your thought life? How do your actions demonstrate that you are a child of God? If you were arrested today for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you? We only have one life to live for God and when it is over we will not have any more opportunities to serve Him. Will you spend eternity wishing you had lived differently, wishing you had done more for Him? Now is the time for action!

## 1 Thessalonians 5:7 - Darkness or Light?

**For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night.**

### Truth to Learn

Unbelievers like the spiritual darkness they live in.

### Behind the Words

The words “those who sleep” are from the verb *katheudō*, which we saw in yesterday’s verse. This form of the verb is a present active participle, which indicates action which is current and ongoing. Literally, we could render this as “those who are sleeping.”

“Those who get drunk” is translated from *methuskō*. This word is based on *methē*, which refers to “wine which has fermented so that it contains alcohol,” and by implication it refers to any intoxicating drink. *Methuskō*, therefore, refers to “drinking an alcoholic drink,” and by extension “getting intoxicated.” It is expressed here as a present passive participle, so literally it means “those who are continually getting intoxicated.”

The words “are drunk” is a different form of the root *methē*. It is *methuō*, which is a more definitive word implying not just intoxicated, but completely drunk.

### Meaning Explained

Paul has been teaching about the rapture and the Day of the Lord (the tribulation). We learned a few verses ago that the Day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night (quietly, while the world is sleeping in spiritual darkness). We also learned earlier that the rapture will come as a noisy event, and it will occur before the Day of the Lord. He also told us that we Christians will not be surprised by the coming of the Day of the Lord because we are not in spiritual darkness. We are sons of light because we are God’s children and we have been spiritually enlightened. Paul spends several verses showing the contrast between us (children of light and of the day) and unbelievers (those who are of the night, who are in spiritual darkness).

Early in Jesus’ ministry, when he had his famous discussion with Nicodemus about being born-again, he also said this:

**"He who believes in Him [the Son of God] is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God." (John 3:18-21)**

In today’s verse Paul says a little more about those who are in darkness. At night they sleep and at night they get drunk. They are not spiritually awake because they like the darkened spiritual state they are in. Also, unbelievers prefer darkness (both physical and spiritual) because that’s when they can practice their evil deeds, thinking they won’t be noticed. Unfortunately for them, God sees even the deeds they do in the darkness, and He will judge them for their deeds.

### Application

Often, when people get saved their “friends” don’t want to be associated with them. It’s because a Christian is a child of light and their “friends” prefer the darkness. Let your light shine and don’t worry about what your former “friends” think and say about you!

## 1 Thessalonians 5:8 - Ready For Battle?

**But we, being of the day should be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and of love, and *as* a helmet the hope of salvation.**

### Truth to Learn

It is important for Christians to always be battle ready.

### Behind the Words

“Be sober” is the translation of the Greek verb *nēphō*, which we saw back in verse six. It originally meant “to abstain from wine.” Later it was used to mean “to avoid abuse of wine or other alcoholic drinks.” Metaphorically it means “to be sober minded or watchful.”

The words “putting on” are from the verb *enduō*, which is made up of *en*, meaning “in” and *duō*, meaning “to sink” or “to go under.” It is a picture of a person getting under the outer garment of the day (like a dress) as it was being put on. Thus *enduō* means “to put on clothing.” It is expressed here as an aorist middle participle which means to have done something to yourself at a point in time in the past. We could translate this as “having dressed yourself with” or “having put on.”

*Thōrax* is the word translated here as “breastplate.” This is the word from which we get our English word thorax, referring to the upper part of the body, the chest area. It is also the name given to the piece of armor a soldier would put on to cover his chest.

The Greek word translated “helmet” is *perikephalaia*, which is made up of *peri*, meaning “around” and *kephalē*, meaning “the head.” Therefore, *perikephalaia* refers to that piece of armor that goes around (or covers) the head.

The word “hope” is translated from the Greek word *elpis*, meaning “hope.” However, it is more than just a wish, it is a hope that carries with it the full expectation that it will happen.

### Meaning Explained

Paul has just contrasted Christians (children of light) with unbelievers (those who are in spiritual darkness). He now gives us instruction on how we are to prepare for the daily spiritual battles that we will face. In the English translation he starts off with our mental preparedness (be sober). The construction of the Greek grammar, however, indicates that the verb “having put on” occurs in time before the main verb (be sober).

A soldier knows that the most important aspect of his protection is his armor. He doesn’t dare go into battle without protection. Once he has put on his armor, he then prepares mentally for the conflict he is about to enter into. Likewise, Christians (those who are of the day) are in spiritual battles every day. We will be in battles against the enemies of God, so we need to be prepared for battle.

The first thing we need to do to prepare for the coming battles is to have our armor on. For another description of Christian armor see **Ephesians 6:13-17**. Once we have our armor on, we need to be mentally prepared by being sober minded.

You may also notice that Paul talks about our “hope of salvation” in today’s verse. We have talked before about the two different aspects of our salvation. When we first believed in Jesus

Christ, we were recorded in God's record book as being righteous, which sealed our salvation. At the rapture we will receive our eternal body and the complete salvation that God promises us when we accept Christ as Savior. This latter description of our salvation is what we hope for and fully expect to happen.

### **Application**

Christians are in spiritual battles every day. We need to have our armor on and be clear minded so that we can effectively fight for the glory of God. Are you ready for battle?

## 1 Thessalonians 5:9 - Why We Fight!

**Because God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,**

### **Truth to Learn**

We need to realize what God has given us and fight for Him.

### **Behind the Words**

“**Because**” is from *hoti*, meaning “that” or “because.” It serves to introduce something that is the reason for what was just said.

The Greek word translated “**appoint**” is *tithēmi*, which means “to set” or “to put in place.” Here it means that God did not place us in a position in which we would receive His wrath.

“**Wrath**” is from *orgē*, which properly means “strong desire” or “excitement of the mind,” that is “strong passion.” By implication it means “punishment,” but it is most often translated as “wrath.”

*Peripoiēsis* is the Greek word translated “**obtain**.” It is made up of *peri*, meaning “around” and a form of *poieō*, meaning “to make” or “to do.” Thus, *peripoiēsis* carries the meaning of surrounding yourself with things. It is most often translated with the English words “acquire” or “obtain.”

“**Salvation**” is translated from *sōtēria*, which refers to “safety, deliverance, or preservation from danger or destruction.”

### **Meaning Explained**

In the previous verse, Paul exhorted us to put on the breastplate of faith and love as well as the helmet of salvation. This is to be followed by being of a sober mind, thinking logically and rationally with a mind that is not under the influence of extreme thought patterns. You may know Christians who are so worried about losing their salvation that they have a difficult time moving forward in their Christian walk. Others are caught up in experiencing miraculous demonstrations of God’s Spirit and become distracted when they aren’t seeing such signs in their own lives. Still others are so bound by legalism that they spend all their effort trying not to break the rules their church has bound them with. All of these types of Christians are wearing so much spiritual fluff and have their minds so filled with distractions that they can’t effectively engage the enemy. As a result, they are easily defeated when they face spiritual battles.

Instead, Paul wants us to be dressed for battle and mentally prepared. The source of that mental preparation is knowledge of what the Bible actually teaches. The only way we can do this is to engage in regular, consistent reading and studying of God’s Word.

So, why should we always be prepared for spiritual battle? Why shouldn’t we live like the world, like those who have no clue regarding what the future holds? Because God did not put us here to receive His wrath; we will not experience the Day of the Lord. Instead we will be resurrected from the earth and granted complete salvation, that salvation which only comes from faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, out of a heart of true thanksgiving and gratitude, we should take up sides, put on the battle gear, and get ready to do battle for Him!

## **Application**

Consider what God has done for us through the sacrifice of His only begotten Son. Consider what He has promised us, both now and eternally. Given what He has already done, how can we possibly just drift through life? We need to get in the race! We need to engage in battle! We need to give our all to serving Him who gave us the most precious gift we could possibly get!

## 1 Thessalonians 5:10 - Eternal, Living Faith

who died for us, that whether we should watch or sleep, we should live together with Him.

### Truth to Learn

Faith in Jesus Christ means living with Him eternally.

### Behind the Words

“Died” is from *apothnēskō*, which is composed of *apo*, meaning “from” or “away from,” used as an intensifier, and *thnēskō*, meaning “to die.” Literally, *apothnēskō* means “to die off,” but it is often used to refer to death of any kind.

The word translated “for” is *huper* (or hyper) meaning “over” or “above.” As used here it also means “for the sake of.”

The words “whether” and “or” are both translated from *eite*. It is composed of *ei*, meaning “if” or “whether” and *te*, meaning “both” or “also.” It is used in Greek to set items in contrast or opposition to one another.

*Grēgoreuō* is the Greek verb translated “watch.” It means “to keep wake” or “to be watchful.” It is expressed here in the subjunctive mood, indicating possibility or probability.

The word translated “sleep” is *katheudō*, meaning “to fall asleep.” It, too, is written in the subjunctive mood.

“We should live” is translated from the verb *dzaō*, meaning “to have life.” Like *grēgoreuō* and *katheudō*, it is expressed in the subjunctive mood.

### Meaning Explained

In the previous chapter of his letter to the Christians in Thessalonica, Paul began his current teaching regarding the rapture and the Day of the Lord. As he introduced the subject of the rapture, he said:

But we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, concerning those who have fallen asleep, that you not grieve as others who have no hope. (1 Thessalonians 4:13)

In this discourse on the rapture and the Day of the Lord, Paul has used the word “sleep” in two different ways. In teaching about the rapture, he used the term to refer to Christians who have died physically. In his teaching about the Day of the Lord, however, he used the word as a reference to those who are spiritually unaware. He contrasted those who are of the day (Christians) with those who are of the night (unbelievers). And, he warned us who are of the day to be awake (aware) and prepared for spiritual battles. In yesterday’s verse Paul reminded us that God did not place us in a situation where we will suffer His wrath (the Day of the Lord), rather in a situation to obtain salvation (raptured off the earth before the Day of the Lord). Also, in yesterday’s verse he reminded us that our salvation is through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Now, Paul says that Christ died for our sake. He didn’t die for Himself because He was without sin and was not facing the death sentence that we were facing. He died so that we could have eternal life. He died for our sake. Why did He die for us? He died for us so that we might live eternally with Him. It doesn’t matter whether we are physically alive or dead at the time of the

rapture; all Christians, together, will live with him eternally. This, he tells us in the next verse, should be a comfort to all Christians.

### **Application**

If you are a born-again Christian, you will spend eternity with Jesus Christ. If not, you will be separated from Him forever!

## 1 Thessalonians 5:11 - Comfort and Build-up

**Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.**

### Truth to Learn

Christians need to comfort and spiritually build-up each other.

### Behind the Words

“Therefore” is translated from the Greek word *dio*. This word is a combination of *dia*, meaning “through” and *hos*, meaning “who” or “which.” So, we see that *dio* literally means “through which.”

The word “comfort” is our old friend *parakaleō*, meaning “to comfort, encourage, or challenge.” It is expressed in the imperative mood, indicating a command.

*Allēlon* is the word translated “each other.” It indicates reciprocal action on the part of all members of a group.

“Edify” is also a word we have seen before. It is translated from *oikodomeō*, which is made up of *oikos*, meaning “a dwelling” or “a house” and a form of *dōma*, meaning “to build.” This verb is also expressed in the imperative mood.

The words “one another” are from the Greek words *heis ton hena*, which literally means “one the one” or “one in behalf of the one.” It expresses a more one-on-one type of activity than *allēlon*

### Meaning Explained

Paul has been teaching the Thessalonians about the rapture and the Day of the Lord because they were grieving over the death of other Christians. When Paul finished teaching about the rapture, explaining that all Christians would be joined together as they received their new bodies, he told them:

Therefore comfort one another with these words. (**1 Thessalonians 4:18**)

The knowledge that the rapture would include all Christians and that we will all be together again was a comfort to those whose saved loved-ones had died.

Now that Paul has explained the difference between the rapture and the Day of the Lord, and the fact that Christians will not have to experience the out-pouring of God’s wrath, he tells them again to comfort one another. I had a godly friend who believed in a mid-tribulation rapture. He used to say, “I believe in a mid-trib rapture, but I pray for a pre-trib rapture.” The reason for his comment is the fact that he didn’t want to have to endure even a portion of the outpouring of God’s wrath on mankind. Once we understand the difference between the rapture and the Day of the Lord and the fact that we will be kept out of that time, it is an encouragement to all Christians.

But notice that Paul did not just tell them (and us) to comfort one another. He also commanded the Thessalonians to build-up each other in a one-on-one fashion. As we talk with our brothers and sisters about the things of God, we need to make the subject of the rapture and the Day of the Lord one of the things we talk about. Don’t get in an argument, simply share with them what Paul taught the Thessalonians.

### **Application**

Do you talk with your Christian brothers and sisters about the things of the Lord? Do you have discussions about what the Bible teaches? Or, do you only talk about family, friends, and church activities? Paul commands us to build each other up and we can only do this by talking about what the Bible says.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:12 - Encouragement and Prayer

**And we ask you, brothers, to recognize those working hard among you, and leading you in the Lord and admonishing you,**

### **Truth to Learn**

Pastors have a tough job. Encourage and pray for him today.

### **Behind the Words**

The word translated “we ask” is *erōtaō*, which literally means “to interrogate.” By implication, however, it means “to request” or “to urge.”

“Recognize” is from the Greek word *eidō*, which means “to see with perception and comprehension.” Therefore, it takes on the meaning of “to know, to comprehend, or to recognize.”

*Kopiaō* is the word translated “working hard.” It literally means “to feel fatigue” and by implication it means “to work hard.”

The words “leading you” are translated from the Greek verb *proistēmi*. This word is made up of *pro*, meaning “before” or “in front of” and *histēmi*, meaning “to stand.” Thus, *proistēmi* means “to stand before” or “to stand in front of.” By analogy, this word refers to someone who “leads.”

“Admonishing” is from the word *noutheteō*, which is made up of *nous*, meaning “the mind” or “the intellect” and *tithēmi*, meaning “to put” or “to place.” *Noutheteō* literally means “to put in mind” or “to caution or reprove.”

### **Meaning Explained**

The Apostle Paul now changes the topic of his teaching to how we are to think about our spiritual leader(s). The grammatical form of this verse indicates that these leaders are characterized by three things. The first is that they work hard. The second characteristic is that they “are leading you.” And, the third thing is that they “are admonishing” you. It’s fairly obvious that Paul is talking about your pastor(s). Let’s look at these three things.

Most of us have jobs that require us to work five days a week, with the weekend off. The job of a pastor, however, is one that requires effort seven days a week. Yes, I know, many pastors take Monday off to recuperate from a very full Sunday (often twelve or more hours). But, even on his day off, your pastor is often contacted by a church member needing spiritual guidance or emotional support. Like a surgeon, your pastor is on-call twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Six days a week your pastor is studying and preparing sermons (often several a week), visiting families with spiritual/financial/physical needs, preparing for/conducting meetings, and overseeing the business operation of the church. He’s a busy man.

The second thing about your pastor is that he has been placed in a position of authority over you. He is directly accountable to God for your spiritual wellbeing. It is his job to open up the Scriptures and teach you what God expects from you. Remember, we are to submit to all those in authority over us.

The third thing a good pastor does is “admonish” you. This means that he has to deliver encouragement and challenge, but it also means he has to deliver the harsh truth about sin and its

consequences. I firmly believe that if you aren't getting your toes stomped on occasionally, either your pastor isn't doing his job or you just aren't listening to him, or to God.

### **Application**

Don't wait for pastor appreciation week. Take some time right now to send an e-mail, a text message, or a letter to your pastor. Tell him how much you appreciate him and pray for him. He needs your encouragement and your prayers!

## 1 Thessalonians 5:13 - Respect, Honor, and Peace

and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves.

### Truth to Learn

Respect and honor your pastor and be at peace with all your Christian brothers.

### Behind the Words

“Esteem” is translated from *hēgeomai*, which means “to lead,” that is, “to command.” It is often used metaphorically, however, meaning “to lead the mind through a reasoning process arriving at a conclusion.” In other words, here it means “conclude, consider, view, regard, or reckon.”

The word “very” is from the Greek word *huper* (hyper), which means “above, over, or beyond.”

The Greek word translated “highly” is the comparative form of *perissos*, which means abundant. Thus, this word means “more than abundant, or highly.”

*Ergon* is the Greek word translated “work.” It represents the work that someone does in performing his or her job.

“Be at peace” is translated from the verb *eirēneuō*, which is based on *eirēnē*, meaning “peace.” Thus, *eirēneuō* means “to be at peace” or “to make peace.”

### Meaning Explained

In yesterday’s verse we talked a little about three of the characteristics of church pastors (or elders). These are:

1. They are hard working. They often work six or seven days a week for very little pay.
2. God has placed them in authority over you and you need to submit yourselves to that authority.
3. Part of their job is to encourage and admonish you regarding what God expects from His children.

In today’s verse Paul tells us specifically how we are to feel about our pastors and how we are to treat all of our Christian brothers and sisters. He starts off today’s verse telling us that we are to regard our pastors very highly, not just a little and not just highly, but very highly. Within the church we are all given spiritual gifts by God and these gifts are to be used for the building-up of the Body of Christ. One of these gifts is that of pastor/teacher (see **Ephesians 4:11**). We are all to be using our gifts in a way that glorifies God. However, He has also ordained a specific order of authority within the church, and we are to honor and submit to those in authority, giving their position the respect that it deserves.

Keep in mind that your pastor has a sin nature, just as you do. He is not perfect! And, most church pastors work in relative obscurity (from a worldly viewpoint). From God’s viewpoint, however, pastors are a key part of His plan for all of His children. Because pastors are in a position of spiritual authority, when they do make mistakes or succumb to the temptations of sin, they receive harsher judgment than the rest of us (see **James 3:1**).

The other thing Paul teaches us in this verse is that we are to be at peace with others in the Body of Christ. None of us is perfect any more than our pastor is perfect. We need to display a lot of grace in dealing with our brothers and sisters in Christ and be at peace with them.

### **Application**

Show respect to your pastor, give honor to his esteemed position, and submit yourself to his authority. Also, make peace with your brothers. This is God's will for your life!

## 1 Thessalonians 5:14 - Caution, Support, and Patience

**And we exhort you, brothers, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, support the weak, be patient with all.**

### Truth to Learn

We all need to patiently work toward peace in the church.

### Behind the Words

The word “**exhort**” is from *parakaleō*, meaning “to encourage, challenge, or comfort.”

“**Warn**” is translated from *noutheteō*, which was translated as “admonish” a couple of verses ago. It means “to put in mind,” “to caution,” or “to reprove.”

“**Unruly**” is from the Greek word *ataktos*. This is made up of the privative *a*, meaning “not” and a form of the verb *tassō*, meaning “to arrange in an orderly manner.” Thus, *ataktos* literally means “disorderly.”

The word translated “**comfort**” is *paramutheomai*, which is made up of *para*, meaning “alongside” or “near” and the verb form of *muthos* (a myth or story), meaning “to relate a story.” *Paramutheomai* means “to speak kindly or soothingly.”

“**Fainthearted**” is translated from *oligopsuchos*. This word is made up of *oligos*, meaning “small or little” and *phuchē*, meaning “soul.”

*Anthechō* is the Greek word translated “**support**.” It is composed of *anti*, meaning “against” and *echo*, meaning “to have” or “to hold.” So, literally this word means “to hold close.”

“**Be patient**” is from *makrothumeō*, from *makros*, meaning “long” and *thumos*, meaning “anger.” It means “to be long-suffering or patient.”

### Meaning Explained

At the end of yesterday’s verse Paul told us to be at peace with each other (referring to Christians); however, being at peace (or making peace) is an active process, not a passive one. Here, Paul gives us some ideas regarding how we can make peace. Notice, first of all, that he doesn’t say, “Just ignore problems that are in the church.” When we see problems in the church we are to take positive, loving action.

The first issue that Paul addresses is members who are unruly or disorderly. In **1 Corinthians 14:33**, Paul contrasted confusion (or disorder) with peace. Those who are disorderly, cause confusion and strife. We need to caution such people and remind them of the need for order and peace within the church.

The second issue that Paul addresses is faintheartedness. These people lack courage or conviction to pursue what is right. They tend to just “give-in and give-up” when faced with opposition. We need to speak kindly to such people and remind them that doing things God’s way is always the right way.

The third issue involves those who are weak. This word is usually applied to those who are physically weak. We are to put effort into lending support to those who are weak, either physically, emotionally, or spiritually.

In each of these situations, however, we are to be patient with those who cause problems. That doesn't mean ignoring the problem, rather giving loving support and guidance even when the problem recurs over and over again.

### **Application**

Making peace within the church is a full time job and it is to be done in a kind, loving way just as our Lord would do.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:15 - Do Good, Not Evil

See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for one another and for all.

### Truth to Learn

Don't retaliate when you experience evil. Do good instead.

### Behind the Words

The word translated “renders” is *apodidōmi*, which is composed of *apo*, meaning “from” or “away from” and *didōmi*, meaning “to give.” Literally, it means “to give from,” that is, to act in response to action done. Specifically, it refers to retaliation. Some translations have this as “return” or “repay.”

*Kakos* is the Greek word translated “evil.” This word refers to external actions that are “worthless, bad, or evil.” A different Greek word, *ponēros*, refers to wickedness or maliciousness as an internal motivation.

“For” is translated from *anti*, meaning “opposite” or “against.” Here it indicates action directed against someone else.

“Always” is from *pantote*, which is made up of a form of *pas*, meaning “all” and *tote*, meaning “then, in terms of time.” Thus, *pantote* means “all the time” or “always.”

The word “pursue” is from the verb *diokō*, which means “to pursue (in a good sense” or “to persecute (in a bad sense).”

*Agathos* is the word translated “good.” It refers to the quality or characteristic of goodness or usefulness.

### Meaning Explained

In yesterday's verse, Paul taught us how we are to respond to certain issues within the church. We need to caution those who are unruly or disruptive, reminding them of the need for peace and orderly conduct in the church. We also need to provide comfort and encouragement for those who are overcome with fear and doubt. And, we need to support those who are weak physically, emotionally, and spiritually. He also said that we are to do these things with an attitude of patience.

Now he tells us what **not** to do, and what to do instead. Each one of us at one time or another has been the recipient of malicious action, whether it was intentional or not. The normal response, driven by our sin nature, is to strike back - to get even. After all, the Old Testament teaches “an eye for an eye,” right? But that's not what the New Testament teaches. Paul says, “Don't repay evil for evil.” Instead of retaliating for something evil that was done to us, Paul says we need to go after what is good.

Jesus Christ is our perfect example of this. He claimed to be the Son of God (which He truly is), thus claiming to be equal with God. (**Matthew 26:63, 64**) Because of this, He was condemned to die. He was then ridiculed, beaten, and hung on a cross to die. Even those standing around him said, “If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” (**Matthew 27:40**) Jesus did not deserve any of this kind of treatment, and He could have simply spoken the words and those

mocking Him would have died. Instead, he chose to do what was ultimately the kindest, most loving thing anyone has ever done. He stayed on the cross and gave His life as payment for your sins and mine. He did what was good for all.

### **Application**

The next time someone does something evil to you, remember what Jesus did for you. Remember what Paul teaches us: pursue what is good for all. This will glorify God.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:16 - Rejoice Always

Rejoice always,

### Truth to Learn

Christians should always be filled with joy.

### Behind the Words

The Greek verb translated “rejoice,” is *chairō*, which literally means “to be calmly happy, to be glad, or to rejoice.” It is expressed here in the imperative mood, indicating a command.

“Always” is from *pantote*, which we saw in yesterday’s verse. It means “all the time.”

### Meaning Explained

Here’s a little nugget for all you trivia buffs. In the Greek text, this is the shortest verse in the New Testament. It is made up of only two words. **John 11:35**, which has the reputation of being the shortest verse in the Bible (**Jesus wept**), contains three words in the Greek text. Now, back to our study --

Back in verses twelve and thirteen, Paul instructed us on how we are to regard and respect our hard working pastors. Then he challenged us regarding how we are to deal with people in the church who cause division and how we are to comfort and support the timid and weak members of our church. In yesterday’s verse, he informed us that getting retaliation for bad things done to us is not what God wants us to do. Instead, we are to always pursue the performance of good deeds.

Now, for the next few verses Paul focuses on the attitudes and actions we need to give attention to in our personal lives. The first attitude he wants us to develop is that of a joyous outlook on life. He commands us to be joyful at all times. *But what if I’m going through tough times and bad things are happening to me?* you may ask. It is especially important in the midst of difficult circumstances to have an attitude of joy. Yes, it’s easy to get depressed and discouraged when bad things are happening to you; however, Paul is not making a suggestion here, he is giving us a command from God.

The key is to recognize that Paul is talking about spiritual joy, not just a fleshly, emotional happiness. As Christians we need to be constantly focused on what God has done for us and the promise He has given us. God is a holy, righteous God. He is totally sinless and because of His righteousness, He must judge sinners. When we realize how sinful we are and that the penalty for our sinfulness is eternal death and damnation, we begin to recognize how undeserving we are of God’s grace.

Bad things happen to us for three reasons:

- They are the consequences of our own sinfulness (God promises us forgiveness of our sin, not avoidance of its consequence).
- God allows them to happen to us in order to help us grow spiritually and become more Christ-like.
- They are a result of the sinful, ungodly world in which we live.

No matter what the source, however, we can be filled with joy because one day we will leave this sinful world and we will spend eternity in God's presence. This is much better than the eternal fate that unbelievers face, whether they know it (or believe it) or not.

### **Application**

In the midst of difficult circumstances we can be filled with joy, knowing that we are God's children and we will spend eternity in His presence. Therefore, my friend, no matter what your circumstances are, learn to be filled with joy.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:17 - Pray Unceasingly

pray without ceasing,

### Truth to Learn

Our prayer life is to be a continual part of our walk with God.

### Behind the Words

“Pray” is translated from the Greek verb *proseuchomai*. This word is made up of *pros*, meaning “to or toward” and *euchomai*, which literally means “to speak out” or “to express a wish.”

Therefore, *proseuchomai* means “to express a wish to someone” or “to speak out to someone.” In virtually every occurrence of this verb in the New Testament, the person being spoken to is God. The verb is expressed here in the imperative mood, expressing a command.

The words “without ceasing” are from the Greek adverb *adialeiptōs*, which is made up of *a*, meaning “without” and a form of the verb *dialeipō*, meaning “to interrupt” or “to leave a gap.” Thus, *adialeiptōs* literally means “without interruption.” In common usage, however, it means “constantly recurring” not “continuously occurring.” This word was used by Greeks to describe a cough that would not go away. They were not referring to a constant cough, but a persistent one.

### Meaning Explained

Paul has switched his teaching from that of how we are to interact with others in the church to how we are to conduct our own personal Christian life. Verses sixteen, seventeen, and eighteen deal primarily with attitudes, while verses nineteen through twenty-two deal primarily with actions. In yesterday’s verse we learned that we are to have an attitude of rejoicing within our spirit at all times. Today, Paul focuses on our attitude of prayer.

As in yesterday’s verse, today’s verse is a command given to us by God. We are to pray unceasingly. There are two ways of interpreting this command. The first is a literal interpretation, in which we are to pray without interruption. This could be called our attitude of prayer. In other words, from the moment we wake in the morning until we fall asleep at night, we are to have an awareness of and communion with God. The other interpretation could be called our persistence in prayer. In other words, we are to be repeatedly communicating with God throughout each day.

Let’s look at Jesus as our example. As the second person of the Godhead, He was constantly aware of God the Father and God the Spirit. However, we find that there were times when He stopped praying. For instance, in **Luke 11:1** it says of Jesus, “**And it happened, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said to Him ...**” Jesus stopped praying long enough to teach His disciples how to pray. Another aspect of praying persistently is given to us in **Luke 18:1-5**. In these verses Jesus is teaching the importance of repeatedly making our requests known to God, without giving up.

As a final note on prayer, keep in mind the advice a wise Christian gave me when I was a new believer. He said, “It is better to pray short in public and long in private.” Think about that!

### Application

Prayer – talking with God – is a foundation stone of our walk with Him through our life on earth. We are to have a constant attitude of prayer and we are to be continually talking to Him. And, we need to listen while we are talking.

## **1 Thessalonians 5:18 - Thankful For Everything** **in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.**

### **Truth to Learn**

Christians are to be thankful for everything!

### **Behind the Words**

The word translated “everything” is *pas*, meaning “all.” It includes the idea of plurality, meaning “all the parts” or “every.” In this verse it is expressed as a neuter adjective, so it could be translated as “all things” or “everything.”

“Give thanks” is from the Greek verb *eucharisteō*, which is composed of *eu*, meaning “good” or “well” and a form of *charidzomai*, meaning “to grant” or “to give.” Thus, *eucharisteō* means “to express gratitude” or “to give thanks.”

### **Meaning Explained**

In the past two verses, Paul has given us a couple of commands regarding Christian attitudes: always rejoicing and ceaseless prayer. He now adds a third attitude that we are to have: giving thanks for everything. This is not the only place in the New Testament where we are told to give thanks for everything. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul said:

giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father,  
(**Ephesians 5:20**)

And, in his letter to the Colossians, he said:

And *whatever* you do in word or in deed, *do* all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. (**Colossians 3:17**)

Also, in his letter to the Philippian Christians, Paul said:

Be anxious about nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; (**Philippians 4:6**)

As with giving praise, however, it is difficult for us to be thankful for situations in which we feel physical or emotional pain. However, James has given us a similar command in the first chapter of his letter:

My brothers, consider it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the proving of your faith brings about patience. But let patience have *its* completing work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. (**James 1:2-4**)

Yes, it’s hard to be filled with joy and to give thanks to God for trials and troubles, but it’s what God expects from Christians. Doing so will produce patience in us, as James told us. But we also know that God will use even these difficult times to produce good, as Paul told the Christians in Rome:

And we know that to those who love God all things work together for good, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. (**Romans 8:28**)

Finally, the reason we should give thanks for everything that happens is because it’s God’s will for every Christian. In fact, the grammatical construction in the Greek text indicates that

everything in this and the previous two verses (rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in everything) are part of God's will for every Christian.

### **Application**

Whether we're healthy or sick, whether we're rich or poor, whether life is easy or hard, whether we feel like it or not, it is our responsibility to give thanks to God. It is what God wants, it is what He expects, and it is what He deserves. Let's get on our knees right now and thank God for everything in our lives!

## 1 Thessalonians 5:19 - Let The Spirit Breathe

**Do not quench the Spirit.**

### Truth to Learn

It is wrong for Christians to suppress the working of the Spirit.

### Behind the Words

The word “quench” is translated from *sbennumi*, which means “to extinguish” or “to quench.” When used metaphorically, it means “to suppress” or “to hinder.” The verb is expressed here in the imperative mood, indicating a command.

“Spirit” is from the Greek noun *pneuma*, from which we get our English words pneumatic (meaning “air filled”). *Pneuma* is based on the verb *pneō*, meaning “to breath.” Thus, *pneuma* refers to “a breath of air” or “air in motion.” This is the word used to describe the vital spirit of life or the breath breathed by God into man which gives him life. It is also used to refer to that part of man which is independent of the body. When used of God, it is a reference to the third person of the godhead, the Holy Spirit.

### Meaning Explained

As we mentioned earlier, Paul is in the midst of teaching how we are to conduct ourselves in our own personal lives. In the previous three verses, although he talked about actions, Paul was primarily referring to actions that spring from our inner attitudes. In this verse and the three that follow, he talks about actions that demonstrate our submission and commitment to God.

In today’s verse we are commanded not to quench the Spirit. In the Greek text the word *mē* (not) precedes the verb. As it is written here it means to stop quenching the Spirit or to break the habit of quenching the Spirit. Apparently, the Thessalonians were trying to suppress the manifestation of the Spirit of God and the use of spiritual gifts given to them.

If you compare this church and the church in Corinth, where there was an excessive display of spiritual gifts, you can see that they weren’t much different from churches today. There are some modern day churches that make a big display of the gifts of the spirit like the church in Corinth was doing. But, there are other churches where the gifts of the Spirit are suppressed and looked down upon. Paul does not approve of either of these extremes. Some churches today even teach that some of the spiritual gifts are no longer in effect today, but their basis for this claim is tenuous at best.

What we need to recognize is that God gave Christians these spiritual gifts for the building up of the body of Christ. This is what he told the Corinthians:

So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, seek to build up the church that you may abound. (1 Corinthians 14:12)

Therefore, whether we would seek a particular spiritual gift for personal benefit, or suppress the manifestation of genuine gifts of the Spirit, we are not pleasing to God. However, if we are completely submitted to the will of God, we will use the gift or gifts He has given us to build up the body of Christ and in doing so bring glory to God and God alone.

### Application

If you know what your spiritual gift is, then seek to use it to build up other members of the body of Christ. If you don't know what your gift is, then submit yourself wholly to God and seek His face. If you do so, He will reveal to you what your gift is and how to use it for His glory and honor. However, like all prayers to God, do not expect an immediate answer. It may take years before your gift is revealed to you. In the meantime, be active in serving him. Try on different responsibilities within the body until you find the one that fits you and your gift.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:20 - Foretelling or Forth-telling?

**Do not despise prophecies.**

### **Truth to Learn**

Christians should only believe a preacher or teacher if their message is completely supported by what the Bible says.

### **Behind the Words**

The word “despise” is translated from the Greek verb *exoutheneō*. It is made up of *ek*, used as an intensifier and the verb *outheneō*, meaning “to treat as nothing.” In general usage *exoutheneō* means “to despise” or “to treat something as if it has *no* value.” As in the previous verse, in the Greek text the word *mē* (not) precedes the verb which is in the present tense and the imperative mood. Therefore, the text means “stop despising prophecies” or “stop treating prophecies as if they have no value.”

“Prophecies” is transliterated (brought straight over from Greek to English) from the noun *prophēteia*. It is made up of *pro*, meaning “before, in time or position” and a form of the verb *phēmi*, meaning “to tell.” The verb form of this word can refer either to foretelling (telling something before it happens) or forth-telling (declaring a message to others). In Hebrew, the word translated prophecy is based on the word stem *nābā*, which simply means “to speak by divine inspiration, either in prediction or simple discourse.” Likewise, the word transliterated “prophecy” in the New Testament means “to speak by divine inspiration.”

### **Meaning Explained**

There is much confusion in the Church today regarding the gift of prophecy. Many people believe that prophecy only refers to telling something before it happens. However, even in the Old Testament, the messages of the prophets contained as much, if not more, about the present than they did about the future.

The Old Testament prophets were delivering messages that came from God to the people. Similarly, in the New Testament church the value of a prophetic message is that it is inspired by God. In the Old Testament, many of the messages of the prophets became part of the written word of God. Today, however, we have a completed Word of God (the Bible) and do not need any new revelation by prophets (such as predicting the future). For that reason, a New Testament prophet today is not a foreteller, only a forth-teller.

In the Old Testament, the messages of the prophets had to always be true. If their forth-telling was contrary to the written Word of God or if their foretelling was not 100% accurate 100% of the time, they were declared to be a false prophet and they were to be stoned to death. Likewise, in the church age, if the message of a prophet does not agree completely with the Bible, that prophet is a false prophet and none of his messages are to be believed.

In today’s verse Paul declares that we are to stop considering prophecies to be of no value. Certainly, if someone claiming to have the gift of prophecy contradicts the Bible, he is not to be believed. But someone who truly has the gift of prophecy today is declaring God’s word and should be listened to, not ignored.

## **Application**

Whenever we are listening to a message from a preacher or learning something from a Bible teacher, we need to search the Scriptures to validate whether what they are saying is true or not. Don't believe any message from a preacher or teacher unless it is fully supported by the Bible. Be like the Christians of Berea of whom it was said:

These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily *to find out* whether these things were so.

**(Acts 17:11)**

## 1 Thessalonians 5:21 - Find Good and Hold On

**Test all things; hold fast what is good.**

### Truth to Learn

We are to look for good and hold on to it when we find it.

### Behind the Words

*Dokimadzō* is the Greek verb translated “test” in today’s verse. This Greek word means “to test something to determine its worth.” It is the word used of testing gold or other precious metals to determine its value. There is another Greek word often translated “test.” It is *peiradzō*, which is often translated “tempt.” It is distinguished from *dokimadzō* in that it is a test or a temptation to try to induce sinfulness.

The word translated “hold fast” is *katechō*, which is made up of *kata*, used as an intensifier and *echō*, meaning “to have” or “to hold.” *Katechō* means “to hold firmly” or “keep hold of.”

“Good” is from the Greek noun *kalos*, which refers to that which is good in quality or character. In other words, it refers to “something that is beautiful or that is morally or constitutionally good.” A different Greek noun, *agathos* refers to “some deed that is useful or beneficial to others.”

### Meaning Explained

Paul is in the middle of a series of short statements about a fruitful Christian walk. He started off with three attitudes: rejoicing, praying, and giving thanks. He follows these up with five actions that demonstrate a life submitted to God.

In both of the previous two verses Paul used a grammatical form that indicates that we are to stop doing certain things. It is common in Paul’s teaching to follow up negative commands (things we are not to do, or that we are to stop doing) with a positive replacement (what we are to do instead). In today’s verse he commands us to do two things to replace the actions we are to stop doing. The first thing is to test all things with the purpose of finding good. Instead of suppressing the working of the Holy Spirit and treating prophecies with scorn, we are to test all things. Since verses nineteen and twenty were focused on workings of the Spirit through spiritually gifted men, it is reasonable to assume that he is still talking about the use of spiritual gifts. Instead of taking a negative position against workings of the Spirit, we should test them to see if they are truly of the Spirit of God or simply manifestations of the will of man.

In **1 Corinthians 12:10** Paul talks about the use of the gifts in the church, and immediately after the gift of prophecy, he mentions the discerning of spirits, that is, a spiritual gift of determining whether the prophecy is truly from the Spirit of God. Also, immediately after mentioning the gift of tongues, he cites the interpretation of tongues. Discerning of spirits and interpreting tongues are both gifts that test the use of spiritual gifts.

Finally, in today’s verse Paul commands us to cling to whatever is inherently good. In order to do that, we have to be constantly on the look-out for good things. When we see good things or encounter good people, we are to emulate them and make such things part of our own Christian walk.

### **Application**

Instead of being negative about everything that takes place in our churches, we need to be positive and look for the good things and good people who demonstrate actions born out of love for our Savior and other people.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:22 - Avoid All Evil

**Abstain from every form of evil.**

### **Truth to Learn**

Live life in God's presence and in obedience to Him.

### **Behind the Words**

“Abstain” is translated from the Greek verb *apechomai*, which is made up of *apo*, meaning “from” or “away from” and a form of *echō*, meaning “to have” or “to hold.” Thus, this word literally means “to hold away from.” It is expressed in the middle voice (action done by the subject, to the subject), so it means “to hold oneself away from.” It is most often translated as “abstain from” or “refrain from.” In the current verse, this word is emphasized by the addition of the preposition *apo*, meaning “from” or “away from.” So, the sense is “keep yourselves far away from any form of evil.”

The word “form” is from a variation of the Greek word *eidōs*, meaning “to see.” It specifically refers to “that which is seen” or “the appearance of something.” In most of the Greek writing of Paul's time, however, this word is not used to mean “appearance as opposed to reality,” but to “any kind” or “any form” of something. This seems to be Paul's intent here.

“Evil” is from *ponēros*, which specifically refers to “that which is inherently evil in a moral or spiritual sense.”

### **Meaning Explained**

Grammatically, this verse is connected to the previous verse. These two verses should be translated as three commands separated by commas: “Test all things, hold fast what is good, abstain from every form of evil.”

There are two different interpretations of this verse among Biblical scholars. The first is that we are to keep ourselves from the appearance of evil. The problem with this interpretation is that it forces us to be more focused on what other people think about our actions than what God thinks about our actions. Yes, we are to love our brothers and sisters in Christ, and we are not to do anything that would cause a brother or sister to stumble. But, if we go through life worrying about what others think of what we are doing, then we are denying God's lordship over us. For instance, if Abraham was concerned with the appearance of his actions, then he would never have offered Isaac on the altar. He was more focused on being obedient to God than on what others might think about his actions.

The other interpretation of this verse is that we are to keep ourselves from every kind of evil, or every form of evil. Doing this causes our focus to be on God and what He thinks about the things that we allow ourselves to do. Living in this manner is even more restrictive than being concerned about what others think of our actions. After all, in our sin-sick minds, we could conceive of things to do that don't appear to others to be evil, but because of our motives they may, in fact, be evil. This is a form of evil. Let's take Cain as our example here. He brought an offering to God from what he harvested from the ground, but God apparently had instructed both him and his brother, Able, to offer an animal sacrifice. Cain's offering doesn't appear to be evil, but because of his motives it was.

### **Application**

As we walk our life-path, let this be our guiding principle: “Do what pleases God and don’t worry what others might think.” If we love God and are submitted and obedient to Him, we will be a testimony of His love for others.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:23 - Sanctification and Preservation

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### Truth to Learn

God is the one who makes us holy and keeps us to the end.

### Behind the Words

“Completely” is from *holotelēs*, made up of *holos*, meaning “all, or the whole” and *telos*, meaning “the end point.” Thus, *holotelēs* means “completely to the very last part.”

“Spirit” is translated from *pneuma*, meaning “a breath of air.” It is that part of man which gives life to all animal life (see **Genesis 2:7; 7:15, 22**).

The word “soul” is translated from *psuchē* (or psyche). This word refers to the affections, desires, and emotions, which distinguish mankind from the rest of the animal world.

“Body” is from the Greek word *soma*, which refers to the physical part of man.

The word translated “kept” is from *tēreō*, which means “to guard and keep from loss or injury.”

*Amemtōs* is the Greek word translated “blameless.” It is made up of the negative particle *a*, meaning “not” or “without” and a form of *memphomai*, meaning “to find fault.”

### Meaning Explained

Having finished his teaching to the Christians in Thessalonica, Paul now expresses a prayer for them (and us). He prays for complete sanctification for the saints. As we have noted a number of times, sanctification refers to the state of “being set apart from sin and its consequences.” This is not, as some churches teach, a condition in which we have so completely turned from sin in our life that we become completely sinless. Notice that we are not the ones who set ourselves apart; that is God’s doing alone. Also see that this complete sanctification occurs when our Lord comes for us.

Almost since the day Paul wrote this letter, there has been an ongoing debate among Christians as to whether man is made up of two parts (soul and body) or three parts (spirit, soul, and body). The main argument for the two-part theory is the fact that soul and body are contrasted a number of times in the Bible (**Job 7:15; Psalms 31:9, 44:25; Isaiah 10:18; Micah 6:7; and Matthew 10:28**), whereas this is the only verse where all three are listed. Notice, however, that in **1 Corinthians 15:44**, Paul refers to our earthly body as a natural body (literally soul body) and our resurrected body as a spirit body. If the soul and the spirit are the same, then so will our heavenly body be the same as our earthly body. Also note that the writer of Hebrews indicates that the Word of God can divide the soul and spirit. Given these two facts alone, it is reasonable to conclude that man is made up of spirit, soul, and body.

Finally, notice that Paul tells us that it is God who preserves us blameless. He is the one who has declared us to be righteous (without sin), and He is the only one who can prevent the loss of that righteousness until the coming of the Lord.

### Application

As we study who and what God is, and as we continue to submit ourselves to Him, we come to realize more fully how powerful and righteous He is and how weak and sinful we are. We also become more and more aware of how undeserving we are of the legal righteousness and the salvation that has been given to us.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:24 - The Promise Keeper

He who calls you *is faithful, who also will do it.*

### Truth to Learn

God will keep His promise regarding your salvation.

### Behind the Words

“He who calls” is translated from *ho kalōn*. The word *ho* is the third person singular personal pronoun (he) and *kalōn* is the present participle form of the verb *kaleō*, meaning “to call” or “to call forth.” A literal translation of these two words could be “the one calling” or “he who is calling.” The emphasis is on the one doing the calling rather than the act itself.

The word “faithful” is from the Greek noun *pistos*. It is based on the verb *pistis*, meaning “to convince, to believe, or to have faith.” *Pistos* refers to someone who is faithful or trustworthy, that is, someone who will do what he said he will do.

The Greek verb *poieō* is translated as “will ... do it.” *Poieō* means “to make” or “to do” in a wide variety of applications. It is expressed here in the future tense, indicating something that will happen in the future.

### Meaning Explained

In the previous verse, the Apostle Paul expressed a prayer concerning the Christians in Thessalonica. He asked that God would set them apart completely from sin and the consequences of that sin. He also asked that God would guard them to keep them blameless until Christ comes to claim His own (at the rapture).

Now he reminds them (and us) about a couple of very significant facts regarding our God. The first is that God is the one who called each of us. That’s another way of saying that God is the one who chose us. Let’s look at Jesus’ disciples for an example of this. In **Matthew 4:18-21** we see that Jesus called Peter, Andres, James, and John to come and follow Him. And in the upper room after they had completed the last supper, Jesus told all of His disciples:

**You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. (John 15:16)**

We don’t know what God’s criteria were when He decided whom to call, and Paul does not take any time in any of his writings trying to figure out those criteria. Paul’s point in today’s verse is not to prove anything, he is simply stating that God is the one who calls us, and He is completely faithful in performing what He said He will do.

The question we have to ask ourselves here is *What is it that He said He would do?* The answer is in the previous verse, God will completely set us apart from sin and its consequences, and He will preserve us blameless until the day He comes to take us home with Him. In other words, our Salvation is completely a work of God. We didn’t deserve it, we don’t deserve it, and we won’t deserve it. This should cause every Christian to humbly bow at the feet of our Savior in thanksgiving for the greatest gift that anyone could ever receive: our Salvation.

### Application

If you are a Christian, then you are one of the called ones according to God's purpose (**Romans 8:28**). And, he will preserve you until the end. You will not be lost because you are His forever. Praise be to God!

## 1 Thessalonians 5:25 - Humble Prayer Request

**Brothers, pray for us.**

### Truth to Learn

We all need prayer so that we can bring glory to God.

### Behind the Words

The word “brothers” is translated from *adelphos*, which is made up of a connective particle, *a* and a form of the noun *delphus*, meaning “the womb.” Thus, *adelphos* literally means “from the same womb.” In the New Testament this word is used to refer to people who are of the same family, including cousins and other more distant relatives. It is used frequently by Paul to refer to fellow Christians since we are all children of our Heavenly Father.

“Pray” is translated from the Greek verb *proseuchomai*. This word is made up of *pros*, meaning “to or toward” and *euchomai*, which literally means “to speak out” or “to express a wish.” Therefore, *proseuchomai* means “to express a wish to someone” or “to speak out to someone.”

### Meaning Explained

In the first century of the church, there is no one who did more for the growth of the church and the spread of the Gospel than the Apostle Paul. From the time of his conversion until the day of his death, he worked tirelessly to proclaim the good news and build up Christians throughout the known world. And yet, in all of his writings there is never even a hint of selfish pride in what he accomplished. Paul realized that it was God working through him who accomplished great things for the church. He realized he was a sinner; in fact, he thought of himself as the worst sinner of all. Here’s what he said:

Faithful *is* the Word and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. **(1 Timothy 1:15)**

Because he knew that anything he might accomplish was the result of God working through him, Paul prayed a lot and asked others to pray for him. He was not afraid to ask for prayer, even from the very people to whom he was ministering. We see this in today’s verse as well as the following verses:

As to the rest, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run *swiftly* and be glorified ... **(2 Thessalonians 3:1)**

Continue earnestly in prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us, that God might open to us a door for the word, that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ ... **(Colossians 4:2-3)**

with all prayer and supplication pray at all times in the Spirit, ... *pray* also for me, that utterance may be given to me, in the opening of my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, **(Ephesians 6:18-19)**

Now I urge you, brothers, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in prayers to God on my behalf, **(Romans 15:30)**

### **Application**

Given all that Paul accomplished, it is amazing that he was so humble and so frequently asked others to pray for him. Notice that he did not make selfish prayer requests. The focus of his prayer requests was the glory of God. When you ask others to pray for you, is it for your benefit and glory, or God's?

## 1 Thessalonians 5:26 - A Holy Kiss?

**Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss.**

### **Truth to Learn**

The early church employed a kiss as a customary greeting.

### **Behind the Words**

“Greet” is from *aspadzomai*, meaning “to enfold in the arms” or as we would say, “to hug.” But, it can also mean “to salute,” “to welcome,” or “to greet.” It is expressed here in the imperative mood, indicating a command.

The word translated “kiss” is *philēma*, which is based on the verb *phileō*, meaning “to love as brothers or best friends.” The word *philēma* refers specifically to a kiss as a token of friendship or love.

### **Meaning Explained**

One of Paul’s final commands to the Christians in Thessalonica is to greet one another with a holy kiss. Many of us in the Western churches would respond with, “A what?!” Some of us are real huggers, while others will only give or accept a hug from a close friend. But a kiss? To most of us, a kiss is a sign of affection that goes beyond just being friends and we wouldn’t even think of kissing those who occupy the pews or chairs around us on Sunday morning. Not so in the early church. They often greeted each other with a kiss, lip to lip.

To us, a kiss on the lips carries the idea of a romantic relationship between a man and a woman. We might consider a kiss on the cheek, but only for someone with whom we have a close familial relationship. Those of us used to a small intimate church family might consider such a kiss on the cheek as acceptable, but those of us in large congregations would never even think of it.

In the Jewish faith at the time of Christ there was a very strict separation of men and women in both temple observances and synagogue services. It was very common for men to kiss men and for women to kiss women as a sign of friendship and brotherly (sisterly) love. This custom carried over into the Christian church even though men and women worshipped together. Christian commentaries over the past two to three centuries, however, have been very careful and very explicit in their description of this type of holy kissing as being only a kiss on the cheek. But, there is sufficient evidence to believe that the holy kiss that Paul was referring to within the church was a kiss on the lips, male to male, female to female, or male to female.

Also, to the first century Christians there was a difference between a brotherly kiss and a romantic kiss. One ancient source even goes so far as to declare, “No erotic kissing in church; instead, one must kiss with a closed and chaste mouth.” Another writer warns against “those who kiss a second time because they enjoyed the first kiss so much.”

Does that mean that we have to adopt lip to lip kissing as a greeting in church in order to be a completely scriptural church? No! It means that a customary church greeting in Paul’s day was a kiss on the lips, whereas today it is our custom to give a hug or perhaps just a handshake.

## **Application**

It is important to greet brothers and sisters in Christ as fellow members of the family of God. It is a sign of acceptance and fellowship. A firm handshake or a familiar embrace can lift the spirits of both parties involved. So, next Sunday morning, greet one another with a holy hug!

## 1 Thessalonians 5:27 - Read God's Letters

I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brothers.

### Truth to Learn

Reading God's Word is essential for all Christians.

### Behind the Words

The Greek word translated "charge" is *horkidzō*, which is based on *horkos*, meaning "a solemn oath." The verb *horkidzō* means "to put someone to an oath" or "to ask someone to swear an oath." In a more common English expression we might say, "Promise me that you will ..."

"Epistle" is transliterated (a word of one language brought directly into another) from *epistolē*, which simply means "a written correspondence" or "a letter."

The verb "read" is from *anaginōskō*, which is made up of *ana*, meaning "again" and *ginōskō*, meaning "to know." The word *anaginōskō* originally meant "to know again" or "to perceive accurately." Later, it came to mean "to recognize" and then "to read." By the time of the New Testament *anaginōskō* always meant "to gain knowledge by reading" or simply "to read."

*Hagios* is the word translated "holy." It is based on *hagos*, meaning "that which inspires awe." The meaning of *hagios* is "that which is set apart from common use to be used in the service of God." All Christians have been set-apart from the world and set-apart to God. Therefore, all Christians are holy.

### Meaning Explained

During the first century of the Christian church, the only Scripture (written teaching for mankind from God) that existed was what we today call the Old Testament. Originally written in Hebrew and Aramaic, it was translated into Greek a little more than 200 years before the birth of Jesus. When the Messiah (Jesus) came, He brought new teaching, emphasizing the intent of the law rather than the letter of the law. This new way of living (by faith, not by sight) was taught by His apostles to those who believed that Jesus is the Son of God and that He gave His life on the cross to pay for their sins.

As we know, word of mouth teaching can get easily perverted, either intentionally or unintentionally; therefore, the apostles wrote letters to the established churches explaining the teachings of Christ, applying these teachings to problems that had begun to spring up in the churches. Many of these letters were addressed to a specific church, but they contained doctrinal teaching that applied to all Christians. For this reason, these letters were copied and carried to other churches so that all Christians could benefit from the teaching.

This practice of copying apostolic letters may have originated from today's verse. Since 1 Thessalonians was one of the first of these letters written (the letter written by James was probably the first), this practice of reading the letter to all Christians became a common practice.

Since the invention of the printing press, the contents of the entire Bible have been made available to all people, and this admonition of the Apostle Paul applies equally to all Christians. But, it applies to the entire Bible, not just this letter.

### Application

How often do you read your Bible? Is it a daily practice that has become an important part of your life? If not, it should be. Reading God's Word is essential for all Christians. How can God speak to you if you aren't reading His letters to you?

## 1 Thessalonians 5:28 - Our Lord and Master

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be with you. Amen.*

### Truth to Learn

Jesus Christ is our gracious Lord and Master. He owns us.

### Behind the Words

“Grace” is translated from the Greek noun *charis*, which is from the verb *chairō*, meaning “to rejoice.” Therefore, we see that *charis* is “that which causes joy, pleasure, gratification, or acceptance as a result of a kindness granted.” It is often translated as grace, thanks, or gratitude.

The word “Lord” is from *kurios*, which is based on *kuros*, meaning “might, power, or control.” *Kurios* refers to someone who has supreme authority or control over someone else.

*Christos* is the word transliterated “Christ,” which is based on the verb *chriō*, meaning “to anoint.” Thus, *christos* literally means “the anointed one.” It is equivalent to the Hebrew word *mashiach*, or Messiah.

The word “amen” is transliterated from the Hebrew word *‘āmēn*, meaning “to be trustworthy, steady, or firm.” It is often translated as “truth,” “verily,” or “it is so.” It is usually appended to the end of a prayer or a hymn.

### Meaning Explained

Paul closes this letter with his typical salutation of grace. Probably more than any other characteristic of God, Paul is ever mindful of God’s grace toward us. Every single letter of Paul’s ends with a reminder of God’s grace (**Romans 16:24; 1 Corinthians 16:23; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 6:18; Ephesians 6:24; Philippians 4:23; Colossians 4:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:28; 2 Thessalonians 3:18; 1 Timothy 6:21; 2 Timothy 4:22; Titus 3:15; Philemon 1:25**). In fact, the only other writings of the New Testament that end with a mention of God’s grace are Hebrews (which some people believe was written by Paul), 2 Peter, and Revelation.

God’s grace, as shown in our salvation and the many blessings that result from it, should serve as a constant reminder to us that without it we are dead in our sins (**Ephesians 2:1**) and destined to receive the wrath of God. It is only by God’s grace that we who deserve eternity in hell, separated from the love of God, should receive His merciful and priceless salvation, fellowship with Him while on this earth, and the promise of eternity in His presence, bathed in His love. A thorough understanding of God’s grace should cause every Christian to humbly fall before our Lord with gratitude and thanksgiving.

But, Paul tells us something else here about God’s grace. It is “**the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.**” This could also be translated as “the grace from our Lord Jesus Christ.” Grace comes, not simply from the godhead (all three persons), but specifically from the second person of the godhead, our Lord Jesus Christ. And Paul tells us that Jesus Christ is not just our God, but our Lord. Jesus Christ has purchased us with his blood (**Revelation 5:9**). We do not own ourselves, we were bought by, and now are owned by, Jesus Christ (**1 Corinthians 6:19, 20**). He is our owner, our Lord, and our Master.

### Application

By the grace of God, we will not get what we deserve (eternity in hell); instead, we will get what we don't deserve (eternal salvation). Let us all fall on our faces with humble thanksgiving and gratitude, and let us strive to do the will of Him who owns us – our Lord Jesus Christ.