

# Thanksgiving in Tribulation

- ‘In doing what we ought we deserve no praise, because it is our duty’ – Augustine
  - True: we do not deserve God’s grace ... yet He gives it
- Paul praises the young, suffering, persevering saints in Thessalonica

# Paul, still at Corinth, writes 2 Thes. Why?

- Church is persecuted (ch.1). They must be active in obedience... Mt.13:21
- Some are troubled about the return of Christ (ch.2). Paul cannot let them remain in error; he corrects their false views
- Some have quit work to prepare for Lord's coming; they need church discipline (ch.3). This is a last resort; some must have a stubborn streak

# Paul commends . . . and encourages

- Commends their *faith* and *love*, 1:3
- Encourages them in *persecution*, 1:4, 11

# I. The Passage

## Verse 1:

- church of Thessalonica, in God Father and Lord Jesus Christ
  - One preposition = both Father and Jesus are 'God': same attributes

## Verse 2:

- *Grace* (favor) . . . . *peace* (all is well)
- God gives us everything we need to be all that we can be...despite persecution
  - “From” God and Lord... (one preposition for both)
- No better prayer to offer for loved ones

## Verse 3:

[3-10: one long sentence]

- 3: Bound (ought): I couldn't help but thank God always for you, brothers...His creation, Ep.2:10
  1. **Faith** – grows abundantly (1 Th.3:10). V.4
  2. **Love** – abounds (1 Th.3:12)
    - Mutual. Everyone has his part
    - Body edifies body

“Faith is the source –love is the outcome of our lives as Christians”

## Verse 4:

We boast of you (1 Th.1:9) [2 Co.8:1-6]

Some only gossip; only negative

Paul praises when it's fitting (v.3)

1. Patience, steadfast endurance. Donkey...  
Battery... Ja.1:3
2. Faith, not fragile. Always under attack. Be  
strong in faith. How? Ac.3:16; 1 Co.16:13
3. Paul boasts of them in persecutions and  
tribulations. Ac.5:41. Ac.7

## Verse 5:

Their troubles – clear sign: God will judge righteously (Gn.18:25)

1. Christians suffer unjustly at hands of sinners. 2 Tim.3:12
2. Sinners suffer justly at hands of God. Lk.16:25
  - Mutual reversal in world to come...to adjust injustice of present state

## Verse 6:

God will repay

1. Full and due requital to sinners

“He repays with afflictions those who afflict you” (cf. ESV)

2. Persecutors are paid in their own coin

## Verse 7:

Troubled saints

Will receive rest (relief). *Anacin*

1. *With us* – Paul is not merely lecturing; he gives hope

Same persecutions, same rest. Paul is now separated from them; soon they will be together ... forever

2. *When Lord is revealed* – Rest comes when Christ comes

‘Just one glimpse of Him in glory  
will the toils of life repay’

## Verse 8:

He will inflict full justice

1. *In flaming fire* – His investiture. Ex.19:18.  
Dt.32:35
2. *Taking vengeance* – He inflicts full justice.  
Objects . . .

Do not know God. Ex.5:2

Do not obey gospel. Ro.10:16

# Verse 9:

Punished with . . .

1. Everlasting destruction
  - Final, fatal, forever disaster
  - Not a rehabilitation, not an annihilation
  - No hope for pardon / release
2. From Lord's presence
3. From glory of His power

# Verse 10:

Glorified in His saints...

- Marvelled at, admired among all who have believed...
- Ac.26:12-15, Paul
- Isa.6:5, Isaiah

## Verse 11:

V.3: gave thanks for them

V.4: boasted of them

V.11: prayed also...

1. Enable you to live worthy of His calling (2:14) . . .
2. Give you power to fulfill good things of your faith
3. Work of faith with power. Ja.2:24, 25

Faith is not mere mental acceptance,  
but active response to His will

## Verse 12:

Name of Lord, glorified in you  
(by virtue of your salvation)

and

You in His grace (undeserved favor)

Ep.1<sup>7</sup> In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace

Ep.2<sup>7</sup> that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus

I. The Passage

II. The Purpose

# 1. To save a congregation of abandoned babies, 1-3

- Ac.17: persecutors drove Paul from Thessalonica before he had time to train them: *spiritual babies under a year old*
- Shows power of NT epistles
  - ...As though an apostle stands before us showing the way
  - 1 Co.14:37 commands of Lord
  - Ac.13:27 voices of prophets which are read every Sabbath

## 2. To encourage Christians in persecution, 4

- What happened to them *will* happen to us in various degrees

1. 2 Tim.3:12. 1 Pt.4:12

2. World hates our gospel / beliefs / hope / preaching / example... Jn.15; 1 Jn.3

3. Temptation: compromise... 1 K.19.  
1 Th.1:8

### 3. Produce strong faith for spiritual success, 3-4

- Increase in . . .

1. strong confidence. 2 K.18:19. 2 Th.3:4

2. self-control. Lk.17:4-5

3. spiritual growth. V.3; 1 Th.3:10

4. Encourage steadfast endurance, 4
- Patience and endurance – bear with, put up with ... keep on keeping on. 2 Tim.2:3; 4:3
    1. God can use difficulties and afflictions to strengthen us
    2. “What can’t be cured must be endured”
    3. Hills are littered with souls who started the climb ... but did not finish

## 5. Judgment is coming, 5-10

5: THE *righteous* judgment of God

6: Pay-day is some day

7: Take the anacin...

8: 'Vengeance is Mine...': (Dt.32:35)

Hb.10:30. Context: *apostasy*. 2 Th.1:8.

9: Eternal destruction: no hope, no change...  
forever

10-12: Glorification of Savior

# Conclusion

1. Strong faith, 3. 'My mind is not like a bed which has to be made and remade. There are some things of which I am absolutely sure' – Jas. Agate
2. Spreading love (abounds toward each other, 3). Ep.4:5
3. Steadfast endurance (patience) 4. Thessalonians have suffered financially (Ac.17); physically? ...prison?
  - No matter: it can't compare with His grace, v.10