Paul’s Admiration for the Thessalonians

2 Thessalonians 1:1-12

Introduction:

I. A Word of Praise – 1:3-4

A. What He was Bound to Do – 1:3a

“We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren,”

“Bound”﻿﻿ ὀφείλομεν = we find it necessary. It is as though he had a debt to pay.

“Always” – at all times.

“To thank God for you”. Why them?

B. Why He was Bound to Do It – 1:3b-4

1. Growth – 1:3b

“because your faith grows exceedingly,”

Their faith was growing because it was being tested. {Like the Oak Tree on the hilltop.} Faith that is not tested is faith that is not growing. Not only is their faith growing; it is growing exceedingly. Why? It was being tested exceedingly. Whatever does not kill me, will make me stronger.

2. Grace – 1:3c

“and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other,”

They were gracious in their attitude toward one another. Love abounds

a. Love of Every Person

“the love of [each and] every one of you”

There is a difference between “each” and “every.”

b. Toward Each Other Person

“all abounds toward each other”

3. Glory – boasting – 1:4

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“so that ﻿﻿we ourselves boast (glory) of you among the churches of God ﻿﻿for your patience and faith ﻿﻿in all your persecutions and ﻿﻿tribulations that you endure,”

Paul did not travel to the cities, but either spoke or wrote to the people from those churches. He was that excited about their patience and faith.

II. A Word of Promise – 1:5-10

A. As to the Proof of It – 1:5-6

1. Judgment of Saints – 1:5

“which is ﻿﻿manifest ﻿﻿evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, ﻿﻿for which you also suffer;”

Every believer will enter the Kingdom – the 1,000 year reign of Christ on the earth. But not all believers will rule with Christ in the Kingdom.

God’s judgment is just, (righteous). He makes no exceptions. Those who accept the persecutions and tribulations that come upon them for Christ’s sake, will be counted worthy of ruling in the Kingdom. That judgment will be determined at the Judgment Seat of Christ. (1 Cor. 3 and 2 Cor. 5.) The believer receives the reward, but God receives the glory.

* It is by God’s grace that he is a believer in the first place.
* It is by God’s design that the trials come. And
* It is by God’s grace that the believer overcomes.
* To God be the glory.

e makes no exceptions

2. Judgment of Sinners – 1:6﻿﻿

“since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with ﻿﻿tribulation those who trouble you,”

God is also just (righteous) when He judges the unbeliever. He will mete out trouble to those who are troubling the believer.

B. As to the Present – 1:7a﻿

“and to give you who are troubled ﻿﻿rest with us”

Rest, “ἄνεσιν” relaxation, relief. He does not mean stop resisting, but to rest in Jesus and trust Him for the proper outcome. That is what Paul did and he encourages them to join him in that rest.

C. As to the Prospect – 1:7b-10

1. A Day of Revelation is Coming – 1:7b

“when ﻿﻿the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,”

We need to watch closely here and see to which coming Paul is making reference. The Lord coming with His angels refers to the second coming to the earth. He is going to set things right. This will happen at the end of the tribulation. It is at that time that their persecutors will be judged.

2. The Day of Revenge is Coming – 1:8-9

1. The Essential Nature of the Wrath – 1:8

“in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

There seems to be two groups in verse 8,

1. “Those who do not know God” -- These people have not heard the gospel.
2. “Those who obeyed not the gospel” -- They heard the gospel, but did not believe. It sounds as though there is no difference in judgment.

b. The Eternal Nature of the Wrath – 1:9

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“These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and ﻿﻿from the glory of His power,”

“Be punished” literally means ‘pay the penalty” Everlasting punishment is just as long as everlasting life.

Matt. 25:46

“And ﻿﻿these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into everlasting life.”

 Dr. Tom Constable in the Bible Knowledge Commentary writes: “Separation from the Lord’s presence (lit., “face”) is the essence of eternal punishment. On the other hand being in the Lord’s presence will make heaven, heaven. A Christian’s hope is to see and be with the Lord; the judgment of unbelievers is to be eternally inaccessible to His presence[[1]](#footnote-1)

3. The Day of Reward is Coming – 1:10

“when He comes, in that Day, ﻿﻿to be ﻿﻿glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who ﻿﻿believe, because our testimony among you was believed.”

When the Lord comes with (not for) His saints, He will be admired in them, the saints who come with Him.

And He will be admired by those on the earth who have believed. At His coming to the earth He will:

* Defeat the Armageddon armies gathered around Jerusalem.
* Judge living Jews – Ezekiel 20:33-38 (v. 9)
* Judge living Gentiles- Matt. 24:31-46 (v. 9)

III. A Word of Prayer – 1:11-12

1. When Paul Prayed – 1:11a

“Therefore we also pray always for you that our God…”

 Paul and Titus and Timothy prayed to their God who is also the God of the Thessalonians, (Our God). They prayed “always”- continually.

B. What Paul Prayed – 1:11b-12﻿﻿

1. That They would be Counted Worthy of their Calling – 1:11b

“would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power,”

Not that they are worthy in themselves. But following His will for their lives, in the power of the Holy Spirit, using the spiritual gift(s) from the Holy Spirit, they would be found faithful to His calling and receive His commendation at His coming.

2. That the Name of the Lord might be Glorified – 1:12

“that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

We can’t make His name more glorious, but we can bring attention to that glorious name by our faithful living for Him.

Conclusion:

What was true for the church at Thessalonica is certainly the standard for us as well. As we face these Scriptures in this modern generation, God challenges us, regardless of our circumstances or difficulties, to lead a life that is faithful and well-pleasing in His sight, bringing honor and glory to His name as we look for His coming.

1. Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (2:716). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)