

## **1 Thessalonians 1.**

Read the chapter. Paul, with Silvanus and Timothy are writing this epistle, in prayer. The gospel, they say, was preached to the Thessalonian Church in word, power and the Holy Spirit, receiving Paul and becoming followers of not only Paul, but Silvanus and Timothy and examples to the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. I missed out the part about the "much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost".

We notice that most of the Church today does not talk about all the afflictions of the brethren that have been on the mission field that also have been martyred. The persecution going on right now in villages, towns, cities is continuous but for some reason "you okay, me okay" and don't bother talking about it! THIS PERSECUTION and also unto death will INCREASE. What did Paul and Silas do when they were thrown in prison: they PRAISED GOD AND SANG. They did not weep and howl. THEY PRAISED GOD AND SANG HYMNS in Joy! The angels opened the prison doors! Today, it's the same. I was in a restaurant and an 87 year old man decided to join us and because he was deaf, I was very loud to tell him that the blood of Jesus is the only salvation for him. He was very mad at God because millions of birds had frozen to death, some 50 years ago by a very cold spring. It is usually after the fact that a person has an answer but I was taken aback about his anger with God. Some time later I remembered what I should have said. Wouldn't it have been great if he had said "The Lord, my God, is sovereign and He does what He thinks best, even though I knew it is because of sin, but I will be glad and rejoice that I am alive and I will talk to Him about it when I see Him." I apologized to the owner but the anger was there. In another case, I brought my guitar to be tuned by a musician we were meeting in a restaurant. Of course, the musician is a musician. The minute he tuned the guitar he started to play "Amazing Grace" and, of course, the other six people decided to "singalong". Knowing the persecutions "around the world" that we had encountered, I instantly asked the waitress if she would ask the owner if it would be all right if we sang for a while until other customers came in. The owner came out and said "I would prefer if you had made prior arrangements." Subtle little persecution but persecution nonetheless. You see we turned from idols (religious or otherwise) to serve the true and living "God; and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even JESUS, which delivered us from the wrath to come." You know that we are to count ALL persecution whether tiny persecution like this, or being held at gun-point by radicals or by abductions, ALL JOY to be counted worthy to suffer the sufferings of JESUS.

## **1 Thessalonians 2.**

Read the chapter. Paul reminds them of the characteristics of his ministry:

1. as courageous, sincere, God-fearing, truthful and unselfish;
2. as humble, gentle, affectionate, industrious, irreproachable, and paternal
3. he refers to the teachableness and sufferings of the church
4. refers to the his desire to visit the church and his glorying in them as his crown of

rejoicing in the Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His Coming. (Thompson bible, analyses of books). For me it is a continuation of the care Paul has given to the Thessalonica church to tell them that he cared enough for them to put his life in jeopardy and in persecution as in Chapter 1 above. He says he cares for them as a "Nurse cherishes her children", as Jesus did.

### **1 Thessalonians 3.**

Read the chapter. Paul sent Timothy to Thessalonica because he was worried that because Paul was under such persecution and afflictions and hardship, that Thessalonica church would be disheartened and lose faith. But Timothy brought back a good report of their faith and charity. Paul and Timothy were so encouraged, praying and expecting to go and visit them again. Thessalonica really knew that OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IS COMING WITH ALL HIS SAINTS. In order to come back with all His saints, the saints (those that applied the Blood of Jesus, the Passover Lamb, to themselves) have to go up first!

**1 Thessalonians 4.** Read the chapter. Paul exhorts us unto holy walk, that is, STOP fornicating, or shacking up, so that you can be sanctified and honorable. We are not to defraud a brother because God has not called us unto uncleanness but unto holiness. It is the command of Jesus, To Love One Another. Also, that we study to be quiet, to do your own business and to work with your own hands. verse 12 says That we may walk honestly toward them that are without and that we may have lack of nothing.

Now, Paul, goes into a teaching on the **Rapture** of the Church, the Body of Christ. Jesus said "as it was in the days of Noah, drinking and eating and giving in marriage", like now, from Noah in the Old Testament go backwards: Noah, now, full of sin, yet eating and drinking and giving in marriage; Enoch, the resurrection of the man that walked with God and a type of rapture; Cain, marked and destroyed in the flood and a promise that the next destruction was going to be by fire; also the mark of the beast, the antichrist; God with us, Genesis, soon Jesus is coming to Jerusalem as our King. In the Song of Solomon, you will also see the Rapture—Jesus skipping on the mountain tops, the Bride joining Him, firstly for the dead in Christ and then for those that are alive in Christ.

### **1 Thessalonians 5.**

Read the chapter. The times and the season is not a problem to Christians. The times are when Israel becomes a nation; the end time harvest--the revival; and the season is now. Jesus cannot come as a thief in the night for us because we know Him. We know His Voice. We know His Word. We are not appointed to His wrath but salvation. We are to exhort our brethren that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, and to be patient toward all men.

1. Rejoice evermore
2. Pray without ceasing
3. Give thanks in everything
4. Quench not the Spirit
5. Despise not prophesyings
6. Prove all things, hold fast that which is good
7. Abstain from all appearance of evil