

The Book of 1 Thessalonians

I. THE REPUTATION OF THE CHURCH (1 THESSALONIANS 1).

- A. It was an energetic church (1:1-3).

"Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father" (1:3).

- B. It was an elect church (1:4).

"Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God" (1:4).

- C. It was an exemplary church (1:5-7).

1. Paul's example to the church (1:5-6).
2. Their example to the world (1:7).

- D. It was an evangelistic church (1:8).

- E. It was an expectant church (1:9-10). In these verses Paul summarizes the three spiritual stages of saved church members.

1. In the past: "How ye turned to God from idols" (1:9).
2. In the present: "To serve the living and true God" (1:9).
3. In the future.

"And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (1:10).

II. THE REVIEW OF THE CHURCH (ch. 2-3).

In this chapter the apostle reviews those circumstances involved in the founding of the Thessalonian church.

- A. The activities of the shepherd in Thessalonica (what Paul says about himself).

1. He was a suffering traveler (2:1-2).
2. He was a faithful steward (2:3-6).
3. He was as a gentle mother (2:7-8).
4. He was a tireless laborer (2:9).
5. He was a consistent example (2:10).
6. He was a concerned father (2:11-12).
7. He was as a homesick brother (2:17).
8. He was an expectant soulwinner (2:19-20).
9. He was as a missionary superintendent (3:1-5).
10. He was a prayer warrior (2:13; 3:7-13).
 - a. The persistence of his prayers.

"For his cause also thank we God without ceasing..." (2:13). "Night and day praying exceedingly..." (3:10).

- b. The purpose of his prayers.

"That we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith" (3:10)

- B. The activities of the sheep in Thessalonica (what Paul says about his converts).

"For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews" (2:14).

- C. The activities of the serpent in Thessalonica (what Paul says about his enemies).

1. The Judaizers (2:15-16).
2. The devil (2:18).

III. THE REMOVAL OF THE CHURCH (ch. 4).

- A. The challenges of this removal.

1. We are to know God's will (what he wants me to do) (4:3).
2. We are to know God's way (how he wants me to do it).
 - a. Concerning self--purity (4:3-5).
 - b. Concerning saints--charity (4:6-10).

- (1) The revelation of the matter (4:6, 9).
 - (2) The reasons for the matter (4:7-8).
 - c. Concerning sinners--honesty (4:11-12).
- B. The chronology of this removal (4:13-18).
 - 1. A realization.

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope" (4:13).

- 2. A repose.

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (4:14).

- 3. A revelation.

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep" (4:15).

- 4. A return.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God" (4:16).

- 5. A resurrection.

"And the dead in Christ shall rise first" (4:16).

- 6. A rapture.

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds..." (4:17).

- 7. A reunion.

"With them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (4:17).

- 8. A reassurance.

"Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (4:18).

IV. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCH (ch. 5).

- A. The God of purpose (what he wills for us to do) (5:1-22).
 - 1. Be watchful (5:1-8).
 - a. The action involved.

"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (5:2).

- b. The reaction involved.
 - (1) The children of light (5:4-6, 8).
 - (2) The children of darkness (5:3, 7).
 - 2. Be helpful (5:9-11, 14).
 - a. The why of the matter.

"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him" (5:9-10).

- b. The who of the matter.

"Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men" (5:11, 14).

- 3. Be merciful (5:15).
- 4. Be respectful (5:12-13).

5. Be joyful (5:16).
 6. Be prayed up (5:17).
 7. Be thankful (5:18).
 8. Be careful (5:19-22).
 - a. Concerning the Spirit of God (5:19).
 - b. Concerning the gifts of God (5:20).
 - c. Concerning the Word of God (5:21).
 - d. Concerning my walk for God (5:22).
- B. The God of peace (what He will do for us) (5:23-28).

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" (5:23-24).