1 Thessalonians - Commentaries by Unknown Author

Young Christian: Volume 34, 1944, Labor of Love

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1 Thessalonians 1:3

“Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.”

Suppose I go laboring, and the spirit of love is in my work, what a difference there will be when the whole service is stamped with the character of this love! If it is only in preaching the gospel, how fully shall I set forth God’s love to a lost world, if the love of Christ is freshly springing up in my own soul! But alas! how often have we to reproach ourselves with going on in a round of Christian duty, faithful in general intention, but not flowing from the fresh realization of the love of Christ to our souls.

Lorneville Conference: 2016, 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5

Reading

Resides in Jesus, our head. The number was that brother 267. Humbly. The First Epistle of Thessalonians. I think there have been references made already to. To the Lord's coming and. Our spiritual state. If it's the mind of the brethren, could we read the 1St chapter of the Thessalonians and or gone further the Lord leads. What do you think, Robert? I think it would be very profitable. It's really ministry that concerns those that are newly saved, brought into the truth of Christ and as the last verse really brings before us or the last couple of verses that how you turn to God from idols. Us from the rocks to come. So we need to have a sense of our deliverance and the sense of how he has turned us from idolatry. To look for his son, to wait for him. Maybe we could read the 1St chapter today and then.

Look to the Lord for guidance the remainder of the reading meetings. Some brother would read it. Chapter One. Holland, Savannah, under the Church of Thessalonians. God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you and her prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father. Knowing brethren, beloved, your election of God for our gospel came not unto you in Word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost, and it must assurance. Men, we were among you for your sake, and He became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost, so that he were in samples to all that believe in Macedonia, and I can't. For from you sounded up the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and IKEA, but also in every place. Your faith to Godward is spread abroad, so that we need not to speak anything. For they themselves know about what matter of entering in we had unto you, and how you turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God. And to wait for his Son from heaven whom he raised, Prince of the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. Maybe a few words in the background of the epistle might be in order. We know this was the first epistle that was written by the apostle, the earliest one. Dates are given around 52 AD. And. The apostle was only a short time in Thessalonica. He was driven out by persecution. Hugely thought that he was only there 3 Lords days. You go back to Acts 17. To get the historical background, when they had passed through Anthropolis and Apollonius, they came to Thessalonica, where was the synagogue of the Jews and Paul, as his manner was. Went in onto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleghing, that Christ must needs have suffered, and then and risen again from the dead, and that this Jesus whom I preached unto you is Christ. And some of them believed and consorted with Paul and Silas, and of the devout Greeks, of great multitude, and of the chief women, not a few. But the Jews, which believed not, moved with envy, and took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the House of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, and so on. So there was bitter persecution in this place. Against those who had made a confession of Christ. Remember that many of them were steeped in idolatry. This was their manner of life. Now some of the Jews were saved, but I would think the majority of those in Thessalonica were Gentiles and they had been involved in in idolatry for years. But the gospel came in mighty power through the Apostle Paul. And he had to leave for his life and. I think he went from here on to Berea and then to Athens, but he had no rest in his spirit, because he was burdened with the this little assembly of babes or new converts, like sheep without a shepherd, and he was very concerned about their condition and their state after the Gospel had been presented to them.

Lest Satan should come and and destroy the work. So he sent Timothy back to Thessalonians. And Paul went on to Corinth, and he waited in Corinth for the report of the condition of the assembly. When he was in Corinth and when the news came through, Timothy, when Timothy left Thessalonica, came to Corinth with the report of how the Thessalonians were prospering. Paul was really encouraged and that led to the writing of this epistle. Seeing the third chapter. Verse 10 Night and day, praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith. So I don't know whether the Apostle ever got back to Thessalonica. Not at this time anyway, because the persecution was severe, however. He desired that they would be established in the faith. But they were new converts, they were babes in Christ. And yet in the no other epistles do you have the Lord's coming so prominent. It comes out in every chapter. You don't get a lot of doctrinal truth in the in this epistle, but you do have the establishing of the young converts. There were several areas that the apostle was much exercised about how they were going to. Meet the awful persecution they were suffering #2 which is very important. The moral condition of the assembly. The apostle deals with that in a number of chapters. The moral condition of these people before he presents doctrinal matters to them. He doesn't develop the mystery of the church. He does not develop any. Really. Doctrinal truth. He wanted them to

have a moral condition that was in keeping with the holiness of God. This comes out in the third chapter and in various parts of the epistles. And then the third thing was that he wanted them to know about the coming of the Lord. You say there were babes that knew very little. Had very little knowledge, say 3 weeks, and yet they were told about the return of the Lord and they were looking for the return of the Lord. They were anxiously waiting. Now they were not well informed, you might say, because. They didn't know what would happen to those that had died. And the apostle brings out that marvelous truth of the rapture, and no other epistle is it developed to the extent that we have it here. So Paul had to teach them these things. But the coming of the Lord is prominent in these two epistles. Sometimes it is the rapture, sometimes it is the appearing. Or the revelation. You have to distinguish between those two things, but the coming of the Lord is a prominent theme of these two epistles. But you allude to there's the coming of the Lord Jesus for his Saints, that's the rapture. And then there's the coming with his Saints, that's the appearing. It's interesting too, to see in chapter 18 of the book of the Acts, just as introductory, how the apostle Paul was used of God to establish the Saints and establish assemblies during the time that he was doing his work and so. In Acts chapter 18 it says in verse one after these things called departed from Athens and came to Corinth. Now he found some that were believers. And it says in verse three, because he was of the same craft, he abode with them and wrought for their occupation. By their occupation they were tent makers. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath and persuaded, persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. And then a little bit further on he says in verse 11, he continued there a year and six months teaching.

The word of God among them. And so there was the space of time that was required, not only evangelical work, but really in connection with the teaching of the truth of God that was necessary that they might be established. And both are necessary. Evangelism is necessary, but then that teaching is necessary as well. We have the principle brought out in Acts Chapter 11, and I'll just mention it very quickly. So that we have an understanding of what Paul is doing and is teaching in the his epistle to the Thessalonians. He was really seeking to comfort their hearts and to point them to Christ and to clarify those issues that he couldn't clarify because he wasn't there. So in Acts Chapter 11, it speaks there of the preaching of the word of God. That is really evangelical work, verse 19. They which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, traveled as far as Funici and Cyprus and Antioch, preaching the Word to none, but under the Jews only. And some of them that were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which when they were come to Antioch, spake under the Grecians, preaching the Word, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord. Well, there you have the work of the evangelism. Of evangelism. And so that's really largely a work outside the assembly. And there was an assembly form in Antioch. And then it says that the brethren found out in Jerusalem in verse 22, the tidings of these things came under the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem. And they sent forth Barnabas that he should go as far as Antioch, who when he came and had seen the grace of God, was glad and exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave under the Lord's. So here Barnabas was a pastor and a shepherd. He longed to see the Saints of God to go on and he instructed him in such a way and encouraged their hearts that way. But then you know he he needed he knew that they needed some teaching and Paul or Saul at that time he called for Saul. It says in verse 24. He was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith and much people was added unto the Lord. Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus for to seek salt. And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church and talked much people and the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. So there was real fruit for God. And there was there at that time of the year of establishing the Saints and ministering the truth of God in that assembly in Antioch. And he might say that that became Paul's home assembly. And then in verse 27 it says in these days. Prophets from Jerusalem, Antioch. So each one had their work. And so in this passage of Scripture you have the four main gifts that are given to the assembly, to the Church of God, and the day that we live in, the evangelists. And then you have the pastor and shepherd, you have the 1-2 who is a teacher, and then you have those that are prophets. Now, a prophet in the New Testament sense is one that delivers the message from the heart of God for the people of God at a particular time. And so he's spoken of in different passages in Scripture. It's just necessary for us, as we take up this epistle of First Thessalonians, to understand that what Paul was doing was teaching them and encouraging them. He had a pastoral work with them, but he was teaching them those things that were necessary as young converts to know and to lay hold of. And so the ministry is rather simple, if you might put it that way, but. It is for the heart, it is for the conscience as well, but it's mostly for the heart. And that cooperates what I mentioned, Robert, that there needs to be a spiritual condition before there's the the the reception of the truth and.

The passage that you cited in Acts 11. Emphasizes that first of all, Barnabas, who was particularly a pastor with a real desire for the encouragement of the Young Young assembly there he ministered. And he comforted in, he exhorted to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart. But he wasn't a great teacher. And that's why he sought Paul to come and establish them in the truth. And it's so in the the epistle that we're looking at, Paul is more a nurse and a pastor here, at least the beginning of the epistle, than he is as a teacher, because they need it to be. Established. They needed to have a moral condition. You know, there was a terrible amount of that. Of immorality in these in these Gentile cities. Thessalonica was a large city, but the practices they were going on with were contrary to the holiness of God. Looking in chapter he deals with that very matter in chapter 4. In some detail. And what we had this morning in our hymn. That body, soul, and spirit might be preserved, blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. So Paul emphasizes holiness very much in this epistle. So if you've mentioned, brother, it's not really an epistle that we have a lot of doctrine given to us, although the doctrine, a part of Paul's doctrine that is key to the ministry that he had among the Saints of God was in connection with the coming of the Lord. And Paul is used with God to give us the truth as to the details of the rapture, how it would take place. The sequence of events. And he tells us too about the change of our bodies and how our bodies will be glorified. He goes through that in First Corinthians chapter 15. But in First Corinthians it's really a corrective epistle. But here in this epistle, it's really a pastoral epistle, you might say. And how how he long that these Saints that were saved out of the idolatry would have their hearts comforted. And so we don't find him upbraiding them for their. Past practice of idolatry or upgrading them for their unholiness and so on, But he encourages them positively in a right way to go on in a righteous way before God, to live a holy life. And so he begins the epistle and he presents this. Credentials. I still I suppose he says that it's from Paul and Sylvanus and Timotheus under the Church of the Thessalonians, which is in God the Father and the Lord in the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. And so he had those that were companions in the path of faith and those that were fellow workers, those that had, you might say, the credibility to be a witness with him, that this letter was coming from him. And it was something that they could take. As modified, we could just turn to 2nd Thessalonians chapter 2. And just see that there were others that had written, perhaps not exactly at this time, but at some time some point they had written letters and signed Pauls name to those letters apparently. And so on. 2nd Thessalonians chapter 2. It says, Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter. As from us as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means. And so these the Lord allowed that Paul wrote this epistle, his first epistle that he wrote to the assemblies and he uses these two witnesses. And it would be wonderful, wouldn't it be, to be in that day. I have often thought of these two individuals so heinous or Silas and Timothy Timotheus here Timotheus was a younger man, perhaps.

But he was faithful, faithful young man and Silas, it says he's called in at first Peter chapter 5. He's called the faithful brother in let's just look at that. I, I don't want to misquote it. It's in Mr. Darby's translation. He labored with Peter. After he labored with the apostle, verse 12, first Peter chapter 5, verse 12, Sylvanus a faithful brother, or it says, as I say in Mr. Darby's translation, Sylvanus the faithful brother. He was one that was noted for devotedness to Christ and suited to be included in the address addressing these words to this assembly. I might just mention. In way of passing that Sylvanus, that portion that we just read in First Peter chapter 5, his name is given to us something like 17 times in the New Testament. And that's the very last time that his name is presented to us in First Peter chapter 5. And the Spirit of God sums up the sum total of his life, gives us a snapshot of his life. He says Sylvanus, the faithful brother. It's all he says. The faithful brother, 3 words and he sums up his life. And so your life and mine is being lived. And we're going to every day that we live, we're going it's going to be reviewed at the judgment seat of Christ. His whole sum total of his life as it were. The Spirit of God records in the Word of God that Sylvanus was the faithful brother. There are some others that are called faithful as well. They had the knowledge of God as their Father. Though they were babes in Christ, they had that knowledge that God was their father. What a wonderful relationship that is for us to enjoy. Not only God is their father, but the Lord Jesus Christ. Bringing out the the Lordship of Christ. One thing to know Christ as our Savior. Perhaps most of those present here do know, but do we acknowledge the the Lordship of Christ in our lives? That's a practical thought. Do we submit everything in our lives to His authority and allow Him to direct us in our daily? Activities or whatever. Do we acknowledge that we are under His control, that no longer we are to live for ourselves? But to acknowledge him as our Lord, and his remarkable that Paul with all his. Extensive travels and laborers and. Sufferings and privations in the work of the Lord, that he remembered these Thessalonians in his prayers. Remarkably, that he had time not only the Thessalonians, but I think every church, a number of which he had established. Were remembered at the throne of grace, and that's a good example for us. The expression found in the first verse of our chapter. Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We find that in almost every one of the epistles of the Apostle Paul where he and Peter as well where he says grace and peace. A brother made this comment one time. He said the more that I understand the grace of God, the more I will enjoy the peace of God.

And what is it? The grace of God, for ye know the grace. Of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. I think what it does, brethren, is it takes us outside of ourselves. And occupies it with him. Because the more I know the grace of God, the more I see the nothingness that I am. And in that position it brings me peace, because I know that all was settled. So you look back at John chapter 20, after the Lord goes to Calvary, and he meets with his own in the upper room, and what does he say? Peace be unto you? And when he had so shed said, he showed them his hands. And his side so. It's nice to notice it just in our readings when we go through the various epistles. Romans. My mind goes particularly through Ephesians and Colossians and also first Peter. It mentions grace and peace. He really brings the deity before them here as well and the deity of Christ and he he speaks of the Trinity. So you have the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, and then a little bit further on in verse five, you have the Holy Ghost and that really brings before us eternal life, doesn't it? They he doesn't use the term really in this first chapter, but in John's Gospel we have this little expression that's used. In verse nine he says umm just in the last part of verse 9. Or verse 10 I should say John 10, verse 10. I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly, or that they might have it abundantly, that is to have eternal life. And so that what is eternal life, it's to have a relationship with the Father, to know God as our Father. And it's also to know the Lord Jesus as Lord, as Savior. It's to know to be indwelled with the Spirit of God. And it's also as a beginning really, to have put our trust and faith in the Lord Jesus, to know him, to trust him. I'll just point this out and ask John's gospel a little bit further on in chapter 16. It speaks there of. Eternal life. I'm sorry, I'm looking at chapter 15. Yeah, I was looking at a chapter. I was looking for chapter 17, verse 3. This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. And so we have. The Father presented here. The Lord Jesus Christ and he presents. He really focuses upon the Lordship of Christ in this epistle, doesn't he? Because that is what will really help. Help and recognizing the authority of the Lord Jesus in our lives will release us from the serving of self. There's many evidences that that's the perhaps the burden of the first chapter is the evidences of this new life in the Thessalonians. There was really the practice the report had spread abroad all over the region. They were energetic in getting the gospel out, but their lives were a was a clear proof that they were elected of God so. The Apostle. He wants to gain their confidence. And he expresses repeatedly his love for these Saints.

And his self denying labor in Thessalonica, he didn't come there to receive money, he came there to preach the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit. Much assurance, but he labored with his own hands. And when the Thessalonians saw this self denying sacrificial life of the apostle. They saw love in practice and that's something that we can be exercised about. Some of us do a lot of talking, but really it's our lives that count. And the apostle was a demonstration of of the gospel in his own life here. It speaks there of them laboring night and day, that he might not be chargeable to them. No, he didn't receive money from them, and they saw the evidence of a man of God among them. And it says it's a little remarkable in our chapter. He became followers of us, but remember that they were. Immersed in idolatry and they didn't know anything about God. They were completely ignorant. But when they saw the evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in the apostle Paul and those with him. They became followers of them really they were following the Lord, but it's remarkable. It says she became followers of us that should speak to us that our lives. Someone has said, and we've often heard the expression what you are speak so loudly that I can't hear what you say. The way that the apostle dresses the Thessalonians. Because they like ourselves. They had a, they had a character. We all have a certain character and Paul and his shepherding care. He he addresses different characters in different ways and has has has been brought out when he wrote to the Corinthians. He addressed them in a much different way than he did to Thessalonians, but why they had a different character? Maybe we could go back to the book of the Acts to see part of this character. That he seeks to address here. In. In Acts 17. In Acts 17, in the 10th verse, it says the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea, who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews, and these were more noble than those of Thessalonica. In that they received the word with all readiness of mind and search the Scriptures daily whether those things were so and so. Here we find that the Thessalonians had a certain character. It was different than the Brians. They heard things and they perhaps didn't bother checking to see if those things were so. Or maybe when they heard a message, they didn't go home and ruminate over it and, and, and, and look in the Scriptures as what was being said. They perhaps just received it just simply. And on they went. And the apostles saw that. As a deficiency. And so as John brought before in the third chapter, there were those things that were lacking in their faith. In the 5th chapter, he uses a little statement to the Thessalonians. He says prove all things. Now, the reason he says that is because that didn't characterize them. So it's interesting to see how in this first chapter, the way he addresses the Thessalonians is the way that, you know, some people need to be addressed. Some people just need a little extra TLC when you're speaking to them. Other people, they need to be told the way it is, just the way it is, because that's the way their character is. And so all of us have a different character, but it's good for us when we're speaking with people to recognize their character and to adjust our way of addressing them because of that character. And so here you go through this first chapter and you know, he, he commends so many things just like he's got his arms around them and he's so afraid of saying something that that's going to offend them. He does address that in the

epistle.

But he does it very, very softly, if I could put it that way. He knows that they need to be encouraged. He knows that they're they're full of energy. Their, their, their, their love is expressed, their labor is expressed, and both things. And he doesn't want to, he doesn't want to disturb those things. And so he addresses them in a way that he commends so many things here and then later on they Thistle. He just gently addresses little things with them that need to be addressed. Much different. Perhaps as I said, that he addresses the Corinthians. And so I think in, in, in any of us seeking to exercise shepherding care, that's very necessary in our addressing people to recognize the character that people have. I've got some children. When I discipline them, I've got two that before the discipline even started, they were bawling their eyes and they were saying they're sorry and and that was their that's their character. They got two others. That the closest they'll ever come to saying they're wrong was would be, you know, I'm not really proud of what I did. It's a very different character. Both is a work of God, but both has to be addressed differently. And so the apostle in his seeking to address the Thessalonians Saints, he addresses a character here that's very necessary and brings these things out of his first with his first chapter that is very tender before he starts. Later on to address the things that are necessary. That's chapter 2 and verse 11. Would you think it's that ye or as you know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you as a father dot his children. And so it was with intelligence and really by the power of the Spirit that he addressed them in very softly, very tenderly and his children. And so you don't deal with a teenager the same way as you would do deal with a child and one who is an adult would be treated a little bit differently. While the Corinthians were more responsible they had. More depth of knowledge of the truth of God than Paul had spent a year and a half there. He speaks to them quite differently. They were more responsible. So it's nice to see the tenderness. And the Lord deals with us according to our state of soul and the depth of knowledge that we have. The truth of God, our responsibility is according to what He has brought before us. And so he speaks to us by his Spirit accordingly. It's wonderful. They may have been. In the idol temple. But the first verse we have now they're in the church. The red says the red blood. Which is in God church. The Father and then the Lord Jesus Christ. Whole new position altogether they found themselves in. And. The new position that they found themselves in brought new desires to their heart. And so they had a work of faith that was there. Before perhaps we just their own desires and energies that throw them along. And so it is with us when we get. The Lord works the work in our hearts. Were brought out of one whole set of conditions that we were in into a brand new place. Looking in Galatians chapter 5. And verse six says therefore in Christ Jesus neither circumcision available anything. Nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love didn't matter whether they were a Gentile. It didn't matter where they if they hadn't been Jewish before this happened, they were now separated from all of that, and they were in the Church of God. A whole new position and what mattered there, as it does with us. It's when we're in the church, it's a thing that we have which worketh by love. So we see the energy that's behind our faith that works is love. That is the energy and of course the power.

That works. It's not the flesh anymore, which it was with these ones that were serving idols and now they were in Christ. But as the Holy Spirit is the power behind our lives and so we have a whole new position that we're brought into, whole new set of desires, a whole new walk and the Lord. Father was so pleased in the Lord. Jesus was so pleased. So without the burst of praise from the vote for these young believers. So nice to see you. Galatians chapter 5. Those verses have first five essentially. Hope, faith and the versions we have loved and in the verse we just dropped before we. Verse four he remembers those ceasing their work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of God, our honorable and we have the same things help. To see too, but at the end of that third verse, but it says patients of hope and I'm thinking of the next expression in our Lord Jesus Christ. God is made man, that he must have an object. And we know that the only way that the object can be the heart can be filled and satisfied is through Christ. And so in the world today, why there's all kinds of motivation that is presented to mankind to stir them up to drive man on from children and being taught in school to be something and and. And. So it is through life that the advertising the whole world is set into try to make man comfortable in a world without God. But here these Thessalonians. Were in this state of idolatry and what happens? God steps into their lives. And they find out about him and where where they are in relation to him. And they turn to God from idols. And and so the object before them, it affects their whole being. And what they do, they turn first of all, to God. That's the work of faith, I take it, the labor of love, to serve him and to wait for him. And that should be what characterizes, should it not, the lives of those of us who are believers in this world, passing through a world. That has rejected the Savior, and we see it getting worse and worse. And so the motivation for moving on in life should be Christ himself, and it'll affect every part of our lives. Before them, the sovereignty of God and verse 4 knowing brethren, beloved, your election of God. Now election is always individual. It's the same word as being chosen. And we might look at that in Ephesians chapter one. And. Let's read from. Verse three, blessed be the God and Father Ephesians chapter one, verse three of our Lord Jesus Christ, who have blessed us with all spiritual blessings and heavenly places in Christ, according as He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. And so the reason these Thessalonians were saved and the reason why you're saved is the election of God, the sovereignty of God.

Now, when the gospel goes forth, you're responsible to hear it and to believe it, to receive it. But really in a sense, in the truth of the matter is that nothing would happen. There would be no fruit for God in this world apart from the sovereignty of God. Mr. Kelly made that comment. He makes it several times in his writings. The soul enjoyed it. It's a help as you read the Scriptures to understand that nothing would ever, there would be no fruit for God in this world. At all apart from the sovereignty of God. And so he speaks to them this way, and he says, Knowing brethren, beloved, your election of God. And so they had a sense of the sovereignty of God, having called them out of idolatry, and have placed before their souls that prospect of being with Christ and like Christ. Well, that was evident by their works, by the way in which they acted, that the apostle concluded that they were elect. We don't have any access to the eternal councils of God. We present the gospel to man as a responsible being. We don't know the decrees of God. Or who is going to be saved. But we know that the invitation is to whosoever. I was thinking going back to verse 3. The patience of hope. The labor of love and the work of faith. As has often been mentioned in the book of the Church of Ephesus in Revelation 2. There was work, there was labor, there was patience. But these the qualities of faith, love and patience. And hope are missing there. So outwardly in the Church of Ephesus, everything seemed to be in order. It was energy put forth, but the motive spring. That should have been the impetus was missing there. I've enjoyed in the book of Second Samuel that we have an illustration of these three qualities. Faith, love and hope. It's a very interesting study in the case of Jonathan. Definitely that was a work of faith. He had faith in David. He saw the marvelous victory over the enemy there. He had full faith in David. It I the get tight, which is I think second Samuel 15 probably won't turn to it now, but he demonstrated wonderful love for David when he was fleeing from his son Absalom, who had usurped the throne and David was in rejection and. Disowned as though the rightful king it, I showed a wonderful love to David. Very interesting study. Then you come to Mephibosheth, who was left in the city of Jerusalem and he wasn't able to follow David because he was lame on both his feet. But he was loyal and true to David in spite of all the opposition. He didn't have anything to do with the merriment in the the. Whole state of things in Jerusalem, glorying in Absalom, who was a usurper of the throne. He had no part in what was going on in Jerusalem. He was a stranger there. And he was loyal and true to David. There you have the patience of hope. And this was manifest in the in

the case of the Thessalonians, the Lord is now a man of patience. He's waited 2000 years and he's still waiting to have his church with him and we are waiting down here. For his return, which is brought out so clearly here in the case of the Thessalonians, waiting for God's Son from heaven. It was the present hope. It was something that practically influenced their lives. You know, sometimes people talk about the coming of the Lord and there's so much error in Christendom today about this, about this whole subject, that you become a dreamer and you're not practical. Certainly wasn't the case with the Thessalonians.

It affected their whole manner of life, and it wasn't turning from idols to God, it was turning to God from idols. They had an object before them that filled their hearts. What it's like Ephraim, what have I to do in Hosea? What have I to do with idols? I have heard him, I have seen him. They had God in the Thessalonians, had God before their vision, filling their souls. They didn't want anything more to do with the idols. You know, there's some boys and girls, you know, I guess they're not here this morning, but. The threadbare illustration. But I had a dog when I was young and he was a very nice disposition. Nice dog, but boy if you got a hold of a bone. You couldn't get it from him. Yank him, hit him. Do anything. You couldn't get that bone out of his mouth. But if you dangled a piece of juicy meat in front of him? Immediately he would drop the ball. Why? Because he had something much better. And this is the case with the Thessalonians. They had God now as their object and it it fell off like autumn leaves, the whole system of idolatry and all their their objects there. Of an ungodly wicked world. They let it drop. They had something infinitely better. So do we. That has been brought before us. Revelation Chapter. Chapter 2. Just in future relation with the third verse of our chapter in Revelation chapter 2. The. Also John addresses. Build an oversight in Ephesus and he says in verse two, I know thy works by labor. Thy patience has been quoted to us and how that can stop fair than what you're evil and has tried them which say they are apostles that are not and must found them liars as born and as patients for my namesake as labored was not fainted. Nevertheless they have someone against thee because thou hast sometimes it's quoted this White House forgotten my first love, but that's not what it says. It says that it's left by first love, you know, just to be practical. We, we, we all, we all enjoy weddings. We have one in our home in our assembly just a couple weeks ago. And just the, the, the freshness of, of the couple in their first love and the joy that they enjoy. We, we really appreciate, you know, but it's sad when we see someone that have been on the pathway for maybe 10 or 15 years and you look at them and think why? I wonder if that's the way they were in their wedding day. And I don't think so. Or maybe it's maybe it's 40 years later or whatever. We see a difference that perhaps we see in the wedding picture when we look at them. Well, you know, the Thessalonians, they were in the enjoyment of their first love. That's where they were. But with them as well as us, there can be the tendency to leave that. And if it's left, what you have is what you have in Revelation. You have do you have work? Do you have patience? You know, you have labor, but it's mechanical. It's absolutely mechanical. And why? Because that freshness of first love is not there. Now the apostle, he's writing the Thessalonians because they're in the enjoyment of first love. And it's beautiful to see. But what a sad thing in our own lives. When we leave that and we're left with a mechanical Christianity. Instead of. Response from the ravishing of the Lord's love to our hearts.

Could be translated the best love. It's a really remarkable that the Lord uses that language in connection with the prodigal son. He gave them the best robe. You and I have been given the very best that God always gives the best and he has given his son. Could we have any better? You and I have a life to live through this scene as we imitate Paul and his life, but we can imitate Christ, we can follow him. And I've just mentioned that in First Corinthians Chapter 11, Paul many times in his ministry says to follow him in verse one, the followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. And so we ought to remember the Lord gave the very best, God gave the best of heaven, and the Lord Jesus gave us the very best, and He's provided the very best. Now for us to set it aside. And to be taken up with a prosperous life or whatever it might be. Is really setting our hearts affections aside. And what he really wants is the heart and the heart's affections. And if he doesn't have the heart's affections, if he doesn't have your heart's affections, he doesn't have what he wants. He doesn't want the wealth, he doesn't want the gifts. He doesn't, he wants the heart. And so Paul is appealing to the hearts of these Saints, isn't he? Now they had only seen him for probably 3 weeks as has been previously mentioned. And apparently we really only learn, we learn most of what we learn by observation. And we have some school teachers in the room and or former school teachers and they would probably attest to this, that you can give instruction, verbal instruction to children. You can tell them all you want, but really most of what we assimilate is by observation. Maybe perhaps I've heard the figure of 85% of what we learned, we learned by observation. So we have a procedure to do to fix a part on a car or whatever, and you look on the Internet to see if you can find a video, and that tells you exactly how to do this. And you learn by observation. You can read the instruction sheet and you can get all the instructions right. But really you're missing that key element of being able to see. And so they had observed Paul's life. They have observed that in verse five, that God had intervened in their lives and in power. The gospel came to them. They didn't go to the gospel. The gospel came to them unto you, in a word, not in Word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, as you know what manner of men. We were among you for your sake, and ye became followers of us, and so they. Saw something of the life of the Apostle Paul and his devotion to Christ and his love. They saw something of his faith, of his love, and of his hope. And they said we want to be just like Paul and follow the Lord, just like Paul following the Lord. That's essentially what they said. And so we have examples as well in the day that we live in, and we might just turn to it. In Hebrews chapter 13, it says. In verse 7, Hebrews 13 and verse seven, remember them which have the rule over you, those that have gone on before, really who have spoken unto you the word of God. Whose faith follower imitates, considering the end of their conversation. And so we might want to just follow the Lord, like some of our older brethren have followed and are still following the Lord. No, Brother Gordon Hill used to often remind us, and some of us remember him well. He would say, you know, young people, it's a wonderful thing to have a good beginning. And he'd say, you know, I'm so encouraged to see you taking some notes as young people and just wanting to be at the meetings and everything. He say it's a good thing to have a good beginning, but make sure you have a good ending. A good ending is better than a good beginning. And so here the apostle is really pleading in this sense with these Thessalonians that they would have a good ending and that they would continue on until the Lord came.

I think what Dave brought out was a very, very good that the exhortation of the epistle doesn't come until chapter four and five. And the the apostle is very sensitive to the way in which he addresses them, and as mentioned, he doesn't scold them. But He wanted them to be established. And the expectations do come in the end of the Epistle. It's the same Ephesians, isn't it? First of all, the Lord gives us all the blessings that we have in Christ, our position, our eternal portion, all that is presented to our hearts, first of all. And then the apostle deals. About speaks to our state. In the last part of the Epistle to the Ephesians, where we have the exhortation in chapter 4-5 and six, but not at the beginning of the book. Shall we sing 200 and 87287? Is not for. Fear. When Christ will. Play Hillsong. With sunshine. Here thy voice. Of heart. Whoever can stop shall come. God. No.

Lorneville Conference: 2016, 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10

Reading

Far away. And joy of. Division. Lord. Of the great. Bullet with Thessalonians. I was thinking that. We have not exhausted the 1St chapter at all. Sort of commented on different parts of it, but. Would it be in order to read part of the first chapter into the second, say from? The fifth verse of the first chapter. And on to the second chapter.

No, I would think. We read down to 12. Thessalonians chapter one and verse 5. For a gospel came not unto you in Word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, as you know what manner of men we were among you for your sake, and ye became followers of us and of Lord, having received the Word with much affliction, with joy into gold, so that you were examples of all that believe in Macedonia and the chaos. For from you sounded up the word of the Lord. Not only in the Macedonia and Macao, but also in every place where faith is awkward is spread abroad, so that we need not to speak anything. For they themselves show us what manner of entering in He had under you, and how you turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He rains from the dead, even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come. For yourself, brethren, know our angels in unto you. That it was not in the veins, but even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully treated, as you know, and vilified. We were born in our God, to speak unto you to the gospel of God, in much contention. For our expectation was not of deceit, nor of I cleanness, nor in God. And as we were allowed at the law to be put in trust with the Gospel, Even so we speak. Not as easy mess, but God, which tribe our hearts for neither at any time used to be flattering words, as you know, or a cloak of covetousness. God is a witness nor of men sought me glory neither of you, nor yet of others. When we might have been emergency as the apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse chairs of her children. So being effectively desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted not to you. Not the gospel brought over, but also our own souls, because you were here unto us. For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail for laboring night and day, because we would not be charitable to any of you. We preached unto you the Gospel of God. Ye are witnesses. And God also. How holy and justly and unplannedly we behaved ourselves among you, that as you know, how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you as a father of his children. That you would walk worthy of God, who have called you unto his Kingdom and glory. Preached in such a way by the Apostle and perhaps others with him. It wasn't just. Eloquence. It was in the power of the Holy Ghost. And it brought. Much assurance, afraid that to some of the gospel preaching today does not have that character. Well, for one thing, often repentance is not is not emphasized. And they want numbers. I'm not being critical. We're glad that the gospel goes out at all. But. Does it bring that assurance of salvation? Through the finished work of Christ. Is it a complete gospel, or was when the apostle proclaimed it here and. And his life was the. The proof of. The message You know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. It was. Delivered in power, and it brought forth fruit. And there was no question that these Thessalonians were true believers. And there is that danger of people making a profession today of being saved and there is not a change in their lives. They go on with the.

Worldly ways that they had before. Perhaps even some sins. This was not the case with the Thessalonians. There was a. A complete break with the godless world that they had been connected with in the. More refined and sophisticated. But if a person makes a profession of salvation and yet doesn't give up the world and there's no change in his life. We can question whether there's been a genuine work of the Spirit of God in him. Not so with the Thessalonians. It was much assurance. We hope that everyone here has the assurance of salvation. Knowing that our sins are forgiven, that we belong to Christ. Well, it looks like almost a paradox in verse six. Much affliction. They really suffered persecution from perhaps their families, from their fellow workers. They were in an idolatrous environment. And they had affliction, persecution. Paul had to leave. But look at Joy of the Holy Ghost. So there was really obedience to the Scriptures in these Thessalonians. And something goes along with obedience. It's happiness. You cannot have be happy in your Christian life if you are disobedient. But there was real joy here in spite of the afflictions they suffered. And it was a testimony, a real, right, powerful testimony. Not only in Thessalonica, but all over the region, Macedonia. No radios or Internet. I don't know how they got the word out, but they were energetic. They became preachers themselves, and they sounded forth the word. All over that area. So Paul didn't need to say anything. They their lives showed that they were saved. They became sole winners. Well, that's a word for us. Says in the book of the Acts that. Paul was accused of turning the world upside down. That was a commendation. I wonder if we are that energetic and getting the gospel out like the apostle was and and the Thessalonians. I must say this. There have been time there, I've stood up to reach a gospel and it was just words that went out. And it reminds me of that person in First Corinthians 13 about not having charity or love. And there's just a what is it a tinkling tinkling symbol or a sounding brass? Because in my life there were things that were dishonouring to the Lord. And if you looked at my life, you couldn't see that it was real with me. And I wasn't walking in the spirit. And perhaps that was that's what he meant here when he said in the Holy Ghost. And there certainly wasn't much power in the words that. Or feebly used. I think there can be a lot more blessing if we would. Take what the gospel is for ourselves and apply it here 1St and then in our life there will be a. A display to others around what we have within us. And when you're coming from that standpoint, when you open the Word of God and you present it, it's real to yourself and it can be made real to others. I think that's why it's worded this way. We don't read here The gospel came not and you in Word only doesn't say, but also in the power of the Holy Ghost. That's not the way it reads. There's two separate things. It's in power. And in the Holy Ghost. And. Just what you bring the forest, Tim, is a searching thing that.

The power that comes from. From speaking as someone speaks as the oracles of God comes from a close walk with the Lord and a relationship with the Lord that is such that that gives that power it's moral power. Yes, there is you know, we read a scripture that says not by might nor by power, but my spirit saith the Lord. That's a little different thing. But here we have that the word was spoken, but there was moral power behind it because of the life that was lived and then of course the Holy Ghost is the one that. Brings the increase and and brings the. Brings the fruit. And Paul wasn't boasting here, was he? It really was the work of the Spirit of God to have him write those things. He wrote in truth, it says in Acts chapter 19 and verse 10. Well, let's read verse 9, Acts 19, verse nine, when divers were hardened, believe not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of Juan Tyranis. And this continued by the space of two years, so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus. The word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks and God rocked special miracles by the hands of Paul. So here was a life lived in communion with God and he was preaching the gospel of the grace of God. But we know too that he was preaching his gospel, what he calls my gospel, and those things that have to do with what we have in Christ. And so here he was diligent. He was all out. It was not half hearted Christian testimony in connection with Paul. He didn't have 1/2 hearted approach. And so the Thessalonians saw this. They saw his devotion to Christ. He had had a vision of Christ in the glory, and he laid aside every weight, every sin that the so easily beside us, and he set Christ before him as the prize. He never ever took that eye off. We know that he was He failed in several different accounts that were given, but there was a purpose that he had a purpose of life, and so he presented the word to them. And the Spirit of God could use that word in power in the Holy Ghost and much assurance. So it's not good enough, if we could put it this way, to give the gospel of the grace of God. But when somebody does accept Christ

as Savior and professes to know Christ as Savior, it's our responsibility to assure them of their salvation, to make sure that they understand and that they lay hold of that finished work of Christ. They don't have to have the right feelings or the right. The right to emotional experience. They lay hold of the finished work of crisis. Christ that they have before them, not you or me. Or anyone else, but they have Christ, and they'll get assurance, because they say his blood has washed me from my sins, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. They lay hold of Christ in his finished work. And so Paul was effective in this way because he was walking in communion with the Lord. The importance of the word, can we? It says here in verse five that the gospel came not unto you in Word only. And then he speaks in verse 6, having received the word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost. So it's the word that we need to present and to enjoy for ourselves. Little Nuggets of the passages of Scripture and a wonderful just to be able to have a reading in the morning. And just get a little nugget, just something that you can carry with you all day. Sometimes you can carry it all week, sometimes longer, perhaps for a lifetime, those little Nuggets. But it's the word. And so Paul says a little later on in the epistles, he says, preach the word. And that's what has effect, that has power, and that's the Word that gives life. And so the word in connection with the believer is not only necessary in producing life. The Lord Jesus is presented as the word in John's Gospel chapter one the Word was made made. Let me just read it.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. So He is the communication of life itself, the communication of God. And in the person of the Son we see evidence of God Himself. And so he fully displayed who God is, and He fully communicated the heart of the Father. But we need the Word, and it's what gives life, but it's also what sustains life. So the word is necessary for a believer to sustain life. It's vital. We need the Word of God. They were in the freshness of first love here and death. Might say it was almost spontaneous. They weren't sent out by a mission board. To preach the gospel. They weren't ordained by any. Group of the Christians, they went out with the message that had touched their hearts and. They just spoke of what the Lord had done for them and there was a real testimony. So. So it is with the believer. Now we're not only holy priests, but we are royal priests and ambassadors for Christ. And it also doesn't say that they have to go to a seminary or a college before they could preach. They simply told out what the Lord had done for them. Man cannot. Give a gift to a person. The gifts are given by an ascended Christ in the glory. They don't depend upon man. If you have a gift, whether it be an evangelist or whatever, that's your warrant to use it. And ministry is simply the exercise of the gift that the Lord has given you. So. Perhaps we are not all evangelists on the platform. But we can all do the work of an evangelist. As the Thessalonians were here, they were very young in the face, three weeks or so. But they were a bright testimony. And. So Paul exhorted Timothy to do that work, and each one of us. Can do the work of an evangelist sisters as well. And we are all servants of the Lord. We all have a gift. Maybe not in a public sphere. Certainly the sisters do not have such such a gift. But we all have a place to fill in the body of Christ, burden to bear, and a work to do. And we can all share the gospel. Sisters and brothers in a quiet way, perhaps 1:00 to 1:00. But if we're healthy, we will want to see the gospel go out to others. Certainly the Thessalonians did hear. You speak, John, about the inexperienced relative inexperienced with the the. New life that was in them that these believers had they were just a few weeks, as you say, saved and not necessarily all young people, but young in the faith and and they what did they have for the word of God? Well, they had the teaching of the Old Testament Scriptures and they had the word of the apostles and that was it and they had the. The testimony to the words of the Lord Jesus. Lord Jesus. When he was here and so that comprised the word of God. So we can we can say that they had a limited a pretty limited awareness of the scope of what they had draft in the leading of the Lord Jesus and and yet that they were exceedingly active by the spirits work. So it emphasizes the value and the activity of the Spirit of God.

Molding Christians from the very beginning and it also. Is an encouragement, I believe, to those who are young in the faith, whether age or otherwise, in age or otherwise. And what you know, what these people knew, they testified to. So what you know of what the Lord has done for you, you are equipped to testify to it. And the strength to do so comes from the Spirit of God. What I just said, we've all perhaps heard that somebody preached the gospel from using only the text from the Isaiah 55 It's often called the the gospel in the Old Testament. And and that is now it's become very clear that that is speaking about so many truths that are fundamental to the message that we have to proclaim. 53 You mean 53? Yeah. That's right and. And so there's a. There's there's value, there's endless resources through the whole screen. We have this whole thick book to draw on, and you can draw on any part of it, as our brother Porter has done earlier today in drawing lessons from Joseph. And so there are, there are lessons for our life and for gospel testimony right through the Old Testament because we can't interpret it now by the Spirit. As to what God's intent was in the first place. It's interesting to notice that the throughout the book of the Acts that the Spirit of God was really directing the movements of the apostle Paul in connection with the gospel and he says in chapter 16. In verse seven it says after they were come to miss you, they assayed to go to Bithynia, but the spirit suffered them not, and they passing by, Monsieur came down to troll us, and a vision appeared to Paul. In a night there stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying. Come over into Macedonia and help us what we have in this chapter. Then the gospel preached in that city of Philippi, the first city in Europe to receive the gospel of the grace of God. But then these dear souls here in Thessalonians, the assembly in Thessalonians were given a little work to do and it says that they were in samples and they to all that believe in Macedonia and Akaya were from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and IKEA, but also in every place. Your faith to God where it is spread abroad so that we need not to speak anything. And so the apostle Paul commends them highly for their gospel activity and for their. Diligence in doing the work that was set before them. I think we need to remember that the work of the gospel is given to those that were once lost sinners but are now Saints. You and I are Saints of God. We're not seen as sinners, not even seen really as save sinners. We're seen as those that are Saints of God. And we're fit for heaven right now apart from the flesh that's in us. And we know that our bodies are going to be glorified, but the gospel of the grace of God is delivered to those that were once lost.

And now can give. A first hand experience, so to speak to another Sinner and tell them how it is to be saved, and what it is, and how the word can be used and how the work of Christ can apply to them. And so the work isn't given to angels, it's given to men, and it's given to those that were once lost to give a first hand. Account. And so there was fruit, and there was their faith. Godward. Was spread abroad. There's evidence that there's a work of the Spirit of God because of the faithfulness of discharging the responsibility that they had in the very place where they were. Well, there's two parts to the Christian life that is brought before us here. Turn to God for my goals. To serve the living and true God. That's the first thing. The second is to wait for his Son from heaven. I don't think. The Thessalonians could have given any dissertation on prophecy. They were very young in the truth. They did not understand much about prophecy. But they were waiting for God's Son from heaven. It did not take place, but this was the hope that motivated them. The hope of the Lords immediate return. Now error came in later on, and Satan tried to dim that hope by false doctrines coming in here. That's why Paul wrote this epistle for one reason, and it's the clearest exposition of the rapture I think we have in the scriptures in chapter 4 explaining to them. They thought that when the Lord came, the Kingdom would be established. But they were wrong there, they said. What about those who have passed through the article of death? Are they going to miss the Kingdom? And Paul explains to them clearly that no, they will have part in the heavenly Kingdom. They're not going to

be part of the earthly Kingdom. And so. The The hope of the Lord's coming really motivated them. And. It gave them. It gave them. The strength to to testify they were they had given up the world. They were no longer going on. It costs they they counted the cost. Of what it meant to accept Christ and to separate from all the worldly associations. And they weren't occupied with the prosperity of the world. They had an object before that, the coming of the Lord and mean time to serve the living and true God. Well, every one of us had that privilege to serve the living and true God. We don't have idols of wood and stone as I said, but anything that comes between our hearts and the Lord and displaces Him is an idol. And we may know those things in our lives that are. We don't like to admit it, but they have crowded out the things of the Lord in our lives. The world. Or the attractions. Umm, in education or? Sports or whatever it might be. They can become an idol in our lives and displace Christ. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. With regards to our presentation of the Gospel. It's in connection with what what happened here when it's you just quoted you just quoted this first young how these turn to God from idols to serve them living in the true God. So what happened is if we go to the book of the Acts for a moment just to see what takes place here.

In Act 17. Acts 17 and verse one, it says, and we've already had this before, but I'm going to make a specific point. And when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica where it was a synagogue of the Jews. So they go to the synagogue. That's where they that's where they're going. That's where they're going to take up with the Scriptures on these three Sabbath days. Now who's there? It says in the third verse opening alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ. And some of them have believed and consorted with Paul and silent. Of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. OK, so so here in the synagogue, obviously there's Jews, but there's also Greeks. Now, these Greeks have already turned from idols. This has already taken place. They've already turned from idols and they're now in the synagogue and they're now listening to what's being taught. And so when Paul mentions here that these ones that turn from idols, that wasn't as a result of his preaching, that had already happened. That had already taken place and they had turned to they turned from islands to serve the living God. Now in our presentation of the gospel. Sometimes we don't see results, but what we don't realize is that in our presentation of the gospel there are various links in the chain. And these Greeks had already had a partial work in their soul to turn from idols. They didn't know about the Lord. They hadn't turned to the Lord, but they had linked up with the Jewish manner of worship, thinking that these idols are worthless and let's try this Jewish end of things. And that's why they're there so often in, in, in souls coming to the Lord, there are various stages. And, you know, we might present the word and we might not see anything, but it it's, there's something in their heart and maybe it's a link towards bringing them to the Lord. I think it's going to be wonderful when we get to the glory. To see those that came to the Lord and we see that maybe something we said was part of the link that we didn't think was of any use at all. And that's the way the gospel is presented. And so we we, we as has been brought before us. We need to do the work of an evangelist not knowing. You know which link it's going to be that that we present and the Lord takes that up and something else follows. So these ones that were Greeks, they'd already turned from idols, they'd already been that work. And they find themselves in the synagogue, and along comes Paul, and he preaches, and the work is further. You have an evidence if you look at the if you look at Mr. Darby's note in in the 17th chapter and the third chapter, it expresses that a little better. You have an evidence of that in Acts chapter 10, don't you, in connection with Cornelius? He was a quickened soul. He had turned from the idolatry of what it was characteristic of the Roman Empire, and he it says that he feared God. Acts chapter 10, verse 2A. Devout man or a pious man, one that feared God. Here's a Gentile, a Gentile, a Roman, He's a centurion. He fears God and with all his health. Which gave much alms to the people. There was a little evidence of life, divine life. He prayed to God only. Well, God had quickened him, He had life, but he wasn't sealed with the Spirit. He hadn't really come to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus having died on the cross, and that the work of salvation, the work of redemption was available for him. And I think that that's what you're expressing here in connection with the Thessalonians. They went to where the Word of God was read habitually. And so the synagogue was that place. They went to where the Word of God was read and it wasn't read with intelligence. It wasn't expounded with intelligence. But when he came, he could expound it with intelligence. And so he spoke and they believed. And as you say in Acts chapter 17, the Spirit of God records really perhaps that most of those that were there in that assembly in Thessalonica were Gentiles. What grace. But there were Jews too. It says in verse five, but the Jews which believe not. There were some Jews that did believe. And so God was working and we find that in connection with Tornillos have just finished the thought in chapter 10 that.

Peter went and he went, what did he go with? He went with the word of God and so they needed to hear it says that in verse 42. He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be judge of the quick and dead to him. Give all the prophets witness that through His name. Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell. On all them which heard the word. But isn't it wonderful that you know, our responsibility is to present the Word and we can't tell whether a soul has been quickened or not. Sometimes we can, sometimes we can. There's a desire to hear the word and a desire, a thirst for righteousness, a thirst to understand the things of God. And but if we present Christ as having done that finished work, completed that finished work. A soul oftentimes just needs to hear that the salvation is for you, the work that was done on the cross of Calgary was done for you and just accept it. And so they turned to God. They had already turned, as you say, from idols, but now they had the ability to serve the living and the true God and to wait. I sometimes connected the verse three with this verse and in this way it says in verse 3. The work of faith, labor of love, patience of hope. Then it's there's a turning. In verse nine, he turned to God. Wait or serve. And then wait for his Son from heaven. That's a wonderful thing to see, a soul that was once enslaved by Satan, enslaved by bad habits, enslaved by sin, set free, and now to serve a new master. And did they ever serve? Came to office because this man was destructive in the way of the Lord. The fervent spirits shaken thought delicately the faith of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. We preach that what she knew talked about what she knew, and it was full of Wasilla. The next verse that had heard him the Coca-Cola under them, and founded them to him the way of God more perfectly than we see the result of this industry at at the end of the chapter. Sometimes the conversions. Are more dramatic, if I can put it that way, in some people than in others. I think we've seen cases like that. I think of a man that many here will perhaps remember her name, Dave McKay, who is from McAdam, NB. How the goes back to the boat into the 50s, I guess nineteen 57860 that area and how he was a rough, rough man and. God went to work in his life and converted and he put Bible verses on his on his house after that. A dramatic conversion Gave up drink, gave up smoking in a dramatic way without getting. Too much into detail about it, and then another kind of conversion, if I can put it that way, of the. I was thinking of the three things that are here in these verses that we've had before us here, that they received the word in verse 6, having received the word, and then verse seven in samples to all but believe, and then in verse 8 sounded out the word. And. I think about a man that I know in some. Some here will remember him. His name was Mike Acheson, and it's about 40 years ago when Mike was saved and he was in a gospel meeting.

In Pine Grove and the brother spoke that night on the Prodigal son. And Mike receives the Lord as a savior. And the next morning he had to go work and he, Mike, is a kind of a timid nature and he didn't know how he was going to get along with the other employees that were there.

And he wasn't the kind of person that would announce that he had been converted so. He went to work and then coffee break time came and. So all the fellows sat around to have coffee together and. Mike was there and didn't say anything, and so one of the fellows said to him, well, what got into you? Well. Right away they realize that something had happened to him. There was a funny man being Christ. He's a new creation. And there may be some here that are converted and they find it more difficult to take and give out the word to others. And there may be southerners there a little more bold. The Lord has his own way of taking and spreading the word. Nice to see here that it was received and then it became examples. And examples can come in a way of letting our light shine. Often been mentioned. When a light shine, it doesn't make any noise. And so in a testimony, a quiet testimony to the Lord can have a great effect on those around, can it? And then there is the the sounding out of the word. So we need to be encouraged and encouraged others to just. Be examples in the same way the Thessalonians work. Spend a little bit of time with my agency. That's forty years later since he was saved. Mike now has a very bad form of cancer and. He continues on for the board, just sleeping very quietly, people in their need and so the Lord has used him to be able to meet a lot of people have found themselves in the same situation where at the end of their lives that have no hope. It's nice for each one of us to be encouraged that whatever way we can spread the gospel of the Lord Jesus, whether we're. Perhaps, given that gift of an evangelist, you. Do it on a regular basis, publicly, but it may be just quiet one at a time to show them the way. There's a nice example. I think we have two in the Word. In the fourth of John, we know the story of how the Lord went to Samaria and says he must need to go through Samaria. And you know the story of how he wanted to meet that woman as well. And we all know what happened. Tremendous. Can I say conversion that took place at that time. Since your life is so filled up with it, she goes and tells the men come and see a man that told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ that was her testimony? And then you turn over to the 8th chapter of Acts and you find that Philip goes down there and it says that. If I recall it says something about the whole city turned upside down or something along that. Well, here the seed was planted. The Lord went there first of all, and. Gave the word to the woman at the well, and then others were affected and then the whole city was effectively. One of the things that you need to Christianity is the teaching of resurrection, isn't it? And so he was going to bring truth out in connection with that a little bit later on in this book that it says in verse 10 that his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. So we're not only delivered from the future judgment, our sins have been judged. They were judged at the cross. God dealt with them. They're gone.

In the coming day at the judgment seat of Christ, God the Son, as you have your private review with Him, will never mention one sin. He will reward what was done for His own glory, for His honor in obedience to His Word, and an affection for Him. But He will never charge you with any sin and never remind you of a sin that He still hasn't forgotten, so to speak. He chooses not to remember those sins, and those sins are being dealt with, Judge, and so here He reminds them of the resurrection. Of the Lord Jesus and that there's a glorified man on high and that's their object. It was a man in the glory who was once here in this scene, went to the cross, bore the judgment for their sins, and now is seated on high. He doesn't go into all those details, but he reminded them that the Lord Jesus was raised and then it says delivered us from the wrath to come. So there's it's a little clearer in Mr. Darby's translation. If you permit me, I'll just read it there, it says. Jesus, our deliverer from the coming wrath. So they didn't have Ross to look forward to. They didn't have judgment to look forward to. They had the peace of God in connection with that finished work of Christ and the judgment was gone, was passed. Death and judgment are behind us. Grace and glory are before. Judgment. The Roth spoken of here is the Tribulation. It's the judgment of the living that is referred to by the apostle here. We might we might make a few remarks to hear on. On the whole subject of the Lord's return, because there's so much confusion out there and Christendom today with the so-called Reformed theology. Covenant theology they have. They don't distinguish between the two comings of the Lord at all, that there is the coming of the Lord. For for his Saints and there is the coming of the Lord with his Saints. I think we hear all understand that, but they are definitely different. There's a period of at least seven years between them. I think this here refers to the rapture, but the other references. At certain times, like at the end of chapter 3 to the end, He may establish your hearts unblameable in holding us before God, even our Father, at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ with all His Saints. Second Epistle of Thessalonians, chapter one, verse seven. And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels and flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God. This is the wrath of God, that. I believe the apostle was looking to that awful judgment that is going to be poured out on this, on Christendom at the end of the Tribulation period. These are two distinct aspects of the Lord's coming first. There is, there is the Rapture, and then there is the appearing or the Revelation. Which is at the end of the tribulation period, when we will come with the Lord. It will at that time. It will be a different sequence. When the Lord comes, we will be taken out from this world and the unsaved will be left behind. But when the Lord appears. The unsaved will be taken in judgment. The harvest judgments there, those who have believed the gospel of the Kingdom, will remain here. And they will go into earthly blessing. So the sequences are entirely different in those two aspects.

And that's what I I'm trying to to bring before us, that there is a definite difference in the coming of the Lord for his Saints. The Bride. Bride meeting the Bridegroom. The Church of God. Taken out of this world entirely. We're a heavenly people. We don't belong to the world. We're going to be raptured, snatched away in a moment, twinkling of an eye. Nothing has to be fulfilled before that takes place. What? What aspects of prophecy had been fulfilled here? The And yet they were told to wait for the Lord's coming. But at the rapture, at the appearing of the Lord, there will be judgment. The Lord will deal with the nation of Israel and the the indignation judgments there, the Western nations and the King of the north, and so on. This will be a pouring out of the wrath of God. You have some Christians that have the church going through the tribulation. They don't understand that the Church is a heavenly company waiting for the Lord to lift us out of this world into the glory at any moment tonight. But for the world, it is the wrath of God which will be poured out. Unlimited when the Lord appears with his Saints. This is one of the passages of Scripture that we can use to teach and to reinforce the fact that the church will not go through the tribulation period. This is one of these verses. And Paul is part of Paul's doctrine. And I just mentioned too, in connection with what you've said, Brother John is in Zachariah chapter 14, just as an example, in verse five, it says just the last part of verse 5, Zechariah 14. Verse five, The Lord my God shall come in all the Saints with thee. That's the appearing. Now in the Old Testament prophetic scriptures, they knew about the appearing because it has to do with Israel. They did not know about the rapture. That's a part of Christian teaching. It's Christian doctrine. It has to do with the heavenly company. So what? What has to do with the earth and with Israel's place on the earth? Is in connection with what is given in the prophetic scriptures in the Old Testament. But it does say that all the Saints will come with him, not one will be missing. And so all those from Adam right down to the time just after the just at the point that the tribulation is ending, they'll all come with the Lord Jesus. Not one will be missing. And so we have the Revelation chapter 20 that gives us that, doesn't it? It says there that in in Revelation chapter 20 that. I'll just read the last part of verse four to get the connection. They lived and reigned with Christ. 1000 years, but the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection. You know what? I think it's a wonderful thing in connection with the grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of the Lord for his own. All those in faith that have died in faith, and those that will be alive on the face of the earth at the time that the Lord Jesus comes, and those that have died and those

that have gone through the tribulation be murdered. They're going to be raised at the end of the Tribulation period. And so when the Lord Jesus comes, it is appearing, all the Saints will be with him. Not one will be missing. And so it didn't matter what age, what time, in the prophetic timetable, you might say that souls have had faith in the Lord and being born of God, they'll all be with him. What a prospect. And Paul just really reinforces this through these dear Saints. Isn't it good for us to see here at the expression and to wait for his Son from heaven? And it reminds us in the 4th chapter of how the the apostle Paul said. We which are alive and remain under the coming of the Lord.

The The hope of the church is a present hope the way it is presented in Scripture, isn't it? And I think that we find. It necessary to be reminded of it in that way. Recently my wife and I went to a Funeral Home and knew a brother and a sister who. Deeply loved the Lord and the wife died. There was her body in the casket and there's a husband who's standing beside him. We went up and said hello and and sorry to hear and so on and he said. I told her at the end, he said. I'll see you on the other side of the river. And I know what he meant, and in connection River Speaking of death, and then he was referring to his own death, that he would die and the coming of the Lord as the present hope is not something. Enjoyed at large among believers, it seems to me. And I think that we need to remind ourselves and. To anticipate that it could be today, perhaps today, that the Lord is coming because it'll affect the decisions that we make in our lives if we, if we hold it in reality, in our lives as the present hope. Brother Bill Herman, would you agree with that? Very serious thing. And so I just want to ask a question about first John and chapter 2 and. Every day. The guy always hopes that I'm not thinking something wrong or doing something that's simple or whatever, or saying something is simple or just. Some of them be caught up in heaven and. You know this thought should be your everyday thought. I would think that refers Bill to the time when. Our lives will be manifest. Just to get the sequence of events, the Lord came tonight. We would be taken into the Father's house and welcomed. And during that seven-year period, the judgment seat of Christ will take place in heaven. And our lives will be reviewed, not only since we have been saved, but since we were in the body. So although nothing that we have done before we were saved will be brought up to condemn us, it will be revealed. We will know then, in deeper and fuller measure, what it how much we have been forgiven.

God will remove that from his memory. But after the judgment seat of Christ, there will be the rewards apportioned and given according to our walk down here. Your place in the Kingdom, your reward, will be according as you have walked down here. What you have lived for in this life, it will be whatever has been done for Christ, however small it might be. Cup of cold water given in his name will not lose its reward. Then the crowns, which of course we will cast at his feet, but they will be given to us and then at the appearing we will come back with Christ, but then we'll be manifest. I believe our rewards how we have walked. So I think that this verse refers to to that time, but I'm I'm not positive. The. If we may have confidence and not be ashamed to be for him that is coming, Well, there is such a thing as a saved soul and a lost life. 1St Corinthians 3 is clear. He shall be saved so as by fire. That can happen to a believer. What I'm afraid. Will be ashamed that is coming, because he lived for the world and the things of this life occupied in present advantage. And he, he, he'll be there in the glory, but there's going to be a loss in his life and there can be in our lives too. So I would think it refers to the time when we will. Appear with the Lord in our. Our rewards will be manifested and some other brother have a thought on that. I endorsed my Second Timothy chapter 4. It says there in verse 8 Paul is speaking. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crowd of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearance. It seems to be a similar thought there that. The appearance seems to be connected with the responsibility of believers. In that verse, and also the one in first John, I wonder if we could just close by sending 286. 286. So. Our Lord. We play a dream. Shake Shipping.

Toledo Conference: 1971, 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5

Reading

All day meeting. Hesper, October 1971 Reading meeting. We're playing together 186. Billionaire with fire a new one, Loving soul. Fire, hearts, desire and light. 180 selected.

In durably near return of our Blessed Lord, would the brother be happy to consider first Thessalonians first chapter? Unless I have anything special on my heart. First chapter of First Thessalonians. Paul I'm so very nice. And Timothy is under the Church of the Thessalonians, which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God always for you all making mention of you in our prayers. Remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor, of love and patience, of hope, in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father, Knowing, Brethren beloved, your election of God for our gospel came not unto you and word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, as you know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And you became followers of us and of the Lord. Having received the word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost, so that you were in samples to all that believe in Macedonia and IKEA, board from you have sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and IKEA, but also in every place. Your faith in Godward is spread abroad, so that we need not to speak anything, for they themselves show of us what manner of entering yet we had unto you, and how you turn to God and idols. To serve the living and true God and await your Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. Correct to say that this was the first successful apostle Paul ever wrote. Perhaps the 2nd epistle was the next epistle that he wrote. And we find those that destiny had not been converted too long before the apostle. Wrote this epistle. Paul was driven out of testimony persecution. He was not able to return for years. So because Satan hindered his returning. He wrote this at Business. We see the hand of God in that. He been able to visit them as he truly desired. We would not have the ministry of the Lord's coming for the whole Church of God. We'll find that in both the 1St and 2nd missiles of Thessalonians, the Lord's coming is mentioned in every chapter. Young Christians who have heard the Gospel and accepted the same. Where the gospel is clearly presented to them, immediately have a longing to see the one who saved them, and that brings in the coming of the Lord. In the next year, you'll walk about it. No one's coming being mentioned. Every chapter in the first chapter is presented at an inspiring coach holding Anne Bondberg. The second characteristics and encouraging hope of a painting sermon. The third chapter of purifying hopeful believers, the 4th chapters, becomes a vote for the Marine.

Fifth chance would present as a surrounding hope of Sleeping Christian. I was thinking to the first person when we get this expression to show us the professor, the Thessalonians, which is in God's Father, isn't it? It speaks of them relationship. In God the Father. The Church of the Thessalonians, which is in Dawn the Father. The only time I mentioned I believe and so it's presented that you see a Saint Paul is wonderful relationship. As far as it appears somewhat like what the hospital, John says about the thieves. Speaking of the thieves of the little children, he

says, I write unto you because you have known the father. And here were young believers. While they hadn't learned some of the deeper truths that he doesn't write to them as he writes to the Ephesian assembly if he can encourage their hearts by reminding them. That they're in God the Father. And that's very beautiful to see an assembly in such a place. Of nearness and nearness and while, as we say. It has written to young believers knowing that relationship, yet there's nothing. That speaks of such security as being in God the Father, because where could we find place where we're so safe? Where the enemy can never reach us and. To be in in God the Father Himself. That is also not to see us in the Lord Jesus Christ. With the congressionalism, Boston falls because the Lord is full title. So often the Lord Jesus Christ, any man be in Christ. He's a new preacher. What's not the worst expression of our Lord when he came to support resurrection morning? I ascended My father, your father, My God, your Father. If you say that relationship comes first and then responsibility. And connection with the ones that Paul identifies himself in writing to the Thessalonians. Paul and Sylvanas, that silence and demotious who travel with Paul. Many journeys carrying the gospel, distant places. Why do you think of Barnabas who started out with Paul and yet he allowed the friction? Well he wanted to take his nephew John Mark along with him. His brother thought it not wise or Paul thought it not wise because he left them and the contention was so sharp that they suffering he never find them together again. Well Barnabas it was self will there. And as another brother has said, the what Paul said was perhaps very sharp, but yet as to the right stand Falls was right. He had a reason. Reason of faithfulness. He saw it with harm a young brother to give him a prominent place after departing from the truth. So 1 can be right as to the extent he takes, and yet his spirit not be controlled by grace.

At the time, But nevertheless, though Paul may have shown an oblast, did show darkness, for it was very sharp, very sharp. Yet Paul was right, and Barn was wrong, and it separated Barnabas from the work that otherwise doubtless the Spirit of God would have given him. And the connection with the Gospel being carried to so many lands. The Church of Antioch commended the Apostle Paul further to their work after that incident, didn't they? So that we see that there were those in that place, those who hadn't got government wisdom to recognize what was the mind of God in the case between the two. And I've often thought that the account that we have in the official to the Galatians concerning Barnabas might have been at the roof of the whole matter. First barn that was carried away with the simulation of others. You need to be careful that we don't get carried away with the things which pertain to the flesh. That's in the second of Galatians, isn't yes. Shows a little failure, a little S wheel. On yield it has. May have very far reaching consequences. So it's a lesson for us in keeping humble and really always ready to own when we're wrong and not be unwilling to judge ourselves. How much sour and how much loss? Doubtless it was a great loss to the work of God to have Barnabas disappear from the work. Of course, I suppose he did carry on in my measurement, not in the full. Fellowship. And he had carried on the work up to that time where Bentio. The Apostle Paul. Valued The fellowship of a president, so you find it here. It's already been mentioned that Paul and Silas and Timothy are united together here in the writing of the successful. And how much we need to fellowship on our brethren too. And whatever we do. It's very important, Brother Smith. And we should value it and not disregard it. Interesting to know. True that both Hall and Noises chose a young man or a Companion of Service. Paul Jones Timothy Moses chose Joshua. Both days on the charge, the charge to Joshua Deuteronomy first after Joshua, so it finally constitutes John and. These two Armando taken around with these old. And committed many a service to them. So we've been remarking. It's nice for the young brothers to keep in company with the older brothers who have had a little more experience perhaps and things of this wicked world and. It's nice to have the companionship. Mark was not influenced by violence, but finding the Timothy that impossible, Commencement says, profitable to me. He wasn't turned aside from a steadfast that's the price. He didn't let Barnabas influence him. Well, he gives this lovely commendation that you find I believe in. And all the way up business and that's the Hebrews.

Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Two things that we much need. In our time. Grace unmerited favor, for we deserve nothing by grace that we are saved through faith and that not of ourselves. It's grace wherein we stand. And it will be grace that will be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ. So when the rewards are given, it will all be of grace. In going on together as the Assembly of God, there is such grace needed. For burying one another in love. Realizing that we're just poor sinners, saved by grace, and it's all his grace that saved us and brought us into this place. And grace will keep the heart lowly and keep the heart dependent. And then we need we need peace. For. For the peace of God that passes all understanding. Is very important and we're told to follow the things that make for peace. I'm sure we all understand it's never peace at any cost to give up the truth or to bring in something that. Dishonored Christ or his priceless work or his holy name just for the sake of having a harmony or try to have a human made harmony. To sacrifice something of of great importance that is never God's way. So when James is speaking along this line, his epistle and the third chapter. He says in the 17th verse for the wisdom that is from above his first cure. Then he said well, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good truth, without partiality and without hypocrisy. That is, there must be first that which is pure. And what is pure maintains the glory of Christ. So the grace here is not really the saving grace is that is the grace which sustains the day by day after we are saved. And the very first thing the Lords in half his resurrection was, peace be unto you. Nice this wonderful source. This grace and peace flows from from. God our Father. And the Lord Jesus Christ. Think of God as our Father. All the priceless truth that surely is. And then those three names brought together. Lord Jesus Christ. And when we have grace and peace flowing down to us on a source like that, that is surely the most wonderful commendation. And no wonder it appears in all the epistles that Hebrews, I believe. How much we need grace day by day. Both in connection with our brethren and with the world. And who could give us grace and peace? Like one who is our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, the one who died. I'm pleased to know that all that sustains us here below we have from our Father, God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Master nervous feel that every 1/4 of thistles ends with grace. He was really a recipient of grace, wasn't it? You really want grace men? And the Lord met him on the downward Rd.

Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all men, after having heard the Lord saying, Behold, I come quickly, Even so come Lord Jesus, the response art of the believers. Then we have the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, and that until he comes again for his own. In the second verse we get we give thanks to God always for you all making mention of you and our prayers. In our prayers, it shows the. Hostile values the prayers in the Assembly. As soon as the Church performed, they continued steadfastly in the Apartment Doctrine Fellowship and in prayers, and in breaking of bread. How important the prayer meeting is. Let's never give up the prayer meeting present and let's be faithful in our attendance at the service. We're usually fine and going about the prayer meeting is the poorest candidate meeting of the meeting of the assembly. There's also. Kind of prayer as leaved, right? Many times that we pray. I pray for all of you have been on the street a long time ago to pray for all those things. So very important for us today is the prayers of mine. We are the presence of God and prayer not just for ourselves but for all of God's people. It reminds me of Anna and the second chapter, Luke. She knew them all and she spake of him. Christ for her subject. And the Lord's people are really precious to our heart, Soviet Cross. So he knew all the Lord's people didn't. They will pray for them all. Just pray for those who are going astray. He prayed for those who were going on well. Someone has said her phone with the widows in Israel, while their mothers in Israel praying for when getting that is and his men went down of the host of the Midianites for no reason

surely give the answer. It was those who were going down into that place of danger. In faith and dependence, and praying more earnestly for them, doubtless than those who. Who went back and didn't have the courage to continue? Well, you'll notice the Blessed Lord himself spent all night in prayer. It surely shows the importance of prayer. And the 6th of Luke says it came to pass in those days that he went out into a mountains of prey and continued all night in prayer to God. And this was before he chose his disciples, his companions. So he is a very important word to the young people before they choose their companions. To spend much time in prayer. The Lord spent all night in prayer before he chose His disciples says in the 13th verse. And when it was day he called unto him his disciples, and of them he chose 12. Well, if it was necessary for the Son of God to spend all night in prayer, surely it's important that we should spend a lot of time in prayer. I remember dear young brother in China who came to prayer meeting. Our sister here would remember him. Wasting and he said to Brother Willis hunt, I have a much to pray about Brother, so I'll not be at the prayer meeting. So he stayed away. Well, not too long after that he took ship down to Hong Kong from Shanghai and they encounter the storm. The ship was more or less wrecked and he was thrown in the sea with his very few belongings and lost them. And so he was picked up by a naval vessel and brought back to Shanghai. And he came to a prayer meeting somehow, he said. Now, brother, I haven't signed the prayer back.

And pass him to that terrible ordeal to make him realize his dependence upon the Lord. He lost his dependence, he said. There's no need for me to come. I have nothing to say about There are two things he lost. He lost his belongings and he lost his independence. And so the Lord may have to teach us solemn lessons too, if we stay away from the prayer meeting when it's possible to be there. Remember, young brother said to me once, he didn't pray. He was at the prayer meeting. They did not pray himself. And he said, do you think it's all right for for us to say Amen to the other brothers prayers? I said, well it's a very easy way out. I said, you know, the Lord says let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice so we won't have our responsibilities. Not we're not suggesting sister should pray in a prayer meeting of thoughts. But we can all pray and we need to think in danger. The Psalmist who said in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and would look up in the morning. And we finally prayed three times a day like Daniel did. Let him that the worst before the one he called attention to, and the 6th of Luke, where the Lord went out and spent the whole night in prayer to find what his enemies were. Indeed, that during that time we're in the preceding verse, it sounds, and they were filled with men and communed one with another, what they might do to Jesus. Yeah, they were having a bad meeting. To condemn the Lord and to stop his ministry and to destroy him. For as the Lord was lonely, the Father in communion and every beautiful when they were trying to destroy the Lord, he was inquired to call the Father so that wider blessing might go out to the nation that wanted to refuse it. Another verse connection with Clinton's My brother Gladys brought before us in the 1St of March from 35th verse. Mark one verse 35. About the Lord and in the morning. Rising up a great while before a day, he went out and departed into a solitary place. And they're afraid, and it mentions in the 38th verse, he said. But then let us go in the next town that I might preach, they're also therefore am I Ford, and at the end of the chapter he meets and cleanses the leopard. We know ourselves begins with prayer. He rose up in the morning, and this is what Satan really tries to keep it all from doing, is praying in the morning, he said. Well, if we pray at night, what's wrong with praying at night? Look, you know it's good. But the Lord sets an example and he rolls up in the morning a great while before a day, and he spent his time in prayer, so they're free. That wasn't preach. They loved me, the left for and heal the leper and bring blessing the man so it by prayers stand up to speak. Comparably an easy thing for a lot of people to do, but to be on our knees is not very easy, is it? They alone with God in the bedroom on our knees sometimes get very weary and tired. But this is what Jesus did. He spent his time. And prayer. So it tells us earlier in the first chapter of Mark that his word was for the second chapter of Mark, his word was with power. I guess you've noticed too, brother Wakefield. And the the verse before it says Simon and they that were with him followed after him, and then they had found him. They said unto him, All men seek for thee is really the word calling. Well, that's quite a incentive to go to where all men are seeking for someone that serves as the Lord. And sure, naturally that was the best for us. We'd say, oh, that's the place to go. They're all thinking you want to want, maybe want to hear my preaching, but how different will the Lord? He said, let us go to the next house. He didn't, wasn't drawn aside at all.

And we have to remember the Lord was a real man. He was a man of faith, too, and a man of dependence, and his dependence was sustained by those times of prayer to his Father. The enemy would have sought to turn the Lord away from other places where God would have him go, but that time and prayer alone there in the morning prepared it so that he wasn't turned aside. He went, as you have called, so nicely, our attention. Was going on and meeting that poor leopard. He wouldn't have met that leopard and cleansed it if he followed Simon's advice and the others at this time. And assistance with what? I value the Lord with pain and prayer all night. He had a decision to make that morning He was in the 212. Out of all those disciples. It's nice to see you as a dependence on the smaller. We continue to occur all night. At the end of the morning He chose 12 disciples to fall hill. And how important this is each one of us. Recall upon to make decisions. And we have to make choices how good it is before the Lord first before we make us God. And these the apostle tells us to pray and always the 6th chapter praying all. And then in Colossians he says. The 4th down is experts continuing prayer and watching the same as Thanksgiving. And then in our officials of Thessalonians, the 5th chapter. 17 First, he says, pray without ceasing. So there is no time in our lake down here when we can do without prayer. Going through the act. Wherever you find prayer mentioned, it's nice to see that there is a blessing on their power, hopping the word as it goes forth. Act 2. We don't have the place to worry about. We have an enemy within A and as long as we're here on this scene, we have the old Acre. And so we need to pray there'll be praise in the be praised in the glory. Prayer. Will be speaking with us. Really is not a sign of the sentence upon the law. And there is a moment that you and I don't need to be dependent upon the Lord if they're going to be kept here in this world of testimony for Him. The disciples in Acts 2 already referred to they continued steadfastly and the apostles doctrine and fellowship in breaking of bread and prayers. I've often thought of it this way, that continuing in the apostles doctrine. That. Is good. We need that we have the word of God. But we need the Fellows of the Apostles Fellowship as well as a doctrine to go on. In fellowship with that which is of God. But then that will lead to exercise after the breaking of bread and obedience to the Word of God. But that too, in its own way, makes us feel our own weakness, our dependence upon the Lord and souls. There is the prayer meeting. That, I believe, is the collective aspect of it. Is it not Brother Midberry? Yes, I believe, though it doesn't say prayer come before the breaking of bread and that second of acts. I may be wrong. The memory is always serving me as a good in the 41St verse of Acts, and they gladly received the word were baptized on the same day. Were added unto them about 3000 souls, when they continued steadfastly on the apostles doctrine and in fellowship and in breaking a bread. And whereas you were right. Yes, thank you. I'm glad to get corrected on that. I get the quoting scripture and then get advanced. I'm glad to be corrected.

Questions of training, authorities and many of the 5th character of Ice cream. Put things together in the 5th chapter. 20 Attention the book before increasing **** from the elders programs to go to land. I've Never Run in my Heart and golden files Little workers. There are players that think about the prayers of the Saints on earth. I think like to the Tribulation. And the next word we have prayed. And redeemed it to God by our blood and someone. Other people asked for the tribulation on earth or in prayer. The people on heaven were afraid. In connection with

your heart from the American 6th of equations and pray hallway to all fair suffocate to the Spirit, and watching there unto the law going to appearance and suffocation for all things. Find the apostle forms engaged in the ground department and Saints. But the next verse he says that for me don't forget me, I need your prayers too. And for me that happens may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth fully to make known the mystery of the gospel. Then I think it's doing a connection with prayer, and some people seem to think that whatever they ask or they will get. But there's a very certain worthy and 66 Psalm verse 18. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. Me, I must be right to the whole first before I expect the lounge to my friend, and then we call him saying the Lord will, and then in John the President, the 5th Catholic. And this is the confidence that we have in England. If we are anything at falling. So we will we hear about and if we know, we hear us whatsoever we ask. We know that we have the petitions that we design out Him, but I do believe we should take notice of that verse in the Psalm. It's important. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. I must be right for the Lord first before I expect an answer to my prayers. Little girl with a question on this and I have to do well. Your first lesson answered. He said, yeah, sometimes God says yes, Sometimes he says no. Sometimes he says wait a little while. And so we need to say, you know, we got time to to wait a little while, but we're not giving up. We're the continuous prayer. Moses prayed, didn't he? And he used the same expression as the Apostle Paul. But the Lord did not think he's prayer the way he desired to enter the land. He showed him the land, but he's not allowed to enter it. He said, Let me hear no more about this. He prayed three times, and we find the Apostle Paul prayed three times, But the answer was not what he expected. But it was a better one, says my gracious sufficient holy praises of all might be removed. But the Lord said, my grace is sufficient for thee. Then he'll say, Therefore life armored gladly, glory, my infirmities of the power of Christ may rest upon me. So you say, the Lord does answer prayer, but not always in the way we expect. Daniel waited for three weeks to be not before his prayer was answered, but it was heard for the first day and Angel was back there with a message from the Lord. That he might die. I'll never answer that prayer when he took him to heaven without dying. I want to go where you can go back to the first chapter of Mark Connection where Brother Ernie was messing in the 30 something. In the morning he rising up the Great Wall before a day with the previous versions going back to verse 32, and it even won the son that settled him all of her disease remember her for dust, for devils. All the city was gathered together at the door to heal money and restricted divers diseases to cast out funny devils.

Because they knew help I was playing. And even when the song did set, while we look for rest and our laborers don't we? But there was no rest for the Lord. You rolled early while it was still day, but he was working late at night. And that's why I believe we get the 11 Chapters of Marker begins with and he did this, and he did that and he did the other speaks of incessant toil. The perfect service from 11 Chapters begins with and he did this. Verse 231. Lord has a couple of Simon four states, and that's what I'm saying to your chief. And I have faith for thee and thy faith of our hearts, when thou convert back to my friends. Does that does that work? Peace. Continue to pray. Nice too to see here on the. Fallout only prayed for the Thessalonians Saints, but he gave thanks to God. All for you all. Now we see our brother going on halfway. It should be an occasion of Thanksgiving. The word all Visible The word all. Through. Remove all one method. Well, that would. This might be without our brothers. Or we were placed in the most favorable spotted world to live this beautiful climate and scenery and and everything that is right with natural man. And we're there without any of our brother Mr. What does all mean to us? So it's really having our the fellowship of our presence. And is the most. Delightful. Blessing to God in this world. Of course, God might send one like Brother Eric Smith through the land where they never heard the gospel. That's quite different. But it wasn't long before he had brothers to rejoice with it. But it wasn't choosing A delightful place to live. It was. The desire to serve the Lord and carry the word. Where was never heard before. And all the social, delightful places we find the sound Riddle. See what sin is brought in. The Lord pronounced the world very good. Offering created it, didn't they? But man is just ruined it. Possibly remember certain. Of certain things. That were characteristic of this assembly. Have rejoiced his heart, and it's well for us to remember the things that are are happy and have been for blessing, not just to be occupied with failures and shortcomings and things that would make us. Would distress our souls. So he remembered without ceasing. Your work of faith and labor, of love and patience, of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. To get brought before us there and the three characteristics of our Christian testimony faith, hope, and love, as you get in First Corinthians 13. And these dear Saints abounded in those.

Those 3 characteristics. I suppose they're brought out, are they not in the 9th and 10th versus this? What you've just mentioned, work of faith, says they turned to God from idols, the work of faith and to serve the living, true God. That's a labor of love, the patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, and to wait for his Son from heaven in the 10th verse. Those three things often appear, I think. And there's a principle where he finds it again. In the 5th chapter and eighth verse, and let us who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for encounter the hope of salvation, there are the three are brought together again. And feed us handsome tongue. I have faith hope and love again and feeds as a pistol we when James rawl that tells us how faint works. And speeds of pistol tells us how hope works and. Of this and tells us how love works. So those 3 epistles are characterized by these three things. You'll find in the. Two emphasis in the second chapter of Revelation. The. The work and the labor and the patience which swell to notice the difference. In Revelation 2. In the second verse in this address to the Church of Ephesus. I know thy works and thy labor and thy patience. What does he have to say further down? Nevertheless, I have someone against thee, because I was left thy first love. In this case. The three things that are characteristic of the Christian life were not there. We find that they were still going on with their work, labour and their patience, but the vital thing was gone. That's when he says thou hast left. Thy first love. As to their outward testimony, they were going on quite well. But you know, there's always the danger in connection with going on the things of the Lord. To carry on. What it started with true energy of faith, love, hope. And just as a habit. And we need to be warned against that. We can get in the habit of going to the breaking of bread, to remember the Lord just because we were brought up that way, because we're accustomed to go there. Same way with prayer. And as to our work might be very much taken up with many school workers, many lines of service. And it just gets to be. An energy and natural energy to see how much is we can do, how many gospel tracks can be given away and so on. And so if those vital things are not there that. Brings in the importance of communion. Harry Hale used to often see there's no substitute for communion. And we can get out of communion and we can go on and the things of the Lord may be very correctly, as another brother said, we could be very sound in the truth, just as clear as an icicle, and just as cool. So we need to be constantly stirred up and that's. An individual matter of getting right into the presence of the Lord and something like 139 Psalms. Search me, oh Lord, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the path in the way everlasting.

So we need that searching of heart and practice because it's so easy. And perhaps we don't, they're not conscious of it, that we're slipping. We're getting careless. Maybe we're there's a lot of self will that's mixed up with our labor for the Lord and alone in His presence is where those things can be detected, and when they are detected can be judged on superiority, presence. Connection with the fourth verse you mentioned, because thou hast left thy first love. 5th verse says remember therefore from when thou fallen and repent and do the 1St works. When I suppose the first first would manifest the first love, would they not? Nothing takes the place for love for Christ. Leave that out. And it's just an empty. Affair. And it shows that the portion of a cart that has received Christ as a Savior, while there isn't the intelligence, there isn't

the knowledge, there isn't the acquaintance with the truth of God, that we can expect to follow on the life of one who has accepted the Savior yet that love. Delights in the Savior who has found peace through believing and work on the cross now that that love, there's nothing can replace it. An example of that. And the 20th chapter of John. Didn't know what's here and John, but the Lord, we love the country. They, well, they went for their own homes and didn't have a home anymore. At home, the red Caribbean, she's got an annual partner, couldn't understand. There's also being an answer, he said in the 24th chapter of Luke. You have an example of two words running the wrong direction, but they have a good. Before the amendment. Happen. When the Lord met the maintenance, and they spoke to him, He said what things, and immediately he leaves with things and speaks about himself. And the consequently they invited them to their home, their home, the Christ, and they warmed their hearts with his a word concerning himself. And their feet have come back to Jerusalem the very same day. So while they were thinking about the things and all, we had occupied the things all around us. But Christ went to think about himself to us. And I think today, in this day in which we live, we need that's what we need, don't we? We need the Lord Himself before us on testimony. Chapter 4. That the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shadow, and when he speaks modern his finished work, that says the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. So we have the three there, we have the past, He gave them some, we have the present, the open event, and all of the Scriptures things concerning Himself. We have the future, the Lord himself, so let's himself all the way. And connects with what you were saying about Mary Magdalene. When Peter, I mean when John went into the the sepulchre, it says he saw and believed that if there was a proof, the Lord could never have left those charms, those grave clothes as he left them there. But Mary wasn't as intelligent as John, but he went to his own home. Where Mary remained at the sepulchre, and as another has said, to his Mary, there was ignorance, affection.

That the Lord valued England affection more than he did intelligence, where that deep affection seen in Mary was lacking. And we need to remember that in connection with souls that have never maybe heard the full truth of the word of God, is to the Church and faith where the Lord would gathered His Saints. But various seeds? Devotion to the Lord that is more precious to his heart than. Than a lot of intelligence, a lot of knowledge without that affection. But as the same writer has said, while the Lord values ignorant affection, he isn't satisfied with it. And so Mary has LED into the highest truth revealed in connection with the resurrection life of Christ who tell my brother. I send unto my Father, and your Father, unto my God and your God. And when the Apostle writes in Ephesians, he gives that as the key to the epistle. That blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The 3rd chapter of Genesis we have the first pattern standing in a garden with a woman and before God he's accusing the woman and he says the woman will now give us a whitening. So he accused of God and he accuses the woman. The 20th chapter of John, we have the last Adam and a woman standing in a garden and there we find the last that I'm not accusing the woman, but saying they were going to my brother and saying to them I ascend unto my brother and your father. And to my God and your God. And he could say that. And you had a fact that he had given his life on the front. So it's like to say the two gardens, one in Genesis 3 and the one in John 20. It says at the end of the 19th of John there was a garden and then the garden there was a new supplier. So apparently there was those two garden scenes bringing these nice dust before us, the love of Christ the last time compared with the failure of the first time. Beautiful. Thank you. Of Mary who mentioned in the 12Th of John there she had the Lord's death before her, but then she was entrusted that glorious message about the resurrection, wasn't she? So she had both these death and resurrection before her in the 12Th chapter says there they made him a saffron Martha Serb. She was not rebuilt here, she was in Luke. 10 Lazarus was one of them with Sabbath and favour with him. Then took Mary and found the ointment of Spike in our very costly and anoint the feet of Jesus and wifey's feet to their here. And the house was filled with the owner of the ointment. And then they were complaining, and disciples were complaining about the assignment, and should have been solved for 300 pence, and given the poor about them. Then said Jesus left her alone against the dam, my burying half. She kept this. Now she had the Lord's death before her, and later on his resurrection. Here she is in the spirit of worship of his feet, wasn't she? And you don't find Mary of Bethany the one you're reading about, at the tomb of Jesus. Her faith in evidently carried her beyond. The the grave. The word in the next and recovered the job before that. First the Lord turns the middle into the custody off. But the different word in the next was why didn't say that in that area. And you know the thought by that Mary was told not to touch him, and why, And well, in the case of. Now Thomas, he was told, attached to me forth by ********* Behold my hands, Was that the question you had? Yes, I think the.

The thought there and why that's brought in, is that now that the Lord has died and is risen, his people are not to know Him in connection with earthly relationship in this world. See, the Jews at that time were waiting for the Messiah to come and set up his Kingdom, but now they were known as the one who has ascended to the fathers, who he says are not yet invented To my father. Now in the 28th of Matthew, the women come and hold him by the feet because Matthew anticipates the setting up of the Kingdom, indeed the 12% out with the gospel that will bring in. The. Great multitude of all nations at the time the Kingdom is set up on earth. But Mary was to learn that she was not to be associated with Christ down here in connection with his massage ship. And they the Apostle Paul brings that before us in 2nd Corinthians 5, where he says, oh, I have known Christ. After the flesh yet from henceforth no I him no more. He didn't know him as the one who reigned in this world. Does that answer your question someone? Is not those who touch his feet affected the runner and those who eat their testing after a picture of the church? I am sure you're right, Brother Felton. She saw a lot, she supposed, and immediately. Goblin. Well, there's many people that day look on Jesus as the God, the one who came down to improve world conditions, to make this a better place to live in. But he's not the gardener at all. He did not come to that purpose. He came to give his life a ransom for many, to glorify God, his father through death through his sacrifice. As for the real? Entering into the subject here in this verse of the Three Characteristics of the Christian Life, Faith, Hope, and Love is found at the end of the verse where you read. In our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God our Father. That is, there are two very important acquaintance we have with father and son. I remember that verse. Thou God sees me. We should live with the consciousness that we're speaking. We're acting under the eye of a holy God that sees every act like. Joe, when he could have concealed his sin, he says. How can I commit this great sin? He was conscious of being under the eye of God, not under the eye of man. So that especially given as the word to conscience, make us realize that we're in the presence of God at all times. But then we need something for the heart as well As for the conscience, and that you get in our Lord Jesus Christ. That that is something very precious to the heart. That we're having to do with that Blessed One. And here are the fullness of His names are brought before us. In our Lord Jesus Christ that we can enjoy His presence, being happy, and His love and doing after we engage him for His glory, trusting Him and going on with him. But there's the other side that's also important. After that, we're living under the searching eyes.

Holy God. And that makes us careful. And now the word of God provides for both the conscience and the heart. After you heard this story of Mr. Garvey and Mr. Bella, Mr. Bellit's ministry was sold distinctly for the hearts of the believers. You can't read any of his writing of what your heart is just drawn to Christ. Mr. Darby was a ministry. Was awesome. Given in view of the conscience, I was told that these two servants of Christ were on their way to a meeting, Mr. Darby said to develop. Now, Brother John, remember that Saints have consciences as well as hearts. Mr. Bella turned to Mr. Darby and who they're both Johns, he says. John, don't forget. The Saints have hearts as well as consciences.

For those two men. Really. Their ministry balanced each other and I believe you have that balance brought before us here in connection with our life and testimony. Expression and the sight of God and our Father. Do you think we have an illustration of that in the 17th of Genesis, where? Verse first. And when Abram was 90 years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abel, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God. Walk before me and be them perfect. Well, undoubtedly Abram would be conscious of the event in the eye of God all the time, he said. I am the Almighty God and walk before me, and if we're walking before a person, we'd be conscious of That person lives upon us all the time, and we make us very careful, and we will. It's the same line of things that ensure. Won't perform and be perfect? That is perfect in the sense that he lived and acted as one who was in the presence of. Of God himself, the Almighty God. Last two that he told who he was first. He told him what to do. In other words, I'm the Almighty God. I'll give you the strength, Lord Abram, although you're 99 years old. Exposed only the apostle could take up 29. They didn't say that the boat themselves, did they? We often appraise people today and well, because such a thing and then such a thing. You've done such a thing and how could how could this do record this well? The Apostle could do the weekend of praise men's works today exactly. Not the same way. The personal education of their work. Knowing your brother and we love your election of God. That's not addressed to sinners. That's addressed to brethren, those who knew something of what it meant to be beloved, and they're the ones that are to know their election. Honorable truth, and it's one that you. Will preserve us and one that will keep us happy. Because I believe that knowing that we are the elect of God fills the heart with praise and worship, fighting God. Choose me as poor Sinner well. The only way I could answer it is it was because as Ephesians One tells us. Recording as you have chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame. Before him in love, it was because he had a right and because.

It was his delight. To single out certain ones. For a place of glory with Christ. The Apostle, the Apostle Paul never preached elections of sinners by the thought of the Saints, didn't he? Election is not to perplex, but it's the comfort Saints, those who have been chosen and are conscious of the fact that they belong to him. These first four, first this are beautifully connected, aren't they? They're all beautifully connected. I was thinking that the council recognized that the Saints needed grace and peace. To carry out these three things that have been mentioned, and. These things are. Indissolubly, shall we say, connected the work of faith. You can't divorce the one from the other without losing a great deal. Work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope. And. Patients of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. And. These things He was able to remember before the Lord in prayer, but before them, that they might continue on in carrying out these beautiful graces of the Christians. They would need grace and peace to do so. Grace and peace not only that the Apostle wished for them, but that they might show it to others as they thought to carry out their labor law and their working faith. And he does this because he knows there. Their election of God for this very purpose. So it seems to me that. The believers in that wonderful place where God can. That work in him leads these graces if we're subject to Him, and so the Apostle is the praying for them that this might continue in their in their experience, as it were. I don't know if this is the same in the margin that's in the new translation, but it seems to me it's very beautiful. The beloved of God, your election. Now clearly that we had the love by the Apostle and by others, the beloved God. Your election. In that Marcus framework of our Pleasure Golden series. And we find in verse one the Lord Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ was the Lord. We find in Hebrews 2 That he was in the 14th 1St. That through that he might destroy him, that had the power of death, that is the devil, and delivered them, who grew fear of them for all their lifetimes, subject to violence. He was third over. He has the authority. He was the Son of the Almighty God, and he was overall. And he was Jesus. From Seabrooks. And I don't believe in Mr. Matthew that this means something called Jesus, for he shall save the people of the sin and at least call Christ well because he is pink. He wasn't a king when he was on earth. When the Jewish people at that time never spoke anything else as expecting crazy the King Even so right on the crowd before pilots it was mentioned that he was Christ the King. Now in this dream group that is disturbed as Jesus the Lord and the Savior and the King, we the Apostle Paul who gave thanks for these people on the Thesaurus against rich are.

A great example for our sakes. What he says remembering without seizing your work of faith. We have spoken about faith needs, and he has spoken about what prayer means, when indeed if. We listen to thee. Among the believers, we generally hear all. I am small faith, and this is true. But if all who Paul said he do the thesaurus, you work of faith. And we have learned already this morning that by prayer we have come to decisions. And if we pray before our Lord, we have to have faith, we have to have work for faith, and we got to make decisions in faith before our Lord and not say, well, I am small or famous. With faith before the Lord. And then the second heart is that and labor of love. There are two ways to do this. If we see something like we can do for our beloved sins rather than two weeks of it, we can easily turn our back and say, well, this is not my duty, but the other way is to seek or I can do something for the beloved. We got a labour force for the outstanding excess. In the sight of the sight of God and our fault. All the believers walk and grave in the presence of the Holy God, but grace is now our Lord, our God. And then he says, whether on when he has said this or hope of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone have more benefits always. We should read here of hope in my Lord Jesus Christ wouldn't rightly because he was praying to the truth of the disorders. But each and every believer should change heart, my Lord, and this make me subject of him. If I say to any person here on earth he is my Lord, well, that means I over myself Before that, how much the more shall I look at myself For the Lord who is the Lord? And now he is my Lord, So we have the power before him, and he is my savior, and he will be the king. Oh well, the Lord And when the Savior, we have. In him that our view is always connected in this framework of good Lord and all of the world and we not can sit down and say our whole life, small faith and oh wow, we should walk more. But we used to Christmas, we got a flavour for love and we got the decisions in our life and show that we do believe in the role that he is able to. We got to have faith. Very difficult for some banks to do, but we have to trust the Lord. #269 #269. Spring of all our joy, of our brightest things come to the sunlight and the 269.

Toledo Conference: 1973, 1 Thessalonians 1:1-6

Reading

General Meetings, Toledo, November 1973. First reading meeting. 3/18. Oh, Lamb of God, still keep up close to thy tears of thighs. It's only there in Saint We Can Abide #380. Olama. Milk. Hey, I suggest first Thessalonians one your brethren. For our reading. Chapter One. All them so famous and tumultuous under the Church of the Thessalonians, which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work, of faith and labor, of love and patience, of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father. Knowing. Brethren beloved, your election of God for our gospel came not unto you and word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance. As you know what manner of men we were among you for your sake, and you became

followers of us and of the Lord, having received a word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost, so that you were in samples to all that believed in Macedonia, and IKEA more from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia, McHale, but also in every place your faith that God were to spread abroad. So that we need not to speak anything. So they themselves show about what men are entering in we had unto you. And how you turn to God from idols, to serve the living and the true God, and to wait for a Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. The wonderful thing to know where we are, brethren. This first chapter tells us. In God the Father, that's the position in which the assembly is addressed here. And the second official is in God Our Father, I believe the Apostle bringing himself in with the Saints and that same. Company all one. And so it's to know where we are that gives us to know. The meaning of all the expectations that we have in Scripture for our pathway down here, because if we were exhorted on the basis of the Old Testament, it'd be quite different. But when we're in the God the Father, we can understand the relationship. The basis upon which were addressed in the various expectations which you do have to follow. But I was thinking of the marvelous positions that the Saints had seen in here, and no doubt they were they were very young in the face, possibly the first Epistle. That the fossil Rd. I'm not sure. But sleep that way and we see a reality here. And the simplicity. That should characterize the Saints and God at all times. Would you say that the actors were here? It's on the relationship. They never gone as their father and the Lord Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, yes. Noticing in the strong statistics, certainly have the full title of our Blessed Lord nine times in this first Epistle the Lord Jesus Christ and. 11 Times in the second episode, 20 times in all, the apostles brings before them the Lordship of Christ. How important that is Today we often hear people say I know Jesus as my Savior, but speak to them about the Lord and know what you mean. Here the Apostle brings before him the Lordship of Christ, and not one new. The one who has more authority over him, over that man. And I was thinking through in the first of First Corinthians 6 times in the 1St 10 verses we have the same title. Corinthians, The Lord Jesus Christ, six times in the 1St 10 verses. Apostle Paul was ever seeking to bring before the Saints the Lordship of Christ. I mean, it's so important for today not merely to acknowledge him as Jesus, our Savior, and as our Lord. One has every right over me, the one I have, every authority over me. He has the right to tell me how to work, how to live, how to worship, how to walk, how to do everything.

So we have all authority over me. Already to see the three names that are brought together here all. Except there be the name of carnival to drop out a little. Self will on one occasion and he loves. Superbly having as a companion in service for the rest of his life. Well. Taken with Fall of Companions and then they include Timothy on their first mission. Journey and we find that Timothy continues with fall also to end the Falls light. Sort of warning that is. To act himself with for some personal reason, and it was a personal reason with Harnibus because he was self willed about taking his nephew Mark. There was relationship there. Often relationships will interfere. Well Praising the Lord. Thought nor of praising his nephew, and of doing the will of the Lord. So he drops out. Never read of him again. In the book of Acts, the stylist becomes devoted companion of the Apostles. He was with Paul when they were beaten in their feet, fastened in the stocks. So we find him going from place to place in company, where that chosen vessel would raise up on God to carry the gospel to the Gentiles. Now thinking too that while, as you say, Brother Lundeen, that these. Thessalonians were young believers. Perhaps the first epistle that was written by Paul was written to them. And the very fact that they were young believers, they could enjoy in a definite way what is spoken of here as being in God the Father. When you have God's family divided into three classes, father, young men and little children are babies. The little children are told that you have known the father. So that comes in here very expressly and while it shows the simplicity of their faith. And that there were young believers. Yet there could be nothing so safe and absolutely secure as being in God the following. So the youngest believer has the certainty of the security he has, and he accepts Christ as his savior. Or you know that he is in the hand of the Good Shepherd. He's also in the hands of God the Father. And the Lord says as such, that they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. But here was an assembly that was characterized by the enjoyment of that special nearness to God as a Father. Right before what Brother Gladding was bringing before us. Has special emphasis here in this first chapter. Our Lord. Jesus Christ, when you got to the epistle of Jews and Peter, also you have those who deny the Lordship.

That's right. Now this is what will characterize the last day. And Brad and Rihanna were in the last days. Now we don't want to stick on any of this. Spirit, what's the weapon? And this is what is all around us. Now one of the ways in which we can take on the spirit of the world, and this is when we hear the word of God not to act on it. Where to act on the word of God when we hear us? That's only the Lordship of Christ. Because the flavors not only a part of the brightest stripes, but he's disturbing, too. Every flavor disturbance. He's a friend and John as well. But still, is the servant, and there's a responsibility connected with the walk if they're not. And there's a friend too. It has to do with obedience, For the Lord says in First Corinthians 15 Ye are my friend if ye do whatsoever I command you. That's a special. Position. The Lord brings those who are obedient to his word interest into that weight of friendship, my friends. That's something like Abraham was called the friend of God because God could communicate His mind to Abraham in a way that he could not to others. So that those who walked in obedience to the Word have the. Enjoyment of the fact that they are privileged to be among those the Lord called my prayer. More than that, he made known his his ways of immortal, his acts under the children of Israel. They saw the working out of those ways. But Moses was in the secret of the Lord. And others saw how those secret purposes of God were worked out as they went on. And I believe that the more we go on in obedience and subjection to the word, the more we'll have the mind of God that gives peace and rest to the soul in the midst of all the confusion and distress and uncertainty that's found in this world. There are those in system generally have no spot whatever as to what is the head of this world. They think they have to make it better and try to improve it. They don't see that it's a condemned thing and that we're just pilums and strangers on our way to our father's house and we know the end of this whole scene. If we get careless, maybe we'll get indifferent to this truth and think maybe there is something worthwhile here and not realize what is before us and what is before this world. Of course, as this lovely epistle brings so clearly before our souls is the coming of the Lord Jesus, and I believe our bright and saying that we get the Lord's coming and all five chapters. The first successful and all the three chapters of the second epistles. Show that among the first trolls that were taught to the Thessalonians Saints was the hope of the Lord personal return. Is not also his presence in connection with his comings in the first epistle? That is, it is coming, but in the sense not simply of a general judgment, as it would be perhaps later. But it's the thought of his presence at the time of his coming, I believe. And also in this first chapter. We see such freshness of first love because we see that the word was received with power and the Holy Ghost, and there was an answer to it from the heart.

It was reality with these who had perhaps come out of idolatry. Some of them at least. And we're now in the enjoyment of. That marvelous position of being in God the Father, but also the hope was fresh in their souls of becoming. And I believe that if we allow the present things to rob us. Of the enjoyment of eternal things, the hope of the Lord's coming will become dim with us. And it won't be a bright thing with the state by day. These were actually pagans. Pagans recently saved just a few weeks. And apparently they were in the freshness of their first laugh, but they had doubts concerning the future. They thought that they might not see their loved ones with eyes, and so the Apostle Paul and this wonderful epistle brings before them the new glorious cruise of the Lord coming. The stand in Christ we rise 1St, and then we which reliable

remain to be pulled up together. We want to meet the little stairs. I think that was here, that we have three of the greatest crews of the Christian estimate. Faith, love and hope. Well, that's for now, listening. Just going down a little. Memories about ceasing your work of faith when there's faith and labor of love. There's love and patience, of course. Lord Jesus Christ, So there we have faith and hope and love. And further down we have that multiple proof that they turn to God from their idols. To serve the living and the true God, and the wages come from heaven, so that. They have heard the God from their idols in faith. To serve the living and the true God. And there's. There's. Well, would you call that? Love serve the living of the true God, and the weight is not from heaven, both through the twice over and the pistol realm. We do find these great central of the Christian testimony. Faith, hope and love. And by the way, if we look over into the Revelation, we find something there that's rather contrary. Well, rather that was lacking in. Read just a verse and two. To the Angel of the church. That's the second chapter of Revelation as little. Unto the Angel of the Church of Ephesus. Right these things, says he, that hold of the seven stars. I suppose these would be light bears, would they not, Prevents in his right hand, who walked in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. I know thy works, and thy labor and thy patience, and how the friends not bear them with your evils. And thou has tried them, which say they are apostles, And our Norton has found them liars, and has borne, and has patience. And for my namesake has labored, and has not fainted. Now in verse four we find something that's very lacking. There nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Well, we can't lose it, can we rather bearing or we can leave it. Is that alright and so? Here are the great essentials of the Christian estimates seem so to me.

Faith and hope and love and these recently saved pagans had these pre essentials. In other words, you'd say, Brother Smith, that you get the labor. The works and the labor and the patience. But it doesn't say a work of faith. It doesn't say a labor of love. It doesn't say a patience of hope. It shows a danger that we need to consider and that is. To just get into a Christian habit, maybe attending the breaking of bread regularly. Not missing that opportunity. But just there as a duty, as a as a form, as something that we've been following out. Well, there's always that danger with us if we are not enjoying the Lord and keeping. Near to him. And going to him continually about all our affairs and reading his word and letting his words speak. And power to our souls, and not resisting thought might affect our conscience. In other words, it's abiding in Christ and living near the Lord. Why then, those very same privileges are blessed to the soul? They're the enjoyment of his love and remembering His death. But if we get careless, neglectful of reading the Word and prayer and occupation with Christ, the very same privileges may continue. And just a formal legal way. And I believe that perhaps was the state that emphasis had dropped into. They had left their first love, and so the very power of work and labor was no longer there. It wasn't a work of faith. It wasn't a labor of love. It wasn't the patience of hope. It was just a going on. In a formal way. And perhaps. Clear the nickel, as a brother once said, and just as cold. Referred to the second version of Revelation 2. Yeah, because we have those three things left out there, do we not? That we have in our chapter. We we have the work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope. And so the one who judges is standing there. With the threat of removal of the Candlestick. Except repentance. Even in natural things that would be terribly distressing, but it's not. The husband and wife were married for 10/20/30 years, and the wife deficiency in cooking, housekeeping and whatnot improved greatly during those years, but her affection gradually faded. Would you find a happy, satisfied husband? He would really be fat, even though perhaps her activities were even more diligent than at the beginning. If her affection had faded, he would miss it, he would long for it. And you can't help but feel that this was what was on the heart of the Lord as he made his appeal to the Angel of the Church and effort. And it strikes me too that the appeal being made to the Angel of the Church is very, very searching. There was reference made quite a long time ago to a verse in the end of Joshua, and we were just reading that verse again uphold the other day. In which we read that during the lifetime of Joshua, and during the lifetime of those who outlived Joshua, the people seem to walk in paths of athletes, godly orders. They walked in those things that were enjoying upon them by the Lord.

But it seems that the Next Generation gave it up. And turned their hearts toward idolatry. Well, there was a generation that walked in the fear of the Lord. There was a succeeding generation, and then the third generation gave it up. And it seems to me that the town is very, very, very searching and period. Why did the second generation keep it up and the third generation let go, I have wondered. Scripture doesn't exactly say, but I have wondered if that second generation perhaps could be in men like Joshua and those who were of his generation. What you have just been referring to in First Thessalonians one that there was a reality and a fear of the Lord and a real faith. In that generation whose way they could observe. And could it be that they continued on in the outward activities and forms that they had seen in the generation before them, but without having the Lord personally before them? And the next generation was pretty quick to determine this. And I'm afraid, President, saying this, that it searches us out, and if we see those who are not bothering the truth to wait, perhaps we seal it off to the values, those whose eyes are being turned away from the Lord and we not look within this, perhaps say to ourselves, can they really see enough that which we thought in the generation that is. Pretty well gone home to be with the Lord. No need to mention anything, but I certainly can sit here with. Very thankful memories of those who not only walk in the truth of the word of God, but we knew that they walked in the fear of the Lord and in the joy of the Lord, and I feel it should search us out Now. This does not make a justifiable excuse for any generation to give up. I feel that it will certainly not be that which will stand in the judgment seat of Christ that anyone could say that the example before my eyes were so failing. That time to be excused for my carelessness? No. Nevertheless, I feel that what has just been said could really hurt our hearts very, very much. To think of the Curry in the heart of the Lord and He looks down at us and perhaps feeds us carrying on with outward form that are according to the words, but perhaps our hearts are not right with you. My brother Barry was just mentioning the Lords communist mentioned in every chapter in this first epistle. I think it's nice to notice that too, in the first chapter is presented as an inspiring hope. Young convert. Second chapter is an encouraging hope for the faithful servants. It's presented in the third chapter as a purifying hope for the believer. The 4th chapter is the comforting hope for the bereaved. Want to come to this fourth chapter has been and in the 5th chapter, a rousing host of the sleepy Christian. So the Lords coming is presented in those five different ways. Notice that the end of that third verse. It says And patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, and then in the sight of God and our Father. Now there are two thoughts brought before US1 for the heart and one for the conscience. Now when it's for the heart is God has been spoken about the fullness of our Lord Jesus Christ. What a person we have as our savior, our friend. Has been mentioned and we know is our advocate and our high priest well, in other words, he's our All in all that.

Blessed One fills the heart the more we think of His love, all that He has done for us and all that He has prepared for us. To fill the heart with unspeakable joy and bliss, but of another word that is equally important. And that's for the conscience in the sight of God her Father that is. Much as we can enjoy the person of Christ, we need to remember that we are living and. Our life is spent in the presence. Of a holy God, just like the one who said, thou God seeth me. That no matter whether it's been the light or in the dark, his eye is upon US1 Thinks about Joseph when he was sorely tempted. There was no idea of human eye to have ever exposed a sin that he could have committed, but he was preserved because. He wouldn't have sinned against the Lord. He was in the presence of God. We were speaking Sunday night about Elijah

when for Elijah when Naoman came with the the all that gold and silver and said receive a gift of. By service What? Elijah said no. He thought he wouldn't receive it, and here before him to take it, but he says. In the book of being in the presence of the Lord, he said. I will not accept it. Well, if Elijah had accepted that gift, he could have reasoned some very. Wise and wonderful ways. Naturally speaking, he could make use of that money. He could have built a school for the sons of the prophets, educated a lot of young men to go out and serve as profits. I just want to read it so as to get exactly the fact that he spoke of being in the presence of the Lord. It's in Second King's chapter 5. The 16 first of second Kings 5 but he said. As the Lord liveth before whom I stand, I will receive none. We urge him to take it, but he refused. How did he accepted that gift, That beautiful gospel story that has been used, I'm sure, but most of the Lord's service we know at some time would have been forth, because it would have. Taught their lesson that salvation could be bought with money, whereas salvation is free. And it's without money and without price. Well, you see how being in the presence of the Lord, he was preferred preserved from a fatal and awful mistake. Well beloved Saints of God, how we need to be asking and living and walking in the presence of a holy God, knowing that His eye is upon us at all times. Our father would suggest. The fact that. He is the one who exercises discipline over his children. We get that in heater, I believe. You call on the father without respect of person to judge of every man according to his work. So we get discipline connected with the father. And that's another side of the truth, isn't it? When you think of disciplines connection with our way because he loved us and will not allow us to go on in ways that are not pleasing to him. I was thinking also of the second verse. There wasn't too much comment on it. Have been questions asked recently about prayer.

We noticed here it says we give thanks to God. Always for you all making mention of you in our prayers. Wondered why the apostle could be such a man of prayer when he was so busy. Well, we know that there was part of his life. He was shut up in prison, and we know that perhaps he had a little more time to pray. And I was just wondering if some of us were shut up in prison, whether we would actually pray or not. The disciples even had to say to the Lord teach us to pray and perhaps it's something that's much neglected today, prayer. We don't realize the value of prayer. But here the apostle, who no doubt is very near to these Saints, we do have the same thing in to the church. That's Philippi. I suppose he was very near to that assembly of Philippi and they were in his prayers constantly. There we have. A large list of heart open here to the Apostle. We give thanks to God always for you. Making mention of you in our prayers, the Apostle didn't seem to have too much here. To criticize the assembly for. He was free in his spirit as he addresses God. Order and maybe just say that prayer in scripture is general. But when you speak of supplication, it's more specific to some. Certain thing that you have in your heart. Some specific thing that you perhaps. Go to God continually about, but then we we find intercession also. These are mentioned in Timothy and this would be for others. But a doll was accompanied with Thanksgiving. I believe in stricter giving signs from the God and all things by Jesus Christ. So we have here, the apostle says, we give thanks to God always for you, all making mention of you and our prayers, not an expression making mention of you. It might be easy for us to, in one suite, take in all the Saints in our prayer. There is such a thing as having an interest in the Saints that they're not and. In the measure in which we can, I'm sure it'd be a wonderful thing to have the Saints on our hearts individually, and I believe that's what the Apostle often mentioned in his prayer, especially at the end of the epistle. He named them one by one, though he has strictly on his heart for some specific purpose. I think that's very helpful, Brother London. I was enjoying that first verse of the first sympathy tools. The other day. It says first of all supplications. When you mentioned that, that would be. Earnest pleadings. Did you say brother More Herman pleadings, supplication. And when you say that prayers would be more general petitions? For general petition, but interpretations would be perhaps free and confiding. Prayer and then it says and giving of thanks. Well, it's not always easy, beloved, to give thanks, but there is when one does give thanks in trials or intention, is the sense there of of the half sense of failure with the law. Sense in favor there is helpful. It's always has been some of the my soul. I was thinking of apple fries to shut up in prison as he made the fervently in prayer. Time to pray. Occupied of the prison vows, but undoubtedly occupied of the Saints, and their needs relayed. Prayer with me in prayer. It was very intelligent prayer, was it not as the next with a particular ministry that had just been opened by the Apostle Paul? They might stand firm and all the will of God, because in that epistle the the word of God was completed, and they're the full truth in regards to the mystery was made known. And now the Ephraim plays to this end of the Saints might lay hold of this precious bruise of Colossians.

For $6 that comes to my mind below it. The anxious or be careful, Anxious for nothing. But it's not always easy. But by the grace of God you can't be in that end to install, but by prayer and supplication, making requests known as God with Thanksgiving. Well, that's not always easy, is it? But with the state. Peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep. And I do love that word. Keep it more like Garrison. Garrison, your heart compliance. Sam should be around this building this afternoon. You wouldn't feel very insecure. Well, Mr. Thought, there becomes Garrison. Your hearts of 95. We have some bananas, but this is. I never think about one of some lines. Who pray? I think your brother London is born out nicely and efficient sex, isn't it? Season 6 and verse 18. Now the Apostle says praying always. With all prayer and suffocation in the Spirit, and watching there undo with all perseverance and supplication for All Saints, All Saints. And then he says, And for me, don't forget. And for me? He was taking lampreys too. Felt the need of. Remember the young brothers saying at the end of the prayer meeting one? All right, if we, young brothers, say Amen to you, all the brothers, when you pray, I said, Well, it's a very easy way out. But the Lord says, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice. I leave the moment, remind me to hear the voices of the young brother too. That he thought of sufficient just to say Amen to another brothers friend. With the order two in the verse that our brother Eric Smith was referring to. With Thanksgiving, let your requests be made known. That's rather remarkable. It is not very, very often the case with us that we let our requests be made known with sort of an understanding that when we get the answer and if the answer is the way we want it to be. Then we'll try to remember to give thanks, but the order of the verse is careful for nothing but in everything by prayer. With Thanksgiving led to requests be made known to me. That is so very, very searching. And yet why should it not be in that order? For to whom am I making these requests? I'm making them to someone whose love and whose power and whose foreknowledge is absolutely perfect. Now, can I not give thanks, man, in preventing a request? To someone whose love and power and foreknowledge is absolutely perfect, he is going to answer according to that love and that foreknowledge. So in presenting the request is the thought in the verse six. I can thank him even as I present the request, knowing that he will hear it, and that his answer will be according to that love and that for knowledge. So the book. I ask him for a nice bright sun day tomorrow and I Blizzard. Well, if I presented my request, went back, giving a piece of thought will still rain in my heart. For I'll know that his love and foreknowledge has chosen better than my wisdom in Athens. But if I omit that Thanksgiving, if I ask in sort of reserve the right to give thanks when I get the answer I want, I'll be frustrated very, very often. But I'd like to see in the Saints of God.

A thief. That's their mouth every circumstance. The problem? I believe it indicates that their prayers, their requests, have been presented with Thanksgiving. With regard prayer, one would not be critical at all, but sometimes we hear the prayer finished in this way in the name of Jesus. Well, I do believe it's more harming for the Lord to finish the prayer by saying asking the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not merely in the name of Jesus. Yeah, I'm reminded of the story that was told me by our brother Clawson, who's now with the Lord of. Bread and rhodium from Russia. In regard to a Christian farmer whose field had been destroyed by hail. And the Atheists farm across the road wasn't

touched. So the atheist neighbor thought he would go over to take a look at his neighbors field that had been destroyed and as he went toward the barn he heard a boy. And so he cautiously crept up to the corner of the barn and listened. And this is what he heard. The Lord, I thank thee for sparing my neighbors field. Well, there was prior Thanksgiving. In this third verse. Could I just call attention again to the verse that has already been commented on? But. Your work of faith. Could we say, brethren, that unless what we're doing is in keeping with the teaching of the Word of God, is not a word of work of faith? There's such a thing as bringing our own ideas into the things of God, and I don't think that's the work of faith. I believe that. Faith would always bring in the Word of God. Faith comes by hearing, hearing by the Word of God. And unless we have the principles of the Word behind what we do, it is not a work of faith. I suppose their work of faith here is in verse 9. Who turned across arrivals? The words of faith. Sir, I've been living in the true God. The labor of love and to wait for his uncomfortable. Invasions of hope. In the first chapter, the first verse, rather the grace and Ephesians we read by great life saying through faith and that not of yourselves is the gift of God. But yeah, I do not believe the brain here that would say it. Isn't it the grace which sustains them day by day insurance and I feel. Could we connect with that then brother gladding what we have in the end of? Hebrews 4 we. Have a shortage of which we can approach. I believe this would apply not only to ourselves as individuals, but I believe in a collective way. That there is great supply for timely health. And surely these Saints to whom the apostle was writing, needed help at that time in their persecutions. But they had the great the promise of grace for them for timely help. And they hadn't wondered whom they could go in there, indeed, and finding him the source of all grace. You come to the fourth verse and says, knowing brethren beloved your election of God, I believe they would better translation knowing brethren below your election.

No election as a family secret. That is, that every believer was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. We don't preach that to sinners. The word to sinners is whosoever will let him take the water of life freely. I'm sure we've all heard the illustration, but it's worth repeating. And. That it's like someone going to. Arch And he sees over whosoever will let him take of the water of light inside the arts, he sees the fountain of the water of life. He goes there and drinks, and is refreshed. Someone says, Have you seen the inscription on the inside of the arts? He turns around, and on the inside of the yard she reads, Chosen in him Christ before the foundation. All the world so after we have. Found Christ as a Savior, then we discover. The wonderful, amazing facts that God had us marked out back in eternity. For this place and blessing that he has brought us into. Under the very fact that, as he says here, knowing brethren, beloved, your elections. Leads to praise to think that a poor unworthy creature like myself. Was chosen in Christ to be brought into all this blessing and happiness and joy. When we see a world going on in darkness and unbelief, going on to eternal destruction, why did God choose you and me? To have all this blessing that He bestows upon us. If some of us remember the. Form that runs like this, why was I made to hear thy voice and enter while there's rules, while thousands make the wretched choice and rather starve and come 12 The same love that spread the peace, that sweetly force me, and as I am still refuse to taste and perish in life in. It's taking up the Great sufferance, and as you remember the Great supper in the 14th of Lewis, there's only one service there, and that servant is told to go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in. That my house may be built in Matthew 25, where you get the Greek dinner. There its servants in the plural, and the servants are told to bend the guests to come in. That's all a servant like ourselves can do, is to invite lost sinners to accept the failure. But the servant, the Holy Spirit, can compel us to come in, not against our will, but he makes us willing on the day of his power. Election is not a preliminary question of assessment before the Senate comes to Christ, but is the glorious encouragement after he has come in. My father said the apostles who will never preach the election descendants, but he taught us the state. We're doing a large amount of other barriers not against our will. Well, I thought the next chapter, you see that's in the 14th chapter. Is the 15th chapter where you get the return of the prodigal son the father divided his living, where the son who said father give us the fortunate falleth to us and let him go into the far country and live a ride of life, and then he comes to the end of himself, his money is spent and.

There in his great need and poverty and poverty and starvation. He says I'll arise and go to my father. There is the steps, as it were, the way that it works, that the center is made willing when God's great acts in his conscience and brings him to the realization of his awful quality and his tremendous need. I don't know whether that would answer. You see, in the 14th chapter, you get the great supper. And then the and the 5th. Chapter against the Now the guests brought in. I like to think of it too, in connection with that practice word draw. In the 6th chapter of Dawn and the 37th verse, all of the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast thou. Then again in the. Same chapter. 44th verse No man can come to me except the Father which has sent me draw him. I love that expression. It seems to me to be just so very, very delightful. You and I are going to look back and thanks God for all eternals for his drawing power. Drawing, not driving, but drawing. To me it's a very practice, and also the way in which it's put. In that 37th person, guest seems to me to be so beautiful. We often hear the last part of the earth quoted him that cometh to me. I will, and no wise passed out a very beautiful verse. But the book, the whole verse, seems to me to be so much more beautiful. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me half. It has come to me. I will in no wise cast out. I hope I may finish with all reverence, but in reading it you would just naturally think. But the Lord did the work He endured, the suffering He bore all that judgment. Does He not have the right to whom He will to be the fruit of all that toil? Having accomplished all that mighty work of redemption? He looked up and said, from all of the Father given me shall come to me. He leaves the toy with the fathers, and so completely doesn't leave the joint that he says whomever the Father may choose to come to me, I will not cast him out. If the Father would choose to bring to me the one who put the spear in my side, I will not cast him out. Makes it doubly beautiful because you and I can look up and realize that by sovereign grace we are the father's gift to the son. And the son in receiving this gift looked up and the father for that gift that has been remarked on. I know in 70s of John he looked up, I believe seven times to mention his delight in recognizing us as the father gift to him. That word draw, I believe, is those practice. I was thinking connection with that word draw. We have it in Song of Solomon, the first chapter. Draw me, we will run after thee Now is that not the expression of first love? The the Father has drawn, but now the soul realizes that they are beloved, as our chapter states here, beloved of God. And now having realized this, and the answer of the heart is drawing. And does it say I will run after thee? I'll read, it says. First of all, let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. For thy love is better than wine. That's the assurance of affection, because of the Savior, thy good ointment. Thy name is as ointment for For therefore do the virgins love me, draw me. We will run after thee. The King has brought me into his chamber. We will be glad to rejoice in these. We will remember thy love more than wine.

The upright lovedness. I believe that first law. And when? When? The when the. The drawing power in one soul brings him to express himself. Draw me Why he then he leads others in the same direction, to follow the one who has won his heart. The 14th and 15th chapters of Lyrics Mansions. And we might add 16 chapter. I'm either summed up in a simple way in the 14th Jasmine, the Earth and its Madness and refusing the Great Summer. The fifth thing is chapter we have and is gladness. Father receiving the son and the 16th Chapel you have hailed and his sadness. Earth and this madness. Heaven and his gladness and hell and his sadness. Very true to see on the 14th chapter you have Man's world in the beast where everyone was trying to get the best place. And isn't that just the character of the whole world in which we live?

Everyone is pushing ahead, trying to get in the best place, regardless of the results that we'll have together just so we can push ahead and exalt himself. But in God's world we have that in the 15th chapter, the very opposite, the one that becomes the joy of heaven, is the one that got down to the very bottom of everything comes in as a poor repentance center, so that there's joy in the presence of the angels of God over 1 Sinner that retain it. We are forced to use a very delicate hands in the ministry to the strength here in the next chapter we have. Is that he has a nurse, nurse with his children and as a father and the money should be children. He doesn't work in the strange field with the Microsoft trend. There were newly controversy, and we often pray for things when we hear of trouble. When we hear of difficulties or please, actually I do, I we're talking less. Very much. Whoa. There's problem on the sorrow and but years that were going on well and he used delicate hands. He noted all the sisters first the doctrine. Common expectation to follow the Pentagon here. There's nothing much to play, but it starts to their knees and mother when he speaks to children that they where she doesn't give them the strong meat, she she keep happy, keep them from crying. Persecution to our year and he doesn't even mention the hope of his coming third is the common here is in judgment ethnic. They hope he presents in the 4th chapter afterwards because they were distressed about the ones that died. But nevertheless it presents Christ to them, and encourage them to go on with praise for them. And in the freshness or love for them. We need to be attached to Christ. Onions, no matter what comes alone they can be living in a hard time. Living on everything is given up well. Look for the time when I Smith London. The time and the white stone be given out Tuesday might be disapproval of our way. Because my proud and administration man, he's not right. I know he's not right. Well, we can look beyond that. There's a time coming. Then he'll prove it or have come from the right choice. And so he can invite him to go on and he's touched whether he loves them to come here onto what he says. And because they were separated, he wanted for his life to stay longer with him. But. He will come back and his heart long mistake for that they would go on because he wanted to go on and when the Lord would come.

Of the real encouragement from that illegal unfaithfully for the Lord. Now in the fifth verse we read, for our gospel came not unto you and word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance as you know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. We could ask the question, what is power? I have thought that if that switch brings souls into the presence of God. It isn't merely hearing. A well worded discourse. A very eloquent service, but it might be in feeble words. It might be poorly expressed, but if it has that about it that brings sinners right into the presence of God to realize their need and their loss conditions, there is where we see that power that the apostle speaks of here. So it was the power and of the Holy Ghost. That is, it wasn't just man speaking and others listening. The Holy Spirit of God was making use of the Apostles to bring out a message that God could use. And which he did use in the salvation of these Thessalonians. So it shows that those who proclaim the gospel need to be near the Lord. So that's the Holy Spirit of God can make use. Of such a one as a vessel. To bring up what he has to bring before so. Sometimes the person may be at a gospel meeting for many years and never received the gospel. I wonder if this expression? In the Holy Ghost would suggest what you've been saying, but also the fact that the Holy Ghost brings understanding. That was true on the day of Pentecost. That's the anointing and. You may explain the gospel to a person many times, and they don't understand this. They don't see it. But when the Holy Ghost? When the Holy Spirit brings conviction. It's simple. Understanding. And that's what happened with these things. Now in the Hebrews, the 10th chapter we have. We have to prove the connection with. The believers position. 10th chapter. The 14th, 1St. For buy one offering yet perfect, good forever then that are sanctified. Where are the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us, For after that he had said before, this is the covenant that I will make with them after those days of the Lord. I will put my laws into their hearts and their minds when I write them, and their sins and iniquity. Well, I remember no more. Now we here I have the Spirit of God opening up to the heart the understanding of what salvation was for the Jew of that day, and for any, of course, that this is written to the Hebrews. I believe that it's absolutely necessary. That the Spirit of God opened the heart and the understanding, otherwise there'll be no salvation. So we should thank God for the Lord Jesus and that work at Calvary, that we should thank him too for the Spirit of God that opens our hearts to receive the message. Our brother was Speaking of the power, and do not think that the power is recognized and and the result yourself and the much assurance receives when what follows is the case. And you know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. There was a conviction that these men were telling the truth because they had acted.

According to the Holy Spirit and power. The power given to the truth of all these spirits rather that cause them to speak the truth, and they acted the truth. So there was a manner that gave force to the power. That's very important, Brother Smith. Is it not also true, brother, in connection with that fourth verse where it says knowing Reverend belongs, your election of God and even the apostle Paul had no specific separate revelation as to who the elect were. The only way he could know what by seeing the result of the fruit of the preaching of the. God. When the gospel of the grace of God has been preached and the effect was seen in the light, then he could say, knowing your election of God, is that not right? That certainly is, brother. And he became followers of us. Of the Lord having received the Word in much afflictions with joy of the Holy Ghost. Shows again that not only. And Paul preaching is like his behavior. His conduct in the city of vessel Naka had been such that those heathen people felt there was a reality. About these men that were presuming the word to them when they received the message, their hearts were open to accept the Gospels. By then. The same man whose life committed the gospel to them is the one who's, like now was guidance for them as believers. Becoming flowers of us and of the Lord. And we need to understand then that. They didn't have the whole New Testament as we have it. I suppose there's very little of the New Testament written at that time and as it was mentioned that perhaps. These pistols of Thessalonians were the first, the Apostle wrote. So the lives of those who? Instructed the Saints was the Bible, as it were, for them to go by. Often been sent the only Bible the world has of the Christian life. And if our lives are inconsistent, if we're one thing one day and another thing another day where one thing in meeting an entirely different when we're not in meeting. No brother that got completely away and I observed this, that in the meeting he was a very helpful brother. Took a nice part that I was with him when he was talking to some of his business associates and when he was with men like that he used the language of the world. So you never know that what he was just as worthy a man. As those he was talking to. Well, that isn't right. That isn't pleasing to the Lord, and it proves to be true in the case of this man. When? When? Temptation came when he fell away. Which is just reality, doesn't it? We have that in this first with much afflictions. It was during the days of the persecution that the Church grew, was it not? But it really tested those who made the profession to see whether they were real or not. And. It could be that the Lord will will yet test the profession of Christianity on the earth before He comes. It could be how good it is to be in the enjoyment of that verse, Knowing, Brethren Beloved, your election of God, to be in the real enjoyment of this cruise in our soul. Being conscious of our position in God the Father. To be conscious of what we do is in the sight of God our Father, and we have reality, do we not?

November 8th, her brother says. Brother, I can't hear what you say because of what you do. Well, that's the best. We are officials, known and read of all men. God would ever live day by day. Community was himself the law of Jesus. Well, in this for a good testimony. In order that we enjoy communion. That we have to keep short accounts. Judge until Reverend, the moment we begun, we begin to think that we boast of something in the. Danger we are just having. Garbage presents so much of our own nothing. Man called of God into his service, so he falls

from a place of strength, realizing their own nothing. I've always enjoyed that. We see a nice picture of that in the Elijah and the 6th of Second Kings you're Speaking of when they. Of Syria sent a whole army to get to catch Elijah. Elijah in the confidence that a thing of this in connection with the assurance the young man gets out early in the morning and he sees that the the two of them are completely surrounded by an army and Elisha doesn't even go to look, he just. Speaks a short prayer, just says, Lord, open the young man's eyes. He prayed with such confidence. And when the man, young man, thighs grew open, he saw that the angels of God were surrounding them. Well, that's what we have here before. It's not really in the midst of all the persecutions that they add here. So I talk and pray with such assurance, and this is the way we can do. I like the pattern of the increase effective versus 267 and eight. Invert 6. Having received the word in verse 7 so that ye were and sample and in verse 84 from you sounded out the word of the Lord. I believe there's a very significant message for us there. I believe it was truly displayed in the testimony of the apostles. Was it not Ezra also who had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel back to congestion? Though I believe that order is that which we can really look to the Lord about having received, that's been passed by the grace of God being entrusted. Should there not empty a desire to be an example so fast. The sounding out of the word made by the good hand of the Lord be respectful. A very power that was spoken of, is. I believe it's proportional to the way in which this border is carried out. I think of that verse he did half no solar. Let him sell his garments and buy what? Well, I suppose every believer heroes survival with every one of them might be able to quote a few verses, at least from the word of God. But who is there here that can use the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, in a way that is effectual toward the Law? Or among our breadth. I believe that we can't help them feel the truth. I believe that it's in the standard in which this is true. PAVA, selling the arm of my perhaps need more than one thing, might suggest the buying up of opportunities to become familiar with the word of God. But I rather look upon it as perhaps even surrendering that which might be our natural rights in this world, shall we say, taking. The most place that walking as those who realize. Our home citizenship is heavenly. Bearing such a testimony produces the use of an effectual source, receiving it and then walking as examples and then sounding it out.

Some of David's mighty men that could use their left hand as well as the right weren't there. I think it's nice to brother out the end of the verse 8. That I need not to speak anything off the ball, need to go around and say, well, that person is a Christian, I'm sure of that. Every evidence of it in their lives. Need to go around and tell people who they were. They were showing themselves as Christians. There was. Every evidence, so the fact that. Save the Lord as a savior, and they are standing out from where under God. Everything 173. A little while, the Lords will come. And we shall wander here no more. You'll take us to the Father's boat, where he for us is gone before to dwell with him, to see his face and sing the glories of His grace.

Toledo Conference: 1973, 1 Thessalonians 1:6-10

Reading

General Meetings, Toledo, November 1973. Second reading meeting. That number. That number, 56. Oh Lord.

Before we read Jesus of Thee, we never would tire the new and living food. And satisfy our hearts desire and light, and thy blood. 186. 344. Sure. Do we have something else? The subject was scarcely begun. I think it was tonight. So we read the whole chapter again. I wonder if. If it would be well to. Read a part of the endings of some of the other chapters with it. What do you think, Brother Barry? I think it would be helpful, brother, letting made those remarks about the different ways the Lord coming is brought before us. And the end of the second chapter. You get the Lord's coming in connection with reward and in the end of the third chapter, in connection.

With Bob purifies the believers and of the 4th chapter is what comforts the believers. And then I think he said at the end of the fifth chapter or in the 5th chapter, it's an arousing hope. But perhaps if we just took up the OR just read the closing parts of the first second. 3rd and 4th chapters. What do you think of that? I think that would be helpful. We're at our close of our meeting yesterday. We're commenting on the 6th verse and Brother Albert Kayle is giving us some very helpful thoughts on the 6th, 7th and 8th verses, which I'd like to hear repeated. First Thessalonians chapter one. And verse 6. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the Word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost. So that you were in samples to all that believe in Macedonia and IKEA, For from your son that the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia NECA, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad, so that we need not to speak anything. But they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how you turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God. And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath of God. In chapter 2. And verse 19. For what is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy. And in the third chapter. Verse 11. Now God Himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ direct our way unto you. The Lord make you to increase and abound and love one toward another and toward all men, even as we do toward you till the end. He may establish your heart unblameable in holiness before God even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his Saints. Chapter 4, verse 13. But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, Even so them also asleep in Jesus, will God bring with him? 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. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words. Whether Albert Hale would you give us? The thoughts that you brought out on the 6th, 7th and 8th verses and both of the last meeting. Well, I have noticed and enjoyed and I hope also been searched by the order that's mentioned in those three verses. In verse six it says having received the word, having received the word in much afflictions, then in verse 7, so that he were in samples to all that believe in Macedonia and IKEA and then in verse 8.

Or from you sounded out. The word of the Lord there seems to me to be a significant order there. First of all the receiving of the word, and then the next step is not sounding it out, but the next step is being an example. And then the third is the sounding out of the word. I believe reference was made to the 7th chapter of Ezra, in which we find that it is said of Ezra that he prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord. And to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments. Well, here it is our privilege in such a meeting as this to hear the word of the Lord. But I believe that there should be an exercise with all of us, that having heard it, there now is our responsibility to be an example to put into practice that which we have heard. Perhaps also the same thing is found in the 11Th of Deuteronomy, where that lovely passage is given

concerning. Thou shalt lay up these My words in your heart and in your soul. That's the receiving of the word. Then it bound upon the hand, and as frontless between the eyes, immediately having been received in the heart of the soul, it begins to have its effect upon the hand and upon the eyes. That which we do, that which we seek after it's also, it seems to me. Brought by word and by precept an example before our children in the next verse thou shall teach them, my children, Speaking of them, when thou sit us down, and when thou walkest, by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And then the next verse, thou shalt bind them upon the doorpost of thy house, and upon thy gate. That last little statement seems to suggest public testimony upon thy gates. Well, it begins in the heart and in the soul. It proceeds through the hand, the eyes, the household, and finally the most public testimony possible to gate. So it was received, then it was effectual in their example, and lastly it was founded out through there. Well, for us to notice too, the way it was received in much affliction, where joy of the Holy Ghost. So that much affliction in no way hinders the joy of the Holy Ghost. But it seems rather to promote us and. To be the result. So there's another asset Never fear persecution. It will make your face shine as an Angel. Many of God's children. In different parts of the world are really suffering persecution. For being in prison and banished and their employment taken from them and their families left in need. But in this country we have. Not faced such trials as that as yet, but the enemy is always busy to try to hinder and to prevent the work of the spirit in our souls. So they are afflictions, bodily, or many problems coming up in our lives, maybe in our assemblies. And God allows all this for a purpose. And if we receive them as permitted of him, For there isn't a circumstance in life that God hasn't permitted. Brother Harry Hayes to this day so often. Accept your circumstances from the Lord and take. Your needs to the Lord. So if we receive everything as permitted by the hands of a loving Father, the result will be this, that there will be the joy of the Holy Ghost. Lord doesn't expect us to have an easy pathway.

Through this scene, through much tribulation, Paul tells the young converts as he and Barnabas travel together, they should enter the Kingdom of God, that is, enter into, in a practical moral sense, all that belongs to this present time of God's grace and blessing to his people while he's gathering out a company to. The glorified with Christ on high. We would not have had these wonderful epistles. If it had not been through the sufferings of the Apostle Paul. And some of the choices. Things that we enjoy today have come from the pen of those who have suffered. Much trial. Much affliction. Remember telling you before? That when I was preaching in the slums of Melbourne, there was a there was a special literature that came out of that section of the city that was full of joy and real happiness in those. Those poems were wonderful to read. So I made-up my mind to find the author and I haunted a long time and found. The author of those beautiful poets. It was a very poor house and I had to climb a very rickety, some rickety steps to get to the little door and knocked on the door and there was a weak voice said come in. And brethren, I've mentioned this before, but what did I see? A poor soul. 17 years on her back. And only able to raise her hand a little bit propped up to write those poems. And it just broke my heart to think. Such beautiful poems could come from a sister suffering like that. Well. Brother Barry asked me of two or three years ago to quote one of them, which I'd like to quote. Just a few lines if you kindly wait. Knows the bitter, weary way, the endless driving day by day, the heart that weeps, the soul that prays. He knows it all. He knows all hearts so full of bliss that whilst on earth our joys we miss, we still can bear it. Knowing this, he knows it all. So there was something from a poor sufferer. That's been a great blessing to my own soul, especially now. That would be in in keeping with that sound, he that goeth forth weeping, shall doubtless come again rejoicing. Bringing his sheaves with him, shows that that dear soul is going to have many of sheep of joy and reward in glory. That also included the expression bearing precious seed, didn't it? I was thinking of. You know that little book that was mentioned yesterday that's just been republished? The land in the book gives us some lovely thoughts as to the. The meanings of these Old Testament scriptures. The Particularly the expressions used in connection with the Scriptures of the Psalms and so on. In that 126th Psalm that's just been mentioned. I believe the background is something like this that. The man who goes out. Weeping to sow his seed is one who has already sown A crop and it's failed. And so he's taking the very seed that he's saved for food for the year, and he's divided it up so he can still sow another crop. And the author of this book says that it was not uncommon to see.

A Jew, as he was, sowing his seed, weeping. Because it was his very food. Now we have a faith connected with that he shall doubtless come again, rejoicing, bearing as she's with him. And so faith really, with a sense of this in their soul, that they're sowing the very food they need themselves. Is that not the way to give the gospel out, brethren? The very food we need ourselves. That we're giving out to others. I believe that's in keeping with these three verses that we've just had. So that he were in samples to all that believe in Macedonia. Well, isn't it a wonderful thing when the. Lies and the walk behavior of God's children. Because all that is required for a testimony as to the truth that they hold notice, Paul says. So that we need not to speak anything. For they themselves sure sure of us what manner of entering in we had among you well. That should be true of us now, and it can be true of us, but it requires a walk in loneliness and dependence and consistent self judgment of everything that. Manifests in any way the place in us. If we're walking with heavenly things as the goal before our souls, and heaven is everything to us, and Christ is the object of our affections, the same character of testimony can it's just among us. So that is really a word for execution for our souls. Some of it here and visited the brother in Gresham and being brother helper has his name is Albert too. He's being on his back for 40 years and he's not able to write beautiful poems like you mentioned brother, because you're so terribly crippled and it's difficult to understand what he says. But our dear brother Oscar Fraser phrase, he goes to see him two or three times every week and by experience he has learned. To a great extent what he says or tries to say. And the brother went to visit him shortly, a little while ago. And he said, well, brother Elvis, I'm sure you'll you'll soon receive a crown. And he made him understand, he said. I don't want the crowd. I want to see his face. I'm not after the crown. I want to see my saviour's face, the brother said. What a rebuke to me. He was thinking more about the crown and save his face. And you see, the testimony went even beyond. Their own city. Founded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad. Well, it shows that godly testimony as there was there at that time in Thessalonica. And traveled widely over much of the known world for those days. People could say, well, what a remarkable thing year of company of idolaters throw away their idols. And now instead of worshipping these gods with the heathen, have always believed they're worshipping the true gods. And they tell us that his son who was here and died on the cross.

Is coming back. That was the testimony that was read out of the lives of these Thessalonians. I suppose they thought, brother Mary, that the day of the Lord had really arrived because of the affliction through which they passed. They they were not clear concerning the difference between the coming of Christ or the Bride and the coming of Christ with the Bride. They were wrong, evidently, in their conception of the coming with. Paul Rather, Paul of the Prize. And so we have this wonderful portion in the 4th chapter explaining in remarkable language how it would be possible. Don't you think, Brother Smith that? Their special error was not understanding, just the way that the Lord would come for his own. When they get to the second epistle, there were misled by false teachers there, telling them that these afflictions that they were suffering, showed that they were in the day of the Lord, or in the great tribulation, and so He. Writes that epistle to set them right as to the fact that the Christian will never go through the great tribulations. Here they were not clear as to just the way in which the Lord would come, and after this was read in the 4th chapter gives the answer the Apostle was. Given for them at that time, and I doubt not, the Apostle never really understood the coming of the Lord so clearly as he did at that time. When they wrote or sent to him to inquire about this matter, then

he got a special revelation from the Lord as to the manner in which the Lord would come for his own. You see, the Lord had plainly told his disciples in the 14th chapter of John, I will come again and receive you unto myself. And where I am, there you may be also. But the way of his coming, the howl of his coming, was not brought out at that time. That was reserved for to be given as a revelation to the Apostle Paul. So I doubt not that their thought was this. Here they were accompanied. And turned from the turn to God, from idols waiting for his son, and that he would come right there where they were. And those that were waiting would be taken up to glory. What about our loved ones? What about those that have died? What part would they have in this wonderful coming of the Lord? Well, of course I'm getting ahead of our subject. That is more what is taken up in the 4th chapter. Here we get. What the The simplicity of their faith. Had given them to enjoy and believe that the Lord was coming soon. And that they were just waiting for him to deliver them from the coming wrath. I'd like to call attention again to the end of the eighth verse. Before we go on, perhaps there's something here for our hearts and consciences. It says so that we need not to speak anything. Someone asked a brother once if his son was saved. He said. You go ask him. I said to a young man once, are you saved? He said. Who would think I wasn't? Now, Braden, is that the kind of an answer? You know, sometimes. People take the place of being a Christian and past, but they really aren't at all. And then sometimes, you know, we grow cold in our souls and we do not leave a testimony, and the Lord has to bring something in to arouse us. If you'll turn with me just a moment.

Digression to the fifth chapter of the Song of Solomon, because I believe it's our affections. Here in this book of Thessalonians that. We should remember it's the affections of the believer who is found in God the Father. With the blessed hope before him now in the 5th chapter of the Song of Solomon. We won't read too much, but just the thought of the first bar is the 7th verse. The Watchmen that went about the city found me. They smoked me. They wounded me. The keepers of the walls took away my veil from me. I charge your daughters of Jerusalem if you find my beloved that she tell him that I'm sick of love now. What is thy beloved more than another beloved? They ask her. Oh, thou fairest among women, What is thy beloved more than another beloved that thou does so charge us? Then she goes on to speak of her beloved and in the end, she says. In the 16th verse, this is my. Beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem. Now sometimes the Lord allows affliction not because we're faithful, but because we're unfaithful, and because we have gotten away from a sense of His love to us. And sometimes someone may ask this question to us, just like the daughters of Jerusalem asked the bride, What is thy beloved more than another beloved? Oh, thou fairest among women. I remember hearing of a young man who was not saved, but he had had good bringing up. And he met an atheist once, and the atheist put some questions to him that led to his salvation. So you see here the Lord allows these things in our lives and we can well, ask the question. Ourselves today. Does someone have to call attention to the fact that we are a Christian, or is there evidence in our lives? Is our manner of life such that we give evidence of this fact? Now take Abraham for instance. He He had the land. God-given him the land, but he dwelled as a Pilgrim there because it was still polluted. He was surrounded by that which did not speak of God's holiness or glory, and so he lived as a Pilgrim. He lived a simple life with simple habits, simple appetites. A simple house, a simple dress. All these things go with the pilgrims. And they gave evidence, did they not? That he had something that the others about him did not have besides that when it came. To power, he was able to deliver loss. He was able to meet the circumstances around him because he lived in this manner, and so I just would read that into that verse again, the 8th verse, so that we need not to speak anything. There was ample evidence with these things of who they were. They belong to Christ, and they were waiting for his Son, for the Son of God from heaven. Gave evidence in their lives that this was true. I like to notice too that after the bride has given that glowing and beautiful description. And the one whom she says, this is my friend. The very next verse is, whither is thy beloved gone, that we may seek him with thee?

Wouldn't it be nice if our testimony were such that others would say we want also the one who has won and ravished your heart? Whither is he gone, that we may seek him with thee? The New Testament counterpart is. The disciples and the early time of the Lord's ministry. It speaks of Phillips seeking Andrew, brother bringing him to the Lord. We have found the Messiah which is called Christ, and there were others that wanted to follow. To know where he's well. So this came down asking people of their slaves. I was once very severely rebuked by asking a young person in our meeting at the. And was saved and the person went off crying and told the father. The father said you are causing trouble in the meeting by asking people if they are saved. Well. This person says just imagine brother gladding thinking I was not saved, but that person is no longer in the meeting. So there's very, very little evidence that she ever was saved. She's left the meeting. So that is rebuked for asking that question. Are you? Isn't that beautiful? There. What manner of entering in we had, Auntie you. That is all came from. Berea driven out of Berea by the persecution of the enemy. No, He had been in September and then went to Berea, had been driven out of Philippi, and now he he is used as the Lord to start a work of the Lord there in that city, and the heater themselves are seen. On a wonderful entering in this man had in this city to see the results of people that have turned to God from idols. Important to get the order there, isn't it? For us all. And we speak especially to the young people. They didn't turn from idols to God, but they turned from God to idols. That is, if we have the right object before our souls will have all his imitations, his idols, behind us. Get out of the heart right with the Lord, and there's no question about. The interior of what should be rejected if the heart is fully adjourned in the enjoyment of the Savior's love portraits is there for that. Which only ministers to the old nature and brings no real peace and happiness to the soul. It's nice to see who it was who's had little children. Keep yourselves from idols. Was it not John who leaned upon Jesus? Brutal. There was very little chance of an idol coming between those two. But poor Peter, He couldn't say that, says He followed us far off. But John leaned upon Jesus bosom, and it was John who said little children keep yourself from idols. It wasn't. It wasn't what was said that impressed them, was it in that ninth verse, where they themselves show unto us what the manner of entering in we had unto you. It was a life that was occupied with Christ, and the power of that life demonstrated that made such an impression, not what they said. Brother Mary, do we have idols that we need to have behind us? That is an idol then. Well, we see little children, beautiful little children brought in here, and we're very attracted to them. And sometimes the mother might be so taken up with that lovely child that that becomes an idol. Anything that would come between the heart and Christ and the enjoyment of him can be an idol, anything good or bad.

My wife and I are very much impressed by that very thing in Shanghai. When the Japanese found firing, there's one system. The missionary home made her one room. Certainly an idol. She was spending most of her time when she should have been on duty, polishing the floor on the furniture, and my wife and I were sometimes invited to go in and speak with her, and she'd set you on the chair and watch us. Who didn't scratch the liner with your feet? Got to keep quite still. She didn't say so, but you can see that expression of face. Well, when the Japanese started firing, the first shot went right into her room, lured all the pieces, and I did. Sister had made an idol of her room, her little home, and the Lord destroyed it in the moment. So that shows that anything that which comes between my soul and the Lord can be an idol and rob me of the joys of Christ and communion with him Well. Bob Allen did the Lord remove the idol, but he removed her too. Which was a very sound thing. My wife and I went to see the room afterwards. It was just a complete wreck. So the Lord can either remove the idol from you, or He can remove you from the idol. It's a solemn thing to think about. Well, this is really the happy ways of being separated from these idols, is what brother Gladding was saying. The Lord may take the idols away. And that's sad and solemn. And we do find those two ways that God has of

drawing his heart to himself. Abraham didn't need what was required of lots. To have a place where his heart was enjoying engaged and his interests were found to be destroyed with fire and brimstone from heaven, and leave driven out of out of the city. So there is the wooling and there is the driving. Trying that order in the 12Th chapter of Hebrews. Perhaps it wouldn't take up too much of our time if we looked at that. And the. 32nd verse of Hebrews 12 He says, But ye are coming to Mount Zion under the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, when numerable company of angels, the General Assembly, and the Church of the first born, and so on. There is the Spirit of God sitting before the soul, the heavenly scene of glory. To lean the heart away from all that would hinder its blessing in going through this theme. But then if you read on farther down in this chapter, you get a warning. The 25th verse, see that she refused, not him that speaketh. And then in the 26th verse, whose voice then shook the earth. But now he has promised Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. Well, either the attractions of the heavenly scene of Christ in glory will wean our hearts from a ruined world, or else that's shaking that is spoken of here when God steps in and shakes the whole thing to pieces. Brother. And may we accept the admonition, the left, the warnings of the Lord. Here are precious holy persons, to be the object of our souls, delight to have the Lord before us, and to adjust our lives to that which is pleasing to him, rather than to have the Lord recipient like this poor woman that Brother Gladden is telling about, and having our idols destroyed, And then? To be broken up over the sadness of what has happened.

Why? We're young. While the Lord is speaking to us, let's make the firm decision that Christ is the object from my soul. May He be everything to me, and may everything be formed in my life according to that which is for His glory. And what would be according to his precious words? There are two things especially characterizing the Dear Young Believers. Says they turn to God from others to serve, to serve the living and true God and the next verse, and to wait for his Son from heaven. Well, surely those two things should characterize us. We should seek to serve God with reverence and godly fear, and to wait for his Son from heaven. What else are we waiting for? Are we waiting for? World Betterment. Or are we really waiting for the Lord to come? They were. They are waiting for God's Son from heaven. That was that one object and thought and desire to see the one who had saved them. We mentioned the other yesterday. They turned to God from idols. Well, that's. Place is an exercise there. To serve the living and true God, there's love manifested there and to wait His Son from heaven. Hope. Well, we mentioned yesterday that the three great essentials of the Christian testimony. Faith. Love. Hope. And I was noticing yesterday concerning the unto the Church of the Thessalonians, which is in in the translation of the Scriptures into the Inca tongue, we noticed that that word in was dwelling. So there was an intimacy, A remarkable intimacy, with these believers, even though they were so. The saved so short a time they were dwelling. In God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm sure you may have noticed that, brethren, to dwell means an intimacy there that's so precious. Well, as we dwell. In that blessed one. The things of this world do grow strangely. Being they certainly do. It's only as we have him, as the object of the soul's affection, that these other things fall off, beloved and of no value for the soul. Well, I've often thought of the standing of the believer, the believer. The standing of the believer is in Christ. We are possessors of divine life. We have his life. The object of the believer is Christ, and that's brought out in Philippians. And the hope of the believer, you'll notice, is to be like Christ. These are very wonderful. Portions concerning our ongoing So these deals. Thessalonians in the midst of the afflictions they possess those three wonderful qualifications below us. Faith and love and hope. It's not what you're going to say, Brother Barry. Oh, I was just thinking that in addition to those two points that you mentioned that God weans or sometimes he removes the idol. But I believe that there's a third and a serious warning for every one of us here today. And that is that if these two don't take place, that there is 1/3 and that is that God will leave us.

As the warning was to Ephraim, Ephraim have turned to idols. Leave him alone. This is the worst of all. When God would leave us, let us go on in our own self will. This is the serious and dreadful path that ends in ensure disaster for the Christian life and testimony. Is it not lovely, too, to notice that all this weaning is always preceded by very much wooing? I I like that thought, that the desire and the pattern of the heart of God toward us is that we might be wooed continually by his faithful love. But if our poor hearts fail to respond to that, then the weaning process becomes necessary. But even in that, how lovely to know that the weaning that is necessary and sometimes painful is not because he looks down and says, I told you not to become taken up with that. Now I'm going to have to take it away from you. We as parents might do such a thing with questionable motives, but the heart of God in weaning us, in ever laying his hand upon those things that might otherwise take up our attention. Even our affections. He does it because he loves us so much. What we have become taken up with is that which is going to fade away, or else our ability to enjoy it will fade away. One or the other assures we're alive and the Lord looks down and says, I want you to be in the enjoyment of something that cannot fade away. I want you to be in the enjoyment of that which will continually minister to your happiness. And so if he lays his hand upon that which we are loath to. Let's go. It's because he loves us so much. I think that there is a repentance in connection with the frame later. I'm thinking of the 13th, 14th chapter and verse eight, he says. Ephraim shall say What have I to do anymore with idols? It seems as if he's learned the lesson. I have heard him. I have heard him and observed him. Such as the love of God, and even to Ephraim, having gone that far. We wouldn't get very far, would we, if it weren't that God came in? And then also the the response from the heart of obedience. I believe it's very important to see this. Would you turn with me to Genesis 35 just for a few verses? Because I believe the subject that we have at this point is the most helpful. Now I'd like to introduce another thought in connection with this subject of idols. That would perhaps help some of us who are parents. We find ourselves in circumstances sometimes where we're not able to do anything. We're helpless as to our children, as to our circumstances, and we're cast upon God. So we'll read the first few verses of Genesis 35. And God said unto Jacob. Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there, and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fled us from the face of he saw thy brother. Then Jacob said unto his household, And to all that were with him, put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments, and let us arise and go up to Bethel. And I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. And they gave unto Jacob all the strange scars which were in their hands, and all their earrings which were in their ears. And Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem. And they journeyed. And the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them. And they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob ninth verse. And God appeared unto Jacob again when he came out of Satan Aram, and blessed him. God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob. Thy name shall not be called anymore.

Jacob but Israel shall be thy name. And he called his name Israel. God said unto him, Mine God Almighty, be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall be of thee king, should come out of thy loins. And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac to thee, I will give it. Do thy seed. After thee will I give the land. God went up from him in the place where he talked with him. And Jacob set up a pillar in the place. Talked with him, even a pillar of stone, and he poured a drink, offering thereon, and he poured oil there on Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him. Bethel, now the point I'd like to bring out here. Is this? That we find Jacob obeying the word of God. That's the first point. We learned that. In Philippians that. The apostles said certain things before the Saints. And he says, if you do these things, the God of peace shall be with you. That's obedience to the word, but we notice also here that he pours out a drink offering. Now this is really a picture of

the soul overwhelmed with joy and what God has done for him in his life. We find Jacob had idols in his house, other things too, and he couldn't get rid of them. He was helpless, absolutely helpless. He doesn't seem to have control of his house. But when God said to him arise and go to Bethel, he knew very well that he couldn't take his idols to Bethel. It wouldn't fit. And so in that simplicity of faith he says to his household. It says here let us arise and go up to Bethel. I know in the second verse put away the strange gods that are among you and be clean and change your garments. Well, they did. So now God came in, and he did for Jacob what Jacob could not do for himself. I believe this is always the case, brethren. If there is to be permanent blessing, it will have to be God coming in. But there is that side of it. There must be the obedience of faith, and it will result. In joy, as we have in this chapter, it will result in joy in our household if we walk in the path of faith and obedience. As God opens the way for us, He will order our circumstances. Because he never disappoints faith, and we too will have that privilege of pouring out a drink offering. That's an offering that's put on top of the sacrifice to indicate joy. And remember, when that drink offering is poured out, there's always the equal amounts of oil with it. That's the spirit of God prompting it, of course, in that nature. Brethren, we must learn a lesson in the 13th chapter of Genesis as well in connection with this matter we find in the. 13th of Genesis. And the tenth verse, it says unlocks lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. Even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou cometh unto Zoar, we find the find that the time has come when Abraham and Locke were going to part. And Locke had a choice to make, and he chose that which was like unto Egypt. Well, the question arises, who was it that had given Lot a taste of Egypt? And if we go back to the previous chapter, the 12Th chapter of Genesis, we find brethren that it was Abraham, that it was Abraham who had taken lock down into Egypt. And now Abraham has come back, he has been restored. But now Lot is faced with a choice.

And what has been given a taste of Egypt, he has had, as it were, an idol set before him. Something that appeals to him, but it was done by Abraham, and Lot found that which was like what he had been given a taste of. And he made his choice, and he went down to Sodom, because it was like unto Egypt. And brethren, for those of us here, I say this to my own heart more than anyone that have families, young families particularly. How careful we have to be that we don't allow that in our homes. We've just heard a word about our household. But to allow that in our homes, that is going to set before our children that which is going to cause them when the time comes for them to make their choice, to follow that which is going to lead them into paths of disobedience, to have things in our own brethren that sets the world before our children. That put things before them, just like Abraham did with Lot, Lot. When the choice, the time came from to make his choice, what a sad, sad choice made and beloved brother, I said to my own heart as they say more than anyone. But how can we be surprised if our children choose Sodom, choose the world, choose the idols if we have been responsible as parents? Putting that before them, which results in the idle being there, it results in their hearts being given a taste and an appetite for the very idle, which we then as parents, deplore for them when they make their choice. I was thinking of the three things in connection with the children of Israel and. Connection is what? The forest. There are three things that should characterize them. That'll be sheltered by the blood of the lamb. Then there was a feast upon the lamb, roast with fire. And the third thing was they'll put leaven out of their houses. Out of their houses? Not out of themselves, that's an impossibility, but out of their houses. My brother was speaking about the evils which can creep in the homes. And houses. And so they were told to put lemon from the first day, it says. In the 15th, 1St even the first day, you should put away 11 out of your houses, or whosoever eateth leavened bread, from the first day of the 7th day, that someone should be cut off from Israel. Well, we know the various things that are coming in, the homes and houses which are defiling to the children. Many places we have been, we have seen this great monster, the children watching it with eager eyes. Well, it has a withering effect upon their soul and upon their parents too, and can do nothing else. Some people claim that this monster is educational. Well, I believe it educates children for health. That's the only education they get from us. It's withering to the soul. I think this is very important. For each one of us, myself included, to keep 11 out of our houses, Is 11 a picture of evil in Scripture? Yes. The nation is what our brother. Prayers and the Speaking of what she was in the well watered plains of Jordan. Of course it was God that had provided well watered plains of Jordan. A lot did not choose Sodom, but Sodom was worried. A lot went that is in the plains. And I think do think we need to be careful and we need to warn ourselves and our households that some of these things which we choose, which look like they're an advantage to us, that they don't draw us away into the place where evil is. Because it speaks in Genesis there that when lot chose. You know, the well watered plains of Jordan speaks of the men of Sodom being wicked exceedingly. The evil was there, and Lord made himself a candidate for going down into Sodom and there to find himself a righteous man. But.

Trouble with the evil which is present. Chapter closes with Jesus before us, doesn't it? It says. To wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus are delivered from the coming wrath. So we have then the. Resting upon the person of Christ in the end of this chapter, but it's his own personal name. It's the one who was down here as man that's before us is now in the glory. In connection with what has been said, there's sort of a negative attitude that a Christian might take two like that. Like, is it her? He got down beneath the two burdens, and he looked for rest and he found it. But the end was sorrowful, wasn't it? That taking sort of a negative act, not going after the items, as it were, but just trying to seek rest in this scene where there is no rest for the Christian and he allows himself to be covered up with burdens of one sort and another. That hinder the advancement that he should be making? Is that not true? In order to that it says to serve the living. And cruel gods the the gods of the heathen were really. Instruments of Satan to degrade those who worship them. We have little idea how degrading idolatry was in those days. It's not only. Allowed the worst class of immorality, but gave those who followed thee followed these ways to think that was something, possibly a game to them. Oh, now the gods that the Thessalonians had turned to does not like the God of Bill when they cried. The old bail hearers. There's no answer at all. There was a God they actually saw fulfilling his word, answering their prayers, and coming in fabulous and wonderful ways. But he was also the true God. The God of holiness. They had known nothing about. In all their lives, in connection with false gods, to know a true God, a God who is infinitely holy, whose very natures of foreign to evil God was something entirely unknown. So it marks out of people in a very positive and distinct way. And we should remember that beloved in connection with. All our affairs, that God is a holy God, and that he will allow nothing that is contrary to his nature. So after the Apostle John has given us that wonderful. Understanding of the ones that was from the beginning and how we we can have fellowship with those who were with him down here. That she might have fellowship without, He says. Then the next word is, and this is the word that we have heard of him, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. All the beloved John had heard the Lord Jesus actually see those very words that he has handed down in his epistle to us that God is light, and light exposes everything that is of the nature of darkness. And will not permit it to exist where His Holiness is manifested. So we need to remember in going on that we have to do. Where the God who is infinite in His Holiness. Does that not become more and more prominent in scripture as the days become darker and darker? I think of June, the last epistle, where a very, very dark picture is presented. But the provision to the believer is building up yourselves on your most holy faith. That is a wonderful provision, and it's striking that it should be spoken of not only as faith or holy faith, but most.

Holy faith. Wonderful privilege, in a day when public opinion has fallen so low, to be able to be together in this manner by the grace of God, to read His precious holy word and realize that it is our privilege and a very challenge in the day in which we live to be built up in our most holy faith. Today, at this juncture in our meeting, give a warning voice against these new translations that are coming in. And even creeping into our meetings like the this new International Bible and the way that the truth is cheapened and well such expressions are set of addressing the deity as thou as you will familiarity that is very unbecoming and often introducing thoughts that dishonor. The person of the Lord Jesus, brethren, be careful of these new translations. Get them out of your house and have no fellowship with this at all, because I believe that the enemy at this time is definitely at work seeking to corrupt the word of God. I'll never forget Shortly before our dear brother Potter was taken home, he called a number of the Lord's servants together and I was privileged as a young man to be with us and he pointed this out. He says, Brother, don't give up the King James translation. He says. I believe that that was a work of God. He says there's never been anything like it. He said. Mr. Darbys translation is a wonderful help to correct some mistakes that are in the King James translation. There are. Interpolations. And there are mistakes because in that time they didn't have all the manuscripts they had later. But we can correct those, and I believe that the Spirit of God, in a very positive, definite way, since God has given us that translation, has been working. So that translation of God's word. May I pass that on, brethren? I believe our brother had the mind of the Lord and solemnly warning, and I know it occasionally as I go about. I hear some praying and using the word you instead of thou, showing that they in some way have been rubbing shoulders. Well, some who are aligned with new translations to come in among them and to have its effect on in connection with the things of the Lord. And another thing, Brother Barry, some of these writers, they speak of the Lord as our elder brother, which is a terrible thought. He calls us his brethren, but we cannot address him as our elder brother. He's our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We have a real problem concerning Spanish, the Spanish translation. There's only one society. From which we can get a good translation of the word of God. And it's in London, England. We've had to turn down the translation from the British and Foreign Bible Society. I'm Speaking of Spanish now. And also the American Bible Society. I knew Dr. N who was the head of that society for years and was a saved man, but then a modernist got in there and so nothing could be very satisfactorily done with him, but. And you can't trust the Canadian Bible Society either. Present in the Spanish language, there's only one. Place. I don't like the name of it. It's called the Trinitarian Bible Society.

But it's been functioning for the last 80 years or more, and that's the only society where we can get a real translation of the word of God. That's faithful now. That's something, isn't it? There's just one society where we can get the word of God translated faithfully into the Spanish tongue. I think in that connection it's well for us to remember that the Word of God does say that what was communicated to us from God was communicated not in the wisdom or the words that man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches. In other words, it was not merely the thoughts that were entrusted to these men, and they expressed the thoughts in their own words. No. The very. Words were given by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches. And I believe the most dangerous of all are those. So-called Bibles, which are an attempt to be man's interpretation of what God was talking about, they're not honestly called translations really at all. A man came into the store in Montreal just a little while ago and he said somebody gave me a a translation or he. I don't know how to use that word or not. But he said and I found it interesting. But he said that I thought I'd come into the store to see if you sold Bibles because I'd like to see what the Bible says. So they told him, Lillian Brown told him, that we certainly do have the King James, that it was rather interesting that that man was really a searcher and. It was the Spirit of God that was teaching him. He wanted to find out what the the truth was. Noticed in reading Mr. Darby's ministry that practically always uses the King James translation, although he had a translation of his own which was very correct but he didn't use it unless there was there was a word that didn't express the right thought where then he called attention to that and then go on with that translation. Whereas you find that some other learned teachers of those days. Who were a great Greek scholars like he was, almost entirely their own translations. Since to me it indicated humility and. Caution to us too. I know what Brother Porter said at that time. He said. If you read only Mr. Darbys translations, he says you will become a critical reader. That is, you all want to look at this word. Is that exactly the Greek meaning? And so on. And you can become so critical in your. Reading of the word that you you'll lose the real power and blessing of the Spirit of God. Heather I remember a very interesting case of a certain minister made a present of a wonderful dictionary to an old sister. And she loved these Saint James version and he said, this will throw a lot of light on the word for you. And I'll be back in a week or two to ask you how you got along. Well, he went back to see her and he says, how do you get along with this? Dictionary. Oh, she said. Sir, my Bible throws a lot of light on your dictionary. Holy men of God, very beloved, wrote as they were born along by the Spirit of God. There are jobs and Pickles there. That are inspired also. It's a wonderful book, but Holy men of God wrote as they were born along by the spirit of God. I think we have good instructions in the 17th of Acts in connection with this. That we should be more like the Bereans. Says of the Bereans, these were more noble than those in Bethel and Naika, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind and search the scriptures daily to see whether those things were so.

Well, it's not important today to search the scriptures. They need to see whether the things that we hear us are in there. I thought, Brother London, you might give us. To understand what is meant by. Delivered to deliver us from the wrath to come, which delivered us from the wrath to come. Or should read the Deliverer, shouldn't it? Here's a place where another translation is helpful, The Deliverer from the coming Wrath. We don't have exactly the. The Lord's coming here, as we do in the 4th chapter, Do we? This is the thought of His coming in vengeance judgment. That's the wrath to come. But the believer will be delivered from this and will be at home long before. In fact, we will be saved out of that time of tribulation and sorrow that will come over the habitable earth, and then the wrath to come follows even that. So we're delivered and we're at home. And we'll be on high to view this, I remember years ago. When I was quite young. Uh, just a boy. I was had the privilege of going to the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, and it's a mile deep, I understand. And I had a little cabin on the on the top and. During the night there was a storm below. And I could watch the lightnings and the storm in its progress below. When I woke up in the morning, the ground was covered with snow all around me. But the storm had gone on below all through the night, and I thought of this as a picture of the believer in his safety at the time when this verse which it refers to the wrath to come, will be at home, will be when the father's house. Will have bodies of glory, and we will be like those in the 4th of Revelation. On the throne and all of the thunders and the lightnings and the quaking is going on, There won't be a stir. There won't be a murmur, because we'll be with the one who's over it all, the judge himself. But the time now is the time, brethren, when we should be concerned about our loved ones, about those who will be left behind, because we can expect the Lord. We wait for him, and we can expect Him at any moment. Could we sing #168? The mind is far threatened, The day at a time no sign to be looked for. The stars in the sky rejoice. Then you say that your Lords own command reject.

Chicago Conference: 1965, 1 Thessalonians 1:1

Reading

252. God told our gracious Savior children through this earth. Alive we are weak, but now our life hold us with my heart. Spread up message. Lead us now and ever for justice. I know. Yeah, we do have this in the precious and move on with. John 1. Or has someone else something that much exercise about? Well, brother, would I be at a place to make this suggestion in view of the chaotic conditions in which we Live Today and the increasing evil of the last days? Wouldn't it be nice to meditate upon a scripture which would direct our thoughts homeward? So the first epistle to the Thessalonians has been, must be for me this morning, if the Brethren are happy to consider it. First Epistle in the first chapter. First Thessalonians chapter one. For all and savannahs and amoebas under the Church of the Thessalonians, which is even God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be unto you, and peace with God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God always for you all making mention of you and our prayers. Remembering without ceasing your work of faith and believer, of love and patience, of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.

Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel team is not unto you and word only, but also in power and little the Holy Ghost, and in much assure, as you know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And you became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the Word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost, so that you were in samples to all that believe in Macedonia and the care. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and IKEA, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad. So that we need not to speak anything. For they themselves show of us what manner of entry in we had unto you, and how he turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true 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. I'd like to remind ourselves. That it's a little difficult to hear, especially on the outer freedom of the meeting. And any brother who takes part, I'm sure will welcome the reminder to raise his voice. And now it takes a little more push. Erase the voice. But God has supplied it with what we might call bellows to do it. And so if we concentrate a little bit upon that, I think we can put some push behind a hoist so that everybody can hear. When you reach the account in the book of Acts about Paul going to be. How the word was received there? Yet they'll assume persecution stirred up against the apostles and they were driven out of the city. So Paul was not able to continue there any length of time. So when he had gone on in his labours. He writes. This epistle and then another epistle, the 2nd Epistle of Methadone. To these states who had in faith brought in the blessing. To his and the Ministry of Others at that time. The one thing impresses me and connection. Where the apostles first laborers, there was how he taught them about the Lord's coming. It must have been a very important part. Of the preaching of the gospel. He says how he turned to God from idol to serve the living and the true God and to wait for his Son from heaven. He doesn't stop short of waiting for God's Son from heaven. I take it that this was the first festival that Paul ever wrote that, right, brother? Yes, I believe that's right. It's remarkable the progress that these Saints there at Thessalonica made in the things of the Lord just said he was a time. I believe he said he was.

A reasoning in the synagogue 3 Sabbath day. So it wasn't there much over three weeks, but it's remarkable the way they took in the truth. Well, I suppose it was the way, the reality of things to them. Here they were engrossed in the darkest idolatry. And here he comes along and he preaches indeed. Well, as he says here in this chapter. How that they? Turned to God from idol. That is, they hadn't got tired of their idols and were looking for something else, but they gladly left them when he brought the news of salvation in Christ to them. Well, it's remarkable, I say. And you see the progress they made. And there was the reality on their part, and there was the power of the Spirit of God. Being ungraded by the failure of his people here that he acted in a way that we do not see today, would you say that's right? Sometimes people say, well, isn't the Holy Spirit the same as he was then? Well yes, the Holy Spirit is the same, but he hasn't got the same material to work on, I don't believe. I suppose we have to remember too that because of the state that Christendom is in, he's also agreed and he's greatly hindered in his work. Something like the time of which we read in the Lord life, when he could do no mighty work there because of their unbelief. Unbelief surely brings in great limitations to the work of God, whether it's Christ himself or the Holy Spirit. When men get up pretending to be giving the word of God, and yet they stand there and deny the truth of the Word of God, how can the Spirit of God help us be grieved and hindered? Just an expression of unbelief and it hinders God from working. It's the led to sin character that seems to have its stamp on almost everything. The present time. And what was said about Laodicea, Thou art lukewarm. I would that thou were either cold or hot. Well, it's a day of indifference to the truth of God. I suppose this and the 2nd Epistle are the only two, are they not, in which we find the mention of the Church which is in God the Father? And so I suppose the emphasis here is on the relationship, the new relationship in the which the children have been brought to know. God is their father, They are now of his children. Is that the thought there? I'm sure that's right, brother. Enjoyed that? Enjoyed it again to hear you mention it. Well, we find that the 1St. Appointment that a believer has to withdraw is that he knows God is his Father. When John writes to the faith, he says, I write unto you little children, because you have known the Father. It didn't know much else, but the new God is their father, and I think, as you say, that is characteristic of those assessment, as though they were young believers. Yet they had this precious enjoy within their souls that gobbled their products. Call the Potter. One of the first things that a child of God, of God, God is cry, have a father because as soon as he has believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And they begin to cry our Father Christ, that God and His Father. Well, this wasn't true Old Testament state. They were children of God didn't have that consciousness that God was their Father, because the Spirit of God was not dwelling in their hearts, although the Spirit of God should come on them for special servers. But now we have this wonderful privilege of knowing God as our Father in a conscious way. Because the Spirit of God wells in our hearts. What a privilege it is to be children of God. And no God is our Father. And you the fact that we are. Faced with the laughing kids. Tendencies. What is the remedy? What is the health? What is the counteractions? What it needs to do? 2021. Jude wedding at 21. But ye beloved. Building up yourselves on your holy face. Pray is the Holy Ghost. Keep yourself in the middle of looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. That means a lot of going on in communion with the Lord. Building up yourselves your most holy faith. No matter how much failure there might be in this world, in Christian profession, the most Holy Faith, that which was instituted by our Blessed Lord and Savior, ever remains the same. It's always that character. The tendency is for us to be occupied with evil. But in building up ourselves our most holy faith, it turns us back to our blessed Lord and Savior. We enjoyed our brother, said the Walla Walla general meeting. This past month or so, he said. We don't have to give up the truth. So let us not even contemplate giving up. There is the full provision for every child. For his glory. Lenin mentions in connection with that praying in the Holy Ghost. And that we would get from the Word of God. Picking up the left skin condition. There really is no remedy for, is there? But we have to recognize that we're all part of the way to see the condition. We all partake of lukewarmness, and although we can't sit prison. We can't set ourselves right. And that's what you're Speaking of, isn't it? Setting ourselves right. Getting into the right relationship with the Lord ourselves. I believe that is practical righteousness. It is connected with also.

What goes ahead of it? Flea also used lust, if one is. Speaking about. The path of faith and their life doesn't correspond with it. Tireless thing in connection with this. Situation in the final state of apostles and they were. Read the versions that apply to that in Revelation chapter 3. Revelation 314. Even to the end of the chapter. Revelation 314 And unto the Angel of the Church of the Laodicean right the faith that these men, the faithless, drew witness the. Beginning of the creation of God, I know that I'm working either cold or hot. I would work cold or hot. So then because of our food war and neither cold or hot, I will pull the out of my mouth. Because out there I have written an increase in good and have need of nothing and know it's not that our rigid and miserable and poor, blind and naked. As a positive side here verse 18 and 19. I can't believe you buy a meat go private fire that may have been written, And white Raymond, that thou land be full, and that's the shape of thy negative. Do not appear and anoint thine eyes that I sat, that thou may of peace as many as I love a rebuke and taste, therefore prevent the whole life. And the door knob. An individual matter, brethren, if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and he would need to him that overcome will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also is. And I'm sat down with my father in his throat even happen here let him hear what the Spirit says unto the church. Well, I believe. Beginning of this meeting it was to have the coming of our Lord before us, so. I had no thought of turning away from the subject, and mentioning led to see up. It seems to me perhaps we might go back to our chapter. Real bombs were formed in Christ as soon as one is brought to know the Lord. Ones that are for all eternity. To think we need a child of God. We find the love in our hearts for that believer. That's determined. We'll meet him on the train. Never met him before. Yes, we can sit down and enjoy their company and. Be a fellowship with with that which is determined. So here Paul has been there, Brother Harrison says. Just three weeks. And wow, that he is surprised with their company. He's thanking God for always for you. Oh, it's expensive. You in our prayers. I'm singing that the companion. For the children of God. Established the divorce blessed. I was going to say natural because because it's connected with one another, but it's spiritual too. But it's one of the greatest blessings that we can think of in this world. For you could have the most ideal place to live. All by little climbers, the loveliest surroundings, everything for for your heart, desire. And yet you are in a place where there wasn't a child of God to have mercy with. Could you enjoy it?

Of course not. So far, rather be in a crowded city. Living in an apartment and having the fellowship of God's peace and being removed to some place where? You're robbed of that philosophy. I don't think that N doesn't at times. Require that his children move away from. Standards of fellowship gatherings where they have been with God's people. Remembering the Lord and so on. I think when there is something that's forced upon them, they can't change the situation, but that's different. But I believe we should rather have seen and value privilege. Going on covering with the children of God. These dear young converts not only were brought into a blessed relationship and knew God as their father, but they have the promise of grace for the pathway. Haven't they? That the Apostle says, grace be unto you? Well, this is not the grace that saved them that were already saved, but the grace which would sustain them in the pathway day by day. And then they also had the glorious hope of the coming of the Lord to take them home. And dear young people, there may be some here this morning who are lost. And let me solemnly warn you that the Lord Jesus Christ is not coming for you. He's coming for every believer. So what a solemn thing for you dear young people if you're left behind. I repeat, the Lord Jesus Christ is coming for his own, not for you as an unbeliever to how Solomon is. But how cheering for these dear young converts to have the coming of the Lord before them. And surely that should encourage our hearts this morning too, in spite of the fact that we're living in very difficult times today. But all how bright the hope is, how glorious the prospect soon seeing the blessed person who redeemed us from hell by his blood, now living for us, and is coming for us to take us home to glory. I see there's a wild statement. Had succeeded in separating the apostles from the Thessalonians Saints, he couldn't injure Paul's free information. That's one provision that has never taken promises. Go and park, leave the elders and effort, because now forever I commend you to God and to the word of this dream. Course, there may be times of persecution on the Bible. They can. But if you've been diligent and read it, why, You'll have the memory of the verses, and then you'll have always the privilege of being in the Lord's presence in prayer. And he chose that why Paul had been deprived of ministry. He had been serving them with his prayers. That's one fear that any of God's children are privileged to carry on. With the provision that the Lord has made for us, our brother Cladding has pointed out, there's no reason, then why each one of us ought not to be filled with joy and contentment, even though we are surrounded by that which is so difficult to try. And I have felt more and more than that in a world like this. Is surely A testimony to the unbelievers. They may argue, they may disagree with everything that is said. They may attack the word of God itself. But surely their consciences must be troubled, as they see here and there among their acquaintances, those who are happy and contented and joyful. Through a world of disillusionment. And to me it's a tremendous challenge to all our hearts, to the dear young people. Just to think that you passing through a world of such aching heart that so many disappointments, you have the opportunity of displaying in this world the joyful, radiant intentions of a child of God that's just waiting to be called home. I can't help but feel that it must be a disturbance.

In the heart of the unbeliever, as they realize that here and there they know it, there are those who are truly joyful in the midst of all these disillusionment. And yet would you say to that even though there is an unspeakable joy in the knowledge that we are going home, there ought to be at the same time a real burden on our arms, as our brother mentioned, for those who are not ready, the two things are not extremes. I don't mean that at one time we also look terribly sad and burdened, and at another time very joyful. I believe it's quite possible for the sound of God to be sorrowful and joyful. Sorrowful is a prospect of those who will be left behind. Sorrowful as we see the sad condition of the testimony and yet filled with joy, knowing he is the same yesterday and today is forever and that will soon be with it. It was after Paul mentioned some that as he wept over, and he follows right upon that to say rejoice. And the Lord always and again I say rejoice. So there he was, weeping over the disappointment. There were seeing some that he had hoped for. That turned aside. Yes, that doesn't give early joy in the Lord, but he could commend to others. So that is important word for it, isn't it? That's all we may be deeply exercised, borrow a little sorrow, and breathed over conditions, yet we should rise above it in such a way that we can have our heart filled with joy. That was marked with the Apostle Paul, when he was before Agrippa, was it not When he said, almost persuaded me to be a Christian, he says I would that thou word he must I accept these bonds. There he had. Those chains on his hands. And here is question of life or death with him. But here he's speaking to a king, he said. I was the sour to eat, miss. I accept these bonds. There was joy and rejoicing and sorrow too. Burdens came upon him of all the churches, but he had a path of joy, though which perhaps none of us are able to enter into it in the way that he did. Covering yet always rejoiced in you pattern for assistance. And as to the things which he passed through, he could say none of these things moved me. He had a blessed object before him all the time, didn't he? And we have the same object too. And he gave not God in this, but God with us, with contemptuous brigade over. In Second Peter one we have two versions that encourage our lives. In times like these we have been outfitted with a complete requirement, necessities for going on. Second Peter Chapter one, verse 2, Great and deep. Be modified under you 2 Indispensable Attributes of God Raising People. Through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power has given unto us all things that pertain to life and godness through the knowledge of Him. Who have hauled up to or by blowing past virtually.

Well, it's a wonderful thing that the Apostle Paul should give back to these states, and it seems that we have a reason for it right here in verse 3. You remember their work of faith. Labor of love and faces of both, he remembered how they were going on. That's what he was thinking about and he could thank God for it. And haven't we had the same experience when we hear of someone that's going on well, or hearts are happy, made happy, they glad and we give God friends. Perhaps we don't do it often enough, but certainly it's something to thank God for. If Saints and God are going on where and if we want to make our brethren happy, let's be exercised before the Lord that we go on where then they'll have something to thank God for. Against the three characteristics of Christian in that third place they open charity or love. And it seems that these memorial sinks. Founders in these three things. So there was a work of faith. There was a labor of love and the patience of whole well when we're. Going on. With with that faith in the Lord strong, and when there's love for him and love for the sink, and we're patiently waiting for the Lord's return, that shows. Very happy on normal state. I would find that when the Boston John is is dressing the street left with the second chapter of Revelation. That's the same energy is found among those Saints that's found here among these Thessalonians. I think energy. What is the second word? Revelation 2. I know that it works, and thy labour and thy patience be the three things that are mentioned worth labor patience. But it's not mentioned that it's a work of faith. Nothing to say about it being. Labor of love or about anything about pool. Well, as the shores were state of me where ever when John wrote the wrote the Book of Revelation. Gold was bad declined. And what was the cause of the decline? The second chapter of Revelation. When you get down to the six words or the 4th. Revelation 2 and four. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against me, because thou hast left my first love. Well, it's very evident that the Thessalonians had not left their first love. Therefore they were abounding in the three things that characterize. The Christian testimony. And you can easily see how that what is what characterizes. The work of the Lord and the energy among God's people that the energy may continue after the vital thing is gone. That is weekend. It's one time be very faithful, coming together to remember the Lord. They think of the Lord being there in the midst and the precious opportunity to remember his death. Is worth more than material thing? Well, it can form. It can become a habit. We can just go there because we're always with there.

And so you can think of any privilege among God people. The reading meeting or the prayer meeting or they become just a habit. Then usually they begin to see neglect of meeting. Perhaps the prayer meeting is the first that neglected and the reading meeting they say the last meeting could be given up by God people. As the breaking of prayer. Well, there's one answer to a state of things such as John described there. I'll never forget how old Brother Clown brought it out here. In the meeting years ago, somebody asked my Brother Clown what is the remedy and he shouted at the top of his voice. Repent. That's it. I feel on my way to judge yourself. I'm with yourself before the Lord. I suppose the three things you mentioned or which are mentioned in the third verse are found in the 9th and 10th, aren't they? It says in the third verse the work of faith. Well, that's surely. In the ninth verse he turned to God from idols after the work of faith and then it says to serve the living and true God. Surely this is. The labor of love and to wait for his Son from heaven. And that's surely impatience of hope, isn't it? Yes, you find a different place. These these three things are linked together several places in Scripture, faith, hope and love, which shows that the Spirit of God put emphasis on it is something very important. And since they're linked together, they ought to be kept together, kept together in practical living. We find the three of them linked together in First Corinthians 13. Now by the faith, oh. Get your love these three. But the greatest of these is love. Well, this is something that. That's right. In this genius you're characterizing why we're down here faithful and love the three together. We know the time will come when there won't be need to faith or hope, but love will abide forever. I have been wondering if that is the reason, he says. The greatest belief is love. Regarding regarding that fourth verse, Revelation 2, remember one of his brother said one time regarding that love because thou has left thy first love, he modified it by mentioning first quality law. Is that true? Would that be correct? 1St fall in love. There's love there yet, but it is not that primary quality. That's true. Could that be the case? Well, I believe it here in connection with what we had as love, it's divine love. There's two kinds of love, divine love and brotherly love we get from that chapter in Second Peter One. Well, this is divine love. Which has the mind of God connected with us, not merely just human sentiment. These three things are beautifully brought together, brother in James, Peter and John aren't they? James tells us how faith works. Peter tells us how hope works. John tells us how love works. Very nice. In the 5th chapter first Thessalonians, you get the three fought together in the 8th 1St. Let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, or an illness of hope, of salvation. There's the tree again, alone, out of the same order. John 15 and 9 gives us a very pointed injunction.

John 15 and 9:00 As the Father had locked me, so have allowed you. Continue thee in my love. That's what God values continuously. It's not continuing in our law, our love for the Lord with continuing in His love. When we're occupied with His love that produces love in our heart, it's his love which will be occupied with. In order to that, it's been the fight of golf. Rather, though, the basis of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. In the sight of God and our Father. There's two thoughts where great importance. In our Lord Jesus Christ. I love to find those places, those words where those 3 glorious things are brought together. Lord Jesus Christ. I can't see how anyone that has ever known. Known anything about the sea here cannot be touched by. Just mention of those three names. It draws out our heart. It awakens. An infection toward him. Well, we need to have our heart warmed. Without it, our hearts will soon grow old as we go on in this godless world. But there is another earthquake too, within the site of God and our Father. That has more to do with the conscience. We need to remember thou thought seriously. And as we go on our way through this angle, speed, we're continually running into dangers and temptations, we think. When he was, when he was tried and seemingly no one would have known, it's been this, he had committed this. But he says, How can I commit this great spin in the sight of the Lord? That's what kept him in a time of temptation. So we need to be constant. We're going on in the fear of the Lord. Because Satan is so busy, and if he can catch us off guard, he consumes. All these two thoughts work harmoniously together. Our heart being drawn up in deep affections for our blessed Lord, and then the fear of God woken in his friends. Realizing that everything is naked and open under the eyes of him with whom we have to do. So these three things that characterize Christmas testimony will then be maintained in their purity. Oh, I believe it's very important what you say, Brother Barry. They great thing seek to be in the presence of God. Is that which leads us to judge ourselves, because the question cannot have any place there. No, it has been said that when the Apostle Paul was caught up in the Paradise and he had those wonderful visions and heard those unspeakable things, he didn't need the thorn to flash there, because he's in the friends of the Lord. There's a deep sense of it whether but after you got back to this world, why then the tendency would be of the flesh. Well, how wonderful it was that I had such a vision and so he needs a thorn in the place. And in our authorized version it says lest I be exalted above measure, and so perhaps a little of it be all right. But that is the thought lest I be exhausted. He needs a thorn of flesh. So it's been said, we don't need to turn the flesh when we're really in the presence of the Lord.

The glorious title you mentioned, Brother Barry, the Lord Jesus Christ, we find invariably the Apostle Paul uses that, doesn't he? Because that's the order in which he first knew him as Lord. And in the first chapter of 1 Corinthians we get the Lord Jesus Christ six times in 10 verses. So he's bringing before the Corinthian Saints the Lordship of Christ. But in Peter and John, I believe invariably they use the title of Jesus Christ. That's the order in which they first knew him as Jesus here on earth in the days of his earthly ministry. Isn't that so? Way the Lord first

revealed himself, Paul. The fear of the Lord is a very, very striking thing, and to connect it with the wonderful principles of the third verse is very lovely, because the fear of the Lord is in no way offensive. But connected with a sense of who he is and his love toward us is a very wholesome and meaningful thing in all our hearts and in the day in which we live, I feel it is more needful than ever it was. We've noticed in Malachi 316 that that expression is quite used in that verse. Then they that fear, the Lord spake often one to another. The Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that hear the Lord. And that thought upon his name. Well, you can't help but feel that in the difficulties of the day in which they live, it was undoubtedly the fear of the Lord, preserved in their hearts by grace, that kept them walking in that path. For it surely is a sad little book to read. But then another striking thought. Is this the next first day? Then they shall be mindset, the Lord of hosts in that day when I make up my duel, and I will spare him as a man, spare his own son to serve with him. Then shall he return and deserve. Between the righteous and the wicked. That's an amazing statement. Who can discern between the righteous and the wicked? Well, we would naturally say anyone can. There's a prop gap between the righteous and the wicked. Surely we can tell that distinction. But no, I believe the word of God would warn us that both Suppo and so evil are the day that it requires a walk in the fear of the Lord. And discern between the righteous and the wicked. And I verily believe that that is one of the awful problems confronting the world right now, that there has been a purposeful and willful attempt to remove from a whole generation of the fear of the Lord. Whatever manner of the fear of the Lord there may have been is removed, as young people are taught that they are not creatures from the hand of God. Responsible to God. You to meet God and give an account of themselves. What have they left? Absolutely nothing whatever left of the fear of the Lord. I believe the lordship or authority of himself, is reflected in the authority we see around us in this world. The authority of apparently, my home, the authority of a teacher in the classroom, the authority of an employer in the factory, or of the powers that be in the land, their God's given authority. But when the fear of God is removed, what's left? Well, we can see it all around us, and we can see a generation that is left with no desert between that which is right and wrong. And if they went to the very ones who gave them that kind of education and said, now help us please the discern between right and wrong, where shall we turn? What answer would be given to them? All we do need in our soul. The fear of the Lord every day, well, it's not on my connection with the world. The same principle is vastly important in connection with the Saints of daughters. And you find there in Malachi there was an insensibility as to their real condition. No, we're there in the third chapter says He had robbed off and they were. Have we robbed off?

Or invisible to the way they were going on. So you have one verse after another where? They're. Wearing Have we failed? Well, that little godly remnants that fears the Lord and faith, often one to another. They have the mind of the Lord at a time like that, when there was general departure and the state where they were absolute invasibility as to the condition they were actually in. It's a solemn condition to get into business where we're going on in the careless. Indifferent ways and. Are not realizing how far we have fallen and how far we have driven away. May the Lord keep us from it. The first mark of their intensibility is in the first verse, and it's really striking. The Lord says, the burden of the Lord to Israel. By Malachi I have loved you, said the Lord. Yet he say, Wherein hath thou laughter? That was the beginning of it. Going to say the nation as such could not discern between the righteous and the wicked. You know there's different forms of wickedness in this scene. Well, when the Lord came, the nation couldn't discern who he was, they rejected him. And what Malachi really goes on into I believe, is when they embrace the Antichrist and the times to come. Well, the remnant will have no difficulty, but the nation won't be able to discern it. There'll be noise. Late at 1:00. From a large high school having around 1000 students. And one of the elderly instructors. Came out to get his car one day and turn alarm home and I gave him to the gospel tracks and he sent me and he responded this way, he says. I have been teaching in that high school for many years and I'm afraid to be there. They have no respect for morals and there's no respect for integrity, he said. It's not a safe place to be and he's a man at 460 years of age. And I found the clipping. Clipping in a magazine that I bought is very soft, but it's presented in a very straightforward manner. It is illegal. To read the Bible in the public school of Illinois. But a law requires that state to provide a Bible for every prison ending. More of a story. Your query is capturing the Bible school. You'll have the opportunity to do so when you get to prison. That's a pathetic situation. And state of Illinois as well as Iowa. When you get to the 4th, 1St. It has growing rather beloved. Your election is all. That's the family secret. That isn't to be free to the world, but it's a very blessed to seek for business knowing your election goal. We should enjoy that increasingly as we go on. To think that I am poor Sinner was marked out back in eternity to be among the chosen of God, to be a member of the body of Christ, And I was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Well, the beloved St. Need to enjoy that more and more, because as Satan gets his work in among Christians and will Christians, he seeks to rob them of that truth. And they can lose their salvation and perish. Well, if that's true, then there's no such thing as the doctrine of election, is there? The doctrine of election is not a preliminary question to be settled before the Senate comes to Jesus, but it's a glorious consolation after he has come, isn't it?

So now that he's one of the elect. Leaders that make your calling and election, sure. Well, it seems to me that that's what these Thessalonians did. Because there's proof of the election that there's two children of God in that third verse, the way they were going on. A person who's going on badly certainly cannot claim to be one of the elections. The word of God never gives anyone like that. Any consolation? Put that way, I suppose or left out so that it should exercise their heart. But we do have the proof of their crawling and election here, and the way they were going on having the work of faith. Labor, block and patients are full, and they were exercised in the presence of God and in the presence of the Father to whom they were in relationship. I'm going to expect making your calling and election, sure, not in God's mind, but your own. And 1:00 that's going on carelessly, Well, it might be a child may lose the consciousness of it in the soul or. Often been said, that truth only remains with those who live it out. The Apostle preached to the Thessalonians as lost sinners, didn't he? And when the Gospel laid hold upon them, then he wrote to them as elect. Right over in Second Thessalonians. Chapter 2. And verse 13. 2nd Thessalonians 213 But we are found to give thanks holy to God, for you present the love of the Lord. Because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation. Through signification of the Spirit and the need of the truth were unto he called you by our gospel, through the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, and over in first Peter chapter one and verse two, First Peter 1/2. Elected according to the four knowledge of God the Father. I'm through obedience and sprinkling of a blood of Jesus by grace, and you and peace be modified. And they got it way back in the Old Testament. Deuteronomy 7, verse 6. Deuteronomy 76 For thou art and holy people under the Lord thy God, the Lord thy God has told thee. To be a special people by itself, above all people that are above the face of the earth. I suppose in this fifth verse. Where our gospel came not unto you and word only, but also in power. And in the Holy Ghost. That the gospel may have come there in words that were correct, but somehow rather there was wasn't any power there. It didn't mean much to the one who was giving it out. You know, they said about the Lord that he didn't speak as the Pharisees and scribes. That is, I take it there they were probably reading the scriptures. Giving out what was there, But they did not know what was the mind of the Lord in connection with it, so there was no power there. But with the Lord there was power. He spake with authority. Where would you see then the power? Is that the spring soul and the presence of God? Yes, I believe so. And that cannot be. Scuttled by education candidates. No, it cannot.

And some of these new translations of the day, you know why they want to make the Bible plain enough so the man in the street, they say, can understand it, but he cannot understand it apart from the work of the Spirit of God. And they leave that out entirely. Your thought is born out brother Barry in First Corinthians chapter 2 and verse 4. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and the power. You read it. I've lost the place. That's your face should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. If all had gone the car with all the learning he had. Well, he might have convinced the love of those wise Greeks about the Gospel that he preached just intellectually. What would become of the workman's whole life? It all depended on just believing things, because all had convinced them of the work before. Did you find that he was there? With much trembling? And he avoided anything like human wisdom or eloquence, because he wants to see that that work from the work of the Spirit of God in the world of sinners. A lot of for many years have enjoyed Act Four regarding this Christian truth. We find the results. Seemingly, they were made at the bottom of the woman's mind. Act 432. As a multitude of them that they need where one heart one soul. Verse 33. And with great power gave the powerful witness, without the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace for the bottom of all. The divided space and Kristoff with approximately approximately 2500 division divisions. That has caused chaos and confusion of the mind of the whole law centers. They don't know what to believe, and they don't know where to go if they didn't believe what to do next. But John 717 is still good. It made a man will do or desire to practice, was when he thou know of the Doctor. Well, the life of the apostles of the. Gospel, that he preached all that he can say, that he knew what manner of men we were among you for your faith. When you consider they didn't have a Bible to break from in those days. They didn't have a New Testament. All they had had. Again, is playing the message too. Was what had been revealed to it. So that you couldn't just say now when you go home you read the book of Philippians and you'll get the crack to walk of the Christian. So they behavior of the service of Christ was an essential part of their work, because they looked upon them, and they saw in them men who were living out the gospel that they preached. All that he said he became followers of us, of the Lord. Well, I don't say that. Making that comment. That we live at a different time. We have the whole word of God we can direct. Our our brothers and Philippians for practical Christianity. That means that we can relieve ourselves. A consistent walk. We're just as responsible as ever.

And is this as important as ever? But I just call attention to that to show how. The. The. Walk and behavior of the service of the Lord. What an effect had, and there's no question that it has the same effect today. Overnight 17 where we have to come to Paul being a Thessalonica. And Act 17. And 1St 4. It says some of them believe, and consorted with Paul and Charles. Another devout Creek, a great multitude. And of the chief women, not a few. Well, there tells us that they followed with Paul and Silas. They they wanted to be in that gathering. But it was wasn't only that. There were following these men now. But the Apostle Paul makes a claim here that they were also followers of the Lord. I saw that when Paul and Silence had to leave, they still had the Lord and they could still follow him. What his missionary work today seems to work in the opposite way. Converts are attracted to those who preach the gospel, and those who preach the gospel become, as it were, their pastors, their leaders. And even the center of gathering. And sometimes when the preachers of the gospel, the missionaries have to leave, then the poor converts are left at sea. They're confused and don't know what to do well, I'm sure, or to what we read in scripture of the way the Apostle Paul talked to dear things. They were all taught to put their trust and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, not only for salvation. But as the one to whom they were to look all through their life as individuals and as gatherings of brought people. Didn't the Apostle Paul say be therefore followers of me? But he didn't stop there, even as also I am of Christ. One of our brother, Anderson said. They're Admiral Bible, and so the Apostle Paul, and when he's there among them, the only place they could hear the word of God, they didn't have any. Bibles didn't have any epistles. Well, they had to face These men were speaking the words of truth. You know, I've enjoyed the thought and connection in the. Verse in the 11Th of Isaiah. Somewhat along this line. I'd like to mention it. The. Speaking about the Messiah coming into this scene. Second verse And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him. Well, some have said. There we have in those expressions the seven branches of Candlestick. The main vertical one was the spirit of the Lord is on him, and that was what the Lord quoted when he read that in Luke. He quoted the 65 There the Spirit of the Lord was upon him. Then they says, the spirit of wisdom. Understanding there was the two topmost franchise, wisdom and understanding. Well, when he comes forth from heaven, he's going to have wisdom as to what is to take place in this scene and he'll have understanding as to what's true. Well, I think you see the same thing in the Acts. Well then the next is there is the spirit of counseling might. Well that was these councils for them. And then there was the power of God when he comes forth in power. Well then the result is there is the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. The earth will be full of the knowledge, and that be the fear of the Lord. Well we see there in the second of action, Peter preaching the gospel to them. He tells them what their condition is, and he has understandings what they should do, and he gives them counsel to what they should do. And there was the power of the Spirit of God that was manifested there and resulted in the fear of the Lord.

Those who heeded his voice there was a fear of the knowledge of the Lord, and the fear of it well that should characterize, I believe. The result of the ministry of the Word being in the power of the Spirit of God. For having received the Word with much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost. We don't naturally connect affliction and joy together, do we? Speaking a while ago about sorrow and joy being linked together, we find affliction and joy linked together in the same place that Second Corinthians. In chapter 6 and verse 10. 2nd Corinthians 6 verse 10 We have asked Sorrowful. Yet always rejoicing. After seven verse 4. Raided my boldness of speech toward you. Great in my glory of you I am filled with comfort. I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulations after 8 verse 2. I live in a great wild affliction. This on their joy and their deep poverty abounded under the richness of their liberality, while you had sorrow and tribulation and affliction and deep poverty, but you have joy exceeding noise, and abundance of joy, only the presence of joy of the Lord. Joy of their new found treasure, they had in Christ, in a certain sense lifted them above all the persecutions. Is something like by the said of the Lord Himself, the joy that was set before him, and yours across and despising the shame set down the right hand, of course. 74 has been given out.

St. Louis Conference: 1995, 1 Thessalonians 1:1-4

Reading

Oh my God. Maybe the mind of the Spirit of God to. Take up the first chapter of First Thessalonians and I was thinking of our brother's address and. In part of the second chapter. Where you have. One giving and the Thessalonians receiving and how they received and and the atmosphere of love found in those in that epistle, I. One reading to my brother and might consider that. The first chapter and maybe. All first eight verses of chapter 2. To consider that portion. There's Thessalonians chapter one, and perhaps for now the 1St 8 verses of chapter 2. Would that be profitable? First Thessalonians. Paul and Sylvanus and Tumultius, under the Church of the Thessalonians, which is in God the

Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God always for you, all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor, of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. In the sight of God and our Father knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God for our gospel came not unto you in Word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost. And in much assurance, as you know what manner of men we were among you for your sake, and ye became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the Word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost. So that ye were in samples to all that believe in Macedonia and IKEA. Or from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia, but also in every place. Your faith to godward is spread abroad, so that we need not to speak anything. For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turn to God from idols, to serve the living and true 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 for yourselves, brother, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain. But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully untreated, as you know, a Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God, with much contention. For our exhortation was not of deceit. Nor of uncleanness, nor in guile, but, as we were allowed of God. To be put in trust with the gospel. Even so we speak not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time use we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness. God is witness, nor of men sought. We glory neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome as the apostles of Christ, but we were gentle among you.

Even as a nurse cherishes her children. So being affectionately desires of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because you were dear unto us. Doug, would you read also Acts 1917, the 1St 9 verses, Act 17 one through 9. X-17 one. Now when they had passed through Antheus and Phyllis and Apollina, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews. And Paul, as his manner was went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead. And that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas, and of the devout Jews a great multitude, And of the chief women not a few. But the Jews, which believe not moved within me, took under them certain lewd fellows of the baser sword, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the House of Jason. And sought to bring them out to the people. And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, and cried, These that have turned the world upside down are come hit her also, whom Jason hath received. And these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus, And they troubled the city, and the rulers of the city. When they heard these things and when they had taken security of Jason and the other, they let them go. This was one of the first that Paul may have written and but it it also is. Full of that first love that the assembly had, and it seems like we could consider it for our the stimulation and enlargement of our own heart, since our brother Don has been bringing before us, as we see the manner of the servants of Christ among those people, and the manner that they responded to the gospel preached to them, and so. That's why I suggested this that. Might be for our prophet in that way. There were those two classes of people that we, as we read in the Acts that at Thessalonica there there were those unbelieving Jews, you know, it says of the Berean Jews that they were more noble than those at Thessalonica. But there was also that great multitude of the Greeks that believed, and in our verses we read that they received the word. As it was in truth, the word of God. And here we have before our eyes portrayed the effect of the Word of God working without restraint in the lives of men and women of God. And it's something that we could covet in our own lives, this.

Unshackled working of the word, and unhindered that as it's of. Brought into our hearts and consciences, there is affection and holiness. Developed in our lives and you just seems like it's beautiful to see that affection here in our verses. It's interesting to see that here in the early history of the church, or shall I say earlier history of the church, this is the is, Henry said. It's probably the first epistle that Paul wrote, and in verse three it says remembering without ceasing your work of faith. And labor of love. And patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father in the message to Ephesus. I believe it is. In Revelation chapter 2, it speaks of the same thing without the qualifying. Adjectives. Oh, I was reading chapter two, one verse two of chapter 2. I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil. And thou hast tried them, which say they are apostles and are not, and has found them liars. Well, this is. Probably. 60 plus or minus years later after he wrote. I don't mean 60, maybe 50 years after he wrote first Thessalonians that John wrote. To the Ephesians in the Book of Revelation. There is certainly a decline in the character of Christianity by that time. The Church is failing. How much more has it failed since then? But. In In the beginning of the history of the Church, we find this character of. The Saints, at least in Thessalonica, their faith was their work was a work of faith. Their labor was a labor of love and. Patience of hope, so they had. They had much to show for what they were, for the character that they were bearing, their hope, their faith and their patience. And then we see it declining half a century later now. There is. There is still faith and there's still hope and there's still patience today, but it's not what it was in those days, the days of Paul at Thessalonica. This is the one church, is it not, in which the Church of which is in God the Father, then our Lord Jesus Christ, God the Father. There were just babes in Christ to us, weren't they? One was thinking of that hymn that we sang. Thou gave us an eternal love to him to bring us home to thee. Through the divine all thought above, and so on in that past eternity, God. The purpose of the desire of God was to have a people before him in glory, just like his own dear Son, the one who and whom he found all his delight. It was his desire. And the Lord Jesus leaves the glory He comes down into this world in order to accomplish the work that would bring about the the perfect fulfillment of all the Father's purposes of love and grace. It was the father's desire to have us. In this before him. And in that same glory with Christ, he has given us a life.

And a nature. Perfectly suited to the presence, to his presence, Olive, His desire is to have fellowship with us, and it is He's given us a life and a nature. That is makes us capable of having fellowship with himself. And this is the desire of God. Well, here are some of those dear Saints. Just a little few there were. Down there at Thessalonica, saved by his grace, God had them marked out in that past eternity. Just like he had you and me and all his own. Well, one day we're going to see those dear Saints Thessalonica. And how much they cost the Apostle. But he could say what is our joy or crown of rejoicing. Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ that is coming? Those Thessalonians Saints are going to be his crown in that day, but here they are seen as as kept in God the Father. They are preserved and kept in in God the Father. It's a it's a Father who is was caring for them and taking care of them. And He's taking care of you and me and all his own today. New believers in the Lord Jesus. I think it's been suggested that maybe there were six, maybe six weeks saved when the apostle wrote this epistle, and I've enjoyed that thought too in connection with in God the Father. It belongs to babes in first John chapter 2 That they know the Father, not beautiful, being brought into relationship with the Father. An old brethren, what a tremendous thing to realize. The Father's love is towards us unchangeably. God has proved how much He loves us in a way that cannot be questioned at all any longer. That's the position you and I occupy now before God in Christ is in the Father's love. Tremendous to to revel in the enjoyment of that we have a Father who loves us unconditionally. John brought that out too, didn't he? He said. I write unto you, little children, because you have known the Father. But I was thinking too, as we read this portion, how it's nice to see the heart of the apostle come out here, because there's always a tenderness in the

heart of the apostle towards his brethren. But I've enjoyed it, especially here, with these new converts, those who are newly saved and gathered to the Lord's name. He speaks of himself in the second chapter of an as a nurse. And as a father in his desire for their good and blessing. When we read the life of the Apostle in the. Book of the Acts we see that before he was saved, his whole zeal and his whole energy was to stamp out the name of Christ and persecute the Christians. But after he was saved on the Damascus road, and there was a work of grace in his own soul, then his whole zeal and energy and desire was that not only would souls be saved, but that they would go on in the good of what they had in Christianity, and that they would enter in in a deeper and fuller way. To all that they had in the Father and in the Son. You get a similar thought expressed with the Apostle John when he wrote. He said, I have no greater joy than to know that my children walk in truth. And her brother has already alluded to the end of the second chapter. To me, it's just as if Paul says, when I see you, Thessalonians at the judgment seat of Christ, and I see you get a rich reward for following the Lord and going on in the truth, he said, I'm going to rejoice. Well, brethren, it's a heart that we all need to covet. Do we have that shepherd's heart, that pastoral care for the Saints of God that would desire not only the salvation of souls, but that souls be nourished and cherished in the assembly and encouraged in the Lord? There's a lot to discourage today. And I appreciated Brother Dave suggesting that the 17th chapter of Acts be read because. We might read that and say, well, with all the opposition, when the gospel went forth at Thessalonica, was there any blessing? We might wonder if that's all we had to go on, whether there'd really been a work there. But we turn over to this epistle and we find that there had been a work there. There had not only been souls saved, but now they were going on in the truth. Because when there's when there's opposition, it usually is an indication of a work of the spirit of God, because the enemy is right there to try and hinder the work and to discourage the and confuse the people of God.

But here we find there was a great work. And, brethren, I know these aren't the days of Thessalonica. They're not the Apostolic days of the Church. But Brethren, the Spirit of God is still working. He's still saving souls. He's still gathering to his precious name. He's still preserving the feet of his Saints. And let's seek grace to encourage one another in the Lord. And to have that shepherd's heart and that pastoral care that would seek to nurture the people of God is so necessary in these last days. Beautiful to see how the Apostle in the this book and in the next book two joins himself to two other servants of the Lord, Sylvanus, which is Silas and Timothy. In his addressing these believers, and I think that's a mark of a real servant of God too, isn't it? That he's joins himself with others, he doesn't make himself the sole figure and that everything revolves around him. That he recognizes that God uses other instruments for blessing. And brethren, we should rejoice when we see in any measure blessing being given through other instruments. God uses some instruments we might not. Expect he might use sometimes he used a a donkey to reprove Valen. Then you might not expect that. But God uses whom he will, and I think it is for us to recognize when there is blessing through other instruments. Still. I think you see, Bob, a sad contrast with Saul the King Saul in the Old Testament because he was Jonathan was used one time to win a great victory in Israel. And Saul came along and tried to get the credit for himself. He wanted to be, shall I say, the center of attention and not to give the credit to another. And so I think what you say is very lovely because God has a path of faith for each one of us. But it's a wonderful thing when we can serve the Lord together. We often think of that verse being laborers together with God. And that's true. It's as we labor in a corner of his vineyard, but we can do it together. And so I think you see this with the Apostle Paul. And later on he took others with him too, and he delighted to commend those that had a service. So it says in Galatians, let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone and not in another. And I don't like to refer to myself, but I've often appreciated having another brother along. Service for the Lord because often it's a balance where perhaps I don't feel I have. Liberty or can carry out some function another can can carry that on as many. You know, I've often traveled with our brother Charlie Little, and I've appreciated him because he has that quiet pastoral care in the home and he's an excellent visitor. Where I feel myself sometimes I fall down in that department. And so I just say that to show how that God can often bring in a balance and give a fuller ministry and more liberty when we seek to go on and work with the people of God in that way. Grace be unto you in peace from God our Father. And the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what God desires for his each one of his own. And in the assembly piece and the grace beyond you in peace, and it flows down from heaven, well, it gives us something of the atmosphere of heaven, doesn't it? What a wonderful thing it'll be in that day when we were gathered home in the Father's presence. All the peace, the peace of that of that of the Father's house. Oh, how wonderful it will be. God is the God of peace. He's spoken of a number of times in scriptures. God is the God of peace and we will enter into enjoy that peace. Well, we're not there yet, but we're on our way. But he would have us to in spirit to enter into and enjoy that what he is in himself as the God of peace. And it is this which through which by which we can go on through the the difficulties on the trials and the circum hard circumstances of life. Peace of God. The peace of God which passeth all understanding what a blessed God we have is the God of peace. He's all love to us too. God is all love to us and there isn't anything that happens to us. Not a circumstance but it, but it's what is His love has ordered or allowed and it's all going to end in blessing.

All right, Dave. Wisdom is his name. And he God is love. And he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. So can't we trust him fully, fully trust him? Because omnipotence, all power is His, and wisdom and love are working for our blessing. There can't be anything to touch us any time of our life, but it's what's good for us. I think it was a very nice brother Jennings, how you referred to those. Contrasts in Revelation chapter 2 with Ephesus because, as you pointed out, the same words are used there, but no faith, no hope and no love. What was the difference? No doubt in Ephesus they knew far more truth at that point. Then the Thessalonians knew here they had had the benefit of the epistle to the Ephesians with, I suppose, the highest truth that God has ever given to man. And outwardly everything was going on well. But the apostle lays his finger on the very root of the problem, doesn't he? Thou hast left thy first love. The Thessalonians here were happy, and as someone has remarked, the Church was the happiest when it knew the least. What was it? Oh, it was Christ that was before them, as her brother Henry remarked, There was the freshness of first love. There was the freshness of joy in that blessed one. There was the hope of the Lord's coming mentioned in every chapter of this epistle in a slightly different way, slightly different viewpoint, but mentioned in every chapter. What was it? Oh, it was Christ that was before them. And I suggest, and I know our dear brethren would agree with us, that what we need. In our hearts is to have that blessed one before us. Do we need truth? Indeed we do. Indeed we do. And God wouldn't have given it to us in His word if it wasn't important. But I suggest that the Spirit of God never occupies you and me only with the truth, but rather with the One who is the truth. And then all truth is connected with Him, and with that blessed 1 The attraction to a person. And that's what they had here, didn't they? That's what brought the joy to their hearts, was the fact that Christ was before them the freshness of first love. The freshness of the gospel, the freshness of that hope, and everything, of course, that flowed from that in their affections and in their joy. Well May God give us to know that in our souls not in any way, as some would say, to neglect the learning of more truth, not in any way to neglect the deeper things that God has given us all my know, but always to enjoy them in connection with that blessed one with whom God would connect them all. God the Father just the fun things how that when the Lord. Took those little children up in his arms. How a father loves to pick up his little children. And maybe at the end of the day he comes home and picks them up in his arms and loves them and kisses them, and they're under the door to meet him. Father loves to have his children around himself. Well, when the blessed Lord was down here and

there and that blessed, lonely man, he picked up those little children in his arms and he blessed them. Well, he could say to the disciples, they said to him. Lord, show us the Father. He says to them, Have I been so long time with you? He that hath seen me has seen the Father. They've seen him pick up those little children and love them and and bless them. And this, this is the Father revealed. This is the God and the Father that we have come to know. And this is the one we have referred to here as as the Church of God which is in God the Father. Our brother Bill mentioned that there was not a lot of knowledge, and others have brought that out. These were believers in the freshness of their early love of Christ. Brother Jennings at the beginning of the meeting reminded us of that sad condition that had happened in Ephesians. But you know, beloved brethren, there's something exceedingly lovely here when we look at the first chapter and the second verse and the third verse. And Paul gives thanks to God for their work of faith.

Their labor of love and their patience of hope. And then, if we turn to the second epistle, written to these very same people, and again in the first chapter, we find these words again in the third verse of the first chapter of the second Epistle. We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren at his meat, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of everyone of you toward each other aboundeth. So that we ourselves glory in you and the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions. Tribulations which he endured. Wasn't that a lovely encouragement that here were a group of Christians who we've already established didn't know very much but they didn't go down. They increased. They abounded. And so in the second epistle their love and their faith is exceeding and it's abounding and it's growing and beloved brethren that can encourage us Sometimes things get rather discouraging today and we see failure in ourselves and. Unfortunately. Sometimes we see failure in others, but here were those who were going through extreme pressures and persecutions and trials, and they were commended early. As whether Bob pointed out, just a very short time after they'd been saved, perhaps. But then the second time Paul writes, he can even commend them further. They're growing. That's what the Lord wants for us, brethren, in these very darkest days is to attach words like abundant and exceeding to our faith and our love. And it can be even in the darkest of days in which we live. I think that's good because, well, it's true that Ephesus had departed collectively from their first love, and that is a point of departure which collectively the church has never been fully restored to. In fact, I believe it's the point of all the failure that later comes in those epistles to the seven churches. But it is possible for a Christian individually to be in the enjoyment of first love. In fact, they ought to be in the enjoyment of that first love as we're occupied with Christ. But I would just say that we don't want to overlook verse 2 here because. As all that we've been saying concerning the Thessalonian brethren is true, and we rejoice at their faith and love and hope and their service for Christ and so on. Yet as the Apostle Paul wrote to them, he said that he was continuing to pray for them. This turnover for similar thought to Philippians. I think it's good to see the context of this. And you get it in a similar context in Philippians chapter one. And verse 3. I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine, for you all making requests with joy. I think it's significant that the two times the Apostle speaks of specifically praying for the Saints in an assembly and as an assembly are on 2 occasions When the assemblies were going on very well. There was again a freshness at Philippi. They were going on well. There was a testimony in the gospel. And so on. And Paul says I'm praying for you. He says the same thing here to the Thessalonian Brethren. This was mentioned one time at an assembly and a sister came to me after and she said, you know, she said sometimes I feel bad when we come to the assembly prayer meeting because she said they pray for those who aren't, who aren't there, those who have perhaps become indifferent, those who are sick and have a special need and so on. But she said, I think it would be good if we prayed for those who are there, those who are going on for the Lord, those who have a desire to be at the assembly meetings and so on. And I thought it was quite a rebuke because, brethren, I believe that we need, like the Apostle Paul to use prayer as a preventative measure. Sometimes we fail to pray for someone until they've got cold in their soul or some difficulty, or they're sick or they're in some real trial or circumstance. But maybe if we prayed for the Saints that are going on well and that are at the assembly meetings and for those assemblies that are going on in the freshness of first love and so on, perhaps it would prevent many things. And so I just point out here that the such was the heart of the heart of the Apostle Paul for these brethren that he said, I know you're going on well, but he said. The, as it were, the enemy is going to be busy, and I'm going to pray for you that you'll be preserved by the God of all peace and by the Father that you have come to know.

Real secret brethren, in our seeking to go on with the Lord in these days of ruin, in many places there are just a few. But the secret is looking up to God as the God of all grace. And that's why it's a beautiful grace be with be unto you in peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace is unmerited favor. He gives brethren not because of the any worth or value or. Or faithfulness on our part. He gives because he's a giving God. And if we can just look up to him in that simplicity when we come together. Remember meeting up with some believers way out in the back areas of Bolivia? They had met some missionary some time before and had gotten saved, but the missionary was just going through and. So I asked him, do you have any meetings here? He said. And they said, no, we don't have any pastor here. We need a pastor, I said. Do you know how to read? They said yes, we know how to read. Do you know how to pray? Yes, we know how to pray. But can't you get together and read the scriptures and simplicity? You don't have to explain it, just allow God to speak to you through the scriptures. And if there's that simplicity of looking up to God as a gracious God, oh how he loves to give and it doesn't matter. Brethren, he uses the most insignificant things sometimes to minister to the need of his people. Mention sometimes the case of the boy with the lunch of five loaves and two fishes, and God used the Lord Jesus used that to feed 5000 people, and there were more leftover after they got done than they started with. That's the kind of God we have. And you might say, well, there's no gift in our meeting. There's nobody that really can explain the scriptures. That may be the case. But what kind of a God do we have? We have a God that delights in giving, and so if we can just look up to him in simplicity and realize that God gives not because of what we are, but because of what he is, that's grace. Perhaps what you say is borne out by two scriptures. In the end of Hebrews, we've been Speaking of the peace of God. But there you have the God of peace. And I think it's very beautiful to see how that when he calls us into into a position of blessing, he doesn't leave us to our own devices. He provides everything that's needed to go on in that place of blessing. And so he says here in Hebrews 13 and verse 20, now the God of peace that brought again from the dead. Our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. Now notice the 21St verse. This is the God of peace. Now make you perfect in every good work to do his will. Working in you, that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever. Amen. It just confirms what you say, Brother Bob. There's two, it says for you all. He didn't say. Well, there's some of you I love, and some of you are kind of a little hard to love, so we'll have to leave you out. But this true heart of a servant of Christ was a servant of Christ who loved every single one of the assembly. He didn't. He wasn't selective about it and said, well, I have my favorites because this brother goes on better and that sister has a nicer personality. But Paul was truly a reflection of the heart of Christ, and it was one that says as it says in verse two, we give thanks to God always for you all. And where Jim read in Philippians 2, it says praying for you all with joy. The natural heart tends to have favorites and say, well, I kind of like this person, but I'm not so sure about that one. But not so with the Spirit of Christ in the heart of God. He loved all Ben, and he gave his son for all. And here we find that the Apostle Paul is a reflection of that he was. For all the Saints in Thessalonica. Should never narrow our hearts affections, any lesser sphere than all God's redeemed people. I was thinking of in Colossians chapter one how the Apostle Paul speaks in his desire for the believers. In the end

of the chapter he says in in connection with Christ in you the hope of glory, verse 28, whom we preach.

Warning every man and teaching every man. In all wisdom that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. How often it's happened to me, brethren? Somebody. Seems hard headed to me and so I just kind of give up on him. But the Apostle Paul didn't give up. Warning every man teaching every man in all wisdom. Why, to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Tremendous. Their state in response to the apostle was such that it caused him great joy. He presents himself as a father to them with his own children. The end of verse 11 of the next chapter.

St. Louis Conference: 1995, 1 Thessalonians 1:5-6

Reading

Oh, teachers. Pray. That there's more in that passage in Thessalonians that we didn't cover yesterday. That's easy to agree to. Verse 5. First Thessalonians chapter one, verse 5. For our gospel came not unto you in Word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, as you know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. You became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the Word in much affliction. With joy in the Holy Ghost, so that ye were in samples to all that believe in Macedonia and IKEA, or from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and IKEA, but also in every place your faith to God. Word is spread abroad, so that we need not to speak anything, for they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how you turn to God from idols to serve the living and true 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. For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you that it was not in vain. But even after that we had suffered before and were shamefully entreated, as you know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God, in much contention. For our exhortation was not of DC, nor of uncleanness, nor of guile. But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, Even so we speak not as pleasing men, but God which trieth our hearts. For neither at anytime usually flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak of covetousness God is witness, nor of men sought, We glory neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome as the apostles of Christ, but we were gentle among you, even as a nourished nurse cherishes her children. So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you. Not the gospel of God only, but also our souls, because you are dear unto us. Mentioned yesterday, brethren, but I'd like to go back for just a few minutes to touch a little more on it. It's such a precious subject, this question of election. Knowing brethren beloved, your election of God, I think it's so important for us to understand our election. You, if you do not understand it, how can you expect to walk properly as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ? Supposing that you, young person, were chosen to be President of the United States. The day of taking office is still in January. There's some time to go before that time, but you are what they call the president-elect. Is that fact going to affect your way You walk down here? The way you act, where you go definitely will affect it, and I think it's so important. We're not talking here this morning about being elected to the Oval offices in Washington, DC We're talking about being elected by the God of the universe. Before the foundations of this world, we were chosen in Him to be holy and without blame before him in love. In First Peter chapter one it says elect according to the foreknowledge of God. How could God? Choose us before there was any world in existence. It's because of what is called foreknowledge. God, knowing everything beforehand, looked forward into the channels of time and said there's going to be such and such a personal life. I'm choosing him to occupy this place, and we need to understand it. We need to revel in the richness of the fact that we have been called Brethren unto his eternal glory. In First Corinthians chapter one, it says we are called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Tremendous place that belongs to us as a believer in the Lord Jesus. A place completely distinct. To that of a person here in this world merely. And if we understand it, if we enjoy it, we revel in it. It's bound to have its effect in our lives. Why don't we get involved in politics? There's great movement today, even in Christian circles, that says that we should become involved in politics. Oh, brethren, isn't it a fact that shows that we have not been enjoying? And reveling in the fact that we are called to eternal glory, what is political influence in this world in relation to that eternal glory to which we've been called? We are ambassadors for Christ Here in this world were representatives of his. Does an ambassador in any country have any right to involve himself in the political structure of that country?

He would be removed very quickly if he did. That's not his place to get involved into the politics of this world. It's his place to represent Christ. We are ambassadors of another country. I think rather than many of the true believers in other circles of Christendom get involved because of a lack of proper teaching. And I think we have to recognize that many of them are very sincerely in that position, and they are acting according to the teaching that they have. But if we understand our position, we are called not for straightening out this world. We are called to eternal glory. This world is under the judgment of God. We preach the gospel so that souls can be saved out of this world system for eternal glory. And it's. Important, brethren, that we understand our election of God. That's why it's important to rightly divide the word of truth and to hold to dispensational teaching. And I would just say, as a warning to us, there's a great movement today and Christendom to set aside dispensational teaching and substitute it with other things. But I don't believe we can rightly divide the word of truth if we wipe away those Dispensational guidelines. And I believe it's important to realize that in this dispensation, those who are being called out as the Church of God and being brought into blessing. We're chosen as Brother Bob quoted that verse in Christ before the foundation of the world. And I think that's significant because the spirit of God is very careful in the New Testament to guard, lest we ever think that our blessings are in any way connected with this world. I believe there's a contrast between that scripture and what we have in Matthew 25, where he speaks of the blessing for Israel. It says that their blessing was from the foundation of the world, and they will be blessed in that way in a coming day on the grounds of sovereign grace. Their blessings are earthly and they will come into the good of that. But. We were chosen and for blessing before the foundation of the world. And I would like to, without belaboring the point, just echo what brother Bob has said, because I believe that the environmental movement is satans attempt to do 2 Things. Now I want to be careful brethren, because I do believe man has abused what God has given him to enjoy in creation and he has not been a faithful steward of those temporal mercies. But by the same token I believe that Satan is busy today to do 2 Things. One to keep men insensitive to his ruin, the natural man, because if he can keep him believing that this world is getting better and that he can do something for the betterment of this world. He's not thinking about eternity, but I believe also it's Satan's attempt to keep the Christian earthly minded. And, as has already been said, there are many zealous Christians who are putting their energy into cleaning up this world. But Brethren were not a moral force to change the world. There was a system at home. And they had a billboard that years ago that said building better citizens to build a better world. That's not the part of the Christian We're here to represent Christ. We're here to present Christ to the lost, just like an ambassador. When we send a Canadian ambassador to another country there, he's in that country. And what is he doing? Well, he's taking up the interests of those who are, who want to come to this country if someone's

interested in coming to Canada. They go to see the Canadian ambassador and he tells them the requirements of coming to that nation, to this country, and what needs to be done in preparation to come to Canada. And so that's what we're here for, brethren. We're to point others to Christ and to bring before them God's requirements and God's provision so that they too can be fellow citizens with the Saints and of the household of God. But I just say, again, let's keep in view that our goals and our aspirations are not connected with this world. We are a left for heavenly blessing. In fact, I believe so careful is the Spirit of God to guard this truth. That when he speaks in Revelation 5 of that time when we will share in the reign of Christ, it should read We reign over this world, He. Attaches us in every way from this Earth and shows that we have something far better beyond this world over. Means above, doesn't it? Yes.

From that I did choose thee, oh Lord, that could not be. This heart would still refuse thee. But thou hast chosen me, and that's the way it is. It's. Man has no free will, but a sovereign God has. We deal with a sovereign God who chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. Perhaps you'll just bear with me, because Mother Henry made a comment at the end of the meeting last yesterday that I appreciated. He said something to the effect that God doesn't have any children that he doesn't want. And I think it's good to see that because not only so, but God is never, just will never be disappointed with anyone of us. He's often grieved with us. Sometimes we grieve him. But as many of you know, I was adopted by my parents when I was a very young child. But when they adopted me, when they chose me and gave me the family name of Highland, they didn't know what I was going to be like. They didn't know how I was going to turn out. Brother Bob used the illustration of the president. Sometimes men are elected to office by the people and they're a disappointment to the people. They don't really know how that elected person is going to turn out. But it thrills my soul to think that when God chose me in Christ before the foundation of the world. He knew all about me. He, in his infinite foreknowledge, knew my weaknesses. He knew my failures. He knew what I was going to be like, and yet he loved me enough to send his son to pay the price. So that I could be blessed for all eternity and brought into the family of God. And so we often make choices and we're disappointed. But what about in a coming day when we're finally gathered around himself in the Father's house? It says he'll see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied sometimes. Use the illustration. I never was very good with my hands, but when I was younger I used to do a little woodworking project, perhaps in my parents basement or put together a model of some sort. And after I was done I would view the finished product. And my parents always had a large wood stove in our basement. And sometimes, before anyone else could see the finished product, I would open the wood stove and it would be gone, because I was disappointed with the end result. But the one who chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, the one who provided salvation through the Lord Jesus, the one who picked me up, the one who's going to carry me safely home to glory when I'm put, sat down in the Father's house, as it were, And he views his family and the Lord Jesus views his bride, is he going to be disappointed that he chose any one of us? No. He's going to rejoice and joy over us with singing and he his heart will be forever satisfied. In Colossians, it tells us too that we are called in one body, and I think that's another part of Our Calling brethren that is important for us to understand. Not only as you're bringing out Jim, as far as the Lord's looking down at us, but in our relationships, one with another too. I remember two brothers that were having a difficulty together, and one brother said, well, brother, the fact that you're a member of the body of Christ wasn't my choice, and the fact that I am wasn't your choice. That it was somebody else that chose us both. Then we better learn to get to go on together. And that's the truth of the matter, brethren. We meet our brethren in the Lord Jesus many times. They don't meet with us, but they're called in one body, just as we are, and we need to view them and seek to be a help and blessing to them in the same measure. Phrase says, says, called in one body and be thankful. It's nice to notice, too, that when the Spirit of God in Scripture brings before us election, predestination, God's choosing of us in a past eternity, almost always, perhaps always. I haven't done any extended research on it, but almost always you find man's responsibility brought in side by side, and that brings before us that which the human mind cannot understand. We can't bring together the sovereignty of God in choosing us and yet the responsibility of man. And so here the apostle, immediately on reminding us of God's election, talks about the way that the gospel was brought to them, not merely in Word. It wasn't merely a matter of saying words and saying, well, let God do the work, and if someone has been chosen in Christ, then they'll be saved. That's true, but it's a half truth here. It was in.

Power. And of the in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance. And there was, I believe, every fiber, if we could use that expression of Paul's being put into the earnestness of bringing that gospel before them. And then in the next verse, in the sixth verse, there's the response of their hearts having received the word. Well, those two things, I say, can only be lived out properly by walking with the Lord on the one hand, to recognize the wonderful privilege we have of being chosen in Christ. But on the other hand, when we go out with the gospel to do so with all the earnestness and love, and in the power of the Holy Ghost as it says here, realizing that ultimately, of course, it is only by the power of God that a soul will be saved. For our gospel, it is a word that we can learn, but you know, for the Sinner. We're pointing to the Savior now we look. It's our Savior, isn't it? We know the Lord Jesus is our Savior, but the scripture says who's sitting at the right hand of God, waiting till his enemies be made his footstool? So he's coming back in power and his enemies will be made his footstool. But we don't have any part in that today. So how could we usher in the Kingdom? How could we help with regard to the Kingdom except a man be born again. He cannot see the Kingdom of God and the majority of the men around us, they have to be born again to see the Kingdom of God. And yet the scripture also tells us we don't know all of those that belong to the Lord. So who would be the enemy? Who wouldn't? You can't determine those things so. There's so many things that would be impossible to work as you're entering in the Kingdom. But what is it that that puts people in the Kingdom of God as we get in John's gospel, but it's being born again That's part of our gospel. And we realized that this is God's work. The person has to be born again as part of the gospel, where they have to be changed. And Corinthians, it says the gospel is good. Again, well, accept drivers, open their eyes. And so we see. That the gospel is a man in the glory, the Lord Jesus, who is in rejection. And we're His ambassadors to tell the good news. That He's saving souls into his new creation, to be members of the Church, which is a heavenly body on earth as we can see what part of it is on earth. Because we don't speak of those that are passed to be with the Lord who are absent from the body, the present Lord. We think of it as earthly, but yet it's a heavenly body associated with that man and the glory waiting to be taught out to be with him because it's not part of the earth. We're not Israelites, and once we were saved, we were not made Jews. But both the Jews and the Gentiles have been made new creatures in Christ Jesus attitude to this one body, which the Lord Jesus tells us is His church, and so this church. You look at it on earth, we don't see the unity, we don't see the oneness, but it is united in Christ as the head. And because it's in ruin, the only way it can be straightened out. For him to take it out of this scene, united with himself and glory, where it can be seen the way he wants it to be seen, when it will be revealed in its time a glorious body without spot or wrinkle, because it is his work. So. To realize. This body is is for that head to have its proper place. That head is a man in the glory for us, separated from the earth, so it calls us into separation too. No, they said the we know that. Only the elect will be saved. But our responsibility is to preach the gospel to every creature, isn't it? Every person is responsible whether he accepts the gospel or not. And so we need to remember that for as much as a person may never accept the gospel, our responsibilities. Still stands to preach the gospel to every creature, and that's something everyone of us can have a part in.

Maybe we don't have particularly the gift of an evangelist, but still we can do the work of an evangelist. You can give a tract. Sometimes it's the most insignificant. Testimony that God uses to bring a soul to the Lord Jesus. And so may we all be encouraged to do the work of an evangelist. I was really encouraged this last trip down in Bolivia. Way up on the high altiplano it was going across and leaving off some gospel calendars at each place where the brethren used them for their gospel work and. Stopped at this place called Rio Mulatto. It's really it's at the 12,000 foot level and it's so barren there that they can't grow any crops. It's too cold and even in the summertime it's too cold to grow any weed or barley at that area. But stop there. Just a few minutes to leave off the calendar and this little girl, 10 years old with her must have been her little sister. I don't know who it was. I don't even know their names. They ran up and came to the place where I stopped there in the pickup and. She gave me this table cloth that her mother had painted for me, She says. Since you're doing the Lord's work, my mother said this is for you. And then she said, and Brother Robert, do you have some gospel tracks? I'd like to give them out in my class at school. Isn't that nice? Don't think you have to be grown up to give out the gospel. Some of the most effective gospel ministry is by children. And I tell you, it really touched me. Think of that little girl. She didn't want anything for that tablecloth. She wanted some gospel tracks to give out to her friends at school. Their children here. Young people, have you given gospel tracts to your friends? Have you? Sometimes particular gospel tract doesn't fit for a certain person. But look over the gospel tracts, read them through, and give them to your friends at school. Some of those friends are really hurting in their hearts. They're empty. They need the Lord Jesus. They really do. And your testimony will come across far stronger than maybe those of us who are older. The Lord encourage us each to do the work of an evangelist. There's encouragement for the sisters when he wrote to the Saints at Philippi because he said and help those women which labored with me in the gospel. There were evidently women that had been a real help to the apostle Paul in the furthering furthering of the gospel. And he says don't forget those women and you help them. When we have summer meetings, children's meetings and gospel meetings in Maine and New Brunswick, some of our most valuable help are the sisters that come to help in a quiet way. They prepare the meals, they help the children in various ways. They help with the hobby class, they're really doing the work of an evangelist, and they're helping the furtherance of the gospel. And if we value it, how much more does the Lord value it as he jots it down in his book of remembrance to receive a reward in eternity? The light doesn't make any noise. It doesn't say anything. It just makes everything visible. And sisters are alight just as much as the brothers. It's not what we say so much, brethren, it's what we are as well that has a real testimony to those around us. We have here the Saints. Such was the life of the apostle as they went about with the gospel. Such was the life of it. It was. It was that light in the darkness. I don't suppose we realize. I don't think we do it all. I'm sure we don't. The darkness of hedonism. We have been brought up in the sphere of Christianity. Perhaps we were brought up in homes and with godly parents. We don't realize what it wants for these Saints to come out of the the awful darkness, the the corruptions, the wickedness of paganism, of idolatry. And yet the light of the blessed light of the gospel was shining there. And these Saints they became a replica or a blueprint of the life of the apostle. In that way the the life of the apostle as they went about these and these helpers and the preaching, the gospel. There it was so it was reflected in these dear Thessalonians Saints, she said, And she could say, you know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And he became followers of us and of the Lord. And so powerful was the testimony that even the world, the world was talking about it. And look at those Saints, Look at those people over there in Thessalonica. They've turned to, they've turned to worship a God, and they've given up their idols and all that and all that, and they turn to worship the God, another God, perhaps the unseen God.

But it was the life of the apostle told along with the words, that he spoke but gave such power. And God blesses faithfulness. Remember our dear brother, age, brother, Mr. Erismann? Years ago, Arizona senior he was. In the over there in the East. This is a long time ago, years and years ago, and he was at a meeting in. I think it was in over there in. I don't know, or New New Jersey somewhere and there was a lot of young people there in the meeting. And he said to an older brother, he said, You, I said, you have some godly, you have some godly brethren here. And well, there were. God bless his face from us. God bless his faithfulness. And when there's a faithful going on, there will, there will be blessing. Well, these Saints at Thessalonica, they were like a like a a blueprint of the life of the apostles in their measure. The order is verse four elected before the foundation of the world. Verse 5, the preaching of the gospel. This is the message that must reach those. Lost souls. To give them the good news of salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus, and then become followers of God and followers of us, as it were, as Paul says here, you became followers of us and of the Lord. Having received the Word with much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost, and then it's turning to God, turning to Him. Who has elected us and sent forth messengers with the good news of salvation? And we we follow those who preach the gospel, and we who who are following God himself. So we leave our idols behind. Our idols now no more entices, nor do they attract us, because we have a we have an attraction far above and far better. Than what we had as natural men. When the meeting opened, our brother Jennings prayed that there might be that which would be for the benefit of the young people. And I was touched by, as I'm sure we all were, by the example our brother Bob gave of this little girl. Who wanted to give out gospel tracts? And I think it would be well, brethren, before we leave verse 5 to notice there are 4 distinct things that. Characterize the preaching of the gospel, and it's wonderful if in any measure we can do the work of an evangelist, and the youngest of the oldest can be occupied with that. But we just might notice those. I'm going to refer to them from the from Mr. Darbys translation for our glad tidings. We're not with you in Word only. That's the first thing the preaching of the gospel is in Word, whether it's spoken or given out in a paper or whatever It's going to be given in Word. But it's not in Word only. There are other things connected with the preaching of the gospel, and our brother dear brought that out about the life of the apostle Paul, adding power to what that Word was that was being preached. And that's the next thing. But also in power, that's a separate thing. So that it's important and I say this, I trust with some amount of. Of shame for myself. But you know, brethren, it's wonderful. And beloved young people, it's wonderful if we can share the gospel with someone. But I want to just say in a little practical way, there ought to be something that corresponds in our life to give power to our words. There ought to be something that can be seen in the way we're acting. We've often remarked. And it's lovely, isn't it? In the in the book of Acts it says of all that Jesus began both to do. And to teach. And I think the order is so lovely and it's a wonderful order for us if we're going to preach the gospel in some way and God help us that we all would be very, very exercised about preaching the gospel somehow, whether that's to give a tract or whatever it is. But and in power relates to the living out of what we're talking about, you know. And it's very good to remember we ought to be doing, we ought to be living at and enjoying it and then preaching it. Well, that's the second thing. The third thing is.

And in the Holy Spirit, you know, it doesn't matter what we do. It doesn't matter what our efforts are. We all know that, don't we? It's got to be a work of the Spirit of God bringing His blessing to whatever is being preached and however it's being presented. Because if the Spirit of God is in, it is not in it. It doesn't matter the intelligence or the amount of money or the effort spent, There's not going to be real fruit for God in the thing. And then finally, and I've enjoyed this and in much assurance, well. I would just share this as my as just a personal thought but you know in in this place and a brother claim or brother Jennings asked that that be read the other day yesterday in acts about when Paul went there. You know he was only there three weeks and there were there was a lot of blessing but there was a tremendous storm of persecution that was raised. A tremendous storm of persecution. And I believe that it was within that persecution in some sense. There was an assurance

given. You know, sometimes we get our assurance, don't we, When things are not going easily, That's when we have that assurance more deeply given to us in our soul of the truth of God, of the value of the things that we walk in. Well, I just point them out before we go on, Brethren. I think it's very important to see those four characters of this gospel that we're talking about. That are presented here in this verse, and it's important, isn't it, that wherever we are? And whatever level we are, that those things somehow, in some way characterize our effort to be an evangelist. To Acts chapter 15. They know they went up to Jerusalem to determine. What should be done about? Circumcision. I was just thinking the. Foundations of the Message to the Thessalonians. We can find here after this is determined in verse. 25. It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things that ye abstained from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication, from which if you keep yourselves, ye shall do well for ye well. So there we get a letter sent with testimony, and then men who would tell the same thing by mouth. But we have Silas. That's a contraction of the name Sylvanus. So in our chapter we have Paul and Sylvanus and Timotheus under the Church of the Thessalonians. Now if we look in Acts chapter 16. Or first, in chapter 15, the end of the chapter, we know that Barnabas took Mark and went to Cyprus, but in First Forty it says Paul chose Silas and departed, being recommended by the Brethren under the grace of God. Then it comes to Derby in the next chapter. And there is Timothy. And verse three says him. Would Paul have go forth with him? And took and circumcised them because of the Jews which were in those quarters. Now there you can see that Paul is at perfect liberty. He's not. Bound in his soul by the by the letter of this gracious letter from Jerusalem. But there's respect for the conscience of the Jews in that place. He has liberty for that. But here we get the bringing together of Paul, Sylvanus and Timotheus. And in Chapter 16 we get. The. Umm Philippian Jail. And in verse 25, well, first in chapter 16, verse nine, a vision appeared to Paul in the night.

There stood a man of Macedonia prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us. After we'd seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us. Or to preach the gospel unto them. Now the Lord says in the Gospels. Where I am, there also shall my servant be. I think the sense of that is where I am working. There also shall my servant be that he has his work going on, and if there's prayerful dependence will be led to that exactly where he's working, and Paul goes there, and Sylvanus and Timotheus, Timothy hasn't mentioned as being in jail with them. But Paul and Silas sang praises unto God at midnight, verse 25. And we know about this wonderful story. How they're the earthquake. They're taking out of prison the washing of their wounds. And then in chapter 17 which was read, so we get the setting. Of how the gospel came to Thessalonica and we have in chapter 2 of what we've read verse 2. Even after that we had suffered before and were shamefully untreated, as you know, at Philippi. We were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God, with much contention. In the face of much contention, I was thinking the foundation. Of the message that came is based on very obvious leading of the Lord. You know in Romans. Look at chapter 10, we're quite familiar with it, but. In Romans chapter 10. Verse 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? How shall they believe in him, and whom they have not heard? How shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things? You know these three men? That came to Thessalonica. Imagine coming really from a Philippian jail. The stripes were probably still rather fresh. Though washed crafts and bandaged, but the sense of the Lord's presence with them and his having sent them. No wonder this gospel came. In power in the Holy Ghost and in much Assurance. And then if we look at first John Chapter 2. We had reference to it yesterday. Verse 12. I write unto you, little children. Because your sins are forgiven you. For his name's sake. In verse 13 I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. But then in verse 20 I was thinking of particularly. But ye have an unction from the Holy One. And you know all things. How wonderful at the moment the Thessalonians believed they had that ocean. But the very foundation of the message, the messengers knew they were sent. And the assurance in their own souls. You know how deep, how wonderful that is. The Lord is working today. And he's doing things in this world. Who's he going to send? Is he going to send you? Is the ear open? Can we say here I am? Is there pride of heart that says send me? Or is there such knowledge of the very rottenness of our own nature?

That we put the emphasis on send me. Because we have to learn what selfie is, don't we? But how much better when we're acquainted with his heart that wants to sin and he is doing things and dear young people. Will he use you? Maybe you're quite intelligent. God is the one that. Gives that. How many of us have learned a foreign language? Greek or Hebrew, There's areas of the world that have no Bible, nothing in their own language. But how much preparation of heart is there in you and I? Where Paul went. There was a different language than his homeland. And I'm sure that there were great cultural differences. They're not easy to adjust to. But where the love of God fills the heart. You can come out of a jail with stripes on your back and the joy is even greater, isn't it? We could look at the 17th of acts as I have a concern as to some of the things that have been said. I see Brother Kenneman touched on as so important to all of these things. In the 17th of acts we have these circumstances, these events that took place and what we've been reading about. That I. Beginning from about the middle of. Verse six these that have turned the world upside down are come hit her also, whom Jason hath received. And these do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king. One Jesus. And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city when they heard these things. You know, I I believe that all of the opposition that we have suffered by these dear Saints was because of the fact that they set up the rightful king. They gave him the place that he was due in their lives. Personally, some of the things we've been talking about and I and I get a little afraid when we start to encourage. One's. Young people and children to enter into something when they possibly haven't done this, to set the Lord Jesus as the rightful king of their lives, to set him in our households as such. It frightens me a little. I think of Gideon, who told his son rise and Slay, but his son couldn't do it, could he? And that we might be careful that we go through these exercises and that we see fruit. Apostle saw fruit. In these Saints, and he commended them for it. But look at the opposition that they faced. Look at the exercises that they went through. Look at the 20th chapter, Acts 20 and Justice to read the scriptures without comment. It shows how the Gospel came to these Saints. Acts 20. 18 And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know from the first day that I came into Asia. After what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord, with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations, which befell me by the lying in weight of the Jews, And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith towards our Lord. Jesus Christ. Well, this gives it just a little insight into. Into the life of the apostle. As he as he served the Lord in the gospel. I'd like to comment a little bit further on that verse five of our chapter and it speaks of Word. Not only, not in Word only, but also in power and the Holy Ghost just to encourage the importance of the use of the scriptures in speaking to souls. It's.

The living Mr. Darby's translation in I think it's First Peter, One says. The living and abiding word of God. Oh how important it is to use Scripture. Not our wisdom, rather not our reasoning, although there is such a thing as reasoning out of the scriptures, but it is the Scripture

itself that God uses. To create new life and souls and it's so important that we. Use that. Even though souls might say I don't believe that, it doesn't matter if they don't believe it. Use it because it's the living and abiding word of God. This book is different from any other book. It's living, it's operative, it's powerful. And some of you may have heard how Brother Grenade over in Italy was saved. He was playing billiards at a place where. The young men used to congregate to smoke cigarettes, and he was in there, and Mr. Pirapata was over there at that time, and he stepped into that building, and he said only one verse. He quoted it twice. He said, Whosoever believeth on me shall have everlasting life, said John 647. If I remember right, he only quoted it twice. And Mr. Grenadi said, I just stopped and listened to that man, and then he stepped right out and went right on his way. But it stuck in his mind. He couldn't get it out of his soul, and that's what God used to bring him to the Lord Jesus. It's the word. It's the living word. It's the word that the Spirit of God uses. And I think it's so important when we preach the gospel, is to give the word, not to give our reasonings our thoughts. Are maybe helpful. Maybe they're not helpful. But what is the thing that God uses? The thing that the spirit of God will use is the word of God. It's the sword of the spirit. And if we are in the spirit, If we're walking in the spirit. God may use this as an instrument, but it's not really our sword, brethren. It's the sword of the Spirit, and it is He that drives it home. And it's in power, brethren. There's power when the Spirit of God uses the word of God. Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts. How important that is when there's so many techniques used to getting people to listen to the gospel and to accept. Brethren, we need to stick close to Scripture. That's what God will bless, we'll use. And I think it's so important too that other point that Doug was bringing out here in verse five in much assurance. There needs to be a conviction on our part as to the truth of it for as much as it is a child of 10 years old. But in any measure that there's been conviction formed there that has a testimony too, assurance, Do you know it for yourself or you just parroting what somebody else has said? People can tell when it's you that have that conviction. I think it's so important to have that clear in our souls, Paul told Timothy in Second Timothy chapter one. It is God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind, wise discretion. And so there should be a conviction on our part. It's been interesting to me to see some of those Bolivian brethren. They're not. Real well educated, a lot of them. Some of them have never been to school. Any formal education. And sometimes I've seen him give the gospel to somebody, maybe an educated person of this world, and that education person will turn and just wipe, just make shreds of that brother. But what comes across so powerfully, even when they get shredded up, when they get attacked by an intelligent person, it doesn't change their conviction and they can see it on their countenance and there still know that this is true. The gospel is true. And it comes across as a powerful testimony. Is it you? Are you convinced of this? Or is it just somebody else that your parents maybe that told you about it and you're just parenting what your parents have told you about dear young people, Let's speak from our own convictions. If you don't have your convictions well formed, I encourage you to go to scripture and set your own feet down on the rock bottom bases of Holy Scripture. That will never change, even though heaven and earth pass away. This book will stand forever.

And it's and it holds true. Remember, as a young person getting attacked for some of my beliefs and I found that I was shaken because it was something and I'd heard in the meetings, but I'd really never laid hold of in my own soul. And when I got shaken, it was kind of. A horrifying experience, but when I went back to scripture I found it holds. It does hold. It's true. Set your feet down, Prove it for yourself. Then you'll have the means to go out and speak with much assurance. It's important they so state that many believe, and I've appreciated too. When Philip spoke to the Ethiopian eunuch, it says there that he was reading in the 53rd of Isaiah. And beginning at the same Scripture, he preached unto him Jesus. In other words, he took the word of God that the man was reading. I've often said it wouldn't have mattered where that man was reading. He could have begun at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus. Because all those Old Testament scriptures spoke of the Lord Himself. Because on the way to Emmaus, he took up the Old Testament Scriptures with those that he was walking with who were going in that direction. But if you'll bear with me, I'd like to just go back to the comment our brother made a few moments ago, because I think he gave a very necessary warning. And I think there are systems today that hold classes and seminars for what they call child evangelism and seeking to train children to go out and, as they say, wind souls and so on. And I think the warning is very good for us, brethren, because it's not that we try to generate a testimony in others or try to generate a testimony within ourselves. I believe in the measure in which we are in the enjoyment of the person and work of Christ. And walking in communion with the Lord, there will be, shall I say, an unconscious reflection of Christ in our lives. When Moses was in the presence of Jehovah on the mount, he came down and his face shone, but he whisked not that his face shone. He hadn't tried to make his face shine. It was the unconscious reflection of being in the presence of Jehovah on the mount. And just in connection with several comments that have been made, let's look at a couple of verses in Philippians chapter 2 before I read these verses, just to notice the context he has given in the earlier part of the chapter. Here the perfect example of the Lord Jesus and brought before us this example as he says let this mind be in you, which is also in Christ Jesus. But then in the 15th and 16th verse, I think there's two things that go very necessarily together. Verse 15, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. Brother Bob made mention of the light earlier on in the reading, and I believe the thrust of this word here is illuminators. And what is an illuminator, brethren? It's one that has no light of itself. It reflects the light of another. We understand this when we look up at a big harvest moon in the night sky. That moon is shining bright. But the moon doesn't have any light of itself. Men have landed on the moon. There's no light in itself. It's reflecting the light of another. And I've sometimes used an illustration for those of us who are younger that help me to understand this. I guess in the days of digital watches and clocks, we don't have this so much anymore. But when I was growing up, I had a watch that had luminous paint on the numerals and hands of that watch, and I used to wear it to bed because I like to know what time it was when the light was turned out at night. And so the light would be turned out, and I'd look at the watch and I couldn't see what time it was, even though it had luminous paint and luminous paint glows in the dark. Well, what was the answer? Well, you switched the light on for a moment, and you hold the watch up to the light. And when you turn the light out, you haven't changed the condition of the room. It's still just as dark. You haven't changed the condition of the watch. But now there's a glowing. There's a light. Why? Because it was drawing. It's drawn from the source. And the longer you hold that watch up to the light, the longer it's going to glow in the dark Room, Brethren, that's what we are here in this Dark World. We're here to be a testimony for Christ to shine as illuminators. I think the hymn writer put it very nicely, he said. Not I may live while here below, but Christ my life may be. And as we have Christ before us as the perfect example, as we're drawing from the source, from being in His presence, then I say there will be that light shining forth. And the verse 15 is the life we live, and verse 16 is the words we holding forth, the word of life. And so the two is brother Doug brought before us earlier, must correspond first of all the life we live. Are we in the presence of the Lord? Are we enjoying the person and work of Christ? Then what we say will have a weight and an effect.

When Lot spoke of judgment coming on Sodom and Gomorrah, he seemed as one that mocked. He hadn't been in the sanctuary. His whole hopes and aspirations were centered in Sodom, and when he spoke of judgment coming, they said, how can he speak in that way? There was no moral force to what he said because his life didn't correspond with his words. Well, again I quote that verse of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, And the apostle Paul said to Timothy as well, Thou hast fully known my doctrine and manner of life. The two things in the apostle corresponded. And few practical things with regard to giving out the gospel that they might pass on to younger ones that they might

feel this desire would be. The word of God that you know. And the dependence upon God in the giving of the gospel. And it's the Holy Spirit of Word. Then the Holy Spirit would bring forth and their believer that his word that you know and you don't have to including the word of God. I find it for my own soul just to quote the word. And you don't necessarily have to give the reference. I'm not going to be looking it up anyway most often. But if you just spoke the word of God and let God use it and then a few words a word for the garbage has using the word of God, he says reach the conscience. We want to reach the conscience of the persons that we're talking to. And another thing he says is use a sharp knife with yourself. We use a sharp knife with ourselves because we want, as another brother to say we want to exalt Christ in the gospel. He's the savior of sin, evening and helping brethren. We want Christ to be exalted before our brethren. So we use a sharp knife with ourselves and as to being led by the Spirit of God. One of the ways it seems that God works with us is exercise. He lays someone on our soul. We have a burden for maybe a schoolmate. Friends at work, neighbor somebody we know we have a little burden on our heartburn. Well that's the way the gut it seems that the Lord works. So we turn to the Lord about that little burden and ask for his help to get to, to maybe speak to that person before we find ourselves in the situation that God might use us and return to God. That moment, all that I might have a word for thee and independence on him would have a little word come forth. Not much necessarily come forth. It's dependence upon him. And to look to him for help in the presentation and to exalt him. And as I'd rather said, the importance, the great importance of using the word of God. It's his word, the word of life. I want to encourage young people to be sensitive to the Lord's leading. As to speaking to souls, I think it's so important I say that. I'm not much of an example at that. Remember in high school and I was there. A young fellow who is my lab partner in chemistry. It was the son of a university professor and fairly good friend of mine. But one day, we were. Bending glass in the lab and I touched his arm with a piece of glass and. And burned it a little bit, and he comes back a few days later and shows me the burn, he says. There's kind of chuckling, kind of jokingly. There's a scarring, and they carry with me to my grave. And it was just as if the Lord said, you'd better speak to him. Do you know how you put it off and put it off? And there was a while later that we graduated. It was a few months later that we graduated, and that next summer he was skydiving, and his chute didn't open in time. Hit the ground and killed instantly. Never did tell them about the Lord. I feel guilty before the Lord. The Lord lays somebody on your heart. I encourage you to do what ASA says. Ask the Lord for an opportunity. Sometimes the Lord will open up an opportunity, and sometimes we're not ready when the opportunity opens up. But ask the Lord for an opportunity and then seek to be ready to give a word at the right time. The Lord can do that for you, and I really believe you can be effective to your friends at school if you'll just do that.

Ask the Lord to open up the opportunities he will. LMA Middlesex told me a story this week about her daughter, Son Wanda Son, who was eight years old and he was cycling with his neighbor boy, a friend. And he he was. He just quoted a verse of scripture and spoke to him about his soul, his eternal welfare. The little boy stopped his bicycle. And got down on his knees and said, I want the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior right there in public. Didn't care who he who saw him. He he wanted to be saved. He wanted Jesus as his Lord and Savior. Well, if you're 8 years old, this is a word for you also 9 or 10 or 11 or 12 or 13 or 14 or seven or six. You can tell them that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. And it might just turn out that there is rich blessing for eternity to the one whom you speak. We're exhorted in Ephesians 5 to redeem the time where I believe the thought is buying up every opportunity and I appreciate it. An older brother at home, I was standing in line at the bank one time and there was quite a long line up and this brother who never misses an opportunity to speak for the Lord was standing some persons ahead of me. I had seen him, but he hadn't seen me and someone turned to him and recognizing him. Said, called him by name and said, how are you today? And he said to them, well, by the Lorde, goodness, I'm fine and so on. And he used that as an opportunity to speak some little word for the Lord. And it was really a rebuke to me because I wondered if, standing in line at the bank and somebody asked me how I was, what I would have said, I probably would have said, well, I'm all right, but it's an awful rainy day and so on and so forth, and I don't like what they're doing down at town council. But here was a man who bought up every opportunity, and Brother Bob mentioned about asking the Lord for opportunities. I've sometimes wondered if it isn't so much asking the Lord for opportunities. There's plenty of opportunities on every hand, but what we need to do is ask the Lord that we would be in a state of soul and in the enjoyment of himself, so that when the opportunities come, we avail ourselves of them. How many opportunities I miss from day-to-day. Often used to think when I was in business, people would come in the office and we would talk business and they would go on their way. Maybe I never saw them again and I never spoke a word for the Lord. Opportunities missed, they may never be regained. It's true. There's no one going to be in hell because of our unfaithfulness. Because the Lord Jesus said, all that the Father hath given me shall come to me. But we miss the joy and the blessing of speaking a word for the Lord and being an instrument used in that way. Mr. Brown Ch Brown, whom we remember with much affection, was one time on a train, I think, and and a oh, I think I was probably a college friend of his, hadn't seen for some time. He he called out down the down the aisle. Well, hello, Clifford Brown. How's the world treating you? He says. Better than it treated the Son of God. And that that closed the I closed the conversation. We did have a responsibility though, don't we? And I I was thinking of a brother I met down in Bolivia one time, and he had a real burden to go back to his home area in the mountains to preach the gospel. And what he said to us when he came and asked us to go with him, he says on that Judgment day, I don't want them to say, oh, there's that man I knew and he never told me. And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. But beloved Saints this is. Preeminent in our hearts and minds, nearly all of us are thinking on these things now. The darker the world becomes, Can it get much darker than it is now? Well, it can, and it will after we're gone. It's going to be total darkness, virtually. Almost total darkness. There will be a flicker of light from that little Jewish remnant. But while we're waiting, the darkness is increasing and the the hope of his coming is getting brighter. And that's what we're waiting for now, perhaps before we even eat lunch today.

We will be in heaven. What a blessed thing it would be to leave all that food here. And be with Christ instead. We wait for the sun. Whom God raised from the dead and he delivered us from the wrath to come. What a marvel, what a marvel. The wrath of God is going to fall. But not on those who are sheltered by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a simple message, very simple message. There are two destinies, heaven and hell. The purpose of hell is to punish sinners for their sins. But the purpose of the death of Christ was for him to stand in our place in death and judgment. So now. Heaven is our home. Hell has no claims on me since my Savior has borne the wrath of God already. Beloved Brethren would allow one other thought from this end of this fifth verse. This phrase has been really coming home to my soul as I've been sitting here listening to the ministry on the gospel and in encouraging all of our hearts and the helps to presenting it. But it says this. Ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sakes, and then out of the J&D, it says. And he became imitators of us. Well, brethren, do we want to see our beloved young people taken up with preaching the gospel? Ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sakes, and you became imitators. What are the beloved young people seeing in US? And that's a real word to our hearts, isn't it? The apostle Paul presents this, and he says, you've watched me. You've seen what I acted like. You watched how I presented the gospel, how I lived it, how I suffered it, and you became imitators. And so, brethren, we earnestly would pray. For our dear young people, they might be kept and might have a heart to present the gospel, but let's not forget they're going to become imitators of us. Turn to God. You turn to God from idols.

Well, what are what are what a God. And think of think. Think of the what the heathen is it do for him. Man must have an object. A man is a moral being. Must have an object. And if it's on an object that is below himself. He has an object which is really below it, and then he descends. And what dreadful corruption was hedonism? The the oftenness of it, Did it make them glad? Did it make them happy? No, indeed it didn't. How how miserable and wretched souls are out there in the world. And any of those poor people. But to turn from it all to to such a God, what a God we have. A God. And when you think of God of love, who in his mercy loves poor sinners? And sent his Son into this world to die for our sins, to put our sins away. A God who has made himself a friend and a friend that sticks closer than a brother. A God who has come down to us and the person of his own dear Son. And loves us and and a God who is, who is wants to bless us. This is the God that they that they found. Oh, you think of the emptiness of the world and the the wretchedness and the misery of poor souls who are in the all the paganism gave to gave to those poor people. And oh are they they found such a God. As the apostle has the joy of telling them what a God they have, a God of love, a God of mercy, a holy God. And we think of those poor women that were there at Philippi down there having a little prayer meeting on the Riverside. They become so weary and so from the the excesses of the wickedness of idolatry that they thought something better. They found something, they thought something better. And they were down there in prayer. Well, God sent the Apostle Paul there.

And he told them and. The Apostle Paul gave them has he loved to tell them, but that blessed God. And we read about Lydia, the first convert of of these of the of the Brethren, the Apostle in Europe, Lydia, I remember Mr. Chapter Brown saying she got a blessing that day that she's enjoying tonight. Well, what a God we have. It reminds us the story about the little Arab street boy, his friend. He never knew anything about a family, a home or anything or pleasures of of a home life. But a friend got him into a boy's home, and there he had a he had a nice he had three meals a day, he had nice clothes, and he had a he had a nice he slept between white sheets. Never had anything like that before. This is what a friend got for him and so one day the teacher said to him Joe, what is the stand up and. Spell friend Joe got up putting me spelled friend, he said FRIEND. That's that's right, Joe. Now tell us, what is a friend? Well, Joe thought for a bit and then he says, well, he says a friend is a is a fellow that knows all about you and loves you just the same. Well, when we take that up to heaven, there's a friend up there that knew all about us and he knows all about us down here. And he loves us just the same, and he loves us through and through. So what a God they had found. It says they turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven. 46 in the back of the book. Have I an obviously? My heart let him live by her in line flow.

St. Louis Conference: 1995, 1 Thessalonians 1:7-10

Reading

Sing the. I. Love God. We begin with verse 7. First Thessalonians one, verse 7. So that ye were in samples to all that believe in Macedonia and IKEA, for from you sounded out the word of the Lord. Not only in Macedonia and IKEA, but also in every place your faith through God Word is spread abroad so that we need not to speak anything. For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how you turn to God from idols to serve the living and true 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.

For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you that it was not in vain. But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as you know, a Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God, with much contention. For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor guile. But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, Even so we speak. Not in pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as you know, nor cloak of covetousness God is witness, nor of men sought. We glory neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome as the apostles of Christ, but we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children, so being affectionately desires of you. We were willing to have imparted unto you not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls. Because ye were dear unto us. Without that in verse. Six ye became followers of us. And of the Lord and our brother Bob mentioned in his address that. We need an understanding of the times that we live in. I don't know if I have an understanding of the time that we live in or not, but. There is a deep impression on my heart. Having in some measure a care for the assembly of the two or three gathered to the Lord's name and its preservation. That's the very great need of our hour. Isn't so much in the day that we live in and in the country that we live in where the? Gospel permeates the airwaves and has been pretty well rejected and apostatized from in many greater extent than we realized. But the hour and the day in which we live in there is a great need. For examples. To those who we are seeking to win for the Lord. And to lead them on, and I would like to bring it down here. It says he became followers of us. Why does he put himself first? Sometimes, you know, we say we shouldn't look on our brethren, but I have been impressed through the years that how often Paul and even Peter. Says Follow me and those as you have for an example, the House of Stephanus and others. That the burden of the apostles, heart and life was to portray before those he was seeking to lead on in the Lord. A visible pattern of Christ lived out in this life. And so. With those of us who are seeking to raise our children. I'm I believe it's God's mind. And the pattern of. Labor for our household. His forefathers to give that household a pattern of Christ to follow. And if we fail in that?

It's not like they're ever going to follow the Lord. And in the assembly. I have noticed through the years a very, very great emphasis. On seeking to help the young people in all kinds of activities. And energies and laborers have gone into this end. But in the assembly, if they don't see in the fathers of an assembly Christ. And we try to work without giving that pattern in our own lives for them to follow. It's no wonder they never come to follow the Lord. And so I think perhaps in this reading we might notice some of those affectionate actions of the apostle as a nurse with her own children, and as a father. You know those who, like Timothy, stayed with Paul. They had a father, son relationship, and at the close of dispensations a man might build an ark. But. He has impressed me. He saved his house through his efforts, but his preaching was pretty well unaffected, effective. Whereas you got Jonah, who didn't know the God of grace at all and didn't like the thought of a God of grace. She ran away from the God of grace. Yet God was pleased to use that poor example of a representative of God to convert a whole city as we might so speak. So there is a lot of preaching. And if God. Wants to use it for salvation of souls. He will do it, but I think we need to be exercised as fathers in the assembly and fathers in the home. If we ever expect those that we desire to help to follow the Lord, we're going to have to give them a visible pattern to follow, and so that it says. And that he became followers of us and of the Lord. And then in verse seven, that they were in samples to all that believe in Macedonia and IKEA, there was that. Imprint put on this assembly that the apostle didn't have to say anything, their testimony of the effectual way that he had brought. Amongst that people bore testimony to the power of the Gospel, and that they were His work, that they were His children. And I thought of Peter and John when they went up to the

temple. And there was that a lame man there, and I think it look on us, they say but. There was the opposition to. The testimony in that day and in the new translation, there's a little expression. That because that man that had been healed was standing there with them, they had nothing to say against that work. Well better than Do we want an effectual gospel testimony. Nothing will be more powerful than if our children come on and stand with us in the work, their standing testimony to the effects of the power. Of the grace of God. But it'll it won't happen. Unless we give them this pattern first to follow it, you know. With a believers house, God works differently than he did say in my life or many others here who were saved out of out of almost heathen darkness. That's not the pattern for the Christian home and the conversion of our children. We say, well, we hope they get converted in the gospel meaning. It's not the pattern for our households. The pattern is that we would win them by the example we have left for them as fathers, and then they will follow the Lord.

Examples. Also, you might turn over to Chapter 6 of Acts. Acts Chapter 6. Assembly. This question about service and the assembly in verse one it says because of their widows are neglected. And so they said in verse 3. Wherefore, brethren, look. Among you seven men of honest report. That's an example, Holy Ghost and Wisdom whom we may appoint over this business. Verse 5 And the same please the whole multitude. And they chose Stevens, a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost and Phillip. Golf course, the Nightcanner and Timemans, or Armenians, Nicholas a crosslight of Antioch, whom they set before the apostles, and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on him, and the word of God increased and remembered Cycles multiplied as you can greatly, and a great company of priests were obedient to the faith. If we look in these lives of these men, they're full of the Holy Spirit. We see the star Stephen becomes a martyr and a testimony to the work of the Holy Spirit. Before the Council of Israel, and they reject Stevens testimony, the testimony of the Holy Spirit in this man. But I was thinking with regard to talk about service, with regard to the gospel, and I believe brethren from. Living amongst the gathered Saints and the assemblies and service, and the assembly begins at the assembly. And the service at this assembly these men were, fellow the Holy Spirit to serve the table. They were to be servants. No, that doesn't seem to be a great word, but it was just a little thing. We might say in the assembly that everything would function and work properly, and these seven young men were chosen, but it was full of the Holy Spirit, a good testimony. And God used that. We see the blessing that came out. I believe service begins in assembly. And we know there's something else here. The apostles laid their hands on them. That is the fellowship of the assembly. That's what the laying hands on if they work in the gospel. When a young man takes his place as a man in the assembly or a young sister takes her place as a woman, meaning an adult in the assembly, and there's a little service that they would perform in the assembly. We want you to have the fellowship of your brethren. If it's an outside work, you need the fellowship of the assembly of your brethren in Now an outside work would be your work, but if questions come up and you don't feel that you have the fellowship of your brother's stop and ask why, go to the old brother and say am I doing something wrong? But he has desire to go on. And serve the Lord Jesus who is in the midst in the gospel. The work of an evangelist brings those that are saved to the assembly that they can establish that they're saved and established in the truth. And they're gathered around the man who is in the glory, who is in the midst of those two or three that are gathered unto him. It's at the assembly, and that's in the service that we do needs to have the fellowship. Of our brother, they need their fellowship. If the gospel works, if we're gospel winded and we have real energy and the Lord is going to be pleased to bless us, we need the fellowship of our president. I want that to balance with this exercise where we have talked in the meeting before to encourage the young people in the gospel. That is true, but it has to be, especially when we get real energetic and we're older and we're taking our place as a man.

As an adult or as a woman? As an adult in the assembly, when we take our place as an assembly, we create acting as just young people. When we take our place, we want the fellowship of our building and keep us out of trouble. See that we work that we will exalt. Our Savior Lord, and add to His assembly. You mentioned Henry about leadership, and I think the testimony in taking a position certainly keeps us low before the Lord, doesn't it? Any of us can be tripped up by the enemy if we didn't walk in humbleness of mind and fear before the Lord. I think of one of the popular radio preachers up here in the United States who was heard in South America. And according to what I can gather and going around in Bolivia, one of the ones that was listened to by many Catholic people and appreciated his message and he fell and descend up here, it was one of the worst blows to the gospel that ever hit Bolivia. And it happened just before the Pope's visit, first time to Bolivian soil and one of the most tremendous blows to the gospel. This certainly shows the importance of of the testimony and the example that those give that take a place. Before. Souls in connection with the Lord and the Lord's things. The Apostle Paul, of course, was a special instrument called to that. And he always says it like he does here in verse six became followers of us and of the Lord. 1St Corinthians 11. I think it is be followers of me, even as I am of Christ. So he always puts that there. Because Paul even. Didn't have really the spirits leading and going up to Jerusalem. So there's always human failure and human vessels. And so there is that. Way that that's put, I think it's so helpful to see that and it's natural that souls, when they're first saved, are going to look at the instruments that God has used in bringing them into blessing. And I like to think though that in the course of time, as there is growth, that there will be a growing up like it says in Ephesians 4IN all things unto him who is the head. So that as time goes on and we grow in the faith and the we don't look as much as we have to human instruments, although that that's still important. But we transfer our vision more and more to the person of Christ himself who is the head in all things. But leadership is important, very important. Satan has always been busy to do 2 Things. One is to trip those who are in a place of influence. Because those in a place of influence, when they miss the path, they often take others with them. And I believe too he's been he's been busy in any dispensation to occupy the people of God with the failures and the faults of their leaders. Because if he can get us occupied with the failures and faults of those that. Minister to us in the Assembly, then our ears are closed to their ministry and I appreciated what Brother Henry said. And I'm thankful that as I look back on my life being brought up in the assembly, there have been those who have had a tremendous impact on my life and been a blessing and encouragement to me, not always by what they said, but by what they did. I think of one brother particularly in my home assembly when I was growing up. He never took an active part in the assembly and ministry or in administration, but his quiet testimony has been a wonderful blessing on my life. But I would like to say a word to those of us who are younger. Because, brethren, it burdens my heart sometimes to hear an excuse used for failure and compromise, an excuse that the older brethren haven't ministered Christ or lived Christ before us properly. Brethren, let's not use that excuse. Let's be careful, brethren, if we're going to be occupied with defaults and failures of those that have gone before. Or those that God has raised up at this present time to God be guides in the assembly. There's plenty of those, and we're going to be discouraged, but I don't believe we're ever given the excuse. And I say this to those of us who are younger, we're never given the excuse justified in using the excuse for failure by pointing at someone else. And so I just say that as a warning to our hearts. Paul, when he wrote to Timothy, wrote of appalling days of failure. And many there are listed that had failed in many ways. But Paul told Timothy to continue in the things that he had learned. He said, Timothy, don't look at those.

We're thankful for those whose faith we follow, but by the same token, if I was looking to my brethren, I would have been discouraged long ago. Many have been an encouragement to me, but I believe, as I've often said, that one of the great lessons that God is teaching us today is. Contained in the 119th Psalm, where it says, I have seen an end of all perfection and brethren, if we're looking for perfection down here, we're

going to be disappointed. If we're looking for perfection in those that God has graciously raised up to be guides and leaders and to have the oversight in the assembly, we're going to be disappointed. And I've been impressed how that at the end of the 11Th chapter of Hebrews, after bringing before us that list of men and women and young people who live by faith for God's glory, against all kinds of odds and difficulties. And they're given to encourage our hearts. But immediately on completion of that list, he lifts our eyes above those men and women. He lifts our eyes above Moses and Elijah and Abraham and all those great men and women of faith. And he says there's only one perfect object, there's only one who hasted through this world in the path of faith and service and never digressed from that path that was set before him. And that's the Lord Jesus. And he lifts our eyes into the open heavens. And he says there's a perfect object. Seated at the right hand of God, the only perfect man that hasted through this world. And he says, if you're going to be preserved in the path of faith and service, it's only by looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith. And so I just say again, we're thankful for brethren that have been an encouragement to us in the past. We're thankful for those that God raises up in the assembly now. But, brethren, we need to have the perfect object before us. And I believe that we will be preserved in the path of faith and service only. As we have Christ before our souls, we sometimes sing that little prayer, and I wonder if we really sing it from our hearts and think about it all. Fix our earnest gaze, so holy Lord on Thee that with Thy beauty occupied we elsewhere none may see. See what the Thessalonians saw in Paul to follow here, that they wanted to become a follower of him. It was the way he went through the afflictions. It was the testings, the persecution there at Thessalonica. And when they saw how Paul responded to those things that were heaped against him there, that's what convinced them that it was the truth. And they wanted to participate in it. They weren't ashamed of the affliction. They wanted the the faith that Paul had to go through that kind of a thing. And. You don't need to worry too much about going to your head and something like that, do you? Or somebody becoming a leader who wants to be a leader in affliction. We often think of it in other ways, leadership and so on, but I really feel that this is where the opportunity is for us today too, brother. Just like to turn over to Second Timothy and read a few verses there that. Perhaps Paul comments along the same line of his. I'll just read from the second Timothy 3, beginning with the eighth verse, because here we have for the last times, and I believe this is applicable to us. We don't have the persecution like Paul had at Thessalonica in this country so much, but we do have falsehood and representation and imitation that seeks to discredit God's work. It's here portrayed with the way Janice and Jamberries withstood the faith. Says in verse 8. Now as Janice and Jam Breathe withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth. Men of corrupt minds reprobate concerning their faith, but they shall proceed no further for their fall They shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was. But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity.

Patience, persecutions, afflictions which came. Unto me at Antioch. And so forth. This is what Paul spoke to Timothy about. Timothy had known Paul. He had seen all these things, and when he saw it, he couldn't help me but be convinced it was the truth. And Timothy walked in at 2. And I believe as our brethren minister, even our young people, they discern what is the truth. They discern who is real. And when they see how we respond to afflictions or divisions or problems that come, it shows us up, doesn't it? The reality of this, or sometimes the lack of it. Nice going back to Thessalonians to see that when they did that, they became an example too. And so the chain goes on, the testimony goes on. But it all started with the Paul in the presence of the Lord. The God and realizing who he was there. The third verse I believe it is. It says the. This the first verse and the last part, grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. That was what Paul laid hold of that enabled him to go through all that, and so it all goes back to God. Of the second chapter in. Verse 8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls. Because ye were dear unto us. I think Mr. Darby translates because. He had become beloved to us, but. You know, we find it difficult. We read the apostle's life. And. We recognize that we can't identify with it. Want to fulfill this filled up the sufferings of Christ but those around us. They're watching us and you back your car up or. Someone backs their car up and bangs your Fender and. What do you do? You arrive at the motel and say you've got. Room reserved for you and the lady says there's no room for you. What do you do? If we're not. If our Christianity isn't sufficient for. A water pipe that breaks in our modern kitchen and we have to fix that water pipe. Is insufficient for anything, but people are watching us in our everyday lives and there are, from morning to night, abundant opportunities to see. What does Christ mean to us? You come home and. Your wife burns the. Biscuits, How do you respond? If we don't respond in the matter becoming the Lord, you know there's an expression in verse four of chapter 2. As we were allowed of God, but Mr. Darby translates that approved of God. This was the vessel raised up by God and I personally feel even when he presents himself as an example. Follow him even if he followed the Lord. It's not. Saying to us, you look at my life and evaluate it, and when you see that I followed the Lord, you followed that part of my life, I don't think that's the force of that scripture. I think the force of that scripture is Paul is saying I have as I have followed the Lord, You follow me. It isn't when I follow the Lord but.

As I have followed the Lord and so that is what why the Spirit of God could so identify with this. If we want to call it a gospel, outreach or whatever. These this vessel was approved of God he hadn't used as he brings out deceit or guile or anything. He wasn't in it for money. He wasn't in it for the approval of men. He wasn't in it for the glory of men. He lived before his God, and it was evident to the eyes in Galatians he he he is expecting something like this before whom Jesus Christ has been evidently portrayed before you crucified. That's that's what we want to be exercised, rather than about what kind of believers we are. There's no sense to exhorting anyone. Young folks I, I sometimes. Let's just live before them, portray Christ before them and the value of our Christianity. What do we do when something that is really we're not talking about what Paul was talking about. Paul was talking about life threatening situations daily in his life. But. Lee Most of our adverse things that happen to us happen to things that we've accumulated. Our lawn mower won't start until I get angry at it. What value is our Christianity? Why should I talk to someone about being occupied with Christ? When something like that turns me aside trying to see what I am saying. That maybe we never will have to suffer like Paul did, but we're going to have to suffer. We've got. He suffers in the flesh, ceases from sin. We're going to have to stop allowing. The flesh to express itself in anger or whatever way, whenever the flesh has been displeased or crossed. Go and Hebrews 11. Just to continue. He mentioned those in Hebrews 11 and and thinking about these persons Moses and Rahab. Gideon, Barack. If we consider when the Lord called them and. Their weak mortal or moral character in the beginning we find them to be men and women dependent on God. Dependent. Weak examples of blood dependence and what happens at the end of the chapter. They they wax bold. They come forth courageously and victorious. I think there's something good for this in all of us, because no matter how young we are here this afternoon, our lives are having an effect on others at this very moment. I've been impressed with that verse that says no man liveth to himself and no man dies to himself. We affect one another, and it's either for one in one of two contacts, we're either affecting one another for good. We're either an encouragement to our fellow Christian at this moment, or we're a hindrance or discouragement. There's no neutrality. In Christianity. And so it's one or the other, and it's a searching thing to realize that. I'd like to just say in connection with Paul too, that it's interesting what he says in Galatians, because there he says, if we are an Angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached, let him be accursed. It's true. And I believe Paul realized that he had been raised up as a, shall I say, a patterned St. to be a pattern for those who hereafter believe. But he says, as it were, if I digress in any way, from the path of faith and from the ministry that I have presented to you, and from the truth of God, he said, don't accept me.

And so I think it's a good balance to what we have here. And he had that exercise and that concern. I realized it was something specific and something serious at Galatia, but I believe there's a broad principle here, he says, If I digress in any way from that which I have presented, he says, don't accept me at all. Point must be always God and the word of His grace. We do have examples that God graciously gives, but they are to point us in that direction and we need to keep that before us, don't we? Christ is the object of faith. Oh, that's true. That really balances it all out, doesn't it, To have Christ before us. If I am listening to the word of God, either the gospel or the truth, God would direct my sight away from the vessel that He is using, because I'm always going to find failure in it. And I am responsible toward God to receive His word no matter what channel He may use to bring it before me. I have no excuse. A lost Sinner will not be able to say in the coming day. While the gospel preacher was inconsistent, his life was a bad testimony and therefore I didn't believe. I will never be able to say in a coming day I didn't receive the truth of God according to his word, because the vessel that brought it before me didn't commend itself to me. But on the other hand, in the words of another, if I present the word of God in such a way as not to glorify God, I give power and influence to those who do not want that word, and perhaps unconsciously, I may repel. Honest souls that are really desirous of knowing God's word, and I may throw them into the hands of those who don't want that. Why? Because of the attitude, the spirit, the inconsistency in my own life. Well, it's very humbling, isn't it? And I believe that's what our brother Henry was bringing before us. So there is a way in which our lives can commend these things. Scripture uses the term in Timothy, I believe, adorning the doctrine. And there's a way that we can adorn that doctrine, can't we? Or there's a way that we can take away from that so that others looking on it say, well, it doesn't commend itself to me. Well, his brother Bob says in each case we are to have Christ before us. Whether we find ourselves on the receiving end or on the giving end. Much more powerful than what we say. And these Thessalonian believers, their testimony was so powerful that it wasn't necessary for the apostles to speak anything. That's that's a tremendous commendation, isn't it? They could see it. It was so visibly displayed. The work of God in their souls. And then he goes on verse 9. For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, how that ye turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God to wait for his Son from heaven. Turn to God from idols. It's a that was commented on some this morning that it's beautiful to think about it. Oh brethren, what kind of a God do we have? Tremendous God. The glory, the grandeur, the greatness of the God that we profess to believe in. Where can we know him but in the person of the Lord Jesus? There we see the full revelation of all that God is. And the Lord Jesus, once you get him before him, what are idols in comparison? It's not that somebody came along and broke those idols, so they had to look for other gods. That wasn't the point. They got something of such supreme value before their souls. Those idols were abandoned. They turned from them. And that's Christianity. God gives us something so tremendous we can know we can belong to the living God now. And those are the things they are left behind.

Because of their. Poor value sometimes, say to the brethren down South, if you want to get a bone away from a dog, what are you going to do? Wrestle that dog to get that bone away from? Just take a nice big piece of meat and flop it down and from them He's going to leave that bone right away. Why? Because he's got something better. Oh, brethren, may the Lord give us to. Show our young people like it's been said that we have something that's worth talking about, that's worth it, worth living. And once they see that the idols are not going to have too much attraction to them any longer, I'm going to leave it They turned. To God from idols. That's the work of faith, isn't it? Like it's been brought up now yesterday. And true faith really works, brethren. We're not saved by works, but we're saved by a faith that really works. And if I profess to know the true God? I profess faith in him, and you see my life has not changed. You see that there's. I'm living basically the same way I did before. There is a faith that I that works, and that's not the faith of God. The faith of God is the faith that works. Again, I say we're not saved by works. We're saved by faith and faith alone. But the faith that saves is a faith that works. Well, I'm thinking of that object. Jesus, He didn't remain, He he was there in the glory of God, in the past eternity, in the form of God. But that isn't how he came down here and appeared. He became a man. He took human nature. And it is this way we can we can relate to him. And what a blessed man we have. He came so near to us, He couldn't come nearer. I think of all the love, the tenderness and the grace that he showed towards us, that blessing money came so near to us. That's the one that the Apostle set before the these dear souls and Thessalonica. And when you think of the misery and the wretchedness of that which they were in. How could they but leave it all behind? And. To have one, a blessed one, who is not only put all their sins away, but one who. Associates himself with them and associates them with him. And that's what the Lord does. He has associated us with himself, and He associates himself with us, and that's the Blessed One we're going to have to all eternity. He became a man in order that we might enjoy Him forever. It's American came where that poor half dead man was came right where he was and that's what God has done, isn't it? Often Think too there that verse in Second Timber Corinthians chapter 4 where it speaks of. The glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ. Think of it. Think of the glory of God in creation, and there is a glory of creation. But think of that face that was so marred. More than any man's on that cross, they're the glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ, the blaze, the glory. By on the other side, the law didn't did nothing for man, Couldn't do anything for poor man Left him there on the road. There was no heart for him, no love for him. Just left him there. Might have said, well, it's your own fault. You're there because of what you've done. You've left. You've turned your back on on Jerusalem and you know you're suffering for it. Well, the law never gave an object and it never gave any strength. To the law could tell man what he ought to be. And what he should be and what he shouldn't be. But it never gave him strength or power. To become what he ought to be or do what he should do. But the Samaritan. He. You saw that poor man down there, and his pity and his love went out to him, and he he wouldn't leave him there, and he didn't leave you and I. He picked us up.

He's carrying us until he's coming to take us home. Verse nine. There first Thessalonians chapter one. For they themselves show up us what manner of entering in we had unto you. Let's turn to those verses in Second Corinthians chapter 4. For the 12Th of Paul said. We can see what that entering in they had. Here with the Thessalonians who were at that entering and serving. Verse five First 10 Corinthians chapter 4 verse 5 where we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves, your servants For Jesus name. They weren't preaching themselves, they were exalting the Lord Jesus Christ. They would preach to him. Verse 6 For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the Lord of God, the faith of Jesus Christ. These are living examples of a work that was done in their hearts. There's nothing more effective than a salesman that believes what he's selling. But these men are more than just salesman. They were offering the free gift of eternal life in Jesus Christ, the Lord, because they've experienced it. We have the same thing. We have experienced salvation in Christ Jesus. We have been saved by grace. It is not of ourselves. We but we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the equity of the power may be of God and not of us. There's no other gospel. They can say all the other news, all the other information. Is what you can do, but you can't do. This gospel would be in the preaching apostle and those who were with him the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. It had touched him, and it turned the Apostle Paul from Judaism to serve the living and true God. John 17 was evident in their lives when he said that they might know these, the only true God in Jesus Christ, without sin. That's. If I have the opportunity to present the gospel on YouTube and I tell you about the Savior that I have in all my sins are forgiven, and that the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ cleanses me from all sin, what a message that is to a Sinner. A Sinner who's serving something else, Some other purpose in life. I remember when I was saved, one of the reasons I was saying is not just what I could have forgiven to sin, but I needed God's help in life. I wanted the

help of God. I wanted his help because life is difficult and tough. Life is hard. To get to life on earth here I needed a Savior. I needed a God as my father. That's the message. Please, man. That's our message again. He's an all the way home. Came to serve here, wasn't it? It's a scriptural thought, brethren, We are saved to serve him. Service varies greatly in the servant but. Sometimes, brethren, I fear we make a special class when they speak of the servants of the Lord that. Every true believer in this room is a servant of Christ. We need to feel that, oh, you say, well, you serve the Lord by leaving your secular employment and going out and ministering the word to believers and in the gospel. That idea, brethren, has done more damage to the testimony than we can realize. You are working for some earthly company, some. Company. You have a boss, an ungodly man. You are serving God at that job. That is important to see the. Apostle Paul to the Colossians says to those who were servants in chapter 3. Who were really? The word is slaves. As I understand it, they were those who never had their liberty to go out and do their own thing. But he says, There ye served the Lord Christ any greater motive than to do your work? Hardly, As unto him, doesn't matter whether it's an earthly master. Whatever it is you serve the Lord Christ, brethren, we're all servants of God, whatever you're doing.

You're serving him. Do it heartily as unto the Lord, and not unto men. And if that's the case. You're going to do it far better than anybody else on the job. If you make that your object, you realize that you're serving the Lord. And I say, if you cannot serve the Lord in that capacity, you'll never serve the Lord in any other capacity. Where the Lord has put you right now, abide with God in that calling. Serve him there. It's important. We're all called to serve him. Tremendous privilege to serve him. For those of us who are younger, when we have a concern and we're praying about what the Lord would have us to do, perhaps as an occupation or profession, that we seek to get into something where we can serve the Lord. Because I believe there are many places and things that a Christian can get into. And sad to say, when he gets into them he finds out he really can't serve the Lord in that capacity. Might be helpful to look at those verses in First Corinthians 7 because I think it's encouragement in connection with what has been brought before us. There were slaves at Corinth too, and they might have said, well, how can I serve the Lord here? I'm a slave to an ungodly master, and there's really nothing I can do for the Lord. But I was thinking of the exhortation here in the seventh of First Corinthians and verse 20. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he is was called called Art thou called being a servant? Care not for it, but if thou mayest be free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord being a servant, is the Lord's freeman. Likewise also he that is called being free is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price. Be not the servants of men, Brethren, let every man wherein he is called therein abide with God. So he tells again these these slaves here at Corinth, that just to go on in the place God has put them, and to live Christ before their ungodly master, the Lord, could even turn that into a testimony to their ungodly master, and use it for their for their blessing. Like the little Him, the children sometimes sing, Speaking of shining for the Lord, they sing you and your small corner, and I and mine. And if the Lord leaves us here, we're all going to go back to the little corner where God has placed us. We're going to go back to the home and to the neighborhood. We're going to go back to the office and the shop. We're going to go back to school. Wherever God has placed us, whether it's in the workplace or whether it's at the kitchen sink or wherever it may be, God has a little service for us to do. And I believe it's a service that no one else can do quite as well as you. God has fitted you for that service. And I wonder too, brethren, if sometimes I want to apply this in connection with the assembly, if there aren't assemblies that suffer a lack because there are those in the assembly who do not carry out the little quiet ministry that God has given them in the assembly. I say that because when Paul wrote to the Colossian brethren, he said, and say to Archippus, take heed to the ministry that thou hast received of the Lord, that thou fulfill it. We're not told specifically what the ministry of Archipelas was. But Paul felt that the Saints at Colossi were suffering a lack because Archippus wasn't carrying out that little service. And so it says in Galatians let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone and not in another. Every one of the Levites had a service, every one of them had a burden. And to fulfill that little service before the Lord was what brought the Lorde blessing, and will bring the Lord's reward in a coming day. Brother and there is a service connected with idols, isn't there? When you think of idols, you think of those that have to serve them. But it's not love that motivates that service. And so here you have a labor of love proven by. Serving the living and true God. An idol is not living and it's not true. And in that wonderful brethren that. We have been turned to God from idols, to serve God, to serve the living and true God. And I want to go back to what our brother Henry mentioned earlier at the beginning of the meeting. You know, the heart of the Apostle Paul breaks out in many places, it seems to me, with his desire as a father in Corinthians. He talks about how the Corinthians had 10,000 instructors.

But not many fathers. He talks about how that he would rather speak 5 words with his understanding than 10,000 words in an unknown tongue. And you know, brethren, I think it's the heart of a father. You think about it. What are those that we're seeking to bring the gospel to? The effect of the gospel, The joy, all that's involved in that. Maybe our families. It ought to be our families. There can be that in the assembly. Are they seeing a labor of love in service? That's what we have. We have a God who's living and true and doesn't that capture our hearts to command and love that we serve him? Our brother Bob was talking about serving wherever we are in the Brother Jim and. You know, if I am looking at that service as a duty, that's what I have to do with an idol. I have to do something, but not with God. He's won my heart and love, and he's turned me to him away from idols. And now that service is a service of love. But, brethren, may it be done with that father's heart. Not only that we serve in that way, but that that example is set for those around us, the assembly, wherever it is, that there might be blessing. I. Yeah, I agree. There are two verses. That give us motivation. With purpose apart in our work. Verse 17 And whatsoever you do in Word for me through all, in the name of the Lord Jesus giving thanks. And verse 23. And whatsoever you do, because it hardly is to the Lord, and not unto men in our secular work a lot of times. Christian is thought of as a negative person, but the Christian should be a cooperative person, and that's what they should see appear to cooperation in the believers. He goes to work, he goes for corporations. They come up with some dumb ideas. They really don't want to hear that their ideas are dumb. And as long as it isn't a moral issue that we're going to have to stand for, we should have a spirit of cooperation. If the company wants to do this and that, we want to do our partisan to the Lord in cooperation. If another thing is in cooperations we work with other employees, they have a tendency. I know you go into another, I go into other places with business and you might hear one person talking about another. You know I we try I don't get into those conversations. I just look and I I just keep about my business but. I think you know how I've met some of the Christians in those different places, and I see them, and I see a spirit of cooperation on their on their part. I say that they're not backbiting and they're trying to show love and kindness. I see a devotion to the Savior on their part, that whatsoever they do, I can see that they do it hardly unto the Lord and not event to men. And now I have a brother that works with the company that I work for. He went out to Canton OH, as a specialist. And we had a specialist transfer out of Saint Louis here. And he says the manager called him up and said, China, did you come down here and work for us? They knew he was a Christian, but they knew he had a dedication and he was cooperating. He had a spirit of cooperation about him. And they could see that this young man, Diana Hudson, I really love him very much in the Lord and I can speak very well of him because here's a young man. That I know is dedicated to the Lord, the family dedicated to the Lord. You see it at home, but you can see it at work too. There's a spirit of cooperation wanting to go along. You see self judgment in his life too. If he does things wrong, he admits to his wrong. He said I shouldn't have done things this way. He takes responsibility for things, but it says spirit of cooperation. And I thought it was so pleasing to see that when when a

specialist was needed they called him from Canton. OH and they said Dang it. But your chance to come down here and help us, that was a testimony to me of that man's testimony before what sorry does he does? Heart is under the Lord, not under him.

Through here, the 10th verse. Nice to get this before we finish up rather than to wait for his Son from heaven. That was what the Apostle Paul taught these Thessalonian believers so many years ago. And yet the Lord hasn't come yet. Was the Apostle Paul mistaken in teaching them to wait for the sun from heaven? That's what partly makes it the living word of God. It's never outdated. It's nothing that the Christian Pope continually, but it was a year 40AD or 1995. It's always the proper hope of the believer at anytime. And these Thessalonian believers because the Lord didn't come in their lifetime, The Apostle Paul, because the Lord didn't come in his lifetime are not going to be disappointed. When the time comes that home call brethren, and the Lord comes to take us home, they're going to all be there, present. It's not a question of those who have gone on to be with the Lord of Time any longer. So. What is it, nearly 2000 years that has transpired since they went home to be with the Lord? What is that? Is a brief moment in eternity, eternities day where they are waiting for that day too. They're not going to be disappointed. They're going to be included. It's always the proper hope of the believer to wait for the sun from heaven, and may the Lord give us to be a vivid burning thing in our souls. Just to think, brethren. Just to think that in one of these moments during our busy lives, we're going to take one step and maybe lift that foot to take another step, and instead of stepping down here, it'll be stepping onto the cloud to meet the Savior. Just that soon, brethren, to meet him face to face. Any accounts? Still pending to straighten up before we go, brethren, Let's get those straightened out. If we're going to go with those accounts pending, it'll be with a sense of shame when we meet him and loss. The Lord help us to live in the constancy. It's proper Christianity to always live at whatever time with the constancy of the sense that our Lord might come. At any moment we're going to see him and with what condition of heart? Am I going to meet him at that supreme moment of encounter? See our Savior face to face? To see that face more marred than any man? To see his hands and his feet fall down before him? To worship and praise him forever? Oh, what a day. It could happen at any moment. Not just waiting, but watching too. Of our life, that the hope of the Lord coming interferes with right. Every There isn't anything. In our practical life that the hope of his coming interferes with. Just go on. Just go on with our work. The Lord has given us to do and but the thought of waiting has has a in itself. It isn't just it isn't just merely A doctrine that the Lord is coming did that coming to the Lord but as a as a there's that that waiting that that eager looking out or something. Remember reading about Thomas saying about a oh a dog? I guess he was a stray. At least somebody. Anyhow, they they put him in the. They put him in one of these places where they just keep dogs until until someone will pick them up and hopefully maybe the master will come back. But that that dog, he sat there and he watched that they put him in that place and he sat there and watched that door, waiting for that door to open. All day long he just sat there and watched, waiting, hoping it was a thought that his master would come and take him out and he just sat there. Well, sometimes creatures put up to shame. Gods, creatures. They teach us lessons, don't they? Looking for that blessed hope.

I'm getting tights. And there's no sign to be accomplished, brethren, for the Lord's coming for us from heaven. We're talking about the Lords coming in His manifestation at the end of the tribulation period to reign on this earth. To reign over this earth, there is a multitude of signs that will be fulfilled for that. Sometimes we look around and say, boy, there's sure a lot of signs of the Lord's coming brethren. The signs that we see are not for the rapture, it's for the coming at the end of the tribulation period. That's right. And but for the Rapture, no sign has to be fulfilled. It can take place at any moment. And as we see those signs that point to that which is beyond the Lord's coming for His Saints, we ought to take heart. Because if we see those signs so prevalent, how much closer? Is the Rapture. I enjoyed Brother Dear's illustration of the dog, and I thought of it too when we were children at home. We lived out on the highway out of town, and on a day when we were expecting some guests, particularly if it was someone we were really looking forward to having in our home, We as children throughout the day would be out the window and we had a big plate glass window in our front room. And we'd be out the window and we could see both ways down the highway, quite a distance. And there we would be every few moments looking down the highway. We weren't just waiting, we were watching for that guest to arrive. We'd say to my dad, well, when are they going to come? Well, I'm not sure. And so we didn't know exactly. We knew they were coming sometime that day, and as we were waiting and watching for those guests, it really had an effect on our whole day. And, brethren, I believe in the measure in which we grasp in our souls this evening as a living reality, not just as a mere doctrine, important as it is to take it up in that way, but as we grasp it as a living reality in our souls, the imminent return of the Lord Jesus for his Saints. In that measure it will have a practical, purifying effect. On our lives. When he takes this up in one John chapter 3 and speaks of being with and like Christ, then he says every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself, even as he is pure and brethren, When the Lord Jesus comes and snatches us out of this world, everything that we have down here as far as this world is concerned is going to be left behind. Pardon the repetition of an Old Testament illustration that I've often used for those of us who are younger. I often think of Daniel when he stood before Belshazzar. There he stood, and Belshazzar said, I'll give you 3 things. If you read the right and read the writing on the wall, I'll give you a gold chain, a scarlet robe, and I'll make your third ruler in the Kingdom. And Daniel said to that man thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another. Nevertheless, I will read the writing. Why did he refuse those gifts? Well, brethren, why would he want to be third ruler in a Kingdom that was already under judgment? Daniel knew from the writing on the wall that that Kingdom was divided and given to another. And Scripture tells us that that's what happened that very night. And Daniel didn't want any part in something that was about to pass away. He was made third ruler in the Kingdom, but it was only for a moment because the Kingdom that night passed away. And brethren, as we realized that everything we have down here is about to be left behind. Jubilee is about to take place. I believe it will place a proper value on what we have here in a temporal way, and it will have that practical purifying effect on our lives while we do everything in view of the Lord's coming. It says Occupy till I come. All right. 208. And hopefully.

Our glory noise, we know the same way. And all the world wars. There's a round through glory. Go down. We are here. All day rain. I love you. Crazy.

Words of Faith: Volume 3, Conversion, The Full Import of

IT should ever be borne in mind that the Lord Himself must be the center in testimony, however blessed it is to put forth the gospel of God's grace. Here, in Thessalonica, these souls were brought out to serve the living and true God. The whole man turned to God-a totally new state from beginning to end; not merely getting relief to conscience, but God Himself in Christ become the object before the soul. This is the full import of conversion, as we get it in 1 Thess. 1:9,10-a man being turned round to God; there is repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

When you believe, you get an entirely new life and you judge the past-you repent because you believe; it all comes together, like the prodigal, when he turned to his father's house, there is a totally new life, state, and object. " They who are of the Spirit, mind the things of the Spirit," &c., and " Our conversation is in heaven," &c., is the doctrinal statement of this. You must get such a knowledge of self as to get rid of it. If you faithfully said," I am dead," Satan could not tempt you. You may not always be able to do this, but it is yours to say, as one " born of water and of the Spirit." The water cleanses, but being born of the Spirit gives a new position and a new life.

We know we are born of God-that eternal life that was with the Father is my life, and that is Christ; He has become my life. The Lord breathing on the disciples was not the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. When Christ ascended to heaven, He received the Holy Ghost afresh for us. He had it before, but He received it for us when He went up on high. It is through the second Man, gone into glory, after having put away our sins, that we get the Spirit. God comes down to us in our sins as Man, and as Man He goes up, and receives the Holy Ghost for us. Man in Christ takes a new place in resurrection.

The work of Christ on the cross clears the conscience then Christ Himself becomes our life. This is a totally new state-a new creation.

The first thing needed, is to have the question of sin settled, and to know that all our sins were borne by Christ, and put away. If you charge me with my sins, God declares that the blood that cleansed me is always under His eye; He cannot impute my sins to me, their imputation was to Christ. It is what God sees that clears me, not that I have accepted Christ, but that God has. What gives peace, is, that the work of Christ has perfectly settled the question of sin.

Practically, if I sin, not only am I miserably failing, but I am doing the thing that caused Christ's agony, but if it did that, it cannot be imputed to me. We have the teaching connected with our practical state in the type of the red heifer. (Num. 19) The ashes-sin consumed on the cross-with the running water, were sprinkled on the unclean person. The ashes are applied to the soul in testimony of the whole thing having been consumed-sin put away. If I indulge a foolish thought even the Holy Spirit is grieved, and I am uncomfortable, but I cannot judge myself for sin, unless I am certain that it is not imputed. The answer to everything is the work done on the cross. That work sets us in the presence of God, in the light, without a stain, our sin having been laid on Christ, according to God's knowledge of it.

Nothing tests the heart so much as realizing that the -worshipper " once cleansed, has no more conscience of sins." There can be no real or right sanctification till a man is clear about sin. Until I know my perfect acceptance, and am perfectly assured of salvation, through all sin being gone, I am mingling up my state with my standing. The holy nature is there, but there can be no proper sanctification till I see that Christ has not borne my sins up to such a day, but that all my sins are gone, end, besides that, I have a perfect acceptance in Christ.

There are three things: peace as to sins; present grace; and glory to come. Not merely no condemnation

as in Christ Jesus, all sin having been cleared away, but a position-a new place in Christ Himself-is ours. All, as to the first Adam, was settled on the cross, and I have a new place in Christ, and I am called to walk now as Christ walked, but I am to be conformed to God's Son in glory. I am to walk as Christ walked, not to be as Christ was. He was without sin in Him, we have sin in us, but sin in our walk is never to be allowed.

" We all, with open face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." Not only are my sins cleared away, but I see a Man gone into glory, and now, not only I would not sin, but I want to be like that Christ in glory-I press on towards the mark. " Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we-know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." I see Christ in glory by faith now; I know I am to be like Him by-and-by, and I want to be as like Him as ever I can be, even now. It is like a light at the end of a tunnel, the nearer-I get, the brighter the light. I see the flesh in me never changes, only appears worse and worse; but if my eye is. fixed, and my mind is occupied with, and full of Christ, I shall get more like Him at every step-" changed into the same image from glory to glory."

There must be nothing in the heart or walk not like. Christ-all must be given up to Him; and, as to walk, I am to walk as Christ did. The account we get of the flesh is lawlessness, before the flood; then, under law it makes a golden calf; then, Christ, come in grace, is rejected and crucified; then, the Holy Ghost is rejected through Stephen; and lastly, if a man goes into the third heavens, as soon as he comes down the flesh must have a thorn. There is no changing it, but that is no reason why we should let it act; there is no present consciousness that the flesh is acting at all if the soul is full of Christ. I am not thinking of it if I am thinking of Christ, I reckon the flesh dead. If a man is dead, you cannot charge him with a wicked will and lusts. Not only Christ was crucified, but I have been crucified with Him. I have always that death of the cross to bring in, and I have Christ as my life-" If we be dead with Christ, we shall also live with him." I get the power of Christ acting in me with this new life. The sin I find in my flesh was put to death in Christ, and I have done. with it. But another point, I get Christ as the object of my life-" The life that I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

You find many who know their sins are forgiven, yet do not know what it is to have been crucified with Christ. You can never get rid of self till you know this. In Rom. 7 the soul is quickened, but not delivered it is under the first husband, renewed, because of knowing the spirituality of the law, but it is learning that it has no strength. It is harder to learn that you have no strength, than that you are ungodly. The last stage is, "I thank my God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." This is deliverance. The moment Christ comes in there is power, but I must learn my weakness not a balance between flesh and Spirit. God in Christ having condemned sin in the flesh, I am dead to it. If I am told of a fine concert, or anything else, I say, " I am dead to it." A gardener has no idea of pruning a crab-apple tree, he cuts it down, and grafts with a new thing altogether.

People do not recognize the fact of their having died with Christ, as well as of Christ having died for them. Many a quickened soul does not know the full value of the work of Christ, and that " as he is, so are we in this world." When the blood was on the lintels and doorposts the Israelites were safe, but when they came to the Red Sea, and were told to stand still, and see " the salvation of God," there was positive deliverance-they were taken out of one place, and put into another.

My standing is, that I am not in the flesh, but in the Spirit: " If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his "—is not in a right standing at all. " Ye in me, and I in you," that is where I get my standing in Christ before God. I am quite peifeet, if I am in Him,. and He in vie; and I have, as to the body, to reckon it. dead.

The way the Thessalonians lived, as to testimony, was most blessed. One can never present it by trying to do it. If my heart be full of Christ, I shall not merely be avoiding evil, but, as Paul prays in connection with the Philippians, desiring to be filled with the fruits of righteousness;

and, having got God's mind, I shall yield my body as a living sacrifice to Him. Paul did but one thing; he ran after Christ in glory. This is what conversion really is-Christ everything to the soul.

J. N. D.

Fragments Gathered Up, Walking Worthily

There are three measures given in this form of the Christian's walk: worthily of God Who calls us to His own kingdom and glory (1 Thess. 2:12); worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing (Col. 1:10); and worthily of the calling wherewith we were called (that is, the Holy Spirit dwelling in the church, Eph. 2, developed as it is after the end of chap. 3).

Christian Friend: Volume 13, 1 Thessalonians 2:8-12

The apostle lays bare in this scripture his inmost heart in regard to his work in preaching the gospel, and exposes all his motives both before God and man. Living and laboring in the light he had nothing to conceal, and, led of the Holy Spirit, he speaks thus of himself in order that all who serve in the ministry of the Word may profit by, his example. He goes at once to the root of the matter in pointing out that he had been "allowed (approved) of God to be put in trust with the gospel." (v. 4) Recognizing this, he adds—would that all who claim to be sent of God could use the language— "Even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth (or proves) our hearts." The faces of men are before the preacher, and every servant has known the temptation of seeking to please his audience: the antidote to the snare lies then in the remembrance of the source of the service, and of the consequent responsibility of pleasing Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. (2 Timothy 2) Then he will be enabled to speak as from God, in the sight of God, in Christ (2 Corinthians 2:17); for man will disappear, and God alone will be before his soul. It was so with Paul, and he could therefore affirm that he had not at any time used (1) flattering words (and he appeals to those to whom he was writing in confirmation of the fact), nor (2) " a cloak of (or with a pretext for) covetousness" (and of this God was witness), nor (3), though an apostle, and he might have pressed his official claims, had he sought glory of men, neither of them nor of others. He had no desires whatever for himself in his work. On the other hand, he was (1) gentle among them "as a nurse cherisheth her children" (v. 7); then (2), so large was his heart for them that he was willing to have imparted to them, not the gospel of God only, but also his own life, because they were beloved of him. Moreover, he reminds them that he labored night and day that he might not be chargeable to them in his work, and he appeals both to them and God, as witnesses of his manner of life, "how holily and justly and unblameably" he had behaved himself amongst those that believe. Lastly, he had "exhorted, and comforted, and charged" every one of them, "as a father doth his children," that they might walk worthy of God, who had called them unto His kingdom and glory. (vv. 11, 12)

What a picture of a faithful, unselfish, devoted, and loving servant! And how it rebukes many of us as we gaze upon it!

Lydia: The Beginning of the Work of God in Europe, Lydia: the Beginning of the Work of God in Europe: No. 3

In our last we saw the certainty of sins forgiven, being justified from all things, and having peace with God, which the gospel gives; and which the apostle preached in the beginning of the work of God in Europe.

We will now look at the effects produced by this certainty. This we shall learn from the epistles sent to the assemblies first gathered in Europe. The assembly of God. The first Epistle sent to the church in Europe, was to the second assembly formed or gathered, that is, to the "assembly of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ." These are the very saints who were converted by the preaching of Paul during three weeks, as we saw in our last paper. Not only, then, is this the first Epistle to the assembly of God in Europe, but if we compare the gospel tour of the apostle in Acts 17; 18 with 1 Thess. 3:1, 2, it will be further evident that this Epistle was sent to them very shortly after their conversion; so that in this, letter we see the immediate effects of the gospel as first preached in Europe. And it will be interesting to observe, that after so long a period, when another which is not another gospel, has been preached; God has been pleased in these very last days to restore the same gospel, and we trust in some little measure, the same effects have followed. May the Lord use this little paper to put the cry in our hearts, that those effects may abound yet more and more!

Such indeed were the effects, as stated in one verse, that we are not aware that the like is found ever after in scripture. " We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father." And this divine freshness characterized the whole assembly. The apostle could say, "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers." There was no uncertainty as to their relationship. "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God."

What a wondrous effect then the true gospel of God had on these poor heathens! There was no labor for salvation; but the work of faith. They believed that Jesus must needs suffer, and rise again, and that Jesus is the Christ; that the atoning work had been done by the now ascended Man in the glory. Yes, He who had borne their sins, they knew by faith in the glory: and thus the activities, the labor of love, flowed from faith in the risen Christ. Just the opposite of modern effort, the endeavor by labor, and works to attain to Christ risen. By faith they saw Him who had accomplished redemption as their Substitute, now in glory; and all works flowed from this starting-point. Labor was thus enjoyed in the freshness of love: the full enjoyed love of Christ. This, no doubt, as it ever will, brought upon them great suffering and persecution: but it only produced further proof of true christian character -"patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of God and our Father." We will notice shortly that this hope is the chief theme of the first Epistle to the assembly in Europe.

We would, however, first call attention to the sad mistake made by many, that we cannot know with certainty that our sins are forgiven, and that we are the children of God.

Had the apostle any such uncertainty about all the believers in Thessalonica? If he had, how could he have said "knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God"? And did he not write this sentence by inspiration of God, as all else he wrote, as infallible truth? Nay, the gospel had come to them "not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance/' Can there be uncertainty when the Holy Ghost gives much assurance? For one of these first Christians in Europe to have said, as many do now, "I hope I am saved," would have been to say, I hope the Holy Ghost speaks truth.

And further, was there not the clearest certainty in the declaration of the Holy Ghost in the preaching of the gospel? "Be it known unto you.... that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." We say could anything be clearer or more certain to the believer, than this declaration of the Holy Ghost? Is the free pardon of Her Majesty the Queen to a poor prisoner more certain, than the free pardon of God to the sinner that believes Him? But more than this: the Holy Ghost had given, had inwardly wrought in their hearts, this much assurance. Has the same Holy Ghost given you this "blessed rest of heart in God our Father, this much assurance? Thus to say a man cannot be sure he is saved now, shows entire ignorance of the glad tidings of God, and the work of the Holy Ghost in the heart.

Also, observe that the work of faith, and the activities of enjoyed love, made itself heard. "For from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad."

Here was a fact then that could not be denied. The preaching of the gospel of Christ for three weeks had given the certainty of salvation to these poor, dark heathens. They had become a bright witness of the one true God in the midst of heathen darkness. This was known to many at the very time this letter was written. The blessed story of the cross had turned them " to God from idols, to serve the living and true 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." Has the gospel had this effect on our readers? Has it turned you to God from idols? Does your heart rest in Abba Father? Is it your delight to serve Him? If still unconverted, you have an idol; your life is spent on some earthly object. Of course no one could know your election of God. Neither do you know it yourself.

What then was that "patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of God and our Father"? Is it not thus expressed, "And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead"? Now if we look carefully through these two Epistles, the first, probably written by Paul, we find no other hope but this, "to wait for his Son from heaven." Indeed the apostle shows that he himself had no other hope, as he says, "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, at his coming?" Here then is another undeniable fact: the gospel as first preached in Europe by the inspired apostle produced this patience of hope: this waiting for His Son from heaven. Look at those dear young converts, the first converts in Europe; they are persecuted: they know they are in the sight of God their Father. What gives them such patience of hope? What sustains them in such sore trial? What are they looking for? For what do they wait? For whom do they look? The Lord Jesus from heaven. The very Jesus who must needs have suffered on the cross; the very Jesus whom God has raised from the dead for their justification, "even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." How very different all this was from looking for a day of wrath, and vainly praying—"In the day of judgment, good Lord, deliver us." He had delivered them from the wrath to come. Come it will, and there will be no deliverer then to those who have rejected Him now. All believers can say now, " Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." (Col. 1:13.) Is it not terrible unbelief to pray to be delivered from wrath then? It is like a condemned man saying, I will not receive pardon now: but I will pray that I may be pardoned when I stand on the scaffold. Not so with the assembly at Thessalonica. They waited for the very One who had delivered them from wrath: the very Jesus who had washed them from their sins in His own blood.

This hope gave patience in every trial: joy in every sorrow. It affected every motive of their hearts. It was the spring of love one to another. "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." (Chap. iii. 13.) What a motive for holiness now; waiting to see the Lord Jesus: unblameable in holiness, before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Is this your hope, your patience of hope?

Mark they did not hope to die, and go to heaven: no, death in many respects is a very sorrowful thing; though, for the one departing, it is better to depart, and be with Christ. But oh, what pangs of sorrow, often, for those left behind. Now did not the apostle put the coming of the Lord before them to comfort them in this very sorrow? "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." And what is this hope he puts before them, but the coming of the Lord? and that hope as sure as the fact that God hath raised Jesus from the dead. How gracious of the Lord to couple these two things together! "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Yes, the coming of Jesus is the one theme of hope, both as to those who are asleep and for those who are alive. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord;" can anything be more certain than 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. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." Oh, what a hope, what an event! Think of that moment for which the word of the Lord teaches us to wait in patience. What a putting forth of divine power and love, all that sleep in Jesus shall rise first. Elsewhere we are taught, that as they have borne the image of the earthy, they will now bear the image of the heavenly. (1 Cor. 15:49.) " Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Thus these first Christians in Europe were comforted, in the midst of the sorrows of death, by the coming of the Lord for whom they waited in patience.

Is it not remarkable that this true, primitive Christianity should have been almost lost for centuries, until within about these last fifty years? Instead of the blessed hope of seeing the Son from heaven, whom God raised from among the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come: have not Christians rather spoken of death itself as the coming of the Lord? And then the terrible thought of rising to judgment; instead of the joyful anticipation of awaking in the likeness and glory of Christ! What a strange departure from the true gospel, the glad tidings of God. Is it not clear from this epistle that the coming of the Lord formed a most essential part of the gospel as first preached? To take it away, or lose it, is to lose the very brightness and joy of the gospel: and by putting a general judgment in its place, is to substitute gloom and uncertainty for the joyful hope.

The first Christians then in Europe believed God, that they were delivered from the wrath to come; that they were justified from all things; that the blessed Jesus who had delivered them was coming again to receive them to Himself. It is thus plain they could, believing God, comfort one another, even in the midst of the sorrows of death's partings, with this joyful hope. They also knew perfectly well, that judgment would

unexpectedly come on a rejecting world. "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." And how much more on these subjects the apostle taught them during his short stay, may be seen by reading the second Epistle to the Thessalonians. This, however, was clearly understood by the first Christians—perfect deliverance from coming wrath by the finished work of Christ; and waiting in patient hope for His coming to receive them to Himself. Then, after that, the terrible day of the Lord, as foretold in scripture. Where this distinction is not understood, or, through ignorance denied, it is evident there has been serious departure from the truth, as first made known by the Holy Ghost. May " 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." And "the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."

Edification: Volume 3, Our Scripture Portion.

(1 Thess. 2:1—3:13).

Please read the passage indicated above before reading this article, and then keep your Bible open so that you may refer to it as may be necessary from time to time.

The writer takes it for granted that you will comply with this request, and hence he addresses you in the terms he would employ if giving a homely “Bible-talk.”

IN his first chapter the Apostle had alluded to “what manner of men” he and his fellow-workers were among the Thessalonians when they first arrived amongst them with the Gospel, and intimated that the power which had accompanied the message was largely connected with the unblameable character of the messengers. He returns to this subject at the opening of chapter 2.

Paul and his friends found at Thessalonica a door opened of the Lord, and they consequently gained a most effectual entrance into their midst. This was the more striking as they had just come from suffering and shameful treatment at Philippi as recorded in Acts 16. However far from being cowed by this they had such confidence in God that again they boldly spoke forth the Word. The power of If was such that some even of the Jews believed, “and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few” (Acts 17:4). Thus did God grant to His Faithful-servants a time of much encouragement after severe suffering and before they were plunged into further troubles in Thessalonica itself. We must remember of course that the violence at Philippi did not mean that but little was accomplished in that city. On the contrary, Paul’s Philippian converts were among the brightest trophies of grace.

The Apostle puts it on record in verse 2 That he preached the gospel “with much contention.” By contention we must not understand heated argument. The expression is literally, “in much agony,” or “conflict.” The New Translation renders it, “with much earnest striving.” Paul preached in an Agony of spiritual conflict that the truth might be effectual in his hearers! No “take it or leave it” gospel was his! He was not the mere theologian or Christian philosopher contented with the truth correctly stated in his lectures; nor was he the dreamy mystic wrapped up in himself and in his own impressions and experiences. He was a man with a message, and burning with zeal, and in agony of mind to effectually convey it to others.

What amazing power this must have given him! He may have been weak as to bodily presence and contemptible as to his powers of utterance— “rude in speech” as he elsewhere says—yet the inward agony of spirit with which he spoke must have made his “rude” words like a whirlwind. Multitudes were converted under them, and still greater multitudes were lashed into fury against him! Where do we see power like this today? We hear Gospel addresses that may be characterized as good, clear, sound, striking, intelligent, eloquent, sweet. But they do not achieve much either in conversions or in stirring up the powers of darkness. Yet the need is as great and the energy of the Holy Spirit is the same. The difference lies in the character and caliber of the messengers.

In verse 3 to 6 we are given a glimpse of what Paul and his helpers were NOT, and thereby we may learn the things that are to be studiously avoided by every servant of God. First of all every element of deceit and unreality must be put away. It has been very rightly said that,

Not only so but all thought of pleasing men must be banished. Any service we have had committed to us, however small it be, has been given of God and not by man. Hence to God we are responsible and He tries not only our words and acts but also our hearts. Paul was put in trust with the Gospel in an altogether exceptional measure, but the three words, “PUT IN TRUST” may well be written upon all our hearts. We must never forget that we are trustees.

If we bear it in mind we shall of course avoid the use of flattering words, and the cloak of covetousness, and the seeking of glory from men, of which verse 5 and 6 speak. These three things are exceedingly common in the world. Men naturally seek their own things and hence are ruled by covetousness, though they may disguise it under some kind of cloak. Glory from man is also very dear to the human heart; and, whether they pursue possessions or glory, they find flattering words a useful weapon, for by them they can often curry favor with the influential. All these things were utterly refused by Paul. As a Servant of God, with God for his judge and God for his Witness, they were altogether beneath him.

The positive characteristics of Paul’s ministry come before us in verse 7 to 12, and it is worthy of note that he begins by comparing himself to a nursing mother and ends by comparing himself to a father. We may find it difficult to imagine how this exceedingly forcible man could have been gentle, “as a nurse would cherish her own children,” but so it was. Physical force is usually brutal. Spiritual force is gentle. There was plenty of the former to be seen Thessalonica when “the Jews which believed not, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort... and set all the city on an uproar,” yet it all ended in nothing. Paul’s gentleness, on the contrary, left lasting results. It was the gentleness begotten of an ardent love for these young converts. He cherished them; that is, he kept them warm, and how could he do this except his own love was warm. It was so warmer he was ready to impart to them not the Gospel only but also his own soul or life. He would have laid down his life for them.

However he was not called upon to do that. What he did was to labor with his own hands by night as well as by day in order that, being self-supporting, he might not be any charge upon them. He refers to this again in his second epistle, and from Acts 20:34 we glean the astonishing information at he not only met his own needs in this way but also the needs of those that were with him. Elsewhere he speaks of “night and day praying exceedingly,” and we know how abundant were his labors in the gospel. Under these circumstances we may well marvel that this extraordinary man could find any time for his tent-making, but somehow the thing was done and thus he made the Gospel of Christ without charge, although the Lord had ordained as a general rule that those who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. It is very evident that manual labor is honorable in the sight of God.

To all this the Thessalonians were witnesses. Himself marked by holiness and practical righteousness he had been able to charge them that they should follow in his steps and walk in a way that was worthy of God—the God who had called them that they should be under His authority and enter into His glory.

What has occupied us thus far has been the manner of life that characterized Paul and his fellow-laborers: with verse 13 we turn again to that which marked their converts in Thessalonica. Receiving the Word of God through channels such as these men were, they received it as the Word of God. This verse plainly indicates that the Word of God may be received as the word of men, and that it is not one whit less the Word of God if it be so received. If you happened a to get hold of a camera with a defective lens you would find the subjects of your films strangely, and often grotesquely, distorted. You must not however blame the objects which you photographed. The objects were all right though your subjects proved all wrong. We must learn to distinguish between the objective and the subjective, as the Apostle does here. The objective Word of God was presented to the Thessalonians and the subjective impression made in them was according to truth. Had they received it as the word of men its effect upon them would have been but transitory. Receiving it as the Word of God it operated in them powerfully and produced in them just those effects that had been seen when first the Gospel had been preached in Judæa. Though tested by persecution they stood firm.

The seventeenth of Acts shows us how quickly the storm of persecution burst in Thessalonica. The house of Jason was assaulted and Jason himself and certain other brethren haled before the magistrates; the instigators of the riotous behavior being Jews. The Apostle here shows them that they had only been called upon to suffer like things to the earlier converts in Judaea, and that the Jewish instigators of their troubles were true to type. This leads him to sum up the indictment which now was laid against them.

Of old God’s great controversy with the Jews was on account of their persistent idolatry. Of this the Old Testament prophets are full. The New Testament adds the even greater charge that they “killed the Lord Jesus.” Added to this they drove out the Apostle by their persecutions and, as far as in them lay, forbad the going forth of the Gospel to the Gentiles. They refused to enter the door of salvation themselves and as far as possible they hindered others doing so. How striking is the description of this unhappy people, “They please not God, and are contrary to all men.”!

It is pretty evident that the nations generally are contrary to the Jew. Verse 16 of our chapter shows us the reason why. They themselves are contrary and nationally they lie under the Divine displeasure, hence nothing is right with them, though of course God is still saving out of them “a remnant according to the election of grace” (Rom. 11:5) Earlier they had under trial. Even after the death of Christ an offer of mercy had been made to them consequent upon the coming of the Holy Spirit, as recorded in Acts 3:17-26. — Their official answer was given by the martyrdom of Stephen and by the persecution of Paul who was raised up directly after Stephen’s death to carry the light of salvation to the Gentiles. They, would have slain Paul also had not God intervened in His providence to prevent it (See, Acts 9:23 and 29). As a consequence the wrath long wit held had been definitely loosed against them. They will not have paid, as a nation, the last farthing, till the great tribulation has rolled over there heads. But nothing now can stay God’s dealings against them in wrath.

Against this dark background how beautiful is the picture which verse 17 to 20 present. The Apostle, who was hurried out of their midst under cover of night, was filled with ardent longings towards them. As his spiritual children, begotten of the Gospel, he looked upon them as his hope, and joy and crown of rejoicing. The links that bound them to him were of the tenderest, most spiritual nature. If he looked on, he anticipated having them as his glory and joy at the coming of the Lord. Looking back he recognized how Satan had worked to keep them sundered on earth, as to bodily presence.

This passage plainly indicates that Satan permitted to harass and hinder the servants of the Lord; yet comparing the story with the history recorded in Acts it is very evident that God knows well how to overrule Satan’s hindering work for good. Satan hindered Paul from returning just then to Thessalonica, but God led him to Corinth and He had much people in that city!

Notice also how happily Paul looked forward to reunion with his beloved Thessalonian converts in heaven. His words would have been meaning had he not expected to know them each and all in that day. The saints of God will know one another when they meet at the coming of Christ and in His presence.

But if Paul had been hindered from coming personally—very likely by the violence of the persecution raised against him by Satan—he had sent Timothy to comfort and encourage them. Here again, in opening chapter 3, we see in Paul the marks of a true father in Christ. He was at Athens, a peculiarly hard and difficult city a place where more urgently than in most he felt the need of the support and encouragement afforded by like minded fellow laborer’s, yet would he sacrifice self and be left alone in order that Timothy might shepherd the souls of these young believers, and establish them just when Satan was aiming at their overthrow by means of afflictions. The trial of their with had not come as a surprise for he had forewarned them about it, even though his stay amongst them had been so short.

From this let us learn that it is not right nor wise to hide from the youngest convert that tribulation from the world is the normal lot of the Christian while on earth. There are abundant joys in Christianity, but not of a worldly order. In the world we are to have tribulation, so let us not misrepresent the case, thinking thereby to get more converts. Let the truth be faced and we shall thereby not lose one true convert, though plenty of make-believe ones may be checked—to their own good and our good also. As to tribulation, we all of us have to say in our turn, “it came to pass, and ye know.”

In raising persecution against believers Satan is always aiming at their faith. He would weaken it and destroy it if possible. Notice how, as a consequence, faith is emphasized by Paul in this passage. He sent Timothy to comfort “concerning your faith.” He sent to “know your faith.” Timothy returned and brought “good tidings of your faith,” and as a consequence he was comforted by your faith.” Faith is the eye of the

soul. It gives spiritual vision. Paul knew that, as long as the unseen things of faith were real to them, the persecution would only produce spiritual enrichment and invigoration, just as a cold douche which would be hurtful to an invalid is invigorating to a man in full health. Faith is a vital link between the soul and God and if it be weakened, everything about the believer is weakened. Satan knows this right well.

When faith is maintained in the hearts of believers they “stand fast in the Lord,” and this was a great joy to the apostle. It comforted him in all his afflictions. So deeply did he feel about the Thessalonians, exposed as they were to such trials so soon after their conversion, that until he knew how they had been sustained in them he was like a man at the point of death. The good news he got through Timothy brought back to life. This is the figure he uses when he says, “Now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.”

Though faith was so brightly, maintained in these Christians, yet there was need that it be perfected, as verse 10 shows. Something was lacking as to it in this sense—that as yet they were unacquainted with the whole circle of truth that had been revealed. What they did see by faith, they saw very clearly; but they did not as yet see all there was to see. The apostle earnestly longed to meet them again and bring before them those parts of God’s truth which as yet they knew not. In this Epistle he reveals to them something of which as yet they were in ignorance, as we shall see when considering chapter 4.

While as yet he was hindered, his desire was that they should increase and abound in love one toward another. God alone is the Object of faith. He is also the Object of love, but love to Him can best be practically expressed by love to those born of Him, as we are reminded in John’s. Epistle. Moreover the Christian should be an overflowing fountain of love toward all men. The Thessalonians were this, and it explains how they became such effectual advertisements of the gospel, as we saw when considering chapter 1. Only they were to increase more and more.

Thus would they be established unblameable in holiness in view of the coming of the Lord. Holiness and love are evidently closely connected. As love is operative in our hearts towards God and His people, so we hate what He hates and are preserved unblameable before Him. The grand goal before us is the coming of the Lord Jesus with all His saints. Mark that preposition “with.” When He comes in His glory we are to be with Him. How we reach His presence above, so as to come forth from heaven in His company when He appears, is not yet plainly indicated in the Epistle; but this verse alone should have assured the Thessalonians, and should assure us, that when He comes not one will be missing. It will be with ALL His saints.

F. B. Hole.

Christian Friend: Volume 13, 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 4:1-10

It is very interesting to observe the apostle’s use of the word “abound” or “ increase,” in this epistle.1 It is also important, as showing that there is, no limit of attainment here for the believer. Many speak of perfection or holiness as something to be reached in this world; but the slightest glance at the teaching of the apostle on “abounding” reveals that these doctrines have no countenance from the word of God. He thus says, “The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another,” &c.

There can be, it is evident, no standard for “abounding.” Again, “Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and please God (“even as ye do walk,” the Revised Version and others add), so ye would abound more and more.” (4: 1) These believers had been instructed how to walk and’ please God, and, accepting the added clause, they were walking so as to please God; and yet they were not to be, satisfied—they were to “abound” more and more. So also, in the last scripture named (4: 10), they had been taught of God to love one another; and they were showing their love “toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia.” But the apostle adds, “We beseech you, brethren, that ye increase (or “abound”) more and more.” Whether, therefore, in loving one another, or loving all the brethren, all saints, or in pleasing God in their walk and ways, they were to abound more and more; and hence there was not one of these dear saints who could take the ground of saying, “I have reached the standard; I have now attained; and I am in the enjoyment of perfection.” The answer at once to such vain imaginings would be, “Whatever your attainments, you have to abound more and more.” And how could it be otherwise, when Christ, in His infinite love to us, is our example? (1 John 3: 16) and when, moreover, it is written, “He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked?” (1 John 2:6) To claim to have reached the standard of Christ can only spring from a want of appreciation of what He is, and from ignorance of what we ourselves are.

We may add, as a point of interest, that the apostle’s prayer in chapter 3: 12 is—seen to be answered in 2 Thessalonians 1:3; for he says, “Your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth.” But even so there might be, bearing in mind the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, a larger measure of “abounding.”

Young Christian: Volume 30, 1940, Shout, The

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout” (1 Thess. 4:16).

I want to tell you something very interesting about that word “shout.” This is the only place in the New Testament where the Greek word here translated “shout” occurs, and it does not mean a shout of terror, a startling shout; it is a word of encouragement. It is the word that was used in olden times to encourage the rowers...It is the shout of encouragement for the people of God, the word that calls them, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

The One that loves us, who has done so much for us, will be there on the threshold of the glory, and will take us in... What a scene that will be!

Christian Treasury: Volume 3, Shout, The

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Simple Testimony: Volume 20, Approaching Event., The

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

1 Thess. 4:16-18.

THIS event may take place at any moment. Millions will then respond to the Lord's "descending shout, to the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. Saints from every part of the globe will be "caught up" to meet the Lord. The redeemed from Adam down will be raised from among the dead and joyfully ascend to meet the Lover and Redeemer of their souls.

Not, indeed, with bodies of weakness and mortality, but with bodies conformed to His body of glory. Thus they will be "caught up" to meet the Lord, and, as the fruit of His own death upon the cross, will be presented faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy (Jude 24).

What an event! What a moment to wait for! What bliss untold to long for! What a Savior to watch for! "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour" (Matt. 25:13).

Could any event be more important or be pregnant with such stupendous consequences? Could anything be more calculated to keep the heart awake than the immediate prospect of the Lord's return? "If I go away, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3). It is ours to joyously respond, saying, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).

The child of God is to live in the light and expectation of this glorious event. He is to regulate his affairs in view of it. Nor is it a 'mere doctrine with him, but something that enters into his very life, both at home and abroad, in the meeting and in the workshop. He may come today is a blessed fact which cheers him as he rises in the morning; and as he commends himself to His care and keeping for the night, he remembers with gladness that He may come before the morning. The sons of toil and those languishing on beds of sickness are comforted by His promise to come' quickly. In the meantime He is with them, comforting their hearts, and saying, "It is I, Myself; be not afraid.”

As we sit down at the Lord's table we look backward and forward—backward to His death, forward to His coming. "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's 'death till He come" (1 Cor. 11:26). If we remember His death, it is the expression of His infinite love; and if we look forward to His coming again for us, we, as it were, hear Him say, "I shall not be satisfied until I have you with and like Me where I am.”

He delights to present Himself in a way that will sustain our affections and lead the heart to respond to His own desires. In Rev. 22:16 He says, "I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star." Not only is He the Author of David's greatness and, according to the flesh, coining of his line, but also "the bright and morning Star." He is such to His waiting Church, Himself the consummation of all her hopes and expectations. To Israel He will appear as the Sun of righteousness, arising with healing in His wings, to introduce the millennial day of peace and glory, when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea (Hab. 2:14; Isa. 2:1-5).

But Christ as the morning Star is the bright hope of the Church. Hence it says, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come" (Rev. 22:17). At His coming we shall be translated to heaven, where we belong. When Israel is blest, and the nations, the earth, purified by the judgments of the Lord, will be the sphere of their blessing. Creation itself, too, will realize the beneficent rule of the Lord Jesus Christ. Delivered from the bondage of corruption, it will be brought into the liberty of the glory of the children of God (Rom. 8:22). Thus, for this poor earth, which has groaned under man's misrule for so many centuries, there is a bright and blessed day coming when He whose right it is shall reign (Isa. 11:1-9).

But if the coming of the Lord is a blessed event for the saints of God, it will be a sorrowful. one for those who have never accepted Christ, or having once professed to receive Him, have given it all up!

Let anyone read 2 Thess. 2:7-12, and he will see what will befall multitudes in these Christian lands left behind at the coming of the Lord. They did not "receive the love of the truth," so they shall "believe a lie"; they would not "be saved," so they must be "damned." They would not have the Christ of God, so they will bow before the "son of perdition," and follow the "lawless one," who will meet his judgment at the appearing of the Lord from heaven with all His saints.

Oh, how this should awaken in the hearts of the true children of God greater affection for the Lord and devotion to His interests here The Church—the people of God—is the center of His interests. Its state is a matter of great moment with Him. He would have His saints separate from the world and devoted to Him, each filling his relationships in this life for His glory and expecting His return.

For the child of God, then, the Lord is coming. The world may be ignorant of this, and the professing Church asleep, but for the people of God there can be no event of greater importance.

Christian Treasury: Volume 2, Last Trump, The

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thess. 4:16.

There is but one command more for which the Host of the Lord now waits a precious, glorious word! He whose voice once spake on earth in lowly grace, and now speaks from heaven with grace unchanged by man's sin, will utter that "shout" of relationship to His own. It is known only to them, and will be heard only by those who have already known the Shepherd's voice; in the twinkling of an eye all shall be changed, and shall be "forever with the Lord.”

What a thrilling note it will be to many a toiling one, who has trodden faithfully his lowly path in the armies of the Lord! Perhaps he had laid down his head on his Master's bosom and "slept," till that day should come—his spirit with the Lord. It may be that he may be found amongst those who are "alive and remain," and when the voice of Jesus sounds, it finds him at his post, like a man who waits for his Lord. In the thousand times ten thousand circumstances of life, the voice will reach those whom He loves, and He will carry him to His Father's house on high. The mighty Host of the Lord will rise, in silence and secrecy, like His own resurrection. He will gather up the dust of His people, hitherto carefully preserved by His living power. The four winds of heaven may have scattered it abroad; the four quarters of the earth may have apparently swallowed it up, but earth must surrender His prize. The sea must give up those who are Christ's, and who perhaps found there an unmarked tomb. The sealed tomb, the silent places of the dead, must be gleaned of their precious dust. The unmoved sod, the yet-sealed tomb, will tell the tale, that He who left the grave with unbroken seal in presence of the sleeping watch, He who left the grave clothes "wrapped together" unmoved, has ordered that with the same silence, the same quiet yet mighty power, the "dead in Christ" will rise. They will quit their places as He, the "first-fruits," did when He comes. The living army still here will then hear His voice, and then this corruption puts on its incorruption, then this mortal puts on its immortality, and the exulting song of the Church is heard in response to His mighty "shout"—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Cor. 15. Then "they will gaze upon their Master, with His name upon their brow.”

Like Enoch of old, they will not be "found"—for God will have translated them.

What an incentive, meanwhile, is this hope to earnestness of purpose in serving Him for whom we wait. The "terror of the Lord" for those who are not Christ's must press itself heavily upon the heart of His soldiers here. They know that the sleeping Church has had the midnight cry. They know how His coming had been forgotten—even denied. They know how that many who love Him have fallen into the "evil servant's" snare, who said, "My lord delayeth his coming." Again they have heard His voice, and have "trimmed their lamps, and gone forth to meet" Him.

They know the solemnity of the hour in which they now stand. They feel that the dawning of the day is near; they watch through the gloom for the Church's Bridegroom—the "Bright and the Morning Star." They feel that all the confusion of the present moment marks the state of the poor foolish virgins. They know, too, the solemn wail that will pass over these lands where Christ is professed, but Himself unknown—"Lord, Lord, open unto us," and this when the door is shut forever! Indeed, what a solemn moment of terror it will be!

Oh! how bright and living a moment it will be to those who belong to the "first resurrection," who are raised or changed by His mighty power as the witness and proof of their complete acceptance in the Beloved. His resurrection was a proof of the perfection and glory of the person of Him who was there. Ours will be the proof of the perfection of His work in which we stand. Surely then we may well "comfort one another with these words.”

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Cor. 15:58. F.G. Patterson CI

Christian Treasury: Volume 2, Shout, The

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout." 1 Thess. 4:16.

I want to tell you something very interesting about that word "shout." This is the only place in the New Testament where the Greek word here translated "shout" occurs, and it does not mean a shout of terror, a startling shout; it is a word of encouragement. It is the word that was used in olden times to encourage the rowers... It is the shout of encouragement for the people of God, the word that calls them, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

The One who loves us, who has done so much for us, will be there on the threshold of the glory and will take us in… What a scene that will be!

Correspondence, Correspondence: Who Will Be Caught Up When the Lord Comes?

Ques. Who will be caught up when the Lord comes? (1 Thess. 4.)

Ans. All the dead in Christ from the beginning of man's race. (1 Cor. 15:23.) Then all the living believers will be changed, and caught up with all that their faith takes in. (Acts 16:31.)

We see in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, 2:10-12 that those who hear "the gospel of the grace of God" and reject it, do not get another chance. Satan has blinded them. They have put away God's precious salvation for the pleasures of sin which were but for a season.

To whom will the gospel be preached after the rapture of the heavenly saints?

The "gospel of the Kingdom," the news that Christ is coming to reign (Psa. 2:10-12), will be preached to Israel (Matt. 10:5-7); and to all nations, i.e., Gentiles; and those who receive that gospel, will be Christ's subjects on earth. We find a direct testimony also sent to the worshippers of idols in Revelation 14:6-7.

The everlasting gospel is creation's testimony (Psa. 19:1-6) to the God who created all things, and this specially is sent to warn all such. God cares for the idolaters also.

Even in the Millennial period, when Christ is reigning, and Satan is bound, we find men making feigned obedience to Christ, the Head of the heathen. (Psa. 18:43-44. See margin.) A multitude comes up in rebellion against God and His earthly people, whenever Satan is loosed out of his prison.

Such is man, all men, unless through grace they are born again. How easy it is to let present things blind us to the truth.

Correspondence, Correspondence: Who Will Be Caught up When the Lord Comes?

Ques. 1st. Who will be caught up when the Lord comes? (1 Thess. 4.)

2nd. Will all the babes in the world be taken?

3rd. To whom will the gospel be preached

after the rapture of the heavenly saints?

A. J. A.

Ans. 1st. All the dead in Christ from the beginning of man's race. (1 Cor. 15:23.) Then all the living believers will be changed, and caught up with

all that their faith takes in. (Acts 16:31.)

2nd. There is no thought in Scripture that all babes will be taken. Matt. 18:11 would show us that any babe, or irresponsible person, who dies, will be saved, because Christ died for such.

3rd. We see in 2 Thess. 1:7-9; 2:10-12 that those who hear "the gospel of the grace of God" and reject it, do not get another chance. Satan has blinded them. They have put away God's precious salvation for the pleasures of sin which were but for a season.

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Joyful Sound: Jubilee, Joyful Sound: Jubilee: No. 3 When and How Will It Cease

We now come to the close of the present period of the joyful sound. Fellow Christians, when will it close, and how will it close to you? And how will it close to the professing, but rejecting world around?

Are these questions answered in the scriptures? They are. Shall we all, as to this body, have to die first? No. The apostle says, as to that, " Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." This present period of gospel sound will close then in a moment. (1 Cor. 15) " 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. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4:15-17.)

For all believers this is how, and when, this present jubilee of joyful sound to every creature shall come to a sudden close. Then shall the true church of God he presented glorious to Christ. Yes, our Lord said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:2, 3.) Oh, what joy to thee, what joy to us, will be the moment of the close of this jubilee of grace. Dwell on it, oh my soul.

But how shall it close with the rejecters of this jubilee glad sound? " When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." (1 Thess. 5:3.) " When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." &c.
(2 Thess. 1:7-9.)

It is still the acceptable year, but the clay of vengeance must come. And oh, how sudden, how unexpected! Even as sudden as the flood in the days of Noah, and the fire that fell on Sodom in the days of Lot. In that day of vengeance so near, there shall be tribulation such as never was, and never shall be again. " And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." " Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth, shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." (Matt. 24; Rev. 1. 7.)

Thus shall close this day of grace to the rejecters of the joyful sound. He shall come, and before Him shall the nations be gathered, to the judgment of the living. One of three things must occur to every one of us. Be caught up to meet the Lord, our Lord; be alive on earth as a rejecter of His grace and mercy, to meet Him when He comes to judge the quick; or die, and if unsaved, be raised to be judged before the great white throne at the judgment of the dead, only to be cast into the lake of fire, to be tormented day and night forever.

Is there no hope then hereafter to such as have heard and rejected the joyful sound of forgiveness? None; " because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned that believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. 2:10-12 Thess, ii. 10-12.) What a solemn moment this is.

We have dwelt chiefly on the joyful sound, the glad tidings of God to every creature, during this, "present period of grace to the Gentiles. The Lord Jesus came to His own nation, but they received Him not. Through unbelief they have been set aside. " Because of unbelief they were broken off." The judicial blindness of Israel is not to continue forever. This is fully explained in Rom. 11 Every prophecy concerning God's ancient people must yet be fulfilled. The clay shall come when, as it is written, all Israel shall be saved. Having forfeited all claim to the covenant through ages of unbelief, God will take them up in mercy—objects of mercy, as He has had mercy on us Gentiles. Oh, the riches of His grace.

We will now briefly look at this subject, as it regards Israel. We must remember Old Testament Scriptures are applied to us in anticipation, yet they refer primarily to Israel. What is Isa. 53 but the discovery of Israel, when God shall awake and restore the captive daughter of Zion? As they look at the wounds in His hands, they discover that He was wounded for their transgressions. They will see in Him, and in His death on the cross, the fulfillment of all their offerings for atonement. What a manifestation of God this will be to them, as it also is to every soul, now brought to God. Thus, on the ground of the atonement, the jubilee will have its fulfillment to them, though crushed and oppressed as they have been, and will be still more, during the three years and a half of their tribulation, such as never was and never shall be again. The day of atonement shall then be understood, the year of their release will have come; the loud sound of liberty will echo through the world for them. The scriptures also abound with evidence that the clay of vengeance shall be on their enemies in the year of their jubilee.

In our chapter, Isa. 61, there is then, first, the proclamation of jubilee to them, to Israel; then the day of vengeance; and then to the end of the chapter, their millennial blessing on earth. Every word also in chapter lx., is about this great future blessing on Israel, also chapter 62. To Jerusalem God says, " Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." In chapter 63. we see the day of vengeance on their enemies' but the day of salvation to them. " For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come." Again, what a description of this day of vengeance is in the last chapter of Isaiah, in close connection with the blessing of Israel.

In Eze. 38; 39, the chief oppression of Israel is by the Russian empire, and the nations confederate with it; they come as a cloud to cover the land. Their terrible overthrow is described, and the months it will take to bury them in the day of the vengeance of God. " Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel/' &c. We have a full account of how God will bless them when He thus has mercy upon them, in Eze. 36:2338. This can only mean Israel, as it says.

There is the same testimony in Joel. When God brings again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, He will gather all nations, and judge them for their treatment of His heritage Israel. He will then be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel.

" Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." Then follows the grand jubilee of Israel. " Sing, daughter of Zion; shout, Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, daughter of Jerusalem." (Zeph. 3:8-20.) Yea, this is greatly the theme of the Psalm and all the prophets, and will surely come to pass. If we understand this, then the judgment of the living nations for their treatment of Israel will be quite clear in Matt. 25

How remarkable that the future jubilee of Israel is so little understood. Yet Isa. 61, and indeed all the prophets, distinctly foretell both the deliverance of those captives, the opening of their prison doors, and their restoration to their own land.

He who made atonement for sins, is the anointed One, whether to announce the heavenly joyful sound now to us, or the earthly glad tidings to Israel in the day of Jacob's restoration to his land.

At present Israel is cut off through unbelief. And through their unbelief we Gentiles are having in anticipation a more blessed jubilee than they will have. God is now taking out the heavenly bride of the Lamb. This may close at any moment, by the church being caught up to meet the Lord.

Then will follow the day of vengeance on all who have heard and rejected the joyful sound.

For a short period the Jews will pass through the great tribulation. Then comes the day of vengeance on their enemies and persecutors. At the same time they are restored to their own land, to enjoy their millennium of rest. Then shall be fulfilled that word of the Lord, " They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Read Isa. 11)

What an interval of infinite grace to us, since the day that Jesus presented Himself as the fulfillment of the jubilee! And still the long suffering of God lingers, not willing that any should perish. But the end will come; the saints will be caught up to meet the Lord. The day of vengeance will come. Ah reader, in that coming moment you must, if still alive here, either be taken, changed in a moment, and be with and like the Lord; or you will be left to the day of vengeance as a rejecter of the love of God in the gift of His Son. Will you continue to despise His atoning death? Will you still reject the glad loud sound of liberty?

May God open your ear to hear the joyful sound before it is forever too late. The atoning work is done; God proclaims to you through Jesus the forgiveness of sins. Blessed proclamation! God declares all who believe are justified from all things. Believing, you are free; and knowing the joyful sound, your happy privilege is to walk in the light of His countenance. And how soon to see His face!

C S.

'Tis but a little while,

And Christ shall come again,

Who died that we might live; who lives,

And we with Him shall reign.

Thou hast, Lord, prepared

My soul for that glad day;

Hast wash'd me in Thy precious blood,

And clear'd my sins away.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Sleep in Jesus, Dead in Christ

W.

Answer: It is to be borne in mind that Jesus is the personal name of our Lord. It is never used as the expression of a condition, like Christ. The appearance of this in verse 14 is not justified by an appeal to the language of the Holy Ghost. The real force is “those put to sleep” (or “that have slept”) “by Jesus.” Such is His dealing in their case. The death of His own is sleeping by His hand, not as the wages of sin, or Satan’s power. It is by that very person who Himself died and rose. Whereas “dead in Christ” is a condition. The saints are dead, not merely like natural men, but dead in Christ. “In Jesus” could not, I think, be thus used. Eph. 4:21 is no exception; for it means “in the person of Jesus,” and not a condition. Hence it is unscriptural to say “yours in Jesus,” or “chosen in Jesus;” it should be “in Christ,” “in Christ Jesus,” “in the Lord,” &c.

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Greek in 1 Thessalonians 4

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J.

Answer: When the “presence” or coming of the Lord for the earth and Israel is intended, as in Matt. 24, James 5 &c., it does coalesce in time with His “revelation,” “appearing” and “day.” So it is also when His “presence with all His saints” is spoken of as in 1 Thess. 3. But it is never so when not thus particularized. Take 1 Cor. 15:23, which does not imply that those who are Christ’s arise at His revelation but at His presence long before, though special classes of Apocalyptic martyrs only then. So in 1 Thess. 4 we assuredly do not remain till His “revelation” but His “presence” which raises the dead saints first and then calls up the living, all changed, to meet the Lord in the air. Revelation, or appearing, or day, is carefully excluded. It is His presence for the translation of His own solely, in strong contrast with the “day” in chap. v. But the conclusive refutation of any such thought is in 2 Thess. 2:1 where His “presence” is bound up strictly by one article in the Greek with “our gathering together unto Him,” there again in the most pointed contrast with His “day,” which coalesces with His “revelation” and “appearing” in judgment of the “lawless” and wicked generally, as in 2 Thess. 1:2 and 2:8. No doubt the glorified saints accompany Him when that day dawns. It is His “presence” therefore first for the heavenly, after that for the earthly who only begin to be called in the interval, while the wicked ripen rapidly for judgment when He is revealed.

If we think of breadth and display, the blessed hope is the Lord’s appearing to put down and govern all men in righteousness and deliver creation from thralldom. But for the heavenly it is not “the appearing of His presence” but His presence, to receive us to Himself for the Father’s house and joys which are far above those even of a regenerated earth.

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Address of Mr. Code.

1 Thess. 4:13-18.

THIS is the great crisis that we wait for, —the termination of a long-protracted course of God's gracious dealings with this present evil age; and, as far as I may speak with any certainty, the only thing that delays this grand expectation and blessed hope to those who know the Lord Jesus Christ, is His waiting till His elect be gathered in unto Him. "Blindness in part is happened unto Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved;" i.e., Israel's prospects are in abeyance till the full number of the Gentiles is completed who, along with the Jews that have been called constitute this body of which all who believe an members— members of Christ's body, of His flesh, and of His bones. And as that event, at to its time, depends upon the completion of the number that are to constitute that body, God only knows the moment when what is declarer in that passage shall be fulfilled: "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the cloud! to meet the Lord in the air." And while out brother was speaking to us of the attractiveness of Christ crucified, my mind was carried on a step further to this our hope, when we shall be caught up, and caught up by the attraction of Jesus. Nobody whose creed, whose orthodox is uncertainty about their present salvation—nobody whose creed teaches them to depend in their dying moments upon the offices of a priest none such could ever consistently hold a doctrine that puts aside all human preparation, and take, us all up just as we are, as the Lord's people. We must be safe, we must be spotless by atoning blood alone, we must be ready, in God's account of us, in order that we might be partakers of that rapture into the air.

How good it is, beloved, that when we are saved our affections are under the influence of this everlastingly attractive object, —the Cross "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." That meant the cross; the passage itself explain, it. "This He said signifying what death He should die." He has been lifted up there, and now He is the attracting object in heaven.

It is to my heart a beautiful word He spoke, in the 14th of John, when He said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself." Now, is not that happy? It is as if the Lord reckoned upon its being a delightful thing to everybody who knew Him that He should come, and not merely take us to heaven, but, as the sum and substance of blessing—as the climax of every step of glorious blessedness, receive us UNTO HIMSELF! Do you like that? Is that pleasant to you? Is that better than heaven to you? Is that better than a crown to you? Is that better than reigning in the kingdom to you? It is the best thing that could be given to us. And heaven will be nothing, and glory will be nothing, compared with JESUS. He is the glory of our glory, and the heaven of our heaven, Himself.

And oh, what a conquest is this, when we consider, beloved, how reluctant we are to have anything to do with Him! How constantly we find the tendency and propensity to forget and avoid Him. The carnal mind is enmity against God; but the blessed Jesus performs such a conquest as to attract this mighty multitude that will go up to Him; with not a reluctant heart, every one attracted to Him, every one running in to Him with joy and gladness; not a single thing in them that would withdraw them from Him, but everything in them that will respond to, and sympathize with, that mighty Magnet,—the loving bosom of Jesus Christ. And how blessed for Jesus, when He comes in the air, and waits for all those He has loved, and whose affections He has died to win, how blessed for Him to stand there and receive them unto Himself! And what a smile of joy, what a beam of brightness, will be in His countenance when we see Him! Oh, the blessed happiness of Jesus, when He gathers us all around Him, —when we flock around Him as the center He has become to us! How blessed is this!

There is a little incident recorded in the last chapter of John, which is a happy illustration of the attractive power of the Lord Jesus. There was Peter, who had denied the Lord Jesus. In the interval between Christ's resurrection and ascension, he had returned to his nets, although Jesus had called him to be a fisher of men. That night he caught nothing. In the morning Jesus stood upon the shore, and as soon as Peter knew it was the Lord, he girt his coat about him and cast himself into the sea to go to Jesus. He had again been to blame by returning to fishing, besides his previous shameful denial: yet the moment he knew it was the Lord, he thought not of his sin, nor of himself; every thought of self or sin is overcome, and vanishes before the engrossing charm of His most blessed presence. We don't think of our sins when we see the love of Christ. Here was a mighty conquest. He attracted to Himself the man that before all had three times denied that he knew Him!

What a word is this in Thessalonians! It is said, "We shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air." There are two things in connection with this being caught up: we shall see God; we shall see in the Man Christ Jesus the image of the invisible God. There is an object to put out the glory and attraction of every other object in our eyes, the one Man Christ Jesus. And then we shall be caught up to the Father's house. The blessed Son of the living God comes down to the air and draws us up to Himself, and then takes us to our Father's house, our home. And that is what every man is seeking after in this world—a peaceful home a permanent rest—but never gets it. But God will give it to us, a peaceful, happy home; nothing to disturb, nothing to mar that peace, with all the blessing that the God who gave His Son for us can give us.

But these two words, "Caught up together." We are to be caught up. How? Separated. Our brother has spoken of the separating power of the Gospel. Here is what we expect, —the separating power of Hope. You who believe in this truth expect to be caught up, caught up out of the world, caught up from your friends and relatives, caught up from every association that would bind you here, caught up from everything. How would you like that? Would you like to be caught up now out of the world? Are you ready now? It is a separating principle, and should mark every step of our way now. It is separating; it is also uniting: separating from the world, uniting to one another. We are not only all caught up, but we are all caught up together. This hope must therefore, while separating from the world, unite to one another; for we shall have no independent place. The saints in Thessalonica were in difficulty in reference to the saints who had fallen asleep. The apostle tells them, "We shall be caught up together." Herein you see there is a bond of union between saint and saint. How separating from the work this is! The very thing that unites us to each other separates us from the world; and the very thing that binds us to the world separates us from one another. Nothing will separate you from the world like this hope.

Well, it is necessary, therefore, for us to consider, beloved brethren, whether our circumstances in the world help or hinder us in this our expectation. It may appear a trifle, but there is a meaning in this, that the Lord Jesus Christ, when He ascended up, He did not ascend out of the heart of Jerusalem; He might have done it if He pleased; but He led them out as far as Bethany, and from Bethany, outside Jerusalem, He ascended. And surely, we are told to "go forth unto Him without the camp, hearing His reproach; for here we have no continuing city."

And now, beloved, I put this question to you, in conclusion: Is Christ such an attractive object to your soul—not merely an attractive object whereby you are drawn to Him for life, and for forgiveness of your sins, but the attractive object that has put out every other light, the attractive object that has captivated your heart, and taken your affections from every other object? Oh! beloved, we shall be caught up to be in God's home, to be "forever with the Lord;" not a transient season of joy, but to be "forever" with the Lord; not a consciousness of His

presence for a while, but “forever.” Oh, the power that is in God, oh, the attractiveness there is in Jesus, to satisfy the demands of millions of needy, hungering souls throughout eternity! The need, the unsatisfied hungering of poor souls in hell, is put in contrast with the blessed fullness and power of God to satisfy every desire of our hearts! What confidence He must have in His own power, what confidence God must have in His resources, to make you happy! He binds you to His Son by the indissoluble tie of unity in life, so that if you are not happy, then Christ is not happy; that if for a moment in eternity you flag in the vivacity of your joy, then that moment Jesus’ joy will fail. But He is the source of eternal blessing, of unfailing streams of joy. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus!” Blessed be the Lord, we shall be soon taken away—soon be with the Lord! And though separated from those we love here, who are still in their sins, who are still in ignorance of Christ’s attractive power, the intenseness of the love of Christ in our hearts shall put away every painful consideration and reminiscence, and we shall be happy as eternity is long. Oh, that we might live, and if need be, die, for the salvation of sinners!

Maine Conference: 2022, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-14

Reading

Our presence. I love. Oh God.

Three, loving God and our Father, we give thee thanks. Again this morning, for my great love to us, so fully known, displayed in the giving of Thy beloved Son, His precious bloodshed for us, His body given on that cross. And we thank the our God and our Father, that having glorified thee there without its reason from the dead, in a straight way glorified Him. Lord Jesus, we look to Thee, we think of how thou just leave this earth, Thy hands up lifted and blessing upon Thy own. And now thou art interceding for us on high, thy hands uplifted there. Intercession ever effectual for thy Saints, and we would lean upon thee this morning. Into or Jesus as head of the church. Is thy body. That thou just guide and direct us to a portion that would be suitable for each member here. And that why those? Joints of supply those bands that. That what's in thy grace? Be thy people through that thou give a portion and direct and help us to be. Subject and waiting on the leading of the Holy Spirit where we know about us guiding direct through him and so we look to the Lord Jesus or portion this morning in the readings that would we're left here through this weekend would carry us through the readings and be for profit and blessing for our soul and Lord Jesus that the result might be. That our hearts would be drawn near and closer to the Atlantic. Might walk more of that to a good way. Workout before SO. We ask this Lord Jesus, as we look to thee, to thee, our God and Father, knowing every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from thee, the Father of lights, and thou art unchangeable, and thy goodness and my grace, the precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen, Amen. Amen. And the Digging Brethren of First Thessalonians, chapter four and five.

The readings if it if it would be the mind of the brethren, I want to impose my. Will in the matter. Been on my heartbeat passages in view of the. Imminent return of the Lord. Resident. So it sounds good. Three chapter 4. Did you want to read all both of them through at one time, brother? Chapter 4. Today this reading. First Thessalonians chapter 4. Furthermore, then, we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as you have received of us how you ought to walk and to please God, so you would abound more and more. For you know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication, that everyone of you should know how to possess his vessel. In his vessel and sanctification and honor, not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles, which know not God, that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any manner, because that the Lord is the avenger of all such as we also have forewarned you, and testified. For God has not called us unto uncleanliness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despises, despiseth not man, but God. Who hath also given unto us His Holy Spirit? But as touching brotherly love, you need not that I write unto you. For ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another, And indeed you do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia. But we beseech you, brethren, that you increase more and more. And then you study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that you might walk honestly towards them that are without, and that you might have lack of nothing. But I would not have you be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep that you sorrow not even as others which have no hope, or if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, Even so them also would sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 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. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. So shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. Well, we know the apostle was only with the Thessalonians for about 3 weeks. Because of the fierceness of the persecution, that rage in that area, that's the Lanika. We read it in Acts chapter 17. He was forced to to leave them and move on, but we had them upon his heart and. Praying for them, and He was exhorting them as a father. Have a great deal of dispensational doctrine in the epistle. But there was the work of faith, there was a labor of love, and there was the patience of hope in the Thessalonians, though they were. Babes converted out of even them likely where they were serving idols now they were serving the and they went back in the first chapter verse nine. They themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had them to you.

And how he turned to God. From idols, not from idols to God to God, from idols to serve the living and the true 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. Numbers, but they had the hope of the Lord's coming, however. Wrong doctrine came in later and they they really lost the freshness of that hope and that's why the apostle is writing to them to confirm the coming of the Lord and what it would mean for us. Their fellow believers would pass through the article of death. Would they miss the Kingdom entirely, as the Thessalonians thought? And so Paul unfolds the truth of the rapture so clearly, the revelation that he had received from the Lord in glory. It wasn't very long ago, I think we took this up in Stellarton, Nova Scotia and. We referred all these little scribbles I have on my page here, but you've probably heard this referred to as the Enoch chapter. And so from the beginning of chapter 4 down to about the end of verse 11 of chapter 5, it speaks of our personal lives and view of Lords, of the Lords coming and in connection with it. Enochs chapter, You see that verse in Hebrews Chapter 11, don't you? Verse Five. Become quite fond of this verse. Hebrews 11 and five. It says by faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and was not found because God had translated him. For before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God, and that would be there should be the desire of our hearts as believers to walk before God, waiting for his return, that we might please him. That's good Jonathan and if you look in first John chapter 3 talking about the Lords coming and seeing the Lord Jesus and how it would relate to our our personal lives here before the Lord comes into the live our lives

in purity. He says in first John 3. Let's start at verse two. Beloved. Now are we the sons of God and it does not yet appear what we shall be what we know that when he shall appear. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Now look at verse 3. Every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself, even as he is pure. And so our chapter here in First Thessalonians 4 looking forward to the coming of the Lord. It tells us how we conduct ourselves before the Lord comes in light. He that has his hope in him purifies himself. And so it's it. It talks about possessing your vessels and sanctification. Having a pure sexual life in in. In honor of the Lord Jesus. Now why did he have to tell these people this in Thessalonica? Because it was common in the in their society. It's common in our society today too, to have sexual impurity on all levels. And so it's, it's important for us to be able to possess our vessels in sanctification. Our vessel would be our bodies. Keep our abilities and sanctification along. I was just noticing in that chapter first John 3. That the apostle John says in verse 21 The love if our heart condemned us not, then have we confidence for God and what's what we asked we receive of him.

Why? Because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight so as believers today. It is our desire to do that which is pleasing to the Lord, and if we're not doing that which is pleasing to Him. I believe it's going to affect our confidence in the Lord. And we're going to be unhappy. Christians and that's not good because it affects our testimony of God in this world. You know, if the world sees that we are happy and appraising people. That says so much for our Savior. It's a powerful witness for Christ, but if we're going on in that which is not pleasing to Him. It's just the opposite. It brings desire on the board. And I just noticed that you refer to that chapter, Tim, and I was just thinking about that chapter. Here it tells us in the first verse of our chapter we just read. You ought to walk and to please come. They were familiar with the habits of even them or immorality was rampant. And idolatry, you know, Satan is behind me. All the idolatry that we see. In the world today, Satan is the God. Of this world religiously. And the Prince of it political. So we're really in Satan's world. And it can lead the child of God into immorality. He has achieved his purpose. The sanctification here is not positional. That is brought out in the book of Hebrews. Positional sanctification, absolutely, but here it is. The practical side, the progressive side of sanctification, we should be more sanctified this year than we were last year. So sanctification is really separation. Unto the Lord. Separation from. Worldliness. And from all the. Root of the old nature which we have. Please, the Lord, thank you. Jesus do. As you can see, we always. Remarkable statement I do always. Those things, that things, really. When we look at. 69. We consider. The kind of man and the kind of walk that he had. In Psalm 69, just starting at verse 7. Because for thy sake I have borne reproach. Shane has covered my face. I have become a stranger unto my brethren, and nearly unto my mother's children. His walk made him different. Strange or misunderstood? The zeal of thine house that heating me up. And the reproaches of them that reproach thee. Perform upon me. And Paul refers to this in Romans chapter 15.

He says, for even Christ please, not himself. But the reproaches of them, that reproach these fell on me. His walk was such. We heard that Enoch please God. Well, if our walk is pleasing to God from the unpleasant command. The Lord Jesus said it, Woe be unto you when all men speak well of you. In other words, all men are not going to speak well of you if you learn. Walking with God, at least to some degree. So it's just striking that Paul associates pleasing him. Praising God with suffering and reproach. We know the Lord Jesus ever and always please God. And I was just thinking of that picture we get in Matthew. It's so striking. The Lord Jesus was here to please God. And in Matthew 16, we all know the passage well, I'm sure. And he reveals to his disciples how that he must go into Jerusalem. Matthew. 1621 From that time forth again Jesus to show unto his disciples how that he must go unto the region. And suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and raised again the third day. Then Peter took him and began to rebuke him. Saying, He is far from me more. This shall not be unto thee. But he turned and said unto Peter. Thou art an offense unto me. Thou Savior, is not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. Peter would spare the flesh. But this time, naturally, he thought he was doing something good, something right, defending his this wonderful man, but the Lord Jesus. The indication is that the Lord did savor the things that be of God. He wanted to please God. He wanted to die to God's glory. He wanted death, the only man ever born to die. And so he had to say to Peter, Thou outer in the fence unto me, they'll save her as not the things that fear of God. It's so striking. This coming suffering and death, God would save you. And it certainly speaks to us of the savory burnt offering. You know Christ, please, not himself. He offered himself up. I'm offering a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour during TV 5. And that's what he wanted. That's all he cared about. In his life as the meal offering, as ascending, as a sweet saver, and in his death. Ascending as a sweet saver pleasing God. So it's striking to see. We're pleasing God, they mean to us. This has a little side rather that word saverist. So remarkable that it comes in again in Philippians 3. Of those that mind earthly things, who are enemies of the cross, that word mind is the same as savorist. They savor earthly things and they're enemies of the cross. Just stay in connection with pleasing the Father. That's really the context of the previous chapter, the joy of the path that the apostle was concerned about them, that they would have been tempted and turned aside and rejoiced the claim that they had not. And he says. Verse eight of chapter 3 Now we live, if he stands fast in the Lord, and what is his thought? He's looking forward to a coming day and desires. Verse 12 That the Lord would make them to increase and abound and love 1 towards another, towards all men, and that he may establish your hearts unblameable and holiness before God, even our Father. It's the same thought to be pleasing to the Father. That was His desire, that they would be pleasing to the Father now in their lives. In the same way he hoped that they would be presented to God the Father in the coming day by the Lord Jesus Christ that is appearing. So that desire for holiness now in the life, that it would correspond to that coming day of the presentation of His own to the Father.

And now our chapter comes in and he says, here's the things that are going to rob you of that. These things will rob you of present joy. Right now they will rob you of. Enjoyment of what he had hoped for them and and desired for them. Pray for them in the previous chapter. Just like to touch on one verse in Hebrews 12. Verse 16. Lest there be any fornicator or profane person, as he saw over one morsel of meat, sold his birthright. Sold as birth price. As believers, we have a birthright. We have those things that are our privileges as belonging to Christ as children of God. Movement for vacation can come in and we can sell our birthright, and we can lose privileges that belong to us as believers here in this world. And there are some that are no longer at the Lord's table of privilege of every child and God. Because they sold their birthright for a very little short period of pleasure. The Apostle had been a wonderful example to them as the outlines in Chopster 2. The Thistle. He has worked with his own hands. You know, labored fervently and prayer and ministry and all the time was only about 3 weeks. They were babes like. All of his workers, I guess. Address here and they work with their hands. They were a testimony not only by what they said, but by what they did. As an example of these Thessalonians. That they could see the. Sacrifice. The fervent sea of the Apostles, Life and death. And labor for these these young Congress. It's remarkable too, isn't it? That says the Lord Jesus in verse one, and then in the second verse the Lord Jesus again, and in the sixth verse the Lord. So it's very important, isn't it, to acknowledge the Lordship. In His Lordship in our lives and to acknowledge that we have a responsibility to walk in obedience to His words. Striking that it mentioned Lord here three times. I think Stanley the Lordship of Christ mentioned more in this these officials than in any other of Pauls writings. I forget the exact figure 2030 times the warship of Christ is referred to. That's important to to practical acknowledgement. We are not our own. We belong to the Lord and. You own this authority. In our lives with everything that we do. We have to be subject to him, to his voice. I believe, Brother Stan, you mentioned responsibility, and we see that clearly here in this chapter, don't we? Tim, you mentioned that you know this is back in

Thessalonica, but today we live in the same situation. And so in verse one. It beseeches them, he says, rather than I exhort you. By the Lord Jesus, that is, ye have received of us. So that's something that they had told them. They've instructed the minute and they knew and you and I have been instructed in these things too. We know he says you have received of us how you ought to walk and to please God.

And then he tells him of the blessing. So you would abound more and more. They continue these as free know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus and tells of his will, the will of God, your sanctification that you should abstain from fornication that every one of you should know how to possess. This vessel and sanctification and honor. And so it's very clear that we have great responsibility in these things. You know, he spoke to the Thessalonians here, but in Timothy. We've given Timothy a similar charge, didn't he? And he said that thou oughtest to know how to behave thyself in the House of God. And so surely individually we have this responsibility, and collectively too, and so that we might abound more and more. And we see further on in the chapter it brings that out with loving one another in the assembly effect too. He says you have received the loss how he ought to walk. In other words, I believe the Apostle Paul had instructed them the importance of walking in self denial, you know, in paganism. There was the worship of the goddess of luck and connected to that was fornication. But now they have to realize that those things are not pleasing to the Lord and theirs is necessary to walk a life of self denial. A judge in the flesh and not allow it to creep its head up. I think it's important to see here how practical this, these verses really are for those Thessalonians and, and not only for them, but for us, because as someone has said, we're living in days very similar to what it was like then. How can I abound more and more? If I'm giving up pleasure in this world, I'm giving up success. What does it mean to abound? Our understanding of the word of God in the. The character of God was there. The verse in Matthew 6. Might apply to it. Matthew 622. The light of the body is the eye. Therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light, and if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. So he says that. He would desire that they would abound. They have heard been taught how to walk. It says. Do you have a single eye? Do you desire to know the will of God in order to do it? You'll abound more and more. You'll be full of light, but if your eye isn't single, you'd like to know what God says, but without a desire to do it. Or I'll decide maybe later whether to do it or not. It suits me before the darkness. So when the eye is single and there's a desire to do His will, when it is made known to us, you just abound more and more. The bodies whole of life. It just keeps going. And he'll show you more and he'll show you more. As soon as you say no, don't want to walk in that one. That's the end of the light coming in. We had He stops right there with us. So I just enjoyed that verse in connection with it. I don't know if that helps too. This abounding is connected with walking and pleasing God. When you love someone, is there any limit to what you'll do to please them? When the love of God is spread abroad in our hearts. There should be no limit to what we'll do, please.

I appreciate connecting with the previous chapter when it says in abounding there I was just thinking at the end of the third chapter it's the Lord working in US. And then in the start of the 4th chapter here it's more responsibility. It says there at the end in chapter 3 verse 12 Says the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, toward all men, even as we do toward you. To the end, you may establish your hearts unbelievable and holiness before God. Even the Father at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ with all those things, so he's working in us for this abounding. Nancy in love, one toward another and toward all men, even as we do towards you. I don't know if it's the exact same abounding is it what it's referring to in the start of Chapter 4, but it's interesting. In chapter 4 and verse one to eight, it's it's power to perhaps the bound towards God and then eight and nine towards other Christians and then in verse 11 and 12 towards unbelievers. And you know, there's an aspect where. The Lord is working in us, which is absolutely incredible. You think he's doing that until he comes to bring fruit for the Lord's glory. And as we see that through the Lord Jesus, we have the opportunity to abandon. What does it start with? It's. Just appreciate what you said about love. And that's what the Lord working at us and that's what we should seek to abound towards others as well. And you know, there's a longing for care in this world where things become more fragmented and through screen and those types of things and even here being together, you know, naturally. Sometimes we don't want to go out of our way, perhaps towards other people. We should be seeking to show love in a very practical way towards other people, and that's what the Lord is working on. Under the law, we find that. Thou shalt not lust, and so fornication is certainly forbidden, and it was a sin. And God's moral ways don't change from dispensation to dispensation. He's not different today. It still is. But you know, it's not just the negative. Now when it comes to Christianity, you get the negative in verse three. You might say the prohibition, but you get the positive in verse 4. Because we have the indwelling Spirit of God. We have the power where there's dependence on him, to possess our vessels, not to be carried away by them. That's how the world is, but to possess our vessels and and. In sanctification and honor. 2nd Corinthians, Structure 7. Working on the floor like it could be reminded verse one Second Corinthians 7. Having therefore these promises here available. Cleanses ourselves. There's the practical sanctuary. All filthiness of the flex and spirit. Perfect thing with Holiness. We have a holy nature. The divine nature which before that holy. Our boards. Our boards see him. And. That divine nature will be. Should be cultivated and manifest in our practical walk and waves, we're also saying. And you know when the Thessalonians epistles, we have the Lord's coming mentioned in every chapter, I believe. The apostle was careful to present to them. The end of the journey. And we have we have the coming of the Lord. We probably are aware within two parts is the rapture and there's the appearing and so the apostle refers to both of those. For instance, at the end of chapter 3 we're looking at here. In the end, he may establish your hearts unblameable importance before God, even our Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We're all the Saints. So that is not the rapture.

That is the appearing of the law, so we need to be clear about those two. Plumbing, you might say. They're all part of one. One minute character, but they take place at different times and they have different connotations. So the rapture which the apostle is is taking up in more detail in our chapter is. Does not have the question of responsibility as the appearing, the appearing when we come with the law and all these Saints. Revelation 19. Then our lives will be manifest. The judge will see the price will have taken place and we will come and be admired and returned to the. The second Thistle here. 2nd Thessalonians. When He shot in verse 10 the 1St chapter, when he shall come to be glorified in His Saints, and to be admired to all them that believe, because our testimony among you will believe in that way. That is the appearing there when? He will be glorified. It will be the public. Of our. Our sanctifications directly connected with our Lord, isn't it? Where he is now. And he prayed for us. John 17. He tells us more than once they are not of the world. Even as I. He was never in any way of the world. The Eternal 1. Now he has brought us into a position where we can say we are not of the world, even as he is not of the world. So he prays for our sanctification. Sanctify them through Thy truth. Thy word is truth on 17/17. And then this very special. Verse. So they're serious. I sanctify myself, but they also might be sanctified through the truth. He sets himself apart in glory. He he. He is above us. As if it's Paul, as Paul tells us in Hebrews, looking off unto Jesus. The author and finisher of our faith and so on. He turns 12. But just that thought looking. And I think Mr. Darby and other clearer translations have it looking off and away unto Jesus because we know where he is. He has set himself apart that we might want to be with Him. You know, kind of like we've all seen this. We've all seen this outside in springtime. There's a mother Robin hovering above the nest. You see the little heads. The little necks in the head stretching up out of the nest. As the mother hovers over the net. And that's what the Lord would love to have us like our desire, our eyes glued on Him above, desiring to be with Him. The result being that we

were set apart unto Him. There's there's greater and greater sanctification in the life and that that which. That which really takes root in US. Is what sanctifies us, sets us apart. But just to point that out, especially that it's his hearts desire. He wants us sanctified, set apart unto Himself.

The young people, I'm sure you've heard people my age and older, you know, make comments about how bad the world is getting. And it's, it's so bad. It's just getting worse. And I think we can all understand why, why people say that. But I just just to put it. Very. It's been mentioned here already, but the world that these people lived in was a world in which someone such as myself was thought OK if I visited a prostitute, it was thought OK if I had a lover. This was the world they lived in. They didn't think that was harmful. They didn't see that as they just thought it was normal behavior. So the world here in this time was. Scary. Immoral, but people didn't really see it as such, they just thought it was normal. So he's telling. These believers in Thessalonica that this was not OK in God's eyes and it was a big deal for them to have to abstain from these things in a world in which it was just, it was just normal behavior, it was thought that not harm anyone. Which is the way it is for for us today. It's not thought to be harmful. As long as you're not harming anybody, it's not a big deal. And that's the the world, these guys. Think of the verses in First Corinthians 6 when you say that Paul. Maybe you just read those First Corinthians 6. Excuse me, verse 15 it says, know ye not? That your bodies are the members of Christ. Shall I then take the members of Christ that make them the members of harlot? God forbid. Says what Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For Tuesday he shall be one flesh. Verse 18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the blood. But he that committeth fornication sentence against his own body. What know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which you have of God, and you're not your own. You're bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body. And your spirit, which are gods and. Singing of what? Steven said earlier and the ending to that or the opposite to it is we mentioned the world and how they react to these things and we have that in verse five, don't we? It says not in the better reverse Board that every one of you should know how to possess his vessels and sanctification and honor just like we read not in the lust of competence, even as the Gentiles which know not God. So because they're that way doesn't give us the excuse to be that way. We know better. We have that responsibility. And just for any that don't know, I can remember hearing that word growing up many times and never knowing what it meant. So I wrote down in just a little definition and I'll just tell you. It says selfish human desire for an Object, person or experience. You and I know that anything that involves. Self or selfishness most assuredly does not have our eyes on him. Singleness of pop and that is the desire of a believer to have singleness of ideas with. So the love that he had brought up, which is. Mentioned a couple times in chapter 3 verse 12 for one another is really the development of by nature and the believer we have that love that we never had before for one another. There was no Capacity for it fairly human life. It's not divine love, but yet in those intimate relationships among one another as believers and we go on pretty closely. We know all about each other. We know about our kids, we know about our grandkids. We know about all our circumstances. We rub elbows pretty closely, and so there's a danger of slipping into the world's ways and those close relationships. And so that development of the divine nature and a holy love needs to be guarded by holiness. And so he goes on to take this up. It's not just.

With someone out in the world. Within the sphere of the assembly, within the Christian circle that no man go beyond and defraud his brother. And so the scripture sets hedges for us, guards, carefulness. It's good for a man not to touch a woman, we read in Corinthians. There are guards that are set in the scripture to keep us from slipping out of a holy love and relationship that should be growing and is encouraged to grow into something that is unholy and has disastrous consequences in the believers life. God has not called us to uncleanness. Unto holiness in the society we lived in. It's it's getting worse, as has been mentioned, and we live in a society surrounded with all these evil practices. And I I read a statistic, there's hope. I can't remember the number but it's over 50% of evangelical Christians believe it's OK to cohabit. There's a verse in Hebrews chapter 13. Hebrews chapter 13 and verse four. Marriage is honorable in all and a bed undefiled, but ********** and adulterers God will judge. One thing we need to realize. Every one of us in this room, we have an effect on other people. And what I do will affect others. If I do good, it will affect others, perhaps for good. If I do bad, it will discourage, disappoint other people. There's a man in Malawi, a brother in the assembly there. He had he had been visiting assemblies and encouraging them for many years. He had a motorcycle and he would drive up into the mountains and back into the remote villages on his motorcycle and teach and preach and encourage the Saints. One day his he wasn't using his motorcycle and another his his relative was using it for a motorcycle taxi. The motor as he was driving along, he got flagged down by he thought was customers. And they hacked him to death with machetes and killed him and stole the motorcycle. Well, the brother lost his motorcycle. He couldn't go to the assemblies anymore. So he started walking to the assemblies. He was devoted. He was abounding, you might say more and more. But then he got his eyes off Christ and he took a second wife. Just like we've been Speaking of here, he did not know how to possess his body and sanctification. Maybe different circumstances in your life will get you discouraged. And you'll think it's not worth it to live your life for Christ to to walk through please God. The more you walk to serve God, the more you believe and have faith, the more troubles and sorrows and difficulties you have. How do you, how do you react when difficult times come into your life? It's going to affect not only you, but others around you who look up to you and they see you, that you've been a help and encouragement to them. And now you're off doing something like this man had done. And it's discouraging to everybody around. It's discouraging to your family, discouraging to the assembly, discouraging to your friends. Your friends don't want to give up on you. They still want to have contact with you. But in First Corinthians chapter 5, we find that if you fall into fornication and other, other things, it's, it's a dishonor to the Lord. And, and not only are you not able to be at the Lord's table and fellowship, you can't even eat with you or, or visit with you. Until there's the repentance. I think her brother. John wanted to talk about the coming of the Lord. Where do you want to go to from here, John? Well, I think that. You can distinguish the character of the coming. Here. They were. Ignorant. Of the of the of the Rapture, they they really didn't understand the true character of the coming of rewards as. As the rapture or the appearing, they thought, now here are some of our loved ones that pass through the article of death and that Paul is speaking about the Kingdom being established and we're part of it as what will happen to our loved ones.

They're gone, are they? Are we going to see them again? Are we? Are they going to have heart in the Kingdom? So that's why the apostle writes the epistle, to explain these things, to enlighten them. They were actually being affected by wrong doctrines. We will find that although the hope at the beginning was bright, the hope begins to dim and you don't get the word hope mentioned in the second epistle or even later in the first epistle. Something had come into dim that hope of the Lord's imminent return that right that Steve, I think that is what took place in between the epistles, especially the apostle had laid out as we have in our chapter, the rapture, the any moment expectation of the Lord's coming and the hope of the believer. And then they had gotten an epistle supposedly from the apostle Paul that it wasn't. And. Really denying that through telling them that they were in the tribulation now and they were in the time of the wrath of God following on this world and so on. Instead of being delivered from the raft to come as was read in chapter one and verse 10, they were under it while that threw them into confusion and so on. The second epistle, as you say, you don't get it mentioned in the same way here. Hope because that had that bad doctrine that come in and dulled their hope and they needed to be revived as to that. But here they're giving it freshly. It's a new revelation.

The apostle hadn't had time to unfold this aspect of the Lord's coming to the Saints, but now he does. There's an opportunity to. It was in connection with the fact that some had died. They were waiting for the Lord to come. Some had died. Well, they're going to miss out now on the Lord's coming. No, they're not, Because there's some details I hadn't told you, and I don't know. It's a good time to tell you now about them. He lays them out here. In verse 14, does that refer to the appearing because it speaks about? Those which sleep in Jesus when God bring with him. So the appearing is when we come back with the water, He's coming with us at that time. But as we read on him, there's 14. And on he's coming for us. So that'd be the rapture. Is that the right thing? Interpretation. That's right. So how many comings of Christ are there? 22. Three right, Two ones already taking place. You came once. The second coming is still going to take place. It's still ahead of us, but it has two aspects, or you might say two installments, but there is only one second coming of Christ. Not to just one and in that second coming, he's going to bring these things with him. But this tells us how the Saints are going to get there to be with him to begin with when he comes with a sense. And that's why we refer to those as the Rapture from the interior. Just thinking of the difference between those two, just in the context or a doctor here at the end of Chapter 3, as John mentioned, it's referring to the appointment and at that point in time. It will be after the judge, after we're caught up in heaven and we our body is changed and you have the very top of the Lamb and the. Doesn't see the price, then we come down and at that point in time we will be. It talks here at the end of chapter 3. It says the enemy may establish your heart is unblameable and holiness before God, even the Father is becoming our Lord Jesus Christ. That's when the Lord will set up his Kingdom and we'll have a perfect government and. It, it'll, it's when the Lord will have his rightful place as King of kings, the Lord of Lords. That is what we're looking for. And that I think is what the Thessalonians were thinking about, but they had a problem. They didn't understand it. It was, they were living in a completely corrupt society that abandoned God in every way.

And they were lived, there was immorality around them and people were cheating one another and even the Christians weren't even treating each other well. And Paul here explains in chapter four, he says, and I like the way this, and I don't mean to go backwards. I like the way this chapter starts. He tells him about his coming with his things. But then he says, he says, furthermore, we beseech you brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus. And then he goes on to tell him, he says. He tells them how these doctors God towards other believers and towards unbelievers and how he's going to the Lord is going to descend from heaven with a shout and call them up to heaven, which is going to prepare for that coming with his Saints. And it's a very important for us to consider today and it's very easy for us to get discouraged as we look around and see everything sort of crumbling around us. We need to look forward to that future day, the Lord coming with this date when, when all of the things that this world is trying to correct now will be corrected. The, the, the, the total falling apart of politics, the falling apart of the world from a, from an environmental point of view to the fighting everywhere, the little come back and correct all that. And this tells us what our responsibility is here and now as we Array, we that shout will be caught up to be prepared for that thing. And to me, it's beautiful in that context because we are very, very similar as I've been mentioned, where the immorality around us is horrible. And I, I was just, I mean, it says they're, as Tim mentioned, he said God is not called us an uncleanness, but in the holiness he's called us and the holiness because of that future day when we come with him. And. And we need to be cognizant of that now as we await this out to be caught up to be with him, neither not explaining that well, but even I, I was thinking even if that's the only as they were confused because these people had died and they didn't know how that Fit into the Lord's coming. And so Paul, as you said, Steve is explaining, Steven is explaining to them what's happening here. And I think there's a practical teaching that we have in this chapter between verse four and verse 16. Is very, very relevant today as we await his return in that first installment. If I could just add what you said, Mark, and just under score how the Lord's coming with us and him coming into his Kingdom is, is like the big day. That's what it's all looking forward to. And him having his Kingdom and having his rightful place is what everything that God is doing is going forward. It's Christ having his day. It's his great celebration. And you know, it's interesting that the Lord is going to share that day with us over coheirs with Christ. But I was thinking of a few verses. I think the more we understand that that the day of manifestation, the day of Christ coming into his Kingdom is what God is looking for is what Christ is looking forward to. It's what his Saints are rightfully looking forward to. In Luke chapter 22, you speaking to specifically to the 12 There, but he said in verse 28 year they which have continued with me in my temptations and I appoint them to you a Kingdom as my father hath appointed unto me. That ye may eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom, and sit on Thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel. The Lord is going to have his celebration. And he was so happy to be able to tell the 12 I'm going to invite you to sit at my table and to celebrate with me. Earlier when he ate the Passover, verse 14 And when the hour was coming, he sat down, and this wall of apostles with him, he said unto them, with desire, I have desire to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I say unto you, I will not eat anymore thereof until it be fulfilled. The Kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this and divide it among yourselves, For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the Kingdom of God shall come. The.

The cup, the wine that was being served on that Passover night, the Lord said. I'm not going to drink. Anymore, until I drink with you in the Kingdom, He's saying my celebration is future. I am not going to celebrate until that day comes and I'm going to share that celebration with you again. It's a great time for the Lord. It's his day, He's going to share it with us. It's what His Kingdom is brought into and we're all looking forward to that. The Lord went to the cross, He died, He rose again. Acts chapter one. The disciples are there with him at the Mount of Olives, and what are they thinking about? Verse 6 And when they therefore will come together, they asked of him, saying, more, Wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel? It was so natural, and you might even say right for them to be thinking about this. This is His day. He conquered death, He rose from the grave, and is this the time? The Lord doesn't say it's not going to happen, He just says it is not for you to know the times or the seasons where which the Father had put in his own power, but He shall receive power after the Holy Ghost has come upon you. He shall be witnesses and soul. So not to belabor the point, but it is very right for us to be looking forward to the time when Christ has his day, when he has his celebration, when when all of his rights are vindicated here in this world. And he says, I am not going to begin celebration until I can do it with you. He didn't go back to heaven, you might say, and start the party. He did not do that. I am not going to touch this cup until I can teach it with you and the Kingdom. And he is waiting until he can enter that Kingdom with us and sit down with us and. So as Mark said is was mentioned earlier, the question is what about those who have died? Are they going to miss it? Are they going to miss Christ coming into his day? Are they going to miss sitting down, not just in spirit but in body? Are they going to miss being there at this table when he for the first time lifts that cup that he said I won't touch again for the first time and when he celebrates with all of his own and the joy of his Kingdom, will they miss out on that? And the wonderful answer, Paul can say no. Something is going to take place first such that they we all together. The togetherness of that time will all come into it, into the joy of that together. You should always remember as first age that brings before us He left when it despised it. Despise it despise it's not mad, but God blessed also gives him to us. Holy Spirit, so that. The Spirit of God is a divine person, not just an influence. And he is abiding in. We don't have two divine persons within us. We have the life of Christ, but we we don't have Christ physically abiding in us, but we do have a divine person, the Holy Spirit of God. And it says in Ephesians 4 grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption. I thought we had our redemption already. Yes, the redemption of our souls and not the redemption of our bodies. So the Spirit of God will not leave you. If I sin and belong with these practices

mentioned here, fear of God does not leave me. But he is grieved. And of course. Of course communion is broken. So a Christian has been said we can, we should be the happiest people on the earth. Sometimes we are not. But we could also be the most miserable people. Because if I'm not walking in obedience, I'm grieving the Holy Spirit of God. I can't enjoy the world as I did before. It's spoiled for me, and I can't enjoy the Lord.

By motive communion. So I'm miserable until I judge that matter, whatever it may be. Maybe, maybe could be uncleanness in the light, but it could be. Bitter feelings for certain brethren, that I refuse to judge. Communion is as sensitive as a delicate threat. It can easily be broken, so we need to be careful in our walk. Is that not right to extend? So how do we know when we come to a portion of Scripture? Let the Lord's coming, whether it's talking about. Is appearing in the Kingdom or the Rapture? So the Rapture comes before the tribulation period. In that sense, we know that. The difference of the two countries. We always come in for us and before the judgement falls upon the world. Is that what you had in mind? Well, there's a lot of places where the Lords coming is referred to in Scripture, but how do we know with that particular? One is Speaking of is coming and appearing, establishing the Kingdom or coming for us? I think perhaps you have an answer to that. But I've wondered about that in relation to the safe Titus chapter 2 where it speaks about looking for the lesson hope and the glorious appearance of the great God that Savior. Well, some would lump all that together and say, you know the blessing hope isn't is really you're feeling it. The Lord established his Kingdom. But I've always thought it was connection with the rapture as being the blessed hope and then. The glorious appearance. Stadium. That would be when he appears to establish his key. I think that's correct. I think. Context is really what shows us what is being spoken of, and it just puts an emphasis on the importance of the context in Scripture in which a verse is found. We can't isolate it by itself and come up with an interpretation and meaning and ignore the other verses around it, ignore its chapter, it's book, and so on. Scripture is interpreted in the light of all the rest of Scripture, and so we always need the context, and that's really what helps us. In Second Thessalonians. To. Verse 8. Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming, that word brightness. Really could be translated appearing or shining out. And there the word coming is used in Scripture, whether it's Speaking of is coming for his Saints or coming with the Saints, it's that same word is used. But when it's the appearing of his coming? It's specifically talking about his visible appearing in this world. I think coming and I, I don't know Greek, but I think the word is harassia. Appearing is epiphany or bright shining out, at least those are kind of the root words. It's the epiphany of this piracy. It's it's right shining out of his coming that is his appearing. And so it may just say coming and we just need to look at the context to understand is it Speaking of his coming and establishing the Kingdom is appearing or is it is coming for us? Or sometimes it includes both.

Most of the references to the Lord's coming in the New Testament are his appeared His name. Coming visible appearing in this world. That word coming means simply this presence. His presence that the epiphany of his presence, the brightness of his presence, is his appearing. But when he comes for us, he's coming. It's his presence. World may not necessarily is not going to see it, but we will will be caught up to be in this presence. It's his presence is coming. He's present, but the appearing of his presence the world's going to see that's when he establishes. So the rapture then is the private meeting? I believe so the Lord. Every eye will see him. Will be associated with him. There are signs, definitely there are signs before the Lord's appearing yet. And the award develops this in Matthew 24 and all of the discourse. There are definitely signs. Kingdom, but there is no sign. Necessary before the Rapture, the Thessalonians were told to. Expect the Lord's return at any moment. 2000 years have passed by. The war hasn't gone. So it's a present hope. Not dependent upon. Developments in this world. Although we see things shaping up like the illustration that has been given, you passed by a cycle. You see that there's excavation taking place and materials are being put down on the ground. You say to your wife, well, it looks as if there's going to be a building for up here. Things are being brought into place and so we can see. The Lord behind all the scenes, moving the scenes that he is behind. You can see the development of things, but the Rapture is a is a present hope for the Marine. I remember John, Mr. Hayhoe saying that the first time the Lord's coming for his Saints that we get in Scripture in John 14, where he says I will come again and receive you unto myself. That's the first time the rapture is mentioned in its proper Christian characters. Is that correct? Yes. Develop the the how of it there, but that is a reference to it I believe. I was noticing too here that Paul says to the Thessalonians studied to be quiet and do your own business and to work with your own hands as we have commanded you. There seems to be a tendency to not go on with their regular employment. Maybe they were expecting what the Lord's going to come. What's the point? In working. But I was thinking that a leader can be a dangerous thing for the Christian candidate. If we just sit around and are doing nothing, we know they're off and says that the devil finds things the parietal hands to do. So we're going to be careful. And I think there's a tendency today in in the world too to. Not put much importance on working and we find they want to shorten the work week to four days now and there's more emphasis on leisure all the time. But we have to be careful, don't we? The Lord have us to carry on, occupy till he comes. I'm going to get that in the first chapter of this book. In the last two verses of the first chapter. This is a wonderful summer purchase of Christian life in a nutshell.

How you turn from how you turn to God from idols. To serve. The living in true God and to wait for his Son from the heaven. So while we're waiting, there is serving. So those two, you can't have just the waiting, you've got to be serving while we're waiting. Just bring in another thought recently. Just. Is the Lord. Those were creatures of activity and. And we do need to be busy. But when it comes to the time, maybe that we say, you know. I like to serve the Lord, like to do something for the Lord with that extra time I have. It's like when the children of Israel said through Moses to Pharaoh, we're going to go out in the wilderness, three days journey and we're going to serve the Lord. What did he do? Says you're going to work more hours and take away the straw. Yeah, an 8 hour day anymore. You got more responsibilities now, young man. You're going to work 12 hour days. Sorry about your family, sorry about the assembly. You're going to serve the board. And Satan is clever in his way to come in and lay upon, especially young brother, way more responsibilities when it comes to a time where he could be useful and raising his little family useful in the assembly to load him up with. Long hours and long days. And pursuing a career. And we need to be careful on that side of things. We don't want the leisure time that plays into the enemy's hands that way. But you know that time comes to serve the Lord, and Satan will try and load you up with ours and just make it seem like it's a priority of my life. I gotta do this. Watch out for that. There's a verse in Second Timothy chapter 4. Second Timothy 4 and verse 8. Henceforth there is a laid up for me, a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all them that also love His appearing. So there's a a crown for those who love his appearance. We look forward to the rapture when the Lord comes to take us to heaven. Just verse is saying those it's a special blessing to love is appearing. That's when the Lord comes and he's glorified before all the world with all the Saints now in our in just before we close in our just one difference between the the rapture and the appearance in verse 1617 of our chapter. 1St Thessalonians 4 we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. See, we're the Lord not coming back to earth at the rapture. He's coming to meet us in the air. But let's, let's look over in Zechariah chapter 14 and we'll see what's going to happen at the appearance. The Lord is not coming back to earth at the rapture. He's going to call us up with the trumpet. If we're already dead, then we're going to hear a chef. The Old Testament Saints will hear the will hear the voice of the arcing is that. Archangel

is connected with Israel, but in Zechariah chapter 14 and verse 35 will read. And his feet, this is when the Lord comes back at the appearing, His feet shall stand in that day upon the mouth of elves, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and on the Mount of Olives. Show, plead in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the West. And there shall be a very great valley, and half the mountain shall remove towards the north, and half of it toward the South. And you shall flee to the valley of the mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Hazel. Yeah, ye shall plead like as he fled from before the earthquake in the days of Isaiah, king of Judah. Now listen to this. And the Lord my God shall come, and all the Saints with him. And so there's the Saints of God. That's you and and, and I, we're going to come back with the Lord on this day when his feet touched him out of always and throughout a time. But there's more verses that show the glory of that day.

Maybe we could sing 100 and 71170. Below he comes from handy Sandy once, for they were listeners playing by all the sins by all the same time. 12 triumphs. All the way through the old. Hallelujah, Jesus runs and comes to reign. Jesus comes and comes to reign. Sing a song of God. Again. Passion blowing glory. Show me that's all that Let's say it's a long day, Sailor Nation to his friends. Jesus, Lord, I. Glory to remain in heaven and to take my people home. All creation. All creation. Trusts are still That's the Last of Us.

Our loving God and Father, we thank you for the sweet time we've had together this morning over Thy Word. Thank Thee for those thoughts of our Lord's coming for us being with Him. And all those things that brought out these things that are needful or are to be brought before us that we might have our thoughts on him. And so we just. Amend ourself. Again, and we think of any who may still be on the road traveling. Pray for them. We thank thank thee for each one who is safely arrived, and we think of some who perhaps have not been able to. Come and be here with us this weekend. We pray for them as well. And we ask this now, the name of our blessed Savior, Lord Jesus Christ.

Maine Conference: 2022, 1 Thessalonians 4:9-18

Reading

Preserve thy walk most graciously within my sheltering board. 288 some brother. Oh, thou good mercies. Mercy all raining calendar. Say I just can't like you fall down within the standing more this way. From the state. They blame the sun till. Every day towards Jesus Christ. Of God. I am.

Let's break our God and our loving Father. Have surely worked some words that are so true thy mercies. Exceed more than we can begin to say. We thank Thee for opening the scriptures to us this morning, for the instruction, the comfort that has been given to us or. All this Father, we, it makes us look forward to this time as we again open by word. We pray that Thou by thy spirit will minister. More of Thy beloved Son to us. For our encouragement along our pathway homeward we ask in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen. Amen. Amen, Amen. And I suggest, brethren, if it's mind of the. Assembly that we spend a little more time in. The First Thessalonians chapter 4 the we do cover a good part of the earlier part of the of the chapter, but. I also believe from. And there's. 11 to the end of the chapter of first, maybe verse 10 to the end of the chapter. First Thessalonians, chapter 4. Starting with verse 10. And indeed you do it toward all brethren, which are in all Macedonia. But when you see your brethren, that you increase more and more. And then you study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to do and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that you may walk honestly towards them that are without, and that you may have lack of nothing. But I would not have you be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not even as others will have no hole. Or if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, Even so them also would sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. But 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 your sleep. But the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shallow, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise 1St And we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. So shall we ever be with the Lord. We're for comfort one another. Wonderful, the testimony that this. Young assembly exhibited. They were known throughout that whole region. For their right testimony. And the Word of God has come in power toward them and. They had sounded out to the Word of the Lord, chapter one, not only in Macedonia and the Kaya, but also in every place your faith to God. Word is spread abroad. So they were. Energetic in there. Spreading of the good news, I would say. And there was a testimony. To all their. The region where props were still steeped in idolatry, here was a group of. Believers that exhibited that. That divine life in the. In their walk and waves, in their love, one toward another, this was quite evident.

The apostle says that we ourselves are talking dog to love one another, and indeed you do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia. But we beseech your brethren, that you increase more and more. How easy it is for Satan to get an inroad between brethren, and to stir up. Hard feelings or what? What grudges or or bitterness? That has a wide effect. It affects the whole assembly. But with the Thessalonians, their fervent love toward each other was was manifest. It was the the work, the work of God in their souls. And we, we covet this for for ourselves, I'm sure. I. There were some comments I made on verse 11 in the last meeting and. What to read the way that the new translation has it? It says seek earnestly to be quiet. To mind your own affairs. And work with your own hands. Would this be the opposite of being a busy body? And always involving yourself with others affairs. I think that's right. So the. Connected with working with their own hands is that. That time that they should have been working was being used to. Involve themselves in an unscriptural way. And other folks affairs and causing difficulty in the assembly. You know there is a sphere of pastoral work and it it can get early deep into intimate details and and lives but that's a healthy work and a scriptural work that's not what's being taken up here at all it's. Involving oneself and another affairs in this way. It should say a busy body, but it's it comes from two things. Comes from the assumption of a superiority as to my own walk and a superiority as to my own knowledge. I know more and I'm better. Therefore I am entitled to involve myself in so and so's affairs and it's not the right assumption. But it was connected with that, the idleness. And. As it says in the scripture and connection on busy bodies going from house to house. Last point out very clearly in the second epistle, chapter 311. Were spent for even when we were with you. This we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. We hear that there are some who walk among the disorderly, working not at all. But our busy bodies now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that will quietly they work to meet their own brand. Well, this was a neatful exhortation. The Greeks looked down upon manual labor, you know, and. They were philosophers, but. The apostle was concerned that. Their outward testimony among the unbelievers did not bring reproach upon the name of Christ. And he gave his own example, working day and night, that he might not be chargeable to any of them. He didn't take any of their money or funds. He worked.

As a tent maker during the day and preach the gospel at night. What are you marvelous servant of the Lord, but he had gave an example of what he of what he was teaching here. I don't want to belabor the point and get us off, but just. First, Peter chapter 4 just seems to indicate the seriousness of being. Involved in other people's affairs? See that as something minor, but look at what it's listed with in verse 15, First Peter chapter 4 and verse 15. But none of you suffer as a murderer that's terrible, or as a thief, or as an evildoer. Whereas a busy body and other men's matters, Mr. Darby has an overseer. Of others affairs. Is listed with these three things murdered, theft, and evil? Back in our chapter, verse 12 That he may walk honestly. With them that are without. That he may have lack of nothing as a brother said this possible follow the great example of that. New translation instead of lack of nothing has need of no one. And it's really the thought of not being in debt. To anyone have in need of going. To be careful that we don't. Comment to anyone back in that way and it's a hindrance to the flourishing of love and the assembly just. As much as my name getting involved in another's affairs, just as much as defrauding a brother, all of those things hinder the outflow of love and the holy and healthy way in the assembly. We live in a dishonest world, don't we? And. Honestly, is that a premium any day? Easy for us to be affected by the. Lack of uprightness in the world today, and we're exhorted to have on the breastplate of righteousness. I believe that's practical righteousness there. We have the divine righteousness. Before God through the work of Christ, but. The world is very quick to pick up. On any inconsistency in the believers life, when he's made a profession of Christ, they connect his conduct, his conduct with his profession. Rightly so. If we are, if we're making a profession, then there should be consistency in our in our walk before the world and before our brethren. So uprightness and honesty is is what the Lord expects us to to manifest. The word asleep here.

Probably we know this already because reiterate, it's never applied to an unsaved person. The body was of the spirit is dead. That's the simplest definition of death, that you could have the body without the spirit, but. For an unsaved person. The body is separated from the spirit, that is true, but there's no such a thing as soul sleep or the unsaved. Their their soul and their spirit are conscious under the judgment of God. They are never spoken of as being asleep, but the believer who passes through the article of death. If the Lord doesn't come, they are spoken of as asleep. It's in reference to their body, not their soul and their spirit. Their soul and their spirit are consciously in the enjoyment of the Lord. Not in a glorified state of course. They await that. We await that too. But. As to the body, it is asleep and. When the show is given. That body, that body of humiliation that went into death. Will be raised. And changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, into a body of glory. Not a new body. Let us be careful there. Not a new body that really is would deny resurrection. It's the body that went down into death, raised by the power of the Lord's Word, and changed instantaneously into the body of glory. Just like Christ's mother. Well, we know that in lithium. Philippians three were familiar with the verse. This wild body is not a it gives them a misinterpretation. The body is not looked upon vile. It can be used for vile purposes, but the body itself is not violent or God wouldn't tell us to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God. The thought is diverse, as we probably all know, is a body of humiliation. Because. We still are connected with this groaning creation. And we have infirmities. Infirmities are not sins per SE, but they can lead to sin. Another thing that we should be clear about, the Lord did not have infirmity. In Burma, Jesus, part of the groaning creation, we all have them in some way or other, and as we get older we feel them more. And it's a it's a body of humiliation. It's always humbling us, but that body of humiliation will be transformed into the body of glory. So these infirmities that we have, as I again I say, they are not sin, but they can lead to sin. If I don't watch and be careful in self judgment, I can begin to complain and. And be dissatisfied with the. The sufferings of this human frame. But the Lord does sympathize with our infirmities, doesn't say He removes the Spirit of God, doesn't remove the infirmities, but He gives us power. To overcome and to to keep keep the whole nature in the place of death. Maybe you should turn to that verse in Romans chapter. I'm not quoting it exactly. Romans chapter 8. Verse 26 Likewise, the Spirit also helped with our infirmities, doesn't say He removes them, but He gives us grace to endure them and to keep from complaining to receive them from the Lord. But the Lord does simplify with our infirmities. I think that's beautiful as our great high priest, though himself not having infirmities in his earthly pathway, he can enter into and sympathize. Support. Strengthen us when we have, when we encounter these.

Bermudas that we we all have. Is that right, Steve? I think that's right. That you sorrow not even as others which have no hope. I don't believe this is saying that we don't sorrow when we lose 1. But we don't sorrow as those who have no hope. That's the difference. They're not gone forever. Don't like to hear people speak of Saints as having passed away. They have not passed away. They have passed on their spirit. Their spirit, their soul has passed on to be with the Lord, and their body is asleep, but they have not passed away. Don't want to make some of the offender for a worry but. Saints that have died have not passed away. A lot of this verse couple weeks ago our daughter Brynn had been babysitting a little boy. He was 20 months old. Since August, three days a week.

Kentucky Conference: 2023, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-13

Reading

Where is this world's playing? The whole world. Is gone. There was. A good night. Who did you see? Oh, Cortana. Could we read in Isaiah chapter 48? Isaiah 48. I'm going to read it out of the. And the translation Isaiah 48 and verse 21. And they thirsted not. When he let them. Through the deserts. He caused the water to flow out of the rock for them. Yeah, he clayed the rock and the water scushed out. And then also in Psalms 78. Psalm 78 and verse 72.

And he sat down. According to the integrity of his heart. And let them by the skillfulness of his hands. Does seem rather than that we are getting close to the moment when we're going to be raptured out of this world, I would like to suggest. First Thessalonians four and five in these three readings that we have in these meetings. Not thinking to focus so much on the first part of chapter 4. The second part, which deals with the rapture. And then the 4th chapter or the 5th chapter which deals with the day of the Lord, which is that day of judgment. What's taking place in the world today seems to be developing towards that. What we see around us is developments that remind us that we're getting close. For the rapture there is no sign and so I suggest we read chapter 4. But what can see mainly on the latter part? I don't know if that's suitable. Why I desire my brother to? Suggest something else if that's the case. I have to stay for some minor what I have to say ports in my heart good. Considering. What? Time. I don't think it would be harmful to spend some time going on the first part of chapter 4 as well. The time of this world was very strong from all good. I want to group chapter 4 course. First Thessalonians chapter 4, verse one. Furthermore, then, we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so you would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus, For this is the will of God, even your sanctification. That you should abstain from fornication. That everyone of you should know how to possess his vessel. In

sanctification and honor, not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles, which know not God, that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter, because that the Lord is the avenger of all such as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despises. Despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us His Holy Spirit. But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you. For ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another, and indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia. But we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more, and that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business and to work. With your own hands, as we commanded you, that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing. 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. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, Even so them also which sleep in Jesus. Will God bring with him 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. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds.

To meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. Well, these incentive the 1St chapter, along with that the last part of verse nine and the first part of verse 10. These Thessalonians had turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for His Son from heaven. Chapter 4 two, I just wanted to point out how the chapter begins. We found in verse one there is that sad exhort you by by whom, by the Lord Jesus. So this isn't exaltation by the Lord Jesus and you go to the end of the chapter. It tells us that because of this now we'll go into what these are there wherefore comfort one another. With these words. So these words are very important, isn't it? As we mentioned as a brother, Brother Bob mentioned with the last eight. And sometimes, I should say often we look at the bad things. We look at how bad this world has become. We get discouraged. But yet in this chapter, the latter part give us the hope because we're not of this world as we're saying, we're not of this world that faded away. And then the first part of the chapter is our brother mentioned. That is good because. This is how we are to walk. We are to walk as a light to this world, even though this world is coming to its very end. It's called the Enoch chapter, hasn't it? Because Enoch walked with God and then Hebrews it says he had this testimony that he pleased God. So to walk to please God through a world that is completely corrupt, brother and I have been incredibly amazed at how corrupt things are turning in our country and we need to be aware of it, not to be mixed up with it, but we need to be aware of it to not get mixed up with it. So he says, furthermore then we beseech you brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus. That as ye have received of us, how you ought to walk, and to please God. So you would abound more and more just like to make this comment as we start to go over this chapter that you'll notice in Mr. Darby's translation that. From verse 15 to verse 18 is a parenthesis. And I think it's good because he's talking to these Thessalonians believers that evidently had had lost some of their relatives that believed and they thought, well, they're not going to be here when Jesus comes back to establish his Kingdom. At the end of the great tribulation, so he says in the verse 14 and I want to connect that verse 14 with the first verse of chapter. Five. But notice verse 14, if we believe that Jesus died and rose again. Even so them also which sleep in Jesus. Will God bring with him? That means when he comes in his Kingdom, he's going to bring those that have fallen asleep in Jesus. OK, but if they've died, how did they get to be with him? And so verse 15 through 18 is a parentheses that shows how those that have died and gone to be with the Lord and are buried, how they get to be with Him too, so they can be brought with him as well. And then he starts in chapter five with the what relates to. The second coming at the end of the Great Tribulation, when he's going to come with his Saints.

The times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that are right unto you, for yourselves know perfectly the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. That's his coming at the end of the great tribulation. So I just like to clarify that I think it helps to understand this chapter connection with the rapture, the what the apostle Paul received as to the rapture of the believers at the end of this period of grace which will take place. At any moment now. It's helpful for us to understand that the Old Testament knew about the appearing of the Lord Jesus. And if you look at Zechariah chapter 14, they had been given a little light as to that event. And he speaks of the appearing all throughout the Old Testament, particularly the prophetic scriptures, the prophetic part of it. But in Zechariah chapter 14, right at the end of verse five, it says, and the Lord my God shall come. And all the Saints with the. Now they knew they would come with the Lord Jesus, but they didn't know how it would be possible for the Saints, those Old Testament Saints, to be with the Lord Jesus, to have their bodies there and to come to be with him at his appearing. And so Paul was given that revelation. It's a part of Paul's doctrine. What we've just read in First Thessalonians chapter 4, particularly here, verses 15 to 18 refer. It really is the revelation of God. It's. It's verse 15, verse one, verse 15, right at the beginning it says this. We say unto by the word of the Lord. It was a revelation of the risen Christ and glory to Paul. And so he tells, he gives further details in first Corinthians 15. How is it that they were going to appear? What kind of condition would their bodies have? Well, it's Paul's doctrine. He tells us how the body would be changed and goes into it as well, speaks of it in connection with redemption, the redemption of our bodies in Romans chapter 8. And so this is really very significant. It's a part of Pauls doctrine. And so here these first eight verses, I've just referred to it brother Bob, but just it's a paragraph. It's a paragraph in the you see it in the Darby translation. If you don't have a Darby translation, I highly recommend it because you have the proper paragraph definitions in that translation. And so he's giving. There the Lordship of Christ, if this is true, that the Lord Jesus is coming and we should live in the expectation of His coming, it should have a practical effect upon our lives. And so he gives that little bit of definition of the practical holiness that is ought to be characteristic of every believer as a result of the Lord's coming. That's why the apostle Paul doctrine is so important. We find among Christendom that sometimes they'll say, why Paul, you don't need Paul's doctrine. They, they drop it for various reasons. But Paul gave us a lot more insight. He, well, let me give you an example. When he spoke to the Ephesians elders told them he will see, they will see his face no more. But he told them three things. I think it's in connection to our chapter. Turn with me just briefly to Acts chapter 20. There were three things that he said to them. Acts chapter 20 he said when he was with them he said this verse 24. The latter part he said, I have received of the Lord Jesus. To testify the gospel of the grace of God, that's the first thing he did, and that's the first thing we ought to do. We've been saying that in our hymn. In our opening hymn about the grace of God. And the sad thing is some of us stop there and don't go any further. It is good to be reminded that we have been saved by grace. It is good to be reminded of the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ. But that's just the beginning of things, isn't it? So Paul said that yes, we didn't stop to proclaim the gospel of the grace of God. And then if you go on in the verse 25, then he said, I have gone preaching.

The Kingdom of God, a brother earlier mentioned about the Kingdom, someone is going to be, oh, I should say Kingdom is going to have a king. There's going to be a king coming, the righteous king, he's going to reign in righteousness. That's part of the thing that we look forward to and actually walk in the moral side of that Kingdom to come. But then there's one more thing. So you have preaching the gospel of the grace of God, the Kingdom of God. And then in verse 27, he said, I have not shunned to declare unto you all the council of God. I think that's very important to be remembered. I know the word shunned is not. We don't use that often. A shun simply means to cut off or to stay away. I

didn't stop. I didn't cut off telling you, I want you to know the whole council of God. Well, here we just talk about part of the Council of God. Paul talked about a lot of the counsel of God in his in his epistle. He talked about the mysteries. But one of the important mystery is you can look this up afterwards in Ephesians and Colossians, the mystery of God. But what is that? The mystery of God is that there is going to be a body on earth but ahead in heaven. That's the mystery of God that the Old Testament saying didn't know about that. Then there is the gospel of Christ, that we as part of the bride will be air and joint air with Christ. What a wonderful mystery to be revealed. So here it's expanded towards that. How would we achieve that? Well, He's going to ****** us out of this world. That's the rapture. We're not going to go through tribulation because we're too weak to withstand a lot of those. That's why those owl of temptations, we're not going to be there. He takes us out and He doesn't just take us out, He takes us out to be with himself. From Bob, I have a question for you in verse 16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the Archangel, with the trump of God. Isn't he going to bring my mother, father, and grandmother, and those with him? Aren't they riding now? Isn't he going to bring him with him? He's going to raise them from the dead so that they can be with him when he comes in power and glory at the end of the privilege. Aren't they coming to the clouds with him? Because that's when he raises the dead, when he gets in the cloud. So my question is, why must that be assigned to a future appear? I just say that that takes place before the appearance. The Old Testament says they didn't have knowledge of the distinction. They had no knowledge of the. Rapture at all, it wasn't a part of the revelation to them. And So what he's telling them here in chapter 4 verses 15 to 18 really is that there was an event that's going to take place before the appearing. And so we know that it's going to. Take place approximately 7 years, maybe just a little more than seven years before the appearing of the Lord Jesus. And this is something that has been lost and christened them. It's the air of covenant theology to blend those two appearances of the Lord. The Lord Jesus will come and he'll come in two different phases, you might say. The first will come. He will come to take his church. And so this is what he's saying to them here by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent or not go before them which are asleep. So at that time. The bodies of the Saints will be raised, those that have died, and their spirits and souls will be reunited. They'll stand on the earth just as the Lord, the head of the church, stood on the earth, and they'll have their bodies will be glorified. And then you and I who are alive, our bodies will be changed, Paul says in First Corinthians 15, in the moment. In the twinkling of an eye, we'll all be standing on the earth. Our bodies change, and then we'll all go up together to meet the Lord in the air.

Approximately 7 years later, just a little more perhaps will come with Him, because we will have been with Him for all that time. As the tribulation period, the beginning of sorrows and the tribulation period unfolds, we will be with the Lord. So at the rapture, the bodies of the Saints will be raised glorified condition and their souls and their spirits will be reunited to their bodies. Then we will rise together. My question though, was not about that. When Jesus comes to the clouds. He's going to lead them in glory, and then he's going to raise their bodies for their He's going to bring them with him to the clouds. There they will be raised and we will meet them in the clouds. I don't understand why it must be assigned to the appearing when he's going to do that, and we know he's going to do that. Why must this verse then be assigned to the appearing? It doesn't wreck anything. It doesn't promote covenant theology or anything. It just consistent with what it says is that he's going to come. He's going to bring my grandmother and my mother and my father with him, their soul and spirit, to the clouds. And then he's going to raise their bodies. And then we follow immediately changed, and we will meet together in the clouds. That's where he says it's going to take place. So why assign that to an appearing? Why take it out of the context of where it is and make it about the appearance? We know that there's an appearing and it's a separate event and it's seven years later approximately, as was said. But why jerk that out of the context and make it mean something that has to do with the appearing when I know that they're coming and I'll see him in the clouds? I don't believe it's taking it out of context brother. I think if you see that as Mr. Garvey put the parentheses from verse 15 to 18 that what he's talking about in verse 14. Even so them also will sleep in Jesus will God bring with him and he's talking about the appearing he will bring those. Why is that he appearing if he's bringing their soul and spirit with him. They're not raised yet. They're coming with him from the place where he is here. I agree that that's going to take place, but that's not what he's referring to here. Why not? That's that's what he's referring to is the appearance. And so it connects with chapter five in the first verses there. Well, that's the exit. That's what I don't understand, and maybe I'm just stupid. I don't understand why it must be the appearance. Why is this the appearance? What's here in the context says it's the appearance and William. God bring with him well, He's not from heaven to the cloud. The entire book, we can't narrow it down to just this chapter. So if we look at what chapter 3 is bringing out, the apostle is looking first in chapter 2, looking forward to the appearing of the Lord and the end of the chapter, and the Saints would be his crown and rejoicing at that time at the appearing. And then in chapter two, he takes up the afflictions of the Saints. And in the end of the chapter. He because of the coldness of the day and what they were passing through. It could show the affections and he takes that up and he says the Lord make you to increase and abound. Verse 12 of chapter 3 and love one toward another and toward all men, even as we do towards you. The end to the end He may establish your hearts unblameable and holiness before God, even our Father at the coming. Of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his Saints. So there's the context, It's really the appearing. And he takes up the subject of their hearts being established in affection, love and light holiness. And then he expands on that subject of holiness. If we're expecting to come with the Lord at his appearing and the establishment of His Kingdom, what is our life? Should it not be in full conformity to that hope and expectation? We should not be walking as it says in verse 5 as the Gentiles which know not God similar to the expressions of the sentiments and the hymn that we sang. Why would we want to have any part of this world in its ways if our hope is the appearing really is what the context is his Saints coming with him and so I think then when we come to verse 14 and the the reassurance to the Saints of those of their brethren.

Who have died? And they're really looking for the appearing, and they're not intelligent yet as to the truth of the rapture and those things that surround it. It's the appearing that they have. They're waiting for the Son of God from heaven to do what? Establish His Kingdom. Well, they're going to miss out when He comes. And they're not thinking about us coming with Him. They're thinking about His coming and setting up the Kingdom. He's going to expand and fill out their understanding now of these events. And so he says in connection with those who have died, they're not going to miss out that the Lord Jesus died and rose again. He's going to bring those which sleep in Jesus with him. When he sets up his Kingdom, he's going to have all the Saints with him. Well, the first question you're going to ask is. How is that going to happen? How is it that he's going to bring them with Him when he comes? Well, then he explains in this parentheses how that's going to take place. First he's going to raise the debt, and then together we're going to be caught up with the Lord. Now we're with the Lord. We meet him in the clouds, in the air. That's how we're all going to be with him at his coming, Those who died and we who are alive, that's how we'll be with Him when he comes and sets up his Kingdom. And so in Revelation that says, behold, he cometh with clouds, that's his appearance. Meeting him in the clouds is the rapture. And we don't want to confuse those either by just seeing clouds in both verses. And so really I think that's why it's the context. What has been the context of the book up to that point is the appearing. And this little parentheses brings in the truth of the rapture, which you do not find previously. And less part and he explains how is it not only that the dead are going to be with him when he comes, but what about us too? How are we going to be with him when he comes if he comes with all the Saints? Well, first he's going to catch us all up to

be with him. And so it's not him bringing the souls that are in heaven, disembodied spirits with him in verse 14. That's not the subject. It's bringing all the Saints with him when he comes. How's he going to do that? Well, first he's going to. Raise the dead, all caught up together, where we're the Lord, and then when he comes and his appearing, we're all with Him. Does that help? Sorry. My mind of confusion is this, where are the Saints who are dead already? And I think that's the question because some people think that, well, if they are with Jesus. Then they're already up there, so why would they be raised again? So I think someone may have to clear up the question, when a St. died, where is he? Is he really in glory? We sometimes use that phrase. We sometimes use that saying he's with Jesus. We know there's some truth to that. Maybe somewhere to expand that more while the body is still under grave. Better. Yeah, that's where they're at. And if I should die tonight or today, in the next moment I expect to open my eyes and see his face. They are there with Him. That is the hope. We are not waiting in some waiting room someplace. That's the wonderful thing about those who've been redeemed by the blood of the blood of Christ is that it should they close their eyes and death here, the next thing they see is their Savior's face and His presence. And I don't know how long it will seem between then and the rapture, but it'll probably seem like a few minutes because of the glory of that place. It's not our glorification. But the glory of the place is there and being in the presence of Christ is that is the blessed hope that we we have is that we will go to be with him. And then the rest of the blessed hope is this. I mean, is that wrong? You can comment on that rather than just one thought here. Very good outline of the chapter that we have, and if there's a little confusion, maybe that could be.

Taken up after after the meeting. Steve, I, I just you, you were very clear in your in your explanation. I appreciate it very much personally for myself. I was just thinking about the Lord Jesus. When he went to the cross, he gave up the ghost and they took him down and they prepared his body and they put it in the tomb. And on the third day, the city would rise. And in Acts chapter one, you recall that origin of where? Those ones were there, the angels, those men and wife, they said, You men of Galilee, this one with whom we see going up, and the clouds will come again in life manner, and so on. And so it was then that they saw in that day. And though I think I understand what you're getting at, Steve, we're not going to be so concerned with who's with him and that day. And these ones in Thessalonica, they had lost sight of the resurrection. They maybe even lost sight. Of those that were alive, he takes up the resurrection, but he mentions Enoch. We touched on it in Hebrews 11, but in Genesis 5 it tells you of Enoch and how old he was when he was here. And then it says he was no more and he had been taken up alive. And so Paul comes in with his brotherly lovely, he speaks about it and he explains to them that as we have in his parentheses, what's going to happen? And he just comforts our hearts with that thing. And I think that we really now, I believe we really need not get too far from that thing. You know, Paul went in there to explain that to them so that they would have a real understanding that in that moment. We which were alive would not go before those which had already gone into the grave. And so in First Corinthians 15, but thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. And so those ones that were in the grave would be caught up as we've already taken up, and we would remain alive, would be caught up together with them in the air. And the blessings in you and I is when we all come back together. I don't think Paul meant any more than that there. Concern those who had died would miss out on the coming of Christ, but when you look at this. Explanation of what is going to take place. It's a revelation made to the past of Paul. It's unfolded in a wonderful way. The coming of Christ for the Church actually effects those who have died firstly. Because it says the dead in Christ shall rise first. But of course it's all going to happen so quickly, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. But I just find it interesting that the concern is about the dead. Those who have died. They're the ones that are influenced first by the return of the Lord Jesus for the church and something else. Reference has been made to Enoch. And Brother Robert referred back to Zechariah how that the Lord was coming with all of his Saints. Now what is amazing to me is that this was revealed to Enoch back in Genesis, and the ground that we have for that is Jude. It tells us here in Jude. 14 And Enoch also the 7th from Adam prophesied of these say. Behold, the Lord comes with 10,000 of His Saints to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. So sometimes we wonder, just how much did Old Testament Saints? Know about the future. And if we only had Genesis, we wouldn't really know that this wonderful. Future revelation had been made known to Enoch, but we read about it in Jude, so it's a wonderful book that we have, and I believe that.

You know the appearing of Christ. Ought to indeed have an influence on our walk and our ways, and that's brought out in the first part of this chapter. There's something else I noticed in the first part with respect to abounding. Now if you back up to chapter 3 and verse 12. The apostle says the Lord made you to increase and unbound in love one toward another. And toward all men. Verse one of the next chapter. He ought to walk and to please God, so you would have found more and more. And then we have it in verse 10. We beseech you, brethren, that ye increase. More and more, this, to my mind, conveys the importance of spiritual growth. And that's what God looks for. And in writing for the Colossians, the apostle Paul, he desired that they would have found in the knowledge of God more and more, you know, I think. There's really no neutral ground, you might say, when it comes to spiritual things. We're either growing, we're increasing, we're abounding more and more, or we're going the other direction. It just kind of reminds me of being on a bicycle. As long as you're moving ahead on the bike, everything is OK. But you can't just say, well, I'm going to stop the bike. And expect that everything is going to be OK. It's going to you're going to fall over. So I just mentioned this because it's been a word to my own heart that we might realize that if we're not growing, we're really shrinking. And. The Apostle Peter, his desire was that we would grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and our Savior Jesus Christ. And this is all in view of his return. I believe every chapter here in First Thessalonians ends with the coming of Christ. What a profound influence it ought to have. On our walked in our ways. The apostle John, he spoke about it. You know, you could say that it does not yet appear. What we shall be. But we know that when he shall appear, we're going to be like him. We're going to see him as he is. I take it that's his appearing in glory. There's always an expression with the verbs that are. Brother's desire, the beginning of the meeting that we touch a little upon the first part of the chapter here. And of course it's been mentioned by our brother Wally that our walk is something that we should be concerned about, and we have excitation through the whole of the Old and New Testament concerning. The Christians walk, the Christians standing. I mentioned this before at a conference some years ago. I was puzzled and reading the early chapters of the Book of Judges where we see a number of kings that were missing. Their thumb and their great toe. Well, without the thumb you could not grasp anything. Without the great toe, you could not stand or walk. And so that. Was very puzzling to me, but we have these exhortations and I was like like to look at just a verse and Colossians chapter one. In connection with one of the early verses in Thessalonians that we've read that you might walk. Worthy of the Lord unto all, pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and. Not only do we have the word stand and walk, but another verb that's used that speaks and speaking and a verse just came to me a few moments ago and should characterize us as we.

Take up portions of His blessed word in First Corinthians chapter one and verse 10. Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. That you speak the same thing, and I might add in meekness. Like to say that in the first part of chapter four of our portion here brethren docs specifically about two things importantly. Sanctification. Means setting apart from what this world practices, and especially in connection with this sin of fornication. Sexual. Sin committed outside of the bonds of marriage. How important it is it's being set aside

completely in our world. How important it is that we respect it. God has given us sexual desires, and God created it that way. And there's a place for sexual activity within the bonds of marriage, very important. But to give place to anything outside of that is fornication. And that is what we are to do, to abstain from fornication. Verse four, that everyone of you should know how to possess. His vessel, that's his own body. In sanctification. And honor, the Holy Spirit of God dwells in our bodies. How can I use my body in something that dishonors God? That is not what we are called to brethren. So that is a very important thing that is gone into also in First Corinthians chapter six and seven. But I want to mention the other thing that is here encouraged. In our chapter is verse 9 as touching brotherly love. You need not that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. There's two mentions of the word love that are two separate words in the grief. The first, brotherly love, is phileo. It's that love of mutual appreciation and we are told to. Just read it in Hebrews chapter 13. Let brotherly love continue. That's what's so precious about these times of conference, when we can get together and discuss things together. We learn our position. We learn to appreciate one another. Brethren, that's important. But there is something else that is added here in our chapter. Yourselves are taught of God to love one another that's the agape love that's the love that God had toward this world. God loved this world. He gave his only begotten son. That's the love that God has because of who he is not of because of anything that there is of worthiness in us to be loved and so there may come come times when. With my brother, I have a problem with him. What am I going to do? That's where we need to bring in this agape love, to continue to love. Even though there might not be the mutual appreciation. There's a difference. How am I going to handle that? I'm going to continue to love, brethren, but it's not the same love. It's the love that we are told to love one another. I think that's so important.

Sanctification. But then it also talked about abstain from fornication. I know it was mentioned briefly, I think the word fornication, we don't use that word much anymore, do we? And there are young people don't even know what that word is. So you need to learn it. Parents, is not the responsibility of a school teachers to teach them things of such. It's not a Sunday school teachers responsibility. It's not the assembly. Its responsibility to teach your children. It needs to be taught over the word of God and in prayers fornication. And then there's the other side too, that I found perhaps in the practical side. I've noticed among the other things, that when we hear homosexuals, that's a fear. Lesbians, we don't even want to talk about it. I heard the other day they want to pull the kids out of school because the principal is one of those. Well, at the meantime now, by the way, I'm not saying I support that that's that's a terrible sin before God. But yet in a sense we no longer talk about people who are living in sin. Perhaps the principle at that school prior to that was one who lived in sin, but yet as if it was OK, it's not as well if there's such a thing as a higher degree of sin, we seems to become tolerant. Lot of the things that this world have accepted and you might say you're being legal. No, we're being what the word of God have to say or even a simple thing is divorce that are unscriptural and we marry afterwards that fornication or adultery. So we need to cling back to the word of God and to abhor those things that are evil. We talk about Enoch. Enoch was in a terror that the world was in a terrible condition. But yet he preached. You know what's interesting too is we don't know if anyone was saved from Enoch's preaching. Not until his sons, his grandson Noah. And even then, we didn't read up anyone being saved. But we see the grace of God's hand that his family was preserved. I made a note in my Bible in a reading meeting with Cellars and I'm going to share because I think it helps in this chapter, Chapter 4, verse one. The chapter 5, verse 11 is the personal lives and view of the Lords coming. Our personal lives and view of the Lords coming. And from chapter 5, verse 12 to the end is the collective assembly light in view of his coming. And we need to keep in mind that our view should be of his comments while we're here. And as you mentioned, those things David reminds me of. What Wally has said in Bob 2 verse five it mentions the word the lust of concupiscence. If you don't know what it means, I wrote that down too. Selfish human desire for an object, person, or experience any or all of those things are things that will change your view of His coming, or get your eyes off the Lord so that you no longer recognize it. It says in verse seven, For God hath not called us unto uncleanness. What brother David Speaking of, but unto holiness first Peter 1000 be holy, for I am holy. So he would have us to walk in these things. And then we have the love that's been mentioned in Chapter 9. And I believe it represent or shows a personal side of love. And it also shows a collective side of what's necessary in the assembly, how we should conduct ourselves with one another because you know, I believe that's the natural heart of a believer. When we're in guilt with the spirit that we take on that love of God. We take on the characteristics of Christ and then we walk in them, and then individually, if we do that, then simply collectively. One follows the other. It's helpful to see, well, he's addressing the motives if the motives aren't right, then really nothing else is going to be right. So that we've he's worked by the Lord Jesus that as you have received of us, how you ought to walk to please God. Now this world is filled with people trying to please themselves, and so the spirit of the age is to please yourself and to you have rights and so on and just fight for your rights and please yourself.

Fornication was the sin that characterized the Gentile world. God has intervened in the Western world and because of Christianity and the light of Christianity, we were exposed to the light of the righteousness of God and the moral standards of the Word of God in the Western Christian world. But now largely that has been given up during the last 50 years. And so the motives for the believer. These things affect us and we live in a world that is pleasing itself. So the exhortation that Paul gives is that he says he already spoke to them to walk and to please God. Their motive was to please the Lord, not to please Himself. And fornication is really to take pleasure without any reference to God at all. I might just say that He brings in another incident. Another possibility is that verse six, that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter. So the Gentile world was characterized by fornication and even in the assembly it was a possibility of a brother defrauding another brother. In connection with his wife and so he brings in the governmental actions of the Lord because that the Lord is the avenger in verse six of all such. As we also have forewarned you and testified, so he brings in this teaching in connection with sanctification. Are we sanctified everything in this world, the advertising and all of the visual arts and all of everything is. Designed to breakdown the sanctification, the separation of a believer. From this world that crucified the Lord Jesus, that rejected him, and that has not changed its mind at all. It's still on the same course. So let's take these instructions and consider. Is it really the Lord Jesus that we're trying to please? Are we doing this to please Him? If the motive isn't right, then we will not have an appreciation for the coming of the Lord, and we will not even take this exhortation to study, to be quiet. Verse 11. To do our own business, to work with our own hands as we commanded you, to mind their own business and do our own work, and to do it as unto the Lord and not as unto men. That's what he's saying. Mind their own business, do our own work, Produce fruit for the Lord because He's coming. The obvious confusion it's been thrown into the mix is to redefine these words. Like right now the Anglican Church in England is going through a process of making a decision to call marriage between homosexuals holies. They at present do not permit one of their Anglican priests to perform a wedding, but they're also working on that. How can we get there where we can call it a holy union? Redefining things. So when you read these things like about holiness. We need to understand what those words mean in the biblical sense and not let somebody redefine it so we can think about it. Why do you think there was such a strong push over the last years for homosexual marriage to be legalized? Because there were religious people in that movement that knew that if they could reach the point where marriage was introduced or the idea that they could be such a thing, redefine that word. Then it would be more accepting to religious people. And it's it's worked. There are groups and churches now that are working on ways to call this a holy union, to redefine

everything. Well, that's the day we live in. And as far as fornication goes, there's still plenty of people in the world that know what it means. But here's the interesting thing. I have talked with a number of young men over the years that will tell me they think it's not a sin, that it was OK as long as you weren't married. It's nothing wrong with it that that's that's a good thing to do get get it out of your system and then you get married and you settle down and then you stay loyal to one woman. Well, that's a lie too. And I think that there's, it's had an effect on evangelical Christendom to let the guard down and like, it's not really a biggie. Well, it is a big.

Like the connected thoughts that have with the subject of the body. Because it's the resurrection and the bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ with His Saints. Bottle it. As you have seen him go up into heaven, so He'll come in like manner. He's not going to have just the spiritual appearing in this world. He's coming back just as He went up. He is their man forever, a man in heaven, spirit, soul and body. And God intends to have you and I there with him, not just as spirits, but spirit, soul and body. That a sister's funeral some years back and mentioned in the funeral that that body lying in the casket was just the empty shell, but her spirit and soul was with the Lord. But you know that empty shell is a precious empty shell. Those folded hands in that casket had raised children, they had cared for the Saints, and we could go on and on. Our body is precious to the Lord. And he intends to raise up those bodies and unite them again in a wonderful new state of being glorified with him. But he intends to have us there, spirit, soul, and body. And so the body is important. And in First Corinthians 6, he says in the end of verse 13. The body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body and God. Has both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by his own power. And so as part of the subject of this chapter. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, Even so them also which sleep and Jesus will God bring with him, just as God raised the Lord Jesus up. Bodily resurrection. So He's going to raise his sleeping Saints and those bodies, and what we do in them now is important to him. Their precious bodies. They're not to be misused. He intends to have us there, just like his beloved Son and heaven above with him, His house filled with children just like his Son, not just in spirit and soul, but in body too, and absolute holiness. And if I'm really expecting the Lord to come, and that's my hope. I'm not going to involve myself in those things that defile the body because I'm looking forward to that. And if I'm going on in a way that's defiling the body in that way, I'm not looking for his coming. In fact, that's the last thing I want to see. You know, you cannot divorce the theory. You cannot divorce the doctrine of Scripture from the practice in our life. It's intended to have a moral effect. If we're looking for his coming, then I ought to be walking here like I'm looking for his coming. How can I defile the body? That's going to be just like His when He comes. These things are so intertwined together. It's just one more note so we don't mistake it. But in verse 16, the end of the verse and the dead in Christ shall rise first. That's resurrection from the dead. That's not being raised up to meet the Lord in the clouds. They're going to rise. First from the dead. That's the first event is the point. Not that they're going to rise first to meet the Lord in the air, and then later we will. Even if it's separated by milliseconds. No, the thought is the dead shall rise first. The 1St order of events is that they're going to be raised from the dead together. You know, it's a beautiful word together, isn't it? Together, you know, as loved ones go and our brethren go, that word becomes more precious to us together. Oh, he'll not separate us. One group from another. When we are brought into the presence of the Lord in the clouds, it's going to be together. And wasn't that what was burdening their hearts? These deer loved Saints were gone. Oh, you're going to be together. You know, Mr. Darby and his lectures in Toronto, he had several lectures on the second coming of the Lord Jesus. They're very easy reading and they're very edifying. But he said, you know, there's not going to be an advantage for one over the other.

The dead will not have an advantage, the living will not have an advantage, will all rise together. He likened it. He said, made the statement, you know that the Lord Jesus stood on the earth a glorified man, the head of the church, and he rose bodily and was received to that shekinah glory cloud received by the Lord God, sat on the right hand of the throne of God. And the church is going to have to go up the same way. The body of Christ is going to have to go up the same way as the head went up. Everyone that is a member of the body of Christ and those Old Testament Saints too, but every one of us he's addressing really the church here and might, might make that distinction in connection with First Corinthians chapter, First Thessalonians, chapter 4. He's speaking specifically of those that are in Christ. So those that are part of the body of Christ are going to be raised, and those that are alive are going to be glorified. Will stand on the earth and will rise the same way that the Lord rose and go through. Satan's realm, you might say, through the heavens, through the 1St heavens, 2nd heaven will go up through Satan's domain and will be paraded in victory before those fallen angels in that whole heavenly host, and in victory will enter into the courts of glory. And so the head is He's the first fruit of resurrection. The second installment of the Resurrection is going to be at the Rapture, which we've read of here. The third installment is in Revelation chapter 20. So the rapture, the resurrection, you might say, takes place in three stages, so in chapter 20 of Revelation. Let's read verse just the last part of verse 4. Them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ 1000 years. Then put a bracket just beside verse 5. There's a parenthesis here at the beginning of verse 5A Bracket. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. Brackets then he continues the subject. He says this is the first resurrection. Let me read it again. The last part of verse four. They lived and reigned with Christ 1000 years. The end of verse 5. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath heart in the first resurrection. And so that's the last installment in this resurrection that we've just read up in Revelation will take place just before the appearing of the Lord Jesus. And that resurrection will take place, and then the Lord will come, and he'll come with all of his Saints. In verse one of chapter 4, it says as he had received about how you ought to walk God so you would abound more and more. And so they were to walk as they had received it and that raises the question of how did they receive it and that's given in the 13th verse of the previous chapter or sorry, the 13th verse of the second chapter for this cause also. Thank you God without ceasing because when you receive the word of God. Which he heard of us, He received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. So they had received how they were to walk as coming not from men, but as from God as its source in God. That was really what he's encouraging them to do in this chapter. And so it was by revelation, not by human thought, but by divine revelation that they had received this. And apart from Revelation, you and I would not know how to please God. And so that's what He brings in in the second verse. For ye know they knew this by Revelation, the commandment which we gave you by the Lord Jesus. And he goes on to speak about what was known by Revelation, about fornication as far as what is and is not pleasing to God. Now that's kind of a preface to a question I have on the 4th verse. I realize our time.

Is almost gone, but I was hoping someone would touch on this. He says that everyone of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor. The knowledge of how we possess our vessel and sanctification and honor, Does that come by revelation or does that come by experience? And whatever the answer is, I wonder if a brother or two might spend just the next couple of minutes explaining to us. How we know? How we can possess our vessel in sanctification and honor. Well, one verse still into that somebody read close to it First Corinthians chapter 6, verse 18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body, but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. That's a unique thing. It means that your body is harmed, your brain is harmed, your emotions are harmed, and your spiritual life is harmed. It's a unique thing and it's treated as nothing in this world. So Christians have been affected by that to treat it a lot

less than we used to think about it or that the Scripture says about it. So this thought our brother is bringing forward that we need to understand. Exactly specifically, how to possess? And gone into a path of sanctification is an important thing, but starting with it, it's a unique sin. That is destructive. There are psychiatrists who say that there are many men in this country who have lived lives filled with fornication before they got married that cannot have a normal life with a woman without serious treatment. That's how bad it is. I think it's important too, to mention the the careful when you get on the Internet as deformed **********. When you see things that you're not supposed to see. And to me that poses. A very real important question for our sisters. You know when Adam and Eve sinned, God gave them clothes to cover themselves. The tendency of this world is to go around as uncovered as possible. So men go get buttoned up right up to the very neck with the tire around there to tire. But women? Tend to, in this world's way of thinking, to show as much of their body as they can. That's a quest that's a serious thing for our sisters to deal with, too. Please sisters, cover yourselves for the glory of God. And brothers, be careful what you look at on the Internet or wherever it might be because that's the way you tend to start degrading this world. Because Satan knows the lusts that are in our hearts and he tries to. Waken them so that we can be turned out of the. Way of the Lord. So the Lord help us, dear young brothers, to keep our vessels, our bodies for him. And when I see the way God used men that knew how to do that, oh, I want to encourage you young men. It's so good to see so many young men with a desire to be under the sound of the word of God. Keep your bodies sanctified. And don't give in to this world's ways of doing it because it's so important. With your question. I tend to think that the second part is. The result of the reflex of the first, so the 1St as you mentioned, was by the commandments that they had been given that knowledge that had been imparted to them. They were to abstain. The result of abstaining would be that they would possess their vessels and sanctification and honor. One is the reflex of the other, and so one is that the negative abstain results in the positive possessive sanctification and honor.

We can turn to Romans chapter 6 just to give a little foundational truth. In regards to how we possess our vessels to sanctification. We have very similar instruction in Romans chapter 6 and verse 13. It says. It says. Neither yield you, your members, as instruments of unrighteousness. Unto sin, but yield ye yield yourselves unto God. As those that are alive from the dead. And your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. It's helpful for us to understand the foundational truths of the gospel that we're dead as to what we were in Adam and we're alive in Christ and. We can't, certainly can't go into these truths in the in this meeting, but without these foundation, this foundational understanding of having died in Adam and living in newness of life. We're we're going to, we're going to struggle. With the practical side of Christianity, the fundamental truths are are what what really Christianity rests upon. And so I just present that with no time left, but it's important. It's restricted to six again, 18 and 20. What no ye that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own. You're bought with the price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God. So I think briefly it answered to your question, which is excellent. If we're doing anything that is outside of war, by God. That is not properly possessing. We don't belong to ourselves, we belong to the Lord, and everything that's done should be done to glorify God. And I would just briefly just quote this from first young people love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. Read it to you because I'm 40 Rd. We're 16. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flush, lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the father. Whatever works. So using these tests to ask yourself is what I'm looking at. Thinking about talking about doing. Lord by God is it. It's a part of this loving the world there, isn't it? And if the answer is it's a lot of the eyes play, subscribe, play, it's not properly possessing. I think your question, Mike is excellent. For 36 in the appendix. One of Satan's greatest tricks is to tell you you're missing out. God's withholding something from you. Adam and Eve were in the garden and everything was perfect in every direction. Imagine just looking out. Everything's perfect and there's one tree and Satan says that's the very best, and God's holding it from you. And it says four times the just shall live by faith. And part of overcoming is understanding that God has the very best for each one of you. And he tells you what it is in his word, and it's not ever less than the very, very best. And faith believes God and says, OK, that's what I want. And The thing is, the trap is laid in vain for the people who see it. When you see the trap, if I'm going to try and trap you and I, I put out this circle and I and I put this treat in there that you'd want. But you see me do that. You're like Matt, that's goofy. I'm not going to take it. Well, the enemy of our souls is laying a trap every day for us. And if we see that trap, we say, I don't want that because I know that's not God's best. You're not going to fool me because I know he loves me. So the Lord help us that we have that earnest desire to please the Lord as our brother mentioned that and that we would walk as as our brother Phil said, in the newness of life. We're not here to try harder to try and make The Who we were in Adam do better. He's given us the power of a brand new life in Christ.

Scranton Conference: 2011, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Reading

Blessed God and our loving Father, we. Give thanks this afternoon for thy love. We give thanks for reminding us.

Once again of our heavenly character. And surely we know it is only but a little while. We shall be with thee. We know too, that the little while that we're left in this scene. How much we need to be? In full dependence on these, we are reminded. How the world? How Satan, the world and the flesh. Often work against us, but we do know that he that is in you is greater than he that is in the world. So we look to Thee for help. We pray that that would continue to give us the faith that is required to walk in this for this little while and help us. To be ever mindful of thy soon return, we think of how thou could say surely. I come quickly. And may I respond, Yes, thy word is recorded. Even so, come Lord Jesus, in the meantime, we look to the. And we will commit this meeting into thine hand would ask for help once more. Through Thy Spirit that will give us a portion to encourage our hearts. So we give thanks and we look to Thee now and ask for Thy help once more in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen. I'm gonna ask whether Tim that you read again. First Thessalonians chapter 4 verse 13 to the end. And then when you're done that you won't get to it all, but just to round out the picture, if you would read the last part of First Corinthians 15 verse 51 to the end. First Thessalonians chapter 4, beginning at verse 13. But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, Even so then which also sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 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. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel. And with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. 1St Corinthians 15, verse 51. Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this

incorruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So in this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, this mortal shall have put on immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written. Death is swallowed up in victory. Oh, death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, For as much as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. Well, we noticed this morning that the Lord Jesus, for the comfort of the disciples, spoke of His coming again and the Father's house and receiving them to Himself and so on. But He doesn't develop that it there in John 14. He just gives it simply as a fact for their comfort at that time before He left them and returned to the Father. And you really have to go to Paul's ministry to get the development of this truth. Will never really understand the truth of the Lord's coming without going to Paul's epistles. It's given to Paul to develop it in a very remarkable way. And so we find these Thessalonians, they had turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for his Son from heaven. But his brother John said this morning, there really are two parts to the second coming of Christ. There's the Lord's coming for his Saints and the Lord's coming with his Saints. And when the Thessalonians were saved, this hadn't been developed yet.

And they had turned to they had turned to God, and they were waiting for the Lord Jesus to come back from heaven. And really, they were waiting for the Lord Jesus to come back and establish his Kingdom. But what happened was some of their number had died while they're waiting. Some of the Saints in Thessalonica had died. And now they're concerned, well, what's going to happen to these ones? We, we're waiting for the Lord to come back. And now some of our number have died. And have they missed out on things? And so the Spirit of God uses the apostle Paul to write to them. And explain very carefully to them that know their loved ones who had died in faith had not missed out in any way. They, like the Thessalonians, were waiting too, just in a different waiting room. They were waiting as we get in Corinthians, absent from the body and present, or in Philippians, I should say, absent from the body and present with the Lord. And so those who have died in faith up until this point, they're really waiting for the same thing we are. They are not in the, they are not in the Father's house with glorified bodies, yet they're absent from the body and present with the Lord, but they are waiting in a much happier waiting place for this event that we have read here in second in First Thessalonians 4. Now just to confirm what I said, notice on the same page here the last verse of the third chapter to the end. He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father. At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, notice this with all his Saints. And so how is it going to happen that he's going to come with all his Saints if some are are passed away and some are still living? Well, the event that we're going to notice in this meeting is going to reunite the Saints of God, those who died in faith, those who are alive at the rapture. It's going to reunite them and unite them with the Lord Jesus so that when he comes back with his Saints, every St. of God is going to be with them. Important to see that asleep here refers to the body. There's only the body that sleeps, and that word is never used in relation to the unsaved. They are dead, dead in their sins. The believer who passes through the article of death, Mr. Kelly translates it put to sleep by Jesus. But it's only in relation to the body. It's not the soul. There's no such a thing as soul sleep. The moment the breath leaves the body, the soul and the spirit are consciously in the enjoyment of the presence of the Lord without any hindrance. What the body is in the grave and it may go back to dust, but the apostle is showing us here that when the Lord comes back, that's the second aspect of the return of the Lord. The coming of Christ is appearing, which we noted this morning is different from his, the rapture, but he's going to bring with him. So this solved the problem for the Thessalonians Saints. He's going to bring with them. As we read here. If we believe that. Jesus died and rose again. Even so them also would sleep in Jesus will God bring with him that is the Lord is going to bring our departed brethren. With him. When he appears to this world. But how is that possible? Because many of them had passed. Through the article of death had passed away in Thessalonica. And so the apostle says they're going to be raised with a glorified body, We will have a changed body, and we will meet together in the clouds and wherever, be with the Lord and then return with him. So it's important to note that.

Sleep here. That part of our beings that. That is still connected with the old creation. We are still connected with this world by means of our bodies. And it's a body of humiliation is a correct translation because it is a body that is continually humbling us. Sicknesses, weaknesses, infirmities, pain, suffering. As you get older, not only your heart cries out for the Lord, but your flesh too, because. You feel the limitations of the body of the apostle says you're going to have a glorified body like Christ and those that have passed through death, they're going to be joined with you. You're going to meet them again and together come with the Lord at his appearing. So sleep is a temporary state of things, and that's why those who who died in faith, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, are referred to in that way. When we lay a loved one in the grave who knows Christ, who knew Christ, it's only a temporary separation. Tonight, in the normal course of things, we're all going to lie down and go to sleep. But in the normal course of things, we expect it only to be temporary. It's only going to be a few hours. And tomorrow morning, at some point, we're going to rise up from our beds and come back to this place if things workout the way we anticipate. And so that's why the body is referred to as sleeping. But I think before we pass on, we want to notice too, that when a loved one dies, it's not that we don't sorrow, brother. But we saw it doesn't say we sorrow not, but we sorrow not as others who have no hope. You talked this morning, Brother Steve, about having hope. There's nothing worse than hopelessness, Probably one of the most disparaging words in the English language, hopelessness. You go to the doctor and he tells you your case is hopeless. You get into a financial situation and the consultant says it's pretty hopeless situation. That's, that's an awful thing to, for, for a person to hear. But we don't we. It's not that we don't sorrow. In fact, I believe that the Christian sorrows deeper than the unbeliever, because our affections have already been awakened in a very real way. And so when we when a loved one dies, we sorrow. And we may sorrow even deeper than the unbeliever who builds up a callus to things and grits their teeth and grins and bears it. But while we sorrow deeper, we don't sorrow with despair. And so the Thessalonian brethren, they didn't understand what was going to happen. And so, lest they sorrow with hopelessness, he explains very clearly what is going to take place. I say that because I think, and I have met Christians who feel it's wrong to shed a tear or to show emotion when a loved one dies. It's not. We do show emotion, and rightly so. We feel it and we feel it keenly, but we remember that the sleep of the body is only a temporary state of things. The things mentioned here that we're talking about are being very quickly. Let loose by Christendom as we know it. So it's a pretty. Pertinent subject. I'm not sure of all the reasons why it's happening that way. But I'm going to relate a comment that I overheard. It was in another room. It wasn't a private company, but a person said, yeah, I believe in in the rapture, but I don't hold it dogmatically. Well, that's quite a compromise. Well, he did. He said that, I suppose, because he didn't want to offend others in the room who probably either had no clue about the rapture or just flat out didn't believe it. But it's it's. Very important issue in understanding what Christianity is, we, we really are not people that belong this world. We are going to be related and associated with Christ in the Kingdom time, but we're not going to usher in the Kingdom in that way because that is one of the thoughts. It's a drop of dispensationalism. It's a drop in considering our heavenly calling. It's it's dropping the specialness of what the church is.

It is bringing Christianity down to this world. And if Christianity does not have a role in bringing in the Kingdom, then what the world are we doing here? And that's some of the concept. And so a lot of Christian organizations, be they churches and schools and, and the various

Christian colleges and whatever these things are being just flat out dropped and in some cases actually ridiculed. So be aware. It's out there, but it is a pretty fundamental thought in keeping our our eyes upward, considering that we really do not belong to this world, that Christ has called us out from this world, and that we are a heavenly people associated with a risen Christ. And those things are all tied in together. And you drop the rapture, you have to drop those other teachings as well. That's very helpful. And you find a little comment that Paul makes in the 15th verse of this chapter that shows that the hope of the Lord's coming for his Saints has always been the proper hope of the believer and it has always been the present hope of the believer. Because the apostle Paul says here we which are alive and remain. Who was he referring to? He was referring to himself and the Thessalonian believers. Now I realize that Paul later on in his ministry. Realized that he was going to, as a special vessel, lay down his life for the Lord. But when he wrote this early epistle to the Thessalonians, he was looking for the Lord Jesus to come at any moment. And so he says, we which are alive and remain. And if, brethren, if Paul could say to the Thessalonians, we which are alive and remain, how much more we which are alive and remain today? Because one thing is for sure and certain. The Lord Jesus hasn't come yet, but we're closer to the Lord's coming than we've ever been before. If Paul could feel the imminence of it, how much more you and me. There's never been anything in the history of the church to hinder the Lord from coming for us or to keep it back as a present hope of the of the believer. Now, certainly as we get near the end of the age, we see things develop that are setting the stage for after the Lord comes. For what we John has referred to as the appearing in the Kingdom and so on, but there has never been a sign connected with the Lord's coming for us. The signs are always in connection with the Lord's coming with us, with the with the appearing. And so that's why the Thessalonians could have it as a present hope. That's why the early brethren had it as a present hope. That's why my father had it as a present hope. But certainly, brethren, as I say, as we get down close to the end, can't we see that we're almost there? We've got to be right on the eve of this momentous event, and that ought to thrill our hearts. I believe that. The Apostle Paul. Speaks of the coming of Christ. In everyone of his epistles except perhaps 3. Doesn't speak of it. I don't believe writing to the Galatians. You know, the Galatians had gotten so far from the truth of the gospel they're mixing up grace with the law. And so it's through a law that we can be justified before God. Well, that was making. Christ of none effect and so it was such serious error he has to recall them to the basic truth of the gospel that one is justified by faith alone, so it didn't seem appropriate to. Bring in the thought of the coming of Christ. And of course in Ephesians we're already seated as seen as seated in the heavenly places. We're all we're up there already so. But every other epistle except the three, I believe that he does bring out some with regard to the community here in First Thessalonians he refers to it in every chapter.

And I believe also in the second epistle he speaks of it. References made to every chapter so we see the importance of. The coming of Christ, the second Coming. And I think it's instructive that. Need to be aware that is being given up. I picked up hymn books. And I've looked through the hymn books. And these are Christian hymn books, and there's hardly any hymns about the rapture. But in our hymn book instead of one that we sing out of the little flock. Many, many hymns with respect to his coming and we've been singing them in this conference. It's very wonderful. Actors of Grace hymn book, the same thing. So many hymns that have as their theme the coming of the Lord Jesus for his own. I think it's important to note that it's only in the ministry of the apostle. Appalled that we have this truth revealed and developed, no other apostle brings before us this revelation. This was a revelation to the Apostle Paul. The Lord, reverently speaking, did not develop the the manner of His coming. He referred to it in John 14, but it's all that had a special revelation among others. Such as the. The Church is the body of Christ, our heavenly calling. The Lord suffered to continue. These are all peculiar to Pauls ministry and not developed in other Apostolic writings. Perhaps they learned it from the Apostle Paul, but it's not part of revelation in the Old Testament. There's no reference in the Old Testament scriptures. This event that we are Speaking of, rapture. There's many references. Numerous to the Lord establishing his Kingdom, returning for the blessing of the nation of Israel and the blessing of the Gentiles through them, but nothing of this mystery. This is a mystery in the New Testament is not something mysterious, but it's something that was not revealed at that time, not revealed formally, but we need to regard. Realize that Paul's ministry is for the church today. And it has largely been given up by evangelicalism. We can thank God that by his grace we have some, we have knowledge of this wonderful, these wonderful truths that were revealed to the apostle and embodied in his epistles to us in the New Testament. We spoke a great deal this morning about the Father's house and the time when we're going to be with the Lord Jesus and his desire to have us there. But when we are ushered into the Father's house, we're going to be ushered in altogether as a heavenly company. And that's what the apostle Paul is encouraging the Thessalonians with here. So he says that those of us who are alive aren't going to get there first. Those who have died in faith, they're not going to get there first. And then he gives us very clearly the series of events that's going to take place. The Lord Jesus is going to come, and He's not going to come back to earth to call to get us. He's going to come on the cloud. He's going to give a shout, and the dead in Christ are going to rise 1St. And then we, which are alive and remain, are going to be caught up together with them. That is, they're not going to get there first. We're not going to get there first. We're going to be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air. And when we meet together, the Lord in the air, then he's going to usher the completed redeemed company, heavenly company into the Father's house. And isn't that beautiful to think of, brethren? No ones going to have a special place in that, in that way and at that time. Such is his favor to all his children, that when God's family enters the Father's house, they're not going to order or enter in any pecking order or any special order.

We're all going to enter together and sit down in his presence with Christ in the mids. It was a true loss to the Church for many hundreds of years. Given up quite quickly after the apostles passed off the scene, and John 14 that we read earlier was often applied to a believer on his deathbed that the Lord was coming for him. Or one close to death might say, the Lord's coming for me and applying John 14 in that way. And you know, it's striking when you think about it, because where does that put the believers hope then? His hope is in death. Not in life. My hope is to die and go to be with the Lord. But our hope isn't in death. Our hope is in the Lord's coming for us. And our hope is not to be, as is just commonly thought among men and women in this world, that we're going to be spirits kind of flitting from cloud to cloud in heaven with little Halos over our heads and so on. And men perhaps get that thought from the Lord, saying they're neither marrying or given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven or some of those expressions. And so they draw thoughts from that. But you know, the Lord was raised as the apostle says here. He was raised. Spirit, soul, and body from that grave. And God has made you and I spirit, soul, and body. And we would not be satisfied until, as our brother read in the meeting before, I shall be satisfied when I awaken Thy likeness. What is his likeness? He's a man and a glory. Spirit, soul and body. We would not be satisfied having been created from the hand of God. A whole being that consists of spirit, soul and body to be there and eternity just as a spirit and soul. We won't be satisfied until we're there, complete, so to speak. Spirit, soul and body just as He is, and that's how He's made us. We would not be comfortable, so to speak, at at rest unless we were as He's created us, but glorified. Let's read that in the end of Philippians 3 because I think it helps to see this very clearly. We'll notice it in first Corinthians 15 two, but just to get it again in Philippians chapter 3 and verse 20. Our conversation is in heaven from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, our body of humiliation, that it may be fashioned like under his glorious body or body of glory according to the working whereby. He is able even to subdue all things unto himself. You know, when Paul was caught up temporarily to the eternal dwelling place of God, referred to in 2nd Corinthians 12 as the 3rd heaven, he really wasn't comfortable there. In fact, he had to

say in relating it, whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell. God knoweth, because for the apostle Paul it was a temporary state of things. He was caught up to see Christ in glory and he came back to earth. It was temporary, but when you and I are caught up at the rapture, it's going to be a permanent state of things. That's why it says at the end of our chapter. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. And we're going to be Steve, as you say, perfectly comfortable in his presence because we're going to have bodies that are changed and suitable to that sphere of things. And when you and I sit down in heaven, it's going to be, as we said this morning, the Father's house. It's going to be home because we're going to be perfectly comfortable in traveling a great deal. I find I'm very comfortable in many of the homes of the people of God. And they come out and they do everything they can to try to make you comfortable. But you're never as comfortable as in your own home. I saw a little motto in a bedroom, a guest room I was using in a brother's home. One day it said, it's not home sweet home. Adjust. And that's what we do down here, don't we? We adjust. But brother, it's going to be no adjustments When we get to the Father's house. We're going to have bodies of glory like unto his body of glory. We're going to never have anything again to annoy us, nothing from within.

Nothing about our surroundings. I don't care how many houses you build, how many times you move the furniture, how many new things you buy for your home. There's always something you wish was just a little bit different, something that isn't quite as comfortable or conducive to your lifestyle as you'd like, but rather nothing like that in the Father's house. And so we're going to undergo that, that change. John does mention it in his epistle, just very briefly. And I think it's beautiful to see because in John's gospel he records, I will come again and receive you to myself. No development. John says that not only are we going to be with him, but we're going to be like him. We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And this really then bridges us to the portion we read in First Corinthians 15, because in First Thessalonians 4 he doesn't take up so much the change. Just the series of events that are going to take place to bring us to meet the Lord in the air. In fact, in First Corinthian air, in First Thessalonians 4, he doesn't even really take us into the Father's house. We meet the Lord in the air. And wherever with the Lord, when he's in heaven, we're with Him. When he comes back to reign, we're with him. We never leave his sight again. But then Paul, in the epistle to the Corinthians, he developed this change, this mystery, which as John said, is not something that's hard to be delved into or looked, looked into, but it's something that wasn't known previously, now revealed. Just to add to your thought to from First Corinthians 15 and. Looking at. Verse 43, the end of the verse. It is sown in weakness. It is raised in power. So not only comfortable, but a body, a body change to be able to contain and to to to walk in that sphere of things. When the angelic being appeared to to Daniel, he had to reach down and and pick him up and stand him on his feet and kind of hold him up there. John saw the Lord he fell at his feet is dead. And these bodies that we have of weakness, we could never be in that place. And bear it not for a minute. And so it was only by a power outside of them that they were sustained, for the visions even that they saw. We could never in these bodies of weakness be in that place. They have to be raised in power. All the Old Testament believers will be raised at the same the same juncture. Juncture. The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shelter voice of triumph and power. Suppose it has a military connotation, a shout of victory, and the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God. Time to March, marching orders. We're waiting for those and the dead in Christ shall rise first. What a tremendous power will be put forth many of the Saints of God. Have been burnt at the stake. Their ashes have been scattered. Far and wide God is going to bring that the remnants of that body together. Just think of of the power that will be put forth. We have it in Ephesians, the end of Ephesians one, do we not a reference to it. Verse 19. What is the exceeding greatness of His power to us? Words who believe. According to the working of His mighty power, which He brought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, and so on, that power was put forth in the resurrection of Christ. First fruits we follow. The same power is going to raise us. Often change us into. Conformity to Christ and where it speaks in first John three with our brother Jim referred to it. It's really morally there. It's now we will be physically like the Lord, of course, but first John three, I think there's more the moral sense.

We love it. We are now. Are we, the sons of God? It does not yet appear that what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like him. We shall see Him as he is. That's wonderful to contemplate that we're going to be like Christ sometimes we're unlike him in our. Behavior down here, but up there we're going to be morally like Christ as well as having bodies of glory. I don't like to use the term brethren. I don't know if I'm going too far here, but I don't like to use the term new body. I know that is used sometimes. It's not really a different body. It's the same body transformed into a body of glory. That same body that we have. We're going to recognize one another in the glory. I'm going to recognize Wally Dear and and others they'll be. A resemblance. The apostle Paul is going to recognize the Thessalonians Saints. They were his glory and joy. Well, if he couldn't see them, how could he be? How could they be His glory and joy? So there's going to be recognition in the glory. But the relationships of life, such as marriage, will no longer. Apply in the in the glory. To suggest that. There will be no bodies. In other words, we're going to have replacements. Deny the truth of the resurrection, would it not? But we know that the bodies are going to be resurrected. Not replaced, but resurrected and changed. And this is the power of God and resurrection. It's awesome to think about. So the Lord and resurrection had the same body that He had as a man when He walked here in this world. It was the same body that was laid in the tomb. But when He came forth from the dead, He showed them that He had a body and resurrection that wasn't subject to physical hindrances. He could come and stand in the midst with the door shut and so on. And the Lord Jesus now at the right hand of God, has a glorified body, but it's the same body as you say that He had. When he came in incarnation, and I think it's helpful, what Wally said is that if we're going to tenaciously hold to the truth of resurrection, we cannot say that it's a new body. And so it it's, he says in First Corinthians 15 where we read, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Now we talk about the rapture taking place quickly, and it will that the very word itself in the original denotes that. But it is interesting that it's the change of the body that is specifically mentioned as being in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Because first of all, those of our loved ones and all those who've died in faith, they're buried somewhere, at least for the most part. And so there are those whose graves are long forgotten and maybe cities built over those, those graveyards, freeways or whatever. There's many who are buried at sea and so on. And there's many in graveyards that are buried 6 feet below the the earth, but when the Lord Jesus gives the shout, they are going to be raised with a body that is not subject to physical hindrances. You know, it's interesting that you never read of the graves being opened at the rapture. Why? Because they won't have to be now. When Lazarus was raised from the dead they had to rule away the stone. He was raised with the same body that he went into the grave with. When there were those at at the Lords death that were raised the great it says the graves were open and many of the bodies of the Saints which slept arose. Why did they had to be opened? Because they were raised with those same physical bodies that were subject to physical hindrances. And subsequent to their resurrection, at some point they re entered the tomb. But when the Lord gives the shout, those bodies are whatever. If it's six, six feet of earth, if it's sixty fathoms of water, if it's a freeway or a city or whatever, it's not going to be a physical hindrance. Now what about those of us who are alive and remain? Suppose the Lord came before this meeting was over this afternoon. There's something between US and the cloud that is hindering these bodies in the state they are in now.

From rising to meet the Lord in the air, there's a ceiling and a roof and metal and so on. But we're going to get an instantaneous change in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, so that that roof above us is not going to be a physical hindrance. We're going to, we can rise right

through that roof or wherever we are, if we're on the 6th floor or in the basement, we can rise immediately to meet the Lord. In the air, and I think this is important to understand because many have questioned, well, how is it going to take place? How can people in the tomb are buried underwater at sea or how can people in buildings? What's going to happen? Remember, we're going to have bodies of glory like unto his body of glory. That same body that the Lord Jesus came and stood in the midst with closed doors and four walls is the same body that we are going to receive chained. These bodies change. To be like His body of glory so that we can rise no matter where we are. He was crucified in weakness and so the cross wasn't a display of power, but the resurrection is the greatest power that this world will ever see is displayed in in the power of God and resurrection. And as you say, some might who question it might raise hindrances, but you know, no matter how broken down the body of a believer becomes left in the ground or wherever it is. And spread around, that power is able to gather. It back up and Balaam says in this prophecy, and I've enjoyed it, who can count the dust of Jacob? Well, though these bodies go to dust and be scattered the world around, there's one who can count the dust of Jacob and gather it back up. And that power is beyond any other display of power. I believe that even in the creation and the formation of the world's far beyond that. Is the resurrection. Enjoyed to that little word together their brother brought out the order of things. That the dead raised first, you know, even if it be just for a twinkling of an eye, they're going to enjoy the same thing the Lord did. He stood triumphant. On this earth. Victor over death. On this earth, and they're going to stand, even if it is but for a moment that we can't even measure. They who have gone through what the Lord went through in the sense that they've died and been buried, are going to have the privilege of enjoying and knowing and feel the power of resurrection. And they're going to stand triumphant on this earth. And then we're going to be caught up together. And I remember. Brother little when he took when we would read this portion, just love that word together and I'm sure he often thought of his dear row it when he would bring it out. He says it's together. You know, he was a very even by nature social brother, so to speak, and that thought of being together. With the Saints is a precious thought, never to be alone again. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. And so we know, no matter how alone we might be from others, the Lord is always with us. But that word together is a precious word. It's really nice how the apostle Paulie comforts the hearts of the Thessalonians with respect to those that had died. You know, that was their concern that they're going to miss out on something. But. When you think about it. I don't know that she. Make a big point about this, but really it's the dead in Christ that are going to be impacted first. That's what it tells us here, when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, while it's the dead in Christ. Isn't it that here's that first? But of course, as you point out, we which are alive and remain, we're going to be caught up together with them and arrive at the same time in the presence of the Lord. What a comfort this must have been to the Thessalonians.

And it's for our comfort. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. Can't think of a greater comfort? President kind present distress realize that to coming the Lord. It could take place today. First in second Timothy one verse 10 brings the same thought I believe first second Timothy 110 just to get the connection. Christ Jesus before the world began but is now made. Maybe you should read the ninth verse. Who has saved us and called us with an holy calling? Not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death. An old death and has brought life, and that should be incorruptibility. Life for the soul, incorruptibility for the body to light through the gospel. As we mentioned, it was through the apostles. Teaching and. Doctrine that this was brought out, that we would have a body incorruptible. We have now a corruptible body. If you pass through the article of death and your body will go back to God, it'll be it'll see corruption. The Lord never could see corruption because there was no sin in his body. But now this is a much deeper revelation than the Old Testament Saints would understand anything about. They knew there would be a resurrection, but they had no idea what kind of a body they would be in. They do. It did believe in their resurrection. But here Paul tells us we're going to have a body that will partake of incorruptibility. And this has been all brought to light through the gospel, through the revelation that Paul LED received from the Lord in glory. So there will never be a breakdown again. No, some of us are starting to feel a little bit the breakdown of the body here and what we like to refer to as the aging process. But it, it's encouraging, isn't it, brethren, to realize that there's a change coming. And I said to somebody the other day, the change is looking better all the time as we get a little older and but there's a change coming that is going to transport us into a state of things that will never change again. You know, we might reverse certain processes here in this life and you know, they advertise certain soaps and that will reverse the aging process of the skin and certain vitamins and nutrients that will reverse their slow the aging process here. But we won't need any of that when we get to the Father's house because this change is going to be something that will be permanent. And I know it's a little different thought, but you know when you go to Revelation. The end of Revelation and you find the bride, about 1000 years after she's been with Christ, she still referred to as a bride in all her freshness and loveliness. There's no breakdown, there's no deterioration there. I suppose any of us who've been married for any length of time, if we were to bring our wedding albums here and pass them around, everybody would have to admit that a change comes in. 26 years in our life together has brought a change in that's very note, very noticeable. I enjoyed Brother John Kaiser last Lords Day morning. He had the Sunday school at the Kentucky Conference and he was talking about change versus things that last for eternity and so on. And he had a photograph and the children were all sitting on the front row. And he passed this photograph up and down the front row. And he asked the children if they knew who this person was was. And all the children shook their head no, they, they had no idea who this person was. Well, it was a picture of John himself when he was a boy. And the point he was making is that time now brings its changes. But the bride 1000 years after she's been with Christ, 10,000 years. An eternity, if you can measure such a thing. No, there'll be no, she'll still be all there in her freshness and loveliness as the bride and all the heavenly company too. But I think it's beautiful to realize, and I know there are brethren here this afternoon who are feeling the weight of years far more than some of us are, but, and some of us are considered young by them. But just think there's a change coming at any moment where you're going to leave all that behind. And all the spare parts, the replacements, the knees and the hips and the other replacements, they're all going to be left behind.

And a change is going to take place that will never change again. Brethren, we consider first John chapter 3 and verse 2. Now are we the sons of God, and does not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see him as he is, and every man that half this holding him purify himself even as he is pure. So we can encounter the purifying effect by having the Lord's coming before us now. That should hasten or step towards that goal. Living from the Lord while we're here. Dale in that regard, I'd like to read a portion in Second Thessalonians because I think it really brings out what you say. And I think it's an important that time is getting going along. And I think it's important to realize that, you know, it's not enough just to come to meetings like this and talk about the Lord's coming and enumerated as one of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. As Bruce said, it is one of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. And brethren, we wanted tenaciously hold on to this precious truth and the order in which it's given in in the New Testament. But it's more than that. The reality of this in our souls, as Dale has pointed out, is going to have a practical purifying effect on our lives. In fact, in the measure in which I'm looking, or you're looking for the Lord to come this afternoon in that measure. It will separate us from the world and give us to live in the proper way as strangers and pilgrims here. And Paul points this out to the Thessalonians in his second epistle. Just going to read the last two verses of chapter 2. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us and hath given us everlasting

consolation, there's that comfort we spoke of and Good Hope through grace. And brethren, it is a Good Hope. And it's only on the basis of grace. But then notice this. Comfort your hearts. But He doesn't stop there and establish you in every good word and work. Now again, I want to say this very circumspectly, but I suggest that in the measure in which we understand the truth of the Lord's coming and we appreciate it and enjoy it in our souls as a living reality, it is what gives us ballast and stability in our walk and our work for the Lord. And you talk to Christians who through miss teaching. Do not understand the truth of the Lord's coming. They are confused as to the rapture and the appearing and our present position and ushering in the Kingdom and all those kinds of things. Talk to them. And yes, many of them are put me to shame as far as personal piety and so on. But talk to them a while and you find there's often instability in many aspects of their Christian life. What is it that's going to give us real stability? And what is it that's going to establish our proper work for the Lord in the context of eternity? It's understanding these, this truth that we've been Speaking of in these two reading meetings today. And that's why it's important. And it's interesting that we won't take time to turn to it. But when he refers to it as a sure and steadfast hope in the end of Hebrews 6, he says which hope we have as an anchor of the soul. You know, the only other time you have an anchor mentioned in Scripture is in connection with the shipwreck in Pauls day in Acts 27 and 28. And there we find that when they got rid of the anchor out of the ship, there was disaster. Brethren, when we get rid of the anchor, it's the truth of the Lord's coming that anchors us. It's the truth of the Lord's coming. When we're anchored to that, then we we work around. That is the pivotal point.

In our lives and everything we do and all our service for Christ is going to be with the Lord's coming as the pivotal point. It's going to anchor us in the proper way. And the Lords coming in, in the New Testament is the pivotal point of everything. Everything in Christianity is in view or in respect to the Lord's coming. But if we Cut the Rope and lose that anchor, we're going to be like a ship without a rudder. We're going to turn into the wind and drip. That's what is brought before us, Jim at the end of the chapter that he suggested there First Corinthians 15, the apostle has been Speaking of these marvelous truths of. Glorified body that we would have death being overcome, grave conquered, and so on. He takes us up into the glory, but He brings us back down to earth at the end of the chapter. And we need to, we need to be reminded. We're not in the glory yet, brethren. We are here in a scene of conflict and we have the privilege of holding forth the word of life and preaching the gospel. We can't do that in the glory. And so he says. Always abounding in the work of the Lord, whether it be among the Saints or in reaching the lost. Remember, when we give out the gospel, it's in view of the Lord's coming, because when he comes. The door for the unsaved will be forever shut. They'll never have another opportunity in these favored Christian lands in which we live to hear the glad tidings. So when we preach the gospel, it should always be in view. The Lord is coming. At any moment the door of grace will be closed on the Sinner. And we thank God that He waited until we had believed. So. It's always abounding in the work of the Lord. For as much as you know that your labor is not in vain, in the Lord steadfast. Unmovable as to the truth of God, but always abounding. I sometimes say it's like a compass. Every boy and girl knows what a compass is. There's one there's one arm of the compass which must be firm and solid, and the other arm goes out as far as you want in in drawing the circle so well, maybe the thought is a little bit different, but we need to be steadfast and firm and yet all we abounding. We should have our foot in the assembly. But we have the world as our pirate. That steadfast and unmovable is very important. As you go into school, into the job, and you start to speak with other Christians, you're going to find that they don't believe. Many of them don't believe of the OR look forward to the imminent coming of Christ for us today. And they have a lot of scriptures. There's a whole system of teaching that denies the fact that Jesus Christ is coming back at any time. And they're preparing the world for Christ and they think it's their job, their job and their duty to vote, get in the political system and vote to change this world and to join the army or the the armed forces and to set this world right and to get the world ready for Christ to return and be. That's because their hope is in the Kingdom, but yet our hope isn't in the Kingdom. Our hope is to be with Christ. And if you look over in Revelation. You'll find that the Lord has a special blessing, a special place, a special position for the church. And in Revelation chapter 21, we we have in this chapter we have both the eternal state and we have the millennial scene. The 1St 8 verses are the millennial state, but you'll find here. Read verse one and I saw a new heaven and a new earth. For the 1St heaven and the first earth were passed away. There was number more sea. And I, John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. This is the bride of Christ. This is the assembly. Of the New Jerusalem, coming down from God, out of heaven, prepared as a bride, adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men, and so the Tabernacle of God comes down.

To the earth, the new earth, and he's and God is with men. And he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them. And be their God. But we see here that the Church, New Jerusalem, God is in. The Tabernacle of God, he's in the New Jerusalem and he's down on earth, in the new earth, but he's in has a distinct place. There's not going to be a ruling party. There's not going to be a government like there was in the Millennium with with Israel ruling over the world. But there's going to be a distinct place for the church. We're all be together, but there's going to be a distinct place for the church in the heart of God. Just like you have your wife sitting next to you in all this group of people, she is distinct to you. And in the eternal state, the church will be distinct to God. And so if we think we're going to be part of that millennial blessings and be part of God's earthly people, it takes away that eternal state. That we're looking forward to. So in the meantime, there is a work to be done about always abounding in the work of the Lord. We've taken up many things in these readings concerning what is future, but as long as we're left here and the Spirit is here, there's a work still to do. In fact, the very fact that we're still here shows that there is that work to do. Because it says in the end of Revelation and the Spirit and the Bride say, come, He doesn't go until we do. And He's working through his own, through the Lord's own. He delights to use us. In those these days, he used Paul, the Corinthians, the Thessalonians, but today the Spirit is still working through you and through me. He has a work for each one of us. This isn't for a select company here. This was for every one of the Corinthians, always abounding in the work of the Lord. This is for every one of us here this afternoon. If we know the Lord Jesus and we're looking for the Lord Jesus to come, what are we to be doing in the meantime? Well, you know, they talk about WWW. And I know what it stands for in connection with the computer world. But I like to think of it this way. Waiting, watching and working. That is the proper attitude of a believer. Now we need to be waiting for the Lords coming. We need to be watching for the Lord's coming, and as we are doing that, we need to be working. But I'd like to, before we close, turn over again to revelation, to the last couple of verses of the book, because I think, brethren, it really caps what we've had and it shows what our proper attitude and spirit ought to be in view of the Lord's return. I know this is familiar, but notice how the Word of God closes. He which testifieth these things sayeth, Surely I come quickly. Now brethren, do you realize these are the last recorded words of the Lord Jesus in Scripture? The last recorded words, and you have it three times on the last page of Scripture. But the last recorded words of the Lord Jesus in the Bible are Surely I come quickly. Just in case we missed it, He confirms it again. Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus, those are the last recorded words of the Saints of God. And he closes the book. Well, not quite. There's something else Now I'm going to sum it up in a little different way. Surely I come quickly. That's the last promise of Scripture. Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus, that's the last prayer of Scripture. But there's something else. There's the last provision of Scripture, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. In other words, brethren, if we're left here a little bit longer waiting for the Lord Jesus, His grace is sufficient. It's able to meet every need as we wait for the Lord's coming. The 84th Psalm says the Lord

will give grace that meets us in our present need and glory. That's what comes at the end of the pathway. And brethren, we have those two things. Grace and glory. So the last prayer, surely I cut the last promise, surely I come quickly. The last prayer, Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus, and the last, the last provision, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

183. Say your can't I say? Honest for me. Seeing also 18 in the back. So. God said.

Lawrenceville Conference: 2001, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Reading

But we also sing. 76. Rise, my soul by God directly strange your hands no more in peace. Pass though on his hand protects me. Drink that has the capture tree Is the wilderness before the desert land, where drought abide. Heavenly spring shall there restore thee fresh from God's exhaustless tides #76. Ride my soul. Racing Stranger. I'm throwing me as I want this. I'm broadcasting. Trainer has broken. There will. Start. There no stranger. Was found in anything surrounding her something. But I would not have you to be ignorant, rather concerning them which are asleep that you saw or not, even as others that have no hope. Or if we believe that Jesus died, he rose again. Even so then also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 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. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words. Remember her brother? Even zip here in his home, going to perform his own thanking the different operation when we're with him on the Holy Mountain. We saw the Lord in his glory. Kingdom Lord. And then he also seen from the on the morning to start from the morning stars will arrive in your heart. I remember, Mr. Glenn Excuse me, I remember mother Uncle Barry Murray Martin was 9 star. In Tennessee, right after midnight after midnight. They're trying all who's our.

Believe in the book of. Thessalonians, these two. Beautiful letters written. It's probably where the very first letters written by Paul. And we think of them in the light that they set before us both the rapture and the appearing. And there seems to be much confusion. In Christmas around us. In the teachings of many that. Don't separate. Really what we have as far as the rapture is concerned in the appealing box. I believe if you realize that the rapture, the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for his own redeemed and for the Church is to take us away from the wicked, we're living in a wicked world. Under judgment, because of the murder and the rejection of the Lord Jesus, though that rapture will take us away from the wicked and take us to himself in the glory, but the appearing is quite different. Because when he comes, it is to judge the wicked. And to bring the righteous for his people, his earthby people, into the Kingdom. And if we understand that, it clears it very in a way that's very helpful. So the rapture, we can think of it as our being taken away from the wicked, but taken into the glory and appearing as to do with judging the wicked. And delivering his people, his earthly people to bring them into the Kingdom. So this is very helpful for us because we have in these two epistles both the rapture and the appearing. What we have in these verses that we've read is really a development of the truth that the Lord gave to his disciples before he left them to return to go to the cross and return to the glory. You remember in John 14 he simply said to the disciples for their comfort on that occasion that he was going to come again and receive them unto himself. But he didn't develop what he the truth there because like many things He spoke to them, they couldn't take them in because the Spirit had not yet been given. And so he develops it here. He simply gives them the promise in John 14 And why did he give it to them? Because their hearts were troubled. They were afraid. And the Lord looked at that little company. He knew what was in their hearts. He knew they were concerned and afraid as they thought of the Lord Jesus leaving them and going back to the glory as he it says there the hour had come that we should depart out of the world under the Father. And he looks at that company. He knows what's in their hearts. And he says, let not your heart be troubled. How could the Lord Jesus say such a thing, rather than on that occasion when he knew what was ahead for himself and for his disciples? One from his brother I will come again. What a comfort to to their hearts on that occasion. But they didn't understand the full development of how that was going to take place. And now we come over to the Thessalonian believers. They turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven. In other words, they were actually looking for the Lord Jesus to come back and establish his Kingdom, come with their number, in the meantime die. They passed away and now they're concerned, well, have they missed out on the coming of the Lord? What's taking place? And so the apostle Paul writes to them by inspiration and leaves, as it were, nothing unexplained as to how this event is going to take place and shows to them that before the Lord Jesus comes back. And appears in this world and sets up his Kingdom. There's another event going to take place and that those are their numbers who had died in faith, who are referred to as a sleeping Jesus because sleep is a temporary state, He says they're not going to miss out in any way. The Lord is going to come, he's going to give this shout and will notice this. As we go down these verses, he develops it and we with them are going to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. I don't want to get ahead, but he ends by saying. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words. Brethren, as we leave these meetings, what comfort would we have if we didn't have something beyond this life? If in this life only we have hope in Christ, even if it was hope in Christ, but only for this life? We are of all men, most miserable. Well, it's true. We have hope in Christ for this life, but we have hope in Christ for that which is to come. And rather the event, the promise given, I will come again. We're just on the eve of the fulfillment of that precious promise.

Mr. McIntosh wrote a paper many years ago. Which I think is important to keep in mind the difference between holding premillennial doctrine and waiting for the sun from heaven. And. There's a lot of discussion about the do you haul pre Trib, pre millennial breed, mid tribulation or whatever, post tribulation, all that sort of thing. There are a lot of views out there. The spirit of God is not interested and I say it respectfully, is not interested in getting us occupied with a theological position so much as to win our hearts toward the Lord and Jesus. And a desire to be with him. Now it's true. He started out here, Paul says I don't want you to be ignorant, so we're not to be ignorant on those subjects, but. The Spirit of God is not developing premillennial doctrine here. The Spirit of God is revealing the truth, but the object of that is to win our hearts so that we say come Lord Jesus. It's been brought home to me in a way in reading and I hope it's not a misapplication. In the story of the taking away of Elijah from from over the head of Elisha, as they go from place to place there in these, I call them theologians, the sons of the prophets who say, you know your message is going to be taken from over your head today, he says, I know it, be silent. How did he know it? He knew it in a real way, in his heart. And that's what I believe the Spirit of God wants us to know. It's always. Possible to find people who can approve millennial doctrine somewhere and I by the way I believe in the pre tribulation pre millennial coming of the Lord Jesus for his own to take them all. I believe in it absolutely. I think it's created a terrible confusion that that there's been an increase in in the number of people

who reject that but at the same time. What I want for myself, and I trust you one for yourself, is that our hearts are engaged with that blessed one to such a way that we it isn't so much what our view is as that we're Our desire is to be with them, to be with them, to be with them. Now, Paul says I don't want you to be ignorant, brethren. I want you to know how this is offered to happen. I want you to know how. And it's important to be intelligent about that. God cares that we have the detail. No, but the most important thing is are we really waiting for Him? And that's what you find in the first chapter. They turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God and to wait for his Son from heaven. And that precious promise was given by the Lord in John 14, and that's how we know that he's coming again. Now how that's all going to fit in and the details of it are given to us in various scriptures, but in this little passage that we have before it. I'm glad you suggested it, Brother Clem. I think it's important. What we had wasn't the 7th year o'clock what we had in the game. From all women there is, I think that I owe him is the whole incoming of gladness my eye. And mother in the whole school. Oh. I'm glad it's my eyes. The glands of my heart and somebody could be here. We have bring it for us love. The singer of most of the Lord is coming and all joy is rich is getting darker. The light darkness power over light is just before the dark. Oh what Roy is nice room from me and that's what I'm saying.

Waiting to know he is coming for us just before the break today and let's and hope the thought of being with him, the one who loves them, who loves us and gave himself work and we had this this morning in our that was our game itself and blessed woman is coming for me and he loves us. He loves us every moment of the day. And God the Father loves him and there isn't anything that he's going to be allowed to come into separate us from that love. He loves them and he's coming for us. And we belong to heaven, and we're a heavenly people. We belong. We belong to heaven. And the Lord is coming soon to take us there. The first chapter **** **** referred to, it says to wait for his son from heaven. And this 13th verse he says I would not have you to be ignorant forever. You see those Thessalonians, those 1St century Christians were waiting for the sun from heaven. They were expecting him to come at any moment. That's 2000 years ago. They were looking for him then and what had happened? Many of their companies had died. So he said, I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, those that are not still living. They thought that while all the Saints that they were in company with were living still, the Lord would come take them to be with himself, or set up the Kingdom. I think they had the Kingdom more in mind. That's one. They said. Wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom of Israel? And he says, it's not for you to know the times of the seasons, But then he introduces the new order of things. But they were, they were, they were troubled. What's going to happen to those that have fallen asleep, those that have died, that you sorrow not even as others which have no hope? Or if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, Even so them also would sleep in Jesus. Will God bring with him? When the Lord comes back? He's going to bring all the sleeping Saints with him. Well, how are they going to get with him? How are they going to get there? The next verse is 15. To the end of the chapter are a parenthesis. Explaining how the sleeping Saints get to be with him so that when he comes at the Rapture they'll be raised, the living will be changed and together we're going to be with the Lord and then he will come back and bring us all with him. That if you don't understand that. That the wicked of verse 14 refers to the appearing when he comes back with the Saints, you won't ever understand 1St Thessalonians 4. The last verses from 15 to the end tell us how the the dead, the dead and the living get to be with him, so that when he comes back he can bring us with him. That's excellent, Chuck and. I'll tell you a story in my own life. Which I didn't know all of these things then, but God passes you through some things to learn by experience. 47 years ago the Lord took a little girl from my life and. We. Found comfort in this and put on her gravestone. Bush 14. If we believe that Jesus died and rose again. Even show them also which believe in Jesus where God bringeth him when I'm thinking about it. Was she going to miss everything coming to Revelation? No, no. This tells us how. How she got where she is and now we're going to get where we are to come back and when she comes we'll come with her. So it's a great comfort. I've said this sometimes, and I hope I'm not misunderstood when I say it. I would much rather meet a person who was mixed up about the details of these things and had affection for the Lord Jesus and was waiting for him to come but wasn't sure how it all fitted in together than to meet someone who had the best knowledge of this.

And yet had no affection for the Lord in regard to that. And now having said that, I'll add this. Paul says I don't want you to be ignorant about it. So we're not to say that ignorance is good or or there's a premium on ignorance. I had a dear friend who one time we were talking about some of these things he he says I don't like him. All this discussion I don't even want to hear about pre tribulation, pre millennial and all that, he says. I just don't like to. I don't like to think about it at all. I know this brother. I know that he is. He's waiting for the Lord. There's no question about it in my heart, but it saddened me that it seemed like he wanted to be ignorant. Do we want to be ignorant or do we want to have the truth? We want to understand it all. Now, brother, come here. I'm sure you're you're happy that you know how this is all going to fit together. Don't. Aren't you? More than that. More than that, we have here one of the four special revelations from Christ through Paul that are introduced in special words, so that in the 15th verse Paul says this we say unto you by the word of the Lord. As we've been said, the Christians of the 1St century didn't have this knowledge. False doctrine came a little bit later and it wasn't written out. They didn't have it. It's all there. Certainly ought to know it, but we've been having wonderful meetings as. From the Gentiles, they're brought into the one body. We might just turn to those other three scriptures that pull marks out in Ephesians chapter 3 to start with. We know this one body truth, and we know what's got, what it's composed of. And here comes from Paul. Who got his ministry from Christ in heaven? This word comes out of heaven. The other apostles didn't have it. So he starts the third verse of of Ephesians 3 with each word. How that by revelation he made unto known unto me the mystery down in verse 5, which in other ages was not made known under the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets. By the Spirit. The Holy Spirit gave it and Paul gave it, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body and particulars of the promise in Christ by the gospel. Now that's the doctrine of the one body composed of Jews and Gentiles, or other words in the epistle about it. Now this morning we broke bread. Let's go to 1St Corinthians 11 to see what we have got for that. And a special revelation from heaven. Given through Paul for us another thing that we ought to pay attention to, and by the grace of God we will. The 23rd verse of First Corinthians 11. Now look what he said I received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you. We have been through this so much, and we practiced it this morning. I don't think we need the rest, need the rest of it. But it's a special revelation that is a witness that there is one body, there's a testimony to that, and it's the breaking of bread on the table of the Lord. Now let's go to 1St Corinthians 15. To get a little development about resurrection. Which was given with a special mark out two. In First Corinthians 15. Verse 51. Against Paul and his ministry that he got through Christ in heaven. And he says, behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. And he develops that. What a wonderful revelation. This came from Paul, to comfort us as to resurrection as to resurrection. Now we're getting in our portion in Thessalonians, Thessalonians.

The wonderful truth of the comfort of the rapture. He's going to call us. They're not two second comings of the Lord. As I understand it, he came the first time and he's coming again, but different ones will see him a little bit different occasions and this shows it very clearly. In our chapter. Verse 15 We say unto you, We say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive. And remain under the coming of the Lord shall not prevent or precede them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the Archangel, and the trump of God. When the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up with

them. In the air. Forgive me because that's a little simple. How many things know where our pattern acts of the heavenly after heaven? This is a young man and young lady. They get attached to each other and then they decide that they belong, but they're met with each other. Well, Emily's having a date and. When they're when they're going to be married and then they're young. I'm getting a hole ready maybe. Yeah. He doesn't have the money to build a home so he fixes up Home Park is bribes. But anyhow, he's back there and getting the hole ready and then on that wonderful day that he. He goes, and he brings his wife, He brings her to the hole that he is prepared for her, or one thing. So our blessed Lord Jesus to You love the church, and He gave himself for it again. He gave all what he had, the Pearl of great safety in all my hands. Church and in going to present the church to himself description of the church glories and so he's looking forward and and with an anticipation which is deal on anything that you and I should ever increase You're looking for the Lord for that day. When he's coming back to this earth, he prepares the whole He can say, I go home, I go to the airplane for you, where I am also. And that's really the. And he's going to take her home to be with him forever. And all one of them that will make and what or joy will be in heaven when that takes place is going to the church is right. Well, I was just going to stay in connection with what you said. That's really the key to to to it all. The fact that he's looking forward rather not just to having us in the Father's house, that's true. He will have us in the Father's house. But he said as our brother quoted, I will come again and receive you not to glory or to heaven or to the Father's house. As true as that may be. But receive you unto myself, brethren, he's longing to have his bride with himself. He's waited almost 2000 years for his bride. Some of us, after we were engaged, we waited a number of months between the engagement and the wedding. Maybe we thought it was a long time. We waited a long time for the preparations and all that needed to be taken to take place before the wedding day. But, oh brethren, it's nothing compared to the man of patience who's weighted these 2000 years and his heart will never really be satisfied until he has us there. But I just like to echo what it has already been said. Rather, he wants us to look up and to respond, not just because of the problems we're going through. Not just because of the trials and the difficulties of the way. Now it is true. In Jude it says looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. And the longer we're left here, the more of a mercy it's going to be to be gone. And sometimes the Lord uses those things to stir us up and to wean us from this world so that we're looking upward and onward. And there is that proper response. But that's not what what he wants. That's not how he wants to get the response rather than do our hearts. So go out to the person of Christ.

We so attracted to him. Are we so occupied with my face, with the man in the glory, that our hearts long to be not just in the Father's house, but long to be where he is, that where I am? There he may be also. And I'd like to just say that we didn't comment on the end of the second chapter of of Titus that we had before us and the other two readings, but it really ties in, doesn't it? Because there are two things that were to be looking for brother. Sometimes we say the raptures are proper hope. I understand what rather mean when they say that, but really the two things are tied together there, and we're to be looking for that blessed hope. That's what we're expecting at any moment. Maybe before we rise out of these seats at the end of the meeting, we're going to hear that shout. We're going to be called away in a moment, the twinkling of an eye, and we're going to rise to with bodies of glory and see our Lord meet him on the cloud and be escorted to the Father's house. That's the blessed hope, but it doesn't stop there. And the glorious appearing of our great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ. Brethren, doesn't it thrill our hearts to think there's a day coming when he's going to have his rightful place here in this world? A day coming when you walk down the street of Lawrenceville and you won't see open sin or rebellion, or hear the name of Christ cursed. Or if you do, it will be judged morning by morning. It will be dealt with immediately, A day coming when the knowledge of this blessed one is going to go out throughout the whole earth. And to think, brother, that we're going to come with them. We're going to reign with him. We're going to be associated with him rather than if we lose sight of these two things, the blessed hope and the glorious appearing, we're going to get discouraged. We need that hope before us. Faith always needs an eye to the future, a hope, an object, a brother. Let's keep this before us. Not as a doctrine, merely good to enumerate these doctrines from the word of God the Brethren. Is this hope for reality in our souls this afternoon? Do we sit on the edge of our seats and anticipating, waiting and watching, thinking that perhaps before another sunset we're going to hear that shout if we do. It says every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself even as he is pure. In other words, in the measure in which this hope is a reality in our souls this afternoon, in that measure it will give us the proper character of those who are waiting. In Luke 16 I just want to read a few verses. In Luke 16, verse 19 there was a certain rich man which was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid in his knee full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table, or over the dogs cave and licked his sores. Now note this. And it came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abrahams puzzle. Rich man also died of the spirit. The beggar died was carried by the angels. That's the disembodied state. After death, no resurrection. But in our chapter He doesn't send angels for us. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven and He'll take us home himself. Not angels, but the Lord himself. He, as I was saying, he he has a bride here. He's going to come for her and bring her to himself. And that connection check, I'd like to point out something that I have found helpful in Matthew 24. Those who give the interpretation that the rapture is to be at the end of the tribulation often use this scripture. And Matthew 24 but it. Is clear when you take in that detail that you mentioned. Notice in verse 29 it says immediately after the tribulation of those days and verse 31, he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other. And they use this verse to show that it's going to be after the tribulation. But it is clear the distinction you make that in this case, when he's going to gather the elect of Israel at the end of the tribulation, he's going to send forth his angels to do that work. But in contrast with that, in our chapter, the Lord himself comes. He's the one that's going to come and take us away. Interesting to think about that, that.

Some of the great events, at least three of them, are marked out with a definite statement. This is the last one, the best I think. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven well, starting in the Lords ministry in Matthew 3 it talks about a voice from heaven marked out that beginning of the Lord's service. A voice from heaven, the Spirit of God, came down, and in the peaceful form of a dove lighted upon Jesus. A man coming up. Out of the water. And the Spirit of God coming upon him. There's the first time you find the Trinity clearly in the Bible. That voice from heaven was the Father, the sun coming up out of the water and entering his service, the Spirit of God. Lighting upon him for the service and the voice from heaven, the Father. Now we go to and think about Acts 2. It says, Well, maybe better to turn to it. Another definite event in the course of God's ways to form the church. In Acts 2. And when the day of Pentecost was. Fully come. They were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven. As of a rushing mighty wind, it filled the house where they were sitting, a voice from heaven. How magnificent, how wonderful, And hear a sound from heaven to form the church. But when He comes for us, the Lord Himself is coming. We get the best. In Revelation, one versus. By the road that involves Herman, David and the blanket morning stars, well. The offspring of David and the roof in the offspring that was from Israel was the right morning star. That's for the church. That's for the church. And this is what the Lord is looking for. He's looking forward to having the church. He's right with himself. Nothing can take the place. Nothing can take one thing from holiday, the bright morning star. Those who get up early in the morning and see the star up there there shines at all it's pristine beauty and loveliness. And then? My mind, little stars wink out. There's gone, but the morning star shines there often times just by itself. We've got the whole heaven to itself. And then perhaps we gave that up. And then he turned his face away, and the next

time he looked, it's gone. It's gone. And though I will be, when the world comes, no sound of our comforter. Is the Lord is coming. He's gone. And he's so silently. And we're going to be gone too, So silently we're going to, we're going to be gone to, we're going to be gone to be with Christ, the dear man and the glories who loved us and gave himself for us. One thinks about some of those dear things they just in the past days of many today they don't know any component, the volunteers doctrine, but they love the Lord and they're looking for his coming. Looking for his coming. You ask him? Yes. And they're looking for the Lord to come. Yes. Well, it's the right hope of the Church, the bright hope of the Christian looking for that blessed. Some of you will remember Brother Ike Wizzy in Maine. John, I'm sure you remember him. He suffered quite a bit with cancer at the end of his life and he lay there and someone came to visit him and said brother Ike. There's a brother over to the Lisbon Forks that's preaching that the Lord is coming in two weeks hoping to encourage, and I said that long. What was the what was the secret of that? He was waiting immediately for the Lord's coming, and a promise of two weeks didn't do anything for him at all. I've always been touched by that. Now that was one thought about the the Rapture. There's a contention that the Word does not appear in Scripture.

Our biblical words that don't. Biblical teachings where the word the Trinity doesn't appear in scripture. The truth of it does. Where does that word rapture come from? Well, there's a species of bird which swoops down. Catches away his prey and takes it away and now swoops down in the dark of night, but grabs in a mouse or a snake or whatever he got his in the way. They are called Raptors. In Spanish, they use the Spanish Bible, the Rapture. That's right, that's Rapture. And so that's where it says when you when you're caught up together. It's raptured, just snatched away. What a wonderful thought. Not like snakes, of course, and not to be devoured by the Lord, but to enjoy his affection for all eternity. But people who quibble about that don't let that trouble you when somebody tells you that there's no such word. Clement is in the Spanish Bible and it is. It is in the Spanish Bible. I think that the word that is taken away, taken away, that's that's verse 17 caught up. Is that right? That's in Spanish. That's the rapture. You have something to say, didn't you, David? Was that you? Well, absolutely. I'd like to say this. This was written about 64 AD or thereabouts and. I'm wrong. It was the first first epistle that he wrote. First epistle followed, but nevertheless, up to that point and for a few years after that, they kept the understanding of the Lords coming for his Saints. And then they lost it. And when they lost him, the Church went into the Dark Ages, and it went for possibly at least 1000 years or maybe more, without the knowledge of the Lord's coming for his people. And then it would recover. How thankful tonight, this afternoon, we can be that we have here in our hands. What actually tells us of that which has recovered you, You think? How could they ever lose it? It's written here. How could they ever lose? Because they lost sight of the fact that they were awake. They didn't wait anymore for the Lord from heaven. And are we waiting? You know, if we don't, the apostle Paul in Romans 910 and 11 fell asleep. The Roman Saints about the recovery of Israel back to God's. People again here on the third, he says. If you don't be careful, don't get wise in your own conceit, in your own thoughts. Because if God cut off the natural branches, he can cut off the grafted in branches. And so as we completed these meetings, how marvelous to know that we have God's word. It's not man's word, it's God's word. And he tells us many of us this room have stood by grave sites, maybe everything. And that last word. Wherefore comfort one another with these words? What a comfort. At the side of a grave where someone who you know. Is God's child a blood bought St. that you're going to see that body in a glorious form in a coming day. What I thought of comfort and that's why it says. That she sorrow not even as others which have no whatever. What hope does anyone have at a gravesite that doesn't know Christ? None. Absolutely none. You know, David said. After his child died, he got up and washed himself and ate and he said. I'll go to him. He'll not return to me, but I'll go to him. And that's the hope we have this afternoon. Every one of us, many of us, those that have passed on well in Christ, we're going to see them again. Only they will have a new body, Just like Christ. Just like you were. Just like I will. Why did they?

Get into the faith how that's less than one, he hung on Calvary, the man who died for me to gaze into that blessed face and see that smile. And see his smile. Oh, think of all the trials that we've been through down here. If it's it won't be anything. Just to see his smile and oh, how precious that will be. Yeah. There with unlearned gazed our eyes on him with rest. And satisfied with endless praise, a heart completely blessed. You said that, David. I'm not sure how you said it doesn't matter. Why did the early Christians lose the hope of this company? Because their understanding of this truth was defective. They expected him to come during their lifetime and some had died. And that's why he writes this passage, to comfort those that sorrow not. That sorrow. There's others that have no hope. They thought they were going to be found in the Kingdom. And anyone that sets a date for the Lord's coming discredits the truth of the Lord's coming, because that date will come and go and he doesn't come. And what the effect that has is and they they just give it up. That's the effect it has on us whenever we expect, we said, whether whether it's a year or a month. Or a day, whatever it might be. The scriptures is very clear. We don't know when he's coming, but we do know he's coming. That's the important thing. We have to emphasize that he is coming, but when we don't know, and when you lose that sense of it because of bad teaching, you're not looking for him. Then you become very world. And This is why worldliness has crept into the church, because we lost sight of them. What's coming? There's another reason also. That the hope of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ was lost. We had brought before us already the aspect of our hearts desiring to go and to be with him. In the 12Th chapter of Luke he says that servant said in his heart the Lord delayeth his coming. So when the affection for the Lord Jesus Christ and the lack of the expectation ceases to be causing not to be a whole, then, as has been just said, our behavior degenerates. That wicked servant began to eat and drink with a drunken and to beat, and the maidservants and the maidservants, so that when it the affections are have begun to wane, and that hope ceases to be an expectation. Then our behavior drops. And so it was in the churches history, and the dark ages as we call it, resulted in the loss of the expectation of His return. We have been speaking about comfort here. Wherefore comfort one another. That's those of us that are left. When someone dear to us has gone, but when you go back to verse 17. Then we which are alive remain. So there were those Thessalonians that had laid aside their loved ones, and there are many here have laid aside their loved ones, that there was life companion for them for many, many years. And so you're standing there. Looking down into that grave and there is the body. Of your loved one, Are you really realize that she's absent from the body of that person, is absent from the body and present with the Lord? Well, what? At first this is what a verse has been to the people of God, and what a verse it must have been to these dear Thessalonians. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the cloud. To meet the Lord in the air. And this is so beautiful. And so shall we ever be with the Lord together. We're caught up together. We meet the Lord Jesus. And with those who have gone before and those that are taken from this world.

Will be together forever. Shells Will we ever be? With the Lord. How marvelous to have the comfort of that. In the darkest situation, perhaps you could pass through here in this world. But it's so like the Lord Jesus, because of his compassion, we see him in our mind's eye. We see him at the graveside of Lazarus, and there he is. As the tears flowed down his face. That blessed One who had all power, and there he is suffering. You might say with those dear sisters. Comforting, yes, but suffering with them as what had happened as a result of sin, Their brother was gone. For what? A day for them. When they'll be all joined together. We caught up together to meet the. Lord in the air, and saw, shall we ever be with the Lord. Brethren, wherefore comfort one another? I hear our dear brother Christopher Willis saying. Oh, what comfort. What

comfort as to that blessed hope? In the Lord's coming. We can't say. That anyone? Who sets a date for the Lord to come beyond today is. Wrong in spirit, if not in fact. That blessed hope ought to be. Perhaps today that's that's closer than what brother Whitney talking about two weeks. But it's it's a wonderful thing to have that blessed hope and it takes you back to Romans. In the third chapter it says oh have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Then a further on in the book it says those are believing rejoice in hope of the glory of God. When we get to the end of near the end of Revelation, it says that the. Bride comes forth having the glory of God, perhaps today, perhaps today. What a hope. I heard Brother Clem of a just recently of a young man who had on his bathroom mirror that little motto perhaps today. And I was encouraged by that, because he wanted to be reminded every morning when he got up and looked in the mirror that this might be the day of the Lord's return. I held a little read a little article recently I. Couldn't sleep one night, which is rare for me. And I was home and so I got up and I have some old volumes on my shelf of the young Christian. That was a periodical edited by Brother Armand, I believe, at the beginning of the century. And I pulled off one of those volumes just to read a short article and hopefully get back to sleep. And I think it was, I'm not really sure, but I think it was maybe the 1913 edition. And I read the New Year's editorial by Mr. Arman. And Mr. Arman was saying that with the condition of things in the world. State of things amongst the Lord's people. Surely 1913 must be the year of the Lord's return. Now he wasn't trying to set a date, but it was a present hope. It was a reality for our brethren at the turn of the century. And it was a reality for the Apostle Paul in these Thessalonians believers. Because when Paul said we which are alive and remain, who was he referring to? He was referring to himself. In the Thessalonian believers they were expecting the Lord to come. But the Lord hasn't come yet and we might say well has the promise made. In John 14, failed when he said I will come again. We've been talking about hope. Maybe I could just qualify that word. It was helpful to me when I was younger to realize here, brethren, talk about hope in the context in which we've been using it. Because hope connected with the first man or with this life is uncertainty at best. We hope to return to our homes after this conference, but maybe something will happen and we'll never return to our homes, even though we had every intention of doing so. But hope connected with Christ and with the new man.

Is never uncertainty. It's only hope in the sense of what it says. Why? What a man has, why does he get hope? For it's only hope in the sense that we're not in the full good of it yet. Not not that it's uncertain. Not that the promise that the Lord Jesus made has failed. All the promises of God in him are yay, and in him Amen. To the glory of God by us was set in the Old Testament. There hath not failed one word of all his good promise. But brother, he has the day of grace has been extended. God is gracious. He's still compelling sinners to come in that his house may be filled. But nevertheless, the hope of the Lord's coming is to be a present reality, just as it was back here, just as it was with our brethren earlier in this century. Let's go home with the reality of this hope, not only for ourselves, but for those that are asleep. And if you'll just allow me another moment, I'd like to say a little word about that word. Sleep. We have it here. We've got to get to verse 16 before the hour comes up. So don't take that long, please. I won't. But I I think perhaps there are some here who wonder, what does it mean when it says asleep? And I used to ponder this as well, because there are those who teach soul sleep. You never have soul sleep in the word of God. Never. Those who have died in faith are in, not in a state of unconsciousness Now they're absent with the body and present with the Lord. And Paul said to depart and be with Christ is far better. It's the sleeve here is referred to the body, and it's only those who have died in faith, in the word of God. That are referred to as asleep. Interesting to notice that Old Testament, New Testament, it's only those who have died in faith I say that are referred to as asleep. Why? Because sleep is a temporary state of things. The body sleeps in the grave. And it was a great comfort to my own soul as I stood a few months ago at my father's grave to realize that that wasn't the end. We laid the body aside, absent from the body present with the Lord. But that is not the end. When the unbeliever walks away from a grave, that's it. It's over. But not for us all. There was sorrow at my father's grave. His children wept. His grandchildren wept. His brethren wept too. But we didn't weep with despair. We sorrowed. It doesn't say we don't sorrow, but we sorrow not as others who have no hope. What a comfort. What a consolation. Brother. Can I have a minute to check or not? A minute. Very good we we live in the light of this blessed hope and. It's something very special. I trust in my own soul that I'm waiting for the Lord Jesus to come. But one thing that gives me patience in waiting is the thought that he has said I will build my church. So he's not going to come until. That wonderful work is accomplished. It hurts. He's going to present it to himself. A glorious church not having spot or wrinkle. So we can wait in patience, because this work is not finished, but it's going to be and the Rapture is going to take place. The passion Prevention has mentioned at least twice in this regard, and the patience of Christ in the in Revelation chapter 3 and. It's not the patients waiting for Christ. So much of the patience of Christ waiting for you. Yeah, he's he's waiting. All right, verse 16. We haven't said anything about that. Not much. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout. Mr. Darby renders that an assembling shout. Mr. Kelly renders it a shout of command, like the general to his army, the Admiral to his Navy shout of command. Archangelical voice. It's not the voice of the Archangel, but it's with archangelical voice, new translation, and with the trump of God. What are those three things? What are we going to hear? What do those things mean? That's my question. In regard to the archangelic waste, I think it's fortunate that we have translations in other languages that help us with that because in German, for example, as you know, Chuck, it's my stimulus, it's the quality of the queries. I don't know, I thought you did, you were talking German to me earlier today, but it was, it's it's the quality of the voice. It's not The Who it is that's talking.

Is the quality of it. It's not Michael coming in. It's the Lord's voice. It's the Lord. It's not Nichols voice, it's the Lords voice. But what is meant by Archangelico voice? What's meant by that voice of authority? Yes, yes. And power. And power. It's like the Supreme Commander of the armed forces issuing an order, right? The general voice shout of command. Because that voice is going to call all the dead from the graves from Abel onward that had faith in God. Think of the power involved in doing that. Well, Bob, do you think the shout will awaken the sleeping Saints? Serious question. And I have no doubt. All right, then. What's the trump? What does the trump mean? There's there's a, there's a sequence here. The shout. And then who's shouting? Well, the voice of authority, archangelical voice. And then the trump is. Now it's time to go arise, my love, and come away. That's the Trump shout is the trumpet. The shout is to awaken the sleeping sights, and the trumpet is to tell them to move. That's. Is that a right interpretation of the passage? That's First Corinthians 15 in the last Trump. OK, I rise My love, My fair one, isn't it? That's it. That's it. Arise, my love. My heroine can come away. Never think of Roman army. Mayor was three Trump's that sounded too for the troop to March. The first Trump was get ready. Get your things ready. That's been shot. That's been sounded already. Yes. OK what was that? I asked if it's been sounded already. That first one in principle it has been sounded. The second Trump is getting ranked to March and that is principle has been sounded already. We should be walking in fellowship with our brother and it only remains the last Trump to March. To go move off together, yes. Is the center and the center of all that one thing to do of all those areas of real chilling in the upland resort? There you go. The second there was this. 46,000 rivers and all levels of each other. The statement is in the being here we're speaking about about the the whole of the all the families is all those little children who need a family will be a family and it's all there. All the freedom of glory and happiness And there won't be there won't be a a cloud and there's no one let me do nothing doesn't ever the on the on the ocean. Oh, how wonderful will be this, Behold of Christ, and on the left gave himself. Will the world? Will the people of the world hear the shout? Will they hear the trumpet? I don't think they will. But you shake your head. No, I agree with you. But how could what do we have to approve that? Well, I've

just thought of it, Chuck in illustration in the Old Testament with Israel, when they left Egypt, it was such a silent exodus that not even a dog lifted its tongue. I know that's not a New Testament scripture, but I thought of it because people talk today about rape disasters when the Lord comes, they talk about car accidents and planes going. And I think people are missing the point. I'm not going to say what's going to happen when the Lord comes because God doesn't answer all our curious questions, but I think they're they're missing the point when they get talking about all this kind of thing and when it says not a dog lifted its tongue. I've learned to appreciate that more, having visited some in 3rd world countries because you visit a third world country and there is a din of dogs day and night. First time I took my wife to to Port of Spain, Trinidad, I tried to prepare for this din of dogs day and night. She wished she had some of the machetes that she saw people carrying down the streets. But it is, and I believe that when it says not a dog lifted its tongue, it is more of a miracle than we in the Western world realize. And I'm sure Brother **** and Brother Coleman and others will agree you've heard these. But I just say that what I believe, when we leave this world, it's going to be a silent, orderly exodus. God is a God of order. He is a God of order. And when we go, he can do it, brother.

He can do it. He can take us out of this world quietly and orderly, and I would suggest that the world for a short time. Will just go on. May be thankful that those Christians that were only a nuisance are finally gone. I'd be glad to hear what others say, but I just bring up. Can I read a verse yes in Second Thessalonians chapter 2 and verse one? Is a power unseen in this world. And the power of that person, God the Holy Spirit, gathers us to the precious name of the Lord Jesus. And here we have in verse one of chapter 2, Second Thessalonians. Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, I believe, when God the Holy Spirit who has been here for 2000 years. Lives at that shelf. Every radiant one will go. It will be silent. So it says in the end of the book, the Spirit and the bride say come the Spirit down here wanting Christ to come too, right? I'd be interested Brother Chuck, in asking this. A brother in a fellowship meeting in Woodbridge some months ago, suggested that we will hear the voice and have time to pull up to the side and turn off our car key. I I just didn't. I don't have any. Assurance that that is a scriptural thought. No, I I don't think that'll be true. But I agree with what Brother Jim said. And God is a God of water. He knows what's happening. He knows what's going on. I saw a God of judgment. He's also a God of judgment. And at the Rapture, that's going to beginning, that's going to be the beginning for this world of the worst judgment it's ever experienced. Why should anyone say there aren't going to be terrible accidents in that crashes? If the pilot of the plane is taken, who's going to pilot that plane down? I know God is able to do that, but the idea that he's a God of order doesn't prove it at all. He's also a God of judgment and and the events that are going to happen after the Rapture are going to be judgment, judgment, judgment, judgment. Very fast. They're going to be very rapid in a short time. Very fast, Yes. I'm wondering if my principal Paul's having heard the voice and some saying it thundered, might not be the way it will be when we go. I I just said what I did because I think we need to be very careful brother not to go beyond what scripture tells us. And if God doesn't tell us what's going to happen when we're taken out then we need to be silent on that that as well. And we can sit here and suppose one way or the other, but God has told us enough in His words so that by faith we can grasp the reality of these precious things and know that rather than at any moment we're going to be gone. And how does the verse end? And so shall we notice this Ever with the Lord, just meditate on that. When He's in glory in the Father's house, we're with him. When He comes back to reign over the earth, we're with Him. We'll never leave his side again. We're going to be ever. With the Lord sometimes. I don't always walk in the conscious sense of the Lord's presence. Now doesn't mean He leaves me or forsakes me, but I don't walk in the conscious sense of it. Brethren, there's the day coming when we are going to be there with our glorified bodies, and we're not going to be in the conscious sense of His presence. We are going to be in His presence, and we're going to be ever with the Lord. There are many of us that have been sitting here silent, and if I can speak for the, I think, silent majority, I have confusion over. The 16th verse in connection with the three things and I wonder if. We get a little help again as to. The difference between the three. The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God. I'm sorry, I don't understand what our brethren have been saying exactly in connection with the show, being something that's first and maybe already taken. Please help me out.

No, I don't think they meant that. The illustration that Bob was giving, I think it was Bob was from history. There were three trumpets blowing, and we're waiting for the last trump, the last trumpet. The first two have already been. It's like a race on your heart. First trumpet get sat, second trumpet go. And that's the thought. And that's the last trumpet. When that sounds, we're going to go, go be with the Lord. That's just an illustration as to what this, this trumpet, the last trump means. But to shout, it's as Darby says, an assembling shout. We're not just going to go a piece meal one at a time. We're going to He's going to assemble us and take us to heaven together. And it's an assembly shout and and and Kelly renders that a shout of command. Like the general with his army, he gives a shout and the voice of the Archangel, it's not the Archangel, it's archangelical voices. It's an arthritis. The article isn't there, it's. It's the voice of authority that speaks and everyone will respond to that. Is that, is that helpful? Or David, you go ahead and ask more questions. That shout is what's going to awaken all the sleeping things from all times and that's necessary because notice the end of the 15th verse, it says. We shall not prevent them which are asleep that were prevented. Old English word that means go before. Present and just simply means that we are not going to go before the ones that died to meet the Lord. And so he explains how that's going to happen. Well, how are those that have died going to be awakened by that shout? That shout That awakens the dead. So it says at the end of verse 16, the dead in Christ shall rise. 1St So first is resurrection, and I'm sure it's not going to take very long, but it's interesting. I remember several years ago in Los Angeles we had First Corinthians 15 in the readings and brother Dan Jacobson pointed out when it says in a moment in a twinkling of an eye, he says it's not talking about the rapture, it's talking about the resurrection. And then it says here then we which are alive and remain there is a sequence. They will rise first, then we, which are alive and remain, will be caught up together. I'm sure it's not going to take long because God's power has no limits to it. But think of the power of all those sleeping Saints. Where is the that redeemed dust from those bodies that died, those that died at sea? The bodies, their bodies were dissolved into the sea, were eaten by fish. Where is it? The power of God in one moment will call them from wherever they are. They're going to be raised incorruptible because it's these bodies are redeemed, brethren, and God is going to take these bodies of humiliation and change them into bodies of glory. And so it's that redeemed us, that is in the graves that God is going to take and. Raised into bodies of glory and incorruption. The northern Army there, being the most of the Army, will be asleep. I remember it's a California trial. And he says all these other curriculum, we're just a huge family or whatever. But anyhow, most of the Army would be asleep and there'd be a hero in that long garden. Well, that was the first blind from the summer. We'll come all up and get out and they get ready and they pack their bags and they get the next and the next line to the chocolate. They get into their playlist. They need Ready to Mars. And then the lineup comes. We all move along and go. But time doesn't enter there anymore. Time will enter. We're in. We're living in circumstances. There is a question. Time doesn't mean anything involved. I'd like to just suggest that the prototype of the assembling shout. Is in John 1143, but it's a qualified prototype, the Lord says.

Come forth. But he puts a word in front of it, because had he not put that in front of it, they'd all have come for it. John Five, it says. All that are in the grave. Show. Hear his voice and come forth. And so there's a qualified prototype of that. I believe in John Chapter 11 and verse 43.

Lazarus come forth. What'd he do? What choice did Lazarus have at that point? He didn't know. There was no choice whatsoever. When the Lord calls us, we will go. Some people say he struggled out of the grave with the grave clothes. I don't believe that. I believe he immediately stood in front of the Lord. You think he walked out? Beg pardon? Do you think he walked out? I think he just was brought up by divine power. And that's what I believe is the the point here. We're going to be raised by no glorious hour when we will be transformed and brought out of the grave and stand ready to March on and then all joining together. This isn't going to be a long process though, is it, brother? Is the world going to see us? When? Dan Jacobson didn't mean it was going to be a long process. #217 two 70. And shall we leave my face? And I never live in my voice. And grace. Well, I. Just. Take the mind and make a heart. Keep in mind the last words of this chapter.

Wherefore converts or new translation says encourage. One another. With these words is wonderful gossip. Reading me, you have a responsibility or a good person. But give thanks. Our God. We have so much to be thankful for and especially these two days together. And we just praise and bless and thank thee for the riches of the. Truth of our position now as being in Christ. And our love brethren who have left this scene as to being with Christ. And that soon we all together shall be like him who has that glorified body. The head of a new creation. The Risen Man. Already in the glory. And we shall be like him. Tremendous thought. But oh, the mercy which goes on toward us and toward the world in general. We're so thankful for that. And something is known of thy grace, the riches of thy grace, the glory of thy grace. Before says ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is true of every believer, we know something of that grace. But oh to see thy face. To be with thee and to be like thee now help us to be encouraged as we've just been admonished. With the words that have been before us, to remember them, help us in that, and not to be hearers only, but doers of the word, putting these things practically to use. We've had such good practical ministry that way. We earnestly pray for all of us. The young ones in particular rejoicing the seed, many that are very interested in these truths. But we ask for blessing upon all and mercies the rest of the day, and the rest of the way. We commit us to thee and give our thanks, Lord Jesus, in thy worthy name. Amen. The. Prayer for the gospel is at 6:30 again in the library and the gospel. At 7:00 PM. The meal tonight will be all held in the cafeteria. No service in that special room. If there's somebody that needs assistance, can't go through the line, why, they can sit in down in the cafeteria and there will be those that will serve them. But I've been told that there is quite a bit of variety in the foods that will be served tonight and so. They're encouraged everyone that can to go through the line. I'd like to ask Brother Charles Brandon if you mind giving thanks for the food. Our blessed God, our Father to Thee with Thanksgiving.

Burbank Conference: 2004, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-7

Reading

We go to meet the. World. Say a few words first. Yeah, go ahead. I'd like to give an attempt to give a little help on a question that was asked yesterday here in this room. And Brother Jeff referred to a passage in Romans chapter 10. And I think if we look at that, we can get a better understanding of. What? He was asking. If we look at Romans 10 and verse six, and I'll read a few verses here, But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise say, not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven, that is to bring Christ down from above? Or who shall descend into the deep, that is to bring up Christ again from the dead? But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart. That is the Word of Faith which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus. And shall believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead. Thou shalt be saved. Well the question was had something to do with going down and and getting Christ or I'm not real sure of the question either. I think it was a little hard to understand but. These things have already been done. God isn't asking us to do heroics. Christ has already come down, He has already come up, and so you and I don't go there to get him. And so this passage isn't talking about where he is now. Or. As the question was. When the Saint goes home, is he violating this scripture to say that that expression? I hope that's helpful. If there's others that can clear it up better, I hope they will. Shall we read 1St Thessalonians 4? Especially the latter part, but we can read from the beginning. First Thessalonians, chapter 4. Beginning at verse one. Furthermore than we beseech you brethren. And exalt you by the Lord Jesus. And that as you have received of us how you ought to walk, and to please God the soul, you would abound more and more. For you know that commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor, not in the lust of concupiscence. Even as the Gentiles, which know not God, that no man go beyond and defraud his brother. In any matter, because that the Lord is the avenger of all such as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despises despiseth not man, but God, who has also given unto us His Holy Spirit, but His touching brotherly love. You need nod that I write unto you, for for ye yourself are taught of God. To love one another, and indeed you do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia. But we beseech you, brethren, that you increase more and more, and that you study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that you may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that you may have lack of nothing. But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren.

Concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow nod. Even as others which have no hope before we believe that Jesus died and rose again, Even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 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. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with a voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. Doubt. Don't sit down. Read the next 10 verses please. Chapter 5. But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you for yourself. Know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say peace and safety, then suddenly, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all children of light and the children of day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. What they that sleep, sleep in the night, and they that be drunken. Are drunken in the night, but let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. 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. I think that was a good idea, Brother Chuck. The convenience of chapters we know, but they put in by men, and they often interrupt the thought, don't they? 1St Thessalonians 4 has often been termed the Enoch chapter and rightfully so. We were going to take verse 13 to the end, but I think it's good to just give a brief thought why it's called that. Turn to Genesis chapter 5 and I believe it's verse 24, although it's earlier too, verse 24 and Enoch walked with God. And he was not, for

God took him. Next comes Methuselah, which I was mentioning to someone in the hall. The longest life in being. And God chose the longest life in being to bring judgment. That's a very unusual thought, but that's God's grace, and he's still delaying judgment. We're here yet because one is still to be saved. At least one. If it was the last one saved, we're gone. But anyway, Enoch walked with God. And he was not. Now Amos, 33, says how can two be agreed? How can two walk together unless they be agreed? Enoch was agreeable to God. That's what we should be one other here turn to Hebrews and. Chapter 11, the faith chapter, because Enoch had faith and so here it says in spotlight this is Hebrews 11.

All right, first five by faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death and was not found because God had translated him for before his translation. He had this testimony that he pleased God. Now you know why you're here. You know why you were born to give pleasure to the Lord. Revelation 11, the last verse. That's why you were born for the Lord's pleasure. A Sinner can never give one ounce of pleasure to God. Never. And you were conceived. In sin, born in sin, and your nature is sinful. We have a sinful nature and you practice sin and you know some will die. In their sins and then for all eternity, they will never give an ounce of pleasure. To God for the purpose for which they were born. That's the terrible thought of eternal death. But at any rate, now to our chapter. You'll see first verse. How you ought to walk and to please God enough walk with God and had this testimony before he was translated. He pleased God. What's the result? Abound more and more. Fruit for God. Now if you look down at verse 4. Everyone should know how to possess His vessel in sanctification and honor. The second thing is you're separated. This sanctification is not absolute sanctification. It's not the sanctification you have and can't get rid of. You're set apart for God forever. But there's a practical sanctification. Enoch had that or he couldn't be said he pleased God. You separate from that which is dishonouring to the Lord. That's Nick and then comes with Enoch. Verse 13, you'd skip the verse 13, and that's a shout called the rapture, which is not a scriptural term, but it's the closest to describing what's going to happen when the Lord comes. I like the rapture. They use it a lot, but that's enough. He was translated, He never died. We don't expect to, do we? Well, that's the thought. Now one other thing. Next we are given verse 8, the power to live this life. He says God, who has also given unto us the Holy Spirit. Of course, that comes in Romans 8, doesn't it? I think 13 and on so clear but touching brotherly love. If you are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, divine love should be part of you, and that would also go horizontal. Not just vertically, which is brotherly love and the verse I have in mind. In first John. Four, I believe. I'm sorry, I don't want to turn to it. Hereby we know we passed from death unto light. What's the test? We love the brethren so. This is a beautiful portion. And it goes on to say. 12. That ye may walk honestly towards them that are without, That ye may have lack of nothing. That brings in course the Colossian truth. I will turn to it. And then comes the portion which we just all love. It goes with yesterday. We read in first John that God is light chapter one, and then God is love in chapter 4. And these first verses would answer to God is light, He's holy, and our sanctification is to abstain from fornication to keep our bodies. Separate from that kind of thing and that's that kind of thing only belongs. It's not called fornication. It belongs in the marriage tie and that's the only place that it's of God outside of the marriage tie. That kind of thing is sin. It's called fornication, sometimes adultery.

Then it starts with verse nine is touching brotherly love and so then God is love. So we have God is light in the first part and God is love in the second part. Ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another, and how wonderful it is that. We can fulfill the will of God by abstaining from things which are defiling and then going out in love to our brethren. There's a conduct that is in keeping and a character that is necessary as to those who are waiting for the Lord Jesus to return. And that's why He brings it out very clearly here before he explains in the last part of the chapter the details concerning how this event is going to take place. He brings before the Thessalonians who had been saved from heathendom, that the things that characterized them in their unregenerate state and in heathendom ought not to characterize those who have been brought into the light and those who are waiting for the Lord Jesus. But I'd just like to make a comment that, if you allow me to go back for a moment, to give it just a general comment or two as to these Thessalonian believers and the truth of the Lord's coming that is brought before them. If we were to go back to the first chapter, we read of these believers that they had turned from God to God, from idols. To serve the living and true God and to wait for His Son from heaven. They were really waiting for the Lord Jesus to come back and establish His Kingdom. They were waiting for the Lord Jesus to come back from heaven, because the Lord's coming, as we speak of it, is really in two parts. And if we don't get ahold of this in our souls, brethren, there's going to be a lot of confusion as to our character, as to our conduct, as to our position in this world and our responsibility concerning this world and so on. And that is that the Lord Jesus, as is delineated later in this chapter, he's first of all going to come for his Saints. And he's going to call us away from this world to meet him on the cloud and he's going to escort us to the Father's house. But then that goes on in Thessalonians to explain there's another part to his coming as well. And that is he's going to come back with his Saints. So if we can put it this way, as it's often been put, he's coming first of all for his Saints, and then he's coming with his Saints. And this was the confusion that Thessalonica because. They were waiting for the Lord Jesus to come back and to establish his Kingdom and to be part of that Kingdom with the Lord Jesus. But as they were waiting, some of their number died, some of them passed away. And now these Thessalonians believers wondered what's happened? Have some of our number missed out on the Kingdom? They're gone now. And so the apostle writes to them by inspiration to explain very clearly that no, they haven't missed out on the Kingdom in any way. But that before the Lord Jesus comes back in glory to establish the Kingdom, there's something that's going to take place that's going to raise those who have died in faith. And then as we said yesterday, and we'll get to it later in our chapter, we're going to rise with them to meet the Lord in the air. So that before he comes back to reign in righteousness and appear in glory in this world, the Saints, the heavenly Saints are going to be all with him so that they come back and that no one misses out. Now just turn to Titus chapter 2 for a moment, because I think Titus chapter a couple of verses in Titus chapter 2. Really sum up what we have in this chapter. I'll read from verse 11, Titus chapter 2, and verse 11. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly loss, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. I'm going to stop there for a moment because this 12TH verse is really the first part of First Corinthians 4 and what he's really telling us here is that grace. I'm sorry, 1St Thessalonians 4. What he's really telling us here is that grace is a teacher that teaches us to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age, denying the things that are ungodly and unholy. You know, when I see a brother or a sister who exhibits moral piety in their lives, I say there's a brother, there's a sister who has an understanding of the grace of God. There is a brother or sister who appreciates the grace of God. Brethren, grace does not give us license to live as we please. It's true Scripture speaks of those who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. But they didn't really understand what grace was, and they took the thought of grace as licensed to live as they please and to use their bodies as they please. But I say again, grace teaches us to live soberly, righteously, and godly.

In this present age. But it doesn't stop there. We find it says then in verse 13, and this is the end of First Thessalonians 4. Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. Now two things are brought out here. First of all, what we said was the Lord's coming for His Saints. We're looking for that blessed hope at any moment of being raptured away to meet the Lord in the air. But there is the glorious appearing too, that time when he's going to come back with his Saints and appear in this world. And so

there's two things that are going to give us the proper character of those who are waiting for the Lord. An appreciation of grace in our souls and the an object before us. Because, brethren, our object forms our character. Our object forms our character. And if we're not looking for the Lord Jesus to come at any moment. As well as, as he expresses it in Second Timothy 4, loving his appearing the day of glory when he's manifested in this world. If those things don't characterize us, we're not going to be walking in the true character of strangers and pilgrims and denying the things that are unholy and going on with the things that we ought to. And we often speak of our blessed hope as the Lord's coming for us. And that's true. But really the two things are part of our hope here. What is our hope? To be caught up, to meet the Lord in the air, and then to come back when he has his full vindication here in this world and all see him and give glory to him. We ought to love that too. And that will help form our character now. So we can say Lord Jesus come, that's the rapture. And we can say thy Kingdom come, that's his appearance. Both are proper for the Christian. I want to refer to. Second Timothy. This question was asked me. No one commented on it. Second Timothy 2, Verse 16 Shun profane and vain babblings, they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat. As doth a canker of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have heard saying that the resurrection is passed already. And overthrow the faith of some Now we saw in first Corinthians 15 that there were some that. That said that there was number resurrection and he develops that and shows that if that's the case, then Christ is not raised because he died. And if there's no resurrection that everything is lost but here that the resurrection is passed already. What would be the effect of that? The effect of that would be that this present scene that we're living in is our final place if we're if we're living in a resurrected state. Then that's that's where we then we can enjoy things down here that might appeal to an American or Canadian audience because we have it so nice, but it wouldn't appeal to Saints in other countries don't don't have it nice at all. And so it's a very destroying thing because it puts off of our hope. In fact, it takes away our hope, doesn't it? Our hope is to be taken out of this scene and to be with Christ in heaven. Our portion is heavenly. Now Colossians, one says. If he then the Colossians 3 says verse one. If he then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above. So there is a sense in which we are already risen with Christ, but that's not in our bodies. Our bodies are still here. They're still in the old condition of things. And so to say that the resurrection is passed already would mean that our bodies are in the resurrection state. That's wrong, definitely wrong. We wouldn't be sick then if that was the case. We wouldn't have all the afflictions that we have down here. So we have to keep these Scriptures in their proper place. When it says we are risen with Christ, that's in a spiritual sense, isn't it? That's where our hope is. That's where our portion is, where a heavenly people. We're not to get engaged in all of the affairs of this world. It's politics. It's it's.

It's everything. We belong to another world, but we're not there yet. And the resurrection of the body will place us there, but that's still future. As we were speaking here I was thinking of something a little bit different. Hope you would allow me to say this. Last evening we had a young people him saying here and to my surprise there must have been over 200 young people here. I know we have lots of people here but I didn't realize we have that many younger ones and that's not counting children that didn't make it as opposed to as an age cut off. But I was thinking more. Sometimes we speak at a level that some of them may or may not understand. I find often when I don't know something, I need someone to explain it to me over and over and over again before I get it. And then when I get it, sometimes I learn that I don't have the patience to explain to someone over and over again because I expected someone else to know it the same way. So I was thinking more of a young one here. Some of them may or may not have heard of some of the things that we talked about. What prompt me to thinking of that was even the word sanctification and fornication. You know, sometimes we chuckle when someone say they don't know the word. And I remember there was a young man about 25 years of age after he was married, he said to me that's when he learned what the word fornication means. It doesn't know what he means. He didn't mean to say that he didn't know what what the act was. He just didn't know the word. So I think we may have to explain it a little bit for a younger one. And sanctification fornication, we're to be sanctified. Last night I used that word with more than one because we know that we should be sanctified and be ready for the master's use and some sex to me. Well, I don't know what you mean to be sanctified. I know our brother mentioned that already to set apart and maybe someone else can expound on that even more so, but I was thinking more too here in our chapter, especially for young people here, the conditions before the Lord's coming. Is very grave in this world. In fact, it's a lot like it is today. We talk about to be sanctified, to be set apart, to be different and live according to the word of God and not what this world is. This world expects a lot of things because it's accepted. We have to be very careful because we are influenced, aren't we, by what we see. Someone already mentioned about how we think we're determined or what we know. Will determine how we think and how we walk. You know, when our hearts dwell with things of this world, then our actions leads us to it. And even simple thing is music that we listen to, the lyric we listen to could dictate how we walk. And this may even be stretching a little bit. And even what we see, You know, I haven't gone outside yet. We came here in the dark. And the only thing I've seen in California here so far is the mountain ahead of us. When we're at home, we even have billboards all over the place. And I'm probably supposed that you have billboards out here too. And sometimes even the messages on the Billboard are defiling. So we have to be careful about things like that. And we know we're told in the last eight conditions are very great. But I like to turn to a passage in in second Timothy and these last days before the Lord comes. And so we see the conditions. I won't comment much on it, but just to read it and. You see how we have to walk Second Timothy, chapter 3. This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boastful, are boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent. Fears. Despises of those that are good traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying the power. There are and so on. We find that in verse seven, ever learning, never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. If we look around us, do we see similar conditions? The moral of this world degrades and sometimes.

We even bring that into the Assembly. We know just because the world. Things in the world are accepted. Do we bring them into the assembly? And that's why we need to be sanctified so that we can be ready for the masters Use. Be careful of what you do, you know. It was the other thing too. It's very difficult as we live in a world so full of corruption. So we as young people, how do we get away with that? Well, you see, some people will say, let's isolate ourselves. We don't see any of that. I don't see the Word of God telling us to do that. I believe what the word of God will want us to do is the first thing is to learn that in me, that is, in my flesh dwelleth no good things. We have to learn that first. If we think we can overcome all this evil in the world, we can't. But we have to acknowledge that we have no power of our own. Now what do we do instead to be filled with the Spirit? We have to spend time to learn. You know, this morning I was thinking, often you're asked to speak to the young people and you'll find that often the speakers will say to the young people and encourage them to read the word of God. And this morning in the shower, I was thinking, you know, sometimes we should actually say don't just read the word of God. But that would get people's attention, wouldn't it? Really? We shouldn't just read the Word of God. The reason I say that is this. You should be in prayer first because we just pick up the word of God to read as a knowledge book. Then that's when we get it into our head instead of our hearts. We need to be before the Lord on our needs, asking Him to show us. Abortion from themselves, and then sanctified ourselves to be holy. Now, then we can be ready for the Master's use. Will we be used by the Master? We don't know that yet. But if we're not sanctified, then definitely you can use us. But we're sanctified and then we can wait. Now, why do I say all this? I say all this not to discourage us. I say this as we look

around us and we can see all these problems, difficulties and corruption. Our heart should rejoice, not rejoicing over the problems, but you know that the Lord's coming is so ever near. He's still going to come and rapture us out from this scene because there is nothing this world can do to correct the problems. What a blessed hope. That's why our brother pointed out that verse in their entire waiting for the glorious return of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. As always, remember, there is an absolute sanctification. And it can't be changed. You are sanctified. Everyone that believes in the Lord Jesus Christ has been set apart from this world for God. That's absolute, never changes. We're talking about practical sanctification here. And I'd like to just turn to the Lord's Prayer for that, because that's really how we can maintain it, the Lord's Prayer. Of course, you all know it's chapter 17 of John. And verse 1617, verse 16, I'm going to mention verse 21St because it applies to us neither pray I. This is the Lord for these alone, the disciples and apostles there, but for them also, which shall believe on me through their word. So you're included in this. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. That's absolute sanctification. Sanctify them through Thy truth. Thy word is truth. As Thou has sent me into the world, Even so I also sent them into the world for their sakes. I sanctify myself that they also might be sanctified. How? Through the truth either. The word of God will keep you from sinning, or sin will keep you. From the word of God. That's it if you continue with the Word. Satan has a harder time with you. I'd like to read a very important passage. It's in First Corinthians 6IN connection with what's been said, there's so many young people here and. 1St Corinthians 6. Verse 12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient. All things are lawful unto me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Now notice verse 13 meets for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body they used to strike me so strange. Why does he?

Mention these two things. Needs for the belly and the other is fornication. What are the two most natural the strongest drives in men? The 1St is self preservation is if you had a choice to. If you were starving and needed food, and you had a choice to either if they were, you were offered two things. And that is food to sustain you, or sex to fulfill your natural sexual desires. You choose the food. But if your food had already satisfied you, what's the next strongest drive in man? Sex. And that's why these two are put together. Notice how it's developed in this chapter. And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Your bodies are the members of Christ. Not just you in a general way, but your bodies. Belong to Christ, They are members of Christ. Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. That's fornication, That's fornication. What know ye not that he which is joined to in harlot is one body. The two shall be one flesh, for two saith thee shall be one flesh. That relationship is reserved for marriage, and engaging in that outside of marriage is sin. Inside the institution of marriage, wonderful relationship that God has provided for men and women is very precious is nothing wrong with it, nothing unholy about it. It's beautiful. It's beautiful, but it has to be kept within that relationship outside of it. It is sinful. Marriage is honorable and all in the best story. Chuck, I'm not finished. I want to get to the end of this chapter. What know ye not, that he which is joined to in harlots? Is one body. Let's think of it. One body with the two shall be one flesh that goes right back to Adam and Eve. Shall be one flesh, but he that is joined to the Lord is 1 spirit. We sing that hymn 1 spirit with the Lord and we're united to the Lord by the Spirit in a spiritual way. But this thing fornication or the one flesh deal is something that has to do with the with the body. And we as we've had before us, we're not in our new body yet, not in our new body. That won't be a part of our new creation activity. There are no, there's not going to be male and female. Up there. That's marriage is an institution of earth belonging to this scene, not heaven. Not heaven. Remember when my son who lost in one day? His family, his wife, his three children murdered. And remember, he wrote a letter to me after that, and he'd been looking at Scripture where the Lord said to them that marriage is for now, not then. And he said I finally said goodbye. To Susie and Becky, Gracie and Benji forever. You'll never have that relationship again. You'll never have the joy of marriage up there, except the marriage of Christ and the Church. But that's an earthly institution. If you don't keep yourself pure in this time, you'll not have another chance for it in that time.

Because it's only in firstly thing beautiful, the most beautiful thing that he's given to us. Keep yourselves pure. Free fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body. But he that committed fornication sinneth against his own body. What? Here's another reason we're not to do it, because our bodies are the members of Christ. Now there's another reason we should abstain from fornication. What know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you. Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. Their body is not evil. It can be used in a wrong way. That's called sin on fornication. I remember a young man said to me once, he said. If I have sex with a young woman and then I go on to marry her, that that constitutes my marriage and I've I've consummated that act which belongs in marriage. And that's so that's not really sin because but it I said no, that's called fornication and scripture. It's not marriage. Marriage involves more than just that act. There are those the way the world thinks. There are those that you commit that act, you're married. Or of course, the world is so loose in these things it's just terrible to even talk about them. But But no, that that in itself does not constitute marriage. There has to be a. A recognition and a public thing in a way that the two are one now, they're married, they belong to each other, and they should only be in that way to each other and to no one else. What know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and you're not your own. Your body isn't yours to do with as you want. You belong. Your body belongs to Christ, just like you do. You're not your own, you're bought with a price. What's the conclusion? Therefore, glorify God in your body. And in your spirit, which are gods? I don't know whether that last part is even there. Glorify God in your body. And that is so important. And that's really the first part of First Thessalonians 4, our sanctification. I think it's so important to stress this because the the whole attitude in the world that we're living in and the television and all that completely, completely contradicts what I just said. Just to give a verse, Chuck, to confirm what you said about marriage being a natural tie for this life when he takes up the relationship of the husband and wife in First Peter chapter 3 and verse 7. He says being heirs together of the grace of life, that's this life here. I've heard people say marriage is a spiritual tie. Marriage is a tie, a natural tie given for this earth. There'll be nothing in glory to detract from that paramount relationship of Christ and his bride. That's what's going to be paramount there in the glory and if earthly relationships continued in glory the way they are now. There would be something to detract from that. But I just want to say this too, as a follow up to what you say. Just turn to Proverbs 6 just to follow up the verses you read to us in Corinthians. Because I think this is so solemn, maybe I'll just preface reading this verse by saying this. I've been impressed in going through the epistles in the New Testament to realize how many times, particularly the apostle Paul warns not the world. But the Saints of God as to the folly and consequences of moral evil, fornication and adultery, even to the Ephesian Saints who were able to take in that great and high truth, he warns them in the midst of it all of moral evil. But I want to read a verse or two here in Proverbs 6, verse 32. But whoso committeth adultery with a woman locketh understanding. He that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. Now notice this next verse. A wound and dishonor shall he get. And his reproach shall not be wiped away. And I believe that one reason why Scripture warns so solemnly and frequently as to the sexual relationships outside the marriage tie is because it leaves a mark on a person for this the rest of their life. A wound and dishonor shall he get. Now it's true that one can be happily restored to the Lord David failed.

We in connection with Bathsheba. It was a grievous moral sin, and David was happily restored to the Lord. And even used of God, but a sword never departed from his house forever. There was a consequence that continued on because of that evil, and a wound and dishonor shall he get. And young people, keep yourself pure. Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled. But don't fall into the trap of moral rune. It'll follow you the rest of your life. I'm not saying you can't be happily restored in your soul to the Lord, and maybe with circumstances, in some circumstances even to the Lord's table and your brethren and so on. But do be careful. But the problem is today, not only has the line of demarcation in the world become blurred, it's become completely removed and obliterated. When I was going to school, we had to go out and look for trouble, and some of us found plenty of it. The difference between that and my young people is trouble is right there in front of us, in front of them. And there's no there was still a line of right and wrong when I went to school as a young person. But these things have become so accepted in our society and through the medium of television and all this kind of thing. That we've become de sweet if we're not careful, we become desensitized to evil and we don't really realize how awful it is. And we don't realize that sin is is costly. Sin is. Is is presented today as something grand and wonderful and something to fill your appetite and you're to go after the lusts of your heart. No one's to put restrictions on you. But sin is costly. Sin has its consequences. Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. And I just plead with you young people, and all of us. There's so many who've had great potential, so many who have been on fire for the Lord and they've fallen into moral evil and it has left us a wound and a scar. Oh, I beg you, keep yourself pure. God has a relationship for us on earth inside the marriage tie, which has been has been said is precious in itself. It's for the blessing of man on earth if we step out of what God has instituted. For our blessing on this earth, we can expect nothing but sorrow and reaping what we sow. I want to add just one more thing to what was said before, then I'll be quiet. In first Corinthians 7 it just follows what we read. I just want to read the 1St 2 verses now concerning the things whereof He wrote unto me. It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. But the husband render the wife to benevolence, and likewise also the wife to the husband, and so on. I was in a wedding. Those are my granddaughter. And. They got married and. The one that married them says you may now kiss your bride. And I heard a voice behind me said He kissed her, the voice behind me said. And he was right. It's the first time he's kissed her. They agreed that they would not. Do anything that would be inappropriate because one thing can lead to another to another and so on, and sin can come in. So they they saved it for the marriage. And if you ever do that, if you do that, and I thought ever, if you do that, you'll never regret it. You'll never regret it. There's too much looseness. It's good for a man not to touch a woman. Now that touch is a sexual touch that he's talking about. Which leads to sin. But they had agreed, they got married and that's the first time he touched her. If you can put it in the language of scripture. I'm just going to say for the day might be able to illustrate sanctification. And because there's another aspect to it. When we not all of us have dishwashers, so we have dirty dishes stacked on one side of the sink and as they're washed and dried, then the clean ones are on the other side. We don't mix them. We put the clean ones on the other side. We don't know whether they're clean or not. So we keep them apart. You might say sanctified. Now here's the the other part about that is.

You might say, well, what can I do about my classmates? I have to sit in a school room with ungodly people. I might ride on a bus with ungodly people or eat in a restaurant and work with ungodly people. Well, you know, there was a time when some of the apostles were. Taken into custody and it's like to read a verse in in Acts chapter 4. It is verse 23. Probably know this verse. Acts 423 and being let go, they went to their own company. Well, when you're forced together in places where you belong and you can't separate from the ungodly, you don't make deep friendships with those people. You can be friendly and then you have an opportunity with the gospel, but when you're let go, then who are your friends? Once you're free from those places where you're required to be, then who are your friends? They went to their own company. And I don't have to explain who your own company is. You know that, Your other fellow believers. There's a beautiful little poem that reads something like this. What has stripped this seeming beauty from the idols of the earth? Not the sense of right or duty, but the sight of peerless worth. I just like to say one little word of encouragement too, as to on the subject of marriage here, that we know that Scripture tells us that in heaven they're neither Mary nor are given in marriage. But isn't it wonderful, beloved brethren, that the. Mate, the Lord has given us here on earth, We're going to enjoy in that scene too. Not as married, but in a richer way. There's going to be that sweet fellowship together as we enjoy Christ. But I was thinking too of something else in connection with this. If we could turn just for a moment to the third chapter of, of first John, and then I think we see something of what would lead to true sanctification. That's what we have. In our chapter, the 4th chapter of One Thessalonians. But to read just a few verses here the 1St 3. And how this will focus our attention. On the things that will bring eternal blessing, that will keep us from the distractions that Satan wants to bring in. Because, beloved brethren, we have an enemy that wants to destroy us. And he wants to discourage us. He wants to get our eyes off of Christ. He's our source of blessing. He's our place of safety. And you know, when the wolf comes in and destroys the the sheep, he scatters the flock. What which ones of the flock are? Are safe the ones who are cleaving close to the Shepherd? Oh, may that be the subject of our hearts. But here we read the first verse of the first. John 3. Behold, oh, I look at that word. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see him as he is, and every man that hath this hope in him purify him by himself even as he is pure. All beloved brethren, when our focus is upon him, just to tell a little story that I've enjoyed, I've heard it many years ago of this man who went into a jewelry shop and he wanted to buy. He saw this Pearl that was so beautiful, so lovely, and he asked the the shopkeeper, how much do you want for that Pearl? The shopkeeper said everything that you have.

And he said, well, OK, he pull out his wallet. And he had a few $100 there and he he gave it to the shopkeeper, the shop seek people said, well, I want your wallet also. And then he said, well then I can't, it's got my license and I can't drive my car. Oh, you have a car. I'll take that too. Well, if you take my car, how will I get my wife and my family around? And how can we go home? Oh, you have a wife and a family. I'll take them to your home. I'll take it too. Old beloved brethren, just impress what has been said to us and how good. What a salvation, what protection it will give us if we could truly lay hold of the truth of the Word of God that tells us ye are not your own. You are bought with a price and all. What a price may our hearts, beloved brethren, be. Taken from the things of this earth that so easily beset us, the sin that so easily beset us, beset us, the sin of unbelief and these things, and cleave unto the Lord with purpose of heart. Like Daniel of old, who purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the King's meat. We have such a Savior. And I think even this moment is that he's looking down with his infinite love. Oh, do we have a sense of that love? That infinite love, beloved brotherhood, to walk through the day with a sense of God's love for me. And also it helps us to remember this, does it not? When I think of how much the Lord Jesus loves my brethren, oh, I want to be careful how I treat them. I want to mention two things that will encourage the young people. I'm not saying you discouraged them, but you know, Satan does take advantage and get it at times. But the one thing, Tom, when you mentioned we should be friendly with those in the world, I remember Harry Hagel. I don't like to quote people like that, but he really affected me many times. He said we should be. The best friends this world can have but not friendly with them. And I think that really sunk into me. I just not correcting you but I'm just saying we better be careful about being friendly with them because Demas name means popular if you find yourself popular with those of the world.

Whoa, whoa, whoa. That isn't what we're talking about. But on the other, on fornication and adultery. You know, it isn't the end. I'm not. No, I'm not going the other way, brother. But I want to turn to Jeremiah, chapter 3 of Jeremiah. And this is so important because once we belong to Christ, always we belong to Christ. And don't let anything discourage you in that. You can always turn to Him. In verse. Three, therefore the showers have been withholding, and there have been no latter rain. This is on Israel. And thou hast a horse forehead then refuses to be ashamed. Now here of course, a horse forehead is one who isn't ashamed of what she's doing, but here it applies to spiritual fornication, which many times that comes up. And that's the worst type of fornication. But what about? Physical. All right, turn to verse 14. Eternal backsliding children, says the Lord Jehovah. For I am married unto you, and I will make you one of a city, two of a family, I will bring you to Zion, and so on. Malachi chapter 3 the Lord says the Lord hates putting away and don't remember don't ever forget. I mean, once you belong to him, you may go as far as David. It could happen, but as as. As our brother said, David was restored. You don't expect to be restored, but don't ever shorten the hand of the Lord. He'll never give you up. And I'm just saying that not to encourage him in the act, but not to discourage him if Satan has taken advantage. Brother Bob, I was. I'm glad you brought that out in First Corinthians 5.

Man was put away, put away from among yourselves, that wicked person. He had committed fornication and. But the second epistle says restore him, forgive him, And he was. But was he the only case at Corinth? I'm going to read you some verses in 2nd Corinthians 12 verse 20. But I fear lest when I come, I shall not find you such as I would. And that I shall be found unto you, such as ye would not, lest there be debates and beings, rats, stripes, backbiting, whisperings, swellings, tumults, and lest when I come again, my God will humble me among you. They were His children in the faith, He was their spiritual father. And when they didn't go on well and humbled him, that's when I come again my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already. And have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and the assiduousness which they've committed. We have to realize that these Corinthians were Gentiles saved out of a a heathen world and that was common to Corinthian eyes was to fornicate. That was the reputation that they had. And this was and these early Christians, they had to learn that that is not Christianity. That's not right. You can't do that. You keep your body reserved and pure and holy. You belong now to Christ. Your body is a member of Christ and you have the Holy Spirit indwelling you. But I want to say this to the young people. If you have fallen into sin that way, it's not over for you. It wasn't over for that man, First Corinthians five. He wept. He repented. He was sorry for what he'd done. And he was forgiven. The grace of God can take you up with no letter where you are. We don't want this ministry to just come down on you as though it's, oh, I'm just nothing. I've failed in everything. It's not over. Just repent, get before the Lord, confess your sins one to another. He will heal you and you can be used. You can be used still if you get in the right state of soul. As Jim said earlier, we have an example in the Old Testament of David. And Jim made a comment that is very, very true. There's a result to sin. There's a result. And David never lost that sword, you know, right? Just before he died, one of his sons revolted against him. You know, there is a result and that something is true, that God is gracious. He forgives government of God. But there is a result. We pay a penalty for what we do. I like to add another comment to this, if I may be for young people, not saying that you are doing this act because I know what children often when you want to teach them something, the first reaction is they'll say, well, I don't do these things. Well, we want you to learn it because none of us are exempted from it. You know, I heard people will say, well, my children are now married, They're fined. You know, these temptations out there are just as great. All of us as any so we have to understand it from the word of God. In fact, we should enjoy on it because when we dwell on it, it leads us into walking that way. What we think about often will translate into actions. That's why we're told to renew our minds. But renew it with what? With the word of God waiting to be occupied with. Now, some of you may say, I don't even think about that and you're right. And I would believe that the number of people we talked to about this year would probably be a very small percentage here. But then we are not exempted. We have other problems too. And as we're thinking of this, I was thinking of the scene of Sodom. You know, when you talk about the the lowest moral degradation, we think of Sodom. And I'd like to turn to a verse in Ezekiel to see what the Lord said about Sodom. Maybe we'll learn something from that because, you know, the Lord finally took judgment on that city. He couldn't wait any longer. In Ezekiel chapter 16, here's the Lord addressing Israel again. A brother read in Jeremiah there about the follies. Here it in the 16th chapter of Ezekiel. I find it very striking because in Sodom I would think that the Lord's going to address them in regard.

To all these immoralities. Now let's see what He says in verse 49. Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom. Well, what do you think the Lord say to them? First, we read a number of things. The first thing here if you notice just one word. First problem He addresses pride, pride. Second thing, short, fullness of bread and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughter's. Neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. The Lord addressed a number of things before he got into the moral issues after on the next verse, which I don't intend to go into because I think enough was said on that. But let's look at this pride. You know, we're told to be humble before the Lord. And I heard an expression someone said one time he said we're sometimes so humble that we are proud of it. You know, there's also thing a spiritual pride. Anything that talks about me is pride, isn't it? And if you think about the word pride I enjoy. Someone pointed out one time he said many of us attacks in homes at our homes with the word pride on it. And some of you may remember that just the word PRIDE. But the artist put it a little bit differently. It looks like a house. The 1St letter is a little bit lower, 2nd letter is higher and higher and in the middle of that is the letter I that stands way out. I that's pride. Anything that have me in it is pride. So that was the problem. Pride we were in Proverbs chapter 6, you know, and that chapter the Lord said there's six things that he hates and the first thing is the proud look. So we have to be very careful pride. But then after pride, I see that we have the same conditions today. We know the conditions around us are dark, are Gray, a evil and corruptions. This condition, we see this in our own household, is that fullness of bread? Do we have that? No, there's nothing wrong with that. And I know some of you, the young people being overseas, in Mexico, in Malawi, in India, in many places where they see there's no such thing as fullness of bread. It's very difficult to hear and understand someone who who will tell you that they haven't eaten in three days. I get pretty grumpy by about half an hour, an hour late from my meal time. But there are many places where people can say this fullness of bread, and in about 20 minutes time will be feasting. We will know what that means, do we? But that was the conditions. They have pride, they have fondness of bread, and along with that, the idleness that was in her and her daughters. It will be very careful. The Lord knows that sometimes riches in abundance can be our hindrance too, and we need to be very careful with this. What do we do with our time? You know, I don't want to mock anybody. We know that many of us when we're not busy, we take up gossiping and we don't need to look at someone else. We look at ourselves and words gets around. You know, we jokingly say whatever you said here today, your mom and dad probably know at home because of Internet and telephone. You know, and you know too that there are times and there are many places where if you know information, if you need information, the certain person you call and you know that that person knows everything. Do we need to know all this? Rather, be careful. We're on a sidetrack, but the longest, we're on one more thing. Sorry, but we were currently going to read 13 to the end, and I think we should still do it. But one more thing, since we got the young people into the mess, let's help them a little if you're at the Lord's Table, which is the highest privilege anyone can have in this world. To be at the Lord's table. We're going to taste it tomorrow. If you are, I just read this to you. First Corinthians 11 and verse. 27 I believe, Yeah. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread or drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine or prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread

and drink of that cup, for he that eateth and drinketh.

Unworthily eateth and drinketh. Judgment should be to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. Now that judgment, of course, is not, is governmental judgment. I mean, you reap what you sow. We talked about it with David and others. But never let any sin keep you from the table if you're there. That's too important. You may have to confess to your brethren in assembly. You certainly have to confess to the Lord. That's before we conclude the meeting. Just read verse seven and eight of our chapter. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not men, but God, who hath also given us his Holy Spirit. I just want to make a comment in connection with this, because we've spoken about uncleanness and the folly of sin. There is a path of holiness for the Saints of God. This is practical holiness, and I think of that verse that says be holy that bear the vessels of the Lord. As we've had before us, our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. But what I want to point out in connection with all that we've said on these matters, lest we be discouraged, is that we have brethren, the resources to shun that which is evil and to live wholly for God's glory in this world. He hasn't left us to do it on our own. Because maybe there's a young person here and you're thinking as these things are unfolded, Well, I've got appetite. I'm young. It's all right for the older brethren to talk about these things, but I'm young and I've got appetite and desires natural. Things given by God and they are and therefore our happiness on earth and they're kept in their proper place and their proper sphere. But I just want to point out that rather than we have all things that pertain unto life and godliness and we're not left to live a life for God's glory on our own devices. He's given us the Spirit of God as the power for our new life. He's given us the resource of prayer. He's given us his precious word. And if we go on with those things in the in availing ourselves of those resources. Then we can, as we said at the beginning of the meeting, live soberly, righteously and godly. In this present age. But the problem is so often we try to do it on our own. We say, well, I know how far to go. He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool. Young people don't ever say, well I know how far to go with that young lady, or I know how far to go with that young man, or I know how far I can go in that circumstance and I won't go any further. Let him that thinketh thee standeth take heed lest he fall. Peter was full of self-confidence, but he had to learn by a bitter experience that he didn't understand his own heart. He trusted his own heart and it was to his downfall. But he had a resource. I've prayed for thee that thy faith fail not if he'd availed himself of what he had in Christ, he would have never done what he did. And if he hadn't associated with those that the world's fire that had no love for his Lord, it might have saved him that bitter experience. But I just want to say this at the end of the meeting, unless we be discouraged. You have all the resources. But maybe I can just say too, to exercise each one of us when we stand at the judgment seat of Christ. And our life is brought into review another day and some failure is brought out. And it's not a question of my acceptance in heaven or my salvation. That's not the point. But some failure in my life is brought out. What excuse am I going to give the Lord Jesus? Am I going to be able to say, well, it was such a dark day. I couldn't live for God's glory. I didn't have the resources to meet that situation. He's going to say, I gave you everything. You have divine life. You had the Spirit of God as the power for it. You had prayer, you had the Word, you had me living and interceding for you at the right hand of God. You had the hope of the Lord's coming. It's going to be a lot of red faces at the judgment seat of Christ. It's not that it's not going to affect our eternal destiny or our salvation. We're there forever. There's going to be a lot of red faces that the judgment seat of Christ as we realize that the reason we fell into these things, the reason sin took hold of us in our lives was because we did not avail ourselves.

Of what we had and if we fail, it's because we have turned away or rejected. Are neglected to use the resources that were available. And brethren, if the day ever gets so dark that we can't live for God's glory with the resources that he has given us, then the Lord will take us out. But as long as we're left here, no matter how dark the day is, no matter how much evil abounds, and not just an immoral society, but an amoral society where there's no boundaries, everything is if it feels good, do it. But as long as we're left here, we have the resources to stand against the tide. The Kingdom of God suffereth violence and the violent take it by force. We're going to have to swim upstream, brethren, but it's not on our own devices. If someone says to you, young person. Everybody's doing it then that proves it's dead wrong. I want to give one verse before I got a time before. That's Proverbs for the young people. I don't know why we're preaching. Thank you, but it's that way. Proverbs chapter 4, verse 23, I believe keep should be Garrison. Garrison thy heart with all diligence for out of it. Are the issues of life and I have one thing to ask. Do you think brother, you're going to have a red face at the judgment seat of Christ? Well, I use that expression. We don't understand what it's going to be. There be no regrets that the judges, but there will but there will be loss at the judgment seat of Christ, not loss of salvation, but loss of what he can reward for those things that were not for his glory and which will be part of that wood, hay and stubble that will all be burned up and gone. Thank God it will. And then something that he can praise us for, but they're wondering. 25 Sorry, Tom #225 The third verse begins. While here in the valley of conflict we stay. Oh, give us submission and strength of the day 225.

Of #288. Not thinking of the young necessarily, but for everyone of us. 288 versus 2 and three.

Chicago Conference: 1981, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-15

Reading

First Thessalonians chapters 4 and five, beginning with verse 13 of chapter 4. For that would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep. That you sorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again. Even so, them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord. That we which are alive and remain under the coming of the Lord shall not prevent or precede them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout. Voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. But of the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon the him as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But she, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light and the children of day. You're not of the night, nor of the darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night. And they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love and foreign help, the hope of salvation. For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. Who died for us that whether we wake our sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together and edify one another even as also you do. Or now that in the early chapters of the book of Acts, we see that there was still when the Lord Jesus Christ went up on high, there was a bonafide a good offer made that if Israel would still repent nationally, God would send Jesus back for the restitution of all things and the Kingdom would be set up. We know that by the time we get to

Acts Chapter 7. There's a message sent up to heaven in the stoning of Stephen. We will not have this man to reign over us, God of course, knowing the all things beforehand. In the next chapters we see then God raising up a man, Saul of Tarsus, a man that was prepared from his mother's womb, as we learned from Galatians 1. And God is going to use him as a special vessel. For the whole truth of bringing out of the church. Now, Paul was given many revelations, we learned, But specifically four are mentioned, aren't there? There is one in connection with the gospel in Galatians chapter one. The and that's outlined for us, shall we say, in the book of Romans, how a man can be just before God, then the three special revelations given to him connection with the church. What in Ephesians 3 that the Jew and the Gentile should be 11 Newman united to Christ in glory, forming that one Newman head and body. So the mystery of the church. Was made known to the apostle Paul. Also the 2nd revelation not in an order now I'm just mentioning then would be the fact that the apostle Paul was never in the upper room when the remembrance of the Lord was instituted. So he had a special revelation from the risen Christ that this the remembrance of the Lord Jesus Christ because an ultra dispensationalism.

They teach that that was something that was just for the early Christian Church when it was in its transitional period. But thank God that which is most blessed to us each Lord's Day was given to the apostle Paul as a revelation, something that should characterize those believers, you and I, until the Lord Jesus Christ comes back again, this do Remember Me. Then, of course, the other revelation would be what we have before us in First Thessalonians chapter 4. The apostle, visiting early in Thessalonica, had given them truth about the coming of the Lord the day of the Lord. We learned that in chapter 5. But now a special revelation is given to him in connection with the Church, and that those that had died and those which remained, that the Lord Jesus is going to come and take us to be with Himself. So these revelations, at least four, as we say, one in connection with the gospel. 3IN connection with the church given to the apostle Paul, some of it unfolded here before us. I mentioned we might mention in connection with the revelation in First Thessalonians chapter 4 that we could connect with that what we have in First Corinthians chapter 15. Verse 51. This is in connection with the resurrection. The two are linked together, the resurrection of the Saints and the catching up of the Saints, to be with Christ in glory. And it was appropriate that the apostle Paul should get a revelation in connection with resurrection because. The resurrection in the Old Testament times was looked at as a general thing, a resurrection of everybody. There wasn't any distinction in resurrection. But now we have this revelation here, and it's stated this way in verse 51 of chapter 15 of First Corinthians. Behold, I show you a mystery. Well, that word mystery is something like the word secret. I show you a secret that is, here's something that is given to the apostle Paul that before it was revealed to him, it was secret. It was hidden. It wasn't strange to God. It was hidden in him like the truth of the church. It was hidden in God. But now he says, I show you this mystery. We shall not all sleep. But we shall all be changed, and you connect that with what we have in First Thessalonians chapter four in a moment. And the twinkling of an eye at the last trump, or the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. So Speaking of those who have died in Christ, and those who are still living that belong to Christ. And the living will be changed, and the dead will be raised incorruptible. And then of course, in First Thessalonians. Four tells us that they're going to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. The Lord himself shall descend to to meet them there in the air. What a glorious truth this is. We're going to see him. We're going to see the one who died for us, the one who loved us and gave himself for us. We're going to be caught away from this scene up to meet him and be taken to the Father's house. And if we want to read more, we can read about that. In John's Gospel chapter 14. Read that portion of scripture with this particular scripture too, because the Lord, the Lord is making an announcement there really in John 14, and it's the truth of the Lords coming in its Christian aspect that we're getting there. The Lord has gone to prepare place for us. The very fact that He's there as a man means that a place is prepared for us there, and He's coming again to receive us unto Himself, that where He is, we might be also. So this is what we have really brought before us in this scripture that's just been read to us. First Thessalonians chapter 4. Now it says in verse 13, I would not have you to be ignorant.

The Apostle Paul was giving these dear Saints of Thessalonica. This revelation, this truth, because he didn't want them to be ignorant about it. Some of their loved ones who knew the Lord had died and they were wondering now what's happened to them? They've lost out, they've lost everything. Nor the apostle says, I don't want you to be ignorant about that. And isn't it wonderful that we have this Scripture that when we lose brethren, we lose loved ones in the Lord? We know what's happened to them. We know where they are. We are not ignorant about it because God has given us His word about it for something. Notice that. In verse 15 of the 4th chapter, the verse 18 is the parenthesis and chapter five really is a continuation from what you get from verse 14. Now as you remarked, I would not have been ignorant concerning them with our sleep and verse 14 for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, Even so them also asleep and Jesus will God bring with him well, how is he going to bring with him well, the following verses is the rapture the Lord coming. Four years old. For many years I used to. Think that this was a Raptor verse 13 and 14, but it is not the Raptor. You get the Raptor in verse 15 and that's how they can come with him because the rapture has taken place and. The regime there with the Lord. Revelation chapter 19. It speaks of an army that comes with him, with the Lord out of heaven. Well, no doubt this is what this is referring to here. We're going to be brought with him, it will be taken up so we're with him and we can come back. And be part of that new Jerusalem that will hover over the earth during the Millennium while the Lord is reigning here on the earth will be associated with the Lord Jesus Christ in His reign over this world. And everyone. Who belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ will have a part in that be associated with Him. No one will be left out. What a wonderful expression this is for all of us that belong to the Lord Jesus, which sleep in Jesus. We have that blessed hope to death overtake us, but we understand it and we take it in not by our thoughts or our reason, but it's because the Holy Spirit has been dwelled us and by faith we can enter into these things. I was thinking when the Lord in John 11. Was telling this to his own disciples. And he said, our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may wake him out asleep. They couldn't enter into that. And he had to say plainly, Lazarus is dead. Well, how wonderful it is. Now we have the mind of Christ, we have the Holy Spirit within us, and by faith we can enter into the blessed truth that those that have gone ahead are asleep in Jesus. When the disciples heard it. From the Lord himself they couldn't enter into that it's too precious isn't it? And it takes it takes the faith through the Holy Spirit of God, which by the grace of God we have now in order to enter into this blessed truth. The 14th verse has been very interesting in this way that. As it's been already pointed out, this would be is appearing, wouldn't it, when he comes back with his Saints. But if you notice it says or if we believe. That Jesus died and rose again. Even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. Isn't it precious to know that God's whole plan is the exaltation of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and when He appears, we appear with Him. When He's glorified, when He has His rightful place, then the Saints are there too with Him. I was thinking of it is don't we get a thought in? First Timothy chapter 6 where we get the. The Lord Jesus and God brought so closely together. First Timothy chapter 6 and verse 13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession, that thou keep this commandment without spot, unremucable until the coming, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Which in his times he shall show. Who is, who is the blessed and only potentate, the king of kings and Lord of Lords? God is going to show he's going to display his beloved Son in that day. I wondered if there wasn't some connection between verse 14 and those verses that we have in

First Timothy chapter 6 that that title the King of kings and Lord of Lords. I think of a verse in Revelation 17. To read to us Revelation 17, verse 14. We read. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of Lords and King of kings, and they that are with him, and that's what our verse says, are called and chosen and faithful. Now those are not the angels, we are the called ones. The epistles are addressed to the called ones, and we are those whom he's called out of darkness into his marvelous light, called to be a people for his name. And so those who are with him when he returns as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, are called and chosen and faithful. How precious that we are so identified with him that when he returns we will be with him and we will be like him. Isn't it? It's called and chosen. When were we called in time? When we were chosen in eternity? What a what a glorious portion this is, isn't it some folks that said, well, why should we take up prophecy? You know, that's not very profitable for our hearts. Well, dear ones, we would say this, that anything that relates. To the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. His work, His person, His glory, His offices, anything that touches upon the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, it should be precious to us. And so if we do, if we should get into some prophetic things, it isn't just to feed the intellect, but it's to know of those coming scenes of glory in which there are two men in the Word of God. The man in responsibility, Adam. And the man of God's purposes and counsels the Lord Jesus Christ. And so anything that touches upon that Blessed One is important to us. Now our part is that we're waiting for the rapture. We're waiting for the Lord Jesus Christ to take us to be with himself. Blessed moment that can come at any time. But how about the revelation? How about the time when the Lord Jesus shall come with the armies of heaven and put down? All of the iniquity and rule and reign as King of kings and Lord of Lords. Well, Second Timothy chapter four, I think has a word for our hearts and consciences there in that connection. Second Timothy chapter 4 and verse 4. The apostle Paul now is at the end of the pathway. This is his last epistle. He might say that what we're reading in First Thessalonians is false first epistle that he wrote in about 51 to 53 AD, somewhere around there on his second missionary journey that we connected with the book of Acts. This second Timothy would be the last epistle, possibly the 14th one that our fossil road. And here he says henceforth, and verse eight, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love the rapture. That's not what it says. Unto all that love his appearing. All we love is appearing as believers. We love that that moment when the Lord Jesus Christ shall be manifested, and when He shall have everything that is rightfully His. There's coming a day right now it's Sit down at my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool. Or one day in Psalm 2, ask of me, and I will give you the heathen for thine inheritance. And he will ask, and he'll come with those armies, and be irresistible as the lion of the tribe of.

And put down everything. Of course, as I say, our blessed hope then is his coming. But here there's a crown of righteousness that we can have in the coming day if we love is appearing. We might say that a little bit later on in verse 10, there's a man who loved the wrong thing, a Christian. Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world. Now what are we loving? Do we love the appearing when the Lord Jesus Christ shall have his rightful place? Or do we love this present world? Doesn't say evil world either, does it? Here He's delivered us from this present evil world, Galatians one. But Demas love this present world could have had a fair appearance. It could have been something that was more lucrative to him than going out preaching the gospel. But he loved this world and he was the loser for it and all. If we set our affections on things down here, that's going to rob us of the joy of the Lord. Connection of John 14 has been referenced recognized when he says to his own who were sorrowing. He says, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am. That must have been precious to their hearts. The very thought of the blessed Savior setting before them, the emphasis. I will receive you onto myself. Not referring to the completion of the councils of God, although that would be true. Not referring to the place to which we would go, that's spoken of that where I am. But unto myself, and if it is precious and real to his own heart, that you and I as redeemed ones would be with him. And like Him, and therefore His praise and glory. Then what ought to characterize us now? We understand, beloved brethren, the truth concerning the coming of the Lord. But I wonder if it is fresh in our hearts. I remember traveling, if you pardon the reference a moment, remember traveling with a dear woman who was only saved about four weeks. And we began to speak about the coming of the Lord. 1St Thessalonians 4 simplified scriptures that we've had before us again and again. Her heart just seemed to throb in her face. It was that beam of the fresh sense. You mean the Lord who loved thee and died for me is going to come really and truly. And take me with everyone else to be with himself. She thought it was marvelous. She said, wait just a minute till I write all these scriptures down so that I can send this to my son who has just also recently known the Lord Jesus as his Savior. It was fresh, it was real. It was. Perhaps the first time she had ever heard of the glory of these truths. And I, in sitting here this afternoon of Finn enjoying what has been before us. And I would challenge our heart, beloved brethren, is it fresh and real? And does it mean something to our heart that the Lord Jesus has not only died for us? And given us the fullness of the Word and the glory of His purpose. But he plainly told us that I will come again and receive you to myself. He says this do in remembrance of me. Where I am, there shall also my servant be. May the Person of Christ be fresh and real. And may these glorious truths as we sit here during these days, the Lord willing, be real in our hearts, as if we were hearing them for the very first time, the truth of the Word of God. Made real by the Spirit of God to the Saints of God. May there be that sense. In which we would be here in the Lord's presence to receive the word of God for the honor and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ in verse 15. It seems to me that.

That the Apostle Paul is giving us a witness, a testimony. Now witnesses or testimonies can be words that are hung upon. Often times you get into a courtroom. And witnesses are brought to the witness stand, and whatever side has the witness, they're hanging upon the words of that witness that the judge might hear those words and make a favorable decision. Well, here we have one giving a testimony. He's giving a real testimony. He's telling something that he has heard. Now there are those. That doubt the word of God. But God speak, and holy men of old wrote as God speak to them, and they spoke by the Holy Ghost, or they wrote by the Spirit of God. Witness was given to them, words were given to them to write, and they wrote them down. Here we have the apostle Paul writing down, telling us what the Lord told him. For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, You have any doubts about this? Well, it's a testimony of the law of the apostle Paul to what the Lord told him. Hang on, do we find assurance in it? Do we really cling to it? Is it a foundation for us to stand upon? God has spoken. The Lord Jesus Christ spoke to the apostle Paul and he's writing it down. It's his testimony. Do we believe it? The whole word of God is a testimony of God to us. Do we believe it? Does it mean something to us? Sometimes we read the word of God. Perhaps in our private reading and we're just reading words, but does it mean something to us? Well, I need to be stirred up in this myself to really know that when I'm reading this book, I'm reading God's testimony to me, holy men of all space as they were moved by the Spirit of God. Oh, I'm thankful for that testimony. He says the Lord told me this. That we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them. Or precede them, or get ahead of them which are asleep. And he goes on to tell the whole thing that the Lord told him. It came directly from the Lord Jesus by the apostle Paul to us. These are the words of the Lord Himself through His servant. And the whole story is here. This passage could not be quoted from the Old Testament. It was not the word of the Lord until the apostle received it by special revelation. Then it was the word of the Lord, and this is acknowledged by. Peter in his second epistle. If you'll notice in the third chapter as he writes in verse 15 and account, the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation, even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him as written unto you, as also in all his officials speaking in them of these things in which. Are some things hard to be understood? Which they that are unlearned and

unstable rest as they do also the other scriptures. So this informs us that this truth of the Lords coming for His people is scripture also. And they rest these scriptures under their own destruction, evidently. It was necessary for the apostle to instruct these Thessalonians in this way. Because of the rejection of Christ and the introduction of Christianity and the change that came about. Because in coming to his own, his own received him not being in the world that was made by him. The world knew him not, and there's a change in dispensations. So Peter makes a reference to the present truth.

And we can be thankful for what is known in the the religious world, shall we say, as dispensational truth. Aren't we glad the Lord is coming and that we're not put in the expectation of a long hard struggle to finally advance the cause of good until the the works of evil are defeated? The Lord is coming and you refer to that is appearing in Revelation 19. A few years ago in Walla Walla, WA, the subject of the Lord's coming was taken up. Not in the way that it's so vitally concerns us, because we'd love to see him, just as that Lady on the train, or whatever mode of travel it was, was so intensely glad in the thought of the Lords coming and she would see him. But the ministry in those meetings had quite a two and quite a bit to do with the Lord having his rifle placed in the appearing. And both are necessary and we can be thankful for the truth of the rapture. And may I close this with the question, what is the rapture? Because the young people would like to know. Really means to catching up. That's in simplicity what it is. Caught up to meet the Lord in the air. I think we have it right there. In verse 17, shall be caught up. That's the rapture. Caught up to meet the Lord in the air, raptured away, caught up in connection with the coming of the Lord. You know, we know it as a doctrine. Think of whether Brother Reeve has been saying we know this as a doctrine, but is it reality in our walk? And it's been interesting to me to see in this chapter, chapter 4, that the beginning of the chapter brings in our walk. Now if there's a if there's a careless walking Christian here today, I don't believe. You're really looking for the Lord to come? That's a sad statement to make. But we need to be careful as to our walk. We receive the truth of God on the principle of faith. That's true, But to enjoy it, we should be wound walking in it. And you find that in that first verse of this chapter. I I don't want to go back to those verses, but just the thought of referring to responsibility now in connection with a truth that we know as a doctrine. But do we really enjoy it? Is it really before us? The first verse says furthermore than we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as you have received of us how you ought to walk and to please God, so you would abound more and more. Or if we're walking in the in the enjoyment of that fact that we know that perhaps today the Lord would come. What a joy that is, and we can say we can respond as we find in Revelation. Even so, come Lord Jesus. And the Spirit, it's the Spirit of God in US. That keeps the coming of the Lord before our souls. That keeps it alive in our souls, doesn't it? We're entwelled by the Spirit of God, that divine guest, and he says where he's given us of his Holy Spirit. Well, we should consider then our walk as to the fact that we may see the Lord today face to face. I believe these are important points in connection with the coming of the Lord rather than. We know it as a doctrine, but. Shouldn't we know it as a practical truth in our lives? Most of us have heard that old saying. An honest confession is good for the soul. This chapter was being read. My ears were listening and I didn't recognize the chapter until they got to verse 13. We dwelt so much on the Lord's coming, the Rapture, but we'd forgotten the instruction in the first part of the chapter. Now the word.

Refers to beautiful feet. And we don't usually talk about beautiful feet, but. Beautiful of the feet of those that preach the gospel, who walk according to the truth of the Word and proclaim it in that way. I. And notice of all this in this chapter, that God is brought before us many times. It's God, isn't it? As such. And God is holy. He is our Father, that's true if God is our Father, but we must remember that God is holy and he's never the same. Holy God, He hasn't changed because of His grace or His love to us, and so it's to please God. The will of God. Which know not God all through God is going to bring those back with him, with his Son, when he when he brings him in that place of exaltation. So it seems that God is brought before us here, isn't it? Very, very much the trump of God and so on. So it's well for us to remember that God is holy. What? I suppose could be summed up in verse three of first John 3. The Epistle of John. The First Epistle of John, chapter 3. And verse 3. And every man that had this hope in him purifies himself, even as he is pure. Every man that hath this hope in him I take to him there refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, and that's what we have in our Scripture. Hope in him brought before us the blessed hope. And every man that hath this hope in him, what does he do? Purifieth himself. Having this truth before us, the coming of the Lord. It has a purifying effect upon us. It's part of that which the Lord is doing, purifying our hearts, cleansing, cleansing us with the washing of water by the Word, and having His coming before us in this aspect any moment He may come. It has a purifying effect. Every man that has this hope in him purifies himself even as he, the Lord, is pure. What's the standard? The Lord himself, the Lord himself, and we need to keep him before us. And how do we keep him before us? Well, we think about him, but we read about Him and as you're reading about him in the Gospels, throughout the Word. It has an effect upon us. Reading about him, seeing him as he walked, we get a picture of himself, a picture that the Spirit of God gives us, not a picture that some man has painted, supposed to be a picture of the Lord Jesus. That kind of a picture of the Lord is not going to purify anybody. It'll make him an idolater of anything. But it's a picture that the Spirit of God gives us as we read about the Lord. Christ in the Word, and having Him before us, what can it do but purify it? We get face to face with Him, and we judge ourselves, and we see ourselves in the light of Himself, and we confess to Him what we are. And what we have done. And it's good for our souls. Our brother mentioned confession. Honest confession is good for the soul. Well, this is what we need. Honest confession before the Lord, getting everything right with Him. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Hebrews 6, verse 18 and 19. We have the hawk vets and these two verses. And by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation or comfort. Who have planned for Rapids to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Well, we've had the hope. It's the hope of the Lord coming for his own. We we expect him any moment. And.

Laying hold upon the hope, I believe, is laying hold with the hand of faith. Do we really have faith that the Lord may come today? It's laying hold of that. If we are going to get comfort, consolation from this hope, there needs to be that practically whole with the hand of faith upon it. And then it goes on to say verse 19, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul. We're living in a day when the tide of evil is rising higher and higher. And when there is a high tide, bullet has to have a good anchor, or it will drift. And if you and I do not have an anchor for our souls, we're going to trip with the tide of evil. And so the apostle says, which hope we have. As an anchor of the soul, so the hope is an anchor for us both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil where the forerunners were centered. Even Jesus made a high priest forever, half the order of Melchizedek. So by faith we see the Lord Jesus, that God's life had enough, we see him there. What's he doing? Oh, his eyes upon us this afternoon. He knows that the sorrows of problems and trials and difficulties of each one of us. Some different than others. Nevertheless, we are all passing through a world that's full of trial and trouble, and it affects every home. Well, how wonderful as Saints of God we have a hope, we have a comfort. Well we need to lay hold of it. And this is what is going to, I believe, put into practice in our lives when our brother Heinz who is bringing before us. I believe it will affect our walk and it there should be that loved one for another. Oh, if I thought this afternoon, I was sure that the Lord would come. Before this meeting was over, or before the day was over, could it be that I would harbor in my heart an unkind, unforgiven spirit against any my brother? Oh, I'm sure if we had that. Oh, and really believe that the Lord might come today. Oh, wouldn't we want to get right with one another? Well, I believe these truths are very needful and precious to us. They

do comfort. Asked a very sensible question. If we are waiting for the coming of the Lord, isn't it also true that there are practical things in life which we need to have and we need to do in a responsible manner? And the answer is yes. And however the emphasis is clearly set out for us in Scripture. Maybe if we looked at it in picture form, it might be helpful. Turn back to Genesis 24. I believe we'll see the relationship. Of a practical circumstance. Genesis 24 we have the subject. Of the servant obtaining a bride before Isaac, and we have then Rebecca at the end of the chapter going. Reverse 61 Rebecca rose and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels and followed the man, and the servant took Rebecca and went his way. The servant surely setting before us in picture the Spirit of God now leading on and you and I now going on as Rebecca, who was to be that bride for Isaac. And then verse 62, Isaac came from the way, the way of the well. And verse 63 Isaac went out to meditate in the field eventide.

And so forth. Verse 64. And Rebecca lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel. Why didn't my act as if the sentence ended there? Because if you and I were mostly thinking about the camel, we would have some provision for watering the camels. Previously in this chapter there was the question of animals, and we are told of watering those animals and caring for them. What about the watering process and all of the things in relationship to this camel? We're not told anything about it. She lighted off the camel, period. I believe clearly, brethren, that there is a little hint here that the camel had properly served the purpose to carry Rebecca through a difficult journey following the server. But now that Isaac is there and she's going to be with him, the camel has nothing further to do with the story, and we needn't be concerned as to what became of. Camel and so if we in our lives can sense the Spirit of God is that servant that would indeed lead us on in the way to be with that blessed One. And that we do have a camel. We do have provision for a difficult journey and during the journey there are responsibilities. The camel was no doubt provided for. When we get to the end of the journey, we abruptly have that. She lighted off the camel, and she had said unto the servant, What man is this, beloved brethren? What man is this, the man Christ Jesus? Will anything then be of any importance? No, during this life? Important Yes, as it serves the purpose to go from where we have been taken in His matchless love and grace unto Himself. That's the only purpose and to be tended to in a responsible manner. But when our eyes can see that blessed man face to face. Nothing else would have any value. And may there be a sense in our souls, as we have it in Luke 12, of waiting and watching? Both are suited. Both have to do with the sensitivity in our heart of the One for whom we long. And may there be, I believe. An instruction for us in this little hint concerning the camel Useful, suitable, suitable. But surely when we seek. What man is this? All then the camel has no purpose, no further reference to it or provision for. We noticed that there are two companies really in this portion of Scripture. Verse 15 speaks of those that are alive and remain and those that are asleep. Well, that's the case right now. Many dear Saints of God have died. They're spoken of as being asleep. Put to sleep by Jesus or sleep in Jesus? But there's still a goodly company that are still alive. Well, if the Lord should come right now, what would happen? Well, that's what's told us here. The dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air. Now He tells us here in verse 15 that those who are alive are not going to get ahead of those who are asleep. That's really what the thought is. They don't really have a better position. The ones that are dead really have a better place because the the scripture brings before us that the dead shall be raised first, then the living changed. See the dear ones who have already died in our sleep in Jesus. They're going to be raised. Just how it's all going to be done, I don't think anybody of us really knows, but it tells us in Philippians 3, it's according to the power whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto himself. The Lord knows how to do it, and He will do it according to His power. And when He does it, it's going to be done just right.

And the dead are going to be raised first. Well, it would seem that when they come out of the graves, they come out complete spirit, soul and body already with bodies change new bodies. Not a different body now. No, because it's shown a natural body is raised, a spiritual body. It it, it's the same body. Well, the body may have lain in the grave for hundreds of years. Thousands of years doesn't matter to the Lord and maybe. The Saint of God has been swallowed by a fish and. Maybe the body has been swallowed by many fish, disintegrated in the water, and those fish have been swallowed by other fish. Well, where are the elements of that body scattered all through the ocean? According to the power whereby he is able to subdue even all things unto himself, He'll gather them all together. Oh, what a wonderful thing to know that we have a Savior like that who can save our souls, and we're going to have the salvation of our bodies, the redemption of our bodies too. The Lord takes care of everything. He doesn't leave one thing out, and we're so thankful for that. And that's the hope that those who have died in Christ. Have that the Lord will take care of the whole thing. And raised them from the dead. And how about us, the living? Well, when the Lord comes to take his own, to be with himself, we're caught up to meet him in the air before we're gone, before we go, we're changed right here. The Lord should come right now. Those of us who are the Lords would be changed right here. And whatever isn't suited for that scene up there will be dropped off. We'll have a glorified body. Like unto the Lord's own body of glory. And will be to go up together with those who've been raised from the grave, and meet the Lord in the air. Two companies going up together. Not two separate companies in the sense of being separate or different. No, but the Lord takes care of the dead first, then the living. Well, it's a principle with the Lord to go to the weakest first. You find that all the way through Scripture goes to the weakest one first. Well, this is wonderful, isn't it, that those who've died in Christ, they'll be taken care of. And this is the assurance that the apostle is giving to these Thessalonians, your loved ones who've died in Christ. Everything is all right. The Lord is going to take care of them. They'll be raised, they'll be with me, and they're going to be with me. At their period in the glory when I reign over the earth, the Lord has given that assurance and His word. Comment on. This asleep in Jesus because there's a doctrine in Christendom that is called the soul sleep. As if all people after they die, the soul sleeps. Well, we believe that this is a terrible doctrine which would certainly be proven very easily from Scripture to be incorrect, because when it comes to the resurrection, every first first to the body, doesn't it? We know that the soul of the believer is with Christ. We have several scriptures that we can quote to depart and to be with Christ, which is. Far better. And absent from the body present with the Lord. Or the Lord told the thief on the cross, today thou shalt be with me in paradise. So a conscious existence after death. We have in Scripture even Luke 16. But we also want to state very plainly that the believer only who has fallen asleep is in Jesus, is spoken of as being asleep in Jesus. A state of rest can only be in connection with those who have died in faith.

But the unbeliever is not asleep. And so we have to clearly see these things in order not to be LED astray by teaching that is taught by Jehovah Witnesses, and certainly Adventists and people like that teach that. But how comforting for us to know that those who have gone to be with the Lord, that Scripture speaks of them as in a state of rest. A slave and the Lord Jesus. Will raise them the body and unite body and soul in the resurrection. And together with the living being changed. We go to meet the Lord in the air. But what a comfort for us to know that they're resting. We do not look at their bodies so much as decaying, but as resting in pride before we leave the war. Caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. Unite us together. Again, that little word, lovely word together is brought embarrassment. You're caught up. We will survive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds then these morning, the air. How conscious that is, and the Lord knows our hearts that perhaps. Have missed loved ones and this is a comforting hope that they're going to be united for today. We're going to be joining together. Say there is nothing that can improve the blessedness of the dead except resurrection. And looking back at verse 14. We

can observe that the same power that wrought in the resurrection of Christ. Will also be exercised in the resurrection of the dead. Those who've fallen asleep in Jesus. There's no limit to the power of God and resurrection because He is the living God. And it's wonderful to know that this victory over death was won by the man Christ Jesus. As you learn in First Corinthians 15. Since by man came dead. By man came also the resurrection of the dead. That's Christ the first roots, and afterwards they that are Christ at his coming. To verse 21 of that First Corinthians 15 might be helpful to notice verse 22. Some are not too clear as to it. Brother Javadan Red for a sense by man came death by man came also the resurrection of the dead. Verse 22 of First Corinthians 15 For ask in Adam all die, Even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Now that all refers to all for the simple reason that the subject is the power of God in Christ Jesus. In connection with who He is. We have been speaking about those who have died in Christ. Those who have died in faith before God, and when we speak about them being raised to be with Christ, that's principally what we have had before us. Now what about those who have died? But who have not died in faith, and who have not accepted the Lord Jesus as their Savior, by what power shall they be raised? In connection with the coming Day of Judgment. 1St Corinthians 1522 We just read it. So in Christ shall all be made alive. That is, there is the marvel of the power of God in Christ Jesus and with respect to those who have died in their sins.

Let's look at Revelation chapter 20. Make sure we see that it's an entirely separate matter. Revelation 20 and verse five. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. That is, it is at the end of that period of time. Then there's a little season. We recognize that, but the point being, it's at the end. Of that period. That we have any reference to those who have died outside of faith before God, those who have died in rejection of Christ, with any reference to them being raised, they will be raised in the power of the glory of the Son of God. Man Christ Jesus raised for what purpose? For judgment, to stand before the great white throne, which is at the end of chapter 20, and their lot is plainly shown. Verse 15 of chapter 20 of Revelation. Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast in the lake of fire. But the resurrection has to do with the power of the glory of the man Christ Jesus. And it should thrill our hearts, beloved, because it's the vindication of the glory that belongs alone to him that is really involved in the subject of coming display of judgment. It has to do with the support of the glory of God. It has to do with the acknowledgement of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the King of kings and Lord of Lords, and to that extent, as we had before us earlier, loving his appearing and loving all that would flow out after that in connection with support of the glory that belongs to Him is something that's critical and real to our hearts. But we ought to recognize in First Corinthians 15, the contrast is the first man. Adam and the. Contrast with the last Adam, we have that throughout the chapter and we have the differences spoken of for instance in verse 45 in First Corinthians 15 and saw it as record the 1St man Adam was made a living soul, the last item a quickening spirit. We have therefore reference as well, do we not? To John 11, I am the resurrection. And the light resurrection in connection with those who have died. Light in connection with those alive, and all in connection with himself. Is that as you see it? I was reverses in John 528 and 29. Is that what the Lord Jesus is saying there might read that verse 48 Marvel out at this, for the hour is coming, into which all that are in the graves shall hear is voice shall come forth they that have done good unto the resurrection of life. That have done evil under the resurrection of their nation. Resurrection has to do them with the body, doesn't Resurrection has to do with the body. And oftentimes we hear a statement made, it's a little bit wrong, but we don't make a man an offender for a word that we're going to have a new body. Well, God could in his own divine power create a new body from that dust. But that's not the truth of strict. That wouldn't be resurrection. Resurrection is that body that went into dust. The Lord is going to raise that body. It's going to be changed and fashioned like under His body of glory. There would be a separate creation of God by divine fear gave a new body to that one, but it's going to be a change body fashion like under His body of glory. In which of course no more like in Philippians chapter 3. There, this body is a body of humiliation. It's a body that's subject to decay, the organs malfunction, a lot of suffering in it. Not so in that glorified body, as we learn from First Corinthians 15. Also resident within now is the old nature. And sometimes we like to believe the holiness doctrine that it could get burnt out, but it just ain't the truth of Scripture, that's all. There's nothing in the Bible that says that it's going to throw a second work of blessing, get burned out. It's there. It's been condemned in the cross, and we need to keep it in the place of death.

But the why might say one other thing and I stand to be corrected on this. I think they're ones that the apostle Paul said at one place I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ. 2nd Corinthians 11, he speaks about how he was beaten and no gal, he had scars all over that body, but I don't believe they'll be there on that body in glory. There's only going to be one man in glory with scars. The Lord Jesus Christ. Behold my hands and my feet to draw out our hearts affection throughout all the ages of eternity. We'll look upon those scars and we'll remember. I love my Master, I love my wife, I love my children. I will not go out free. And so he went and was crucified on the cross of Calvary. He bears alone the marks in his body. There are some very unusual things said in verse 16. For the Lord Himself, that's one thing. Shall descend from heaven. That's another thing. With a shout, that's the third thing. With Archangel voice, that's the fourth thing, and with the trump of God. The 5th. Thing Some unusual things are said in connection with the Lord's coming. And of course, what can we say about the coming of the Lord itself? That will be. An unusual thing. No doubt that moment when we're caught up to meet the Lord in the air will be a moment for which all other moments was made. Everything looking forward to that, because that surely is what we have in the word himself. The Lord Himself. A brother was speaking about Isaac and Rebecca. Well, Isaac himself. Was out there in the field waiting. For that price, I don't know if he even knew what her name was. He had never seen her before. She had never seen him. But he was waiting for that moment. I believe that's what the meditation was about. He was meditating in the field that day. That moment that he would have his companion, the Lord is meditating that moment that He'll have us with himself. Well, it's mentioned first in John 14. Receive you unto myself. And here we have it, the Lord Himself. It's a personal thing with him. His delight. And he is going to be fully satisfied. To have us with himself. And wonder if wonders were going to be like him. Not anything about us, no staying, nothing that will mar that scene. Everything gone just like himself and all of us like him. And what a company that's going to be all around himself. I suppose we'll all be happy to be there. Well, perhaps some solemn things that have been said. Have stirred us up this afternoon and we do want to be purified and ready to meet Him. There is a sense in which we are ready, but there's another sense in which I'm afraid we're not ready. We're not walking in the spirit of self judgment, but all when we think about His desire for us, longing to have us with Himself. Surely this stirs our hearts. His joy stirs us to be happy. His love stirs us to love Him. There are 7 because the five are from heaven, but the Spirit and the Bride, they come. Those are the two on earth. There you have the completeness of all in seven things.

Chicago Conference: 1981, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

Reading

1St Thessalonians 4 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven. It was a sheriff with the voice of the Archangel and with the trump of God. The dead didn't crush your eyes first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together within the clouds. To make the Lord in there. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words, but of the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you for yourselves. Know perfectly that the day of the Lord shall cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say peace and safety. Then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child. They shall not escape. But she, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. You're all the children of light and the children of the day. We are not of the night in our darkness, therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. The Bay, the sleep. Sleep in the night. And they that be drunken, or drunken in the night, but let us who are of the day be sober. Putting on the breastplate of faith and love. And for inherit the hope of salvation. For God has 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. Wherefore comfort yourselves together. And identify one another even as also you do not do to any of us. I'm sure to notice that in the Thessalonian epistle we have the Lords coming in every chapter. In chapter one of First Thessalonians at the end of it, it says in verse 10 and to wait for his son from heaven will be raised from the dead, even Jesus our deliverer from coming wrath. And so I know that as you read each of these, we can have different thoughts, I'm sure upon them, but I would just suggest that in this first instance, then it's the Lord himself. Apart from anything else of raising the dead, it's just the Lord Himself. These Thessalonians. Remember in Acts 17 the apostle Paul was there and he reasoned 3 Sabbath days, just a short time. Could have been there perhaps a little time before the 1St Sabbath and a little after the last three weeks, a month. But one thing that as they turned from their idols to God, why the first thing was the wait for His Son from heaven. His Son, all the affections would be engaged. That the Lord Jesus Christ, the one that Paul preached to them that died on the cross of Calvary, but going back up to glory, He's the one that was coming to receive them to Himself. So at the 2nd chapter at the end of it, it says verse 19 For what is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing are not even gain in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming. For ye are glory and joy. So how blessed too that not I alone. But all thy loved ones, it's it's nice that we enter in. The Lord's going to come for me. I'm going to see him. But oh, how blessed our affections go out to all the people of God. It's not just for myself, but all the dear Saints of God are going to be caught up together at that time. And also, someone has said this is an incentive for the soul winner because the apostle Paul says he was the one that went and ministered the gospel as it were to them and saved their souls. And there's going to be a crown for each one that goes out and win souls for the Lord. Jesus Christ, may we be gospel minded as we have in Philippians chapter 3 at the end of it. It has to do with responsibility. Verse 13 to the end. He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his Saints. Well, that's not the coming four. That's the coming with whenever that's spoken of in that sense it has to do with.

Responsibility as to our walk in our ways here while we're waiting, not to go on too long, the 4th chapter. Then we have the Lord coming and he's going to bring those that have gone on before and there's going to be a reunion, as it were, all how blessing. We're going to see loved ones that have gone on before and we'll know, just like on the Mount of Transfiguration with Moses and Elijah and Peter, James and John. Who they were. And we're going to have recognition too in that coming day. The 5th chapter that tells us. In verse 9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. And verse 23 the very God of peace sanctify you holy. And I pray God, your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless under the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. So here the coming of the Lord is set before us as a deliverance. We will not go through the tribulation he's delivered us from coming wrath. God has a controversy with the scene that rejected his Son. The judgments will fall, but we're going to be caught away and the at that time we'll know sanctification in every part of the being, spirit, soul and body at that time will be completed. Like to give a thought in the third chapter. Our brother did not read the 12Th verse and I'd like to connect those two verses often times. Love is looked upon is different. Almost as the opposite of holiness. Notice how those two verses read. The Lord make you to increase and abound in love, one toward another and toward all men, even as also. Even as we do toward you to the end, He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His Saints. Here we're talking about His coming with the Saints, but notice that the operation of love is to the end that the hearts be established in holiness. There is no conflict. In fact, there is nothing so holy as love. There's no conflict between love and holiness, and when divine love is operative amongst the Saints of God, love always seeks the blessing of its object. Love does not. If it's true divine love, it does not link it evil, but where we see one who is possibly going astray or tending to air from the path of. Love seeks Him out, and it's to the end that the hearts be established in holiness. If Divine Love is really operating in our midst, it will seek to correct that which is an error. It will seek the good and the blessing of its object. It is always to the end that holiness be the result. The two are not in opposition. The one leads to the other. The one you might say, is the product of the other. God sent His Son into this world to put our sins away. He is light and He is love. And when it's true love that's operating, it's never at the expense of His Holiness. Never. If it is, it's not true love. And I think that's so important to bring out that divine love, divine love operating amongst us. Will always see the good and blessing of the object, and to have all evil judged and dealt with. That holiness might be the result for sin to surface. In an atmosphere of love. The flesh can never correct the flesh, and when we have bitterness, the flesh is still active. Have the marvels of these trows to see the way the thought of encouraging and comforting one another is also woven together.

For instance, in our chapter, it's a marvelous thing to read of the Lord himself shall descend. The end of verse 17 So shall we ever be with the Lord? Wherefore comfort one another with these words, verse 11 in chapter 5. Wherefore comfort yourselves together and edify one another, even as also you do. That type of language is also woven through this epistle because it is not simply beloved brother, not simply a fact of being. Told of coming events, although that's here, there's a reason we are being told. These dear Saints were being called for their encouragement, for their comfort, for their edification that there would be the result in glory, and there would be that peace and that way of going on as on to the Lord and for the Lords glory. And it's marvelous to see that at each juncture it is woven together. Is the subject of the first few verses of chapter 5, Is that the same as the subject in 16 and 17 of chapter 4? No, it is not the same subject. But we come along to the end of that subject. And in either case, we have comforting one another with these words, that is. The intelligence. In divine things, in action in our lives, in a manner which when we speak together, is to comfort, to edify. And that love therefore, that has been before us in operation and shining out to one another. And wouldn't that be glorious and for the honour and glory of the Lord, if it were more operative in our lives? Quite a number of years ago. I met a lady. That was very much occupied with the facts of prophecy. And trying to get everything in order. And was occupied with it to such an extent. Especially in the Book of Revelation. That she seemed to lose contact with the Lord himself. And went into a period of darkness, depression. Well, she was simply looking at the facts, the prophetic facts that we find in Scripture and looking at them simply aspects. And seeming seemingly not connecting them with the Lord Jesus Christ in a personal way. And this is what we find in connection with future events, prophetic things. They are all connected with the Lord Jesus Christ. They're centered around Himself. And if we miss that, we've missed the real point of the whole thing, because it's all to bring before us that scene of coming glory in which we will be with the Lord Jesus Christ. And as that is related to this earth. And we find that we have these two things brought together here in First

Thessalonians, what we're still reading. Is the revelation that the Apostle Paul got from the Lord himself? In connection with the church being caught up to meet the Lord in the air. But later on we come to times and seasons taking up really where it left off in verse 14 of chapter 4. Because those two verses 13 and 14 are connected with the times and seasons which have to do with things here upon the earth and the Lord reigning during the Millennium, reigning over this sea. And so it the whole thing is related together, and it's all centered around the Lord Jesus Christ. You notice when you come to chapter 5 that the day of the Lord is spoken out. Well, that's connected with this earth and the judgments of this earth. When the Lord reigns is key and He is ruling and judging every day. The wicked in the land, keeping everything cleaned up here on the earth. That's times and seasons. It's times and seasons because it's not eternity yet during the Millennium, the 1000 years reign of Christ and Christ. Of course, is the center of that whole scene, the millennial scene. He will be king of Jerusalem and He'll be the center of that throng of which will be a part in the glory. And I notice that it speaks of the Lord descending, and then later on we meet him in the air. Of course, that tells us that the Lord, when he comes for his people, He doesn't come way down to earth.

But during the Millennium he does come down to earth, and he takes his place on the throne of Jerusalem. To read Rain and just all the details connected with his, his passing between the earthly people and the heavenly people. I, I couldn't answer that. I don't think we're giving all those details. But still, there is a way in which he's the center of the heavenly company and he's king on the earth as well. And all of these things, all of these facts that come out. Are connected with himself. And we mustn't forget that. And this is the part that's really the comfort to our hearts, because to be caught up there, to be in the air, well, what would that be without Him there? That's what the comfort is. We're going to be with him. So shall we ever be with the Lord? And what about heaven? Sometimes people wonder, well, what is heaven well. It's a sphere in which the Lord Jesus Christ is the center of everything. And if the Lord were not in heaven, it would just be an empty place. And what would we want to be there for? Nor the Lord is there. We used to sing a song where Jesus is tis heaven there. Well, if Jesus isn't there, we don't want to be there and bring it right down to the present time. We here today. Why are we really here today in this reading meeting? Why were we there together yesterday at the breaking of bread? Why are we together at the prayer meeting? It's because He is there. I trust it is. I hope that this is brought before us powerfully by the Scripture that we have, that the Lord is the center of all that's worth anything. In these meetings we've been speaking about. The loving kindness of God, the righteousness of God, the holiness of God, God's judgments on the earth. Are they all woven together or are they separate subjects? Love it. They're woven together. Mike just turned to Jeremiah Chapter 9, and we'll see that they're all woven together because the subject is really one. The subject is the glory. Of God the subject is He the glorious, Let him glory in the Lord. It's all one subject. Jeremiah 9, verse 23. Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom. Neither let the mighty mind glory in His might. Let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him the glory in this. He understandeth the knoweth me that I am the Lord, which exercise loving kindness. Judgment and righteousness in the earth were in these things I delight set the Lord. Have therefore 1 subject. The glory of God and the fullness of it declared on the earth and in heaven. And we have the righteousness of God, surely, but we have the loving kindness of God first, whether it be with respect to his people of old, or whether it be with respect to you or to me. But righteousness must be maintained. Judgment on the earth must be here. That Blessed One will be King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and all of these marvelous things, therefore, would but in your heart and mind show that the glory of that Blessed One will yet be in fullness declared. And it is that that causes within us that interest and that keen awareness that it is all given to us by the Spirit of God for our instruction. Learning comfort, exhortation, edification, and praise to Himself as we see it all woven together by the Spirit of God for the honor and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord himself shall descend from heaven. We had before us yesterday. He that had this hope in him, in Christ, purifieth himself even as he is pure. I was thinking of the. Verse the last verse in John 14. I'll quote it. You don't have to turn to it, but that the world may know that I love the Father and as the Father has given me commandment, Even so I do arise. Let us go hands. These were the two things you might say that characterized the blessed Lord love to the Father. And obedience to the Father. We are sanctified to the obedience of Christ, to obey as He obeyed. And it was love to the Father which was the spring of his obedience. It was love to the Father which always led that blessed One, when He was here below in affection for the Father. To walk a path of perfect obedience and dependence. And this is really how true holiness is produced in the life of the Christian. True holiness is the result of affection for Christ, having the heart attached to Him, the Lord Himself, and as we have him before us. You're certainly not going to fall into sin when you're in love with him, when you're walking hand in hand with him, when your affections are engaged with Christ. This is the most perfect way of separating you from all that is contrary to Himself and and holiness is the result. It's love to him. It's having him before your heart and my heart that really separates us. From all that is contrary to Him. It's not doctrine that separates us. It's the person of Christ who is before our hearts, who engages our affections. And then there is holiness, Then there is separation From all that is contrary to Him. There are three things mentioned in this verse. He descends from heaven. With a shout. In the new translation it says with an assembling shout. Kelly renders it with a shout of command. It's the word that General uses to his soldiers, the Admiral to his sailors, a shout of command. I think of the Lord Jesus at the grave of Lazarus, where he said with a loud voice, Lazarus come forth. It suggests to me that with this shout of command he awakens the sleeping Saints. And then. Archangels voice, the Supreme Commander is the one that gives the shout. And then the trump of God, and we're home with him. Not that these are sequentially vents. I don't mean to suggest that they take place in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, but the shout of command which assembles us, ready to March the authority of the one that commands. And then the trumpet, and we're gone. We're home, we're with him, the Lord Jesus. How precious. What a prospect. And so in First Timothy 1, the apostle says, Christ Jesus, who is our hope. He is our hope. It's not just a doctrine, it's himself, the Lord himself. Things in connection with these important things mentioned in verse 16, I wish you would repeat them. Just had to add two things that made the five points that you brought out your brother in the 15th verse. All heaven and has moved and comes forth. There was nothing, nobody left in heaven, humanly speaking. But there's one or two that are on earth. That is the spirit. And we find the mention of that Spirit who Letteth will let in chapter two of Second Thessalonians. And we learned that the Holy Spirit is now withholding and keeping the world in such shape that we can still go on live a quiet and peaceable life. But there comes this time of that meeting in the air. When the Holy Spirit will be taken from the earth and we along with the Holy Spirit and that made the two additional ones so that the number and that is what I enjoyed was seven. Now it is like the completion is here. It is all complete. That is it was stated on Saturday.

This is the moment for which every other moment was made. All beloved is a wonderful thing, is it not? And then may I also share with you a thought in the next verse that I've had and enjoyed very much. The question may come up. And I would specially address the dear young people here because, you know, we're analytic Sometimes as young people, we like to find out the very last of what the Scriptures say. And the words in the clouds are here. Spend my query. What do the clouds have to do with this event? And the first thought went back to the first chapter of Acts in. There the disciples see the Lord Jesus caught up. And it says that he was taken in verse nine and a cloud received him out of their sight. And I felt that was saying what it wants to say to us out of their sight. When that cloud was between the blessed Lord Jesus and

His disciples who were watching him, He had disappeared. So the cloud was like a veil or a barrier between that ascended Lord and His own that were to remain on earth now till the moment in our chapter comes to pass. Now we know in Christendom, in the world, there's a lot of speculation going on. Not that the Christendom or the camp generally takes these things to heart, as we have learned to do, but they do speculate, for they believe that they're going to be caught up. What's going to happen? Here it speaks of clouds in the plural took one clouded. Take up the Lord Jesus and out of their sight. But there will be clouds, beloved, that are like a barrier between ourselves caught up to be with the Lord and this world. Perhaps many are in such expectation. They would just love to train Paloma. Back to telescope on that event if they could, but God wonderfully puts a veil right across it. All this world is left to wonder. They'll soon have to believe a lie, but because some explanation will have to be given and it says that they shall believe a lie. Well, the cloud is to me here of that significance. The Lord draws a veil over the whole thing. As to the eyes of the world that would love to fill their curiosity with some information, it's all going to be closed at once and we'll be home with the Lord and no more troubles from this world. We have forever left it behind. That we find in Christendom that there's a lot of speculation as to events, present events, and bringing these in connection with the coming of the Lord Jesus. And that I believe is a snare of the enemy to occupy the people of God with events rather than be looking for the Lord Jesus himself. There is no prophetic scripture that we're waiting for to be fulfilled. Before the Lord Jesus will come Himself to fetch us away and we should not be overly occupied with the things that are going on. They can at best have something to do with that which will take place after the rapture. The rapture has nothing to do, as we have seen with the times and seasons. That has to do with His return to earth and we can for those who might not be that familiar with it. Even have been confused by teachings that are going around in Christendom. The Lord Jesus can come any moment. It's an imminent imminent to hope at any moment he can come. We do not look for any events to take place and we do know that there is the teaching of. That we will, as believers, go through the tribulation. That which has to do with the times and seasons for others again speak of a partial rapture, that only the faithful one will be raptured. And these are all doctrines that we take heed not to listen to. We should be occupied with the person of the Lord Jesus. The Spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus.

The Spirit of God will always seek to link the events in Scripture with that person. And if that is not accomplished, that that person becomes dearer to us, that our joy is great because we see He will be exalted and glorified in the very place where He was rejected and crucified, then prophecy really doesn't do as much good. The enemy uses it to puff us up, but we have to ever seek, as the Spirit of God would seek to do, bring them into connection with the person of the Lord Jesus. And that's for us especially what we should be looking for, not events and be occupied with these things too much we should be occupied with. That expectation of seeing the one who loved us and gave himself for us. Our brother is brought before us the coming of the Lord in each of the chapters in Thessalonians. It just has struck me so forcibly that these living Saints at Thessalonica were so waiting for the sun from heaven that the error that they had that they needed to be corrected on was when some of the Saints died. They wondered what would happen, would they lose out when the Lord came? And that's why the apostle has to give this instruction in verse 15 through 18, that the dead in Christ shall be raised 1St and then the living changed and caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air. They were waiting for the Lord, but they were so expecting the Lord to come in their day way back then. They were waiting for him. And when some died, they wondered, are they going to lose out? Are they going to miss out? And that's the error. That's the mistake in their minds. That is corrected here by the apostle. Glad that the apostle was hindered, he would have gone not merely once, but again to the Cecil lynchings, to minister to them. But he was hindered. And so we have this epistle in our hands here this morning. And all this array of blessed truth to enjoy the coming of the Lord for His own is never associated with judgment in the Scriptures. The first mention of the coming of the Lord and its Christian character is in John 14 and. That's the reason for the disappearance of the title The Son of Man in the 13th verse of Matthew. Because the Lord is coming for His own, and there's no judgment connected with that. Our judgment has already been taken care of at the cross of Calvary when our blessed Lord died. The just for the unjust to bring us to God. And judgment does not change men's hearts. We see that in the last two verses of Revelation 9. After all the severity of those judgments that have been poured out. Man's heart is still unchanged, so it's the Lord himself that we need, and we're glad that that was mentioned from the first chapter before we come to service in the second chapter. The judgment seat of Christ, then. Well, that expression judgment seat of Christ is really not a correct expression because. The after we've been taken up to be with Christ, then the works of all of us as believers will be evaluated, and it's at that time that the Lord sits what is on what is called the the Bema. Or the judgment seat, and it has nothing to do with sins, because the sins are all taken care of and the finished work of Christ, the precious blood has cleansed us from all sin. The judgment is passed will not come into condemnation, but that time when we passed before that judgment seat, or I'd like to call it the man, a place of manifestation or a place of evaluation. It's a manifest.

Evaluation of the works that we have done to please the Lord in whatever way it might have been down here to please the Lord. And rewards will be given out for those, for those works on the basis of those works. So we mustn't get that confused when it speaks of the judgment seat of Christ, it's not a judgment of doom. It's in a judgment of evaluation. Like at a County Fair. Or any kind of affair where people bring all of their produce and they cook thing baked things, and the farmer brings in all of his wares from the farm and the livestock. And all the judges come in and they're not coming there to condemn any of these things or to destroy them, but simply to evaluate them, place an evaluation upon them. And so one gets first prize and another one gets second prize and third prize and so on. It's a judgment of evaluation or manifestation. It's not a judgment of doom. So our brother is correct in what you say, that the coming of the Lord has nothing to do with judgment as far as condemnation is concerned, that fast. Someone has said that I believe it's true in connection with what you just said, Brother Anderson, that the coming of the Lord for his people is an affair of the heart. The coming of the Lord with his, with the Saints, is an affair of the conscience. Going to be brought into judgment. Judgment is coming. Thinking to us, someone has said remarked about we find those that are seek to be occupied with prophecy today and it's they get very confused on many things. I was thinking of what Daniel said in connection with. In the book of Daniel, in connection with that which is to come, Daniel's prophecy has to do much with the Book of Revelation also. And we know what's coming, but just notice there. As as to prophecy today, there is much speculation as to what this is or what that is, but God's desire is that we'd be occupied with Christ because this is where we're going. There's the the the church is not a part of prophecy at all. It's been set in. God is now calling out of a condemned world of people for his name up there. And so as far as the scene now is concerned, even we as those who belong to the Lord now, we see through a glass dimly, not darkly, but dimly. We, we don't see clearly all that we have because God wants us to be occupied with Christ, as someone has already said. But I was looking at Daniel chapter 12. And verse 4. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end. And many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. Seal them up. Well, that's that's taking place now, isn't it? It's sealed as far as as the. The knowledge of these things are concerned and then then we find later. That's verse nine of that chapter. And he said, go thy way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end. Well, that doesn't come until after the church has gone home. And so it says. Many shall be purified and made white and tried, but the wicked shall do wickedly. None of the wicked shall understand, but the why shall understand. When will they understand? Not today. They'll understand then, because judgment will fall. Man is going to learn a knowledge, then he'll learn of God through judgment. But then in

in Revelation in the 22nd chapter. When we get there. Verse the 22nd chapter, verse 10 that says, and he said unto he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of the book where the time is at hand now it's going to be open, but when is it opened? After the church is gone to glory, then it will be revealed. So it's good for us to know that as we were having in our chapter that.

It's the Lord Himself that's coming for us. Someone referred to Matthew 13 when he when he comes together his elect. He will send his angels, He sends a representative there but for us, and now He comes himself. How blessed that is all. In chapters 13141516 and around there the Lord says that what I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. And constantly He keeps referring to and in that day well. We're in that day. And the disciples only could take hold of so much while the Lord Jesus was here speaking to them. What day did he anticipate, the day after he would do that work on the cross, go up on high, receive the second time the Holy Spirit, and send him forth. And this the Spirit of God would come down and be with and in all believers and baptize them into one body and unite them to the hidden glory. And the Spirit of God indwells each one of us, and would lead us in the intelligence of the whole world of God, prophecy included. Proverbs 25, Proverbs 25 and verse two says it is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honor of kings is the search out a matter. Kings and priests unto God, and God would have us search out the Lord would lead us into the intelligence of all of us. Truth in the word of God. Now there is a prerequisite, shall we say? Who was used by the Lord in the New Testament to bring out the truth of the Book of Revelation in the prophetic things? The one in John chapter 13 who laid his head upon the bosom of the Lord. What was the secret with Daniel that had all this coming time unfolded these prophetic things, Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the King's meat and wine. And so Abraham, shall I hide this thing from Abraham? This judgment that's to come, that which was a secret to God. No, he let it be known unto a man who was walking in separation from the world. The so dear ones, for you and I, the Lord would open up the Vista of all this truth that's there. There's a capacity for it and he loves us so much. I'm not going to hide anything from you. All that all that's coming. One other thing we might say we have a Trump mentioned here. Let me go back to a statement now that our late brother chapter Brown said one time, talking about fundamentalism as we know it in the Christendom around. He said fundamentalism is the effect of the truth back in the camp. In other words, when God wrought in 1830 and 40, and through Mr. Darby and Mr. Bellitt and Wigram and later Mr. Kelly, all of those writings, they brought out the whole truth of scope, as it were, of the prophetic things and the nature and calling and character of the Church. There are many who never got into the pathway. They got the truth of it through the writings of the brethren. Fundamentalism is the reaction of the truth back in the camp, and if you don't take the position somewhere along the line, you're going to give up. So why do they start teaching now in fundamental circles that the church is going to go through the tribulation? We can expect a lot more. Of erroneous things to be taught. Well, how about this Trump? Well, they say, look, here's a Trump here. 1St Corinthians 15 says the last Trump. And here in Revelation 11, it says the seventh trump shall sound of the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of Christ. They're all one. So the church has gone through the tribulation. Well, I would just suggest to you that as those who have the Spirit of God indwelling us as we learn the truth of Revelation two and three, the prophetic history of the church and profession upon the earth, that we get to lay it to see you. And then in the 4th and 5th chapter, what do we see? We see 24 elders up in glory. What do they represent? They present represent the whole company of the redeemed for the.

Testament Saints are going to be raised here in First Thessalonians 4 along with us, and we are seen in that company as the 24 elders right after chapters two and three of Revelation. So in the rest of the unfolding of all the judgments that have to do with the tribulation period, we're the 24 elders, as it were represented there. Now we'll get our own distinct place later on the 19th chapter we find the last time the 24 elders are mentioned. Then when the marriage supper of the. Comes we have our own distinct place as the bride of Christ with the Lord Jesus Christ and will be associated with him like a son at was with Joseph of old. We're going to be associated with the Lord Jesus Christ not only in the Kingdom, but on through eternity. For a high school, there is this scripture in John 16 that helps me in what you have said. As to prophetic scripture, He shall show you that which is to come. And I have enjoyed this thought, that in the 14th chapter the Spirit of God is used to bring to our memory that which the Lord had uttered on earth. You might say that has to do with the Gospel. For us to have spiritual intelligence as to the Gospels, to really enter into them, we need the Spirit of God in the 15th chapter. It has to do. With the Lord Jesus himself that he presents him, and it has to do, we might say, with the Church, the epistles, that which we have in Paul's writings in particular, but then in the 16th chapter we have to prophetic scriptures. The statements that we made earlier are not to be understood, that we should not seek to read. Prophetic Scripture. Blessing is pronounced upon those who read this book. And revelation, in contrast to Daniel, is not sealed because we live now in the dispensation of the Spirit of God, where we have spiritual power to enter into those things. But the danger is to bring the rapture in connection with events that are taking place. This is the warning that we want to give. And we do certainly benefit from reading the prophetic scripture. I think just about 2/3 of the Word of God, maybe not quite that much, is prophetic in character and it all has to do with the blessed Lord. But how wonderful, like Freddie Hindsley has said in the 5th chapter is the best proof that we will not go through the tribulation when the Lamb stands there. A slain he is the one that has the right to take the book out of him. That sitters upon the throne and this book is the book of judgment. They are unfolding one after another. But before he even has that book and receives it, the redeemed are already around him. So we do see that. We just see from this that we, the Saints of God will not go through the tribulation. The rapture will take place. And in the 4th chapter. Verse one I believe we have. A scripture that hints or gives us an indication that the rapture. There could be implied. Here's what it says after this. I I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard was, as it were, of a trumpet talking with me. And which said come up, hit her. We see in John being called up hitter a picture as a prayer of the church being called to glory after the 2nd and 3rd chapter which presents us a prophetic picture of the church here on earth.

Order. So to speak, to be on the Isle of Patmos with John, where the Lord is, when we read the Book of Revelation, When? The early brethren came together to study prophecy. I believe I read that they broke bread every morning or before they began their studies of the prophetic word. They wanted to avoid taking up the prophetic subjects of Scripture in a merely intellectual way. They wanted their hearts warmed and drawn out to the Lord Jesus, and there's nothing that draws the heart out to Him like the remembrance. Himself and his death and I believe they remembered the Lord each time before they had their prophetic studies and it it becomes us. And it's so important to stress again the words the Lord himself. You can have all the knowledge of Scripture, but if He is not the one who is before your soul in mind, the truth that we possess will not keep us. That's been abundantly proven in the history of the Church. Men far better than you or me have gone astray. Well, it ought to keep us very humble with our faces in the dust as we realize what we're capable of. But the Lord himself alone can keep us. And Prison Dumb expects or plans to bring in the Kingdom through the enlargement of the professing church. And of course that is an empty sort of thing and man's design, and it makes something of man as he is in the flesh, but we are thankful for. Dispensational truth. And that Lord has promised. I will come again. And receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. Here in these verses that the word Lord is used several times. Verse 15. The word of the Lord, and in that same verse, the coming of the Lord. Verse 16. The Lord Himself. And then again down in verse 17, to meet the Lord in the air. So shall we ever be with the Lord. But why is it that that is mentioned there? I believe five

times. We read it there, Lord. Well, to me it speaks of this. That he is the one that has everything under control. He is the one in dominion because the word Lord means the one who has dominion. It's you know what a Dominion is. King is it is raining. His sphere of rain is a dominion. He has dominion over that sphere. Well, here's something that the Lord has complete dominion over. He is the Lord. He's in control. And I think it's wonderful to see that it says at the end where for comfort one another with these words, the Lord has all under control. Recently we heard with the passing of a brother. That just before he went, he said. God's way is perfect. God's way is perfect. Yes, God is perfect in all of his ways. And the Lord is going to do everything for us according to his desires, and it's going to be just right. It's going to be perfect. And to be with the Lord, that is the essence of comfort and perfection, or whatever you could call it forever with the law. Comfort one another with these words. And we'll be with the one. Reigning with the one who will have all things under control in the Millennium, the 1000 years when he reigned, and we'll be with him for all eternity.

What a wonderful thing that is to be with the one who loved us, gave himself for us, and he's doing the very best he can for every one of us, even now. Doing the very best He can for us all. He would love to do a lot more for us, but sometimes we're in a sort of a state of soul that prevents him, as we have in the Book of Revelation in the first chapter. There the Lord stands with the golden girdle. Around his bosom. Well, the seed of his affections are there in his heart, in his bosom, but the golden girdle is on there to hold the affections back. To keep them from being shown out as he would love to, because the of the state of things, the state of the church. He's standing in the midst of the golden candlesticks, symbols of the testimony of God here on the earth at this time, and he's standing in the midst of us. And he's there for our blessing, but he has to judge everything too. And he wants to show his love to us, but oftentimes he can't because we're in a bad state of soul. He has to chasten us instead. And then he has to tell us whom the Lord loveth. He chasing us while he's trying to get us closer to himself in such a state of soul that he can show his luck to us and we can be in the enjoyment of that love, the love of the Lord. Toward us never changes. But he can't always show it to us as he would love to. And this ought to touch our hearts. But all we're going to be in that scene where everything that comes into our lives brings a barrier between us and him. It disturbs our fellowship with him. We're not going on in communion with him as we ought to. Everything that disturbs is going to be dropped. And we're going to be just like him, having a body of glory, like unto his body of glory. And we will be able to enjoy him in fullness and we're thankful that he is in control. I'm so thankful for that and all that. We might learn that lesson now that even in the assembly he is in control. Is not the brothers meeting that's in control, It's not leading brothers that are in control. All that we might recognize that he is in control. Always looking to him, to the one who is in control, that we might give all the controls to him, that we might recognize him really as he is, because we're going to see him as he is. Yeah, and this verse is to be found in the promise and fact of the Lord's coming. Chapter Brown had my father's funeral in the year 19140. Do you think that he suggested to me that after time that you will be allowed to rejoin your loved one that has been taken away? No, that's not the comfort of the verse. The covenant of the verse is in the promise and fact of our Lord's return. The Lord Himself shall come. Together, I'm sure you have thoughts about it. Let's turn back to Ezra three and four, and we'll glean a few thoughts from there on the word together, Ezra, Chapter 3. When this little remnant went back some 42,000. To the center and when the 7th month was come, Ezra three one and the children of Israel were in the cities. The people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem. And how blessed this is. Then this together they were together there at the right center, the divine center, having come back from Babylon well. God, on the day of Pentecost, they were all of one heart and one soul. They were together. The Spirit of God came down, baptized believers into one, united them to the head in glory. But we see that after the death of the apostles, things went into ruin and divisions have come about in Christendom. God raised up a testimony in 1830 or 40 around there. How blessed that God and his marvelous grace.

Has given the truth that there is one body. And that we can meet all that ground and we have this truth and we trust by God's grace that will appreciate it and we'll go on together. We love the people of God. We know that there are some even in Thyatira, which have not known the depths of Satan and are going to be in glory in the Roman Catholic system. There are those scattered throughout the branches of Protestantism. We meet them every once in a while and. In no time at all, we learn all they're a true child of God. We can't walk with them here. We can't be divine Love will not allow us to go. Just the other day we were having something to eat in a restaurant. We bowed our head and gave thanks. And then when we were ready to leave, we left the gospel track on the table. There were three ladies and a gentleman, elderly in the next table. And the lady looked over and she says, I think I'll do that too. Well, I knew that was just an excuse to speak. So I stood up and I said, well, I said, let me see your track. And she showed it to me and it was a fundamental track. And I said, well, I says, are you the Lord? Oh, yes, indeed. Well, there was response in no time at all. We just shared some common thoughts. Then they says we're going to a Bible conference down at the Ocean City and such and such as the speaker. How about coming down? Well, I said, you see, I can't go there. As I'm gathered with a little group of Christians to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, she says, I know who you are, your brethren. And I says, well, you're saved, aren't you, each one of you and your brethren too? Well, I couldn't go where they invited me. It would be false to the truth. Blessed that hymn we sing no more to view thy chosen few by selfish strife. Divided that will be up on the other side. But here in love to my brethren, I've got to walk in that separated pathway. It condemns that position. That's contrary to the word of God. It might exercise his conscience that he might meet on that ground. That's according to the word of God. Well, that's one thought here in verse 9. It says then stood Joshua with his sons and his brethren, Kate Mills. And his sons, the sons of Judah, together to set forward the workmen in the House of God. So we see these dear ones working together. They were gathered together. Now they're working together and all. How blessed that you and I can be workers together in the vineyard of the Lord. Some of the dear servants are out on the front line. God hasn't called all to that position. But all we can sustain them, we can pray for them earnestly and fervently. We can minister of our substance to them. And also we have our own to every man, his own work. We each have our jobs to do. Well, let's just take two more things. In verse 11, they sang together. How blessed to be seeing the praises of the Lord together, both in assembly or as we gather around the piano over at Fisher Hall. How it rejoices our souls in these hymn sings. And another thing that's blessed is on Lords Day or any other time when we pick up this book. To sing from it. We can sing without with ease. We don't have to worry. Are we singing things that are not accurate according to the word of God? This has been proven. And the expressions are good and faithful to the Word of God. Let us be careful then. And a lot of the songs that we pick up from the camp, they may not be scriptural, they may have a good tune, but watch what you sing. One other thing that is in chapter 4 and verse 3. You have nothing to do with us to build a house unto our God, but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel. While these were the adversaries, and they came and they said, let us throw in with you, we'll help. We're going to be worshippers too in that temple and. They had the sense of discernment to say you are not worshippers, you are adversaries. And so with you and I, we cannot throw in our lot. They would like us to join in their amalgamations. I remember one time, you'll forgive me, but T8 Frank Jackson went into a restaurant in Washington, DC.

And who should show up in the same restaurant but a great evangelist whose name is close by? They had gone to school years before, and Billy recognized Frank and he had some words with him. They spoke together of old things. And then he says, I'm having a big campaign over

at the Coliseum. I trust you'll be there, Frank. And Frank says, I'm sorry, but I won't be there. Why? What's wrong? Well, says Frank. I'm with a little group of Christians gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and Mr. G said I know who you are, don't go any further. Just pray for us. Just pray. Well, here in our chapter building together, we don't amalgamate, we don't join in, we don't secure the help of others. We'll go on with God's help till he comes. The story comes to mind. It's a bit of information. Our brother Larson was laboring in the western part of the state of Arkansas. And the local minister edged up pretty close. He wanted to find out what was going on. He was a man preaching the gospel. It was. The truth of the Word and he was baptizing people. And he wanted to find out who this man could be. And after a time, he says I've got it. You're a Plymouth brother. Larson says Plymouth brother. I'm a Des Moines brother. Aren't you an Arkansas brother? Apostle Paul say. Times and seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you. They must have been acquainted with this. They could. They could find out about that from the Old Testament Scriptures. I'm sure the Apostle Paul had spoken to them about these things when he was there preaching the gospel. And the times and seasons are spoken of in the Old Testament. The Old Testament prophecy. You don't find any revelation in the Old Testament about the church, but you do find revelations concerning the times and seasons. Well, the times and seasons are connected with the restoration of Israel, the reign of the Lord during the 1000 years. Rainiest king, the Kingdom of Israel established again. Has to do with the times and seasons. Well, the beginning of the times and seasons is really when the Lord comes back to earth, isn't it? And he deals with the nation. He comes in judgment. He comes to set everything right. See, when the children of Israel went into the land of Canaan, they had to clean it up first. They had to deal with all of the enemies. They had to destroy those enemies according to God's word, because they were wicked sinners. They had to clean up the country, and then it was that Solomon reigned. The Kingdom was set up then. I speak of Solomon because it was really then that the Kingdom was. Set up according to the mind of God. In the beginning there was Saul of Tarsus, and he was given to the people because they desired a king like all the nations around. But still in Solomon we get a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ reigning in glory. But there had to be a clean up first. And so when the Lord comes, he'll do both things. He'll clean up the whole seed, and then he'll reign. It's the same as the day of the Lord. We find in scripture two expressions that it is good to understand the difference, the day of the Lord and the day of Christ or Christ Day and the day of Christ has to do with his own. We find that in Philippians and other scriptures and. The day of the Lord has to do with his coming back on earth and the judgment and the Millennium. All of this is the day of the Lord and even the final judgment. Is that correct?

The first chapter of Acts we get that the question there was asked wasn't it they were still concerned about the Kingdom. The first chapter Acts one verse. Chapter one of Acts and verse. 6. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father had put in His own power, But then he brings them to the other era, when the Spirit of God would come down, and. Reveal this to them, but He shall receive power after that. The Holy Ghost has come upon you. You shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, in Judea, in Samaria, into the uttermost parts of the earth. But they were concerned there, weren't they, about the Kingdom. And he said it's the times and seasons were not for you to know. I believe to what the Church is. The Church is a heavenly people. The Church belongs to heaven, and the Church does not belong to the sphere that's included. In that statement, times and seasons, we don't belong to that sphere of times and seasons. We belong to heaven. We're heavenly people and we're heavenly because the Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the church, is in heaven and we're connected with him there seated in the heavenlies in Christ. And so this has nothing to do with the church, the church at this time. Is home with the Lord, but then the Lord comes back to deal with this earth. And as was already mentioned, he comes as the Lord, and it's the day of the Lord, and he mentioned about the day of Christ. And I remember Brother Brown giving us this simple illustration. Of a two-story house. He says these two things are really like a two-story house. The day of the Lord has to do with the earth. The day of Christ has to do with heaven. The day of Christ has to do with his earth, his heavenly people, those who are in Christ, who belong to Christ the Church. The day of the Lord has to do with people here on the earth that come in for judgment, the judgment of God. Read in Matthew about all nations being gathered before the Lord and he deals with them all and separates them as shepherds, divides the sheep from the ghosts, and those on the left hand are sent to eternal destruction, and those on the right hand they go into the blessing of the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ on the earth. So the Lord comes, and he is in full command. And that's another reason, I suppose it's called the day of the Lord, because he's, he's in command. He's in control of that too, and nobody is going to say anything to him. They're not going to again say him. All of them will be submitting to him. And in chapter 18 of the Psalms. It tells us that they're going to give feigned obedience to the Lord. They'll be so afraid of him that even though they're not born again, they're going to bow to him and give feigned obedience to him. And all the way through the Millennium they'll do that which is the day of the Lord. That whole 1000 years and a few more years are the day of the Lord, and they'll give feigned obedience to the Lord. And so when you come to the end of 1000 years reign of Christ. Then it is that Satan is loose, and he goes out to deceive the nations. And of course all of those who simply give given feigned obedience to the Lord, they will follow Satan and fire comes down out of heaven and destroys them all because they dare to compass the camp to Saints about that is the Lords little company of earthly people, and the fire of God destroys all of them. So all of those during that time were not really the Lords who are not really born again. There are only feigned subjects of the Lord Jesus Christ. They will be dealt with and all of them going to death. And so at the end of the Millennium, all those who are not the Lords are in death. And then after that you get the great White throne judgment. When the Lord sits on that throne and all are gathered before him, all the dead, well, there's no point in calling living there because all the living.

Are in the Lord's safekeeping. We in the glory and those on the earth who are the Lords, they're all safe keeping. 2 But all the wicked dead are brought forth, all those who died in their sins are brought forth to stand before the great white throne and be judged there, And the doom is that they're cast into the lake of fire. Perhaps you might just give a word on 2nd Thessalonians 2, verse 2. Because I believe some of the young people might. Like a little help on this. It speaks, but they have Christ. But you read this Mr. Darby's translation. It's the day of the Lord, isn't it? I just mentioned that #282.

Things New and Old: Volume 1, Second Advent, The Double Phase of the

1 Thess. 4:13; 5:11. These verses form a very distinct section of this instructive and valuable epistle, in which the inspired apostle sets forth the two great phases of the second advent of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, viz.: 1St, That phase of it which bears upon a sorrowing Church; the 2nd, That phase of it which bears upon a rejoicing world.

The Holy Ghost makes use of the same grand truth, at once to comfort the heart of a weeping saint and to warn the heart of an exulting worldling. The tears of the former, and the boastings of the latter, are both met by the same all-important and most influential doctrine.

Now, it is usual to ascribe to death what the apostle here ascribes only to the Lord's coming. We frequently hear it said, when a christian friend has departed, "We shall soon follow him." This is not what the apostle says; but quite the reverse. "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them that have fallen asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." And why not? Is it because they were so soon to follow them? By no means. This would be put to death in the place of a returning Christ. The comfort which the Holy Ghost had to offer to the bereaved heart of a saint, rested on a totally different ground. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again even so also them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." The coming of Christ was so near to the apostle's heart—so vividly and so naturally before his soul, as the proper object of hope, that he can say, "we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord." The worldly heart would say, "My Lord delayeth his coming;" but the true attitude of a saint, in reference to the second advent of Christ, is set forth in the expression, "we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord."

The two great boundaries of the Church's existence, down here, are the cross and the coming of Christ. In the cross, death and judgment are forever set aside, as regards the Church; and, instead thereof, the whole scene is filled with glory. "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and after them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." (Heb. 9:27, 28.) Christ's coming in glory, without any reference to, or connection with, sin, is the distinctive hope of the Church. "He hath appeared once, in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;" and, hence, He has nothing more to say to sin; but when He comes again, it will be unto salvation.

Now, it is important to see with distinction the double phase of Christ's second coming, as set forth in Thessalonians, by the two expressions, "the coming of the Lord;" and "the day of the Lord;" the former has distinct reference to the Church: the latter to the world: the former has nothing to do with "times and seasons;" the latter has: the farmer is unconnected with events amongst the nations; the latter is not.

The great burden of the prophets is the moral government of God amongst the nations of the earth, including His dealings with that peculiar nation, Israel—a subject of immense interest to the saint, not because of his personal connection therewith, but because it involves the counsels of God, and His ways with man on the earth. But we may look in vain, throughout the pages of Old Testament prophecy, for any enunciation of the doctrine of the Church's position, her calling, or her hope. These things "were not in other ages made known to the sons of men, as they are now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets, by the Spirit." (Eph. 3:5.)

Such being the case, it is evident that the hope of the Church cannot be affected by those events which form the more immediate subject of the Old Testament prophets "That blessed hope" shines out in all its peculiar brightness, without so much as a single intervening cloud. "The bright and morning star" glitters on the Church's horizon, and the fondly cherished hope of seeing it cheers her heart and animates her spirit during the dreary watches of this dark night. "I will give him the bright and morning star," is Christ's own promise; and He Himself is that star.

The Holy Ghost, by the prophet Malachi, presents Christ to the hopes and expectations of the pious remnant of Israel, as "the Sun of Righteousness" who shall "arise with healing in his wings;" but "the bright and morning star" awakens an entirely different train of thought in the soul. The Church will have been in the enjoyment of her morning star before the beams of the Sun of Righteousness cheer the sorrowing heart of the remnant of Israel. It is only those who are on the watch during the night who are favored with the sight of the morning star; when the Sun shines forth over the earth, at the opening of the millennial morning, the God-fearing remnant shall catch the first glimpse of His beams; and when He comes to His meridian height "every eye shall see him."

The moment Christ rises up from the Father's throne, the Church rises from earth to meet Him in the air. For that moment the Church waits. Till then, the Holy Ghost works, in connection with the gospel of Christ, for the purpose of gathering out the remainder of God's elect. Till then, He also works to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. But when the time, arranged in the divine counsels, has fully come," The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God." This is the Church's special hope, and in full keeping with Christ's gracious promise in John 14 "I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." Observe the peculiar grace of the words "I will come again"—"the Lord Himself shall descend." He will not send an angel, nor a legion of angels; no; He will come Himself. Such is His grace—such, too, the dignity put upon His beloved bride.

And all this is founded upon the truth, that "Jesus died and rose again." "If," says the inspired apostle, "we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." The Lord Jesus was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father; and all who sleep in Jesus, being part of His body, shall be raised up, and presented with Him in His coming glory. God raised Christ from the dead; and, if we believe that, we can, in like manner, believe that all who sleep in Jesus shall be raised up and brought with Him, at His glorious appearing. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. 8:11.) All is founded upon our connection with Christ. The head and the body, being one, shall appear together in glory. "For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain to the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them that are asleep; for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Similar is the teaching in 1 Cor. 15 "Behold I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep; but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

Here we have the hope of the Church very clearly and simply enunciated; and most needful it is that the saints should receive it as clearly and simply as it is here laid down, seeing that the enemy has sought to encumber it with a variety of other things, which however interesting as subjects of study, are nowise attractive as objects of hope. For example, some would teach the saints that they must be trampled down under the feet of the beast, ere their hearts can be gladdened by the sight of the morning star. Where do I find this in 1 Cor. 15, or 1 Thess. 4? And yet these scriptures do, as we have said, clearly set forth that which constitutes the Church's hope. So also in chap, 1, we read, "ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living God, and to wait"—for what? The beast? No. The man of sin? No. The false prophet? No. The full development and final destruction of Nebuchadnezzar's image? No. What then? "To wait for his Son from heaven." This is simple and conclusive enough for any mind that is desirous of being subject to the authority of holy scripture.

The Church is not taught to wait for any movements amongst the nations, for the restoration of the Jews, for the development of the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image, for the consolidation of the Roman Empire, for the drying up of the river Euphrates, in order to prepare the way of the kings of the east; in short, she is not to wait for any earthly event whatever, but simply for the Son from heaven—"the bright and

morning star." True, all these things are the direct subject of prophetic testimony, and, as such, profoundly interesting to the spiritual student of scripture, just as the destinies of Sodom were interesting to Abraham, though, personally, he had nothing whatever to do with them.

Every Christian, whatever may be the measure of his prophetic knowledge, should take an interest in the study of prophecy, not that he may build up a system, or defend a theory, but simply that he may be more or less acquainted with the ways and counsels of God, and the destinies of this lower world, But his specific hope is a totally different thing. He will not find that in the pages of Old Testament prophecy. There is nothing there about the Head and the body, the Bridegroom and the bride meeting in the air. He will read of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Tire, Gog and Magog; and the connection of all these with the city of Jerusalem, and the land of Israel. But these have naught to do with the outlining of the "bright and morning star." That star is the emblem of a celestial glory, far removed from this dark and stormy world—a glory which shall appear to the Church while a Christ-rejecting world is still wrapped in profound slumber, or intoxicated with its own proud and godless schemes.

Now, when we turn to the second phase of the advent, as presented in 1 Thess. 5:1-11, we find something entirely different. We here come to "times and seasons," concerning which the apostle felt he had no need to write to the Church, because she had nothing to do with such, so far as she herself was personally concerned. The Church belongs to the day and to the light, and therefore has no need to be guided by "times and seasons," or "the signs of the times." Such things have direct reference to those who shall be involved in the terrors of the "day of the Lord," and by no means to those who have to do with the morning star—those who shall have met Christ as a Bridegroom in the air, before the revelation of the day.

It must be evident, to every reflecting mind, that there is a vast difference between the appearance of the morning Star, and the revelation of the sun's full brightness. Nor is the difference less striking between the coming of a bridegroom to an expecting bride, and the bursting in of a thief upon an intoxicated or a slumbering household; and yet the two phases of the advent are thus strikingly contrasted. "Yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night; for when they (not ye) shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them (not upon you) as travail upon a woman With child, and they shall not escape." This is peculiarly solemn, and eminently calculated to strike terror into a worldly heart. Indeed, the coming of the thief is as terrifying, as the coming of the Bridegroom is attractive. But the two things are as distinct as they can be, and they cannot be confounded without serious damage to the mind of a saint.

It would seem as if the Thessalonians had suffered from having so confounded them. They seem to have, at first, feared lest their departed friends should not participate in the joys of Christ's return; and when corrected as to this, they would appear to have run into another error; namely, that of fearing lest they themselves should be involved in the terrors accompanying "the day of the Lord." This latter thought is fully corrected in the second epistle; and, in the apostle's mode of correction, there is, if possible, a still fuller and clearer presentation of the double phase of the advent. He says, "We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind neither be troubled, whether by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as if the day of the Lord were at hand," or had actually set in. Here the two things are brought into direct contrast, and the saints are exhorted, on the ground of their participation in the joys of the former not to dread being involved in the terrors of the latter. This is most conclusive. The coming of the Lord is the Church's hope, the day of the Lord is the world's dread; the former will be the consummation of the saint's joy; the latter will be the death-knell of the worldling's happiness.

"The day of the Lord shall so come as a thief in the night." It is never said that the morning star shall so come as a thief in the night. True, the Lord says to the angel of the church, in Sardis, "If, therefore, thou wilt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." (Rev. 3:3.) This passage, so far from presenting any difficulty, rather affords a strong confirmation of the truth on which we have been dwelling. The Church of Sardis had a name to live, and was dead: it had sunk down, very much to the level of the world, and therefore it is that the Lord presents to it that phase of His advent which properly belongs to the world. If the saint mingles with the world, he must expect to be threatened with the world's portion. If Lot goes down to Sodom, he must participate in Sodom's woes. But we know full well, that "a thief" is not Christ's proper aspect to the Church. "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." We, properly, belong to the day; but if we, through ignorance or unfaithfulness, get out of our proper position, we cannot expect the Spirit to animate us with our proper hopes. If we sink to the world's level, we shall look at the future from the world's point of view. "Ye are all the children of the light and the children of the day; we are not of the night nor of darkness. Wherefore, let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night; but let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation; for God hath not appointed us unto 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." Such is our proper position—our proper hope. And be it observed, that our living together with Christ is founded on the fact that Christ died for us. His dying for us secures our living with Him, whether we wake or sleep.

It is well to note this. It sweetly reveals the grace of Him with whom we have to do, whose death for us secures, infallibly, our being linked with Him in that eternal glory for which both He and His saints now wait. By this gracious assurance, and not by any feeling of dread or uncertainty, would the blessed Spirit superinduce a watchful condition of soul. And, assuredly, the heart that could use such a truth as an excuse for not watching, can know but little of the real power of either grace or glory. Such an one would say, "Let us continue in sin that grace may abound."

I would only observe, in conclusion, that the apostle closes his view of both phases of the advent, with the same sweet exhortation, "comfort yourselves with these words."

Things New and Old: Volume 14, Christian's Hope, Meditations on the: The Order of Events

Ver. 15-18. "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. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." The apostle always wrote, we must remember, under the direct guidance and full sanction of the Spirit of God; but here there is something special—something

that was required for the instruction and consolation of the sorrowing Thessalonians, therefore he introduces the new revelation with a “This we say unto you by the word of the Lord.” We have a similar instance in 1 Corinthians 11, when the apostle says, “For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you.” That was given to correct an abuse as to the observance of the Lord’s supper; this, to correct a mistake as to the Lord’s coming.

But mark the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to His young disciples; He assures their hearts, that in the order of events connected with His coming, the first that takes place is the resurrection of those who had fallen asleep in Jesus, and that in place of losing anything by having departed, they will be the first that are ready to go up and meet the Lord. “The dead in Christ shall rise first.” So far from those who have fallen asleep in Jesus missing the joyful hour of His coming, they will be raised before the living are changed. This is grace, the grace of the Lord Jesus; at the same time we know, that every event connected with His coming shall be accomplished in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, so that the interval cannot be estimated.

But now, my soul, observe in silent wonder, the shining forth of this twofold glory of the Lord Jesus: He rises from His throne, He descends from heaven, He gives the word Himself, the voice of the archangel passes it on, and the trumpet gives a well-known sound. The imagery is military. As well trained troops know the orders of their commander by the sound of the trumpet, so will the army of the Lord answer instantly to His call. All the dead in Christ shall rise, and all the living shall be changed; and they shall all enter into the cloud, and be caught up together, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall they ever be with the Lord. No separation then; therefore the apostle adds, “Comfort one another with these words.”

Thus the apostle explains to the Thessalonians how God will bring with Jesus all who sleep in Him. From verse 15 to 18 is a parenthesis, which accounts for what is said in the 14th: “Even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” When the Lord returns in glory, all the saints will be with Him; but, previously, He has awakened the sleepers, changed the living, and translated both to heaven.

The Rapture of the Saints.

And now, the saints are gone—all gone—gone to glory—gone to be with the Lord forever! What a thought—what an event, my soul! Not a particle of the redeemed dust of God’s children left in the grave; and not a believer left on the face of the whole earth! all caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. But who can think—who can speak of the happy reunions on that morning of cloudless joy? Doubtless the Person of the Lord will fix every eye and ravish every heart; still, there will be the distinct recognition of those, who, though long parted from us here, have never lost their place in our hearts. And as all will perfectly bear the image of the Lord, we can never lose sight of Him. Though every one will have his own identity, and his own special joy, yet all will be like the Lord, and the joy of each will be the common joy of all. “ magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together,” will be a note of praise often sung, as we meet to part no more forever.

Yes, my soul, heaven is a home, a social place; and surely the blessed Lord who has prepared that home of love will ever have the first thought, the first place, yet He Himself will connect the brightest scenes in glory with the darkest days of the wilderness. This is evident from what the apostle says in the second chapter. At the very moment when he was hindered by Satan from visiting his beloved Thessalonians, who were sorely persecuted, he looked beyond those troublous times and saw his children in the faith around him in the glory. “For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy.” But there are many other scenes of earth that will have a bright reflection in the glory. Many cross my mind, some I well remember; but I forbear, their record is on high.

“Hark to the trump! behold it breaks

The sleep of ages now:

And lo! the light of glory shines

On many an aching brow.

Changed in a moment—raised to life;

The quick, the dead arise,

Responsive to th’ archangel’s voice,

That calls us to the skies.

Undazzled by the glorious light

Of that beloved brow,

We see, without a single cloud,

We see the Savior now!

Lord, the bright and blessed hope

That cheered us through the past,

Of full eternal rest in thee,

Is all fulfilled at last.”

Here pause a little, my soul; meditate on this wondrous scene. Who will meet thee there? Who will greet thee with a joyous welcome in that happy land? Who will clasp thy hand, to the sundered no more forever? But oh! how completely all are changed, and yet how perfectly all are identically the same. One cannot be mistaken for another; and not one can he unknown. But chiefest of all thy joys that morning, and from which all thy other joys shall flow, will he to see His face, hear His voice, and behold His glory; or, as St. John says, and sums up all

blessedness in two expressions; “We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” Surely God Himself could not have done a better thing for us than to make us like Christ; and a richer blessing He could not have bestowed than to give us to see Him as He is—that means, we shall see Him and know Him in all the realities of His love, and in all the greatness of His many glories. This will be the fullness of our joy, the everlasting spring of our never-ending delight.

The Interval Between the Rapture and the Appearing.

But to where, may I ask, does the Lord conduct His saints after He meets them in the air? To heaven, surely, to the house of many mansions which He has prepared for them, according to His own promise in John 14 “In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” Nothing can possibly be plainer or simpler than these words. Their first meeting in the air may be foreshadowed by Isaac meeting Rebecca in the wilderness. We see in her beautiful behavior the most reverent love: and we see in his love and kindness the fulfillment of the promises and testimonies of Eliezer: “And Rebecca lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel;.....and she took a veil and covered herself. And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done.” This may be like the Holy Spirit delivering up His sacred charge to the Son of the Father; though He will dwell in the Church forever. “And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent, and took Rebecca, and she became his wife: and he loved her.” Gen. 24.

Having passed into heaven, the saints will then be manifested in the light; as the apostle says, “We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” (Rom. 14:10, 12.) But this does not mean, observe, that the saints, as to their persons, shall stand in judgment. Christ has been judged for them, and they, as he says Himself, shall never come into judgment. But it does mean, that all their works and ways will be seen in the light of His presence, and that we shall then know His estimate of all that we have done for Him. Being in our bodies of glory, we shall be incapable of experiencing anything like fear or unhappiness; but when manifested in the light we shall have a perfect knowledge, according to the mind of Christ, of every moment of our past history. All that was of self or of Christ in our motives, objects, and service, will then be seen—all that we failed to understand in time, will be perfectly known then, at least as regards our connection with Christ, His Church and service. But, surely, everything as to ourselves will be lost sight of when seen side by side with His patient grace; and we shall pass from His tribunal in admiring wonder and praise at the patience which bore with our ways in the wilderness, and brought us safe to glory. “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know, even as also I am known.” 1 Cor. 13:12.

All things being now ready, the marriage of the Lamb takes place, according to the vision of St. John. (Rev. 19) “The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.” He presents her to Himself a glorious Church, holy and without blemish. (Eph. 5) What a day that will be! What a day even for heaven, so long accustomed to glory! What a mustering of its myriad hosts to do Him honor! But this will be a new glory—the bridal glory of the Lamb! wondrous thought, transcendent glory! The bride ranks with her Bridegroom, the wife ranks with her husband! As He is, so she is—where He is, there she is—what He has, that she has. And all forever and forever. But tell me, tell me this, my soul, will thine eyes behold that glory? —will thy heart taste these joys? —will thy feet stand in that holy place? —will these nuptial glories be thine? What sayest thou? —answer me. At perfect rest my heart is as Isaac confirmed all that had been testified of him to Rebecca, so shall the true Isaac confirm all that has been spoken of Him to His Church, which is His body, and His bride.

The marriage scene, and the marriage supper of the Lamb are little more than announced, they are not described. But the book of the Revelation is not the place to speak of the Father’s house, and the intimacies of love; but rather of the righteous ways of God, and the establishment of His kingdom on earth. Nevertheless, we are permitted to see the bride, the guests, the preparations, and to hear of the blessedness of all present. “Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” And immense weight is to be attached to the concluding sentence of this brief account of the nuptial scene: “And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.” What grace is thine, most gracious God our Father, to give such double assurance of that blessed future to thy weak and often doubting ones! May we be faithful to our Well-beloved, to whom we are now affianced, and only think of and prepare for that coming day, which will be the summing up of all blessedness and the consummation of all Christian hope.

Things New and Old: Volume 14, Christian's Hope, Meditations on the

Thou hast done well, my soul, in meditating on the Christian’s standing, state, vocation, and warfare: these are subjects of the deepest personal interest, and subjects with which every Christian ought to be well acquainted according to the revelation of God. But there is yet another theme, equally personal and important, on winch thou mayest profitably muse for a little; I mean the Christians hope—the hope of thy Lord’s return. Here, then, let thy thoughts, and not thy thoughts only, but thy affections, be centered. The blessed Lord, the Son of the living God, coming from heaven for thee, is the true and proper object of thy hope—thy expectation. It is a question of affection—a family scene.

The Father’s house, into which He will introduce thee, is not the place of governmental glory, but of the manifestation of His grace and love. Thou wilt be in the same house with the Son—this is thy hope. wondrous, blessed, glorious hope! What grace! What love divine! We may know something of God’s love to sinners, but what can we know of the Father’s love to the children—of the Bridegroom’s love for His Bride? The former is compassion, but the latter is complacency.

Hast thou ever thought, my soul, on that strange anomaly so common among Christians—that though Christ is the one object of their faith, He is not the one object of their hope. Many think that the coming of the Lord means nothing more than that He comes for us when we die; and that at the last, there will be one general resurrection and one general judgment. It would be difficult to say what is the proper hope of such, for all is indefinite, indeed, we may say, confusion. Even as to the proper object of faith, and its blessed results, all is dark and cloudy.

Nothing, surely, can be more natural, in a Christian sense, than that He who is the object of our faith should also be the object of our hope. But simple as this is, it is all important. Thou wilt do well to trace the twofold path a little.

When we know Christ as the one who loves us, and died for us, we have no difficulty in trusting Him: we believe in Him—we have faith in Him. The knowledge of His love creates the most unquestioning confidence; the testimony of the word to the power of His blood meets all our anxieties. We are happy—perfectly happy in Him. His love answers to every desire of the heart, and His sacrifice to every need of the

conscience. With every wish met, and every desire satisfied, we must be happy, and can only love and praise the Lord. But why is He not equally the one proper object of hope? Why is He not the daily expectation, as well as the daily rest of the soul? Most sure and certain we are, that when a Christian dies, his soul is immediately with the Lord in paradise; and a blessed precious truth it is; but it is never spoken of in scripture as the hope of the Christian: rather that we shall not die, but be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. There is no reason or necessity why a Christian should die; Christ has died for him. But if he should die, death to him is called a “falling asleep in Jesus”—a being put to sleep by Jesus. How sweet, how blessed, the thought, my soul! This is the way a believer dies: the poor body is laid to sleep, and the soul ascends on angels’ wings to be with Christ, till the morning of the first resurrection.

But what saith the scripture? faith can only rest on the word of God. Many speak of these things as the “peculiar view’s” of a particular class of Christians; but the one question is, Has God spoken plainly on the subject? On nothing more so; the difficulty is in the selection; but a passage from Paul’s first epistle to the Thessalonians may be the most convenient to refer to now. There we have a special revelation from the Lord, for the express purpose of giving further truth in detail as to the coming and glory of the Lord Jesus. Carefully read 1 Thess. 4:13-18.

The Thessalonians, evidently, had been converted by means of a gospel that embraced the truth, usually called, “The Lord’s second coming in glory.” This is apparent from Acts 17, where we find the unbelieving Jews giving a political turn to their accusations, by saying, “These all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus.” No doubt the apostle preached the truth of the Lord’s coming to reign in glory. Hence it was, that from the time of their conversion, they were looking day by day for His return. But in the meantime, some of their brethren died. This troubled them greatly. Their sorrow was excessive. Not that they had any fear about the salvation of their friends, but because they would not be present to welcome the Lord, and to be received by Him. When the apostle heard of their troubles, he wrote to them at once. They were comparatively uninstructed, and also greatly persecuted both by the Jews and the heathen. Their opportunities of learning had been very few. The apostle was not allowed to remain long with them after their conversion because of the persecution; and the books of the New Testament were not then written. But their ignorance and distress only gave the fitting opportunity for the Lord to reveal His mind more fully on this blessed subject.

In the new revelation which the apostle received, the order of events is given. This is important; though no doubt given in the first instance to meet the sorrowing hearts of the Thessalonians, it is also intended for the instruction of the saints of God in all ages: but the best way will be to go over the verses as they stand; and, first, we would notice,

THE SORROW OF THE THESSALONIANS.

Ver. 13. “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.” These warm, earnest-hearted, but young Christians had not been instructed as to how the dead saints could be with the Lord when He comes, and share His glory. They were so full of the expectation of the Savior’s return, that they had never thought of any of them dying before He came; so that they were in great trouble when some of their brethren fell asleep. But now, observe, my soul, and give good heed to what the apostle says to them. Does he find fault with them for their too ardent hopes of the return of Jesus? Did he say they were too much occupied with it? or that they were excited and lacked sobriety? Familiar to thy mind are such sayings from many of thy fellow Christians; but no such word drops from the pen of the apostle. Their waiting for the Lord is mentioned in each chapter of both epistles, and most surely to their praise. Neither does he seek to comfort the bereaved—as is commonly done—by reminding them that they would soon follow—that they would soon rejoin the dear departed in heaven. No, indeed; true as that might be, he does not refer to it as a ground of comfort. The Thessalonians are maintained in the thought that they were still to look for the Lord during their life-time, and a fresh revelation is given to assure them, that all who have fallen asleep in Jesus will have equally their part in the glory with those who are alive at His coming.

Ver. 14. “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” The first thing that the apostle does is to fix the eye of the sorrowing ones on Jesus—on Him who died and rose again. True comfort is only to be found in looking to thee, most blessed Lord, and divine strength to glorify thee in our deepest afflictions. There we see victory over death and the grave—there we see the one who died, was buried, rose again, and is now in glory. He is the believer’s life. We triumph in like manner—“Even so.” Our life is connected with Him who thus died and rose again, and belongs to the glory. All who have fallen asleep in Jesus will be raised, and leave the earth precisely as He did. “There is this difference,” says one: “He went up in his own full right; He ascended. As to us, His voice calls the dead, and they come forth from the grave, and the living, being changed, all are caught up together. It is a solemn act of God’s power, which seals the Christian’s life and the work of God, and brings the former into the glory of Christ as His heavenly companion. Glorious privilege! Precious grace! To lose sight of it destroys the proper character of our joy and our hope.”1

Things New and Old: Volume 20, 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.

Present Testimony: Volume 5, 1853, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

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

"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.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and

so shall we ever be with the Lord.

" Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

On entering upon the consideration of the above passage, the first question is-What were these saints of Thessalonica sorrowing about? They were not, I believe, mourning because they feared lest their brethren might possibly have perished. They knew them to be believers, and hence such a suspicion could not enter their minds. Neither were they indulging themselves in mere natural grief because of their loss. This with them was altogether a secondary point. Their sorrow arose from neither of these two causes. From whence then did it arise? It arose, I believe, as the Apostle intimates, from their being ignorant with regard to these saints, of something touching the hope of the kingdom. They did not, in truth, understand how they who had fallen asleep could partake with themselves of the coming glory of Christ. This fear, therefore, the Apostle meets with a positive declaration that so far from their coming short of the blessing, in any measure, that when God bringeth in the first begotten into the world, when He introduces Christ to that kingdom which he is to receive as the meed of his humiliation on the earth, He (God), will bring with Him (Christ) those who, previous thereto, shall have died in the faith.

Ah! but the Thessalonians might have replied, " Our brethren are dead, how then can they come with Christ?" This, therefore, St. Paul meets in ver. 15, by saying " that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord,1 shall not prevent them which are asleep." And then he goes on, in verses 16, 17, to show that in 'order to come with Him, they must be previously raised; that, as in the case of a sovereign visiting some city or province of his dominions, the nobles dwelling therein must go forth to meet him, in order to mingle among his retinue as he enters the place, so the saints (at least those of whom he is speaking-those who have fallen asleep), must ascend in order to descend with the Lord when He comes in his glory. Having, in ver. 14, spoken of the ultimate thing, he then turns back, and in ver. 16, 17, he shows what, previous thereto, must of necessity happen.

The point on which the Thessalonians were ignorant, and on which they needed to be thus enlightened, was the doctrine of a "first resurrection." Like Martha, when she said of her brother, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day;" and like many in our own day, they had some vague thought of a general resurrection of the righteous and the wicked at the end, but of "the resurrection of life" contrasted with "the resurrection of judgment," they knew nothing. They thought that the dead and the living would meet and be equally blest in the end, but that in the interim there would be a difference; they fancied that they who were alive would "prevent," or get the start of the others. So that in proportion to the duration of the kingdom, the latter would lose the honor reserved for the former.

Probably, indeed, they had little or no idea of any of the saints, either the dead or the living, coming with Christ, but supposed, according to the notion of many at present, that He is to come and establish His kingdom on earth, as we know will really be the case with regard to His earthly people the Jews; while His Church will at the same time be manifested in heavenly glory, reigning with Him over the earth in close connection therewith. All this, then, the Apostle was called on to meet, and he does meet it, as I have said in this passage.

But it may be objected, that ver. 14 cannot apply to the Lord coming in His kingdom, because the saints spoken of here are only a part of those who are to accompany Rim then. True it is, they are but a part, but this. does not at all interfere with the interpretation here given. The fears of the Thessalonians, be it remembered, concerned the dead, not the living, for which cause St. Paul confines himself to the former, without (ver. 14) alluding at all to the latter; he speaks of those which sleep in Jesus, without deeming it needful to say what is true, that God will bring with His Son the rest of the redeemed, even the living, as well as those who have died, at the very same time.

True it is, when he comes to treat of the rapture of the saints in verses 16, 17, he speaks of the living as well as the dead. But why does he do so? Because the time was come for a new revelation to be made, not to these Thessalonians alone, but to the whole Church of God. And hence he takes occasion, from the circumstances of their sorrow, to bring this new unrevealed truth to light. He shows them "by the word of the Lord," the order of events in reference to the resurrection and ascension both of the dead and living. He tells them that when Christ descends into the air, the first thing which will happen will be that the dead will be raised, next that the living will be changed, and then that they will, in their glorified bodies, both be caught up together to heaven; all which we might be tempted to think would take some time to effect, but which, being God's work, will be done, as we read, " in the twinkling of an eye"- will be the work of a moment.

The foregoing remarks were written for the purpose of meeting a view of this passage which I find is more general among Christians than I was at all prepared to expect. " If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him!' This, it is said, applies to the coming of Jesus when He shall descend from heaven into the air, accompanied, as is thought, by the spirits or souls of those who have fallen asleep. Now after what I have said, it is needless for me to add, that I believe this view of the passage to be wholly mistaken, and that unless we allow that ver. 14 applies to the ultimate thing, as I have said, even the coming of Christ when He appears in His kingdom, and verses 16, 17, to what will previously happen, namely, the resurrection, the change, and ascension of the saints, we do not catch the object and mind of the Spirit through the Apostle.

And here, with regard to the separate spirit, before I conclude I would say a few words. True it is, that the souls of those who are asleep are now with the Lord; and equally true, that when Christ descends from heaven, they will take possession again of their bodies. But observe, the Apostle says nothing at all in this passage of spirits. He speaks of the saints as individuals, neither viewing the spirit apart from the body, nor the body apart from the spirit. What he treats of is the whole man-the believer. His word is not " the spirits of them which sleep in Jesus," but " them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with If, indeed, he at all speaks of one more than the other, it must be of the body, that part of us which dies-which ceases to act, in contrast with the spirit which cannot sleep, but which becomes more actively alive, more energetic than before, as soon as it is freed from our present bodies of sin and death. This, however, I say merely to strengthen my assertion as to the silence of Scripture with regard to the re-entrance of the spirit into the body; because, whether St. Paul speaks in verse 14 of the coming of these saints with the Lord, or in verses 16, 17, of their previously leaving their graves, he views them, as I have said, in the totality of their existence-as men raised to life-as beings composed both of body and spirit.

To me, I confess, the thought which I here venture to combat, seems to lead to the conclusion that the soul sleeps while apart from the body. Is it not so? Because those whom God brings are those who have been previously sleeping. Now, according to what has been said, it is the souls of the saints which are thus brought, in order that they may re-possess themselves of their bodies; and therefore the conclusion is, that these same souls will have been slumbering in the interval between death and resurrection.

Far be it from me to accuse any one holding this view of believing anything so false, so unscriptural, as the sleep of the separate spirit. I have no such thought or suspicion, I can truly say. Still, I repeat that the view, if duly considered, will be found to involve this conclusion, just as the denial of the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor. 15), involves nothing less than the denial of the resurrection of Christ. The Apostle never meant, because the Corinthians failed in understanding this doctrine in reference to themselves, to accuse them of saying that Christ, their living Head, was not raised, because in so doing, he could scarcely have owned them as Christians. He deals plainly and candidly with them, however; he exposes the error of the views they were actually holding, by showing the conclusion to which, if followed out, they must of necessity lead.

Where the heart is right, and the eye is single, the Lord, in His mercy, keeps us from the consequences of many a mistake in the understanding of Scripture into which the wisest amongst us may fall. This is comforting, considering that now at 'best we see through a glass darkly. Still, as in the present case, we should be careful as to what views we are holding, not knowing what advantage the enemy may thereby gain over us, as he sometimes has done, by leading the saints to push their conclusions so far as in the end to get into positive error. May the Lord keep us simple, humble, and dependent, in the study of Scripture, on the teaching of His own blessed Spirit!

The Offerings.

Some points as to the offerings in. Leviticus having been lately cleared up to me, and brought home to my heart, I trust I may say, in a way I had not known them before, I would simply name them, with references to the passages by which they are illustrated or proved. To many readers these remarks may suggest nothing that is new; but to some they may not have occurred; and even where they have, the mention of them may stir up to renewed consideration of the subject, and thus promote growth in the truth. How happy to be fellow learners in the school of our Divine instructor

First.-The Lord's part in the peace (or prosperity) offerings being the fat of the inwards, and this being consumed on the burnt offering (see Lev. chapter 3:5), and with the meat offering (see chapter 7:12), the participation in the other parts of the peace offering of the priest that offered, the priests at large, and the worshipper, really brought them into communion with God's own joy and delight, not only in the peace offering, but also in the burnt and meat offerings, of which the fat of the peace offering was " the food."

Secondly.-The fat of all the sin offerings (except the red heifer in Num. 19) was consumed on the altar of burnt offerings, (see Lev. 4:10, 19, 26, 31, 35; 7:5; 16:25, etc., etc.) Thus we see, that even in that view of Christ's work, in which he was most actually and absolutely made sin for us, His own inward devotion to God, in which He was willing to be thus made sin, was infinitely pleasant and acceptable to God, forming thus a link between the sin offering and all the rest. How precious, that at the very time when Jesus was really bearing wrath for our sins; when it was impossible that God could manifest his favor to Him; when, in consequence, he had to cry, " My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" At this very time the link with God on His part (Christ's) was still, as always, unbroken! Indeed, in what one scene do we so see His complete devotion to the Father's glory, as that in which He bows to His Father's will that He should be made sin and suffer without the gate? And even when forsaken and asking "why," He calls Him "My God!"

Thirdly.-The case of the priest (see chapter iv.) whose sin interrupted the communion of the whole congregation, or the similar case of the sin of the whole congregation, is what cannot now occur. The instruction, therefore, as often in Hebrews, is by contrast not comparison. Our Priest cannot fail; and all the sins, yea, the sin of the whole congregation has once, for all, and forever, been so expiated, that nothing now can disqualify the whole church as such for communion and worship.

Fourthly.-As to the diverse force and meaning of the laying on of hands on the victim. In the one case, that of the sin and trespass offerings, a person came as a sinner, and placing his hands on the victim's head, confessed his sins, and transferred, as it were, the load of sin to the victim that suffered in his stead. In the other case, a person came as a worshipper, and placed his hands on the head of the animal, in token of being himself identified with the acceptableness of the offering.

How gracious of our God to condescend to teach us thus! May our poor hearts profit by these typical instructions, knowing, as we surely do, something of their import from the full revelation in the New Testament of the great and blessed Anti-type!

Bible Subjects for the Household of Faith: Volume 1, 1863, Meeting-Place in Resurrection, The

1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18.

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.

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

15. 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.

16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Notwithstanding the number of tracts that have been written on the Lord’s coming, I have felt that there is the need of one containing a few elementary statements to direct the attention of christians to this portion of God’s truth. The great difficulty in the way of many of the Lord’s people is their confusion of two distinct events-the coming of the Lord in the air, and the coming of the Lord to the earth. The effect of this is practically to rob them of the enjoyment of their proper hope and portion, which is “to wait for God’s Son from heaven, whom he raised from

the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come” (1 Thessalonians 1: 10).

This portion of scripture was a new revelation given to Paul to correct mistaken views which the Thessalonians had about those who had died in the Lord. They thought that they would not enter into blessing as soon as themselves, and this was to them a source of grief. The Lord tells them not to sorrow is others who have no hope. He reveals to them the fact that when Christ should return in glory God would bring those who “sleep in Jesus” with him; they should be all together; there should be no advantage of the living over the dead saints, for “them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”

But how are they to get there? Who comes for them? Where is the meeting-place? Questions like these would be suggested to the mind when the revealed fact is received that the sleeping saints are to appear with Christ in glory.

From the 15th to 18th verses the answers to these questions are given. They are the explanation of verses 13 and 14, with a full revelation of that meeting-place in resurrection which God has told us of, to cheer our hearts, and to wean us from this present evil world.

I intend more especially to confine myself to this portion of God’s word, using other scripture only as bearing upon it. May the Lord guide us by the Holy Ghost as we meditate upon The Meeting-place in. Resurrection.”

1. The Person to be met, and where he comes from “The Lord from heaven.”

2. The persons going to this meeting-place, and where they go from. “We which are alive” (on the Two classes earth). “Those which are asleep” (in. their graves).

3. The summons to go there, and who gives the signal. The Lord himself ... . with the voice of the archangel and with the trump. of God.”

4. The locality where the meeting-place is to be. “In the air.”

5. The authority for the statement. “The word of the Lord.”

6. The use to be made of this portion of God’s word. “Comfort (or exhort) one another with these words.”

The first point is the Person to be met, and where he comes from. The Lord from heaven.”

God has not only saved us, but given us a blessed hope, a heavenly object. He has won our hearts by the exhibition of his love in Christ, and has made Christ to be precious to our souls. We have redemption through the blood of Christ, and a new life in him; but it is in order that Christ himself may be our portion, and that we may be with him forever, to the praise of the glory of God’s grace. Jesus, having accomplished redemption and having gone into the presence of God for us, is now seated upon the throne of his Father, crowned with glory and honor. There he awaits the gathering out of this world the church which he has purchased with his blood; and then, at the command of God, he leaves the throne of his Father and descends into the air, the place of meeting where his Bride ascends to meet him. The Person to be met is the Lord—yes, the adorable Lord Jesus, the one who dwelt from all eternity in the bosom of the Father, the one who was cradled in Bethlehem’s manger, the one who for three and thirty years trod the world of his own creation, the one whose hand was ever ready to meet the needy, and whose heart yearned over the outcast one; and, above all, the one who died on Calvary’s cross, was raised by the power of God, and is now sitting on the right hand of the majesty on high. This blessed one, this Lord from heaven, is the Person to be met, and from heaven, direct from his Father’s presence, he comes.

2. Who are the persons going to this meeting-place, and where do they go from? They consist of persons in two differing positions:— “We who are alive and remain,” “them which sleep in Jesus;” as it says in Corinthians, “ they that are Christ’s at his coming.” There will be those who are alive on this earth, living amidst others, but having, besides their natural life, spiritual life-life in Christ. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, they will be changed (1 Corinthians 15: 52), and caught away from among their fellow-men to meet the Lord from heaven. And how suddenly! as quickly as a moment passes, as quickly as the eyelid falls and rises again, so quickly will the transition occur. But then what about those who have died in Christ? Shall they miss this blessed scene? shall they be left behind? No; if anything, they have the precedence, though it is but a momentary one. The first action of the archangel’s voice is to awake the dead in Christ, “the dead in Christ shall rise first.” They shall only just have emerged from their hiding places, and have been, clad in resurrection-glory, when the living shall be changed, and all shall be caught up together.

Oh! what a meeting! what a blessed hope! No more separation, none missing, none left behind in the darkness of the grave. The sheep will have heard the Shepherd’s voice— “they that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth”— those alive changed, and they all go up together—yes, together; not in various detachments, as some have imagined; not some left behind to pass through the tribulation for their unfaithfulness. The Jewish remnant will have to pass through it but ere it occurs the church and Old Testament saints will be safely housed with the Lord.

Are only the Lord’s people to go up? Only those. Those others, who have no hope, are left behind. Reader, are you among the others who have no hope? Would you like to be left behind? Do you say, well! what if I am? The Lord will come after this to the earth in judgment, “to take vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thessalonians 1:8). But I may be dead. Well! what then? Left behind at the resurrection of the just, you shall have your part in the resurrection of the unjust; you shall hear Christ’s voice, and you shall come forth to the resurrection of damnation (John 5:29). The search for your name in the book of life being fruitless—the books testifying to your evil deeds—your eternal portion will be the lake of fire.

Why are you among the others who have no hope? Because you have not believed in God’s love in the gift of his Son. The life, death, resurrection, and all the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, are as yet nothing to you, except to increase your guilt and condemnation. May your heart be opened to receive Christ, that you may become a son of God by believing on his name.

3. The summons to go there, and who gives the signal.

It is a summons, as we have been seeing, that all in Christ hear and obey. It is called in Corinthians “the last trump,” which some think refers to the last of trumpets used in battle for marching; others believe it to have a reference to the jubilee trumpet. It is evidently Christ, armed

with authority, summoning together those dear to his heart.

4. The locality where the meeting-place is to be. “In the air.” Mark well the place: it is not at Jerusalem, nor at the Mount of Olives: it is in the air. It is quite true that the Lord will come to the Mount of Olives, because God in-his word says so “His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives “ (Zechariah 14: 4); but that is not when we go up to meet him; it refers to a subsequent event; it is when we come with him, afterward, when he comes forth to deliver Israel and to set up his millennial kingdom. Thus, in the next verse (Zechariah 14: 5), it says, “The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.” Now, it is evident that to return with Christ we must first have been gathered to him. There must be the meeting in resurrection before there is the return with Christ. It is of all-importance to see the difference between these two events. We shall get confused and unscriptural thoughts, unless we see from God’s word the difference. And the practical difference consists in this at any moment this meeting-place in the air may occur. Scripture puts nothing between the christian. and the Lord; and an s stem of prophetic truth (however ingenious it may be) that says that this or that event must have before the Lord comes to Claim the People that he has purchased- with his blood, is not of God. If the christian thinks of his sins and sins and iniquities, he remembers Christ, who upon Calvary’s cross blotted them out by the shedding of his blood; if he thinks of his daily sins and shortcomings, he remembers him who appears in the presence of God for him. And what then? He has a hope which must be realized, he waits for God’s Son from heaven, his heart is upon the resurrection-morning; the language of his heart is, or ought to be, “Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.” Thus Christ is everything to him; his past wants, his present necessities, are met by him, and the hopes of his new life are cherished by the thought of thus meeting him.

“This we say unto you by the word of the Lord.” Paul received this truth directly from the Lord, as he did that concerning the Lord’s supper (1 Corinthians 11). Would the Lord have taken the trouble, or thought it needful specially to make this known to Paul, had it not been good for the church of God to enter into and enjoy the hope of the Lord’s coming? And yet how many Christians know nothing about it, looking forward to a good old age; and a grave at the end of it; -Bill God. places the christian on resurrection Found to start with, on the other side of death. See John 11:25. It is blessedly true, that, if the christian fall asleep in Jesus, his spirit is “with the Lord,” and “to depart and be with Christ is far better;” but is that the proper hope of the christian? No. The resurrection morning is what he waits for, because God gives him resurrection promises. When will he be like Christ, perfectly conformed to the image of God’s Son? Not until he sees him in resurrection. “We look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body” (Phil, in 20. 21). Christian reader, you believe in the word—of God—why not believe all it says? You would be horrified if anyone doubted the truth “the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanseth us from all sin;” and yet this truth of the Lord’s coming is founded upon the same authority, it is revealed in the same word. But you say, There is a difference between essential and nonessential truth. You have no right to say so. It is a notion encouraged by Satan to shut up from the souls of God’s people much of his revealed word, but the soul that wishes to yield an intelligent obedience, knowing what the mind of the Lord is, must believe practically that “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3: 16, 17).

6. The use to be made of this portion of God’s word.

“Comfort (or exhort) one another with these words.” Exhortation and comfort-two of the things specially marked as characteristic of useful ministry (1 Corinthians 14:3). How much the saint of God needs exhortation: exhorting one another: and so much the more as we see the day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25).

The reception of Christ by the Thessalonians had caused them to pass through the waters of affliction. While they had the joy of the Holy Ghost as that which sustained and kept them pressing forward, and while it is the joy of the Holy Ghost to testify of an absent Christ, and to all the glories of his person and the perfections of his work, is it not part of this work, his coming again and the glory that is to be revealed in connection with that joyous time? It is not only the bride that says “Come,” but “the Spirit and the bride say, Come.” And is not the fact, that at any moment the Lord may come, that which may well dislocate our affections from this present evil world? His promise remains unchanged, though as yet unfulfilled, “I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there you may be also.” And when will he come? “Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry” (Hebrews 10:37).

And what a source of comfort is the thought of that day! Then shall be raised the song of triumph, then shall the shout of victory be heard; no more sighing and sorrow, no more tears to wipe away, no more broken hearts that want binding up, no more beds of death where the sad farewell in broken utterance escapes the quivering lips. No! at that resurrection meeting-place one shout of triumph shall burst from the lips of the joyous conquerors: “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” and then, with hearts turned upwards to the God of salvation, shall they thankfully exclaim, “Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Young Christian: Volume 11, 1921, He Is Faithful

“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.” 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

This is a very strong expression, and a very simple expression, and a very blessed expression. The thoughts of the Spirit of God, and the thoughts of the Apostle were not that we should be brought to know the things of heaven, of God, and of Christ, and then mar our walk by intercourse with the things of Sodom and Gomorrah. But this was His thought, “May your spirit, 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.” (Verses 23, 24).

Paul does not speak of taking the law of sin and death out of our members. He does not say that He sets us in a place where we shall have no more conflict. He does not speak of taking us out of the wilderness; but he does speak of this grace which shall preserve us blameless. He does speak of God finding us blameless in that day.

As to Paul’s own walk, he was fully persuaded that Christ would be magnified in his body, whether by life or by death, and when he thus said that he was positive that Christ would be magnified, he did not have the idea of being blameworthy in his own particular walk. No! This word is to strengthen the hearts of the children of God. It is He who has called them, and He will do it.

Is God going to keep you blameless? Then, mind, you are to overcome! Mind, you are not to flag! You will overcome, because He will keep you blameless. I see God putting Himself forward, saying, “I am the Person who will keep you blameless unto that day.”

Christian Treasury: Volume 10, In Everything Give Thanks

"In everything give thanks: for this is the will ofGod in Christ Jesus concerning you."I Thess. 5:28

"In everything give thanks,”My God, is this Thy will?Give thanks for disappointments given,For prayers unanswered still!

Give thanks! when in the placeOf health and usefulness,Through sickness Thou hast paled my faceWith pain and weariness.

Give thanks! if 'twere Thy willSubmission to demand,I then might bid myself be still,And bow to Thy command.

Give thanks! Yea, Lord, I do,And by Thy help I will,Give thanks! for blessings not received,Although expected still.

Give thanks! for mercies given,Unnoticed oft by me;Give thanks! for sins forgiven,Known only, Lord, to Thee.

Give thanks! in word and deed,For Thy surpassing love,That sent Thy Son on earth to save,And now to plead above.

Give thanks! for tender love,That our Redeemer showed,Who, in the absence of Himself,A Comforter bestowed,

Oh, grant me by Thy graceTo walk by faith alone,Until before my Father's faceknow as I am know!

J. G. B.

Christian Treasury: Volume 11, Asleep in Jesus

In 1 Thessalonians 5 the word "sleep" is used in three different senses. In verse 6 it is moral sleep, in verse 7 physical sleep, and in verse 10 it is the sleep of death, yet they are all brought together in this chapter.

It is a very precious thing that God speaks to us of the believer who has entered into death, not as being dead, but sleeping. We are all going to be awakened; everyone that sleeps in Christ is going to hear the voice of the archangel, the shout and the trumpet. It will awaken them and bring them out of those graves. It does not make any difference whether they have been there a day, a year, or a thousand years. It is the Lord's archangelic voice. Men try to limit the power of God, but it cannot be limited. Suppose a child of God passes into death in the middle of the ocean and is buried right there. Will that body be raised again? It surely will; every sleeping saint will be raised; not one will be left out—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Paul and all the rest.

Scripture never uses the term "sleep" in connection with the death of the unsaved or ungodly. No, death is never spoken of as steep except of those who are asleep in Christ. It is asleep by, or through, Christ.

In connection with the state of one who is asleep in Christ, we might notice 2 Corinthians 5:1, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." That is the body which will be fashioned like the body of glory of Christ as spoken of in Philippians 3, but spoken of here in 2 Corinthians as a house.

"For in this we groan, earnestly desiring [that is our present position] to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life" (vss. 2-4). Why should the Apostle groan, being burdened? Because the mortal state of the physical body that we now dwell in hindered him from the complete and full enjoyment of the state which was still future. He desired not to be in the unclothed state, but to be with the body which is from heaven, or the house which is from heaven.

The spirits of those who are asleep in Christ consciously enjoy Him while their bodies are in the grave. When they hear the shout and are raised, instantaneously they (and we) will receive bodies of glory, bodies fashioned like the present body of Christ as a Man in glory. Then they will no longer be unclothed

In 1 Corinthians 15:53 it says, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." It is as definite as language could make it. You cannot go wrong on the resurrection of the body unless you do it deliberately, shutting your eyes because you do not want to believe what God says. There is nothing that stumbles the natural heart as much as resurrection. This transformation will be the immediate effect of the shout—yes, and without any difficulty.

Three little words in Philippians 3:21 answer all our difficulties: "He is able." That is all we need. When the shout comes, the bodies of those who have passed away will immediately be changed. It is not a question of where they remain: in the grave, the sea or the air; that does not enter into it at all. All is "according to the working whereby He is able." He will take care of it without any difficulty. The difficulty is all within ourselves; it is not with Him. In the meantime the spirits are with the Lord-absent from the body, present with the Lord.

The saints who pass away now are in the passive enjoyment of Christ. At His coming they will enter into the active enjoyment of His presence.

It is important to see that when the graves are opened and the bodies of the saints arise, they are already changed: they are not raised for glory, but in glory. So the other attributes connected with the resurrection day are already accomplished when they arise from the grave. The company that arises will be no scanty company.

Our present body is sustained by blood. The changed body will be sustained by spirit, and is therefore spoken of as a spiritual body. It is not a spiritual spirit, but a spiritual body—that is, a body adapted to the spirit. It is like the Lord says, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see

Me have." We could never be in the glory except there was a Man there in the glory before us. Christ became a Man at infinite cost and in wondrous love in order to meet us in our need. He is ascended in resurrection life, the risen Man seated in glory at God's right hand. He was here a Man for us, and He is there a Man for us, and because He is there as the Son of Man, or the glorified Man, we will be there with Him and like Him.

Our hearts are warmed when we think what a dear brother once said regarding the shout. When asked what the shout was for, he answered, "Because He is so happy."

Faithful Words for Old and Young: Volume 25, Meditation on a Text, A

CHRIST "died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him." 1

What words of blessing are here! The death of the blessed One—and the substitutionary character of His death—the assurance of our full blessing, whether we die, or whether we live till His coming again—and our eternal blessedness with Him.

Yes, Christ died! He surrendered His life, with the crowd deriding Him, and God having forsaken Him. Yet why?

For us, so that by His death our sins might be cleansed away. In these words, "for us," is the explanation of Calvary. He endured all its agonies in order that His choice wish might be realized, and

That we should live together with Him. And this shall be realized, whether by our being raised up from death, or being translated without our dying into His presence at His coming.

By our Lord's death we know that our sins will never bar us out of heaven, for Christ died for our sins, and by our Lord's resurrection we are assured that, our living Christ watches over us day and night as He sits upon the throne of God. Ah! if when we were sinners Jesus so loved us as to die for us, how much more shall we, now that we are His friends, be saved by His life! He loved us unto death; He loves us after such a sort that He will bring us home to Himself.

On the cross the whole question of sin was settled for all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. The tomb where He lay is empty, and He is now seated upon the throne of God. By Christ's death, sin is condemned and our sins are put away, everlasting righteousness is brought in and secured to the believer. By His death the law is magnified and made honorable. By His death God is glorified and Satan is defeated. By His death, death has lost its sting and the grave its victory, and the believer is eternally saved. Christ "died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him."

Questions and Answers on Scripture: From the Bible Treasury, Sanctification in 1 Thessalonians 5:23

Question: 1 Thess. 5:23: how do you explain sanctification here? M.

Answer: It is sanctification in practice, which all Christians admit and urge. The apostle prays that "the God of peace might sanctify them wholly"; and, not content with this general desire, "that their spirit and soul and body might be preserved entire, blamelessly, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." The whole man is comprehended, in virtue of the reconciling work on the cross; which awaits redemption in the full sense (Rom. 8:23) at Christ's coming. It is the believing man inwardly and outwardly, the mind of flesh or old man already condemned, and all the rest, inner and outer, animated and directed by the indwelling Spirit of God. The higher faculty of man, his spirit, is named first, and the external instrument, his body, last; the soul, if we distinguish the words, is the seat of individuality, the "I" which uses both. It is a heathen notion, though favored by many moderns, to place the "I" in the spirit; but scripture is distinctly adverse, and the error involves many serious consequences. As to this, Dr. Delitzsch's book is unreliable, though learned and lively.

Edification: Volume 9, Editor's Foreword.

"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" (1 Thess. 5:23).

God's standards are always lofty and worthy of Himself. The verse quoted above gives us His standard of sanctity, or holiness.

So lofty is it that He must Himself work to bring us up to it. So lofty, that it will only be reached in full perfection at the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Still it is to be wrought out now. The whole man, spirit, soul, and body, is to be set apart wholly for God's pleasure, and thus be blameless at the coming of the Lord.

This evidently is what God is pursuing now with all His saints. The question arises, Are we each pursuing it for ourselves? We hardly need stop to prove the point that God makes known to us His objective for us, in order that we may make it our objective.

Are we pursuing holiness? We make no attempt to answer the question in a broad, wholesale kind of way. We can only speak according to that which comes under our own very limited observation. Speaking thus, we have to say with reluctance that the pursuit seems to be slack.

We do not say that there is no pursuit of the things that are good. We believe that there is, and with some a pursuit of considerable diligence. We observe those who pursue an intelligent understanding of the things of God. They read the Word of God and understand it. We observe

those who pursue the service of the Lord. They do not miss the occasions when the Lord gathers His saints together for the breaking of bread, or for worship, or ministry of the Word. They take part in it as may be suitable. They rejoice in opportunities for testimony in the Lord’s name, But is there a corresponding keenness as to personal holiness?

We wish we could give an unqualified “Yes” to the question. But we hesitate.

Where is our insatiable thirst after God — such as characterized the Psalmist (63:1)? Where, our yearnings after communion with Christ, our desires for “the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus” our Lord? Where, the deep abasement when sin has come in (see, Psa. 51)? Where, the fervent longings for deliverance from the workings of sin in the members, until the Deliverer Himself and the power of His Spirit are known?

In matters such as these we certainly seem to have slipped backwards during more recent years.

Let us bestir ourselves. The next verse says, “Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.” Thank God, He will do it! Blessed news this, but very serious also. Blessed, because this guarantees that the thing will be really done. Serious, because He will do it according to His call, even if we are quite slack about it; which means that we shall be dragged through discipline, even heavy chastening, to bring it to pass.

Is this the explanation of many of our trials and disappointments? We believe it is.

We hope that what may appear in the pages of our little magazine may be such as shall incite us in this direction, and lead us to “follow... holiness without which no man shall see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14).

Oh, beware of your own way. Follow the Lord fully. Take no path that conscience tells you is doubtful. If God’s smile is not on it abandon it Forever. Christians bring sorrow of heart upon themselves, darkness of soul and loss of peace, not so much by taking wrong paths as by taking doubtful ones.

Chicago Conference: 2017, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-8

Reading

166 one 6/6. Lord, thou hast drawn us after thee. Now let us run and never tire in 166. But thou hast drawn up early. Now that must come. My present? Come on 13. I shall follow Art. Lord and. God will follow you. Our sunlight. When hearts were strong. Oh my goodness. Our granddad's name. Our grandfather. I love you. I'm from our restraints. I'm sick of. I'm going to be home before. Nsnoise our earth. Sleep time, I please must hear. Nsnoise. So this thing also 280. Oh, joyful day, Oh Gloria.

'S not on the grave. In all his birthday all the way. MMM. Zero Eight, 2018. Nsnoise. 9539 and what my spirit said first of all. MMM 17994. 98 persons not in the brain. For a refreshing girl long story. When she passed 100000. I suggest we go on to 1St Thessalonians 5 verse one, and if there's a need for another comment or two behind that, that'd be perfectly fine, obviously. First Corinthians chapter 5. I'm sorry, First Thessalonians chapter 5, beginning at verse one. But of the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you, for yourselves. Know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. Before when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light and the children of the dead. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober, for they that sleep, sleep in the night. And they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has 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. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly. In love for their work sake and be a tease among yourselves. Now we exalt you, brethren. Warn them that are unruly. Comfort the feeble minded, supports the weak. Be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man, but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing in everything, give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit, despise not prophesizing, prove all things, hold fast that which is good, abstain from all appearance of evil, and the very God of peace. Sanctify you holy and I pray God. Your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved flameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss. I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. Nsnoise. Unlike the end of the last chapter where the Thessalonians Saints were being taught something they hadn't heard before that they didn't understand, which was that they. Uh, those that had already physically died that were asleep in Jesus were going to be caught up out of the grave to go up together with those that were still alive at the time of the Lord's coming. That was a great comfort to them that they weren't going to be separated from the brethren that they come to know and love that they were part of the same body with. Here in this chapter, it begins with truth that they already knew that was already revealed in the Old Testament says that at the times and the seasons brethren. You have no need that I write unto you for yourselves know perfectly. And then he begins to speak of the day of the Lord. The day of the Lord is spoken of many, many, many, many times in the Old Testament. It's that time that we often refer to. I think we did yesterday as the the time of the appearing when the Lord comes back from heaven with his Saints in order to reign and rule and put everything under the his authority as Lord, the Lord of all. And so this was something that they were already familiar with. But after that brief introduction in the first few verses is going to go on to lay out for them its present effect in their lives. And so, uh, as was referenced some several times in the address that we've just had, this wasn't doctrine to put on the shelf and store as a, a set of thoughts and ideas and facts and then to walk away from, but rather here in this portion, he's, he's refreshing the memory a little bit. As to what the appearing was that they'd already been exposed to and knew about. And then he's going on to lay out for them the practical, uh, result of that truth in their life.

Times and seasons, that usually is related to things that happen on this earth, not in the future day. But sometimes we may get confused with times. There were times mentioned. So we find perhaps in a place where it says that in the folders of time. Well, that's a little bit different,

isn't it? So when we see that verse, is that in the fullness of time He sent forth his son born of a woman. So that's God's time that he sent a Savior in the world. And we find that phrase in the fullness of time. And then we find perhaps an efficient, we find that it's just that in the dispensation of the fullness of times without the different reference, again, isn't it that referred to the millennial day, There are different phrases that we let the, uh, Scripture use in regard to that. Uh, we find that Millennium is mentioned in Revelation chapter 20. Then we find perhaps even the, the phrase, the times of refreshing. Well, that referred to the same time when the Lord Jesus will reign, that in Acts we find that we find perhaps a phrase of restitution of all things that refer to that time or the regeneration or the, the, uh, the Reformation. And there are various phrase like that describing different things as compared to here where it referred to things that are gonna happen on earth. And then also, as our brother mentioned that he talks about the day of the Lord. We'll see here, choose other language start to change a little bit when it talks about the rapture or is coming for us. We found the word we or ye is mentioned often. So as we read those next few verses about the day of the Lord, we find the word they are being mentioned. So we see the distinguisher in there. So let's look at verse 3/4 when they shall say that's not us. The reason is not us is as we deem one. We learn from the previous chapter that we have already been taken out of the scene. Those earth dwellers, those who are left behind, the unbelievers are left the face. The day of the Lord, when the Lord this is Speaking of the Lord's coming to execute judgment, is this day. When God created the heavens and the earth. Created time. Time didn't exist in past what we call past eternity. But when God created time and he had a purpose in creating things, so he created the earth. And the heavens. And he placed different parts of his creation on the earth, Most importantly, man. And at that point God in his own purposes decided or decided in his own councils, that he would work with time and man in different ways. And so he divided up the period of what would be time until it goes on to the future when these things will be done. And there will be a future eternity in which there will no longer be time. But Scripture because of that and the way the fact that God deals in different ways at different points in the history of man on earth. Uh refers to times and seasons. He also makes use of the difference between night and day and the fact that we can think about certain things that we do and we don't do at night and other things we do and don't do in the daytime. And so some of the periods and that God has established for His ways with man have involved and used in Scripture the times, the seasons, and so on. That are referred to here and I find it rather interesting that these. Quite young believers had already been given some understanding of that, perhaps being introduced to the Old Testament and getting some instruction from it with respect to this way that God is dealing. But I don't think it would be profitable to go too far in that direction as to the various sometimes people have used the word dispensations as to dividing up these different periods of time.

But uh, I would like to make particular reference to one, and that is at the present moment, God views this world in a period of night. God sees it, and the Scripture sees the time in which we are in a period of night. Yeah, well. The day will come when the Lord Jesus returns, and then it will be the day. So the Lord as with respect to ourselves and our walk, we've been called to walk during a period in the history of God's ways. Let's look at as night time. Peter comments on it in his first epistle and he talks about it and he says the daystar arise in your heart. That is, we are those who are supposed to be enjoying and looking for. The signs that the morning is coming, that the day is coming and have the enjoyment of the the Daystar which appears in the sky. I don't know that I've ever seen it in the Northern hemisphere, but in the Southern hemisphere it comes just before the break of day. And Peter said get that star, that enjoyment of what's coming in your hearts. But here in connection with our chapter. Uh, we weren't created for night. You know, everything's different at night, right? But we all normally speaking, we like the day and, uh, what the day brings. And so he's saying to the brethren, well, the Lord, as it said in Luke 12 That we had yesterday and in Matthew 24 yesterday, umm, the person is not looking for the Lord. He's refers to the watches of the night and the in those watches of the night, he. He's, he's not looking, he's not watching and uh, he's asleep to it. But those who wait for their Lord during the period of the night ought to be, if you will, awake and watching spiritually awake and watching for their Lord to come. These and so when he comes, so he says here in connection with that, uh, verse four, ye brethren, are not of the darkness. Yeah, you're the that's a day should overtake you as a thief. No, he said. What are you, verse five? You're children of light, Your children of day. We've been brought into light. Through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, what were we before Romans? One says. Oh, I should say John One says, When the Lord came, it says He came as light. And the darkness. Didn't perceive, didn't comprehend the light, because man is not only in the dark, but in his sense he's darkness itself. We are of the light and we enjoy the light, the light of God, the perfections of His person and His Holiness and His character. We've been brought to enjoy that. But an unbeliever. Is characterized as a person of darkness. Why? Because his deeds are evil, morally speaking. He prefers moral darkness because it can hide the character of his life and he doesn't want life. That's why he works better, if you will. He hopes, like the thief, to get away with what he's doing in a moral darkness. But the contrast is for these dear believers in Thessalonica and us here. His brethren, we're not darkness anymore, we're light. We're not children of the night like the Worldling is. We're children of the day. And so our proper environment, we're waiting for it. We're not in the nice setting that's coming because we're children of day and yet we're going through a period of darkness. And so we look on and hope.

To the the day that's coming when everything is consistent with the life and character that, uh, the life and person that God has given to us, the Son of righteousness. SUN of Righteousness. Sometimes with a light is in contrast to darkness, or light is the opposite of darkness, which is not true because darkness cannot overcome light. You cannot bring darkness into light, but you can bring light Into Darkness because light would dispel darkness. As more of a light, there is still dispelled darkness. I remember years ago, I, I can't remember what we passed through as we head out West. There was a, a cave that they advertised you can go for a tour. So with young children, we went in for the tour. They took us into this big cavern and then the man told us to blow the candles out and we were in total darkness. You could put your fingers in front of your eyeballs and you couldn't see it. And then all of a sudden he struck a match. That's all he did, just a match. The light from the match lit up the whole room. It wasn't bright like this, but it was enough to dispel the darkness in this in that room. So we find light is not that light would dispel darkness totally. And we are, we are, as we've been reminded, children of light. We are different than the world. And there is one more thought about light and darkness. God looked at time differently than we do. We have a problem that we look at everything from our perspective. Everything is about me is how we look at it. And we even find in this country, you look at a map, North America, North North America is always in the center of a map. That's how important we think we are. But dear God, look at things and we have to see His view to. God, it's an evening and then the morning it's a day. It's not interesting for us. We say what a day and a night. We make up the day. But Scripture always look at the evening. The darkness comes first and then come as we're reminded to see that they dawn, the morning star arise. So men love darkness rather than light. But it's going to be exposed when the Son of Man who will come and give us that true life. 1St to mention about him coming as a thief as we deem one we have a look at and waiting for our Lord to come as a thief. So here's another distinction there. This is the Lord's coming for this world because he's going to come as the world not expecting him to come. And the world thinks that as he used to the the language he appears and safety, well, how much peace and safety did this world have? But here Word of God tells us that then sudden destruction cometh upon them. God has given this world a taste. We find that Adam and Eve, when they disobey, it was quite sudden, they were sent out. Of that garden, NOAA in Noaa's day, God show man that God must punish sin. And there we too find judgment was executed. Would you know God is a God of patient? We find that in the book of Jude, he he said about Noah, but rather

his great grandfather Enoch, who was a preacher of righteousness, who forewarned this world of the ungodly deeds and the ungodly acts. God gave men ample time, but then we know the story when it comes that day, that moment when that door and the arc was shut, the judgment fell upon this world. So already once before, only eight souls were saved, Noah, his three sons and the wives and execute judgment was executed. And now we're perhaps in the brink of another judgment, ready to fall upon this world. And the God, our God is so gracious that we've been reminded we're going to be taken out of this scene.

Rapture out, ****** your weight in the air to be with the Lord. Whatever with the Lord, what a blessed, blessed hope that we have to dwell where it is. Does the peace and safety. Umm, we can see other people who say that in the Old Testament, in Jeremiah. Jeremiah 23. At verse 17. They say still unto them, that despite thee, the Lord has said, he shall have peace. They say unto everyone that walketh after their imagination of his own heart, no evil shall come upon you. These are the false prophets just before the destruction of Jerusalem, umm, and the captivity in Babylon. And as our brethren were saying that in, in the darkness, umm, they'll avoid the light. But we can see that the character of the darkness, not only to avoid the light, but to declare the darkness to be light and to attack anyone that would, uh, bring true light into the darkness. This is something we can see through the whole history of the Bible and. We should expect that character today, and we compete in our modern Society of declaring good evil and evil good. So Satan presents himself as an Angel of light, but he's really the great deceiver. Was just remarked on in that way. Uh, the thief is the one that takes from somebody something that they consider their possession. When the Lord Jesus was here. As perfect light to man. He said man said we don't want him. We don't, as it were, want him to take from us what we want. They were convicted and convinced in spite of themselves by the conscience God had given to them, that what was being presented to them was truth and light from God. But what do you do when? If you will, if you had the power to do it. When you don't want something, you get rid of it. And that was man's wish and will with respect to perfect light of the Lord Jesus. And so in this period of the world's darkness, umm, the world, Satan would seek to deceive man not to recognize that the Lord of all will come, as might be said, like the thief in the night, like the one who comes at a time unexpected to do something that's unwanted. And, uh, he will come unexpected and do what's unwanted. But the contrast is for us in verse 7, verse six, what do you do at night? What's the typical natural thing? Most everyone in this room, if you have a typical night, you're going to go to bed, you're going to sleep. And uh, that's the normal activity during a period of, of night. But in the picture that's being presented to us here in verse five and six and seven and so on, it says, well, your children of the dead of the light, verse six. So don't sleep. Don't go to sleep. Be watchful as those that wait for their Lord to come during the night hours. That is with respect to the world, the night time. It's very practical and our lives need to be characterized by it and not settle down and rest if you will. Indifferent to the condition of the world and what kind of people we are in contrast to that world. So he's telling these young believers, he said, let's not sleep. Our place right now is to watch. Watch for the Lord to come and be sober. Be careful to recognize that. Lots of bad things happen at night.

Umm, lots of bad things happen at life just because it's dark. Most robberies take place at night because people tend to do at night what they may not do in the day. And morally we're susceptible to the same things. And so he says watch and be sober, be careful. And it gives us some armor later to help us to be careful. And not get into this pattern that my Lord delays is coming and, uh, which has been so much before them in the previous chapter. And that as was said to the dear Saints, he turned to God from idols. You turn from the things of the world, the idols that characterize man's night time to serve the living and true God and to wait for his son from heaven. And so. Where to watch as we wait and be sober. The Lord's coming and His glorious appearing, which is in contrast to the thief in the night. Ours is the blessed hope. I was just talking to Steven there earlier. Umm it was a mega church in Rockford where we live. I challenge the man one day. My niece goes there and they have what they call an article of faith they posted on their website. There was nothing in there pertaining to the rapture. At all. So I challenge him on it and I thought, what do you do with that? You know your scriptures right here first. That's only before he said it was too controversial amongst his, uh, group there like 10,000 people there. And I just thought about Paul and his dealings with controversy, but I saw too controversial. What is your blessed hope that he didn't have no answer for that? But they gave that up and it's scary really amongst the Christian community how many people, Christians have given up this blessed truth. And Paul writes this, he got a direct revelation from the Lord, verse 15 for this we say unto you by the word of the Lord in verse 18 he says, wherefore this is important. He says comfort one another with these words. These are words of comfort for the believer. And to think of how many have given that up. How sad that is though, who is, who is behind that? Well, I think we know who's behind that. That would cause believers to give up that blessed hope. The Lord's coming and uh, this young Christians here don't give that up. Hang on to that type and they're going to try to rob you of that in the community of Christians today. They want to ride you in the enjoyment of our blessed home. If we look for the Lord to come today to take us home to the Lord. This is something that the church as a whole have forgotten or given up, but it is very important for us to understand the sequence of events that happens in Scripture. Understand. The difference between the rapture and the Lord's coming. Because among Christendom some have given up, but some are just. Quoting it from a very different standpoint, I was at a wedding a couple of weeks ago sitting next to a youth pastor from some Baker church. And he said to me, he said, we didn't give that up. He said, the Lord has come already. I said, the Lord has come already. Oh yes, he come in different installments. Well, I think those freights are borrowed from us because we used that phrase yesterday. While the two installments, the first one is you come to take us out of the scene. And 2nd, when it comes as as the, as the, uh, the judge, well, his version of different installment was, well, he's just come gradually taking some home a little bit at a time. I don't believe scripture tells us that. I said, what do you read? If it came that the dead in Christ shall rise first. Have we seen that? He couldn't answer that. But then he even went on and say, he said, well, you know, we, we, we place Israel. So whatever you read of Israel blessing your powers now, so we find that the, the Christendom as a whole, they, they don't, uh, divide the word of God properly. They will quote from certain places. I remember years ago I was doing a business with a client and he, he threw the conversation, recognized I'm a Christian. You know, as Christian, we are like, we don't need to say we are. They often can tell from the way you talk, from the way you behave. And then they said to me, he said, are you pre or post? I said the dumbfounded, I have no idea what he meant at that time. Are you pre opposed? Because there are some Christian felt, uh, believe that.

There is so-called pre mole, uh, pre rupture and after. Some believe that you will be raptured out, but some believe that you will believe you will be leaving behind to do the Lord's work and continue on presenting the gospel of God's grace, which is false teaching. So we need to understand this, study it by ourselves, young people, older ones too. There is so much in there that would encourage our heart. As our brother mentioned here, we can use this to comfort one another with these words. Let me make another comment. Often I find when I'm in trouble, when I feel down. Often is the time when I have forgotten or not enjoying the coming, the soon return of our Lord Jesus Christ. Think that for yourself. If you feel down and feel forsaken, think about those moments. Did you remember that your Lord, my Lord, is going to take us out of the sea? There are some moral features in Bible teaching pertaining to prophecy in the Lord's coming, and of course all of scriptures for our heart and conscience, not just for intellectual exercise, but these things that are true are supposed to have a positive impact on us. When we

have false teachings such as we were talking about here, Satan's counterfeits, they are also for the effect that he wants upon us. Now, one of the teachings of our Lord's coming being installment, very common amongst, uh, mainline Christendom of the Dark ages. Was that the coming of the Holy Spirit is the Lord's coming. Well, people who believe that they aren't really going to be walking truly in the Holy Spirit because you know, the Holy Spirit himself would not seek such a teaching. So there are these counterfeit spirits out there that Satan would have us follow after in place of the Holy Spirit. And you mentioned post millennial. This was the common teaching for most of Christian, uh, era, including by the wonderful Protestant reformers. That was basically. The idea that we, uh, either are living in the Millennium now or that we should create a Millennium by Christianizing the world. Well, obviously we know this is totally untrue, but it would give us to have an earthly hope, an earthly perspective, cause us to be citizens of this world and not citizens and ambassadors for heaven. And, and that's a real, real danger, isn't it? Because we look at the bad influence it's been so much when Christians have been politically involved and, and had really given up the gospel. Thinking that they're doing it in good and to help the world. So again, there's a reason why Staton has these errors for us. There's there's little things where we may not agree with every little position on prophecy, but but you look at these big errors. It's there for a reason. It's it's there for the bad influence that he wants to have on our souls to get us tangled up in this world instead of looking to heaven and truly being in this scene as ambassadors for Christ. Purify the effect is, I believe in first John chapter 3 that you mentioned, uh verse one. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knows us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as he is. And every man that has this hope in him purifies himself, even as he is pure. So it has a purifying effect. That our soul, I believe right now as we go through this scene, to have that object before our hearts and the Lord's coming. That's true. Should, and if submitted to, always has a positive moral effect upon our lives. Umm. One brother said the only truth you really have is the truth you walk in. And. I'd like to just emphasize that and the connection here in verse.

6/7. Umm, well, no. Let verse six let us not sleep. Verse seven they that sleep sleep in the night have already commented on that the importance, the practical effect upon the hope that we have of our Lord coming for us and he will during this period of night. Uh, the practice full effect upon our lives and the measure in which we truly live it out and don't just accept it as a doctrine is seen in. Whether we are awake or whether we are asleep. The second effect given here there are others in other places is verse six says let us watch and be sober. The contrast of is in verse seven they that be drunken that's in contrast to being sober. They that be drunken are drunken in the night and if. The truth of what we profess is not a reality in our. Daily life, we will get drunk. I don't mean that we will go out and have to be arrested by the police for intoxication, but it's the moral effect upon our lives of not being sober. We will indulge ourselves. In that which takes away our moral capacity to discern good and evil. We will take off with things that are a pleasure to us to access. The scriptures didn't forbid you might say in fact, in another way use the word joy in connection with wine in a natural world and it Georgia, it was a symbol of of that which gave joy. But if taken to its excess, the person became drunken by it and it will it's not it might, but the moral instruction to us here is. If we are not practically watching, we will get drunk. In a moral sense we will take up and indulge ourselves to excess in that which is part of the world system of things that is no different than our neighbor or somebody else, and just as a moral force of it, brethren. Were not exempt because we might say we're not part of Christendom. We have exactly the same hearts and the results will be the same with us regardless of what we profess our doctrine to be. You can have correct doctrine and bad practice, and having correct doctrine does not is essential, but it is not in and of itself. That which will keep from bad practice and so these expectations are given. To us sitting in this room to live out what we profess and watch and be sober. So in verse eight there are several indications of what real Christian life involves. It says, but let us who are of the day be sober. We've just been Speaking of and then it says putting on the breastplate of faith and love and friend helmet, the hope of salvation. There are those three things, faith, love and hope. They were referred to yesterday as we started in Thessalonians. We went back to the first chapter and faith, love and hope are referred to. Actually, in the epistles, that trilogy appears, I believe, at least eight times. It occurs four times, and it occurs in First Corinthians. It occurs in Galatians, it occurs in Hebrews and occurs in Romans with the order of faith, hope, and love in those four places. Its faith, hope, and love twice here in First Thessalonians, also in Ephesians, also in Colossians. It appears in the order we have here, faith, love, and hope. All eight of these times are in the Epistles because they're the.

Maybe this isn't the best analogy, perhaps someone has a better one, but it's kind of like the green on indicator of the Christian life and a believer. If there's a believer where there's life, there's going to be these three things, faith and then the order that we have them here, faith, love and hope. And if those things, the indicator lights getting a little bit dim, it's an indication if our faith is weakening. Really that comes first and all 8 occurrences. It's what connects us to God and to truth. Faith is that living link that we receive from God himself as a gift that connects him, connects ourselves to him. And so any of the 8 occurrences in the epistles, it comes first. It's essential. And if that's flickering, if it's weak in us, there's an indication that the there's the creeping darkness of the world is having a practical effect in our life. If love, love to our brother, as we'll see later in this chapter. Love, uh, in a sense of the Lord's love to us, just the love that we have as believers. If that starts to dwindle, if I have favorites in the family of God and I like this one better than that one and so on. And it's, it's sunken from the divine love to a brother in love with my natural favorite. That's an indicator that there's something of the darkness Speaking of an immoral practical way that's creeping into my life. And the hope, the hope that we've been enjoying is a practical, daily fresh living thing, an eager expectation of a person, if that. I wake up one morning and you, you know, it's been a week, it's been a month, It's been, wow, how long has it been since I got up in the morning and thought. I am absolutely looking forward today to being with my Lord. Perhaps I'll be with him practically morally here and in life, but but maybe I'll see him today face to face, if that hope is when we have to stop and we have to think that. When was it that I last really woke up in the morning or put my head on the pillow at night enjoying it? Then there's something that's sneaking in, that's grabbing a hold of my heart, that's coming from the darkness that's around. And it's not the children of light. And so it's a, it's an indicator that there's a need to go back to the beginning, the the face link to the word of God and to be refreshed. And so they're presented here as armor. It's a breastplate of faith and love and a helmet of hope. So what keeps us from that moral darkness that we are surrounded by? Out of these three, we find faith with the foundation as if it were because we learned even when we're a child without pay, it is impossible to please God. So faith has to come in. And then we even find in the book of Romans is that whatsoever is not a faith is sin. So faith is the basis because without faith and we would have no hope and we don't have the holes. We can exhibit the love the the love that God would have us exhibit to the world. We can show passion and we sometimes call that hope, I mean love, but it's not the same love, is it? Another little example of this truth. Just to go back to refresh ourselves before turning to another place, to the first chapter. These young Saints in Thessalonica. Paul having been with them and is praying for them, he says in connection with his prayer for them in chapter one and giving thanks for them. He gives thanks remembering and verse 3. Your work of faith, labor of love and patience of hope. Work of faith, labor of love and patience and hope is just mentioned that. Those same three things are recorded in Ephesians as characteristic of the Christian life. Now turn over to Revelation chapter 2.

In Revelation chapter 2. We have the beginning of the Lord's assessment. Before his coming. Of seven specific assemblies. That had been formed during the lives of Paul and John and so forth. And uh, we are thankful for the letter that was written to the Saints in Ephesus. Now these Saints are again addressed by the Lord himself in connection with their walk, their practical walk as they waited for his coming. And so he says in chapter 2, verse one unto the Angel of the Church of Ephesus, right? And then in verse two, notice. I know thy works. And thy labor and thy patience. And how thou canst not bear them which are evil? Says thy works. What's left out? Motivating connection with God Himself. The activity was there. There was work there in Ephesus with the faith could not be reported as active. He then says Thy labor. For the Thessalonians, Saints, and. Activity of first love. What did it say? Labor of love. The activity is there, but the motivating power of that activity was lost. The love wasn't there. The third. By patience. The patience was in them. But the patience of hope Hope is not mentioned. It was no longer an active. Ingredient in their daily lives. The next item is equally to my own conscience, important. How thou canst not bear them that are evil? There was a holding on to correct doctrine. They hadn't given up some doctrine they couldn't bear evil as it were. They were going to walk in proper doctrine. And so is everything OK? What's the Lord's statement to them? Umm, he says, and to them first the end of verse 5. Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent. And do the 1St works, weren't they doing the 1St works? Wasn't their faith? I mean, wasn't their labor and patience and work this there was what was it the 1St works? No, it wasn't because the thing that had was had to be in it in order to be acceptable to God was the faith, the hope and the love that motivated and activated them to those those activities. And so he says or else I will come quickly. And remove the Candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. In other words, they're seen here as a light for God in the world. Ephesus was to be a light for God in Ephesus and the surrounding area. They were gods, the Lord, when he was here, he said, I'm the light of the world. He's he went home to heaven. How are they addressed in Ephesus in the epistle he says to them, Ye are the light of the world. You're the light of the world now. I'm not here, but you're here, and I put you here as a candle. Stick to bear the light. But just to take one of those 3. Expressions of the eternal life that's given to us. The love God is love. You can have all the labor you want. But if it does not properly express what God is as love, then you're not a testimony for God.

You might be a testimony to your own glory for your own labor and how much activity you can be involved in, but it's not a Candlestick for God. That is, it isn't fulfilling the purpose for which you were placed in the darkness of the world to be light to the world in its dark period of darkness. And so he, he says, I'm going to put you aside. As not. Being of use to me as a Candlestick unless you repent and go back and do the 1St works. You have to go back to the labor of love and then you will manifest me. Otherwise I will remove the Candlestick. Solemn words, but it is the expression of what happens if we don't have on that breastplate that protects the heart. Since we have in our chapter. The vision just says where the breastplate of righteousness, doesn't it? Or put on the breast later. Particularly because the enemy and Ephesians, where the breastplate of righteousness in the 6th chapter is given. The enemy there is Satan, and if we give up the breastplate of righteousness. Were made a coward to the influence and work of Satan to keep us from being light because Satan could say you're not righteous. And, uh, he uses that. And so the most subtle of our enemies, our enemies of the world, the flesh and the devil and Ephesians, the one that's brought out in the last chapter is Satan is the enemy and he wants. Bring us into unrighteous behavior that then robs us of power and it makes a coward out of us. Because if one is not righteous, one tries to protect the exposure of what they are. The end of verse 8 speaks to the hope of salvation, using salvation in the sense not of eternal salvation and forgiveness of sins, but in the salvation, if you will, of the body. It's the salvation of the whole being that is so worthy of God in this tremendous work. He's redeemed us. We've had the words, their spirit, soul, and body, and uh, I believe they were referenced yesterday a little further down. But there's the spirit, soul and body, all of them belong to God. And so here they were concerned again, these Thessalonians Saints, concerned about their brethren that had died that were asleep in Jesus. And that was touched on in the last chapter. It's brought up back again in verse 10 when it says whether we wake or sleep, that sleep is the sleep or death of the body. It's in contrast with, it's a different sense of use of the word than the sleep that we've been talking of so far in this reading meeting, which was a moral sleep. Because there's many English words, we use them and they're context defines them. Uh, just so with these words here. And so in verses 8-9 and ten, it's talking about the hope of salvation when our spirit, soul, body are all together with him. And so it refers to it in that way. And that's what we look forward to in these verses. And so in verse nine, it makes it very clear God if not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. Who died for us? He's the one that's introduced here as the one that's going to be the comfort because of his death for us. There are some parallels here between this chapter and the prior one. Umm, in verse 10 is who died for us that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves in the prior chapter, it was he died for us. And then it introduces the fact that those that were awake or asleep, uh, were going to be caught up together to be with him.

And so the the two chapters of a lot of parallels, but it's found it founded on the death of Christ. It's founded on the person and being attracted to him. It's his power that keeps us in the chapter end of chapter 4. It's his power that snatches us out of this world and puts us in his presence in this chapter. It's his power that keeps us from that day of wrath that's being spoken of. Just want to re emphasize the point just made. It's. Can be very confusing if it's not clear in the soul, in the reading of the New Testament, and that is. The perspective given of the word salvation is not the same in every place and I want to use one example of it and it's just been referred to here in the same way with the same meaning. In First Peter, the Saints of God had been largely saved out of Judaism and were very familiar with the journey of the children of Israel. In leaving Egypt and the Lord taking him through the wilderness to Canaan, the promised land, it was a very dangerous journey. And there was not food for them. God was going to have to sustain them in the wilderness. They were going to face enemies, not the least of which was themselves. Umm, and, uh, they. The point was, could the Lord take them all the way to the promised land? And that was the place, you might say, of where they their hope was. Peter takes up that way of looking at it with these brethren that had a Jewish. Way and says you're on a journey, it's a dangerous one and you have the hope that set before you, but the salvation was seen as that which they would enter into at the end of the journey and it's important for us to recognize that otherwise we only look at the word salvation in the context of believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. And that's the most first and a fundamental way in which to look at the word and that when we put our trust in the Lord Jesus were cleansed by his precious blood and were eternally saved. But the word salvation doesn't always have that sense. And as it's given in this chapter in first Peter and elsewhere, it's the thought of you're on a journey and you're not safe home yet. And so their exhortation. To not to be careful. There's danger. Uh, we're at in a night time, We've got to be sober and not have a falling out, if you will, by the way. And uh, so it's given that way here. So the purpose of God in verse nine is God hasn't appointed us to self wrath, but to obtain salvation. And so God's purpose is to take us all the way home safely, but he also gives us exhortation. To live out in reality and be careful not to come as we see the all the things that happened to the children of Israel on their journey. And it says, bosses, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. He's not talking about the salvation of the soul, is he? It's our present salvation that we need to work out. He would soon be gone from them. Another example of it can be confusing like you say, if you don't understand the word salvation. This comment on verse 8 two The breastplate protects the heart. The helmet protects the mind. Put on the head and I just want to say. Some of the remarks that have already been made about. People redefining terms and changing what things mean and so on. It's often a work of Satan to play with the mind if you can. And so very important for us to go back and stand on the Word of God in its completeness and

recognize that Satan will even take the Word of God if he can and misuse it in a way that plays with our minds and introduces doubt and so on.

But don't give up the word of God because. Of Satan doing that. The Lord Jesus was tempted by Satan as he started his public ministry and Satan tried three different ways to get him to give up. Some truth and Satan quoted the scriptures too when he was tempting the Lord Jesus. But in spite of that, the Lord's answers all three times for Scripture. He answered him with the word of God, and so it's, if you will, very important for us to fill our minds with the word of God. Be careful of where you get your thoughts. The world's full of man's spots. Books are full of man's thoughts. The Internet's full of man's thoughts. Sometimes we unguardedly absorb those thoughts because that's where we've gone to gain something, knowledge or understanding or something else, and we take in unguardedly thoughts which are not in accordance with the Word of God. We need to be careful where we learn things. What's the source that was said to the children in Sunday school? The source, Uh. Needs to be if we want the certainty of the truth of something. Be sure that the source of your thought is the word of God and not something you've absorbed from unconsciously absorbed because it's the thought of man. The number 212 #212 stands as one and seven. 9000. 831934. Nine and three days time to come. Umm. We need 100 bucks for anything. All right. Gave me my my friend. I. Went from here. I felt far treasure and I'm brighter. 238 the last verse. Nsnoise. Just now falling asleep.

On. Breathing. Right.

Chicago Conference: 2017, 1 Thessalonians 5:9-28

Reading

It saved him 180. Arkansas Grammar. Here's our home. And I swallowed grill and trip life. And tell me overnight. We shall pray to my God. Without any color in mind. And his powerful. Home. 10-4. Please. Oh yeah, stronger made yourself. 1St Thessalonians 5, verse 9. Suggest is for us to read First Thessalonians chapter 5 beginning at verse 9. 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. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also you do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work sake.

And be at peace among yourself. Now we exalt you, brethren. Warn them that unruly comfort the feeble minded, support the weak. Be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man, but ever follow that which is good both among yourselves and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing in everything. Give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesizing. Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil, 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. Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss. I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. It's a wonderful thing that. God, the Creator of all things, sustainer of all things that he's created. As satisfied his own or is satisfying his own heart of love? By having creatures to love that He can bless and bring into an eternal relationship with Himself. And so we sit in this room. I speak to us as believers, as those who are part of the family of God. God purposed us for blessing before He ever created anything in His own heart. He didn't bring us into existence with the purpose of wrath. But rather, His purpose for us was one of eternal blessing and joy with Himself in His own presence and having so. Purpose. He never does anything halfway, and so He will finish that which is purposes began where necessary. He had to send His Son to take our place and endure the wrath that we justly deserved, so that He wouldn't have to bring us under that wrath of His righteous holiness. But having done so, as He says, and it's an encouragement should be to our hearts. We tend to worry about tomorrow and the next day, but if we can get a little bigger view of tomorrow and the next day, we would say, well, I have nothing to worry about. It's all ultimately in the hands of a God who has loved me from a past eternity and will, as it were, we've had before with not rest until He has accomplished that which His own heart has said about to do with respect to us. And so, as he says in the verse, we started with not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let's say mighty power of his purposes is evident in verse 10 as well, because it says who died for us that whether we wake or sleep, referring to the condition of the body, whether we're watching and waiting with our body alive or asleep in Jesus, we shall live together with him. So the physical death of the body. Is absolutely no obstacle whatever to that, uh, living together with him. It's a wonderful thing, his power in carrying out his purposes. Is completely unhindered by the most powerful force known to man, death that's completely conquered at the cross and through his death. Sometimes when we look at a book or a chapter, even though we're short, there are different thoughts in the chapter and it's nice to look at the division in the chapter to help us understand. So here the 1St 11 verses of this chapter that we have just sort of taken up between last meeting and this meeting because 11 Cha, 11 verses speaks of the day of the Lord. And then we'll find the subject we start to change. From the, uh, twelve verse on for the following 10 verses, we'll see that he's speaking now of exaltation to encourage us and how we ought to walk, how we ought to walk, uh, talk, uh, with each other. And then toward the end of the chapter, the last five verses are So from verse 23 on, we see the character change again. There is as if it was he put in a little conclusion that his farewell as if it were. So we, we began our meeting with. The Lord's coming and as a reminder there were two portions and many have pointed out and then he he talked about how we are to be taken out of the scene rapture out caught up is the word they used in the King James there and then he speaks about the day of the Lord. Now not to confuse that with the Lord's day yesterday we referred to that day is the Lord's day. The day of the Lord is very different. That's when he come. And he's gonna execute judgment. He actually will come back into this world, physically come back. Uh, perhaps, uh, if you don't mind, I just wanna go back very briefly to the book of Zechariah. I believe it's important to understand that the Lord come the rapture of the when we are caught up. He didn't come. He said it was in the air, it was in the clouds were caught up in the clouds. He did not touch. Is Fee in the 14th chapter of Zechariah again reading the book of Joel two that they talked about that day, but he was quite specific in Zachariah chapter 14, it reminds us it says behold the day of the Lord. It tells us clearly that the day of the Lord cometh and I'm just so for time's sake, I'm going to go down to verse 4 is that and his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives. So it tells us He will physically come into this world. He stands on that mount called Mount of Olives, that we lead up often in Scripture, which is before Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst of towards the east and toward the West, and there shall be a great valley in half. The mountain shall be moved removed towards the north. And half of it toward the South. And they see this many dramatic

changes in there. This is the Lord, the day of the Lord that he come, and we will read more of it if you were to go into it and see how judgment will be executed, how the date would turn dark and so on. So we are warned, not warned, but we are comforted that we will not be part of that scene. And as a reminder, because Christians don't get it all mixed up. So we have to be clear in our own mind and as you read through these chapters on your own. Just be very careful and noticing those words we so we read we which are alive and remain That's us as we deem one and then when they talk about came as a thief, it says they they that are not it will see him as a thief in the night as a judge that face that the Lord the day of the Lord, we will be caught up. We will be looking down from above with him because after we're caught up, we can truly say forever with the Lord.

Of olives when we read of our Lord leading this world. In Acts chapter one, according to verse 12 of that chapter, they had been at the Mount of Olives. And so it's very logical that, uh, uh, in verse six, when they therefore were come together, they were at, they asked of him saying, Lord will file at this time, restore again the Kingdom to Israel. Uh, I hope this is not conjecture, speculation, but possibly they're saying, Lord, here we're at the Mount of Olives, you have. Dyed, risen again, you're the Messiah. Hey, isn't it time for the Kingdom? But then what a surprise he left them. Just a total surprise. He left them because there is now an interruption. Not an interruption, but a parenthesis in God's program with Israel that that is for the MO for the moment being, umm, laid aside. Not broken, not canceled, but laid aside to bring in the church, the body of Christ. And so it's so important to realize this is the program we're part of. Not Israel's program, we're not a replacement of Israel. We're not Israel made over reformed redone. We're something totally new as we read in Paul's writing, a new body where there's neither Jew nor Gentile. We're a heavenly people too, not an earthly. And, uh, we read of the apostles that, uh, one was gone. They had to replace him and they were looking for somebody who knew this Lord on the earth. But then there was a need for an apostle for this dispensation. And with Paul, who as far as we know did not know him in this world, who knew him from heaven. And that's where we are a heavenly people. Our gaze has to be on heaven. That's where our life, our righteousness, our hope is we're here in this world as strangers, pilgrims and ambassadors. If we don't realize that, we'll get into this thing of, of thinking we're Israelites and we've got a, uh, reform the world, civilized the world, Christianize the world. They tried that before and it was called the dark ages. So we don't want to be doing that all over again. We've got, we've got to stay on God's program. So as we come to the end of this opening section with, uh, chapter 5 in verse umm 11 with the division or just given of the chapter, it says wherefore comfort yourselves together and edify one another even as also you do at the end of the prior chapter ended with Wherefore comfort one another with these words. Wanna make this application of the way those two sections, the section that dealt with the rapture ended and the section that ends with the. Uh, about the appearing end and that is the truth that they were going to be caught up together with those that were had already fallen asleep in Jesus was something new to them. It was a word from the of the Lord in verse 15 of chapter 4 that had been given to them. So it was fresh understanding and so there to take it and apply it. Comfort one another with these words here in the section we've just completed in verse 11, it says comfort yourself together and that if I want another. Even as also you do. So the apostle is encouraging them and really he's saying keep on, continue on and what you already knew, and I'm giving you some practical application of it, but continue on with it and what you've taken up that's new, take it and apply it in your life. And so for each one of us here, perhaps there are things at this conference and after things in our regular daily life that the Lord brings before us as we're reading his word. And it's something we already know. The exhortation is to edify one another, even as also you do. Continue, keep on. And then there are things that are fresh to our souls. Perhaps there's something that we newly come into and understand, and the encouragement there is to take it and practically apply it as well. So continue on with what's known and take and apply what's new. And before he gets into the. Exhortations that are given in the last verses. He says in verse 11. Edify one another even as also you do like to make this general comment about all of them. Almost every single one of these exhortations have to do with you caring for someone else outside of you.

Why is that? We tend to think and we read so often or man would say what's in it for me? Oh, what? What comfort, what help, what encouragement is there that I I am going to receive? But these exhortations are based on this basis. God has given me the life of Christ. Did he spend his day saying what's in it for me? What am I going to get out of today? Uh, who's going to encourage me today? Did he appreciate encouragement from others? The last day of his life, The last night of his life, he said, Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations to his disciples. Yes, he was sensitive and yes, he appreciated. The fact that they had been with him, but it did not characterize his life, his daily life, rather the divine life, which is love, was always occupied with the good and well-being of others. And this, these exhortations are based on living out the life given and the encouragement to live it out rather than to go on as had previously been the character of life. Man essentially is selfishly occupied. That is man Adam and his race. Which as we had yesterday, we've left living that life and that being part of that race to being part of the family of God. And the very nature of the family that we've been brought into is the life of Christ, which is a giving, loving for others life rather than oh, I need some help, I need some comfort. Nobody cares about me type of life that is characteristic of. This world, and so he says, as he does here in the very first comment, edify one another. That is, think about your brother 1St and be occupied with his need. In turn, the Lord will use it to your own encouragement and help. But the basis of these things are thinking about your brethren. And so John, who brings it out in a little different way, he says we know that we have passed from death. Unto life, because we love the brethren. Because we love the brethren. That is a direct statement of evidence of the nature that's been given to us. You can't have new life without loving your brethren. You have the life you love, your brethren, because it's the very nature of your life. And so live it out in a practical way as being encouraged upon these Saints and Thessalonica, even though perhaps doctrinally they didn't even know it yet. But Paul knew they had the life, and so he encourages to live it, perhaps even before they had learned the doctrinal side of it. It's interesting now to see he's going to exalt us on how we ought to walk and to behave. He begins by using the word. We beseech you, brethren, the new translation. Use a stronger word, He says. I beg you, brethren. But what does he want us to be? See, John? Well, the first thing here is to notice those who labor among us. What a contrast if you go to the end of the book of Romans. You'll find that it was very different. It says mark them who caused divisions among you or the new translation that says consider. Well, we have to think about these things, don't we you in in the enrollments tell us to consider those who caused problems and divisions. But here now in a different note, we have to consider our those who labor among you now in in the.

King James there. He says NRNR over you in the Lord I, I have difficulty with that until I was able to look in the new translation, which I believe express it in a much better way than you said. Those that take the lead among you. I like that. So we find sometimes, perhaps even in a small conference like this, you'll find that perhaps we all have different personalities. Some would rather sit back and enjoy. Some would participate, some would participate more, and of course some would take the lead. And then of course in our lives too, some would take the lead in many ways to labor among the things or labor for God. So we find here that God noticed those who labor for himself, and further down that it tells us and reminded us to give them that higher portion of honors. Versus 1213 and 14 go together in a beautifully balanced way that begins as we've just heard about the ones that were to recognize that take a lead among not ruling over and it says and admonish you. The flesh

doesn't like to be admonished and the flesh gets excited when it receives an admonishment. And so in the next verse it says and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. It may be that when we're admonished, it's not done in a fully Christ like way. Maybe that the message is an important message for our soul, but there's something of the written sandpaper of the flash mixed in with it and. So it might be a little abrasive. And so what's encouragement in the next verse is and esteem them very highly in love for their work sake. Recognize that the work that's being carried out is a necessary one. It's a job that the Lord has given them to do and recognize it even if it's not carried out perfectly. And then the additional, if you will guard against saying, well, they said that to me and they were yelling and filling their arms and. I don't need to listen to that. It says at the end of the verse and be at peace among yourselves. We're encouraged in that we read a little. Volume with our morning family reading and uh, happened to re read a section this morning at at breakfast because it was extra good. I thought it was a brother and the Lord who was teaching and uh, he received a very nasty letter apparently and it was delivered anonymously to his door and umm, he read it. He waited before the Lord and the next time he got up to. Praise, She said. I received this letter and this brother who obviously knows me very well, recognizes and he went on in very careful language to basically state everything that they said in their letter is what I'm completely capable of and so on in my flesh. And I would love to talk to the brother and, and went on with it, but it was very clear from what they said that they hadn't been guilty of any of the individual things that they've been accused of. The point was that they received this letter as coming in this case, not directly an application of this verse. They didn't even know who it had come from and the contents of it were untrue, but they received it in a proper fumble spirit and it really more fruit in their life. Well, here there's something that may be said more closely to the Spirit of Christ, but with a little of the flesh and so it's recognized and then just quickly on verse 14. It says now we exhort you brethren, warn them that are unruly. Now it's addressing not those that take the lead that are doing admonishing, but all of us. And so it may be that we would rather leave that work of admonishing to somebody else. We take verse 12 and say, ah, yeah, not a not a very enjoyable work. That person can do it. They take the lead. That's that's not my role. No, verse 14 doesn't let us escape out the back door on that one. It says exhort, warn, and then at the end of the verse, be patient toward all.

There's the implication that it may not go that well, and then in fact it may not take effect immediately. And so for all of us, there's the privileges guided by the Lord to carry out this task and not just wash our hands of it, because those that take the lead have that role only. Say this there are practical lessons for us either way so if we were the one who received that that letter, how do we how would we react or respond to it It's much easier to say well that brother did the right thing or did the wrong thing What if it's you? What if it's you? What if it's me? Because we have to know that nothing happened by chance, even if. Let's assume the letter was written in anger or our malice or whatever the case may be. When we receive that, we still have to receive that as it is from the Lord, don't we? There are lessons in there for us that the Lord is speaking to us on, whether it's by a good hand that deliver it or a bad end. But then on the other hand, as we have been reminded that, uh, we have to speak to those that are unruly. Well. Would I be the one just as sharp as the other brother who wrote that letter or is there a better way to approach that? Because often I find that we among ourselves that we are all very well learned in many ways from scripture and we are very quick at pointing out another person's mistake. But is now it is right because especially in location like this, we're told that two or three speak especially in open meeting and. What are the rest to do the other to judge? And that's according to the word of God. But then how do we approach a brother if something is sort of slightly out of line? Let me exaggerate. Maybe he mispronounced a word. Maybe he misused a word. Or often we find someone say the wrong chapter and the wrong book, even though we know what they meant. Well, OK, perhaps that's an exaggeration. Do we jump and say you said the wrong thing? So we have to look at it from both sides of it and say we are responsible both ways before the Lord, aren't we? Like can we say and the way that the Lord would have us to do. Umm, whether the Lord some time ago to do a little word study on that word unruly to kind of fine tune what it means. And according to vines, umm, lexicon, it is really a military term for soldiers walking out of step or being insubordinate to orders. And, uh, it reminded me of a saying that I had previously appreciated by Mr. Kelly. He had once said something to the effect that the Church of God is compared in scriptures to a family. Not to an army marching in lockstep. Well, then I realized Mr. Kelly wasn't totally, 100% correct. Because there is a place for submitting to one another and walking in unison and in harmony. So yes, love is the important thing. Being brethren, being in harmony is all important. But it's also important to submit to one another, not to create unnecessary dissension. There are brothers here and there who sometimes, uh, like to get a little unruly and they say, oh, we don't want to put the leaders on a pedestal. That's wrong to put leading men on a pedestal. But if I'm the kind of person that argues over every little thing and finds fault with everything the Assembly does, aren't I putting myself in my own opinion on the pedestal? And isn't that every bit is wrong and it's fleshly? So there is that point, yes, that we're brethren, we love one another, we're a family, we're not an army. But there's also a point here where we have to submit and to walk together, even at times when we don't totally agree 100% with what the Assembly might be doing. Let me bring out the thought here regarding, umm, those that labor among you and are over you and the Lord. And I just, umm, think of the, the need for there to be admonishment, umm, and the need to be able to receive admonishment. And I've just, uh, I, I, I, I just think of how, umm.

Admi admonishment is received. Umm. Uh uh, so uh umm, so much easier when it comes from 1:00 to. Uh, deals with uh, the responsibility of oversight and leadership in the spirit of a father, uh, rather than umm, one who just feels the responsibility for the Lord to do the work. Umm, I the, the, the tone of a father is always going to be umm, with, with love, umm, and care and concern for. The one that is meeting the instruction is meeting the guidance. UMM is needing the support and the health and umm there is a a a UMM. With the Father, umm, there is, there is a sense of, of, of great concern for the blessing of that individual and umm, so I, I just. Bring out that thought that, uh, we need to know, as it were, our children in state. Uh, I, I've been in circumstances where I've, I've seen a need in one of the Lord's, uh, children and I felt the need to go and address it, but I really didn't understand where the individual was and what they were going through. I was, I was, I was just really kind of dealing with the. The the, the outward. Things that were wrong and I didn't really understand the cause, underlying cause and what that individual is going through. And as a father, I had to listen. To why this child of God was going through the difficulty they were and maybe why they weren't attending the meetings that I felt like they they were, they were missing and it would be for their blessing. And and so they're, they're there needed to be a, a listening and a a coming to understand them. And I think that that's that's helpful too. That that that, that we deal with. Umm these children umm in the in the spirit of the product. When the Lord Jesus was here. He did these things for His disciples. He manifested His own heart of love toward them. And when the end of his life was coming to its close and he recognized he would no longer be here to fulfill the needs of those who companion with him, his disciples. He made provision. For their that need which they each one had when he would be absent from them. And so we have the teaching of John's Gospel chapter 13, in which he washes the disciples fate and then in turn teaches them to wash one another's feet. And that's the character of what we have here, that every one of us. In contacts, the defilement of a dirty world and uh, our feet need washing as in the picture in John 13. And so he's, he begs them to build each other up. And it's very easy, it's already been before us to be rather selective about it. Umm, and yet I'd just like to notice, for us to notice, it's not all the admonish or the disorderly side that's given in verse 14. The needs extend, it says comfort the faint hearted, sustain the weak, be patient towards all. And so whatever that need might be, there is a need for in each one of us. And the Lord has so chosen that our brother.

Help us. We need help and sometimes we're the last ones to see our own need and, uh, recognize the need and yet another may see it. And may the Lord help us to. I'm going to put it this way.

Love our brother enough. To admonish if needed. To comfort, not just take one side of it or the other, but to, as it says here, sustain the weak. May we love our brothers and sisters enough to fulfill these things. We need it too, and our brother and sister would give it to us. It's not, uh, I'll just make a little, I hope, helpful remark with respect to the what's shown here, you might say is among those who are alike. Particularly except he says no those which. Uh, the Lord has given to besides yourselves, if you will, uh, among you, the Lord is given, the Lord has raised up some to particular service and but the important thing in that is always recognize the source from which something comes. If I only see my brother, I may very often stop short of seeing the source. In this case it's the Lord that is the true source that has given that brother that responsibility. They may carry it out well or poorly but were helped if we can recognize it's the Lord that is behind it. And further one other comment as well about the father. A little difference, particularly in connection with the father, is in the father's child relationship. There's an express and known authority and so the child has to submit as under authority to someone. The disciples, when they washed one another's feet, were not being put into the position of authority, and so to carry it out properly they had to get down on their knees. And they had to do it in a very humble really. The job of washing feet was, naturally speaking in that day, given to servants, not given the Lord's, not given the masters, and in a certain way not given the fathers either. But it was given to the servant, and to help one another. The heart has to get into the servant character of the relationship to carry it out in the right way. There's another aspect that's not here either, but it sometimes gets connected with it in our thoughts, and that is the work of the what Scripture calls the pastor. The gift, it's a gift, it's a specific gift. And, uh, it is one that has characteristics like these. And sometimes the Lord raises up a pastor who is able to, if you will, in one way go beyond what's given here because, uh, as I've mentioned many times, but it's helped me immensely to understand it. Brother Darby, I'll use modern words, but this thought was. The gift of the pastor is rare. The pastor is like a doctor. He has to be able to diagnose. But that's only half of it. Sometimes we can see difficulties in another. We can diagnose, if you will. We have no idea. What to do to help? But he said the pastor not only can diagnose, but the pastor is like the doctor, he knows the correct medicine that is needed. For what is diagnosed, and may the Lord raise up those who can do that. But even if we don't have that gift, what's given to us here is for all of us, and it's in the character of John 13. If you love one another, and that's the character of the life that's expressed here, then you will work to help one another. If you see somebody physically fall down as they're walking to the. Meal table This today I would say without a second thought you would go and help them get back up. Well, we need that same character toward one another.

The, uh, loving each other enough. To admonish. Not sure what you're exactly right, but that was the idea I remember very very clearly as. A young person, umm, feeling like. There wasn't, Uh. At least some of my. My group of peers there wasn't that, at least amongst ourselves and I remember very specifically. At times. Doing things that I knew I should be admonished for with the thought. Let's see if anyone has the nerve or cares enough to say something about it. I acknowledge that I was in Brock, but I was also conscious that I was testing to see if anyone cared enough. Spiritual fortitude, whatever to say something about it, and I remember very clearly. 3 instances. Where someone did One was an older brother that I respected. Another one was one of my closest friends. Another one was a a younger young person that I knew hooked up but cared enough. All three of them. When we were alone. I refer to a specific circumstance where I had belittled someone or taken part in something that shouldn't have said. You need to go back. You need to apologize. You need to. Do such and such and it's meant so much. That they cared enough to do that. Almost at the end of the chapter, with a few minutes left, we can probably sum it up quickly. There's a number of things to encourage us. We need not to look at all the problems and difficulties. All the time as we walk, we're reminded here, uh, to rejoice. Well, rejoicing is not only when there's happy situation. We can rejoice even under circumstances, can we? And how often do we rejoice? Evermore so. In summary, that tells us rejoice evermore. Oh, here's another thing that we ought to do and we often forget is to pray. We only pray when there is major situation happen to our lives. Well, what about to give thanks? What about there are many part of prayers that perhaps someone could get into, uh, to talk to us about, but we're told to pray without ceasing not just one prayer, not just two, but a continual. Prayers, will they be Thanksgiving, supplication or asking for help before God and then it reminds us in everything. Give thanks that means good or bad or otherwise, and talk to quench the Spirit despise not prophesizing. I know this is going too quickly. I'm looking at our clock here with approve all things all fast, all things well. How do you approve all things well? You have to know it first to prove it. How do you hold fast to something that you don't know? We're told to hold that fast. What that thou hast? Well, what do you have that you have to hold fast? There are many truths from the Word of God and many assembly truth. And the Word of God tells us that we have to buy the truth, then we will sell it not. And then the last but not least is to abstain not just from evil, but even from the appearance of evil. One little thought. I don't think I'm too far off here, if I am at all. I think that verse 21 is almost a counterbalance to verse 20, despite not prophesying. But does that mean that in open meetings and Bible readings, a brother has the right to just say what he wants? And, well, it's an open meeting to say no. In other words, uh, now it is the assembly's place to prove all things and hold fast that which is good. As we read in First Corinthians 14, let the prophet speak one by one, but let the assembly judge. And so there's a point to tell a brother that, hey, it's not correct. It's not.

A, a, uh, open forum to say whatever it's, it's, it's the, the body itself that each of us is a part of, to be edified and not for any one brother to be going against the whole body. And so, uh, subjection to the Lord and to one another. I think the new translation helps to understand that verse. I'm going to read the 19th and 20th in the new translation. Quench not the spirit that is. Do not hinder. My failure to follow the leading of the Spirit. Umm, we can do that not. I remember comment about a brother in the Chicago at now Addison Assembly. He said there was a long, long, long, long pause when it was time to break the bread and one wise older brother turned around and looked straight at another brother. Uh, the other brother was convicted. He had quenched the Spirit. The Lord really wanted him to get up and break the bread, and he hadn't. That's quenching the Spirit. The Spirit's leading and not doing it. And it should be of the Spirit. Let the prophet speak two or three and let the rest judge the next one. It helps, I think, to see the new translation. It says do not lightly esteem prophecies. That is, there can be a tendency with us to not take seriously. What God has used a servant to give to us. And if the Lord is given something to a brother, even a prophecy, there's a potential in us not to recognize the importance of it, but to lightly esteem it and give it less than it it really means. I'd I'd like to make is our time is almost up. Umm comment particularly as A to me, a wonderful ending in some ways. And that's on verse 23. The very God of peace sanctify you wholly. To give what that I believe verse means to us, go to Philippians chapter 4. Philippians, Chapter 4. Get the same we have rejoice always in verse 4 Philippians 4 where he's talking to another set of believers, but he's giving some of the same exhortation. He says in verse 4, rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice so on, but the verse I want to comment on. Is first starting in verse six. Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with Thanksgiving. Let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. We have trial, we have temptation, we have trouble, we have need. We have an encouragement here. If we take it to the Lord in prayer. With Thanksgiving that He has allowed it and brought it into our lives. Then we can receive from the Lord as a result of doing that, a piece from God that passes our own

understanding as to how God worked in us to bring that peace in the circumstances in which we were. And so it's given to us as an exhortation and encouragement to do it. That our hearts and minds, because as we had yesterday, our hearts are attacked and so are our minds, can be kept through Christ Jesus. But then notice the next two verses and we'll get to the our chapter of the God of peace. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, and so on verse 9, those things which you have both heard, learned and received and heard and seen in May, and the keyword is due.

It's not taking a request to the Lord in prayer here. It's not asking for something with Thanksgiving to so that the peace of God can come into our souls and those that need, but it's something that if we do it. Then it says the God of peace shall be with you. And that's the same sense in which our chapter is giving it. In every place in the New Testament where you have the God of peace mentioned, it's in that same character. And that is, if we carry out the things that we've just been considering to gather this morning that are given to us, if they are actively a part of our everyday life, then we will enjoy our God, a God of peace. Walking with us in those things, if we don't, we won't have that enjoyment. But if we do, if we, as in Philippians, the things that are pure and just and honest and so on, we do, then the God of peace will, as it were, give the sense and of our own hearts and souls. We're walking through this together. And it's a God of peace that is the one that presently in as we walk through to the end of the journey. Walks with us in these things. 209 Just the 1St 3 verses of 209. Verses 1-2 and three offer 200 and 9th. Our times are in the end. Order everywhere. Somewhere. All right, our souls are all living. Our eyes are in my hands. OK, right. I love. You doing? Our eyes are in my hands. Why the language of our hands? And thou, honey. Last year.

Kentucky YP Camp: 2016, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Reading

78 white ebooks 178 Thank you. Everything to my prayer. Oh, what is the optimal? Me, let's stay with them. All because they hear my daring. They sing to God in prayer. Have 3 miles and that day. Couple of landing near where? We shall never be discovered. In the morning prayer. And we find our friends are faithful. My friend says 540. Take it to the Lord in prayer. In his life till they can chill day. Thou will find out all the time. So, as I mentioned, we are going to read in First Thessalonians. Chapter 5. And we're going to begin with verse 16. And I hope any of you young brothers who have a thought or question as we go along on the, uh, verses, we'll, uh, please feel free to speak up. And, uh, we'd like to conduct this like a little Bible study. So I've asked Lucas to read from verse 16 of First Thessalonians 5. 516 Rejoice evermore, pray without season in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the spirit, despise not prophesying, prove all things, hold fast that which is good, abstain from all appearance of evil, 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. Braden, pray for us. Grate all the bread, and with the holy kiss I charge you by the Lord, that this piece will be wrath unto all the holy brethren, the grace of her Lord as Christ be with you. Amen. So just to introduce this. Portion of Scripture. As we know, the great subject in both 1St and 2nd Thessalonians is the Lord's coming in its various aspects. That is, the Lord's coming for us at any moment, and then the time when the Lord is going to come back to earth and take up the judgments of this world and eventually reign in righteousness. But at the end of this epistle, where he has explained very carefully both aspects of the Lord's coming. He then takes up before he closes, some very, very practical exhortation. Short sentences here that are not hard to be understood because we're not home yet. We're not. The Lord hasn't come yet. And you and I, whether we're young or old, we're still here in this world. And there is a conduct that is in keeping with Christians who are waiting for the Lord to come. And so in a few terse sentences at the end of the epistle, he gives us some hints as to what our conduct is to be.

While we wait for the Lord Jesus to come. So we'll go down these and make a few comments on each one. And please, anybody that has a thought on these expressions, uh, please share it. So just to start us off with the verse we began with, it's in our English Bible. It's the second shortest verse in our English Bible. I know the verse divisions are not inspired. They were added by the translators. But it is interesting how God arranged that the shortest verse in our English Bible. In contrast, is Jesus wet? The Lord Jesus was the Man of sorrows here in this world. But now he says to us, rejoice evermore so when we think about what the Lord Jesus has done for us. He begins these exhortations by telling us that we are to be a happy people. We're not to be a sad, long faced people waiting for the Lord to come. Sometimes people think of Christianity as being very sober and long faced and, uh, boring and so on. But that's not the way it is to be with Christianity. We're to be a happy people, rejoicing not just sometimes, but ever more. There was a risk when, uh, left. The first time, uh. They, they were attracting attention. They, they had to leave for the sake of the, the congregation that they had formed there. And, uh, there had to be, it had to have been on his mind, on their mind that this, this congregation, as small as it may have been, even in such a great city of Thessalonica, which is one of the greatest cities of that time in that area, there was a risk that this congregation would, would soon collapse after their departure. And, uh, I think. You know, as Paul usually does at the end of his his epistles, you know, he he makes it very he makes it very personal greeting such and such by name or, or and you know, things of this nature. And he's, you know, he's giving this, this little church that has has. To his probably to his to his joy lasted, uh, until this his writing this letter and he's just giving him just some practical. Umm, exhortations in this way. Rejoice, pray and give thanks, uh. Continue, you know, obviously they had withstood the initial challenge in their that must have been comforting to, uh, to pull, you know, and he's just giving him some sort of pride club exhortation and it makes it personal as usual. I find in my own life that there's rejoice always, so I can't, I don't always rejoice. And I find that, you know, like it's not like giving, like a qualifier, like what we're going through, you know, like to rejoice all the time. But for me seems like it depends on what my like status of communication is with God, you know, like to be able to rejoice like above and beyond like circumstances, you know, things are going good, you know, but I'm not, you know, like out, you know, physically or whatever. And I'm in a relationship with God's faults and I'm not necessarily happy like that, you know. And things are going bad. You know, it's I mean communication with God had to understand like more than just what's going on here in his heart. If if you know, sometimes you can still rejoice. So this is my personal experience. But, but I, I think that's really the key what Kevin has said, because it's not here rejoicing in our circumstances necessarily. We are to rejoice while we go through trials and difficulties, but it's not circumstances that cause us to rejoice. It's the Lord. And so that's why when Paul wrote to the Philippians, he said rejoice in the Lord always. And and again I say rejoice.

Because, as Kevin said, our circumstances are often adverse and difficult. Sometimes our state of soul isn't what it should be. But I believe the rejoicing in your life and mind comes in the measure in which we are enjoying the Lord. And so we read this morning. Whom not having seen, ye love, though now you see him not yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. But, but let me point this out too. It is

often a process. Let's just go in thought to Paul and Silas in prison. Now I don't know what time of day they were thrown in prison, but I suspect that they were in prison for some time before they prayed and sang praises. Because it's very specific. At midnight they prayed and sang praises, but who knows how long, how many hours they had been in the prison before that process. But just hold your finger here and go back to the 119th Psalm for a verse that I have often wondered if Paul and Silas didn't all of a sudden remember while their backs were bleeding, their feet were in the stalks. And I don't know what I would have been doing. Probably grumbling and complaining and saying, well Lord, I thought I got a vision to come over here and help someone and what good am I doing here? But notice what it the 119th Psalm and verse 62. At midnight I will arrive, I will rise and give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments. Now again, Scripture is very specific. At midnight they prayed and sang praises. And I've often wondered if they didn't remember this verse and remember the last part of this verse that says, because of thy righteous judgment, you will only be able to rejoice at all times in the measure in which you realize. That what God is doing in your life is right. It may not be pleasant, It may not be good. Seemingly as far as the circumstance, it may be like the people Peter was writing to, they were having fiery trials, but it was right. And that's how we can rejoice evermore. To get to the point where we realize that what God is doing in our lives is the very best, and that's what's going to cause us to rejoice. So we rejoice, yes, we rejoice in the circumstance, but not necessarily. Because of the circumstance or the what we're go, what we're going through, it may not be a pleasant circumstance, but here's another verse. Paul said sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. So he experienced sorrow in trials and difficulties, but he could rejoice and that lifted him above the circumstance. I think it's always kind of important to realize exactly what we're rejoicing. Umm, this kind of, uh, reminded me of a section in, uh, loop chapter 10, uh, starting with uh, verse 17, uh, referring to the 7070, uh, messenger sent out, uh, if I might read that. And the 70 returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven. So even though they were in, you know, obviously a positive experience, that still. Wasn't what they should be focusing on. Be kind of a state that you you're in when you're, umm, you're not necessarily just. Praying all the time, but it's the communion that you have with the Lord. Yes, I think that's right, but that for a moment, but and it's interesting, isn't it that it follows rejoice ever more and so the two things are are intimately connected so.

Sometimes. Well, let me go back to Paul and Silas. They did two things. They prayed and they sang praises. Because we don't want to be indifferent to our circumstances and when we talk about rejoicing in the Lord, it doesn't mean that we're just floating on air and in different to what are callous to what's going on. No, if we're going through good or bad circumstances, we need the spirit of dependence. And as Austin said, that's really what what prayer is. When I pray, I'm really expressing dependence on the Lord. I'm saying I don't have any might for this. Situation. But I'm also expressing confidence that the Lord is able. But as you say, Austin, you can't be forming actual words in prayer all day long. You've got to concentrate on your studies, your driving, whatever you're doing, school work, work, uh, in, in our secular employment, all those things. So what does this really mean? Pray without ceasing it is to maintain at all times the spirit and attitude of dependence and to keep an open line between ourselves and the Lord. You know, if you have a friend and you're driving along together, maybe you're driving to camp and you've got several hours drive, you may not always be talking to each other all the time, but that friend is there and you can turn to that friend at any moment. Now, if you allow something, some problem between you and the friend, then you just don't feel like talking to that friend or you have a question. I just don't feel so comfortable to ask that. But if things are well between you and your friend. Though you may not be actually communicating at all times, there's an open line maintained. So that if you need directions, you have a question, or you just want to communicate, talk, be friendly, you can turn to that person. Now let's go to Nehemiah chapter 2, and we see a beautiful example of a man who maintained an open line between himself and the Lord. I won't read all this, but in the second chapter of Nehemiah we find Nehemiah was sad one day in the presence of his employer, who was the king. Nehemiah was the cup there, and Nehemiah was always to have the cup. There was always to have a happy countenance in the presence of the king. And one day Nehemiah was sad. The king noticed this and he spoke to Nehemiah about it. And you can imagine Nehemiah how scared he was. These kings had the power of life and death. They didn't like the way your attitude today, off with your head by sundown. And so the king says. To Nehemiah, what's your problem? And Nehemiah had to give an immediate answer. He didn't have time to go into his room and pray about it or get his friends together like Daniel did on one occasion and have a little prayer meeting over a serious situation. But let's notice first four. Then the king said unto me, This is Nehemiah 2. For what dost thou make request? Now Nehemiah had to give an immediate answer. Notice what it says. So I pray to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king. In other words, between the time the king asked the question and Nehemiah had to give an immediate answer, and he knew it had to be answered wisely, that he'd lose his job and maybe even his head, he sent up a swift little prayer. You see, this isn't this isn't an illustration of what we have in our verse. Pray without ceasing it was to maintain that open line. So I would suggest this little prayer with maybe a swift as Lord help me or help Lord, and I know you've experienced this. Somebody at school asked you something. Somebody at work says something and you know it's gotta be answered wisely. You just send up that little swift little 10 second prayer and if any man lack wisdom, let him ask and then God give liberally. So it's an example of. What we have pray without ceasing. We're not always on our knees, we're not always forming actual words, but we're keeping that open line of dependence. In connection with the rejoicing part, I think it's, we'll talk a little bit about the circumstances, but also brought a Rep in, uh, in Luke and rejoice that you're neighboring heaven. So what is it in my life or your life related to the Lord that we can always rejoice about? We can rejoice in our salvation. We can rejoice that we know the Lord, We can rejoice.

His promise to us and to have that as, as something that is sure for our own souls, that's something that we can, we can rejoice always on those things. So it's umm. Different cases that we we look at circumstance and know that the lower will provide, but there are also many, many things that we have with the Lord. The Lord has promised us that we can rejoice on those truths alone. If you could say that that's alone, but just just by by having that before our souls or what he has promised that will not never leave us nor forsake us and salvation again and he's coming very, very near. Those are the things that just allow us to to always have something to rejoice. Above it may be completely different. Or not completely related to the circumstances we are at, but it's something that we can always rejoice about. There was an illustration I read, uh, umm, a recent book. Uh, the heavenly man, a Christian, a Chinese Christian, umm. That went through great persecution, and he would rejoice. Uh. By faith. Based on these verses in in Matthew, blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say to all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven. And he thanked them for increasing his reward. It's just, it's a, it's an incredible book. I. So it's only a believer who can really rejoice in adversity. And I that book, I, I've enjoyed that book too. I, I recommend it, But only a believer can rejoice under those kind of circumstances. The man of the world can be happy when things go well. They get a good grade at school, they get a promotion at work. Things are going along well. The man of the unbeliever can re can be happy, but a Christian has a joy. It says your joy no man takes from you. It's a joy that, as we've been saying, isn't dependent on circumstances. And that's why he goes on in the 18th verse to say in everything. Give thanks, but but

I'm a bit like Kevin, I, I, I'm in a situation and I'm not very thankful in the situation. But to follow up what Mark said, let's go to Ephesians chapter 5 because there's a prerequisite to the verse we have in our chapter. So you say I I find it hard in my circumstances to give thanks. Pretty difficult circumstances, but here's the prerequisite in Ephesians chapter 5 and verse 20. Giving thanks always or at all times. Now I want you to notice this next little word 4 Not in like our chapter, but four. There's quite a difference. So first of all, we have to give thanks. For the circumstance, before we can give thanks in the circumstance, it's like what Mark was saying about the Chinese brother. I believe he was one who learned to thank the Lord for the circumstance, not that the circumstance was pleasant. And if you can learn in your circumstance to say, Lord, thank you for allowing this. I know you've got a purpose for it. I know it's gonna turn out for a blessing in the end. When you learn to give thanks for things. For circumstances then, and only then I believe, will you have learned to give thanks in the circumstance. I suggest again with Paul and Silas, that they first of all gave thanks for the circumstance. Realizing that what God was doing was right. He had put them there for a purpose. Then they could rejoice in the circumstance. And what was the the result? Why the the whole prison heard them. The jailkeeper got saved.

There was a lot of blessing as a result of their joy in the Lord. Because remember, your joy and thankfulness in the Lord is often a testimony to others because they'll realize, as we've been saying, that you have something they don't. Those words in everything you're saying, it's been pretty difficult. I found in my own life that's easy sometimes to get a little bit backwards when it comes to big things and little things. So sometimes I almost find that I'll use the example of driving past year. I got in an accident and you know when it first happened, you're exactly happy. But after a while you're like, OK, Lord, this is I needed this. Thank you for this and then. And being thankful for that circumstance. But those little everyday things sometimes I think can be even more difficult. And we're supposed to be thankful for everything. So for me, if you're if you're late to work and that light goes red. Sometimes I find it can be considerably more challenging than to consistently have a thankful spirit for even those little things that can annoy you day-to-day, whether it be personal life or something like that. It's important to get the the little things, be thankful for them on a day-to-day basis in your life practically and then. A bit of an order there and that some of those bigger things and the word sends on larger trials in your life. Umm, those two, you can be thankful for those. Thankfulness to start with trust. If we if we think that the ship trust the shepherd that will be taking. That's shipped to the right places at the right time for the right refreshment. That you can be thankful no matter the circumstance. I think that's where with the Lord, if we trust and own Him as Lord of our lives. That could give us a better perspective in terms of thankfulness, because we we may look at a circumstance only isolated, but trust that the Lord. Is guiding our lives and and providing things and and directing it. It would be much easier. You if you look at it as if if the Lord is leading you this way, I will be thankful that we. Sometimes it's embarrassing, uh, when you have, you're in those difficult situations and you're not being thankful. All you can think of is the trial and after the fact, you look back and see, oh, that's why. And that's, and the embarrassment hits when you're like, when you realize I wasn't, I wasn't trusting him. Well, one thing is for sure, our verse tells us that this is the will of God. So we often talk about knowing God's will. You know, there are so many things in our lives we have to say, well, we trust we have God's will in doing this or that and so on. But there are some things we don't have to wonder. And one of the things we don't have to wonder whether it's God's will for us or not is to give thanks for all things and in every circumstance. So it's not God's will for you to go around with a long face unhappy. Not saying there are times of sorrow, no that's not what I'm saying. But God wants us to be a happy people, so we sometimes sing to him, happy though despised and and poor. God wants us to be a happy people. So this is the will of God concerning you.

Kentucky YP Camp: 2016, 1 Thessalonians 5:19-28

Reading

In the little clock, Yeah, thank you. 46 in the appendix of the little floss. The deadline is all whistling. By my heart and day. Princess, I swear it's been flawed and circuitously by Constantine. LOTC. 20. 7. Of my heart. A gratitude, brother. And. When you serve your life on me. In my. Spirited. Fry's. My Savior. Have been pretty. Long and long. And pray for the. Dead right and there. Soon. And my heart. I love to be. The. Head and let them all from. Thee to heart. 40. Undestructed. And wait for everything. So we're in first, uh, Colonians 5, and I'm going to get Lupus to read from verse 19 to the end, please. Where's the colonial 519? But it's not the spirit, but it's not prophet. Science prove all things hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil, and the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God your Holy Spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it. Rather pray for us. Reap all the bread, and with the holy gifts I charge you by the Lord that says the pistol be wrath unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord says Christ be with you.

I mean, let's notice a verse in Ephesians chapter 4 in connection with this expression quenching up the Spirit. Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 30. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby. Ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. So just these two expressions. Quench not the spirit and grieve not the spirit. They're slightly different. Now in these next few verses we have in our chapter, I would say that the general context of it is the collective side of things more than the individual, but I believe we can apply it also. Individually as well, because we can quench the Holy Spirit in a collective setting, and I believe we can quench the Holy Spirit in a our interactions with one another outside. What we call assembly meetings. Now if I can put these two verses in perspective in this way, to grieve the Holy Spirit in Ephesians is to hinder the work of God in US. And it's sin in our lives that grieves the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit can't work in our lives if they're sin. Sin hinders the work of the Spirit of God. So the. To grieve the Spirit is to hinder the work of God in US. To quench the Holy Spirit is to hinder the work of God through us. Now let's apply it in its real context here collectively. First of all, this morning when we were together to remember the Lord Jesus in the breaking of bread, we waited on the Spirit of God to guide and direct in the worship and the praise and the Thanksgiving. So we didn't have a preset list of hymns up at the room. We didn't appoint different ones to pray or read certain scriptures. There wasn't a brother who was pre appointed to give thanks for the loaf in the cup. We came and. I trust we waited on the Spirit of God. But brother, brothers, if you sat in the meeting this morning and the Spirit of God pressed something on your mind to give out or to say, and you didn't do it, you quenched the Holy Spirit of God. If you had a hymn on your heart and it just kept coming to your mind, and because it's through the mind that the Spirit works, and if that him kept coming to your mind and you didn't give it out, then perhaps you quenched the Spirit of God. I'm not saying every hymn that comes to your mind is of the Spirit of God either, so. We, we, we, we wanna temper our remarks. If you gave out a hymn that wasn't of the Spirit just because it was your favorite hymn, or you read a scripture that was your favorite scripture, but it wasn't of the Spirit of God, you quench the Holy Spirit as well. If the you seemed pressed to stand up and say a little word of Thanksgiving and you didn't do it, you perhaps quenched the Holy Spirit. You were hindering the work of God through you, and not just on Lord's Day morning, but in any assembly

meeting. But I believe you can also do that by in in our interactions with one another. Maybe the Lord has really laid on your heart by the Spirit of God to go and speak to a young brother or young sister. Now this is something for brothers and sisters alike. Maybe young sisters, you know of some real need and the Lord lays on your heart a scripture or something to bring before another sister and you don't do it. Perhaps you're punching the spirit of the Spirit of God. And so. Again, just in a general way, to grieve the Spirit of God is to allow sin in our lives that hinders the work of God in us so that He can't minister Christ from the Word to us the way he he should or or wants to. And to quench the Spirit of God is to hinder the work of God through us in blessing to others.

Good question. So how do we unregulated? Very good question, Kevin. How do we, I, I like your word ungrieved the Holy Spirit. That's that's about as good as I've I've heard it. Thank you. Well, let's let's go to first, John. First John chapter one and. Let's just read a few verses here and there, verse three, first, John 1/3 that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us. And truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. So it's through the Spirit of God. We are linked by the Spirit of God to the Lord Jesus, and it is through the Spirit of God that we have fellowship with the Father, with the Son. And as a result with one another. But Kevin's question is, what happens when sin comes in and that fellowship or that communion is broken so that the Spirit of God can't minister to us, the person and work of Christ, the fellowship that we have with the Father and with the Son? Well, He gives us the answer here. Let's read verse nine. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Now I'm going to give you a little illustration from the Old Testament that helped me to understand this verse I've just read. Before I do that, I'll just say that running water in Scripture, a fountain of spring, a brook, or a well is most often a type of the Spirit of God. The reason I say that is the Lord said out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water, and this he spake concerning the Spirit. That's the key to understanding. Many scriptures in connection with running water. Now you remember when Moses first struck the rock in Exodus chapter. 17 As a result, the water flowed out, and that water was a refreshing stream for the children of Israel all through the wilderness. Christ is the rock is a picture of Christ. The rod striking the rock is a picture of the Lord Jesus coming under the rod of God's judgment. I'm the man that has seen affliction by the rod of his wrath if the Lord Jesus bearing our sins on the cross. And what's the result? Then the water flows out. It's a picture of the Spirit of God sent down after the Lord Jesus died on the cross, rose again, and went back to heaven. But when you go to Numbers Chapter 11, you'll find that the water dried up. The water is a picture of the Spirit of God. And what was Moses to do? He was to go and speak to the Roth. The sin of Moses was that he struck the wrath and he struck it twice, but he was to go and speak to the rock. And when we have grieved the Holy Spirit of God through sin, and it's the the Spirit of God is not flowing out for our blessing, what are we to do? We're to go and speak to the rock. We're just going to speak to the Lord Jesus. We're to confess our sins and. This verse in first John is a believer. This is not confessing. For salvation, this is confessing for restoration. And so if the Spirit of God has been grieved by some sin in your life. Go and confess it. Of course we need to forsake it as well. We don't want to confess in sin and sin and confess and so on. That's, that's not going to cause the, uh, the, the water from the rock, so to speak, to flow out as it should. But when, when we go and speak to the Lord Jesus, then the Spirit of God can again work and minister to us according to what our need. Is that helpful, Kevin? Yeah. You know, I guess I'm not gonna say one other thing. There's a verse, I think it's in James's, uh, confessors intellectually another, I think your fault to one another, one or two. Pray for each other that you might be healed. Umm, I guess it was the other day we're talking about addictions, you know, those can be sent that we can't get rid of very easily, you know, and we definitely gotta get it right between God, you know? But they could also be helpful in scriptural to confide in maybe a close friend that you're being able to talk about, like what? And get prayer support, you know, as well. Get support of another believer, those sort of things.

Very ties into this. Yeah, that's good. We can be a help to one another in that way. And it's good to have a close friend who, uh, you can turn to with the spiritual matter or a like you say, even in cases like addiction and different, different difficulties. Yes, it's very helpful. So then going along with what we said about quench not the Spirit in the collective side of things, he then says despise not prophesying or prophecies. Now the word prophecy here is not so much in the context of prophetic events like we usually think of prophecy. When we think of prophecy, we think of the Book of Revelation and other parts of the Word of God that bring before us future events. But there's also another context in which we have in the New Testament prophets and prophecy, and that is when Paul wrote to the Corinthian assembly, he said let the prophet speak two or three and let the other judge. We read to that the church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Prophecy in that sense is simply conveying the mind of the Lord. A prophet in the New Testament sense is not necessarily someone whose. Predicting future events. In fact, there's nothing to predict apart from what we've been given in the word of God. There's no fresh revelation. But we do have prophets today. And so when we have, when we come together for ministry, maybe in a reading meeting, it may be in a an address, it may be in what we call an open meeting. There are things said by those I believe that are we could label as prophets. A profit in its simplest form, whether it's Old Testament or New Testament, is one. Who has a message from God for a specific people at a specific time concerning a specific situation? So. There were different ones that came to Israel. They had a specific message at the time concerning a specific situation in Israel and God has those in the church today, in the assembly today that. Maybe sometimes they don't say a lot, but every once in a while they'll speak up and they'll have a message that's right on. And we're not to despise that. You know, we might not like always like what they say. The prophets in the Old Testament, the people didn't always like what they say. In fact, they threw Jeremiah in prison because he prophesied faithfully and they didn't like the message he had for them, but he had a message from God. And so sometimes things are said in a meeting like this. In the assembly meetings that maybe that really hit hard, but it says don't despise that. Take it as a message from the Lord at at the time. Now let's broaden the application here again because perhaps someone speaks to you, maybe an older brother, an older sister speaks to you about something. Maybe they see something in your life that you're going on with that they feel is going to be a detriment to you. In following the Lord or lead into a bad path, and they come and they speak faithfully to you. Don't despise that. If they have a message for the time, for the specific situation, then take it as from the Lord. Maybe you say, but I don't like that person, or that person hasn't treated me very well, or how can that person say what they say when they're going on with something? Look beyond the messenger and weigh what they say in the presence of the Lord. We can read in Ephesians 4. Connect you to two thoughts together. Just 411 was mentioned, and he gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers in verse 12, especially for the perfecting of the Saints for the work of the ministry. And 435 of the body of Christ. Especially at the last part of the verse when we talk about wrenching off the Spirit as well as by not prophesying is that what God has for us and and wanna use each 145 oil price. So when when we hold back there is a loss for each one of us of the Spirit wanna use but also there is a loss.

For a body of Christ. And I think there is. Many, many reasons why we we would want or perhaps would want would hold back that I, I think of one, maybe just, you know, I'm not the best person to talk about it or to talk to that person. And so and so, but I think it's important to to be aware of what the spirit is slating in your heart about it. One other aspect. Maybe it's a large meeting and. Why? I'm gonna stand up here and talk. But we are all priests or holy priesthood before the Lord and uh, the Spirit can use each one. This, this perhaps an exercise. Often there

is a award to to different ones coming from smaller meetings. But I think this is one area where a smaller meeting provides a better exercise to to hear of what the the Spirit is. In leading and not not hold back. So there are two extremes. We can be like the Corinthians, when they came together, it was confusion because everyone had a Psalm, everyone had a doctrine and it seemed like they were tripping over one another to get out of him or a thought or a prayer or whatever. And that was that was one extreme. But I think mostly today we have the other extreme where we sit in the breaking of bread or any other assembly meeting. And sometimes 10 or 15 minutes can go by without somebody saying saying anything. So both extremes are are wrong. So I'm going to ask the question how do we prove all things? Verse 21. Let's hear some thought about how we prove all things. We're talking about prophecy and what we're prophesying and what we hear in ministry in the assembly. How do we then prove all things? Reading scriptures. Right, spending time with with the Lord. I would say, yeah, that's that's very good. Improve here I think also doesn't relate to to experiment all things that sometimes the word proof is used, but to examine or judge all things. I think this is a SPE was a special needed word to the Thessalonian assembly based on their reaction in Acts 17. Let's go back to Acts 17 and see what happened there when the Apostle Paul visited them. I'll start from verse 10 of Acts 17. And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea. They'd been in Thessalonica, now they've sent them to Berea. Who coming thither, went to the into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were solved. Now when Paul was visiting the assembly in Thessalonica, they listened to what the apostle Paul ministered, and that was good, and they received the truth in that way. But we find that and they were noble. But the Bereans were more noble. Wasn't that the Thessaloniki weren't noble? They were. But there were those who were more noble. Why? Because they went a step further than those in Thessalonica. They searched the Scriptures daily to see if those things were so, what things, the things that the Apostle Paul was ministering to them. Now, of course, they didn't have the New Testament like we do.

But they listen. They came and listened to the apostle Paul minister, and then they went home and they got out whatever manuscripts or scrolls, whatever part of the word of God they would have had available. And they wanted to make sure what the apostle Paul was telling them coincided with the scriptures that they already had. That's proving all things. They didn't do that at Tesla Nica, but in Berea they did. And I believe that's why Paul gives this special exhortation. To the assembly at Thessalonica. He wanted them not just to be noble, but to be more noble. Now what have we learned from this? We learned that it's great to come to meetings for ministry of the Word. It's great to come to camp and to conferences and to listen to the word minister. But young people, I hope everyone of you will go home with your Bibles and the notes you have taken and make sure what you've heard this weekend is according to the truth of God that's proving all things. And then walk in it as you say. Take what you've learned and and seen us the truth. And use it experimentally in your life and you'll be more noble than those of Thessalonica. You'll be like the Bereans. So as we said in one of the previous meetings, we need to search the scriptures. Not just casually read the scripture, but search the scriptures and go home from every meeting you hear you're at and search out what you've heard to make sure it coincides with the truth of God. I think the opposite. We have in the chapter we write Ephesians 4. Season 4. What is the the opposite effect verse 14? That that we as far be no more children. Thoughts to and fro, and carry it about with every wind of doctrine on the slave of man, in the cunning craftiness whereby they lying wage deceived. If if we don't have a standard to to go by and to prove all things about the word. Will be carrying a toxic to or from from every wing of doctrine. And, uh, it's important to, to, to remember that some of those suite of documents may come proportionally from, from different ones, including some together. So that's why it's important individually as, as an exercise before the Lord to, to prove all things. And then when we proved all things to hold fast thought which is good, if it's not according to the word of God, let it go. But if it is, if you see that it is based on Scripture, then hold fast to it. And so often we are exhorted in Scripture to hold fast. What does it mean to hold fast? It means to grip something firmly and not let it go. And that's what we need to do with the truth of God, what we prove from Scripture to be the truth. We need to hold back to it, not let it go. A lot of letting go today, a lot of compromising, and it isn't letting go all at once. It's just letting go a little here and a little there. Compromise is letting the barrier down slowly, just taking a brick off the wall now and again. Doesn't seem like very much. But you do it often enough. The barrier, the wall is gone. That's what compromise is. And so we prove all things. We set aside that which is not according to truth, the Word of God, and we're to hold faster, cling to that which is good. First thing you talk about talks about abstaining from all appearance of evil. Other versions says every form of wickedness. Would this relate to some things that maybe not evil on themselves but. Brings up the appearance to others as we're talking about collectively. Well, we can take this verse at face value in the King James, and it's certainly true. We shouldn't. And there are other scriptures that teach us that we shouldn't be in a compromising position.

But I I suggest that's not really the thought in the context here, because he's talking again about not despising, prophesying. When we hear the truth of God, minister, and we're to hold fast what is good, we're to set aside what is evil and to stay aloof, as you say, which is Mr. Darby's translation from every form of wickedness. That is, we are to have no association with that which is not the truth of God. It may be doctrinal evil, it may be moral evil, it may be an ecclesiastical connection that is not according to the Word of God, Some religious system that holds doctrine contrary to the person and work of Christ, like we spoke last night in the question and answer period about those who bring doctrine that's blasphemous in connection with the Lord Jesus and so on. So we're to hold aloof. We're to completely keep away. From that which is unholy, from that which is wicked. I believe in every aspect of our life. However, I don't want to take away from what it says at face value in our King James Bible because it, it's certainly true. I, I think in a setting like this, I can be very, very blunt. A a man and a woman living under the same roof who are not married, even though there may be. Nothing unseemly about their relationship as far as they know. Yet it has the appearance of evil to the neighbors. And so we want to abstain from all appearance of evil. We don't want to do anything to mar our our testimony. But I think it's really a a a. It's really a more, it's a harder state statement here. It's it's really getting to the very heart of the matter. Anything that is not of the truth of God, we are to keep completely away from. It might be helpful to read, uh, this whole section from verse 20 down to there in the Darby translation, because it's all kind of one connected thought. It says, do not lightly esteem prophecies, but prove all things hold fast the right, hold aloof from every form of wickedness. Yes, that's that's helpful. It's all part of the same paragraph. So yes, it's all all connected and and really in its context, that's why I say abstain from all appearance of evil. It doesn't. It's not really practical things that he's talking about. Well then he goes on in conclusion of the chapter to speak of how God's desire is to preserve you and me in the three parts of our being because we're a tripart being. We're three. There's three parts to our being. There's the spirit, that's the God consciousness and that's what sets us apart. That's what sets humanity apart from the lower creation. We have a God consciousness. God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life. And man became a living soul or a living spirit. He you don't read of him doing that with with the animal Kingdom. And so we have a God conscious part to our being. Then the soul is the seat of the emotions and affections. Animals in that sense have a soul because animals have personality. They have affections. Some of you I saw hugging up a cat here and that cat was snuggling in and that cat had affections. And that cat in its own way appreciated the attention that it that it had. And any of us who had pets know that every pet has a distinct personality. And so the lower creation have a soul as well. It's the seed of the emotions and affections. And

so there's the spirit soul, and then there's the body that's the physical. And the desire and prayer of the apostle was that the Thessalonians believers would be preserved in the three parts of their being. So he didn't want them to be taken up with false teaching. He didn't want them to fall into moral evil because he's taken that up in the 4th chapter, connection with fornication and and moral evil. And and so on didn't want their emotions to run rampant and so on and to follow, just to follow the desires and appetites of the northeast of, uh, their emotions. No, everything was to be brought into check so that they would be preserved, spirit, soul and body. Now he speaks here not of the peace of God, but the God of peace because it's a person. Christianity is a person.

Christianity brings us into relationship with God and with the Lord Jesus, and it's not just the peace of God, but it's the God of peace, and it's the God of peace that's going to preserve us in the three parts of our being. And how long does did he desire that they be preserved, blameless, under the coming of the Lord of our Lord Jesus Christ? He sums this up because that's the subject of the whole book, really. It's the coming of Christ. And Paul's desire for the breath the brethren at Thessalonica was. That they would be preserved in their their spirit, their soul and body for their own blessing and their own and their testimony to those around until the Lord Jesus comes. But you say, how can it be? Jim, you don't understand what I go through at school and how evil it is at work and in the world today. Well, perhaps I don't. But faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. If we fail in our lives, if we're not preserved, spirit, soul and body, it's not God's fault because He's faithful. And if we're not faithful, He abides faithfully, cannot deny Himself. And if you and I are looking to the Lord and drawing on the resources that we have in our God and in the Lord Jesus every day, we can be preserved, not because of our faithfulness or anything in ourselves. But because of his faithfulness, faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. He will do it. But he if, if we fail, it's not his fault, it's our fault. He will do it. But we have to take heed. We have to hold fast the good. We have to hold aloof from evil. There are these practical exhortations. There has to be prayer and not quenching the Spirit and and so on. All these things, if they're carried out in our day-to-day life, then God will and can preserve us. And remember this young people, they'll never be a day so dark. Morally and spiritually, that you and I can't be preserved and live for the Lord's glory here in this world. If it ever gets that bad, then the Lord will take us out. But as long as we're here, every resource is given to us to be preserved, spirit, soul and body. Well, we're never above the need of the prayers of our brethren, are we? Here was the Apostle Paul, this great apostle raised up at the beginning of the churches history and given all this wonderful truth and what does he say in verse 25? Brethren, pray for us. He and his fellow laborers needed the prayers of their brethren and none of us are above the prayer needing the prayers of one another and. I believe young people, if we would pray for one another more, it would be a preserving factor. You know, so often we pray for someone after they're in trouble. Maybe they aren't coming to meeting, they're getting cold in their soul, they're going on with something they failed. Some sinners come into their lives and then we pray for them. But if we would pray for one another as a preventative measure before we get into trouble. I think it would preserve us from many things. So Paul, as he went about and had his fellow laborers with him, he said we need your prayers so we can pray as to our own needs, but we need to pray for one another as well. I guess I'll just say again, you know, we don't, you don't know that I'm struggling unless I tell you about it, you know, So I encourage you guys to talk to your friends and, and share what you're struggling with, you know, so that doesn't get to that point. You can be prayed for ahead of time. Well, our time is gone, but I just say at the end of the chapter we find that he asks that or charges that the epistle be read to all the brethren because they all needed it. This wasn't just exhortations for certain ones, but this was for all the brethren. And so when we open the word of God and we read it for ourselves or we hear it ministered in the meeting, don't be like a brother. I heard one, one time I heard of a brother one time. He said, well, certain shots I let go over my shoulder.

He doesn't think those certain things that were said were for him or that he needed them. But the apostle Paul said, what I've written to you is good for everybody. Make sure everybody hears, uh, what, what I said. And then as he, as he's so customary, he closes with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ because grace is what preserves us in the path of faith. It's what meets our present need. He says in another place, my grace is sufficient. The Lord said to Paul, My grace is sufficient. For thee do you need more grace? It says in James. He giveth more grace. Is it just for a certain class of brother? No, of all we received of His fullness and grace upon grace. So it's one of those great supplies that we have so that we can be preserved. If you draw on the grace of God every day, then you'll be preserved, spirit, soul and body. Now I'm going to make a suggestion for the next 10 or 15 minutes we have, we received word that there's been a car accident. The ruins were in a car accident. Their car was totaled. Abel was driving. They're OK. They went to the hospital as routine. Umm, their brother is coming for them from Dorothy. They're about 9 hours from home and umm. So they're waiting for that. They spun out of control. No one else was involved in the accident, but the car is totaled as far as they know. I think what would be nice for the next few minutes is if we just quietly get down on our knees and we have a. New #23. Will pray. For all. The time. And. Trust him over all. That should come.

Lawrenceville Conference: 2006, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-5

Reading

Suggest something at least for one or two readings to see what the brethren think of it. It seems in the hymns that have been before us, both in the prayer meeting and in this meeting, the Lord's coming was brought before us, but particularly with an emphasis on the Lord's guidance in our time down here. We have often remarked from time to time on how near the Lord's return is. And I believe Scripture brings that before us too, but also lays emphasis on the moral state that is in keeping with what we know in that respect. I wonder if the 5th chapter of First Thessalonians would be acceptable, at least for perhaps one or two readings. Sorry, brother. Clem, say that again. I had to say. Thinking of reading the entire chapter. I think it would be nice to read the entire chapter. There are some very good exhortations toward the end that perhaps we don't need to dwell on because they're pretty clear, but I think it'd be nice to read the whole chapter. First Thessalonians chapter 5, beginning at verse one. But of the time. And the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you for yourself. Know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night, Or when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that they should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of life and the children of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night, and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to us, 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. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you. And are over you and the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work sake, and be at peace among

yourselves. Now we exalt you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, Comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man, but ever follow that which is good. Both among yourselves and to all men, rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing in everything. Give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit, despise not prophesizing. Prove all things, Hold fast that which is good. Abstained from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless, until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, faithful with the that calleth you, who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss. I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with, be with you. Amen. Just to mention a little background for this, which is familiar, I'm sure, to many of us, and that is that we know that when Paul went to Thessalonica, as is recorded in the book of the Act, he stayed there only a relatively short time. Three Sabbath days, it says. And so he wasn't there for more than three or four weeks. But when he left, he left believers behind. He left an assembly and they went on, but they had difficulties because they were not perhaps well grounded in some things, although Paul had taught them many things and they got a little bit confused about some things concerning the Lord's coming and so. In both epistles to the Thessalonians, in every chapter the Lord's coming is brought in in some way. Sometimes it is coming for us, sometimes it is appearing. But Paul seeks to correct some of the difficulties that they had and some of the questions, but also impresses on them, as we have in this chapter. What is in keeping with those who have that blessed hope before them? And that, perhaps, is what has laid emphasis on here in the beginning, isn't it? One thing that they hadn't been taught to differentiate between was, as you say, the Lord's coming for his Saints and the Lord's coming with his Saints. That what we refer to so often as the rapture and has been mentioned the appearing. And this caused a bit of consternation because in the first chapter when it says they turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for his Son from heaven, what they really were waiting for and expecting was the Lord to come back and set up the Kingdom. And in the interim, as they were waiting, some of their number died, some of them passed on. And so they wondered, have they missed out on the Kingdom? Have they missed out on the Lord coming back to establish things according to his righteousness? And so the apostle Paul writes these epistles to, as it were, leave nothing unexplained as to an event that was going to take place between the Lord's, the death of the Saints and the Lord's coming back with his Saints. And so if we were to back up in the 4th chapter, we would find he spells this out very clearly. He says they haven't missed out. They're asleep in Jesus. Their body is asleep in the grave. They've been laid to rest. But they're waiting for an event, the same event rather than that we're waiting for this morning. They're waiting for the Lord to come and to call the dead in Christ to be with themselves, we to rise to be with him, and then he's going to come back with his Saints. But if we don't understand the order of those events, we're going to be confused too. And not only so, but there isn't going to be the proper character of those who are waiting for these two events. I say waiting for these two events because the two things are part of our whole. We often speak of the Lord's coming for his Saints, the rapture, as the proper hope of the believer, and certainly that is true. But when the apostle Paul writes to Titus, he brings the two things together. He says, looking for that blessed hope, that's the hope of hearing the shout at any moment, what Paul spells out in the end of the fourth chapter of First Thessalonians. But he doesn't stop there, he says, and the glorious appearing we're that's part of our hope too. All speaks of all those that love his appearing. And so it's all part of our hope, but we need to keep it in the proper perspective. And so having taken that up in the end of the fourth chapter. Now he goes on to speak of another event, and what we have in the beginning of this 5th chapter is not the Lord's coming for His Saints, but the Lords coming with His Saints. If you if you look at the 4th chapter, the 14th verse, I think it becomes clear that he's speaking in verse 14 of chapter four of the Lord's coming.

In his appearing at the end of the tribulation period and then 15 through 18 is a parenthesis in which he explained how those that have died in faith in Christ will be with the Lord to be able to accompany him when he comes back in power and glory at the end of the tribulation period to establish his Kingdom. So. It says in verse 14 if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, Even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him in his appearing at the end of the tribulation, How do they get to be with him if they have died? So verses 15 through 18 explain how those will be raised and be with the Lord. The rapture which takes place, we believe, before those seven years of tribulation. To begin. So it's looked at as one coming, isn't it? The second coming is 1 Coming, but it does have its two distinct parts. If you read the 14th verse of chapter 4 at the end of it says them also with sleep in Jesus will God bring with him and then if you skip the (15 to 18, he connects that in verse one of chapter 5, but of the times and the season spread and whatever he speaks of times and seasons, he's Speaking of something that takes place here on earth. There are no times and seasons in heaven. So of the times and the seasons, brethren, it says when he comes back, verse 14, he God will bring with him. How do they get there? Well, Bob, let's just explain 15 to 18 explains that. But of the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you for yourselves. Know perfectly that the day of the Lord, day of the Lord is not the rapture. That's the day when he will come back and set things right down here, the day of the Lord. Umm, so cometh as a thief in the night. We're not looking for him. You don't look for a thief. Uh, we're looking for him. That's the rapture. But when he comes back, as he'll come back as a thief in the night, they won't be expecting him and looking for him. The world won't, and he'll come as a thief. So we're not looking for him as a thief. We're looking for him as a savior. Another fourteen and four fo uh yeah, 14 and four is Zachariah. And that's where. Uh, the Lord Jesus? His feet stand on the Mount of Olives, the Mount of Olives. This is as as his coming we have here in chapter 5. So Mount of Olives split wide open an earthquake or whatever it is, the Lord works there and uh, causes a great valley going east and West. And that is? Shortly before. The someone in the room, one of the remnants, will see the nail prints in his hands. And, uh, that will be the conversion of the nation of Israel, the time of the conversion when you, you will get Isaiah 53, uh, when they confess he was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our people's appointment with his stripes were healed all we like sheep have gone astray. We've turned everyone to his own way. We appropriate now for ourselves Isaiah 53. Yeah. But it's really for Israel is right. And they see him. They realize he was wounded for our transgression. What what a day that will be of awakening for that nation. Yeah. Jim quoted it, but I'd like us to go back again and read it in chapter one of First Thessalonians.

Uh, middle of verse 9. For Setonians 1, the middle of verse 9. Ye turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus. Mr. Darby translates the end of it. Our deliverer from the coming wrath. Just like to again give emphasis that maybe already it seems like some of the details that we've taken up in this reading meeting might seem a little difficult to understand, might seem at first glance to be a little bit of a fine point, but it's not intended to be. So for us, this statement here were. And this letter was written to new believers, those who had only been saved, perhaps a matter of weeks. Receive this letter and so don't let us this morning be afraid and say, well, I can't understand this or that aspect of what's said. He starts the chapter 5 and he says, you know perfectly well you who've been saved just a matter of weeks. And in this first end of this first chapter is something to me very important. A person in their sins has their idols. Now these here have physical idols that probably could be seen. In Thessalonica, but a person's life is characterized by idolatry until they come to the Lord Jesus. But the minute we come to the Lord Jesus as Savior, our whole life changes. And

he says now what is characterize their life? They've been saved a few weeks to serve the living and true God and to wait for his Son from heaven. And so our lives here this morning, we have these two things, the serving of the living and true God, in contrast to the dead idol. And we sit here this morning in anticipation and waiting for the sun from heaven, who is our deliverer from the wrath that is shortly to fall upon this this world. And what does it do for us practically? It changes the true proper appreciation and expectation of the Lord's coming for us will totally affect our daily life. It's not just something about what people call prophecy. Even this is not actually prophecy, but the anticipation of the Lord's coming is not just, well, it is an event, but it's more than that to us. It is the anticipation and the waiting of seeing Him. Who's going to call us? Who's going to come and take us home to be with himself? And so as we take up the chapter, please, let's treat it as, can I say, simple instructions for us, even if we are a new believer. Lord's coming should be connected without every aid our everyday life and our unique writer in this book pointed out very nicely. We'll find that after in this book in connection with the lowest economy, but each one has a little bit different character to it a rather rate of risk averse in chapter one. Let's just look at it one more time in chapter one there in verse 10 you step 10 and to wait. For his Son from heaven will be raised from the dead, even Jesus, which deliver us from the wrath to come. For the first in connection to the Lord's coming is the ways we're waiting for it coming. What a blessed hope that we have been reminded whether you would say yes to this or reminded you have that lesser flow to wait for his son. And then when we'll go to the second chapter, we'll find that in verse 19. It raised that question about daily now is that for what is our home? Ah, do we ever ask ourselves that question? We often get so occupied with the cares of this world and then we get so occupied with my own problem that we forget here what is our home or joy or ground of rejoicing, and then it goes on here.

Are not even be in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ as his coming. Oh, we need to be reminded, don't we and then when we go to the third chapter that we are reminded about the fact that he's going to be coming in verse 13. A lot of hard there the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his things and again we'd be reminded that obvious we have to be taken out of this scene in order to be able to come back without bless the Lord and you know it's good to raise all of these principles because this world, especially Christendom often gets all mixed up. Let's let's go on chapter 4 then it reminded us about the Lord's coming in regard to those. Who have already uh, uh, uh, asleep. Those who are with Jesus. Oh, how precious. You know, this morning when our brother mentioned that our brother, uh, one of our brother is uh, getting close towards the end of his pilgrimage. And I saw tears in various quantize. Yes, the Lord gave us natural affections, but you know that that is our blessed hope is to be with the Lord and the CLDR brother going before us now into our chapter chapter 5. Here there is a theme to that as well, isn't it? We know about waiting for the Lord to come in. We know about the plastic hope. We know about coming coming with him and we know about those who have gone before. Now this chapter again is back to us about our practical work in the in verse 23 it says and the peace and the very God of peace will sanctify. You holy? And then they pray. Notice here the order. He's praying for your whole spirit and soul and body. You know, we often talk about body, soul and spirit because we're so self-centered here in praying for your, for your spirit first, your spirit and soul and body. What is your spirit and soul and body's focus here? The apostle was praying that you may be preserved. Blameless until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is a verse in Proverbs 29 that says where there is no vision, the people perish, or I think Mr. Darby translates it, or at least has a footnote, The people cast off restraint. And brethren, if we don't have this hope that we've been speaking out before our souls, if we're not looking for something beyond the horizons of this world, we're going to get discouraged. And not only are we going to get discouraged, but there isn't going to be that proper moral character. That is to be exhibited in our lives in a practical way, as those who are going on to something else, something far better. You turn on the news, you read a newspaper and the events of this world show that things are not getting better in this world. Man is trying to set things right today by peace packs and and negotiations and summits and lining up with the United States and the allied forces and this kind of thing. They're trying to make peace by introducing democracy into corners of the world where it's never been introduced before. Is this going to solve the world's problems? Are things getting better? Regards This World notes, and Scripture teaches us that it will never get better until the King of Righteousness rises with healing in his wings and the Prince of Peace comes back to reign and has his rightful place. Then, and only then, will there be righteousness and equity. Exhibited in this world. But if we don't have this before our souls, we're gonna get discouraged. There's many zealous Christians today who don't understand the difference between the Lord's coming for his Saints and the Lord's coming with his Saints. And what are they doing? They're out zealously lobbying for the betterment of this world, rising up against governments and all this kind of thing. And you've heard this before. You know what I'm Speaking of. But it's because that that through misteaching or misguidance. They've lost sight or they don't understand the truth of the Lord's coming and how his brother Bob said it's in two parts. And so if we can keep this before us where there is no vision, the people perish. But brethren, how can we go on in a world where things are deteriorating economically, morally, politically in every sphere of society? How can we go on quietly for the Lord? Oh, it's to realize that he's going to take us out very soon. It's to look up every day and say perhaps today the Lord is coming.

It's to live in the good of that and then to realize that there is a glorious appearing when He and only He will set things right. This turns to a verse in 3rd John. I think it's helpful in this regard. I might just say this too, that in John's Gospel chapter 14, the Lord simply said to the disciples to encourage them before he left them in this sad world alone. He gave them many things for their comfort, but one of the things he said to encourage them was. I will come again and receive it unto myself. But he doesn't develop it there. He just leaves it there for their encouragement. But it's interesting that John develops this a little further in First John chapter 3 and verse 2. Beloved now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. Now John here takes us beyond just the Lord coming for us. It's true. When He comes for us, we're going to get bodies of glory like unto His body of glory, and there's going to be an instantaneous change, and we're going to rise to meet the Lord. We get that from first Corinthians 15 and so on. But here he says, when he shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. But he's saying his brethren, there's a day when the Lord Jesus is going to appear in this world and we're going to appear with him. And it says in Thessalonians, he's coming to be glorified in his Saints and admired in all those that are about him in that game. That is when the world looks gone and they see the believers, they're going to see a perfect reflection of Christ in that, in the in the church, in the believer, not only going to be with Christ, we're going to be like him. And then he says. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. And what I take from this in a simple way, brethren, is that in the measure in which you and I have both the coming of the Lord for his Saints, and his appearing with His Saints before our souls. Not just as a mere doctrine, good to be doctrinally correct and accurate when we enumerate these this truth from Scripture, but when we have this hope as a reality in our souls from day-to-day. And we're living in the good of it. What is going to be the result? It's going to have a practical purifying effect on your life and mind if we get up every morning with the realization that the Lord may come today. If we get up every morning with that thought and with the realization that there's a day coming when he's going to appear back in this world and we're going to be with him, I believe it will make a difference in our conduct, in our relationships, in our reactions, in our testimony to this world. Every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself even as he is pure. Because the passage that says every eye shall see him, not of the rapture. Right at the Rapture, we'll be gone,

we'll be missing, but he won't be seen until he comes back with us. Then so on. The one in in first part of His coming, they don't see us go and they don't see him. The second part of his coming, they'll see both him and us. What we speak about this morning is not the view of the world. The view of the world is given to us in verses 2:00 and 3:00. They say the day of the Lord, or can I say we would see about the world. The day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night. People don't appreciate thieves. Nobody wants the thief to come to their house at night, but that's the attitude of the world in which we live. The thought of the coming of the Lord to this earth again is an unwanted, unappreciated and undesired thought among men. He was gone. We're thankful he lived here. He left some examples, but the bottom line is we didn't want him. He left and that's just the way we'd like it to remain. So his coming for those who are of this world is will be like a thief, an unwanted person who comes in the middle of their night. And the present attitude of the world is in verse 3.

They shall say peace and safety. The world doesn't look at things today and say it's hopeless. It'll never get better. But man wise men of the world are using every energy and every means that their disposal to try to make this world. A place of peace and a place of safety. But what's going to happen to such verse? The end of verse 3? Sudden destruction cometh upon them. The coming of the Lord is going to give God's estimate of the state of things in the world, which is such a state of disorder in the rejection of His Son, that He has pronounced judgment upon it. And the coming of the Lord is going to begin. The day of the Lord is going to begin with the execution of this judgment. Of which no man will escape, as he says in the end of verse three, they shall not escape. Now when we see that side of it, what attitude do we want to have ourselves? The Lord, when He comes, is going to bring judgment. The man of the world is not going to escape it. Am I going to live my daily life right alongside with him with the same attitudes, the same interest, the same desire? And say, well, yes, we'll do all we can for peace and safety and let's hope things are better tomorrow and next week. Not if I'm on the Lord's side, not if my spirit and my soul is with the Lord. I say to that man, judgment is coming. You need to flee. So the alarms of the Savior, the deliverer to be saved from the wrath to come. Or is my neighbor my work associate someday if they could. Say, why didn't you tell me? Why did you act just like I acted as it were, living the same kind of life with the same kind of intentions and interest in talking about the same hopes and expectations? All connected only with this world. Or why didn't you warn me to flee from the wrath to come? The difference between Abraham. And lots stand out as examples of what you're saying on and they're different attitudes. Abraham dwelt with God on the mountain and these current pieces of Thessalonians I believe were in a similar state of Seoul. Their affection for Christ was great. I believe rather than we're living in a time though when we can easily. Umm re replace. Affection for Christ with occupation, with kind and seasons. Uh, if we look at the Lord as coming as a bridegroom, coming for the bride, we think about a bride waiting for her bridegroom. The great thing for her is she's going to be united to her loved one. And if we saw a bride getting taken up with, well, what the times in there. There's some signs showing that my wedding day is getting close. I see the the the flowers of blooming springs come and that isn't this wonderful. That should not take the place of what her real heart is looking for, to be united to her loved one. And that's what Price wants from us and that's what our attitude could be. And how good to have that affection. Then we'll be like Abraham, who understood and interpreted the signs and see, uh, around him, Lot didn't properly know how to interpret things. He was saved as by fire as as it were. And so I think it's important for us, umm. Not just to be occupied with the times and seasons. That's important to know the heavenly hall and guard the Lord, but let us never uh, neglect Lord a heart for Christ. It it it comes out in in verse, Umm, umm. 16 of chapter 4 it says for the Lord himself. That is his person. He himself is coming. That's the great thing. Not as a thief in the night.

I like that, Doug, because we get the Lord Jesus Christ before us both in the rapture and in the appearing, don't we? In the rapture it's the blessed hope of being united to the One who is our Bridegroom. And we find in not this epistle, but the third chapter of the 2nd epistle that His desire to have us with Him. Exceeds ours to be there. But then when it comes to His appearing, we know Paul could say in Second Timothy four, He could speak of a crown of righteousness. And not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing. Why do we love His appearing? Because He will have His rightful place. He will be given that place of glory and exaltation publicly. That we trust He has today at the Father's. I shouldn't say that that he has today at the Father's right hand and that we trust He has in our hearts. But in that day He will be given that place publicly. And we love His appearing for that reason. But then it takes us back, doesn't it, to the little book that's mentioned at the end of Revelation 10, I believe, where John was told to eat the little book, no doubt bringing judgment before us. And when he ate it, it made his mouth sweet as honey. It wasn't his mouth sweet as honey for the reason we've just given. The Lord Jesus Christ is being given his rightful place, but then it makes his belly bitter. Why? Oh, because of the awful judgments that have to fall on this poor world in order for all that to come about. There's no other way. When they judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. And so I believe that's what's brought before us that twofold aspect in this chapter. Yes. Is there joy in looking forward to his appearing? Yes, there is. And we see, we will see him in his glory. But then what an awful thing to contemplate what this poor world has to go through. As we've just heard, they're trying in every way possible now to achieve what they never will. It'll only come when the Lord Jesus has his place. And so there's a moral state that is important for those who know all these things ahead of time. Our president thinks that he's a Christian, I believe, but he thinks that democracy is the ideal government. A government of the people, for the people, by the people. That's about as far away removed from the Bible as you can get. The ideal government is one man rule and that's the Lord Jesus Christ. They don't want that. They don't want that. They want to do it themselves. They want to do it themselves and. That is, that is going to come to failure, of course, and that's why. That's one of the reasons I don't vote because. We're not going to set the world right. We are guilty. By we, I mean the world is guilty of rejecting, committing the greatest sin that man has ever committed, rejecting the only righteous ruler, and that's the Lord Jesus. We will not have this man to reign over us. That's what they said, and that's the attitude of everyone that is unsaved. They want to do it themselves and that's going to fail. And we don't. If we're intelligent in our pathway, we walk down here as strangers and pilgrims, not as citizens of this earth, but as citizens of heaven. And the, the, the one that's going to rain and do it righteously is our precious Lord Jesus. And we wait for that moment when that will take place. And it'll go on for 1000 years. The EV everything is going to be set right in the millennial day by one man, and that's the Lord Jesus Christ. Men aren't going to do it. They're going to go through the worst tribulation this world has ever seen before that comes to pass. But we belong to the heavenly state, and to get involved in these things is just to take the level of land can do it. And he can't do it. He can't do it not without the Lord. And uh, God is going to have one man sit on the throne and rule in righteousness. And we'll be part of that. We'll all rule with him. I'd like to make a comment on this expression in our verse the Day of the Lord. But before I do that, I'd like to just give a little illustration in connection with what brother Bill said in to loving his appearing.

And looking forward to the full exaltation of Christ here in this world, where they cast him out and spit in his face and set away with him, crucify him. It might be a bit of a feeble illustration, but perhaps it will help when the president of the United States or the Prime Minister of Canada is elected to office and his picture is splashed across the pages of the press. Who rejoices with him at his side? His wife. Why is she there at his side? Not because she was elected to office, but because of her relationship to the one who is. And she rejoices that her husband has been elevated to this place of prominence, that he has a place in the as head of the nation or whatever it might be. And so she rejoices in

that all through the election, she's been looking forward to the time when the ballots will be counted and she'll stand by her husband as he is. As he's proclaimed the winner. Now that may be a feeble illustration because there's no balance to be counted, rather than if I can speak reverently and put it that way. With full assurance, we know that God's man is going to have his rightful place. Lot of things I don't understand about the Bible, but I do know the end of the story. I know that God's man is going to be exalted. And I know another thing too. I'm going to be at his side. You know, it's interesting. In the end of the fourth chapter, he says. And so shall we ever be with the Lord? Just think about that little expression. When He's in the Father's house, we're with him. When he comes back to reign, we're with Him. We're going to be ever with the Lord. And so we rejoice to think not so much of our position, but to think of that day when He's going to be exalted. You walk down the street of Lawrenceville or Allendale or any other town or city in the world today, you hear the name of the Lord taken in vain. You see on every hand that. He he he's still the son of the drunkard, the on the lips of the cursor he still rejected. Does it rejoice your heart to think there's a day coming when that will no longer be so? And if it is so, it will be judged immediately. Sin will be judged morning by morning. And so I just say that in connection with what brother Bill is so good to keep in mind that Christ is going to have his full exaltation and wonder of wonders, we're going to be associated with him. But I would like to make a little comment or two on this expression, the day of the Lord. It's an expression I grew up hearing in the meetings and perhaps and perhaps still don't fully understand it, but to put it very simply, the day of the Lord is a day when his rights will be outwardly owned and executed here in this world. It's in contrast. Just go back to First Corinthians chapter 4 for a moment, in contrast to what we have. In First Corinthians chapter 4. And verse 3. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man if you notice your margin. And this is the way Mr. Darby translates it. Man's day. Now this is man's day. God is allowing man to a certain extent to have his way. Today. Man is exerting his rights. And I believe that the final climax of man's history of sin. It's what it says the king shall do according to his own will. Unbridled self will and the assertion of man's rights will be the final climax to man's history of sin. The verse I quoted is in connection with the man of sin in the coming day. But don't we see things heading up that way today? Human rights are glorified today. It's ingrained in our students the minute they step into the public school system that no one's to tell us what to do. We're taught to rebel against authority and to assert our own rights. I would like to just say this too, that in man's day, outwardly it seems like man is having his way, but we want to be very clear that God is behind the scenes. But Chuck was talking about how he doesn't vote. And what gives me confidence in not going to the ballot box on Election Day is that the most high rule is in the kingdoms of men. And set us up whomsoever He will in the kingdoms of men, the basis of men in the kingdoms of men.

God is in control. The man in power in the United States or Canada or any other country in this world today is there because God is in control. God set him there. All there may have been secondary means elections or in some countries military coups or whatever it might have been, but God is in control. And brethren, if we can keep that before our souls, that the powers that be, even in man's day, are ordained of God, then that gives me confidence. To bow and say, Lord, whoever you put in power, I'm content to go on and to pray as Timothy was told to pray for those in power. Timothy wasn't told to lobby against the government. And who was in power when Timothy was told to pray for kings and those in authority, Probably one of the worst tyrants that ever reigned in this world, the emperor Nero, was he to go out and lobby against what was going on? No, he was to pray. And I believe if Christians would spend more of their time and energy praying for those in authority. It would have a lot more effect, it would do a lot more good than rising up and lobbying against them and joining coalitions and all that kind of thing. But I simply want to point out that even though this is man's day, outwardly God is still in control. But there is a day when the Lord Jesus will have his rightful place in this world. It isn't now. Now we see, not yet, all things put under him. And brethren, I trust there's no thought even in corners of our hearts this morning. As to this being the reigning time, this is not the reigning time. Paul said would that we reign, but this is not the reigning time. The reigning time is coming. What we are to do is to have him reign in our hearts alone and own Him, Lord of our life. But this is not the reigning time. But let's go on realizing the day of the Lord is coming. It's going to be a surprise for this world, but it is a day when his rights are going to be asserted and God is going to be finally satisfied. Laodicea, the period just before the return of Christ and, uh, it, the word means the people speak. It's the time when man is having his day and he's going to see in the end that his leaving God out of his life and not, uh, submitting to God and his word and his ways is going to be fatal. But. If only we would judge ourselves. And I'm Speaking of our the very people who are I'm speaking to now. All of us need to be very much. Thinking about what my part is in label darceanism, am I guilty of having my own opinion about things that are personal instead of reading the word of God and having him direct me and give me wisdom as a where to go, what to do, and what and how to do it? When the Lord Jesus came into this world, and John's Gospel particularly, he said in the very beginning of his ministry, I am the light of the world. And so when the Lord Jesus came into this world, a brilliance of light came into the world to shine upon men. Man in himself with darkness, he wasn't just in the dark, but he says when concerning the Lord Jesus and John one the darkness comprehended it not. The state of man was he was darkness itself. And so when the Lord Jesus shined upon him and exposed what was in his heart, it exposed the fact that he was darkness itself. But there were those who by the grace of God and the work of the Holy Spirit. Responded to the Lord Jesus, and that darkness was changed to light when the Lord Jesus on the day of his death.

Was cast out and crucified. Night descended upon this world, and this world lives in the darkness of night. And it has done so from the day of the death of the Lord Jesus. We live in a World of Darkness and night. And so here in our chapter what he's saying to his brethren in verse four, he says, brethren, ye brethren are not in the darkness, that the day should overtake you. They as people and we'll look at it in a moment. We're not in the darkness. It was night around them. But they had a life that the world did not have. So that the thief would not overtake them. What is man? He loves darkness. He doesn't mind that he lives in a World of Darkness. It says the men love darkness. Why? Because their deeds are evil. If it's dark as it were, physically outside and I'm going to rob something, I think I have a better chance of getting away with it. And so if I'm going to live according to the desires of my flesh. And I'm not seeing well, so much the better. I have a sense of maybe I'll get away with it. And so as a consequence, this world, it really loves the darkness because its deeds are evil. But with respect to us, he says, brethren, you're not of the darkness. He says in verse five, your children of light and children of the day, our proper. Place is to wait for the day because we're children of the day, we're not children of the night. We don't look for darkness to hide evil. We by nature, by new birth, we enjoy the light. We would rather be in a place of light than in a place of darkness. And Peter speaks of it in the in his second first chapter of the 2nd letter. He says let the day star. Arise in your heart. In other words, the day of the dawn is almost approaching, he says of the new day, the day when the Lord comes. And then when the Lord comes and sets up his Kingdom, it will be a day of righteousness. It will be a day of the brilliance of the noonday sun again on this earth. But what about us? I'd just like to turn for one moment to 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 and see our portion in the midst of this night. As we await for the day, he says to us. Concerning those who don't accept the gospel, 2nd Corinthians 4. Three. If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not. Satan is busy keeping it dark, so that man won't see and believe, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves your servants for Jesus sake. Now verse six is what's happened to us. God commanded the light to shine out of darkness as it were. We were in the midst of this darkness, but

God shined his light as Paul saw it or saw on in the road of the act. It was the brightness greater than the noonday sun that shone in his soul that day of his salvation. Has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We have this treasure in earthen vessels. We have the treasure of the glory of the light of God. God is opened up heaven for us because it's dark down here that we might see the full brightness of the heavens for our souls by faith and that we might be occupied with that and say, oh Lord. How wonderful to see him in his glory at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Eternal light in his presence, and we carry in us that light. And consequently in Ephesians chapter 5, what about this Dark World? What does it see by the Lord's? Not here the Lord Paul said to the Ephesians Saints in chapter five. He said, you, ye are the light of the world. What light does the darkness have in your daily life around you? What light do the people have?

You, you. You are the light that this world presently has. Tremendous responsibility to one of us live in our daily lives as we await the coming of the Lord. You are the light in your community. You are the light in your school. You are the light at work. We belong to an entirely different world, he said. Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. If the world hates you, you know that it hated me before you. If you were of the world, the world would love his own. But because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. We belong to a Heavenly St. Our citizenship is in heaven. Recently my my physician, my doctor handed handed out a paper that they want to update their files and one of the statements was. Your present occupation, Your present employer, I wrote down the Lord Jesus Christ. They might think I'm nuts, but that's what I wrote. And that's, that's where we belong. That's where we belong. So we're children of day and children of the light for two reasons. Is it fair to say that on the one hand, as we've just heard, we see in the face of the Lord Jesus all the light of God's glory? And in that sense we are called to reflect that light here in this world which is dark. So then there's a day coming when the Lord will have his rightful place. That will be day for this world. It's night now, but there's a day coming. And when He comes and that day dawns, we will be associated with Him. And so, as was being brought out earlier, we don't by grace seek to straighten things out now. We're not of the darkness. We're not part of this particular situation. But there is a day when we will live and reign with Christ. Evangelical world is trying to set things right. Did wrong. MMM. So our responsibility is to point souls to Christ. The world's under judgment. Someone has said the ship is going down. What are we to do? We're to point people to Christ, point people to the way out, point them to the light. And again, if Christians would spend their more energy propagating the gospel and praying for the good seed of its own would be a lot more desirable, a lot more according to the word of God. And it would be perhaps a lot more results as to souls being saved as the gospel goes out. But we are here to point people to that other world, to Christ, tell them how they can become the children of light. Separation is almost a lost word in vocabularies, but umm, that's where we're to be a separated people. We'll find 2 with our Christian walk when we get into difficulties, when we feel that we're in a trial of some sort. Often if we look at our our own walk closely, we will find that we have forgotten. We have forgotten about the soon return of our blessed Savior. Just a little story time is gone, but appreciated reading about John Wesley and. He was passing one of the great Manor homes in Britain and he stopped and had a little chat with the gardener. And the gardener took him on a tour of that beautiful mansion. And after they were done the tour and they returned to the gate of that grand home, John Wesley turned to the gardener and he said, I too have a liking for these things, but there's another world and brethren, there is another world. We're going on to something far better. And then the Lord Jesus, as we've been saying, is going to come back and straighten things out. As regards to what he sees is righteous. 208 M #208. Nsnoise. 170 versus 5 and six. Tis thy heavenly bride and Spirit, Jesus Lord, that bid thee come. 170 verses 5 and six, and somehow would seem fitting to stand up for it.

As I have me.

Kentucky Conference: 2019, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-8

Reading

Guide us, O thou gracious Savior. Pilgrims through this barren land. We are weak, but thou art mighty. Hold us with thy powerful hand, Bread of Heaven. Feed us now and evermore. 276. Guide us so badly. Around my life, who's in, God willing. Oh my God. I'd like to suggest First Thessalonians chapter 5. It's. It's interesting that it has the Lord's coming or the rapture in the chapter before and then reminding us the Lord's coming. And we have the farmers or at least some of the armors being mentioned in this chapter as well and on how we ought to walk. And I just want to see if that would be a suggestion that we can take up. Recess Lions. Chapter 5. What other times in the seasons? Rather you have no need that I write unto you for yourselves. Know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But ye. Brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light and the children of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night. They that be drunk and are drunken in the night. But let us who are of the day be sober.

Putting on the breastplate of faith and love and foreign helmet the hope of salvation. For God has 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. Wherefore comfort yourselves together and edify one another even as also ye do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you. And are over you and the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work sake, and be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, Comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men, See the non render evil for evil unto any man. Whatever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men, Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and everything gives thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. When not the Spirit? Despise, not prophesying. Prove all things. Past that, which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctified you holy. And I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless under the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calls you who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss. I charge you by the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. Drop and take up the 4th chapter. And we find that in that chapter the apostle tells us about the rapture, and then he ends the chapter by saying, wherefore comfort one another with these words. And then they go on to the fifth chapter in regard to the Lord's coming from a different perspective. Now that touched my heart, because today among Christendom most don't know the difference between the rapture and the Lord's coming. And often we walk and we sometimes hear comment that we may say, well our children are with Christians, they should be OK. And sometimes that worries me because what do they believe in just because they profess to be Christian? So here it tells us that we are walking differently. There is a lot of times and seasons. Well there are

those that are still looking for earthly events such as times and seasons. Rather than spiritual things. So we need to be careful and this chapter exhausted to tell us that we are not of this world, we are this. It's interesting in the new translation in chapter 4, verses 15 through 18. Are in parentheses. So if you go back to verse 14 of chapter 4, it says if we believe. That Jesus died and rose again, Even so them also which sleep in Jesus. Will God bring with him? The Thessalonians had lost some of their loved ones in death. And they didn't know, they thought they won't be around when the Lord comes back again. So in verse 14 he says yes, they will be included. They will be there when Even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. So they're going to be included like you say, brother David's in the appearing it's two parts of the Lord's second coming.

Both are part of the second coming, first of all the Rapture, and in that part he will only come, as it says in this chapter. Four, he will descend from heaven with a shout, and he's going to come to the clouds and then we will be raptured. And then it's later on at the end of the great tribulation that he was coming back to planet Earth. He's going to put his feet down on this planet again. And he will come with his Saints. That's called the appearing. Sometimes the revelation, sometimes it's called the manifestation. That's all when He comes back in person. And so you have the distinction. And then verse 15 through 18 of chapter 4 shows how those who are dead in Christ will be included when the Lord comes again in his appearing. So like you say, brother. Dave, this chapter five really begins with. The appearing what is what we know is the appearing in verse 23 of chapter 5. It's the rapture again, isn't it? That's referred to I think. In Acts chapter one, it's interesting that when the Lord rose from the dead and was those 40 days with his disciples in the earth, they were with him and. He they say in verse six Acts 16, when they were therefore were come together, they asked him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel? That's what they were thinking about. The Lord was going to establish his Kingdom. And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons. Which the father has put in his own power. That's in connection. Like Brother Dave said, times and seasons are in connection with his coming when he comes to establish his Kingdom. The end of the great tribulation times. Times and seasons there's nothing to indicate when the Lord is going to rapture us home, but for his coming at his appearing, there is multitudes of signs and. That God gives that the time is getting close and some of those were seen in the world today, the beginnings of them, brethren. But he says here as to the in chapter five, he uses those same 2 words of the times and the seasons. Brethren, you have no need that I write unto you, for yourselves. Know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. So when it's that coming as a thief in the night, that always refers to his appearing, is that right? We notice the language change too in the 14th chapter, verse 17 or those verses. There we find the word we be speaking to you, and He's speaking about we, we which are alive and remain. And I trust that many in this room this afternoon were associated with as we are. So He reminds us here about the times and seasons, but this is not about us. Because another clue to that is the Lord doesn't come for us as a thief in the night when they're not ready. But then when we go on to verse three, we notice a language change from we to they. That's a third party reference, isn't it, for when they shall say peace and safety. And this world is often look for peace. There is no peace in this world, but we're looking for peace. We're looking for safety. We're looking for all these things that are temporal. We want to make sure this world goes on.

Because we claimed it to be ours. But here they for when they say when they when this wall fingers peace and safety, then it's a sudden destruction cometh upon them. And then he, I don't mean to have the time to finish the thought here. And then they remind us. But ye, that's speaking about us again here, brethren are not in darkness that the day should overtake you as a thief. Maybe someone could help us with the difference between a crime? I would just suggest and perhaps it's a simple answer, but what I have appreciated with of that is that. A time tends to be more specific as to an actual. Point in time, whereas a season is a period of time over which something happens, isn't it? And so we speak of the season of spring or the season of summer or something like that. It's a period of time, whereas again, it's not always used that way, but in a general way, a time is when something specific happens, and there are things that the Lord does at a specific time, but there are things that are done over a period of time, and all of it refers to when the Lord comes back to this earth to deal with things. Just as what I would call a simple example, the day of the Lord. Well, the day of the Lord is not one day as we would express it, but it includes the judgments that will take place at the end of the tribulation period. But really the day of the Lord extends throughout the tribulation and includes the judgments at the end, or I should take that back. It includes the whole of the Millennium and includes the judgments that will take place at the end. And so to me, it's seems that the Lord sometimes. Acts by doing something over a period of time, and sometimes acts by doing something at a specific time. State director comment I I thought I'd understand it too that the times and seasons goes together sometimes into certain festivals, religious ceremony, et cetera that man go after. So we'll find that in within that Deuteronomy 1616 three times a year did it go into Jerusalem. So there are fixed times for certain feasts as well. So this is more. Of customs and things that man would want to follow. It says, ye have no need that right unto you. Why not? Because it's in the scriptures, this is relating to prophecy. Now, when Paul wrote the Thessalonians, there was something that he did need to write them about and that was where what has happened to our brethren who have died. We were looking for the Lord to come and now they've died, they've missed it. So that was the subject. They needed clarity, they needed teaching on. There were certain things he did need to write unto them, and that's the point of First Thessalonians. But when he come to chapter five, he says, I don't need to write to you about that because it's already been revealed in the Old Testament. Now, as far as times and seasons of Brother Dave, you may have this in mind that we find that we go to Revelation chapter 12 and 13, for instance. We find that. That that 3 1/2 year period is spoken of. Is it time and times and half a time. We finally spoken of this 42 months. We find it spoken of his 12160 days, very specific time frames and it's connected with the Saints of God and suffering. It's been noted it's brought down to the days 12160 days. The blessed Lord notes the very day that we're going through. So the times and season it is connected with prophecy. No reason to write about it now because it's it's a subject of prophecy.

But what the apostle does in this chapter now takes the appearing of the Lord, and brings it to bear on our present conduct. The proper hope of the church is the Lord's coming for us, but here he takes up the subject of the Lord's coming with us, and that has a practical bearing on our life, our manner of life here in this world, and that's what he takes up in the subsequent verses. It's true, and many Christian circles, that the distinction between these two parts of the Lord's second coming are not clear. The rapture when he comes for us, the church is a heavenly people, and when God. Predestined us to for eternal glory. There was not even a world in existence yet. The church is heavenly in every aspect, so the exit point of the church from planet earth is something that is not detailed in any time or season, but we know that it must be near. But we don't know The point is is to be ready at any time. But then he says here in. Verse two yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. And sometimes I find that believers think that the Lord will come as a thief in the night for us. I sometimes say to them in a simple way. Do you expect a thief at your house and they say no. Are you waiting for a thief? No. Let me ask you another question. Are you waiting for the Lord? Yes. And do you expect the Lord to come? Yes, I say. Well then he won't come for you as a thief. He will come as your heavenly Bridegroom to take you home to glory. But a thief is for those people. Who don't want him to come and don't expect him to come. That for them it will come as a thief. And it's interesting to go through the many scriptures in the New

Testament that speak of his coming as a thief. And it's always in connection with his appearing, never in connection with the Rapture. So it's helpful just to get those things clear in our minds. There are two distinct parts. Of the second coming. Both are part of the second coming. There's another major distinction to that is that the rapture, the Lord come to take us to be with himself when there comes a thief later on, is he's coming to execute judgment. The difference isn't it? And we have gone out of this world rapture out to be with the Lord, and we will return with him to reign. Might be able to go back to the beginning of the book of First Thessalonians, pick up a verse or two that helps get the context for the what's already been said. It's not really different than what's been said, but it's just reinforces it perhaps. These believers in Thessalonica, it would appear, had only been saved a few weeks at the time that this letter was written to them. So the Apostle Paul is writing to brand new. Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and he had to be separated from them, and he was concerned about them. And so he writes them a letter. And in his letter he begins almost at the very beginning. Versus chapter one, verses 9 and 10, he says for they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you. Now here's what characterizes their conversion.

To the Lord Jesus, their salvation and their expectation, he said. Ye turn to God from idols. It's the first thing that happened for them. They turned from all the world's idols. Those were actual idols, but today there are lots of spiritual idols. You turn to God from idols to do what two things to serve the living and true God. And the 2nd and to wait for his son from heaven. And so this was what was given to them. They turned from their former way of life to God. And in turning to God they had now a new occupation to serve the living and true God. These two things ought to characterize any believer who puts their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ today. Whether it was then or now, we would turn to God from the idols that previously. Controlled our lives, not necessarily physical idols, but other things that were the things that controlled our lives, that instead of God and to serve the living and true God. And in addition to that, when we put our trust in the Lord Jesus, it's to wait for his Son from heaven and we wait for one who was here, who died, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus. And then this is what connects the last phrase with what's been said, which delivered us from the coming wrath, or the new translation, or Jesus our deliverer from the coming wrath. All the verses that have been referred to in chapter four and five use the expression the day of the Lord, because the Lord is the one who's coming back to execute judgment, and it will be a day of wrath. And then a day of peace. But when he first comes as Lord, he came as Savior. They had come to know Him as the deliverer from wrath. But now he says you've trusted in him. He's the one that will deliver you from wrath. And so when he comes back, you're not going to be coming under that wrath. He's the one that's already delivered you from it. And in fact, in chapter 4, that's already been read. And in Second Thessalonians chapter one, it's made very clear he can't come back until you're with him because he's delivered you from that wrath. And so when he is the Lord comes back to execute wrath on the earth, you have to be gone. You have to be with him, otherwise it would not be possible for him to. Come back. And so. That's our place. Is to serve the living and true God and to wait for our deliverer as we see the world get worse. Is that a cause for fear? No, it's a cause to serve the living and true God and as he says in in our chapter, to be a light. In a dark place where the light of the world. And so it is for us, brethren, let's, if you will be like the Thessalonians were exhorted to live life intelligently in the understanding of where we are in this season of God's grace. Just to comment on season, it often has to do with some activity that's going on for some period of time. And this should be a fruitful season for God when he's gathering out of the world a heavenly people for himself. But seasons come to an end, and this season will be finished and come to its end, and then those times that God has purposed to come will come. Another distinction to be made between the rapture and the appearing is. That the Rapture is something that is revealed in the New Testament only.

Nothing about the Rapture in the Old Testament. Perhaps you say, well, there's figures of it and that is true. Enoch was taken before the judgment of the flood, and that is in a certain sense a figure of it, but it was not something that was well known. That was known in the Old Testament, whereas the Day of the Lord is something that is spoken of. In a lot of places in the Old Testament, it's very common that. Just look at the book of Joel for a minute. To see that it is a day of terrible judgment. In fact, it will be the most awful judgment this world has ever or will ever know. Joel Chapter 2. Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain. Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord cometh. For it is nigh at hand. A dead darkness and of gloominess, A day of clouds and thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains. A great people, and as strong there have not been ever the like. Neither shall be anymore after it, even to the years of many generations of fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth. The land that's the land of Israel is as the Garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness. Yay. And nothing shall escape them. So it's a awful day of judgment. The day of the Lord is a day when the Lord Jesus is coming back to exercise. His lordship in the earth. And so it will include awful judgment that is mentioned here in our chapter 5 says. When they shall say, verse 3 peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with. As travelled upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. So it's a day of judgment and the day of the Lord is spoken of in both testaments. And it's really interesting to go through. The book of Isaiah speaks a lot of it, brethren. So here, he says. That's for those that will stay here in this world after the rapture. They're going to suffer the day of the Lord. Judgment and destruction is not really the subject here, but rather to encourage the Catalonian Saints, which really in turn to us too, that we're not children. We are children of light. Do we? Do we value that? As he reminds us here, we are children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. We have to shine for him. We have a different character than the children of this world. It was coming to earlier how things seemed to get so dark around us. We've got all the problems and difficulties we get. We, we can easily be depiled with all the, all the, the immoralities around us. But we have to shine. And in dark plays now, sometimes it's difficult to shine, but sometimes in the sense the darker the time, I remember, I think an old writer of old quitted, he said the darker the time. The brighter the small testimony. So if you can picture yourself in a dark room and I told this story before we, we went through a cave one time for the children. You crawled through a few caverns and then we entered this big room. And then remember the man said blow your candles out or I should have mentioned we weren't allowed flashlight. We had a pink and welded sideway with a candle in it. It took a bit of time to get accustomed to that light and he had everyone blow the light out. It was so dark you couldn't see your fingers in front of your eyeballs.

And then he lit a match. That's it, just a match. And the whole room lit up because he was so dark. So the darker the time sometimes the brighter the testimony. We all have a sense of and night. Certain things characterized the day. Certain things characterized the night. When the Lord Jesus came into the world, he presented himself. As I am the light of the world. The world said we will not have this man released unto us, Bravos. And so when the Lord Jesus, the light of the world left the world, the world is a system of things became a dark place and it's continued. This Thessalonians were very at the very beginning. For most of the history of the Church on earth. But the earth at that point was looked at as in night, because the light of day was not there and the person of the Lord Jesus. When the Lord Jesus returns as the Son of righteousness, then the world will be in day. The 1000 years of the coming Millennium will be a day of light and a day of righteousness and will fill the whole earth. But it's important for us to recognize as believers in the Lord Jesus. The day in which we live is the night, and we have to live as children of day in the time of night. And So what does the world have for its life? Where's the light in the neighborhood in which you live? It's in the believer. Each one of us on the street corner in which God has placed us has given us the responsibility of being light. We're

not the sun as the Lord is, but each one of us sometimes were looked at as a star. In the view of Genesis one, we're looked at as light, light bearers and actually when you get to the revelation, the church before the Lord starts the period of the day of the Lord in in the revelation, the light that was in the world during the night is seen in chapters 2 and three where he reviews. How did the Church fulfill its responsibility? Of being the light of the world during its night. Sadly. That review ends in him having to say I can't use you anymore. You are have failed to be the light that you should be. And so as a testimony for me and the earth, I have to put you aside. And that's why it ends up in Laodicea being put aside as a light bearer for the Lord in a in its period of night. And then the question is raised, who's worthy now to do something? And the worthy Lamb of God is identified in chapter 5. As the one who can and then we see the activity in chapter 6 on of what is going to be the tribulation and the activities of the day of the Lord. And so it will be. But in here, as it says to the saying to the the Saints, you're the you're the children of the day. You're not of the night, you're not of the darkness. And so let's not sleep. Let's be sober. Let's live with an understanding of the day in which we live. Otherwise, there's the danger of going to sleep or the danger of going into the darkness ourselves and the character of which we live our lives, that is living with the world. It is a solemn thing, isn't it, that it is a solemn thing that when the Lord comes, evidently the disappearance of millions of people will have at least in an outward way, an effect on this world. But yet it says here in verse three, when they shall say peace and safety whatever.

Explanation. Satan will have whatever lie he will have, he will somehow be able to persuade men. Don't worry, everything's going to be all right. Everything's going to carry on. And I believe for myself that there will be a measure of peace and prosperity in that day. There are many predictions today about how things can fall apart, how economies can fail. How different events could cause a big breakdown in this world? Humanly speaking, it could certainly happen, but I believe the Lord will see to it that there is something that Satan can latch onto that he will lull men to sleep with, just as they are now very, very solemn to think about it. And that, you might say, points out the basis for the exhortations that. Start out with verse 4. Need two things that we need to think about in this connection. One is sleep and the other is drunkenness. Nothing wrong with sleep and the material sense of it, but it's speaking about. Being asleep spiritually and I sometimes say. If a person is asleep on the floor, I can speak to him. Hey you. And he's not going to respond. Why doesn't he respond? He has life, but he's not alert. And sometimes, brethren, we can be very alert as to material things in this world that affect us personally, our business, our houses, our homes, our families, our cars. But when it comes to the Lord's things. We're not alert. That's what sleep is. To not being alert to the Lord. And so we're told not to sleep. Let us not sleep, as do others. But let us watch. So the contrast to sleeping is watching. You know how sleep can overpower you if you. Let it. It's a hard thing to resist. So in these days, lots of people are going to sleep, Brethren, I really believe. I must say some time ago I heard testimony on some of our brethren in the Muslim countries and how they without fear are carrying the gospel forward, and I think of us over here in the United States. And sometimes we think if we want to go to meeting or we go. If we don't want to go, we don't go. And justice hit me, Brethren, are we asleep? As to the Lord's interests, I fear that I can be asleep. And I say, brother, if you see me asleep, please come and give me a shake. I want to be alert for that momentous time when the Lord comes again. So let us not sleep. But the other part is to not be drunken. What is drunkenness? It's being under the influence. Perhaps not with alcohol, but under the influence of present things. You can be under the influence of sports, nothing wrong with sports in themselves, but you get under the power of that to the point you're thinking only about that. Don't be drunken. Don't be under the influence. Other people get under the influence of music. There's a lot of things in this present world that it's easy to become get under the influence of them. So we need to be alert. The Lord's coming. And justice to think, brethren, I've often wondered, brethren, I honestly believe it's true that the moment we step across into the presence of the Lord Jesus and see him in all his glory, we're going to say, what was I doing down there in the earth? I was just fooling around. I didn't hardly put any importance to the Lord's things. When He's glorious, He's going to fill the whole universe with his glory and we're going to be with him, associated with him.

Oh, how easy it is to get under the influence of present things. When I see the way the Lord's blessing in other parts of the world, brethren, I say what's happening up here? Materialism has had a tremendous influence on us and has dulled the testimony up here. It's self pleasing up here and I, I have to say I'm not pointing the finger anywhere else about myself because I know I've been affected by it. But that's part of what it is. Drunkenness is to get under the influence of present things to the point that I'm not acting. As a Christian ought to act. Sometimes too, it can go to the other extreme as well. I was thinking of later to see how they became neither cold nor hot. We'll get into that influence. We get influenced by that too, don't we? We don't want to make any opinion on anything. We don't stand for anything from the Word of God. And there's an old phrase, you don't stand for anything, then you'll fall for everything. It's so easy not to make a stand, especially about Christianity. We find in our society that they want you to agree with them. All these terrible immoralities that they mentioned, if you speak up against it, they were saying you hate them. The word of God is the guide and we have to uphold that. So sometimes we became neither hot nor cold and then we find a Lord said he didn't like that neither and he spewed them out in the mouth. I like to quote a verse. This sounds very and I want to say I'm not reading this verse. In mind but this first been on my heart. I ordered that at the last conference. Please if you heard it please let me do it again. In the book of Ezekiel chapter 33 I find I find myself falling to this position for many years by just sitting and say how nice and that nothing happens. Ezekiel chapter 33. I read this to for your encouragement. Verse 31. Ezekiel Chapter 33. Verse 31. And and they come unto they as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them. For with the mouth they show much love, but with the heart goeth after their covetousness. And lo, thou art unto them as a lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice. And can play well on an instrument, for they hear thy words, but they do them not. I read it more to say, do we fall into that condition sometimes? Have you told someone there was such such lovely address they gave or the comments they have made but. Did any of this affect your hearts? Do what do is an interesting word. You'll find scripture use that a lot. 2 letters do this do in remembrance of me. Well, does everybody do it? And I know there are some in this room. Would not do as the Lord would request us to do tomorrow morning if the Lord needs us here. If you go through scriptures, there are various doves. We Christianity is an action, isn't it? We're to do not just faith alone, faith and work together. So today is in contrast to night as light is in contrast to darkness. We often speak of the increasing darkness, morally and spiritually, of the day that we're living in. I like to read a verse over in first John chapter 2 because I believe it gives us the flip side of the same coin. First John, chapter 2. Read well. Read from verse seven, brother, and I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which he had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you have heard from the beginning. Now verse eight again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you, because the darkness is past, or the darkness is passing.

And the true light now shineth. Well, you might notice on verse 7, the old commandment is not the law of Moses. The old commandment was the words the Lord Jesus spoke to His disciples here in His public ministry. And now John is Speaking of the new commandment, his exhortation to believers. Now which thing is true in him and in you? We walk in the light, that is, we walk in the light of God revealed. First, John gives us the emphasis. It is the manifestation of eternal life in the Saints of God. That light is now true in us, but it says because the

darkness is passing now, isn't that an encouragement to us? Because we think of the darkness getting worse, but in the light of first John, the darkness is passing. That true light has already shined fully in Christ. It shines now in the believers, The life of Christ manifested, and it's in passing, and it's in view of the coming day when that light will be manifested in all of its fullness. There's a verse in Proverbs chapter 4 we're all familiar with, but I enjoy it in this connection. Proverbs, chapter 4. And verse 18. But the path of the just. Is as the shining light that shineth more and more. Unto the perfect day for the Darby rights renders it. But the path of the righteous is as the shining light going on and brightening. Until the day be fully come. And so it's all true that it is getting darker. But on the other hand, as we take these things up in the ways of God, the day is upon us, and the day it is brightening as it goes on the path of the just is as the shining light that goes on and brightens until the day before He come, And so on the path of the believer here in the presence of this darkness, should shine more and more. Because he was the true light, and it is the reflection of that light in us that that brightness. And so we really do need to be in the enjoyment of him for his light to shine forth. That doesn't set aside responsibility, but there's energy. In in being, in the enjoyment of Christ. Some solemn thing. To recognize that if the day is getting darker, it's getting darker because the light of Christianity is getting dimmer. We look at the conditions of the world as getting worse and we look at it that way as it's getting darker and darker and that there's truth in that, but the light of the world, The Lord Jesus is not here, but he left his people in his place to give light in testimony for himself to the world, as you have again in Revelation 2 and three. But the sadness of it is, is when. The believers take up as they were warned here in First Thessalonians 5 are exhorted not to if. You are not shining in your personal life. Than where you are is darker. If I'm not shining as given to me where I am, then my street corner is darker. And it's a solemn thing to think that when we look around us and talk about darkness, we might not look at the other side of it and recognize the importance of being light for the Lord. And if we're not, then we have added to what's called the darkness. The side of it is as he says. Not to sleep and then we sleep and verses 6 and seven that have been spoken to, but then he speaks about us in verse eight. He says let us who are of the day we belong to the day we don't belong to the night, we belong to the time an identification with our Son of righteousness and it says.

Putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for in helmet the hope of salvation. There are three things mentioned there, Faith and hope and love. Now go back to chapter one and see what it is that characterized these new believers. And their lives. It says in verse three of chapter one, remembering without ceasing. This is Paul in his prayer remembering them without ceasing their what? Work of faith. Labor of love and patience of hope. In our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God our Father. And so there were three things that characterized normal, proper Christian life. There are three things that ought to characterize your daily life and mine. It's the work of faith. The labor of love and the patience of hope. And so, as we already had, they had turned from idols. The idols of dumb, idols of darkness. To serve the living and true God. How did they serve Him? By the work of faith and the labor of love. And they had the hope. And so it was. The hope was to wait for His Son from heaven. And if you give up those things, you've given up the very things that protect. The life and so if the turning to God from idols to serve the living and true God, he says. What do we need? We need the breastplate that protects the heart. And is that which preserves in connection with faith and love, our hearts, our source of love, and so on, and in the helmet the hope of salvation. The helmet protects the head. And when we lose the present enjoyment of our hope. Because we don't have our helmets on, if you will, to protect us from the world's thoughts, which are contrary to God's thoughts, and we give up the protection of the breastplate of faith and love. Then we're going to go in with the world. We're going to walk in the darkness, and we won't have the joy and the comfort and the present service that is to characterize our lives now. Perhaps add more things to that list and chapter 2. And versus. 14 and 1514 and 15. It says, do all things without murmuring and disputing, that you may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation. This is a. Talking about moral darkness in the world. Among whom you shine as lights in the world. When the body of Christ, when members of the body of Christ are in constant argument with each other, that hinders the light in this world as well. I remember a number of years ago someone spoke at a Sunday school. I like those Sunday school because often the lessons are simple and it seems to stay in your mind longer. And this brother asked the children. He said, have you seen St. Lights? And of course every one of the children put their hands up and say yes. He said, have you ever seen St. Lights in the whole city put into one corner? So why? It doesn't make sense, but it sure makes it very bright. His point was that a light is to be distributed evenly through our all the areas to shine. It may not be as bright as all the light in one spot, but it's a lot more useful. So the Lord put us into various corners, for lack of a word. So we think of this room. Here we have many lights shining as if it was under a bushel. No one out there can see us in it. And as a word of encouragement.

In a few days you will be going home away from your friends and the influence you have with your brethren. Are you light for the remain, shining for your friends? And I think our brother brought that point out very nicely that why is there darkness around us? Is there Bush old? Did we put our light under a bushel and it's not shiny? Or have you let it's not let the light shine as we ought to? Brother Bill, you spoke about the breastplate of righteousness in your meeting here. It's the breastplate of faith and love. How do you fit those two together? Well, I suppose that what we get here was written to very new believers, wasn't it? We know that when Paul went to Thessalonica, he was there probably less than a month. It says 3 Sabbath days, so he couldn't have been there very long and. We might say Paul crammed an awful lot of teaching into that time period. He brought them right out of idolatry, right out of heathenism, into the light of the gospel. But he had also given them a good deal of instruction as to the Lord's coming and what would happen and so on. And as Dawn was mentioning, the three things that he brought before them very clearly were faith and hope and love. And so those things are. Very necessary for the new believer. They're necessary for all of us. And in that sense, the breastplate is composed of faith and love, and the helmet is the hope of salvation. But in Ephesians, which is, as we mentioned, the highest truth that God gives us concerning the believers blessings during this time of His grace, it's a little different, isn't it? Because they were seen as risen and seated at heavenly places. And so it's a breastplate of righteousness and a helmet of salvation. It's necessary that there be a walk and that there be the definite security of where that salvation is and where it's taking us. And it's not merely the hope of the Lord's coming, but all the ramifications of it that protect us, isn't it? And so the use of those pieces of the armor here is perhaps more suitable for new believers. That perhaps were not so well instructed, but the others are. You might say a little bit more advanced in Christianity, and to bring before them the importance of being maintained in the heavenly places and in the enjoyment of it. Is that the way you would see it? Faith and love, if they're in operation, will certainly produce righteousness. One thing. And here, like you say, in connection with the helmet of salvation, it's with a specific view of the Lords coming. And so it's the hope of salvation or as in Ephesians, it's it's the merely the helmet of salvation which is more inclusive of all our earthly pathway going through this world. We know that in the Lord Jesus we have complete salvation through it all. Wonder if we have these practical working out of the helmet of the hope of salvation at the end of Romans chapter 13. Romans, 1311. And that knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believe. Clearly this is in reference to the Lord's coming. We have the salvation of our souls, and this is not a practical salvation. It's something we're still waiting. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. So here is the armor of light that while we think of light often as bearing witness. It's and it's also a great defense against this, the armor of light. The light will repel the darkness. And so we're to cast off the works of darkness. That's a little bit more than as we sometimes sing dropping off like autumn leaves. That's more of an act of putting it away. He said, well, let these go unto the Lord and these things will fall off. Well, that may be, but we we can't sometimes we need to be a little bit more energetic. And putting away from us the things of darkness, and using it rather to put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the life. That is the life that this world should see in US. The hope of salvation doesn't imply a question concerning its reality, does it? No, we use Hope Indiana a different way, don't we do, John? In many cases, when we speak of hope, there's an element of uncertainty as to it. But the only uncertainty as to this hope is the timing, not as to the actual. Fact of it's going to take place. When we speak of hope, we often use a matter of uncertainty as to whether it will happen or not. But here there's no question of of that. It's merely a matter of timing. Save 234. 234.

Kentucky Conference: 2019, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-28

Reading

Lord, we rejoice. Lord, we rejoice. Would verse 19 be about right? Sure, First Thessalonians chapter 5 and verse 16. Rejoice evermore, Pray without ceasing, and everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit, despise not prophesying, Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit. And soul and body be preserved blameless under the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss. Charge you by the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Since we started at verse 16, I could just make a comment on verse 1617 and 18. I did not have the privilege of knowing our brother Harry Hayhoe, who I've heard quoted many times and I've enjoyed. When I was a young man, there was a little track maybe still around called sentence sermons. And as I recall in that little paper there is an expression, a brother, hey, oh, that says. That joy will ever rise in proportion to prayer and Thanksgiving. That's verses 1617 and 18. Rejoice evermore. Joy will ever rise in proportion to verse 17 prayer and verse 18 Thanksgiving. And so has often been said, or maybe not often enough, that our testimony to the world is our joy in Christ. That might be another quote from our late brother, but how is the key to joy? There is something that is so disheartening and that is to seek not a sober Christian now. But an unhappy Christian? There's a big difference between being sober and walking in a sober way and being unhappy. But don't we often find that the reason there are unhappy believers is these two components are lacking in their life. They're lacking more specifically in my life. If there is not that prayer in Thanksgiving, in everything, give thanks. That is the key. The three great things to joy is giving Thanksgiving and forgiving. Now in Ephesians, it says a little bit different thought there. It's not giving thanks in in everything giving thanks, but it's giving thanks always for all things. Well, you say, how can that be? How can we thank the Lord for something? Sinful or sad or tragic, that happened. Well, the verse doesn't end there, it says. Unto the God and Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, we give thanks for all things as qualified and defined in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, so for all things, but also here in all things. And again, what a simple yet profound. Guidance for us. If there's joy lacking in our life, we need to focus on verse 17 and verse 18. And if we don't feel thankful, thank the Lord anyway. And that will produce joy and Thanksgiving in our hearts. Matthew Chapter 11 when cities had. Rejected him. A Verse 24 He says, But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee at that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because I was hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, or so it seemed good in thy sight. One overall isn't there. We can always thank him. When I was a boy, my 18 year old uncle drowned. And my Uncle Bob, who's now turned 91, last Thursday. He was a dear Christian then, and he went by grandfather's bedside and thanked the Lord. For taking Uncle Marvin. And that just gave grandpa more strength to be able to get up and even attend the funeral. He had a really bad heart. But giving thanks in all things can be at times. Difficult and take grace to do so. Verses in the Bible with two words in them. And I think you all remember the other is Jesus wept and here is rejoice evermore. Beautiful to put the two together. But I appreciate what you give Brother Bill. Pray in the Darby translation. It's a two word verse two. Pray unceasingly. It's to be the continual attitude of our hearts, the sense that the Lord is at our side, and to be conversing with Him. All the time. The sense of His presence with us. Oh, how important that is. Prayer, brethren, I do believe that we don't put enough time to real intentional prayer.

It's so easy in our busy, distracted lives to not give time in the Lord's presence to talk to Him. And. I remember a quote by Martin Luther, he said I have so much to do every day. I dare not take any less than three hours to pray. No wonder that man had a tremendous influence on. The circles in which he lived at that time. But prayer is so important. Individual prayer. Assembly prayer. Family prayer. We have those mentioned in scripture and we need to. Exercise them. But here it is. Pray unceasingly. We are in a spiritual warfare, and our brother Bill on Saturday mentioned that in Ephesians 6. I just want to go back to that to read it because it goes right along with what we're saying. Verse 18. Of Ephesians 6 praying. Always. With all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching there into with all perseverance and supplication for All Saints. There's several things there that call my attention that word supplication. Can you explain that to us a little bit, Bill? Well, I have always looked at it as if prayer was something in which I should have. As you just said a moment ago, it should be my attitude at all times in my life, even if I don't have any special burden on my heart at the time, or any special difficulty to take to the Lord, either on my own behalf or someone else. I should be in an attitude of prayer. But sometimes there are particularly heavy burdens that weigh on us, aren't there? And they should. And in that case, supplication seems to me to be. A deeper thing, it's an imploring the Lord a getting into a real almost wrestling in prayer for a particular need. Realizing of course that as many will recognize the source of this quotation, that prayer ultimately is based on the wonderful privilege of our having common interests with God. And if I have a sense in my soul that what I am supplicating about. I can pray. I Maybe it's, and I don't want to get into a long dissertation on it, but I've linked it up with the fact that enrollments 8. We have the Spirit making intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. That is, there is the feeling there of the difficulties with which we are occupied, and in supplication I am. In that sense, taking all that before the Lord, does that commend itself? And that verse in Romans 8 that you mentioned with groanings which cannot be uttered. There are things that we get before the Lord about that are so difficult we don't actually know what or how to ask, do we? And I often think sometimes all you can do is groan. And God knows our hearts. And he takes it. The Spirit of God intercedes, and he is within us. And he intercedes with groanings which cannot be uttered. So I've often wondered, people have said, why should we supplicate? Which is more intense pleading with God, when God is going to do his own will in the end? What's the

purpose of us supplicating? And it's just come to me so much what you mentioned there, Bill that.

In prayer and supplication, we get into God's thoughts about His purposes. And when I ask, for example, for the salvation of some soul. God's desire. Does he desire the salvation of that soul? He desires it even more than I do. Then why should I ask? Because God wants me to be in the curd of his thoughts about it. And I think in that way we are in the current of his thoughts. Isn't it beautiful to think about, brethren, how God wants fellowship with us? And so prayer is such an important thing. I often remember our brother, late brother Clem Buchanan. Who said long prayers for the closet? Short prayers for the prayer meeting? And I think that was a good statement. And we do need to be conscious that when we are in a prayer meeting that there are others there and that they should be exercised to pray as well. But do we know what it means to get into the closet, have our own place, a prayer with the Lord and to get there and to deliberately, brethren, I have to say I find prayer real work. It's not easy for me. I kneel down my particular place, and I find my mind wanders off in One Direction and up in another direction, and I have to bring in those stray thoughts and concentrate. Here I am, kneeling in a particular place in my house, but really before the throne of God in heaven. And to think of the tremendous privilege there before that throne are those millions of angels attending him. And they opened ranks so that I can go right straight before the throne. What a privilege. What a tremendous privilege. Do we value it properly? I I just fear we don't. Someone was approached once, a man was approached a believer and asked by someone who didn't really know the value of prayer and said, do you really think that when you pray you actually change God's mind about what he's going to do? And his answer was, oh, he said, you're holding the stick by the wrong end. He said, when I get into the Lord's presence and pray. It's usually I that get changed, not the Lord, and that's very, very true. And I would just suggest that in that sense these verses are connected because the next scripture says. Quench not the Spirit. If I come before the Lord in prayer, we know, and we can be thankful for it. That when. That prayer goes up to the Lord. It does not go perhaps, or let me take out the Word, perhaps, it does not go in the imperfect way in which I see the need. It goes up according to the one who searcheth the hearts and knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession according to the will of God, but on the other end. If I get into the Lord's presence in prayer, am I willing to let the Spirit change my mind, change my thoughts, change my outlook? We often talk about quenching the Spirit in connection with taking part in an assembly meeting, and that is certainly included. But I believe here it's a much broader thing than that. We are all if we're truly saved and dwelt with the Spirit of God. And we know that the Spirit dwells here on earth during this time of God's grace, dwells collectively among believers as the House of God. And so we have the Spirit of God working both in our hearts individually and then working collectively among believers. And in that sense despising, not prophesying, says despise not prophesying. That also has the thought of not quenching the Spirit if the Spirit in Brother Lemoine.

Speak something and I say, oh boy, I don't like that. I don't want to hear that. Then I'm quenching the spirit and I'm denying what the Lord is seeking to bring home to my soul. And so it has a multifaceted application, doesn't it? If I neglect the reading of the Word of God, would that be quenching the Spirit? I hadn't thought of it that way, but I suppose it would because I should be reading the word of God. Yes. I could rather bear with me. We've said these verses are all lengthened. The string of verses that we started with starts with rejoice evermore. I'd like to just say one more thing about rejoicing, which is linked with all this and with quenching the Spirit to turn to Romans chapter 15. Wow. Romans back at 15. Verse 13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing joy in believing and turn to Philippians chapter one. And verse 25. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide to continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith. Before we got too far from that verse, I wanted to stress. That joy is a fruit of the spirit. If we quench the spirit, we're not going to have joy. It's not a feeling. We often look at ourselves and we say, I don't feel very joyful, but it's not joy. It's not a feeling. Happiness is a feeling. Joy is a fruit of the spirit and it's encouraged by faith. It's developed by faith. And so I just wanted to. Get that cleared. If I'm not if I'm not joyful, then it's I've been neglecting. Believing in the Lord. Maybe just a further thought on on supplication, if we could look at Luke, Luke 11 for a moment. In Luke 11, the disciples come to the Lord. In the first verse and notice what they don't say. They don't come to the Lord and say. Teach us how to pray. They say teach us to pray. Which is. More the difficulty that we face than knowing how to pray. But then as we go down through the portion, we've all enjoyed Mr. Mcintosh's discourse on this portion where in the fifth verse he says, you know, we go to the Lord as our friend. We're very specific. This one says lend and he just doesn't say lend in a general way. He says lend me and then he just doesn't say I need some bread but he's very specific as to the bread. He says lend ME3 loaves but then he goes on to say. And this is often what I think we're faced with, He says here for a friend of mine and his journey has come to me and I have nothing to set before him. So often we, we have a burden on our heart and we just have a hard time to engage. We, we have someone on our heart and, and, and we draw alongside and we just, we just have nothing to set before them that is able to alleviate the burden. Both on their hearts and on our own. But if we go to the previous chapter, and I appreciated this being taken up in the in the in the gospel mentioning in the gospel, but in the previous chapter, we we have this Samaritan that that comes to the ditch.

And he sees the man in the ditch. And I've so enjoyed the wording here because in Luke 10, and let's look at the 31St verse, it says there by chance there came down a certain priest that way and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise, the Levis Levite, when he was at the place, he came and looked on him and he passed on the other side. But a certain Samaritan uneasy journey, he came where he was and when he saw him, he had compassion on him. So we can picture the scene here, the Samaritan, he comes right to where the man is. But then it says and he went to him. How can you go to someone if you're already there? And I think that's the point. Is we can draw alongside of someone. And we're right there. But in spirit and in feeling and trying to get. Trying to get to find out what's going on underneath. We're just miles apart. And I believe that supplication is the step between these two points. Where this American comes where he was, but he needed a further step and supplication is that further step where? There's a friend of mine in his journey, he's come to me. I have nothing to set before him. We just, we're right there and our spirit is there and we want to engage. We want to help. But we just can't. And it's that next step of being, of being right where the person is. But then it says and he went to him and that is what's needed. And it takes supplication to do that. Richard says in my presence is fullness of joy. At thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore. We cannot truly in our spirit be in the presence of God without joy. It's his place and his desire that we dwell. The Lord Jesus dwelt in the bosom of the Father, and dwelling there, He had the constant place and source from which joy comes. And so the rejoicing evermore is often connected with, Is there anything that's hindering me from the constant enjoyment of the presence of God and being before Him? And so when we're exhorted to rejoice evermore, it's that we might ever be. Consciously in our daily life as we go through it moment by moment. In the constant enjoyment of his presence. And our place with Him there is the Lord dwelt in his bosom, so we too may enjoy that same. Relationship and when it says pray without ceasing, in addition to what's been said, there is also a sense. Of constant dependence. Were not sufficient in ourselves, for ourselves or for anyone else. We have to gradually learn that in me, I can't do it, no matter how little it is. We, the tendency of prayer is to say, well, I can do this, that and the other and we do it. We don't even think about praying, we just do it. But there are other things that we have some sense in US. I can't handle this. And so that's when we tend to turn to prayer. And so often our activity of prayer is connected with things that we have a conscious sense we can't do for ourselves or for somebody else. And so we pray about them and and that rightly we're expressing

dependence. But in the prey without ceasing to me has in addition to it the sense that I can't do anything. First thing comes to my mind I. Just getting up in the morning and going through the morning routine from the moment our eyes are opened in a real sense of the word, we need to have the conscious sense of dependence. It's don't just start praying, you know, okay, I've got up, I've brushed my teeth, I've washed my hands or whatever the routine is. Now I'm going to have a time of reading the word in prayer. It's well if when we wake up, one of the first conscious senses we have is to.

Consciously come into the presence of God. And begin the day with God before we ever get out of bed, before we ever start into any routine that there might be nothing. That's between our soul and God. So then when it says in everything, give thanks to me, there's not only dependence that should be characteristic of our beings, but the other thing that's often been said. This submission. And in what said here and everything, give thanks. I can give thanks and everything if I truly am submissive to God. It's when there is some conflict between my will and the will of God that I'm unwilling to submit to Him in. Then there's going to be difficulty in prayer. There's going to be difficulty in my behavior and everything else. But if there is true submission in everything, then we can truly in our hearts, whether we understand it or not, we can submit to it because connected with that as well is. Our quote There seems to be days of quoting other people. Every failure of Saint or Sinner springs from unbelief in the goodness that's in the heart of God for us. That's another very hajo. But I will say on his behalf, most of his sayings came from his own reading of writings. So they didn't. Many of them didn't originate with him. But I'll repeat that if you haven't heard it. Every failure. Whether of Saints or Sinner springs from unbelief. In the goodness that's in the heart of God toward us, and consequently in everything, give thanks. If there is no unbelief in what's God's heart is toward us, then there can be submission. And if there's submission, there can be giving of thanks for everything, because there is the confidence that everything that originates in the heart of God or that God allows. As a purpose of good in it, and so I can give thanks for it. Whether I have any understanding of the terrible tragedy, as we call it, that occurred or not, I can give thanks. And so it then says, for this is the will of God. The giving of thanks is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. And then I connected in my own soul with quench, not the Spirit in the sense that the Spirit is quenched. Or can be quenched when there is a divergent of will between my soul and God and then I act in myself will in some way that is a hindrance to what the Spirit is doing. But if there is truly. A submission of the of the previous things, then they will help me not to act in my own will. And I will that is a contrary to the will of the Spirit of God, and in that way oppose it and hinder it. And so if it's God's will that another brother do something and I do it instead of that brother, that wasn't the will of the Spirit and I hindered the Spirit and so on. And as it's often been said, it's we the examples quite often are given in connection with in a meeting. When we're together like we are right now, but it takes place in every aspect of life. Don, you touched on it, I believe, but there's the other scripture exercisation not to grieve the Spirit of God or by ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Could you, could you give us a word on the difference between quenching the Spirit and grieving the Spirit? Of God when I sin. But I quench the Spirit of God when I hinder its working by self will. But it this if there's sin in my life, it's a grief to the Spirit of God who dwells in me and.

The Holy Spirit of God, for me to do something contrary to God in sin is a grief. To the Holy Spirit that dwells in my body and will remain in me. And so I think the aspect specifically of grieving is what I do when I I act in an act of sin. It's a grief to God dwelling in me by the Spirit to do anything that is against what God is in His Holiness, in his love, in his truth and to. If. I can only appreciate this one example that that I would help helps me A brother in Michigan many many years ago worked in an automobile plant and he was a well known among his fellow workers as a being a Christian and so on a break one time, some of the workers kind of gathered around him to tell a dirty story, as we would call it and. They, he said to the men. I live in the presence of God. And that had a spiritual weight with them that they stopped trying to defile him by what they were a dirty joke. Whatever. Would to God that that his expression be ever with us. I dwell in the presence of God. And every single act that I do or every single thought that I have. Is in the immediate presence of the Spirit of God. So May God help us to live in that sense of His presence that we do not grieve Him. Ephesians 4 where it says that brother John. Be good to read those verses, perhaps Ephesians 4 and verse 29 it says let no corrupt communication pro ceed out of your mouth. But that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace into the hearers, and grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed into the day of redemption. Then it continues, Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice, and be kind one to another, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ sake of forgiving you. Another brother has put it in this way that we grieve the Spirit of God when we do those things he tells us not to do. We quench the Spirit of God when we don't do what the Spirit of God leads us to do. So those are things that can be chewed on. I'd like to go back to verse 18 a minute about in everything given thanks and. Brother Bill mentioned that verse in. Ephesians 5 that says giving thanks always for all things. I must say, brethren, I find it a challenge to do that because there's some things that just go against the grain in our thoughts and to be able to stop when something has happened and to be able to say thank you Lord. I must say. I find it's a struggle in my soul at times. Thank you Lord. How can I say thank you Lord, when things are so messed up? And I go back to that verse that is so well known in Ephesians or in Romans 8. All things work together for good to them that love God. And then that last part we often leave out to them, who are the called according to His purpose. In other words, God has purpose in everything that happens in our lives and often we do not see those purposes.

Right away, but God's purposes were formed in that eternal past. His eternal purpose of blessing and do you think? He's going to be frustrated in his purposes of blessing. No, not really. My comprehension of those purposes is extremely limited and so OFT times I don't understand and things happen in my life that are different than I thought would happen. But to be able to stop and say thank you Lord. In everything, give thanks, for this is the will of God. And I suggest Don it is the IT is the Lord's will that we give thanks. But even what is permitted, and I like to put it in this way, that the work of redemption has set us so in the favor of God, that even those things that are negative in our life can only work in the end. Our own blessing and to be able to accept it from the hand of God. Brings peace. I see people sometimes when they have things happen that are negative, they're wrestling against it, they're wrestling with it. We need to recognize the hand of the Lord and to say thank you, Lord, and to accept his hand in what's happened to us, and that will bring peace. And I find that that does bring peace when we simply accept it. Just make one more comment and it's come home to my soul this way. I would suggest there's a reason why it says in Thessalonians to give thanks in all things and in Ephesians to give thanks for all things. They were two different companies. The Thessalonians were new believers and sometimes when a very difficult event occurs in our lives, and I speak from my own experience. I wasn't, if I could say it this way, a mature enough Christian to give thanks for it. I thank God that I can honestly say there was always the giving thanks in all things. I believe there was a submission to the will of God, but the overwhelming difficulty and the overwhelming grief sometimes made it difficult to give thanks for it. But then the Ephesians, they were those who received the highest truth that God ever gave as to the believers blessings. And when we're risen and seated in heavenly places in Christ and enjoying that place. Then I believe we can more likely give thanks for all things. The one who can always give thanks in all things will perhaps give thanks for that thing sometime down the road as it comes home to our souls. What the Lord is doing as the lesson that we need to learn, or the blessing that we get from it comes home to our

souls. Then we can give thanks for it. But I can't always give thanks for it right away. You can always give thanks in all things. Further comment. God is God and God knows all things, and he says my ways are not your ways, and my thoughts are not your thoughts. God's management of the affairs of this earth and the billions of people that are on it and the interactions of the lives of those people is not subject to God explaining every detail of every action and all the interactions of what He's doing in every life, including our own, including our interaction. We never know all the facts and the details about what God is doing. Even in our personal lives and how things happen that affect us. And so it's well for us to recognize my ways are not your ways and my thoughts are not your thoughts. Because so easily we think that what we need is to understand what God is doing in order to give thanks about it or to accept it.

I don't believe that's the intent. God says, have I communicated to you adequately that you know my heart? And if you know my heart, you can accept everything without understanding, Or if I choose to or you need to know, I'll tell you. But we honor God. By trusting him. And that's the root we honor God when we trust him. And if we what God wants us to learn isn't so much the details of what he's doing in every respect, but he wants us to know his heart. And in order that that is so, he has given us eternal life and that life is perfect. It's the life of Christ. And so. It has the divine character of love. In it, and that's God's heart of love, we also learn that God is perfect in light and holiness, and that also is given to us by the life that we have. And consequently God has said to us, I have given to you that which is necessary for you to know me as light and love. In my very character and essence. And if we have that, then we can fulfill all these exhortations without regard to whether or not we understand what he's doing in a particular instance or or way. And it's the character. I'll make one more comment about it. It's the character of Christianity in contrast to Judaism. That's why James. Said Until I see him, I will not believe. That is the Jewish side of things, and in the Millennium or in the Tribulation, when the earthly people are restored in their relationship to their Messiah, that process of restoration, they'll look at the wounds in his hands, and then they'll recognize Him as to who He was, and they will see Him, and that will confirm their belief. But for us, we live in a time and in a relationship which is based on faith, not sight. It's based on a faith that doesn't require. Explanations of every detail of what God is doing. It is based on depending by the direction of the Word of God and the Spirit of God to be able to act in submission and conformity to His will. So I say these things particularly to the intent that we not think we have to understand in order to give thanks in all things. That what he wants us to understand is one thing. His heart himself. To know him, and if we know him, we can accept that his understanding and how he acts is beyond our many things He's we're not going to know in this life at least. Having not paid, we rejoice with joy unspeakable. Matthew 11 You know, we often. Read these verses and. Verse 27 says, All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any man the father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him, come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. We often use that in connection with the gospel. But how is it with us as to our walk and take my yoke upon you and learn of me? Well, he just. Had spoken of that wondrous relationship with father and son and. For I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy. My burden is light. That's a big lesson for us, isn't it, to walk so with the Father in Psalm 43, verse three. And it says, Oh, send out thy light.

And thy true. Our Lord Jesus says I am the light of the world. Ye that followeth me shall not walk in darkness. And thy truth, I am the way, the truth. And the light, what a man has been in your world and mine to give such a wondrous display of the Father's heart. In every circumstance of life and even. As he gave himself into death, let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy holy hill, unto thy tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy. Mr. Darby translates that God, the gladness of my joy, we are brought to enjoy God himself. Isn't that amazing? We who were guilty and lost? Now have this privilege. And to walk with a similar yoke which will fail at he never did. But that's our privilege as Saints of God. Connection. The verse quench not the spirit. I would like to. Think a little bit, brethren, about the wonderful, tremendous privilege it is when we become believers and says, when we believe the gospel of our salvation, we were sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise. And it tells us very clearly in John's Gospel that the Spirit of God is with us to guide us into all truth. And so he's there to guide us and very interesting in First Corinthians chapter 3, it speaks of the Spirit of God dwelling in us. That's collectively He dwells in each of our bodies. Individually we are the temple of the Holy Spirit, but collectively. As those believers. That composed the Church of the living God. He dwells in US collectively. And He's there to guide us collectively. And I think it is a beautiful thing to see in Scripture and to recognize in our assembly meetings that the Spirit of God is here to guide us into all truth. And it's beautiful in a reading like this to see the different ones that bring up some thought, and it helps us to have a more balanced view. Of the truth of God. So the Spirit of God is in US collectively. To guide us. And so we are told not to quench the spirit. Somebody has said we can quench the spirit by not speaking when the Spirit of God tells us to speak, or we can quench the spirit by talking too much. And that quenches the Spirit, perhaps for a brother that God wants to use to say something. And so there needs to be a sense in our souls of the fact that we are one member amongst many. Look at the First Corinthians chapter 12 for example. It says in verse four there are diversities. Of gifts but the same Spirit there are diverse differences of administrations, but the same Lord. There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh All in all. Beautiful to see that in the body of Christ there's diversity and unity at the same time. But notice verse 7. The manifestation of the Spirit is given. To every man or everyone to profit withal. So there's not one brother that God may use. He may use one brother.

In an address, but in a meeting where we leave it open to the Spirit of God to guide. Then there is profit in everyone as we give the Spirit of God liberty to guidance. And so there should be the exercise. And I want to say a word to you younger brethren. I know you don't feel like speaking up that much. I remember being in that same position and, and, but I, I find if there's a sensitivity as to the presence and the direction of the Spirit of God, sometimes a younger brother can bring up a thought. Or perhaps a question that really helps to develop the? Theme of the chapter that we're going over so be exercised to be led by the Spirit of God in whatever meeting we're talking about. Aspect in which the Spirit of God affects our lives or is is a very dominant force in our lives as believers, we're told in Romans 8 that ye are not in the flesh that you're in the spirit. If so be the Spirit of God dwells in you. You know we we we have learned quite a bit. I know that we fail in it that we've learned quite a bit about. Seeking to follow the leading of the Spirit of God. In our meetings especially, it's an exercise for the brothers that we sense the Spirit of God. Very, very obvious sometimes when we fail to do that. But what about our individual lives? Do we realize that the Spirit of God is the energy for our new life? Are we dependent on the Spirit of God to produce? The fruit of the Spirit. Do we walk in dependence? It says walk in the Spirit. The lead of the Spirit is is the activity of the Spirit of God something that we are we are dependent upon and aware of? Because when we're not, we can be sure that the Spirit of God will be quince. He is the only energy for this new life. And if there is something produced for the glory of God from our lives, it's going to come through the activity of the Spirit of God. And so this is something, this is something for us to understand that this is what God is designed in the in, in, in our, in our Christian experience. That the Spirit of God is absolutely necessary for there to be fruit to be born for God. I really think that's important, Phil, I must say. If we don't learn to walk individually as guided by the Spirit of God, recognizing that He's within my body and He's there to guide me and to give Him place, then when we come together, how can we expect Him to guide us? We need to practice that on the individual level. Then it will be evident. When we come together collectively, I must say it has been exercising to me too. The. Exhortation we have in Ephesians 5, where it says. Be not

drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit. What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? It means that what guides us are the impulses of the Spirit of God, not our own natural impulses. When the Lord Jesus had fasted for 40 days and 40 nights, he was a hungered says. Was it hunger that moved him to act? The devil tempted him. Change those. Stones into bread. You're the Son of God, but that was not what guided him. What guided him was the Spirit of God through the Word of God, and he resisted that temptation and how often we're guided by our own natural impulses.

We give the illustration of walking through a shopping center and come buy a coffee shop and they pump out that coffee smell into the aisle you're passing through. What's the purpose of that? You know what it is to turn on your desires and come in and have a cup of coffee. Well, those are natural impulses, but are we aware of the presence and the power of the Spirit of God? And when you look at the book of the Acts and see those who were filled with the Spirit of God? Beautiful illustration in Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit. I think it's so beautiful, brother and I. It's a challenge to me as I think about it. Is it what really guides me in my life individually, the Spirit of God, or are there other impulses? The mind of Christ referred to in the past birth of First Corinthians 2. Is that the result of the indwelling of the Spirit? The Spirit of God has celebrity as we've been talking. It's not quenched. Then there's the openness to good and there's close to evil. We become permeable membranes, if you think of it that way. And so verse 20 is touched on a while back. Despise not prophesying. There's the openness to good and there's closed to evil. Verse 21 prove all things hold fast that which is good. Those two attitudes are nicely, I think, illustrated in Acts 17 and Acts 17. Speaking of the Bereans, says in verse 11, these were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind. They were open to the good, they weren't close to it and searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were. So they filtered it to make sure that what they had wasn't evil, wasn't wrong, It was consistent with the Word of God. So there are those two things we ought not to be. We ought to be permeable membranes if we're guided by the Spirit of God, open to the good. And retaining it and close to the evil. I remember traveling with brother Glenn Mckennon a number of years ago and and a brother spoke in a meeting and it's a brother that I didn't particularly have a lot of respect for. And I afterwards I mentioned it to brother Clem and. He is this verse 20. He said despise not prophesying. He said you may not respect him. You may not like him that well, but listen, because God often uses instruments. We least expect to say something that's for our profit. Let me tell you that has been a very helpful correction in mind. Doesn't mean that we accept everything that's said. It goes on to say, like you say, prove all things hold fast that which is good. So we got our Bibles open. You young people, are you checking it out? Is that what it means? Is this what the Spirit of God is saying to us? Prove it. And that which is good, hold fast to it and abstain from all appearance of evil. So those are good challenges to us. We spent quite a bit of time on the word everything really is like ball. So in giving thanks is everything. Now if you notice that in verse 18, in everything, not just some, we don't choose to give thanks on something over others and then. When it speaks in verse 21 about proving well, what do we have to prove? Which is exalted to prove all things, all things not part of it. And then as to evil, we we find that to be a very big problem today. Evil is all around us. Abstain from what part of evil? All all appearance. And often we ask the question, well, what's wrong with that?

What is wrong with and that I remember that when I was a teenager that was a question raised and some of you I remember you as a youngster now your parents and I'm sure you have your your children asking you the same question. What is wrong with that? And I don't think we have enough answers for all that, but really is what is right with it before God that you need to prove all things and if it gives any hint of an appearance of evil, which as we're to abstain from them from all of it. Authority reads the broader than this, it says abstain. From every form of evil I believe, and so it covers the appearance of evil. Yes, sometimes we may not actually be doing something wrong, but it has the appearance of wrong. But the broader thing is every form of evil. Generally speaking, in our hearts there is because of what we are, there is a strong feeling about a certain evil, and perhaps because of tendencies in our own hearts, we don't feel quite so strongly. About something else, but. The Old Testament tells us in the book of Ecclesiastes dead flies. 'Cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savor, and then it gives the application of it. So. Now lost that train of thought. So. A little folly, thank you, Lemoyne. So a little folly in him that is held in reputation for wisdom and honor. And so a believer may be going on very well and be used of the Lord, and there may be blessing in his or her life, but it doesn't take much to spoil the whole thing, does it? And I believe that's why. This verse is here because it doesn't take much to spoil our testimony, not only before the Lord, but before the world. And the world in some cases knows better than we how a Christian should walk. And it's a humbling thing when the world pulls us up short for some inconsistency in our walk, isn't it? And I speak from experience, it's it's a very humbling thing because they know what a Christian should do and they know very well. When we step out of line and do something, even if it's something small. And so every form of evil has to be carefully avoided, doesn't it? Also, sometimes they're translated to wickedness. And I was thinking perhaps I'm not quite in touch with the young people. Sometimes they have a phrase when they see something nice, they'll say wicked. That's not very good, is it? They are trying to imply something good. They may say, well, what's the big deal? It's only an expression, but there's a very bad expression and implying evil along with it. In Deuteronomy chapter 16. It talks about. Eating unleavened bread in connection with the celebration of the Passover. They weren't to eat of it for seven days. First three, Deuteronomy 16 verse 3. Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it. Seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith. But in verse four it says, And there shall be no leaven bread seen with thee and all thy coast seven days. Not only were they not to eat the leaven bread, but they weren't even to have it show up anywhere in the whole country for seven days. Nonprofit signs. Things and not to treat them lightly. We often whenever we see a word that involves the word prophecy, we think of what's going to happen in the future. And we got lots of books up there in the display on the subject of prophecy. And we might originally read this and say, well, we ought to despise what God has said about what's going to happen. I don't believe that's the intent of these words. Prophesying is. The in the broad sense of the word is God giving his mind.

About something as it applies to a particular need or situation. And so it's in the Old Testament when you had prophets, the most common use of those prophets was the king. And something was they were questioning what should we do or shouldn't do. The king would say, Well, go to the prophet and let's ask him. And so they went to the prophet to ask of the prophet, What is the mind of Jehovah with respect to this situation in which we are? And the prophet would often give them what God had to say to him to tell them both in many cases as to the present, but he also often the Lord would say because of this, this is going to happen down the road, if you will, of time. The importance of it in this chapter is there may be a situation. I'm going to use an example to illustrate the point, but it has a broad application. There may be a situation that comes up in the assembly and the brothers in what we call a brothers meeting get together to consider what to do about that matter. And the aspect of it is what is the mind of the Lord for us, and what does the Lord's mind concerning this matter? And if there's something to be done, what is it that the Lord wants us to do about it? We are to be before the Lord and recognize that maybe the Lord didn't tell you. But he may have told your brother, and your brother may have the mind of the Lord for all of you in that situation. And so we need to listen. And not lightly esteem what another says about a matter that is involved in knowing the mind of the Lord in the matter. And if the Lord gives it to someone, our responsibility is to recognize the Lord has spoken. And the Lord has used that instrument, And how do we receive It is

given in the prove all things, hold fast that which is good, abstain from evil, if it is the mind of the Lord. It can be tested in the that it will be according to the Word of God. It will be totally consistent. The Lord may use that brother to bring before us a specific scripture. Not always, but I suppose sometimes a specific scripture that says, brethren, I believe this is the word of the Lord concerning what we are to do or not to do in this matter. And secondly, as has already been mentioned, in good and evil, it will not only be according to the Word, but it will be consistent with God in balance, that God is perfect in love and perfect in holiness. And very often we have to test things because they may get imbalanced in emphasizing love at the expense of holiness or holiness at the expense of love. And so it takes a spiritual mind to discern sometimes that this is truly a word from the Lord that is according to the Word of God and maintains both the good. God is love and the evil that is God is light and it is not according to God is light, and very often when it's, I'll say not according to the mind of the Lord. Very often there can even be a scripture, but it will emphasize God is love at the expense of God is light, or it will emphasize God is love at the expense that God is. One or the other is. Is not upheld, and I believe that in this thing it is. That's part of what the Spirit of God wants us to get out of it. I think with regards to that. The way we receive a message has to do with the one that gives it, and we need to differentiate between that. I'll just give an example. David and his life had two people that came and gave him a message.

One of them was Shimmy Eye. He threw dirt and stones at him. And he told him he was a bloody man. And there was another man that came to David Nathan. And he came in a much different spirit and he said, you know, David, I know you want to build the temple, but God has said to me that because you're a bloody man, because you're a man of blood, you're not able to do that. Now we like the Nathan. We like an Anton that comes alongside of us and he puts his arm around us and he delivers the message. We don't like Ashima, who throws dirt and stones at us. Now David could see. Through the situation with Shiny Eye and when his men wanted to take his head off. He said no, the Lord has bid him. And so just in connection with what you're bringing before us, Brother Dawn, that often when a message is given, we line it up with the messenger instead of recognizing whether it's actually the mind of God or not, regardless of the messenger. And so I've just appreciated that with David, here's exactly the same message by two different messengers, exactly the same message. You can have the exact flip side of it in the sense of not wanting to accept because of your feeling of a brother, or you can miss the mind of the Lord because you seek somebody that has a good reputation and try to get their concurrence. That's the opposite, but it is equally. We're all as a brother, you often said when I was growing up, we're all a bunch of crooked streaks and and there it's so easy for us to seek and it's illustrated multiple times in the Kings where they. Wanted. Oh, Saul said, I've sinned the prophet, But then he said, now honor me before the brethren. That is, he sought concurrence of somebody else. For. And Walt so and so says so. So it ought to be right And. There's an instance in the end of Second Kings where they go to the prophet to ask the prophet what to do. And it he tells them what to do and it says they don't accept it. And they don't accept it because they already had their mind made-up and the prophet exposed that they were going to act a certain way anyways and God was angry with them for doing that. But we can also. Ask the mind of the Lord of others, will you help me with this, to know the Lord's mind? But if our heart doesn't go in trueness of wanting to know, then we're not going to listen anyways unless they agree with us. And that's a danger too in upholding these verses. Perhaps just a comment or two on verses 23 and 24 before we close the meeting. Here we have, I believe, several things. First of all. We have sanctification not so much as that which. Is positional. We get that when we're saved, but that which the Lord is doing with us all through our Christian lives and. There's an order here, Spirit, soul and body. Quite often in Scripture the spirit and the soul are put together because in one sense they can't be separated. But they are very distinct from one another, aren't they? The spirit being the God conscious part of our being, and the soul being what we might call the seed of our appetites and desires and what makes us individuals. And then of course the body, the house in which both of them live. But if we are going to be preserved, it has to start with the Spirit of God. Working on our spirit, the human spirit, we have a human spirit and that is the part that responds to God's claims. But as a result of that, we can progress down to the soul, where my appetites and my desires are formed by the power of the Spirit of God and the Lord working in my life. And then of course, that will naturally translate into the body being kept from sin.

But it's a wonderful thing to think that. The Lord is willing to do that and. The next verse says Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. We might ask ourselves the question then, why is it that in some cases we do not see a believer preserved spirit and soul and body as this verse says, if the Lord is faithful and he will do it, then why doesn't it happen? Oh, it's because we have not allowed the God of peace to sanctify us wholly. Mentioned a few minutes earlier in this meeting, we have allowed our own wills to try and and they have sometimes thwarted the will of God. But I love the comment. I think it was in Mr. Wiggum's ministry and it's beautiful. It's been a big encouragement to me. He said if the Lord sees in your heart any desire to go after Christ, He will work it in you. That's what we have here, I believe. Is there a desire in my heart? Maybe I don't know how to bring it about. Maybe I don't know what to do. Then the Lord will bring circumstances into my life, put me through a tuition if necessary, even bring severe difficulties into my life in order to do what? To preserve me blameless under the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so we can all have confidence in that. Now, maybe others can add to that, but it has been a tremendous, a tremendous encouragement to my own soul. To see how that this epistle is ended up by. Now there are a couple of other things said beyond this that are very nice, but. Having had all these exhortations that have been brought out, can we do it in our own strength? No, but the Lord will work it in US. He'll preserve us, spirit, soul and body, if there's a desire in our hearts and if we allow the Lord to sanctify us holy. So there's that, which contaminates on each of those levels, isn't it? Spiritual wickedness there is that the bad desires that are encouraged in the world we live in. And there is that which contaminates the body. Fornication is a sin against the body. Specifically, and so we're to be sanctified. Holy Lord, help us to be that way. I often think, too, that God made us in his image and likeness. God is triune and so we are three parts in one. The Lord help us to be. For his coming again blameless that seems like. It's impossible, isn't it? But when you take into account verse 24, faithful is he which calleth you, who also will do it. So let us let our confidence be in the Lord, brethren, to keep us. He will, if we want to be kept. Like comment on how the epistle closes and this way too. There's God at work at the end of the epistle, right? He also will do it. Here is perhaps the most experienced most. Outstanding Christian that's ever lived the pattern of Saints the apostle Paul and here's some brand new newborn believers and what's he say to them pray for us. There is an God has so established what we are collectively and individually that he has formed an interdependence that I need you and you need me and woe to the Spirit that says I have the Spirit of God in the Bible and I don't need anybody. That is not that's a bad attitude. That's not according to the way script work. Scripture presents it. So he says I charge you that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. In other words, here you've received this letter now share it. And so part of our interdependence is what the Lord gives to us needs to be shared there. There are many things that we all need and in the end it begins with he will do it.

And what is his heart toward us? That we depend on the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Can we not say when we walk out of this building that the end of the afternoon the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us? 88. Till thou shalt fully have obtained in us the fruits of grace. And we enjoy said, Never end shall see thee face to face #288. All those merry boy. I will come back for my sleep. By. Age of obligated when you're feeling. I shall pray full moon of the man from now, every heart away.

Kentucky Conference: 2023, 1 Thessalonians 5:8-13

Reading

We pray for. God. Exercise. Today, Oh my God, it's the end of the day. I can't remember being browsed in all of you. Verse 8, brother. Chapter 5. Verse 8.

I Thessalonians, chapter 5, verse 8. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith, and love, and foreign helmet, the hope of salvation. 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. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another. Even as also we do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake, and be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly. Comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient toward all. See that none render evil for evil unto any man, but ever follow that which is good both among yourselves and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing in everything. Give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit, despise not prophesying. Prove all things, hold fast that which is good, abstain from all appearance of evil, and the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless under the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with unholy kiss. I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. When I was a child I grew up on a farm and if my dad went away and said I had a chore to do or some task. My tendency was to wait till the last minute. But if my mother reminded me that Dad's going to be home at 7:00 as the time approached, I get concerned about finishing that task. Because I had told my dad that I would do it. So I procrastinate until the last possible minute. I don't know if you have children like that, but some of you may have but when the. Thought that he was just about to arrive was in my mind. It got me busy and I was thinking about that Bernie bracket and I were reminiscing a little bit about the early days. In between 1975 and 1985. There was kind of a revival that took place at the factory that worked. And eventually there were about 70 people in the factory that got saved between all three shifts. And there were multiples from them, their families that got saved and through the community in that. But there was something interesting that took place. We would often I was sharing this with someone else, we'd say you got your Rapture shoes on. And the thought was we're all wearing steel toed boots and stuff, and they'd be quickly left behind if the Lord shouted. But we were thinking about being ready for the Lord's coming. And we often did that and talked with each other, talked about the Lord's coming a lot. And it had an effect on how we conducted ourselves with those thoughts in the front of our minds, constantly talking about and speaking about it with each other. And. Questions and all of that kind of conversation and I was thinking about that as we're having these meetings. Now having those thoughts in the forefront make a difference. There's a sanctifying effect. The Spirit of God works to sanctify us, but there's a sanctifying effect at what's in your mind and what's in the forefront and what you're anticipating and this anticipation of the Lord Jesus eminent return because you can think about it. And a young person I did as a young person if the Lord came. And he found me doing this.

How do you answer that if the Lord came and I'm in the middle of this? Or as our brother said about in our hearts and minds there when we first get saved, there may be rooms that we don't want the Lord to visit. Well, it makes a difference when you think about that, the Lord's imminent return and coming for us. And then too, when we plan things, you know, there's nothing wrong with, as our brothers and several have said, there's nothing wrong with wanting to be married, wanting to develop a career, wanting to have some kind of job or business or whatever. But I remember a brother saying recently, we need to hold on to those things loosely. I like that thought that they're important to do because if you just sit around and you're a young person and you don't make any plans for anything, life, well, I'm just satisfied to work at Denny's and flip burgers or something. That's complacency and planning, but holding on to things loosely with this idea in the back of your mind that the Lord is coming soon. Go ahead, get married, go ahead, plan for your career, plan a job. Do that. But keep in mind that. He's coming soon and then does that thing that you're going to do, is it going to interfere? With whatever gift you have from the Lord and whatever opportunity you have from the Lord to share the gospel with others. And is it something that you hold loosely or does? Is it something that has you in its grip? That's another thing, you know, Scripture tells us that we are to. Lay aside every weight. That tells us. Also, the sins that easily beset us put them away. Both of those things can hinder. And that when you have in the forefront of your mind, hey, the Lord might come today. And when you get up in the morning and some of your first thoughts are after you greet the Lord and speak to the Lord as Lord, maybe you're coming today. And in light of that, you spend your day and you even begin your day, your prayer in your reading as you think how that relates to the Lord's coming, it makes a huge difference. And I was thinking about that period of time, how going to work. And I didn't like the job that much. It was a welding job. It was hot in a factory. It paid well. But you know what? When people were getting saved and we were talking about the Lord's coming every day with fellow believers, I started looking forward to going to work. It made a difference in my life and it made a difference in everyone there. That's a good admonition, Sam. In our verse 8 here, it says we are of the day be sober. You know we're not on a on a cruise ship until we get home. We're in a battlefield and we're not looking for someone who's just shooting Nerf darts. He wants to take us out and kill us. John 1010, deceived cometh not, but to steal and kill and destroy. And you, dear young people, he puts traps out there. He's not just trying to trip you up, He's trying to destroy you. This is for reals the next thing here. It says put on the breastplate of faith and love. My dear, beloved brother Steve Hall said. I have a little note. That's the bulletproof vest of confidence in God, because we're going to take hits down here. We're going to get bumped. It's going to happen. And if our focus of life is ourselves, if we're the center of our solar system, we're going to question how could the Lord let this happen? What, like because I'm just supposed to have a wonderful life? Isn't that why God saved me? No, He saved me to conform me to the image of His Son. He's the center of the solar system, not me. And I'll tell you a brief story. When I was 19 years old, I just got married to the most amazing woman in the whole world. We moved to Ohio and we were going to rent this apartment. And I said, Lord, just make it plain if we're supposed to live here. It was brand new. The water had never been turned on. And the guy said we have sulfur water. Well, I'm from Walla Walla, WA. I've never heard of sulfur water. And we're moving in and everything. And I go to wash my hands and I turn on the kitchen sink and anybody in here who doesn't know what sulfur water is.

It was so gross. I was like, Nope, we're leaving just like that, babe, pack up, we're out of here. The thing is, if I'm looking, I want my life to be perfect and I go and do this. I unloaded all my stuff. Now I got to pick it all back up. And I'm like, Lord, why? How could you let that happen to me? I thought you liked me. And it makes this whole big trauma. Instead of saying, Lord, what are you trying to teach me? And the Lord used

that as an opportunity to show me that He could guide me, that I could trust Him. That he had a plan. And the next one is the helmet of the hope of salvation. Where there is no hope, the people perish. I don't know how many couples I've talked to and they give up because they say it's not going to matter anyways. Well, guess what your farm looks like if you give up? It's all 100% weeds. Well, I'm not going to do anything anyway. It's not going to matter anyway. I'm not going to study for that test. I'm going to fail anyway. That's where the devil gets us. We believe the lie that he, the Lord, isn't going to be faithful. That isn't going to matter. It does matter. And we need that helmet on, that he's for us because we're going to get bumped out here and that we have the confidence in him. Chapter in verse 8 where we began it says but. And so in Mr. Darby's translation there's a semi colon and so we're not of the night and so but. Let us and the Spirit of God is giving us the instruction that the Christian pathway. Is an appeal to the heart and the affections of God's people and God is not giving us commandments as he did to the Old Testament Saints. And so he's appealing to us and the affections are really tender of those that are newly saved. And so the apostle is addressing those and with the intelligence of what the Spirit of God is bringing out is that the affections need to be guarded. And so he says here who are but let us who are of the day. Sober, and so we're to be cognitive of the dangers that are about us and not to be intoxicated with the pleasures of this world and so on. I believe that's what he's bringing before us. And then putting on the breastplate of faith and love. And so the heart, the breastplate covered the heart. It covered the it's a picture of protection of the affections for Christ. And so they had been just newly saved. In that verse, that is so. Familiar to us in verse chapter one that they turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for his Son from heaven. What will damage those affections, which will cool those affections is not having the heart guarded. And so they needed to have the breastplate of faith. That's confidence in God and the object, the object of Christ himself, the breastplate. The affections preserved for Christ himself and the affections, the love to know him as the source of love. And so he says this helmet too really protects our thoughts and the hope of salvation. So we have a a hope, we have a deferred certainty, but we have a hope of not only eternal salvation. But I believe here he's Speaking of our practical salvation. It's possible to have a saved soul, but a lost life, and he wanted their affections to be preserved so that they would not only have a saved soul, but a saved life. Everything in this present world tends to make us walk by sight, Paul says in 2nd Corinthians 5. We walk by faith, not by sight. I think that's such an important thing to keep in mind because everything here is geared to make us walk according to what we see around us. And I don't say we ignore what we see around us. We don't shut our eyes. Now we use our eyes, but what controls our life is what God has told us in His Word. And that's so important to keep the focus on what God has said in His Word. We walk by faith, not by sight. Lord, help us to do that.

It's interesting to consider some of those Old Testament. Men of faith, Abraham, God said I'm going to give you a son when he had no son at all. I mean, it was pretty severe test of his faith. And when Sarah suggested that he used another option to have a son, why he didn't consult the Lord, he would have did what Sarah told you. And then the second time Sarah came to him and says, cast out the bondwoman and her son, and Abraham didn't want to do that. But this time Abraham went to the Lord, and the Lord says you do what she says. Brethren, when our wives say something to us, we need to listen. But don't do just exactly what they say. Take it to the Lord and do what the Lord tells you to do. That time, Sarah was right. And so we walk by faith. But then I think of the awfulness of the test that God gave to Abraham. Take thy son and only son Isaac, and offer him for a burnt offering. There is no record of any backtalk on Abraham's part saying well, Lord, he didn't you say that this was the one. No, no, top. He simply obeyed. That's the obedience of faith. How important that we exercise faith in these last days. It's tough because this whole world is geared on going by what you see. Lord help us in that. Another person that was a man of faith is David. Can I? I must say I'm amazed at the simplicity of his faith when he goes down in obedience to his Father to see his brethren at the war. And there he sees that giant, and he says, I will go. And fight the giant. And to David, it wasn't a question of David versus Goliath. It was a question of God versus Goliath. And brethren, that's what it's about. It's not a matter of if you are able for this situation, it's a matter there's God up to this situation. And so we trust in him. We walk by faith. And David went forward and I, I'm amazed. I have often thought about David as he approached that giant and the giant looked at him in disdain and says, come here, I'll give your flesh to the birds of the field and the fowls. To the beast of the field, and the vowels of the air. And he says, you come to me with a sword in the spirit. The spirit I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, whose whose armies you have defied. The simplicity of faith is is beautiful to see that's what we're called to brethren, but on the breastplate of faith and love and then like has been mentioned the. Helmet of the hope of salvation in the Ephesians. That's the helmet of salvation. It's a little bit different focus, but here's the hope because it's talking about the question of the Lord's coming. And, O brethren, things down here are not what you want them to be. So often there are situations in life that are difficult, that are inexplainable. Are you going to give up because of that? Put on the helmet of the hope of salvation at a moment's notice. The Lord's going to give that shout, and we're going to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. We're going to be transformed into bodies. Like his body of glory, Incredibly wonderful to think about it. And then we'll be with him in that eternal day. O brethren, this is what is ahead for the believer. Put on the helmet of the hope of salvation. He made his efforts to David and here we have the word face.

What is the middle letter of the word faith? I What is the middle letter of the word pride? I But in the one case the eye is trusting in the Lord. In the other case, the eye is trusting in oneself. And that's what characterized Goliath the giant. There was pride. And you know, pride goes before destruction, but. David, on the other hand, he was trusting in the Lord, and he was successful. Somebody said faith is spelled. FAITH. Make an acronym forsaking all I take Him, and when our trust is in the Lord. We are on solid foundation, solid ground. Brother Kelly said someplace faith to those that don't have it seems to be arrogance. David's brothers thought he was arrogant. Hooli. He had confidence because, oh, by the way, I killed the lion and the bear, and you know what? I grabbed the lion by the beard and smote him. Yeah, the Lord delivered him into my hand. This guy, you know, he never calls him a giant. And when he goes into battle, he runs at him. You think there's faith in this man? Yeah. You see it demonstrated. He runs at him. Do you run at your problems? When you're facing a giant, do you run at it? David did. He ran right at it. He picked up five stones. Why did he pick up five? Because he was ready for the other four brothers. He was ready for the other four brothers that might pop out of the back of that army. He was ready for them and he had confidence in the one he had learned to trust when nobody was watching. And that's the thing. You hear, brethren, over the years talking about the Hitherto's we have in our lives. Every one of us has Hitherto's in our lives. And you have Hitherto's you've heard about from your parents and you've had Hitherto's that you read in Scripture and you have Hitherto's that you've heard stories of from your older brother. All of those things help us. So your own Hitherto's that have come in the past. David knew in the mountains with the sheep what God could do. When's the last time you grabbed a lion, bite a beard, or even had an opportunity to do such a thing? He did. And oh, by the way, I killed a bear too. Is that arrogance? No, that's confidence in the God who delivered him, and confidence in the God that you've gotten to know and who has helped you in the past. And you have some Hitherto's should help you to face a new challenge, a new giant. A new Goliath with confidence because it's the same God. And then run at him. You're in a very different position, perhaps a better position than say David, because David had to learn. He got a lot of training when he was racing sheep. We in this case have been put on a different ground. There is no training required. You're handed this defensive helmet and breastplate and so on. But we have been put on a different thing. I know we spoke on that the other day. We have been brought from darkness into light. Do we need to be reminded of that? We have been given a new life. You know our our brothers spoke on the

church there. You remember he mentioned when the Holy Ghost came down that rushing wind is said to be looking. Mr. Darby's explanation is like a breathing noise, as if to me a new life. But this is a spiritual life that God has given us, not only a new life, but now we have the Spirit indwelling in US. Helping us so there is no strength of our own. It is all dependent on Him. And what's all been said is true. But now we have more admonition as if it were. Now do we have confidence that God will take us through. And that's why those helmets of salvation. You know how many times we hear someone say, I don't believe I'm a Christian anymore. Satan knows how to cast doubt. Into one's mind. We need the word of God. We need the Spirit of God to help us to be more conscious of what the Lord Jesus is to us. So here. And we need one another too. That's why we're told to comfort one another with these words, because sometimes.

We can't touch everybody. I know in a large group like this, there are people that we don't get along well. I shouldn't say that. We don't have a lot of similarities, so perhaps we don't click. I guess that's a better phrase. And there are some that you just naturally click and the Lord wants you to use that too. Someone that you can touch, Encourage them. We can't touch everybody, but encourage those who are around you. Comfort one another with these words. Good to connect verse nine with the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath. That's a connecting word for. So put on a helmet as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, and so its salvation looked at the end of the path. And it's salvation from wrath. Well, we know we have the salvation of our souls now, as Peter says. Salvation from eternal judgment. This is salvation from the wrath that's coming upon this world. And so part of what the apostle Paul had given the Thessalonians and the little time he was there was not only that the Lord was coming, but that there was judgment coming upon this world. And so in chapter one. We'll connect those two together. Verse 10 and to wait for his son from heaven. When we raised from the dead, even Jesus or Jesus our deliverer. From the wrath to come. And so it's looking on really to the wrath of God that's going to fall on this world and tribulation. Romans chapter 5, we get another verse. Verse 9. Romans 59. Much more than being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. That's again the same thing. That's what's coming upon this world. Let's look one more connection in Revelation. A letter to the Church of Philadelphia. He says to Philadelphia, verse 10 Because thus kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. We've been, we have our hope and the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Deliverer from that coming wrath, and we need to have our thoughts as to what is going to take place in this world. As we wait for him to come to be protected by that truth that we've been delivered from that coming wrath, and that is the certain end for everything in this world is going to be to fall under the judgment of God in that great tribulation. It's not going to get better. It's not going to improve. It's going to come under judgment. And we need to have our thoughts protected by that or we could go all over the place in our Christian pathway involved with all kinds of activities. That really are a denial of the fact that this world is under judgment and it's certain to come. So it protects our thoughts, this hope of salvation from the wrath that's coming. And isn't it wonderful? The Lord Jesus bore the wrath of God for us will never pass through it. His church will never pass through the wrath of God because he has taken it all for us. Now there are those who say well, the wrath of God. As the last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation is turning a little over in Revelation. And chapter. 6. We get the 6th field and verse 12, and then under the 6th seal we find in verse 16, I said to the mountains and rocks fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of his wrath has come. And who shall be able to stand? These verses take us up to the middle of the tribulation. And they say the great day of His wrath has come. And so there are those who preach that the church will be raptured halfway through the tribulation. But we've got to go through the 1St 3 1/2 years. That's not the wrath of God, they say. It's not. That doesn't happen till the 6th seal. And under the 6th seal we get raptured. Well, what's the key to that? The key to that is Revelation 4:00 and 5:00.

We see before any seal on that book is open, the entire company of the resurrected heavenly Saints are there in the four and 20 elders complete. Not one is missing. We're all there before 1 seal and that book is open. No, the rapture is not going to happen under the 7th seal. We're we're going to be all there before one of those seals is open. We're going to witness the opening of those seals by our Lord Jesus Christ. He's delivered us from the coming wrath. We want to have that clear in our thoughts because it's going to protect us. In the first reading Meaning of Suspension, that with this the 4th chapter was the Enoch chapter. The deliverance from the wrath is the Enoch deliverance. He was called out and is taken out of the world. Noah makes it through the flood, but that's carrying him safely through. That's a picture of the remnant of Israel being brought through the time of wrath. But here we have a different way of obtaining salvation, not going through the raft. Of the mouth oriented oriented entirely entirely differently differently here. This is one of the passages. First is one of the passages in Scripture in the New Testament that we can use and that clearly teaches us that the church will not go through the Tribulation period. Brother Steve has mentioned another one in connection with Philadelphia and we have that assurance that the church will not go through the Tribulation period. So the word salvation here is used a couple of times in our chapter, verse 8. The hope of salvation, we could say, apply it to the rapture. We ought to have that blessed hope, what Titus address calls the blessed hope, which is the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ for us to rapture us out of this scene. But this salvation, the second word here, the second time it's used to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. The It'll be a practical salvation if we're going to be saved out of this scene. We're not a part of this world and so let us who are of a day be sober. We're not a part of this scene that's going to fall under judgment. We're separate from it. We're heavenly citizen. We're a heavenly a body of believers might just point out that there's a couple of other ways that salvation is used. It's used very little, very few times in connection with eternal salvation, the eternal salvation of soul. But in Philippians chapter 2, that word salvation is used to gain. And it's used umm, I think it's in chapter 2 The. Chapter 3 that. Verse 12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. So it's really there is the salvation of the assembly. You and I live in a scene the assembly is the assembly of the Lord Jesus were gathered to his precious name in the assembly is the object of the enmity of Satan himself. And so we have different dangers that come into the assembly and that we need to with fear and trembling, knowing our weakness and yet the strength of God that the assembly can be saved from the different dangers that come against it. So salvation is spoken of in different ways. In the scriptures and here, we're going to be saved out of this scene. By our Lord Jesus Christ. I can back up and go to chapter one for a moment. I'm going to read in three different places and I ask you to watch for 3 words. As we read them, faith, hope, love. Now let's go to chapter one, when Paul writes to these babes in Christ, these new believers, and he's explaining to them what the Christian life is all about after having been with them for a very short period of time. And so we'll read. Remember the three words, faith, hope, love.

Verse 3. Remembering without ceasing. Your work of faith. And labor of love. And patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father. Now chapter 4 again or chapter 5? And verse A. Let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love and foreign helmet the hope of salvation. I'll go forward to his second letter. That apparently was written not all that long after the first one. Second Fells Thelonians, chapter one. Verse three. We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, for it is me, because your faith groweth exceedingly. And the charity or love? Of everyone of you, all toward each other aboundeth. Where is the hope? Chapter 2. Verse 2.

That he be not soon. Shaken in mind, or be troubled neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us. But the day of the Lord or the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means. For that day shall not come except. And he goes on to explain. The three pillars of Christian life on a daily basis, our faith, hope and love. And the apostle Paul here in these new believers begins with it. And if you go to the other epistles, you'll find the same three brought out as he writes to his brethren in the different assemblies. And it is the. Necessary 3 aspects of our daily life as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith, hope and love. And it's wonderful to see without developing it at any detail. There's already been a lot said on it that in the very beginning, what did it result in them? Where there was faith, there was worth, there was labor. Immediately in their lives that faith caused them to be active in the things of the Lord. What about love? Immediately and their life was the labor of love going on for others and one another, and those about them put them to work in love. And the third, what about their hope? They got to be like the Lord Jesus right away, the man of faith who's waiting for the Lord to come the most. Is it somebody in this room? I'm going to suggest, no, I'm going to suggest that the greatest expression of faith in the hope and the expression of patience is Jesus Christ. He is the man, more than any other, looks forward. To having you and I in his presence. And he's waited patiently for 2000 years for that hope to be realized of having his own with himself. He's the man of patience. And these Saints here were entering into the enjoyment of it. And so then when he gets to the 4th, 5th chapter, he tells them that they're going to be conflict.

On those three things, and they needed the protection, and it's already been explained to us a little late. Recite it in slightly different words. What controls your heart, controls your life? Whatever is most important to you in your heart here this afternoon is what has the greatest influence on your life this afternoon and tomorrow and the next day. And so the breastplate is that which is necessary to protect. The most vital aspect of what we are our heart. And where's your faith? Is it in your head? In faith, believe in thine heart, the Lord Jesus. And consequently, that same armor that's in Ephesians 6 speaks about that need of protection of the heart. And then when it comes to the hope, it says the helmet because it's protecting the mind. Is protecting the mind and thinking about the address that we just had and some comments made in that address is so important that if our mind does not have correct doctrine, we can't have correct walk. Our thoughts are going to be wrong unless our thoughts are formed by the language. And the truth of the Word of God. We need to be so occupied with God's Word. As the source of giving us right thoughts, in Romans chapter 13, it says of some there, what did they need concerning their mind? Well, what did these people in Thessalonica need? Their minds? That the day they were saved and they'd only been saved a while, What was in their minds? Their minds were full of wrong thoughts. That they had accumulated in their lives all the way up to the point of their salvation. And so they needed the transforming process of Romans 13 that says, be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. That is, they had to replace all the thoughts that they previously had with new ones, ones formed by God and God's thoughts that we each need and consequently. We need. Daily, to have our thoughts formed by the scripture rather than by the news or by what we're going to get at school or work or anywhere else. There is that When it's in the spiritual or moral realm, our thoughts need to come in that way. So what happens in in when he writes the 2nd letter? It wasn't very long there after, but he's already got to help them because. One of those three things they didn't have anymore in its proper way. What should be and what is for us, Each one we should grow. And so he's able to say to them the joy he found when he writes his second letter, he says your faith groweth exceedingly. Next time I see you, will I see you groan? Well, I outwardly when they're little kids, next time I see them, I'll know they've grown. There isn't any question about it. They've grown. It's a wonderful joy when we see each other occasionally when we in the conversation can see in a brother or sister growth. And sometimes it's pretty evident that God has been at work in that life and developed growth. And so here was faith growing. Charity exceeding. That love between them was active. It was growing. But what about the hope? Well, they receive false information. They had false communications that played with their mind. And what's the consequence when we allow things that are not of God? Well, an important point really is Paul said you got the truth. And even if somebody said it was from me, you already know what the truth is, so don't accept it.

Don't accept it, refuse it. And then he goes on to show what the consequence of having their mind played with. He sets it, he corrects it in the second chapter to reestablish to them the truth of the hope that was set before them and why what they had heard was wrong. And so we often, in fact most of the epistles, not all, not the first one here, but the 2nd and many of the epistles were written to a correct. Wrong thinking and wrong teaching that the Saints had, and so we're constantly exposed with it and thank God that He has used even that as a means of His way of revealing to us truth that we can walk in. So brethren, we need faith, we need hope, and we need love as a constant of our everyday life. Brother Bob mentioned Abraham and being told to offer his son. And he said that there wasn't, there's no record of him arguing with God about the matter or reasoning like, oh, wow, why, why are you doing this to me? None of that. But there was an inner conversation. And we know about that because the New Testament tells us. And it illustrates what you're saying, Don. He believed God, what he had told him. So when he was told to go to the mountain and sacrifice his son, his inner conversation, you know, the devil attacked him. We don't hear that conversation, but you know what happened. But he goes OK. What do I know? God told me this boy is going to have children. So faith reasons to what's next? I'm going to see a resurrection. That's where Faith took it on based on what God had told him, Faith took him, oh, I'm going to see my boy resurrected. That's not what happened. Maybe in type it did, but that's not what happened. But Faith didn't take him to some wild argument or mad at God experience didn't he believed he was going to see a resurrection. Commented on in the sense that we from the very beginning or taught certain things. But brethren, sometimes it takes a long time to learn them and we don't want to give up just because we fail. Abraham is a wonderful example of a man who failed in faith. When he started his journey in life, he was told to go out. And leave his family where he'd been grown up. And he laughed, but he couldn't leave his family behind as he was told to. That was a lack of faith. He was told where the promises were going to be to him. And he got there into that land and. The conflict came up and what did he do? He left the place of promise and went down into Egypt and caused a lot of grief for himself with respect to the protection of his wife because of what he did. And yet God in infinite grace brought that man back into the place and caused his faith to grow so that when it came to the test regarding Isaac, he had learned. And as Sam has said, we see him excel in it, and we find that same record given to us in Hebrews 11 as a wonderful example of a man of faith. But at the same time, just like the Thessalonians, it didn't last very long before they were in trouble. So often in our lives, things start out and there's the immediate initial joy of salvation and then. The reality of everyday life hits us pretty quick and sometimes we don't live up to what we have already known. But I just say it as a matter of encouragement that God never gives up on His work to fulfill His ultimate result of making us like Christ. I think that's a really good point. Yesterday there was a dear brother said to be. It would be nice if we spoke a little bit more about the path back to him when we have difficulties in our life. And I think that you explained that very well with Abraham there. It's good for us to recognize that as we come to Christ and are saved. The path is not an easy one. Sometimes it's difficult. I know myself, I've gone through difficult times in my life, and I'm thankful that the Lord can draw me back to Him and that there's a path back to Him.

I was thinking of all these points being brought out. Really indicates to me that even through chapter 4 and into this part that we're in in chapter 5 that we need to be occupied with. Upright things or righteousness and. The brother said our minds get filled with thoughts that

aren't right at times, and we often refer to that verse in Ephesians 5, the washing of water by the Word and how much we need to take up His word and read it daily says that He might present. That He might present it to himself, a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing that should be holy and without blemish. And that's what He's preparing us for right now while we wait for His return. It goes on in this portion. We often use the word comfort because that's what it says. But really he's exhorting. He's saying to exhort one another in these things, to stir each other up in them. And we need to help each other as we move from the individual aspect here. And then verse 12 and the assembly side of it. Her collective side of it, I should say. And then also it says to edify, we need to build each other up in these days. And when I think of chapter 4 there it said that we might increase more and more. It reminds me of a verse. In Proverbs. Chapter 4 I believe. I'm merely thinking of how difficult it is. For each. Often we hear over and over again how dark this world is. And that itself can be rather depressing, how dark this world is, how dark it is. And you know it is evil. It's truly evil. It's going to mention in this chapter a little further on, it's purely evil. It's run by Satan. You can't serve 2 masters, you can only serve one. And so, as we hear it over and over again, surely we lose sight of the coming of the Lord. Sure we surely we lose sight of any moment we would hear that shout we spoke of yesterday and be caught up, but I just really enjoy this verse in Proverbs 4 as we increase more and more it says in verse. But the path of the Jostens is the shining light that shineth more and more under the perfect day. The way the wicked is as darkness, they know not of what they stumble, but the. Path of the justice is the shining light that shines more and more on the perfect day. We can't shine more and more, dear ones, if we don't take up with him, if we don't get caught up with him. Upright things. And he says occupy till he come. He's be occupied with him until he come. And then shine brighter more and more into the perfect day. You won't see the darkness. The light would be so bright. And as we go along together, brother read in Philippians chapter 3 There I think a little further down it says Paul says, but follow together after me. He says that's the example of Christ is what he's indicating. There he was walking in the ways of Christ, Lord Jesus. And so we too can go along together, following after him in those ways. And would be so bright. Can't be caught up with the darkness. We can only be caught up with him. Please remember that these dear things are suffering. They were suffering persecution, They were losing their personal property. They were some of them were losing their lives perhaps and so he says he presents to them at the end verse nine that they would obtain their obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. That really is the final deliverance that they would have at his coming at the rapture who died for us that whether we wake. That is, whether we're alive at the coming of the Lord Jesus. Or whether we sleep, that is, that there would be those that would perhaps die before the Lord came to be absent from the body and present with the Lord either of those two conditions, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. And so they were to use this hope, the teaching of this blessed hope.

That the apostle had brought before them in chapter 4, verse 13. Really. Verse 15 to 18. They were to use this to build up one another and to encourage one another and to present to one another the fact that there was a final deliverance and the Lord Jesus would come himself for them. And so then in verse 12 begins a different subject of it's helpful and I've said it before. You notice if you have a Darby translation, there are paragraphs and the Spirit of God uses these little bits of teaching. Chapter 5, verse one. Down to verse, the end of verse 11 is a paragraph, and he's got a subject in mind and he's teaching in connection with that particular subject. Then in chapter, in verse 12, now he begins really his final. Encouragement and instructions as to the what it would be to be a believer in that day and for us as well, and the instructions that are given that they might go on in an orderly way. The first thing he brings before them in verse 12 is that those that are in oversight. Now this isn't translated very well in the King James translation, but it says I'm going to read it in the new translation. But we beg you, brethren, to know those who labor among you and take the lead among you in the Lord and admonish you and regard them exceedingly in love on account of their work. So this is referring to those who are in oversight in the local assembly. He's not Speaking of those that perhaps might take a lead in public ministry or anything like that. He's Speaking of those that are in oversight. And so they might they. The assembly was young, he was only there for maybe 3 weeks. And he gave them some instruction, he taught them as much as he could, and then he was really forced to leave. And so he writes this letter. And as those that are new believers and a young fresh assembly, the Spirit of God was going to raise up those that would protect them and that would shepherd them. Let's look at Acts chapter 20 just to show that it's there's an act of God. It's the sovereignty of God. In connection with oversight, God raises up those that will be shepherds for the flock. It says in verse 28, Acts 20, verse 28, take heed therefore unto yourselves is speaking to those that are in oversight and to all the flock over the witch. I think over the which we're in. I think it's Darby translation, the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost hath made you overseers. This is their work twofold. To feed the Church of God, which he had purchased with his own blood. And really they were to they were to feed and then they were to watch in verse 31 and remember. And so they were to be watchful, they were to feed the Saints of God. God raises up shepherds and that's the sovereignty of God in another place. It's, I think it's first Timothy chapter 3 verse one. It says it is. This is a true saying. First Timothy chapter 3 verse one. This is a true saying if a man desired the office of the Bishop or a shepherd. He desireth a good work. A Bishop then must be blameless. And so those in oversight are raised up of God. And it's the sovereignty of God in that sense that he does raise up those that are self sacrificing and addicted to the service of the Saints. But then there is responsibility and there are those that are exercised to take up that work. And so that's what you have in second in first Timothy chapter. Three. So here he's Speaking of their response to those who would be raised up of God to be a help and a protection to those of the Saints in that assembly. In verse 10 it says who died for us, whether we wake or sleep, whether we live or die. As our brother said, we should live together with him.

And I just want to make this point to you that are younger than me. Nobody gets out of here alive. Think about that. Nobody gets out of here alive. What is my life for? What is the point? If we live in view of eternity and we realize I'm not going to take anything out of this world except for people that I touch, that's it. My house is going to burn, my car is going to burn, everything I own is going to burn. Why am I here? What is the point that we should live together with him? That we would be in fellowship with the Lord Jesus and He wants that to be good enough. And it's not that we don't. I remember when I was 18 and I was like, oh man, I can't wait to get married. I'm not saying that's wrong, but to understand that's not ultimately going to fulfill us. That's not going to last our whole life. Eventually I'm going to die, or my wife's going to die, or both of us are going to die together, or the Lord's going to come. This life isn't going to last forever. So make what you do count. Make it last, invest it on the other side and the second thing here in verse 11, our brother mentioned here, comfort yourselves together and edify one another even as all she do and I think you are saying. Edify and comfort was absorbed and I just want to say to us, are we willing to get dirty with one another? There's a couple in our assembly that's been a huge help to me. Like I cannot. I feel like the guy saved my life. He didn't physically. But he and his wife were such a help to us. They were willing to get dirty. They were willing to come to our house. They were willing to work with us. It was such a help. Not in judgment. It's so easy. You, you run into somebody, oh, how are you doing? Oh, it's so easy to get a rock and throw a rock at them. Are you willing to get off your high horse and say, wow, that could happen to me? Wow, I'm really sorry. Let's see what we can do to put this together. It means everything to the assembly, it means everything to the assemble, to the individual. And it builds up love. It builds us up. We go through a trial. There's a brother. He stood at the podium in Walla Walla and he was almost in tears because he couldn't hold his life together. And I said you and I are going out to lunch and I took him out to lunch and that

meant so much to him. Did that cost me? Sure it did. It cost me a meal, cost me some time. What is he worth? He's my brother. That's what the Lord is trying to exercise us in our hearts about these things and as we get to what our brother was sharing. In the collective sense. But do I care about you? I can't affect you if I don't care about you. All I well, I can affect you. I can drive you away if we want. As those of us who are older, if we want to make a difference in the lives of the younger, we have to reach with love. We have to reach their heart. What comes from the heart goes to the heart. The Lord help us, every single one, that we would care. And I feel it. I feel it right here. This conference has been such an encouragement. We need godly companions on the way home to glory, don't we? We see here in the verse 11 wherefore comfort yourselves together and edify one another is also you do I believe there's about 21 another who can go through love one another, care for one another, edify one another's about 20 of them. We need godly companions on the way home to glory. We think of pilgrims progress in the next story. One of his companions turned back. Another one was martyred. Another one was with him in the prison with giant of despair. We meet companions and godly companions. You can look at an individual, look at their three or four closest companions and you can accurately predict the outcome. The closest companions. It's very important. We need one another. We need God, the companions who can teach us the Word of God. I was thinking of these Thessalonians. There's the admonition in chapter 2 That says they received it as the Word of God. But we turn back to the three weeks that our brother Robert mentioned in Act 17. It says there were others. There we were more noble, more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and search the Scriptures daily whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed also honorable women, which were Greeks, and of men not a few. But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people. Then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go, as it were, to deceive. But Silas and Timothy are both there still.

Isn't it good that Silas and Timothy are both there still? It sounds like they were just sending Paul to the sea. Goodbye. But they had those three weeks of teaching. They have this letter. They have another letter, and Silas and Timothy abode. So it was very important for Paul to stress to look at those who are in authority, those who are teaching, those who are admonishing. We need one another. You know, our brother has mentioned the connection of faith, hope and love. And they when they just lost one, they lost hope and they had a problem. There because they lost hope. With the exception of maybe third John, almost every single epistle in the New Testament says either the Lord Jesus Christ Christ, Jesus our Lord Jesus Christ our Lord, or our Savior Jesus Christ in the 1St 3 verses. When we come to Christ, we come to Christ. He's our Messiah, He's our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Sometimes people, they come to Christ, but they need to make him Lord. Of their life, there needs to be the divine authority of scripture to follow. And they need to live the life of some people who maybe have tried to make Jesus Lord. But when you look at their life, you look at their personal behavior, their home, their work life, is it consistent with the character Matthew, Mark, Luke, John of a life of Christ? Do they have the meekness, the gentleness, the sweetness, the wonderfulness in their life? Christ in you, the hope of glory. When we have Christ, we have everything, the Lord Jesus. Christ that needs to be reflected in our heart and our life, even as faith, hope and love need to be intertwined. We need to be intertwined with one another. There's like 20 of them. Look it up as an exercise. I saw this one time and it had 20 points. I didn't memorize them. I should have. But we need the scriptures. We need to be reminded. Peter says, I'm reminding you again, don't you already know it? But I have to remind you again. And even Paul, Paul wrote in his scriptures, we need to encourage others who we respect and trust in the faith. It's obvious from the two messages here that the brothers for maybe years had thought about those in. Addresses thought about those subjects, the towers in the wells and the the distinction between the Jews and the church. It's very important. Sometimes these things come over years. I was thinking when we were reading about two of the pieces of the armor. If you count prayer, there's seven, but there's six listed in Ephesians six. Well, this is about our brother said 8054. If you go to Romans 13 and mentions the armor of light, that was about AD 60. And then Ephesians 6, which has the full armor, that was about 8064. So over a span of about 10 years. So sometimes in our life there's there's things that are learned or understood over time. And maybe if you're preparing for a message or you're seeking to help someone, things may come to you as an epiphany and all at one moment. But some things God will work. It is God that worketh in you both the will and the due of his good pleasure. He may work with us over many, many years. We need godly companions on the way home to glory to help us if one falls and the other can help them up. How many times even Abraham went flat on his face? We need one another, we need to encourage one another. The journey is nearing the end and what a blessing we can be in our daily lives will be encouraging one another. I think back to the time in my life when I had possibly one foot in the world and one foot in the assembly. I was going along every day figuring I had it worked out and meeting time would come. I would try to find an excuse not to go. Or maybe I would let my wife go to meeting and I'd put the kids to bed. Well, the week that I would go, there would be a brother that would walk down the hall with me. And he would say, Jonathan, you need to be out for the weeknight meeting with your family. Maybe a whole month would go by and I'd leave the meeting and that brother would walk down the hall with me again. He'd say, Jonathan, you need to be out of the weeknight meeting with your family. He kept reminding me and reminding me another brother would call me and I'd see his number on my phone. And I wouldn't want to answer it because I knew what the message was going to be. Missed you at the meeting last night. And so, you know there's a responsibility here. It says, we beseech you, brethren, to know them, which labor among you. You can't know one another. You really can't love one another. You really can't trust one another unless you go to meeting and be with each other. Proverbs 1824 Men that have friends must show himself friendly. And so, dear ones, we have to be together in order to connect with what our brother is saying back here. We have to be together.

And we have to trust our brethren. How would you know who has the oversight? How would you know who the Shepherd is if you don't go? Why would you ever listen to him if you don't trust him? Why would you think he has a care for you if you don't love him? So how would you know if that? Your faith is probably Wayne God's sour. And so I merely point out that having one foot in the world, one foot in the assembly, does not work. It is not being occupied with Christ. It is not being prepared for his coming. We can't encourage each other that way. Has the sense of recognizing them, and I believe so. You could read it that way. We beseech you, brethren, to recognize them. Who those that God has raised up in oversight, those that are true shepherds, what do they do? They labor among the Saints and they take the lead. It's not correct to say over you and the Lord, but they take the lead in the shepherding work in the Saints among the Saints. They may teach as well as we could read other passages, but they. Admonish you. And so he gives them three examples here. There's labor, they take the lead, perhaps in ministry, but perhaps in the work of oversight in the assembly. And they admonish you. No one likes correction. And you know, the shepherd often times gets his shins kicked. And there was a shepherd in Portugal, I believe it was, and he. In those areas they have circular enclosure for the sheep. It has Stonewall approximately 6 or seven feet high. And a shepherd has will lie in the doorway, which is about maybe 24 inches wide. And one shepherd brother asked him how come he had so many scars on his shins. He says, well, that's from lying across the doorway and at night kicking at the wolves to keep the wolves out of the. The sheep away from the sheepfold. And so the shepherd is a very thankless work at times, but the Spirit of God here with this young group of believers that had accepted Christ as Savior, were looking for His coming. They had that blessed hope before them. Their hearts needed to be tender towards the Savior, protected, and they needed to recognize that the assembly was organized by the Spirit of God. It wasn't just a group of brethren and like a democracy that we're

so accustomed to, but that God would select in His wisdom and raise up by His power those that would be self sacrificing. And for the preservation of that assembly, that they would labor among them. And so that's why he says to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. What would the result be? There would be peace. And there is never a blessing in an assembly when there are those that are striving against the oversight that God has raised up. There isn't a peace in the assembly because there's a striving against the work of the Spirit of God. In how he has raised up those in oversight. Now they'll answer to the Lord for how they go on, how the assembly goes on under their watch. We might just look at that in Hebrews chapter 13. I think it's being referred to before. Verse 17. Hebrews 13. Verse 17. It says obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves. It doesn't mean to the way they want it done is the way they should it should be done and their opinion is a higher opinion so on. But they present the word of God in certain situation and so we should submit to that. Says obey them rule, have the rule over you and submit yourself for they watch for your souls as they that must give account that they may do it with joy. And not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you and so those that are in oversight.

Will give account of their stewardship. You might say their oversight during the time that they had responsibility because the flock is the Lorde flock. It's not theirs and it's the price that was paid was the blood of the his own son. The price was paid at the Cross of Calvary that he might have those that were blessed in his presence. So this is just he's giving them instruction. This young assembly young group of believers. To recognize those that God had raised up to care for them, not to treat them shoddily. Cultivate fellowship with those who are older in your assembly. Sometimes you see them all in a group of young people. That's fine. It's nice to have fellowship with one another. But cultivate fellowship with older ones and learn to ask good questions. That's a good way to learn, I must say. I've been impressed at the end of Matthew's Gospel, the Lord Jesus gives the command Go therefore and teach all nations. It's really make disciples, discipleship. And I have accompanied older brethren in my youth today into Latin America. And I must say I learned immensely, not only about what they talked about, but the way they acted. And the way they handled situations. It was incredibly important learning for me. And so I just want to encourage you to do that. To know those doesn't mean they're perfect, they may make mistakes, but respect them because they're a little older, they have a little more experience. And so I remember an older brother in the assembly where I came to when I was 18 years old and Oak Park, IL, and I had quite a bit of confidence with him and I went up to him one time and said. What do you think about this situation? He says, you know what, I don't know what to answer you, but I'll get back to you. And it was a few days later, he came back to me in another assembly meeting and after the assembly meeting and said, here's what I want to share with you. And I must say I thoroughly appreciated and respected him in that. I just want to mention too, that word admonish includes correction. But when there is confidence you can take correction, and I've been, I can tell you about times when I've been corrected by my older brother. I must say it was kind of a jolt at first, but when I stopped and considered and thought about it, it was extremely helpful in my understanding of the Scriptures. Let me give you one word or one verse that talks about. Admonishment, too, that I found very helpful. In Romans chapter 15. And verse 14. He says. I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren. That ye also are full of goodness. Filled with all knowledge. Able also to admonish one another. Notice that admonish doesn't start the list. First comes. Full of goodness. And so we need to think of as a brother that needs some admonishment. Have I shown goodness to that person? Am I filled with all knowledge? Sometimes you go up to a person to correct them and you don't have the whole picture and you get into the fray and you try to admonish them and it doesn't get over it well, very well. It's important to be filled with all knowledge and then able also to admonish. Brethren, we need admonishment. I need it. But let's learn to take it. And again, I say it to my younger brother. Totally. Fellowship with your older brother. You're describing people that have grace in the way they do it. We jokingly have a little thing back home where I admonish one of my brothers, don't be get off my lawn guy. But the way you treat people because that guy, you know what happens? They get on his lawnmower. Don't be that guy. Don't be that guy in spiritual matters. Don't be the get off my lawn guy. It won't be received well and maybe you should just consider it anyway. But.

Grace, a lot of grace that comes. I heard a description of different ones who were. Thankful that they received help and admonishment from different ones and it wasn't from a get off my lawn guy. Sing 191. 191. We mentioned.

Kentucky Conference: 2023, 1 Thessalonians 5:14-28

Reading

#218. So. Every time I saw a Christian. Also 160. #161. Forever with the heart. And soul of heaven and being. So I am crying. Verse 14. First Thessalonians, chapter 5, verse 14. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly. Comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, Be patient toward all, See that none render evil for evil unto any man, but ever follow that which is good both among yourselves and to all men. Rejoice evermore, Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus. Concerning you quench not the Spirit, despise not prophesying, prove all things. Hold fast that which is good, abstain from all appearance of evil, 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. Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss. I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. Just want to mention rather than rule had something special in his heart from John 17. Perhaps we can get through these verses in time to let him. Get what he has on his heart. I think that would be good. These are short verses and I think we don't have to. Get hung up on anything here. They may be short, but they're profound, those seven things. Are life changing but I totally agree with you. In his writing speaks to these Thessalonians and he says we exhort you, you stirring them up, brethren, to warn them that are unruly comfort the feeble minded support the weak patient toward all He gives these little Nuggets and as we know when we live in this scene, we're affected by sin and everything that is. Built or set up falls into disorder, it just decays, it falls apart and so you know the Lord Jesus in his love for his Saints is he brings out in verse 12 Those that were being oversight shepherds of God's people and the motive is love for the Lord, love for the Saints and now there might be some disorder that would creep in and he says to speak.

To speak, to warn them, to really stir those up that are causing the difficulty among the people of God, those that are unruly. I believe the word is a military term and it's not walking in rank with your brethren, not walking consistent with the character of what it is to walk together. And so he says to warn them. That's the work of the. Those that are in oversight comfort the feeble minded or the faint hearted. Those that are perhaps discouraged, disheartened and just about to give up, strengthen them and have a view of having a. Have the eye out for those that are perhaps faint hearted. Support the weak. Be patient toward all. Now that's particular instruction to those that are perhaps in oversight. But it's good for all of us to recognize that these little excerpts are necessary. Now remember, the apostle Paul was speaking to

this. These young Christians, they were just saved. They were just newly gathered to the Lord's name. He doesn't. Try to correct them and correct any errors or anything. I don't think there's anything corrective in this epistle, but he just gives them little Nuggets to help them to oil the wheels, oil the chains, just oil things so that they'll run smoothly. And so it's the kindness of God that we can have this care for one another in this way. Somebody likes to stir the pot. There was a brother years ago in our assembly and he was funny guy and. He used to say things to kind of get something gone, and sometimes it was funny, you know, and entertaining. But he had been good at that as an unsaved person. But now in the assembly, he would do that sometimes. And I remember talking with him and I talking to him and say, you know, yeah, sometimes it's funny, other times not so much. And you're entertaining yourself, maybe at the expense in a way that. Isn't profitable because there are people that get offended by things like that. And I remember him taking it to heart and realizing, well, wait a minute, you know, why am I doing that? You know, for my, just for entertainment purposes. Well, if you're doing it in the assembly. Maybe not the right place and I I know people that have a funny bone in them and they, they can do that kind of thing. But if you, if you hear about somebody and you hear somebody say they like to stir the pot. It's often not a good thing. And you know that they, for whatever reason. Just seemed to want to do that kind of thing. If somebody says black, they say white. Well, that's not a good thing. It's not a good thing amongst the Saints to be doing that. Says comforts of faint hearted in the Darby translation. And then there's a lot of people that are discouraged and we need to be sensitive brethren with our brethren and and be a help in the right direction. If there's faint heartedness, a wrong word, perhaps a strong word of exhortation is going to knock them down. So let's be sensitive as to the needs of our brethren. Fun to make your helmet out of an overarching, overarching observation. Picking up from the end of verse 13 and then verse 23 last phrase and be at peace among yourselves and the very God of peace sanctify you holy. And many of these things that are brought out in connection with has been a smooth assembly functioning and or as well as individual relationships. This matter of peace personally in your soul is extremely important. And what is peace? Peace is a nature that is at rest in the satisfaction of having everything that it desires.

A dog has a nature. You give them a nice sunny front porch, a full bowl of dog food and water, a nice rug to lay on, and he curls up in the sun and that is a picture of peace. His doggy nature has everything that it wants. He scratch his head, he just thumps his tail. We have two natures. And if our passions. And our will get active because there's something we want, there's something we want to correct that irritates us, and it begins to just consume us. Why doesn't this circumstance change? Why does this brother have to act this way? Why does this sister have to do that? And if we wake up thinking about it, we go to bed thinking about it, and we want to change it. And our passions and our will are active, and we have no power. To satisfy our own passion and gratify our own will. And it is a total lack of peace. Now the one I'm irritated about might be going on just peacefully, but for me it's a total lack of peace. But I have a new nature. And that new nature is given everything that it needs from God, and it finds that satisfaction. And those things that God gives if I exert my will enough and. Maybe Satan gets involved and I get what I want now I've got it. Am I at peace? No, because I don't have it with a good conscience. And so I go warn that brother. That's a difficulty. But I'm irritated and I finally act in my own self will and I drop the hammer. Well, I fixed it. Am I at peace? I'm not at peace. I got what I wanted, but I don't have it in a good conscience. Everything that God has to give us satisfies that new nature that we have without any twinge of conscience whatsoever. So he's the God of peace. He is the one who supplies everything that that new nature needs. What is it to be at peace among ourselves as to resign my will? Being at peace among ourselves starts with me resigning my will and leaving it with the Lord. Then I can warn the unruly because I'm not coming from a place that doesn't have any peace. I can comfort the faint hearted because I'm coming from a place of peace. And all of these things that unfold, the God of peace supplies what we need. There was a man named Ammon in the Old Testament, and he wanted a woman named Tamar, and he wanted her so badly. That he began to pine away and lose weight. And he had a friend. We heard about good friends last night. He had a bad friend named John and Dan. And John and Deb says, don't worry, Ammon, I'll fix this up for you and you can get what you want. Well, he did. But it's after he got her. He said he hated her. And the hatred where he hated her was more than the love that he had loved her. He had no peace. In the satisfaction and gratification of his own will. And he lost his life two years later. We want what God wants for us, and only in that way are we going to have peace. We have to resign our own wills. The God of peace will supply it. Get yourself back. Elliott's thinking of others and the good of others, isn't it? And I find in our country, brethren, we are self-centered. That's the way our whole advertising system works, To think of yourself, what you want, what you can get. Even Christ please, not himself. Here's the creator of the universe. He did not please himself. O brethren, may the Lord help us. And so in these things it's thinking of others, warning them that are unruly, comforting the big hearted, supporting the weak, and be patient toward all. And then verse 15 see that none render evil for evil unto any man. Whatever, follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men. Well, how important these are to think of others. Get outside yourself. We need to be delivered from ourselves, brethren. We we are. I often say to young people, we're dead bearing and risen to grin with Christ, a person that's dead and buried, that you go out and dig them up and see how they're doing once in a while.

No, you leave them there. Just leave them there. Our life is on the other side and our life is Christ. And so when you look up into the glory, we can say that man in the glory, that's my life. We have the we have Scripture to show that that's my life. Oh, brethren, to be delivered from ourselves is so beautiful. It's also the fact that we don't have the wisdom to be able to deliver ourselves in some of these situations, and some of these situations will never be fixed until we're safely with the Lord. And so he presents the Lord's coming, but not to avenge ourselves that I was thinking of Romans chapter 12 here it says in verse 19, Romans 12, dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place under wrath. For it is written, Vengeance is mine. I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst give him drink, for in so doing thou shalt keep coals of fire on his head, and be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. Well, we don't have time to expound all of that, but really the Lord is the one that has the right, the authority to exact vengeance. And in His governmental way we have the confidence. If we have faith, we have confidence in His ability. To render correct verdict in the situation that might exist and we don't have to try to solve it ourselves. And so isn't it nice to just trust the Lord in faith with some of these situations that develop and not to exert our wills and interfere in the wisdom of God, the purpose of God for allowing that particular trial. When you were bombarded with communications, you can get alerts on their phone and occur in a public area. You hear a beep in a ring, and sometimes you wonder if it's your own phone because the ring might sound the same. We are bombarded, but as Christians we have the Holy Spirit that dwells within us, and we need to build gateways to good and barriers to bad. Gateways to good and barriers to bad. There's about a dozen here. Between verses 14 and 23. You turn to Romans 12. There's about two dozen, so. Sometime I would recommend reading Romans 12 and then I Thessalonians 5. There's over 35 different instructions. They're very short, sometimes three and four words, but they're very, very important. You know, people use home remedies to try to fix problems. We need to use divine home remedies again, barriers to bad, gateways to good. God has given us His word. His word is living, is powerful, sharper than any two edged sword, piercing to the dividing of soul and spirit sometimes. We don't know what our problem is. A few weeks ago I knew there was something wrong. I couldn't tell my wife. Immunology pill. I tried some other thing. Finally, a few days later I figured out what it was, but I couldn't figure it out. Sometimes we need an MRI or an X-ray in a spiritual realm. A loved one a few years ago had an MRI and it turned out there was something the size of a grapefruit and it was just an

accumulation of tissue and water over more than a decade and it was removed. There was it was completely benign. There was nothing wrong, but it needed to be corrected. We need those divine X-rays and MRI's in our soul and in our experience and that's what these scriptures are. Rejoice evermore. How important is that? We need to live in daily happiness and joy in the presence of the Lord. We can rejoice no matter how dark it is, how offering, how often and Peter and James is suffering connected with joy. You want more joy. God may bring suffering because I believe often it's suffering because the flesh suffers and then God can pour into the cracks, into the holes, into the the piercings. His doors, Jesus said to his disciples, I give you my joy, and my joy no one takes from. God has given us everything that pertains to life in godliness. He's given us it all. We need to take hold of it, lay it, and apply it wisely. I really enjoy thinking brother, and that there are two verses in our King James Bible that have two words alone, and I like to put them together. Jesus wept. Rejoice evermore.

Put those two together. And I like to think of these rather than verses from 16 forward, They're, they're really commands in the New Testament sense of the word commands. He doesn't say rejoice ever more if you can. No, just rejoice evermore. Hey, how does that work when you're going through serious trial? You know, I've often thought of fallen Silas in the prison there. Philip by their blacks bleeding their feet into stocks and. It doesn't say they sang right away. It wasn't until midnight that they sang praise. They prayed and sang praises to God. Can you rejoice in that kind of a circumstance? Is that a possibility? Yes, it is. And I say this, brethren, God has set us in such a position of favor before Him in Christ, that even the things that seem to be negative can only and always work for our own good. And so in that impossible situation, God shook that prison and loosened all the. The bonds of the prisoners. And fall in silence, Come out of that prison with trophies of grace the the Philippian jailer at his household. What a tremendous thing, brethren, to realize we have reason to rejoice evermore. Look at Philippians because Philippians was written in a Roman prison and there was a lot that Paul could have been down about. But notice what he says in verse one of chapter 3. Finally, my brethren. Rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you. To me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. Notice chapter 4, verse 4. Rejoice in the Lord. How often? Alway. Did you hear that, brother and sister? The Lord again I say, rejoice. Yeah, we do have problems here, and I don't think we can ignore them, brethren, but the point is, if we consider that place of favor that we occupy before God in Christ, there's no way we can do anything but rejoice. This is the command, brother. Let it be a reality in our hearts. Being a command. Turn to Philippians chapter 4 for a couple of verses and then we'll apply them to our chapter and to the exhortations that are given. Philippians, Chapter 4. You'll notice the first one has to do with the peace of God. So you can look for those words and what I read verse six. Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with Thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. What's the consequence? And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. What has already been said? These things have to do with the will of God. And here in the first the peace of God is enjoyed in the soul, when the will of God is submitted to. And the peace of God. We can have that same peace that God has about a matter when we submit to what the will of God is in that even if we don't understand why we still submit as this is the will of God. And if we do submit, then the consequence in our souls is we will enjoy the peace of God now.

A little different aspect of it is found in the God of peace. And that if you go down to verse nine, it says. These things which he have both learned and received and heard and seen. In me do. And the God of peace shall be with you. What's the keyword there do? There is. The God of peace is with us. When we do, Bob used the word command and in our chapter, these exhortations have the character in a New Testament sense of a command. So turn to our chapter and I'm going to just use the words that we've just had these things that you've heard and seen and so on in me do and what are they? They had seen it in the apostle Paul. In his short time with them and now he's giving them these exhortations. And so he says, rejoice evermore. Why does he say that? Because it's the will of God. It's the will of God and if there is submission and doing. There will be the peace as a result because one finds communion with God in doing his will. But there's conflict when I don't because God isn't with me in it. And so these somewhat simple exhortations have that character. He says pray without ceasing. It's the will of God. Do it and you will receive the benefit and blessing that he intends from it. In everything, give thanks. And in fact, he reinforces what we're just saying in it. He says this is the will of God. In Christ Jesus concerning you and so on it goes on with the rest of them as the same character. We know you need to remember too, that there are sorrowful situations even in this epistle. He says we sorrow not as others which have no hope. And so there are times of sorrow. And our sister Irene is sorrowing, her husband is with Christ, and she's glad that it's far better for him. But there's sorrow, there's something. So the Lord here, he speaks the Spirit of God brings before us the rejoicing evermore. That's the normal. Course of life for a believer. There may be some exceptions, some situations that cause sorrow and so on. And the Lord grieves with us. The Lord Jesus wept as you read. Jesus wept. But the normal course of a believer should be a course of rejoicing and happiness. And so the believer should be recognizable on the street in every situation of life because he's rejoicing. His face radiates Christ, but he's also in the spirit of dependence. He prays without ceasing, and so he's not on his knees 24 hours a day, but he spends time privately with the Lord in secret. But then he has the display of a spirit of dependence upon Christ, upon the Lord. He doesn't take out, reach out and take things that he hasn't received from the Lord, as it were. He depends upon the Lord in every circumstance and so. These simple little instructions were given to these new believers. They were tender hearted, they had affection for Christ, they were waiting for His coming. And this is the spirit of how they ought to have been living. And He just gives them this little incursion. Isn't that wonderful? And so when we get older in the path of faith, we sometimes forget these things. So these three things really go together to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks. For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. So to have a joyful spirit, a dependent attitude and then a thankful spirit, it's opposite of what is existent in this world today. The scripture mentioned seven things, and now brother alluded to these who are 7 things. In here we see seven things mentioned. The 4th should bring to our attention often to some sort of.

Lovin or evil if it's not done properly in the fourth one. So as in the case of seven churches, the 4th church is Thyatira. In the case of seven feasts of Jehovah, you'll find that the 4th one was the meal offering with Levin in it, although it's been baked. And the seven parable will find that the middle 4th one has 11. So in this case a brother mentioned the three already. And it was the will of God. Then the 4th one is a quench, not the spirit. It's a mistake or it's a problem that we often fail that we may quench the spirit. It's difficult and I think some other can expand on it more. I often liken the verse in scripture. It tells us not to be like a horse nor a mule. Because I can relate to both where sometimes we just want to go. I have so much to say. I want to say it now. Just like that race force, you put them behind the racing gate, it wants to go. And someone has to remind him that that the race hasn't started yet. It has to wait for his time. And then there are times that would could be like that mule, pick me all you want, I'm not going to move. So we need to relate to that and be dependent on the Spirit of God. Should there be a long wait, maybe should be. Should there be something the Lord lay on your heart that you should speak up now I would encourage during the lunch hour and the break. Many younger ones have shared with me many wonderful passages. And things that we didn't talk about, I'll relate a quick story. I've been there. I was one of you that didn't say anything. I'll show you. Did this with a brother Bob Bauman. I jumped on him one time. As a brother Bob, you should have mentioned this, this and that and that too. And brother Bob Bauman looked at me with a straight face. He said that was good, brother. You should bring it up at the next meeting. So it's true not to

quench the Spirit. It's important. Another seven things that's in the middle, the last three or the next three, if you really look at it, you can. You cannot do it without the Spirit helping. You see, we should see the whole Godhead involved, that God's will. Now the Spirit help to bring the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ out. So there with the Spirit's help, then we can prophesize. Don't despise it. We can prove whether it is so from the word of God. And then we are told to abstain from evil. No, I don't think that's what he said is that abstain from all appearance of evil. And young people, they're often the phrase and our children used to use that. What's wrong with that? Tell me what's wrong. We can't always say what's wrong. Because the appearance of that, sometimes even the spirit of that statement tells us that there is some rebellion spirit involved rather than staying what's wrong. So stay away from even the appearance of evil and be obedient to the Word of God. In our chapter it says in everything give thanks. Ephesians 5 and verse 20 says giving thanks always. For all things and to God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. So not only in all things, but for all things. And I must say rather than I have found it a real help in my own Christian life when something happens that is fairly negative to say. Thank you Lord. I remember one time I was heading east from their West Coast with my four kids in the car, barbed flew and we were just out of Pocatello, ID and it was the winter time as following the truck and a piece of ice came off the top of that truck and flew right into my windshield. Just shattered it. Ever. I didn't know how to react. My first reaction, my kids told me afterwards, thank you, Lord. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Lord. Now, Lord, help me. And so I was able to pull it over. But I was amazed, Brother, what happened? You know, when a truck's ahead of you, you generally doesn't see what's going on behind it. But that guy saw that happen and he pulled right over. It was a Pepsi truck. And he and he came back. He says, you guys all right? He said yeah.

He says, I'm going to call my office, and he called his office and he says if you go to this address, we'll put you in a new windshield right away. Yeah, we we're delaying two or three hours, but it didn't cost us a thing to have a new windshield put in. Brethren, it helps to just accept every situation from the hand of God and say thank you, Lord, in everything. Give thanks and giving thanks for all things. This is important. This is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. And then what you were mentioning about Brother Dave Quench, not the Spirit, how important it is. Notice the Spirit is in capital. It's the Holy Spirit of God that dwells in US. Is there to guide us not only in assembly meetings, but he's to guide us individually every day. Cultivate the sensitivity as to the presence of the and the spirit of the Spirit of God in my in our hearts brethren, because he's there to guide us and he will give you direction that you need the Lord help us to be exercised about this. The verses 9 keys 20 and 21 give us what our proper response should be. To the work of the Spirit in our lives. And this too was really in connection with these young believers. They have when you're lost, you're living under the influence of the enemy. And more than we would understand, we're under the influence of the enemy, particularly when we're lost. We're slaves to sin and so on. But when we get saved, if we walk in communion with the Lord Jesus. Independence upon him, and we have that spirit. We're rejoicing in the Lord. The Spirit of God will be at liberty to guide and so. Our response should be not to quench the leading of the Spirit, perhaps in gospel work or whatever it might be. But then there's another response that says in Ephesians chapter 5, verse 30, Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God. Whereby, oh, chapter 4, verse 30, I'm sorry, whereby we are, ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. So grieving the Spirit of God is doing something that He didn't ask you to do and sinning, perhaps in a way that the Spirit has spoken and you have resisted and you have pressed your own will and gone ahead. And so these things are just in the tenderness. You can just see the tenderness of the apostle Paul. And speaking to these new believers and saying the Spirit of God is going to try to work with you and don't quench that spirit. Just allow him to do his work. Despise not prophesying. So he's going to use individuals and they're going to prophecy. We might just look at the First Corinthians chapter 3. It's not a complete. Definition of what prophesying is. But it is a partial definition. Chapter 14 of first Corinthians. It says verse three. He that prophecy us speaketh unto men to edification. That's a building up in the things of God. Knowledge of the Scriptures exhortation stirring up the conscience is engaged then comfort, comfort of heart. Those three things particularly. But then if you look back in. Or ahead to I'm sorry, back to Colossians. I think it's chapter 3 in Colossians. It says that we should be speaking with hymns, speaking to one another, singing, making melody in our hearts. I can't find that. Maybe some verse, chapter 3, verse 16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And so there are different aspects to the work of prophesying.

And God knows how to use the word of God and to raise up individuals to prophecy, and they don't tell us what we want to hear. They don't speak soft things, but they speak on behalf of the Lord. And so that's why the sisters cover their heads at a hymn sing is they may be prophesying, singing and the teaching and the admonishing of the Saints and so on. It's a part of the prophetic realm. And so then there's prophecy and we're to prove all things and to hold fast that which is good. I might prophecy something that's not true, not right, not according to the word of God, while we're to prove what we hear by the word of God. And 1St Corinthians 14, the prophets speak two or three and let the others judge, not judging persons, but judge what is being said. You've got your Bible open in front of you. Is that really what it's saying? Look at it and it will be in the line if it's the right teaching. I must say, younger brethren, I want to say a word because when I was young. I remember accompanying Brother Clem Buchanan in one of the trips and a brother spoke in a meeting and I didn't particularly like what he had to say at a centric Brother Clem Buchanan. Afterwards, when that brother speaks, I can't really hardly listen very well. He looks at me and he says despise, not prophesying. That was a good correction for me. He says you may not like him, but he might be saying something that you need to hear. Listen. And God uses sometimes instruments that we least expect. He used the mouth of a donkey to reprove me, disobedient prophet. Brethren, bless not despise prophecy, but then like you say, Robert, prove all things hold fast that which is good. So we test it by the Word of God, and when we see it in the Word of God, then it's cemented into our hearts and souls. And then I think it follows on abstain from all appearance of evil, as something comes up that has the appearance of evil. Abstain. Think of being led by the Spirit as a brother who speaks. But then we too should think of other things. First of all, how can you be LED, especially publicly, if you're not at the reading, at the regular meetings? And I say this because we know when we go home, sometimes we find it difficult to be at all the meetings. What happened at the prayer meeting? Should you be there? Is the spirit they're guiding. What about reading meetings or maybe a special meeting called for different purpose? I say this as an encouragement. You know, it's interesting. During COVID, I don't follow the US as much as Canada. We have people fighting, saying it's not good that Sunday churches are closed. They were fighting for it. You know, I'm not here to debate right or wrong because I know there are going to be different opinions. But my thought immediately turned to it was that how come they're not fighting to be at the prayer meeting or the reading meeting? Where is our heart? Those are the prayer meeting is an assembly meeting. And as the old brethren of all used to say, in a sense that's the temperature gauge for the assembly. And you might say, well, there's so few there. Well, I think that's why you need to be there. Well, there were many there. Well, that's why you need to be there. You should be at the prayer meeting as well. Many conversations with young brother about this very thing. He had a lot of things to say about the problems and difficulties which no doubt were true. But I said, why don't you be part of the solution? But I related to him when I was in my 20s and the Lord restored me and I was back in meeting. I didn't come Wednesday nights very often.

Brother Carl McCoy won Lord's Day morning after meeting, said Brother Sam, why don't you come to the Wednesday night meetings And I said, you really want to know? And he said, yeah, he could have laid into me his ability to do that, but he did it. And I said to him, because the prayers don't get answered here, there's something hindering things in the meeting, the way the meetings are. I said at work, I pray with the Baptist brother and this evangelical on that one, and the prayers get answered that afternoon or the next day or the next week. Nothing gets answered here. That's how I felt. Brother Carl said to me. He said, well, you know Brother Sam, he said, I guess then that's what we should be praying about. And he said, would you be there next week? And I said, OK, And he started the prayer meeting next week. He mentioned a little bit about that. And he said something's hindering things here, brother. And he started off and the prayer was unbelievable. He just poured his out to God about what is hindering. All the young people are gone. Everybody's gone. All this stuff and it's dead. It seems dead. Well, if you're a young person, it's hard to go to a thing like that. But he could have said to me, well, be part of the solution, and he kind of did because I was there the next week and I saw something take place that was authentic and real. And our brother Carl was. He just poured out his heart before God. And, you know, things began to change after that. But I was excusing myself in a way that I shouldn't have been. But there can be a hindrance in our meetings, and those who are, are there. Maybe you ought to think about that. Maybe there ought to be some prayers about Lord. What's hindering things? What's holding things back? What is keeping young people away? Are we driving them away? And if things start changing, you'll want to be there. And after that, I did want to be there because I watched that there was something real taking place, that God was moving. The Spirit of God began to do things and I was amazed. And he's able to do that. So there's another side to it. And we should prayerfully consider that verse 23 and 24 kind of summarize all these exhortations. The very God of peace sanctify you holy and I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body, that's our entire being. They preserve blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. I look at that verse. I say, how in the world? Can that happen? How can I be blameless? There's so many little fallacies in my personality and my actions. But look at verse 24. There's the answer, brethren, Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it? It's not a matter of my faithfulness, brother. It's a matter of his faithfulness. He's going to work it out, and He is working it out in US. And so the Lord give us that confidence that on that day when we appear before Him in glory, spirit, soul, and body will be found blameless before Him. Oh, brethren, what a tremendous thing it would be. In that day. The Lord exercise our hearts, not only our body, but our soul. And our spirit, in every sense of the word, we need to be sanctified. Sit apart for him. The world refers to this order, doesn't it? The world you'll hear the expression in the world, body, soul and spirit. And so they pay little attention to the spirit. But the spirit is God conscious. It's the intelligence of the intelligence of man and his God conscious person that part of them. And his soul is his emotions and what he likes is he dislikes and then embodies physical. Appreciation, ability to physically. Enjoy this world or exist in it. The world wants to forget the spirit, but the order here is very significant, spirit, soul and body. And so we need our thoughts. It's a marvelous, you know, you should think of the tenderness. The apostle Paul to speak in this way in the Spirit of God leading him. The spirit needed to be right for everything else to be right. The Spirit 1St and then the soul, the emotions and then the body.

In chapter one. Genesis, a man in his own image and likeness. God is a tripartite being is. Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and so He made us in His image and likeness. I sometimes say to the brethren in South America, the plant creation as a body, but has no soul nor spirit. The animal creation has a body and a soul. They can they have their likes and their dislikes. They can show affection or a lack thereof. But ask a dog about God. There's no. Spirit there to have any sense of God or his his existence. It's only man that is spirit, soul and body. Our time is gone, brethren. I would like to turn it to dawn, please. The last half hour we got here. Please don't you go ahead with what you have in your heart. Let's turn to John, chapter 17. I'm going to make remarks, but I don't intend to take 1/2 an hour's worth of remarks. And so after I make what's on my heart, I would leave it open for others to share from John 17 according to what the Lord may give them. We've had. This weekend and the reading meetings and occupation with the Lord's coming and practical exhortations that would characterize our lives in view of it and give us a hope for the Lord to come and. The This morning, what brought this chapter before me particularly was this morning we had three. We sang three different hymns. But the character of all three hymns were really in the spirit of a prayer. All three hymns we directly address. Lord, we can see by faith in Thee a prospect bright, unfailing, and so in spirit, if we were singing them. As I trust we did, our hearts were lifted up to express to the Lord what our thoughts were in a hymn. Which is in the spirit of a prayer. All three of the hymns had that same character. Of direct address. It's important when we. 22 songs, if you will, that we opened this meeting with. We're not of that character. They were spiritual songs and they were reflections that we were making on our thoughts that we trust were formed by the Spirit of God. But John 17 to me is a wonderful reverse. And I think a very encouraging way to end our reading meetings on the weekend. What's John 17? Well, in John 13 through John 17, the Lord Jesus is anticipating the time when he's going to be separated from His own. And so he begins to prepare them for the time when the disciples and others, ourselves included, would not be with him and where He is. And so he concludes that preparation. With his prayer for us. And so I think it's important for us to see what the Lord Jesus has prayed and is praying his Spirit with respect to what we've had this weekend. And it's not our side of it. We ended up the reading portion with it's God that works. And here's the perfect you appreciate. We were told to pray for one another. Don't we appreciate this morning that the Lord Jesus is praying for us? Who better could be praying for us this morning than the Lord Jesus? Who better could anticipate? His coming and how he feels about it. We've had an experience over this feel about his coming and what our thoughts are as to our hope and what that hope is. What's his hope And to me if we let him.

Tell us, as he does in this chapter in his prayer. It's a prayer. And so I just like to look at a few things that the Lord Jesus is praying. Then and today, for you and I, in anticipation of the moment in which he's going to give a shout. So he says and just get the context in chapter 17 and verse one, these words spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come glorify thy son and the beginning of the prayer he is speaking to the Father and telling the Father and recognizing with the Father that his work here on earth that he came to do for the Father. Is now come to a conclusion as Son of God, he could refer to it even though he hadn't physically yet been on the cross. That comes in a couple of chapters. But he prays to his Father and says, Father, I have glorified you on the earth. I have done the work which you gave me to do, and now you glorify yourself. And so he begins that way. In verse six he says, I've manifested thy name unto the men. Which men? He says The men which thou gave us to me. Out of the world. You look at yourself this morning that way. Do I? I'm a person that God gave to his son and He's going to pray for me. And you, he's going as he does here, speak for us in that context. He cares about those that God has given him out of the world. And so he expresses that. And so he says. Thou gave us the mate and so on, and expresses the thoughts. I'm not going to try to go verse by verse through the chapter. He says in verse nine. I pray for them. Can you leave the room this morning and with the consciousness that he just prayed to God said I pray for brother so and so and sister make it personal. Lord, I pray for Dawn, I pray for Bob and so on. I pray for Mary and so he. Thou hast given me those who thou hast given me. They are thine. Oh, that's a wonderful thing. He can speak to his Father and say you've given him to me. And they're mine, but they're yours too. And so we look. He's praying for us as belonging to himself. And belonging to his father. Better to belong to. Is it possible? Can you imagine anybody you'd rather belong to than God the Father and God the Son? So he says. Verse 11, part of the prayer that is for us as we walk out of this room today and head back to whatever our other activities of life are. He says. They are of the world, Holy Father. Holy Father, that's his character of his Father. And what

does he ask for us in connection with it? He says keep. Keep those that thou hast given me. He wants us to be kept. So. Thus, prayer we could ever ask for to leave this room is that the Holy Father keep. Verse 11 Through thine own name those who has given me. The we we speak about entrusting one another to the care of the Lord. Our Lord Jesus has the same character of his prayer. He's entrusting us.

To Holy Father to keep us, and so he says. Umm verse 14. I have kept them. And the world hated them. So what is he going to want for us? He kept them while he was here. But he's not going to be here anymore. And So what is his prayer for us? We weren't in the same position that these words had to do with his 12 disciples and the others that the Lord had given him and that he had part of his pathway. But his desire, as we see later in his prayer, was, does he say Lord take him out of the world? No, he doesn't. He says, I've given them thy word so they have it. And that he then says, I pray not. Verse 15 Thou should take them out of the world. But thou should keep them from the evil. That's the prayer of the Lord Jesus for you and I this morning. Not to take us out of the world yet. But to as wholly keep us from the evil. So we had an exhortation this morning and. Abstain from every appearance of evil, and so on. We were given practical things on our side of responsibility that would contribute, if you will, to this end result. Verse 17. Sanctify them through Thy truth, by word as truth. What's been happening for the last couple of days? What's the process that's been going on when you and I have been sitting here for several hours reading the Word of God and meditating together on it? We're fulfilling this prayer. Sanctify them through Thy truth. Thy word is truth. If we have been accepting what the truth of what has been given to us over this weekend in this prayer and this, these meetings, it has a separating, a sanctifying effect because God's Word is pure and it is that which has that character for us. Verse 19 for their sakes. I sanctify myself. We had earlier. Your life's where your heart is. Where's your heart? Your heart, at least in measure and the desire of God completely would be my heart is totally wrapped up in that person where he is outside this dirty, messy, sinful world. And so the object of the heart being I set myself apart. He does, He has, He is set apart. He's not here anymore in this sinful world, but by being where he is and being the object of our hearts, then the occupation with him. Is a separating purifying. Activity of his that's embedded in his prayer. To give time for others, I'll just quickly go down maybe to. Verse 24 Father, here's the desire of the Lord Jesus. We talk about his coming. We've been occupied with the anticipation of the hope of it. What's his prayer about it? What should he pray for us concerning his coming? Father, I will. That they also. Whom thou hast given me. Be with me where I am. Does that tell you something about his coming? You and I have a hope formed to look forward to that coming. Does he have a hope? Yes, he does. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given thee. With me where I am and what will be the result? Of that desire of his heart we've already had. There's nobody more patient waiting for the coming than himself. He's waited for it a little longer than anybody in this room.

Ever has or ever will. And yet He patiently waits. And why? It's wonderful what he puts in attributes, if you will, to our hearts, when He says that they may behold my glory. Why is say such a thing? Because He knows that when you behold His glory, it will be the supreme satisfaction that you will ever realize. It will perfectly, completely and forever satisfy the greatest longings of the human heart of the new man. And so to behold His glory. It's love that He has for your soul and mine, that He would have us. Behold that glory of Himself that is His alone as Son of God, that is His as man, given by God to have. And so. Uh, I'll stop. Let others. Could you explain further Dom the two? The two. I don't know if you'd call it titles, but that the Lord. Uses in verse 11 and verse 25. All the rest of the times it's just Father, but he says Holy Father in verse 11, righteous Father in verse 25. And maybe I see how Holy Father fits a little bit more with keeping them. But why is why does he use those two titles, and why are they appropriate where they are in the Lord's Prayer? Yeah, that's not. I don't really want to. No, I've never. Complete that I feel free to put out so I would appreciate help. Maybe anybody might be able to help. Verse 11 I believe the importance of the holy is the keeping from it's the character of God who is holy and it is His desire that we be kept consistent with his character of holiness and He recognizes the risk that there is in a world that is unholy and hates holiness. In Romans chapter one, the world did not want to retain God in their knowledge. Because to retain God in man's knowledge is the conflict that I don't want to do the will of God. I want my own will and it's a sinful will. And in fact. There is a measure in which when the believers are gone from this world the will, the world will breathe a sigh of relief. Because that influence for holiness will be gone. And temporarily, man will be happy that you're no longer here. To bother his conscience if you live a holy life. And yet we're constantly in danger of being drawn into it because we still have the flesh in US. In James chapter 2 I'll make this comment about unholiness. In James chapter 2 verse one, it speaks about flesh and desire. And, and, and it's pretty significantly important. We know what the flesh is. It wants to do its own will, and it's a sinful will. In that verse where it speaks of our desire, it's important to recognize that flesh gets satisfaction temporarily out of what it does. Man does sin because he finds, at least at the moment of doing it, he has satisfaction in what he's doing. And Satan uses that. And he sins because he's doing it in a way that sometimes in its right context, is the right thing. And God put the desire there.

That which is moral and within the marriage is a fulfillment of a natural pleasure that is of God and is wonderful in its place in the man woman relationship as husband and wife. But there's desire satisfied in it and man fulfills that desire and adultery and other forms of it, but you can't say there's not a satisfaction in the doing of it. Here. I'm going beyond verse 11, but it's the sense. Of a Holy Father that needs that he's praying to a Holy Father in that need that we have to be separated from the sense of evil. But I believe in the verse 25 when it's, O righteous Father, that the day is coming when the world will know and recognize that God has always acted righteously and all his affairs with man and His place with man having to do with the earth. He has been perfectly consistent in all that he has done, but the world doesn't know it. And so he's saying to us, but you know it. You know it. And he recognizes that we recognize when we are made the righteousness of God in Christ as we had in the Saturday night gospel, when we are made that part of what we are learned is the truth of the righteousness of God and how that righteousness is satisfied. We understand it as a people, but the world doesn't. The world has no real clue of what righteousness really is. The operation of the earth and the governments of the world. We pray that they would. Act in the fear of the Lord and act righteously, but we recognize and practice. That very often the governments of the earth are anything but righteous in their character. That the flesh and the desires of man dominate rather than what is. Right managing the affairs of the world. That is interesting to hear John John 17. There are two things that are there to help sanctify us rather than the 1St is in verse 17/17/17. Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth. Important to you young people. In the day in which we live, anything goes. People think truth is relative. Brethren, when it's here, thy word is truth. That is not relative, that is absolute. And so truth is absolute. I think the problem is sometimes when people look at us who fail in our testimony, they say you say you have the truth. Look what you're doing. And so they call it in question, and maybe they might. If we are the reference point, we are not the reference point. The reference point is God's word. And of course in the Lord, the Lord Jesus said I am the way. Is that true? Is the truth in the absolute sense of it, beyond which there is no appeal, how important it is to get that settled in your souls, young people, in the midst of a world where, say, that's just your idea? It's not just my idea, it's what God says in His Word, and I must go by that. But I think it's important for us to keep the focus of ourselves. So that's one of the things that sanctifies. I want to ask you young people, do you read the Scriptures on your own? You have a time when you open up the Word of God and read it for yourself, just you and the Lord. I just want to encourage you to establish that habit in your life. It's so important that will sanctify you. We live in a world that everything we hold

true is being challenged. And so here's something that is absolute.

Thy word is true. Read it constantly. Read it consistently. I say. Don't just jump around in your Bible from one side to another. But read it consistently if you start Matthew's Gospel. Wherever you stop reading market and then keep on reading from there, read through the Scriptures. That way you will understand it much better. But Scripture has a sanctifying effect and that's what we've been talking about in in First Thessalonians chapter 5, verse 23. But there's another thing here in John 17 that I think is beautiful to see. And I think Don mentioned it, but I just want to focus on it a little more. Verse 19, he says, for their sakes, I sanctify. Myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth. Now that's His work of intercession at God's right hand. He has set himself apart in the glory to pray for us. And it's that we might be sanctified. That's why it's so serious for a child of God to get into sin. You are more responsible than a person of the world if you sin, because you are sinning with that one. Pleading for you at God's right hand and I don't pretend to know what he says there he says father there's Bob down there he's getting close to temptation keep him don't let him get into that and if I purposely. Get into it. I am far more responsible. So remember that you have one who is interceding for you at God's right hand every day, every hour. Oh, what a precious thing it is to know. So there is reason that we should be sanctified, set apart, holy for God. That's why in our present day. Against believers is to undermine the very idea that truth can be known. That you the very idea that you can hold it in your hands, that it cannot be known, this idea that there are no absolutes, Bob said. There is, there is apologists one time. Well, you quoted the word, but I heard what you said and it's the truth because you're repeating it. An apologist had AQ and a one time and somebody said in the Q&A there are no absolutes. Said to him, Really, He says there are no absolutes. Are you sure? There are no absolutes. Are you absolutely sure? And all of a sudden, the guy paused and realized he just defeated his own argument. I want you to know that, young people, it's that easy to defeat some of these foolish things that people come up with is to push it out to its extent. Francis Schaeffer in the 70s wrote about those things, and he coined the word then that he had to coin just to make a debate with somebody or a discussion. He called it true truth. The Word of God is true. True. It's what actually is. It is objective. And you can prove that by pushing somebody with those kind of statements. But if you've been convinced you can't know it or that you have a sword that's made out of rubber, how do you fight? Don't let them do that. And much of the stuff on the Internet that tries to to suggest to people. Older sister up in Iowa Falls who whose grandson keeps coming home with stuff from the Internet. He's got her doubting whether she can trust the word of God now. Well, it's a lie, and it doesn't take long if you think it through a little bit to realize it is a lie. There are absolutes. That which actually is true is what reality actually is. And this idea, you have a truth, I have a truth, he has a truth, she has a truth. It doesn't fit the real world and no one lives that way anyway. You can point to an atheist or somebody that tries to say that. Do you live that way? Do you live as though truth can't be known? No, you don't.

In your practical existence, day by day, they don't live that way. It might look good on a philosophy paper, but it doesn't work in real life. You know you, you think you can alter truth. Try jumping off a four story building one day, convincing yourself that you can fly. It doesn't work, not unless you provide yourself with wings or a parachute. But truth can be known. And if you believe that truth can be known, then when you do learn some things, it has a practical effect. It is a sanctifying effect. It has an effect on changing behavior and how you do. I'm going to tell you a quick thing about a young believer who just told me this recently, he said. Something's going on in me. He said I never used to do stuff like this. He said I was driving along and I could see a young woman running towards me. It wasn't dressed very well, covered very well. He says I never did this before. I put my hand up as I drove by. What did I do that I know why? Because he'd learned something and the Spirit of God had him put his hand up and the Lord showed him something. So Brother Bob, when you quoted that, who will do it? He will do it. What's our side to cooperate with that by faith, right? The fathers I notice in verse five had actually begin by saying, oh father, and I think that's how we are like when we first learned from the word of God, Oh father, we realize there is a father now. I think the Sunday school verse is that this week or last week I can remember Proverbs 9. And tan give us a hinge to the next one. Proverbs 9 and 10 says the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Many of us know that verse very well except we stopped there. There is there is a semi colon. We learned that it says after that and the knowledge of the holy. Is understanding. It's good to know the word of God, but it's also good to learn what is holy. Once you learn to holy, we now recognize there's a Holy Father now times gone, but you look down further. The Lord pray that that we be in him and he be in God. When we realize and learn to look at things from God's perspective as well, not just ours, then we can address him and understanding he's the righteous Father. 300. By 325. Because they could comment before we write. 17 verse 24. The Sun's desire here, Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am. Why, that they may behold my glory, which thou has given me. We've talked a lot here about natural relationships and natural desires, and one of those desires is we have a desire that we would be known that there would be someone that would understand us. First Corinthians, chapter 13.

First Corinthians chapter 13, the very end of the chapter. For now, we see through a glass darkly. But then face to face, now I know in part. But then shall I know? Even as also I am known. The Lord has asked us while we are here on this earth, to remember Him in His death. To remember the suffering. But in heaven He desires that we see his glory. The glory of the Creator and the glory of the Redeemer. That's his desire, that's his thought for us to be with him, to hold his discord. Look for that.

Montreal Conference: 2017, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-8

Reading

Thing Together 288. 288. All thou whose mercy spark, do all we can do or say, as in thy people Thou indeed just daily more displayed, let for our happiness of God and us while here below, by virtue of Christ, death and blood the riches blessings flow. 188. Hold thou whose mercy is all. We may be able to remember sighs loud from the ground and his throat and his name is the land of the placards, and then the number one man is the A1 who directions to all the. Phone number 80693 10-4 37673932. Call iPhone Raymond. Call 168. Dollars per hour. I would like to make a suggestion as to what we might take up.

I believe our brothers hymn that we just sung was very timely. And I would suggest the chapter from which the lines in the last verse were taken. 1St Thessalonians 5. It's a very practical chapter. But we need that kind of thing sometimes in these last days. And it is a chapter that deals particularly with. Some things that are going on in the world today or potentially going on and. Some of the things that are coming upon this world and our proper reaction to it, which of course is supremely important to us, how do we react to coming events in this world and the shadow of them that we are seeing rather vividly right now? What do my brethren think of that? Of the Lord sanctifying us fully. That last verse really spoke to my heart as we thank you. Well, that's encouraging. Or perhaps we could read for Thessalonians. Chapter 5. But at the

time and of the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I read unto you, for you yourself know perfectly. Day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night, when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, to travail upon a woman with trial, and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in the darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. You're all the children of light and the children of the day. We are not of the night, nor of the darkness. But let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober, for they did sleep, sleep in the night. And they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has 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. Before comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also you do, we beseech you, brethren, to know them with your labor among you, and are over you and the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work sake can be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly. Comfort the feeble minded, support the weak. Be patient toward all men. See that you render evil or evil. See that none render evil for evil unto any man. But ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men. Rejoice evermore, Pray without ceasing. In everything. Give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit, despite not prophesying, Prove all things, hold fast that which is good, Abstain from all appearance of evil, and the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body, you preserve blameless under the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the bread and with a holy kiss. It's hard to do by the Lord Jesus. By the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren, in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. Before we begin the chapter, I would make one remark, and that is, let's bear in mind that we have only two reading meetings. Not that we have necessarily to get through the whole chapter, but. Uh, it's easy to get bogged down in a few verses and sometimes, uh, miss seeing, as we would say in common jargon, we miss seeing the forest for the trees. So it's good to get a picture of the whole chapter as much as possible. But also, of course, if there are important details, it's good to get into some of them too. And we allow the Spirit of God liberty to do that.

But as we know, the Thessalonians. Had been brought right out of paganism by a visit from the Apostle Paul, which was fairly short. He had been there, we find in the book of the Acts, only three Sabbath days, so that his visit among them was probably only a month or less. And yet they were saved right out of paganism and brought into the light of Christianity. And no doubt in that time period Paul had given them a great deal of instruction about future events and about their proper hope in Christ. So that the Lord's coming, whether it is the appearing, as we often talk about it when the Lord comes to set up His Kingdom, or whether it is His coming for us, commonly referred to as the rapture. Paul brings that in in every single chapter of his two epistles to them. But we know, of course, that they had gotten a little mixed up and. Somehow had the idea that they were going through the tribulation, which of course was a rather serious error. And Paul seeks to correct that in this second epistle, among other things, because they had lost sight of the Lord's coming for them as an ever present hope. But having corrected that in the second epistle, I, I, I mentioned, uh, we find here in the first epistle. He is bringing before them the precious joy of all that was theirs in Christ, all that they had to hope for, all the blessings that were theirs that were going to, they were going to enjoy in fullness in the coming day. But then very definitely, and this is where I suggest we come in, in these last days, there is a very definite emphasis on the. State of soul and the lifestyle, if we could use the term, that was in keeping with those who were expecting the Lord to come at any moment and who were knowledgeable about the judgment that was coming on this world. So to chapter one. And to wait for it to come from heaven and be raised from the dead in Jesus, who delivered us reading from the last come. In there just two verses, what's your positive words to develop all the paths to do constructive matter of detail? He is the richest of the death and we have come together before. You believe God, we don't have the death and souls. Those are deadly fights. You kind of raise the death and he delivers. That's about to come. Through this. He delivers us from neurotic countries final salvation, the Lord coming and changing our body and taking us through the Father's house before the terrible justice comes right there and that beginning the opening versions right. There's one that doesn't come on the world. Stop. Well, it's so important, isn't it, for all of us to be clear on this. As our brother has mentioned, at the end of the fourth chapter of this epistle, Paul gives us the wonderful details of how you and I are going to be called home. What a wonderful hope that is. And yet we are still here, and we marvel at it.

Permit a little reminiscence. I can still remember back in 1970, the year my wife and I were married, my late father-in-law, Albert Hayhoe, wrote down that date as he was beginning a letter. And I can still see him. He shook his head. He said. I can't believe it. I can't believe it that we're still here. And then later on, a few years later, he gave an address to young people. Who were in their late teens and early 20s. And in the strongest terms, told them to take a good hard look at themselves because they had already lived. More than half their life in this world already. The Lord's coming was that close. But he was rough. Those same young people are now, in many cases, grandparents, and we're still here. But the Lord is not slack concerning His promises. He is coming. But he is long-suffering and not willing that any should perish. But then, as our brother has mentioned as we go into this 5th chapter. The day of the Lord is brought before us, and the day of the Lord is the day of judgment, isn't it? The day of the Lord encompasses the judgments that. Begin with the Lord's dealing with man in the latter part of the seven-year tribulation period, and it encompasses the whole of the millennial day and then the judgments at the end of the millennia, the day of the Lord. It's when the Lord Jesus will have his rightful place, and it comes to this world like a thief in the night, unwanted and unexpected. Never, never is the rapture the Lord's coming referred to in that way. It is always the Lord's coming in judgment, isn't it? But we are to be sensitive to the fact that it is very close. We are. Intended to see, as Hebrews 10 and 25 brings before us, that the day is approaching the day of judgment, and I would suggest that some of the. Very serious events that have taken place in the last few years. Are the Lord warning this world? Wildfires, hurricanes, floods, earthquakes even. Very serious multi vehicle accidents such as we had just this past week. Right here in Canada and in the province of Ontario. God is warning man that far worse things are coming, and so we get a warning here about that which is coming and what God is going to do with this world that continues to reject His beloved Son. But again, there is a state of soul, there is a walk that is in keeping with those who know and understand that. I was utterly shocked. In reading the other day about. About that massacre that occurred in Las Vegas, where a gunman from a hotel, having amassed a virtual arsenal of weapons, proceeded to break open a couple of windows and begin firing on the crowds. And I can't remember the exact number, but it was. Well up into the hundreds of people that were either killed or injured. And yet someone called attention to the fact that within a day and 1/2 after that massacre, all the casinos in that hotel were being used in full force and the gambling was going on just as if nothing had ever happened. That's the kind of world we live in. Well, there is good instruction for us here, for all of us, young and old, isn't there? Interesting to consider.

Non believers were recent believers Monday For the youngest countries. There were no elders. There are little elders. Concerning problems. With confusion today, we consider that details of prophecy reason pretty simple. The first thing that's coming back, someone who died before you on the cross. We showed his death, that he comes. That's how simple it is. Put it before us, a personal door, looking back on the cross, looking forward to his coming on my heart to save enough to him. I think that's right in the point, you know, we're looking at the world around

and we got occupied with profession, terrible things. That's so powerful when we look up and say, oh, it's so wonderful. The Lord is coming on each one day passes, folks. That's important for people to talk to them for that. It's interesting to observe the dispatch guitar has been mentioned at 17 that the scripture indirectly states that these brethren were noble in. Korea were more normal, which means the brethren and petrol and ICE and were noble, but the characteristic, uh, and difference between those in Berea and those, in fact, Lanika were those in Berea searched the scriptures to see if these things were sold. And, uh, it's interesting just to observe along with what their brother Michelle just brought before us, if the brethren of Thessalonica had paid attention to what is written in the 4th and 5th chapter of the book we're taking up this morning. There might not have been a need for the 2nd epistle because if they just listen carefully and read carefully what's been brought out already this morning about the difference between the Rapture in the 4th chapter and the Day of the Lord in the 5th chapter, they might not have gotten so easily confused. But what's the challenge for me and for you? And the challenge is, am I being a Marine? Am I going to go home later and look up all of the references, the places that have been referred to? Am I going to search to understand whether indeed. All the places where the Lord. Coming for his Saints mentioned is never a surprise, but where the coming of the Lord in judgment and it's always a surprise. And we're going to go home and look those things up. That's the way to buy the truth. That's the way to be Berean and search the Scriptures and see if these things are sold. And in doing that, you'll get into your own heart. And when you're challenged by some of the false teachings that are so prevalent in the world around us, you'll have a basis of truth on the Word of God. That will enable you to be able to hold firmly what you've been taught by the Spirit from the word of God and to be able to help others. And so I think there's a little lesson here in that we can learn from those brothers and sisters and best Lanika, to search the scriptures and lay hold on these things for ourselves to really get a great grasp on. The day of the Lord, is it not when the Lord Jesus Christ will manifest Himself publicly to the whole world? And we read in the second epistle, chapter one and verse 7 how He's going to be revealed to this world. Tells us here. 2nd Thessalonians 1 and verse 7. Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven. With his mighty angels, Martin says, the angels of his power in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and then obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and so on. Well, at the present time the Lord Jesus is hidden through this world. But it's not hidden to faith. We sit here and think, joy by faith, that the Lord Jesus Christ lives, He seated on his Father's throne.

Citadel on the right hand of God in heaven is that which we enter into and enjoy by faith as believers. But the world knows nothing about this. And I think of world leaders. And how they struggle to deal with the issues that confront this world. And how frustrated they become when? It doesn't seem as though anything is working, but you know, the important thing here is to recognize that the Lord Jesus Christ is the answer. To the problem. But I understand in the United Nations. Which is an organization established. To bring peace to this world, the United Nations, the name of Jesus is not to be mentioned. Well, how is it that we can have peace without the Prince of Peace? So I'm thinking about the Thessalonians and how they entered into the truth as to the Lord's resurrection and ascension. And you know the apostle, he says, you yourself know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For one day, one day shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them. Well, apparently there's going to be a time in this world where there does appear to be. A sense of of of peace, safety, but. It's going to be short lived, sudden destruction. You come with a condom as prayer bail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But ye brethren. In darkness. That they should overtake you as a thief. How wonderful it is to be in the light. And to have the word of God illuminate. Power of the Spirit of God. The future as well as the present and the past. This world lies in darkness. This is a good description of the day of the Lord in Isaiah 13, starting with verse 6. And I believe it's. Perhaps the apostle was referencing this Scripture when he wrote to the Thessalonians. Isaiah 13. Six Holly for the day of the Lord is at hand. It shall come as the destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be fainted in every man's heart shall melt, and they shall be afraid. Pangs and sorrow shall take hold of them. They shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth. They shall be amazed one at another. Their faces shall be as flames. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate, and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light. The sun shall be darkened and is going forth, and the moon shall not 'cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity. And I will cause the arrogancy of the proud deceased, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man. More precious than fine gold, even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of our place, and the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger. And in Luke 21 we read that men's hearts are failing them for fear of those things that are coming upon the earth. And in Revelation 3, in the letter to the assembly of Sardis, the Lord speaks to that assembly, and he says that He is going to come upon them as a thief in the night. There is a portion of the professing Church of God that is going to be left in this world after the Saints are raptured, that is going to go on and be caught by the Lord when he comes in his days to execute judgment on this world. He's going to come upon that empty profession of Christianity as a thief in the night. And men's hearts are failing them for fear, those things that are coming on the earth, and they're looking for someone.

Who can keep a lid on things? Who can kind of take control? Because if there's one thing that man wants, it's peace. It's the desire of all nations, Haggai tells us, that they're not going to have it until the Lord comes, but they want peace and they're willing to give up. We see in the day we live in, In my lifetime, we've seen an amazing change of such a insistence on certain liberties and privacy, especially in North America, given up in order to have peace and safety, willing to turn over. Almost anything. In order to have in exchange the promise of peace and safety. And there is a man coming who's going to promise that. You know, every politician today preaches this message. Put your trust in me. Vote for me, elect me. I'll bring you peace and safety. They can't. And there's one coming who's going to say the same thing. And the Western gentile world is going to put their trust in the beast who can make war. With the beast, Oh, we've got one now that will provide us peace and safety and then sudden destruction. The Lord is going to meet the beast in his armies when he comes out of heaven. That peace and safety is never going to be realized though it be preached. There is a God. Why is he allowing all the things that we see around us, the wickedness, vileness that we see every day? If there's a God, why does he allow that? And so there's a possibility with them that he would, he would look forward to a time where God would come and judge, as he says, the wicked from the earth. They don't realize that they themselves need a Savior. They're self-righteous people like that that look forward to a time when the earth could be cleansed. And if it was a God that would do it and they could be brought into peace through that way, they would desire it. And there's an interesting aspect in Amos uh, mentioned this Amos, uh, chapter 5. Verse 18 of Amos chapter 5 it says Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord. To what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkness and not light. If a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him, or went into the house and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him, shall not the day of the Lord be darkness and not light? He was very dark, no brightness in it. When the Lord does come to judge every person that has not accepted the gospel. As God presents it is going to come under the judgment of God. There may be those that would be looking for someone to come and relieve them of all the evil that's in the world. They may be looking for even the day of God to come that that would rid this world of all the evil that's in it. But what about what about themselves? Is there somebody here like that? That has not put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. And you're looking for something to happen that's going to rid

the world of all the evil. Well, we each one of us have to look within ourselves. We do. We want this because we want to see the Lord Jesus have his rightful place in this scene that rejected him. That should be our desire as as believers. But there is a world out there that's looking for, like our brother mentioned, peace. In any way it can give it? The righteousness of God. One of the desires of the brother here in Montreal. Through the gospel, and it was mentioned that there was a man who said he would come. Praying for the gospel as it goes forth and the young people who are going to be handing up tracks and so forth. But it's important to see, I believe, in the second chapter.

Of the attitude in which that should be done. After First Thessalonians 2 and verse 7. They were just alone on you. Even as a nurse, cherish the children. So manufacturing desirous of you. We are willing to impart unto you. But also our own souls, as you were here. That's the heart of the gospel. And then I sit here not in judgment, and speak about the name of the Lord. Talking about people. Relatives, aunts and uncles, grandmas and grandpas, neighbors, they're going to come under the trust. And we sit here sometimes as academic. There's no hurt, there's no heart from it. We can relish the facts and the position. We're going home and we're not going to be here. We're going to say seeing all these things that are going to be dissolved. The men are persons on you to be an all holy conversation and godliness is a practical walk for it. But for you who are going to present the gospel that you end up track. Does the person see your heart in it? Does Do they see you really care for them? Do they real, real life? It's the love of the truth. That they're rejecting and that love is manifested in the way you express that love. These were either worshippers. So much of the world today is called little children. Keep yourself revival. But as we speak about the Lord's coming, we speak about the day of God, the day of wrath and all these things made me realize that a cable way the gospel is going more than may there really be a lot for these Pure souls that are going to come under this judgment that they would be delivered and that they would receive the love of the truth that they might be saved. So it's an encouragement to those years in Montreal tonight. Just want to present the gospel. Presented with heart. Presented. So. Son of God, who left me. And that's the message you want to present from your heart as a nurse cherishes your children being affectionately desirous of you and willing to impart their own soul. It isn't that we just throw a track in somebody's face and say, read this, but it's the heart that needs to be reached. It's the response. God, soul of the world, gave his only because of the thought. So as we continue this chapter and we have the thoughts about the day of God remembering the neighborhood that we're talking about, it's the people we work with talking about, we're going to come under the most solemn judgment. It was part of the gospel that Paul three because they evidently and there was a week. Business around Thessalonica was, uh, and the, uh, great, uh, Roman Rd. the Evian way went through that city and it was a crossroads. And so from that city went out the testimony of this people who had turned from idols that was surprising to serve a God they called the living God and contrast those dead idols to wait for his Son from heaven. So in the short time the apostle had been there, he told them of the Lord's coming for them, right? And deliver who has delivered us from the coming wrath. So he had taken up judgment. And so these things in that short period of time to those young believers. He had laid out that whole order of things of the Lord's coming and judgment on this world. And when he preached the Felix, he, he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, and Felix tremble at the thought of it. And so I believe that judgment to come, not just eternal punishment in the lake of fire, but judgment to come upon this world. Is very much a part of the preaching of the gospel and it reaches the consciences where the Spirit of God is working of men and women. So they had an understanding of these things and he could say, you know, the times and the seasons. Times and seasons have to do with the unfolding of prophetic events in this world, times and seasons. If you go back to Daniel's prophecy, we get days that represent certain periods of time.

There's times and seasons connected with the unfolding of prophetic events, the apostle says. You know those things. But we live not in that time of times and seasons. That's going to start after the Saints are gone. Those events are going to begin to unfold. There's so much today. That is so readily available, and one gets the sense that the Saints so easily pick up on our swept away. A sister called me the other night and she said, do you know? That the Antichrist is here. I said, really? Where did you hear that? On the YouTube? She said, OK, well that sounds kind of silly, but you know, there's things that are much more subtle and they're out there and they're available and they are seeking to look around at events in this world and to try and tag them with the prophetic scriptures. There isn't one prophetic scripture that's going to unfold or a prophetic event that is going to take place until after the Lord comes. That's the next event. His coming for us, then those things are going to unfold. Say a very high, hearty Amen to that because there is so much out there today that is mixing up prophecy with the church, period. And as we well know, the church being a heavenly company is not the subject of prophecy. And so the prophecies that are referred to in Scripture and that are referred to here have to do with the earth, with God's dealings with the earth, and as such. If we could use the term, the clock of prophecy will not start until after you and I are called home, and I believe that's why it says here. When they shall say peace and safety? We hear a lot today about the cataclysmic events that are about to befall this world of how the economies of the United States or the economy of the European Union is going to fail. And maybe there's going to be a nuclear war now that North Korea seems to be getting worked up and rattling at Sabre, so to speak, and all this kind of thing. You and I can go on in peace in spite of all of that. I am not suggesting that nothing serious will happen. But I do say, and I'm quoting also our brother, our late brother Norman Berry, who used to say the same thing. He said, don't look to see the economies and everything in this world to go down in one terrible fall before the Lord comes. He said. I don't believe it can happen. After we are called home, they are still going to be able to say peace and safety. And as Brother Steve has been bringing out, they will find a man in the beast who says let me have it, I'll fix it for you. I know how to do it and people will put their faith in him. We get in Luke's gospel. I think it might be Chapter 9 where it says as it was in the days of Lot social, the days of the Son of Man be they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they build it. They will continue to do all those things. For a short time after you and I are called home. The first horse of the the Apocalypse in Revelation chapter six, he goes forth conquering into conquer, but not with bloodshed. And so all those things would indicate to us that Satan is going to have a very clever lie, whatever it will be, to persuade this world that everything is going to be all right. Even though millions of people have disappeared, when the rapture occurs and life is going to go on, things are going to be all right. Prosperity will still go on, and I have no doubt that just as men have become almost immune to the troubles and difficulties God is allowing in this world today, so they will get over the sudden disappearance of you and me very quickly. And Satan will persuade them. Let's go forward now. Everything is going to be all right, and then the Lord will step in and start to deal with matters.

And dismantle all the huge commercial and religious and other systems that man has set up. But for a while there will be peace and safety. But then, as has been brought out by our brother Richard, what is our attitude and spirit knowing that all of this is just around the corner? It ought to solemnize it, shouldn't it, and at the same time energize us toward a lost world. Something is terrible, and the Lord will take pleasure in judgment. Of the world time period presents of other place freedom. Seeks to wait next and I'm afraid to leave your Christian because of course he said that we're going to be our desire to bless each other. The momentum is what we experience. All these things only because we have faith, We know the terror of the Lord. We know that, uh, what the Lord says he is going to do, he will keep his word. And uh, we walk by faith as believers and we know that, uh, there is a day of judgment coming. The world knows nothing of this. They, they don't have faith. They don't see God, God in his judgment and capacity, but we do, we know that God will judge evil. He has to righteousness. He imagines it and

there is a coming day when he is. He will judge this world and righteousness that tells us an acts, and that one whom he hath raised from the dead and preordained to do so in that coming day, a judgment will go forth. And here it says in the in the chapter that we're in. There shall not escape. There's no escape. And Hebrews chapter 2 it says, how shall you escape? You neglect such a day of salvation, and so there is no escape from God's. Judgments. And so it should be terrifying for, for the world, but uh, because they're blinded, they don't have faith. It's not a terrifying thing, but it is to us because as I pointed out, we have long ones perhaps that do not know the Lord is our Savior yet. And so we realize that if they don't turn to the Lord, what will happen if they remain in an unsafe condition? So it should compel us to try to reach out to those that we are not sure about. Steve disappeared. All emerges. #634 Let's not see him other. Last December. Tonight. Are you ready for the sweetheart seeks of immoral things and unconsciousness are really going on and sleeping darkness on life and then you have to sleep on the deeper. Or we are living. We're going living with the world. Came back. It's not, it's not. Doesn't really matter. Speaking with the world, you know, because they're embarrassed, unconscious.

Someone has said and uh, a couple of us were mentioning it just before the meeting. Power in the Christian life comes first of all from taking the position consciously, taking the position into which God has already placed us. And we could talk of many things where God has already placed us. It's not the subject of this epistle, but for example, in Ephesians 2 we're told that we are risen and seated in heavenly places in Christ. Power comes when I say I am there and therefore I have the power through Christ to live in that position where he has put me. Christianity. Is never striving to get something, but rather living out what I already have, because every exhortation in scripture, every exhortation is based on what I already possess. Do you remember someone saying that Stan Allen quite often to us. Who was it? Charlotte's grandfather, right? Your wife's grandfather too. Harry Hao used to impress upon us. Every exhortation of Scripture is based on what we all ready possess, and we are in the light. Every believer is in the light, and now we're called upon to walk in that light, not in darkness. There is a difference though, I would suggest, between sleeping and drunkenness, although they often bring about the same kind of situation. Sleeping is, at least in the daytime, is the result of laziness, of not realizing what needs to be done and having the energy to do it. But getting drunk is the deliberate attempt. To take something that dulls my senses to what is going on around me. Both are wrong and the believer can fall into both. Most of you in Montreal are very familiar with the name Van Horn. You've got a street named after him, William Van Horn, one of the men very much involved in the railway that was completed across Canada many years ago. And he was one of those unique individuals who could survive on about four hours sleep a night. Somebody asked him why he never slept much. His answer was very significant, he said. Because then you don't know what's going on. Of course, you had a habit of listening in on the telegraphs. Telegraph boys, when they were having fun in the middle of the night, sending silly messages back and forth. And suddenly he would get on the Telegraph and bang out a message at 3:00 in the morning telling them that he had read what they had been banging about and to quit the nonsense and get back to work. And it was quite a shock to them to realize that the CEO of the company had been listening in. He knew what was going on. You and I as believers ought to be like that. We ought to be sensitive to what is going on in this world and also seeking to look after the Lord's interest. But the drunkenness comes from the deliberate attempt to dull myself so that I don't have to face, in many cases, the problems and difficulties. Are we doing that? Are we deliberately doing that which dulls our senses to what is going on so that we don't have to face problems and difficulties? That's what the world does. It's out there taking drugs and alcohol and any other kind of thing. Why? In order to transport them into a state where suddenly those difficulties and problems and.

Things they cannot face for the moment are not occupying their mind. There are difficulties in this world, there are difficulties in the Christian pathway and in unfaithfulness to the Lord. We can say I wanna get away from them rather than saying before the Lord. I have every resource to face them, to learn from them, and to deal with them in his strength. And so both of those states, I would suggest, are very easy for the Christian to fall into. And yet neither one is right for us. We are to be alive as those that are in the day, even if it means facing difficulties. Unconscious. As illustrated too in Romans chapter 13. Where it says there. Uh, and that knowing the time, that now it is high time to weep out of sleep. For now is our salvation nearer than when we believe the night is far spent. The day as it has. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting or drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness. Not in strife and in envying. I was thinking of this last verse particularly, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lust through. I believe it's it's very easy for us to fall into the temptation of making provision for the flesh, but we need to take this exhortation seriously, don't we? To put on the Lord Jesus Christ. To uh, wake up in the morning and seek to do His will and not fall into doing whatever we want to do. I just think these verses are important. In 1945 converted by old comma respect. They're not apparel now for today and Matthew's Gospel chapter 13. Comment on in Matthew 13 we have this was a changing chapter chapter 12 and so in chapter 13 we have the parables of the of the Kingdom of heaven given and we read these verses here from verse 13 and verse. 10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in Caribou? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know. The mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. But to them it is not given. Bruce ever asked to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance, and whosoever wrath not from him shall be taken away, even though he asked. Therefore be nice to them in parables, because they seeing see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And then them to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah's, which saith by hearing he shall hear, shall not understand, and seeing he shall see and shall not proceed. For this people's heart is black rose. And their ears are yellow earrings, and their eyes that they closed best at any time. They should see with their eyes and hear with your ears. They should understand with their heart, and should be converted. And I should yield it, or blessed me. Blessed are your eyes when they see, and your ears for their ears. This kind of parallel to this damage we live, as well as the going forth in the gospel is falling in deaf ears.

Well, I believe that verse 12. Is a universal principle, isn't it? That verse with slight variations is repeated, I think at least five times in the Gospels, under different circumstances and in different applications. But it's a universal principle that if we reject the truth that God has given us, God will not allow us to have, as it were, the theory of it in our heads without the practice of it in our walk. And so here the Jewish nation had rejected the Lord Jesus after he had presented himself to them. And in that sense, in the 12Th chapter of Matthew, the Lord formally rejects Israel, and then in Matthew 13, as it were, goes out of the House of Israel and sits by the seaside of the world, where the truth goes out and the gospel ultimately to the Gentiles as well. And so it's a universal principle that if we turn our back on what God has given us. And refused to walk in it. We are not going to get any further light. Uh, another verse, I think it's in Luke 8 says that to him that hath not even that he seemeth to have shall be taken away from him. And so I don't really have something unless I take it in and walk in and do I? And whether that were the Jew of the Old Testament or whether it is, uh, those today who don't want to walk in what God has given us don't want to enjoy their Christian positions. Sad to say, there are many believers today that are not enjoying the light that is before them because they have chosen rather to walk in darkness and to ignore the Light. And there are many who have perhaps in one sense enjoyed the light and the blessings of Christianity, but who are not really saved and now who are horrified at the state of the world when Christ is being given up. And God is beginning to let man see the effect of it. But this verse is a is a true picture, I believe, isn't it, of the way God deals with man at any

time and in any dispensation? Prepared for someone of them were sleeping these virgin neuropathy when you consider our responsibility. Certainly we can have our hands in so many ways and but they don't have to find the middle of the night there before the bedrooms and when the Lord is coming in for us and grace is responsible. Great, I've got sensitive every deals brought back to us and emerged nothing from the administration because he is faithful and he wants people to be enjoyment of who he is and what he's done and so I'm considering meeting we open the century before the God. We can go back home to the last conference and forget about all that we heard we could be awakened. It's like your birthday. They've been relaxed in their life. What the Lord will give us to be sensitive to what he brings before us. I have to ask this question, if I might and 1St Thessalonians 5. Eight LED us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and her helmet the hope of salvation over in the first chapter. For Thessalonians, one verse, one remembering without verse 3 remembering without ceasing. Your work is safe labor of love, patience, and hope. You know, in First Corinthians 13. What is the difference from the first chapter until this chapter? This chapter seems to be an armor versus the 1St chapter. Is a path and faith and past life the armor of God in view of the Smith chapter. Yet when you turn to Revelation sex and the armor of God is not listed as such in the breastplate of the righteousness.

Well I would suggest the thought and others can comment on it, but. We know that faith, hope and love are characteristic, aren't they? If we could say basic Christianity, very, very basic. And the Thessalonians had those three. They had their work of faith, they had their labor of love, they had their patience of hope. And as has already been commented, had they paid attention to Paul's words in the last two chapters of this epistle. They might not have fallen into the difficulties. Which necessitated the 2nd epistle because in the first chapter of the 2nd epistle, Paul mentions faith and love, but doesn't mention their hope. Why? Because they'd lost it. They'd lost that hope. And so we need to have the breastplate of faith and love, and we need to have, as it says here, the helmet of salvation. But it's called the hope of salvation because here it's salvation looked upon as being at the end of the pathway, when the Lord comes, when we get our glorified bodies, and when we're perfectly like Him and also we're with Him. It's not the fullness of the armor that you get in Ephesians 6. Because there they were receiving higher truth, a truth that they were capable of having, of being risen and seated in heavenly places. And in that sense the full armor is mentioned there, together with the sword of the Spirit, the preparation of the gospel of peace, the shoes, the shoes of the gospel of peace, and so on. Other things there and that are needed for the full armor. But here for these new believers who hadn't perhaps gotten to that point yet, they needed protection for that faith, hope and love. But sad to say, I don't believe they took as they should the helmet of salvation. And as a result, they lost that hope, and Paul had to write to them and restore it to them. And it's a sad thing in this world when a believer loses in his soul the present living reality of the Lord's coming. It's a sad thing when we lose the sense in our souls of the enjoyment of the love of God as a present, living, everyday thing. It's sad when a believer loses faith and starts looking at things around him or her and having, shall we say, confidence in that. Which is around, rather than simply in the Lord himself. And the devil is right there seeking to take those things away from us. It's not an injection, but. Stress your affection needed to be protected and so they needed to have confidence in the person of the Lord, faith in Him and faith in Him. You know his character, the kind of person he is. You feel himself to us and the love, the love of Lord Jesus for us. You love us so much. You love you so much and you work in 10 minutes and you were going on in sin. He died before you don't talk and it's not true. Because it's out to you. We need to come on the breastplate of faith and not faith in our Lord Jesus. Enjoyment that is not Jesus, love those of our hearts that came in, but the helmet of salvation, hope, salvation, that's where it's not. So somebody could have confidence in the Lord and he trusts him and he did know that the Lord loves him, but he confused in his mind on what's going to happen. I mean, it's it's robbed of that precious thought of the Lord's coming.

Oh, so in that one drive for you, he's coming for you. He died for me, he's coming to me. He sent me suppose to join when he said. No other reason. I don't know who he is. No, it's not appointed us the wrath. Rapture. It is a slight to the work of Christ on the cross to preach that the church is going to go through the tribulation, because the tribulation is the wrath of God poured out on this world, but Christ bore it for us. The church may go through persecution, but it is never going to endure wrath. No Saints of God is ever in in that have put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as truly his is ever going to face wrath. He faced it at the cross. He bore it for us. We haven't been appointed to wrath. This world has, and the judgment of God is going to pour out upon it, but the Lord bore that for us. We've not been appointed to it and it really is a slight. On the finished work of the cross and its results. To think that the Saints of God are going to go through and endure the wrath of God in this world. OK. The context in order to understand the meaning of the word, uh, what just been brought before us is that, uh, the idea of the wrath of God. And that's really not the thought of suffering for eternity and health is what we've been talking about this morning, which is what the context of our chapter is. And if you confuse those two ideas in this verse, then you get mixed up on what the verse means. Same thing with the idea of salvation as has been brought out already this morning, that it's the end of our pathway here, and particularly the fact that the Lord Jesus isn't going to allow His church to go through the wrath of God. So as long as you. Understand the meaning of the word from the passage here, then you don't get confused. If you take the general meaning of salvation from sin and apply it here, then you could easily get confused. Good. The Lord coming for the Saints, which we look forward through the hope, and then the Lord coming with the Saints. We had both of these events brought before us. In, uh, the chapter uh, four of our uh. Chapter 4 We have, uh, the Rapture brought before us. How that's all going to take place, the details of it. And then in chapter 5, we have the first part of that chapter being before us or coming with the Saints. We're coming in judgment. We have both events brought before us. They're mentioned in the Titus chapter 2 and verse 13. It says there that we're looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. Well. We're looking for that whole the Lord Jesus may come this very day and take the church home to be with themselves. But then there's the glory, glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. Two events are mentioned in that verse, but we know that there's at least seven years gap between the two or Jason will come first, the rapture will take place and then later to be followed by his appearing. And so as we read this portion that we had before us. Keep in mind that speaking here, mostly in the first part of it about the Lord's appearance is when he comes with the Saints. And then it goes back to, uh, where you have here that he has not appointed us to rock. That is our hope again, brought before us. And we're looking for that bless the full to be delivered from the tribulation period, which is the time of God's wrath to be poured out here on this scene. #46.

Yes. We just commend ourselves, our God and Father.

Montreal Conference: 2017, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-24

Reading

217. For those that may not have been here this morning, we were taking up First Thessalonians Chapter 5. Would it be all right to start with verse 12, or did we not get quite that far? What do you think, Rob? Well, I didn't think about right that car, but we might just start at verse 12. All right. But I remember your comment from this morning that this is the last reading meeting, so. A bit of ground recovery. Well, with that loading, GAAP versus 12? And we BC two brethren, to know them, which they were among you, and are over you and the Lord, and admonish you, and to have seen them very highly in love for their work sake, and be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brother, and warn them that are unruly. Comfort the devil minded, support the weak, be patient with all, see that none render evil for evil unto any, but ever follow that which is good both among yourself and to all.

Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing, and everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. When should not fear it, despite not prophesying. Prove all things and hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil, and the very God of peace sanctify you fully. And I pray God, your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless under the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us. Read all the brethren with the holy kiss. I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. One of the things that I think is beautiful in this chapter is what we have in the end of verse 10 that we should live together with Him in. And that's really, I think, uh, the essence of, uh, Christianity, of knowing the Lord Jesus Christ as your savior, all the truths that we're discussing, it really is essential to hold them into relationship of who Christ is and living together with him. One of the things that's personally hard for me is easy for me to think about things in a very rational way, logic them through, but it's a much harder thing for me to actually enjoy them and enjoy them with the Lord. And really, that's what, uh, is really essential. The Lord Jesus is looking for a relationship with me and with you and all the truth that we've been talking about today. If referring to also a future day, we will be physically living with him. Over the question. I didn't hear that question yourself. Could you repeat it? I was asking the end of verse 10. We might also live with him with that referring to a future. They also will be physically living with him. Both are asleep and fright. Therapist, the Lord in heaven. When he comes grocery living together with him. Their diversity 527136 weeks. Drop 27, verse 13. I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. I know that many of us like to refer to that as the real land of the living is where we're going to be with Christ and glory. So the context is certainly also here on earth as the land of the living. It's mentioned in many other places in God's Word, and I think that in this case also, it can apply to both. Yes, I would agree with that. I believe the primary thought is here that. But in the previous chapter. Whether we are alive or whether we are asleep in the sense of having gone to be with Christ and our bodies are in a grave, we will all live together with him. And the Lord died for us. And that ties in with Rob's thought. He wants us to remember that there was a price paid in order that we might have all these things and on that basis. There is the exhortation to live in view of all that we have in him and the judgment that is coming on this world. But as we read in another place, like commandment is exceeding broad. And in that sense I believe we who are alive, we do live together with him down here, don't we and those that have. Gone to sleep, as scripture uses the term. They are in that sense living with them too, aren't they? And so it's nice to apply it that way.

In verse 10. For the word wake. Yes, the word watching. Yeah, well, there will be, whether we may be watching or sleep. And they live together with him. What? What is the thought of watching? Does that refer back to verse 6 where it speaks about let us watch and be sober? Or would it also have been viewed watching for his return, for his coming? Well, once again, wouldn't you think? I would think so. Watch as the idea of being on the alert, doesn't it? It has the idea of being. Aware of what's going on around us. End. It's a state of being. Totally aware on the one hand of what's going on around me, but then on the other hand to be watching for that which we know with assurance is going to happen. And so we're told to watch when it comes to the Lord's coming too, aren't we? And so in verse 11, there's we have two things that are necessary in ministry, don't we comfort and. Edification. I remember well our late brother Armstead Barry, whom some of us can remember. And he had a memory that went a long way back. And he told us a story that I've never read anywhere, but he told it to us how that two brothers back in the 1800s were walking to a reading meeting. One of them was John Darby and one of them was John Bellitt. And in the course of that walk, John Darby turned to John Bellett and said, Brother John, I want you to remember tonight that the Saints have consciences as well as hearts. Well, Mr. Ballard was a good friend and he could, uh, return the compliment. And he immediately said, and you, Brother John, you remember that the Saints have hearts as well as consciences. Each one had a line of ministry for the heart and Darby's more for the conscience, but each recognized the gift the other had and recognized that perhaps there was a need for balance. And so these are both needed, aren't they? It's good to exercise the conscience, to build up, to teach. It's good to give good, solid truth. But there's also a need sometimes for the comfort that the Word of God gives us, and only the Spirit of God can give us the right time and the right place for it. And sometimes, of course, different gifts lend themselves to. Different lines of things. Sometimes one has more a gift to comfort the comforting than another. Some has more the gift of edifying than another. But both are very much needed, aren't they? Since they were doing it and that were encouraged. Things to be compressed to us, to have progress that in place, to be faithful along with those things. That's what I brought before us. But they were continued company edifying each other that they also were doing. That would include everyone of the believers and successful and unusual. And it was, by implication, mean it's something that each one of us should be exercising to build each other up. Correct each other, I suppose the office is regarding hands is not tearing down by the ritual or by mockery or whatever in the world.

For as well single level among them specific ones not referring to verse 11. That's so those there were neighboring among them on the official way to be recognized by the exercise of the gift their careers for the brethren, but eventually before they were no pointed out they were also. We're lacking in brethren who've had an interest in the state and cares for them. He didn't want it. Well, it is true that God has raised up leaders and guides in the Church of God. I believe, as you say, Michelle, that these were probably local ones. Who? Those like Paul had ordained his elders, and in that sense they had the oversight of the assembly there. It's very interesting to see how that it was not necessary for that assembly to have existed for a long time. For God to have raised up those who could act in that capacity, and whom the apostles could place in that position, and they were to be recognized. But there was never the thought that there should be an exclusive ministry of that kind, was there? As Rob was mentioning, all should be exercised as to the need of edifying and comforting. And doing what they could to fill those. Those needs and so it's very, very important to see that on the one hand, we know that the Church of God, as has often been pointed out, is not a democracy where one man's word is just the same as another's. But on the other hand, neither is it a place where. There is an exclusive ministry to the exclusion of others. No, God intends that each one should feel his or her responsibility and each one seek to help out. Our brother Steve in the address was springing before us that we meet as members of the body of Christ. And as someone has pointed out, the body of Christ is a unity of individuals, not a unity of assemblies. Yes, there are assemblies because we don't all live in one place, but it's a unity of individuals and what is exhorted here. Is individual responsibility not so much collective? Would you agree with that, Steve? Yeah, I think we get individual characters of things until perhaps we get down to verse 19 and then it's a little more collective. But I

think in the past few verses it's really more individual responsibility. I believe verse 11 and 12 refer back to chapter one of this epistle where. Paul, Sylvanus and Timothy came to that. That's, uh, Thessalonica and that's an example could be following as far as ministry is concerned in, in chapter one, it refers to leadership and shepherding. What we were talking about brothers earlier was mentioning about, umm, ministry from the height of ministry to the conscience. And there was in verse 27 tonight of chapter one, there was more of. A mother, a mothering type of ministry where there was an expression of of the heart of love to encourage the Christians there. And then verses 8 and 10 is more of a fathering type of shepherding where now you're ministering to the consciousness that you would walk further. And so this is the balance that those brothers wanted to leave with the Assembly of Thessalonica. And it's just reinforcing enemies to reverse. And then also from verse 14 that we have the responsibility towards our brothers, sisters and she completed. To be a help to them, to be 100 of them patients not thirsty, written to us, an elite in the assembly, but all the things you care for one another.

For many of these, exhortations are very straightforward and don't need a lot of elaboration or explanation. The great thing, of course here is to see. That each has his place and each should seek to fulfill what the Lord has given him or her to do. And we notice an expression here in verse 13. It's rather unusual in the way that it's worded. It's Speaking of those who were locally there in Thessalonica and who were taking the lead in the assembly and labored among them. It says to esteem them very highly in love for their works saved. There has always been the tendency and. I suppose if each one of us is honest with him or herself, we would have to admit that when someone takes any kind of a position of leadership or responsibility immediately, their life comes under a closer scrutiny. And even in the world, this is so, isn't it? When a candidate runs for political office, especially for high political office, immediately his or sometimes in her life? Their background. Their lifestyle, everything that they have done, comes under a very close scrutiny and of course in the world it is with the view from their opponent. What can we dig up, What kind of dirt can we find that might be able to discredit them? Am I going too far to say that? Sometimes that happens among the people of God. I'm afraid it does. Not that our lives should not be. And are an open book to our brethren. And if there is that which needs correction, then that should be something that we are open to very definitely. But on the other hand, there is sometimes. The tendency to pick on little inconsistencies or character traits, or whatever else might come in among those whom the Lord might use, whether locally or in another sense, in a general way, and I believe these verses would guard against that, wouldn't they? They would say, esteem them highly for their work's sake. If I look at my brethren, I will see Christ in every one of them. If I look for failure, I can find failure in everyone of them. But let me remember that I can find the most failure right here. And that's why Paul says in Philippians. Look, not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. I can always see in someone else. Something of Christ that I don't have. Let me focus on that and say I value that character in that brother or that sister. Well, I believe Paul could see that there would be the tendency in that way. And in the second epistle he does have to warn those who were unruly, and he tells them here to do that. But he gives an even more specific exhortation in the second epistle. But nevertheless, if there are those who are seeking to be a help, Paul says, look at what they're doing for the Lord. Don't spend so much time picking at them and things in their lives. Look at what they're doing for the Lord. No, of course, if there's some glaring fault, that's another matter. If there's something that is hindering their work, that's another matter. But I believe here it's rather the thought that let us be occupied with what is positive rather than always talking about what is negative. Especially when it comes to being admonished. I think I can speak for everyone here. When you're admonished, the first thing that comes up is your own will just right up hard against it, you know, and you have to ask the Lord for help to, to judge that. But when the Will's active, then the soul gets stirred up. And, you know, when we want our own will, we have no ability to satisfy it. And so we just continue agitated, agitated, agitated, and there's no peace.

And that spreads out into the assembly, doesn't it? But when we resign our own wills and we want his will, and we just have the Lord before us, then there's peace because we have an object before us that forms our soul, that forms what we want, and then he satisfies it. He alone has the power to satisfy a will that's subject and in tune and in concert with his own. And so I think this, those admonishments can really, you know. Kind of get our hackles up and, uh, but we need to just submit our wills to his and then we can be at peace among ourselves. But I think that esteem being very highly in love to look on that one, uh, that's seeking to serve the Lord and love and value the work of the Lord in their lives is kind of the key thing. And when you say Steve, you referenced the word peace. Is that the way to have the piece that's at the end of the verse then? I believe so. There's an order, isn't there? I've looked at this and thought that the, uh, piece that's mentioned, if we want that piece, uh, between ourselves and our brethren, then read the next bunch of verses because they all lead that direction and apply them to myself. The one phrase there in verse 15 I would suggest. Is very important. Ever follow that which is good. As you say, brother Steve, when my will is involved. I am very apartment to, very apartment to. Want to pay back a wrong word or an insult or something that. Has been said. And if I am admonished and I don't take it in the right way. I will look for an opportunity. To admonish someone else. Not in the right way, but just to give, as the world says, *** for tat. You found some wrong in me and you pulled me up short. Now it's my turn. Well, that kind of thing will never really accomplish God's purpose, will it? Not that I shouldn't if the occasion calls for it. Be ready to admonish someone else, but the thought here is ever follow that which is good. The thought of rendering evil for evil should never be in my book. It should never be that I hold a grudge. If I hold a grudge, then we have that scripture in Ephesians. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Yes, we may resent something because sometimes things are said that are downright unkind. Sometimes things are said to us that are not true. Sometimes we are falsely accused. It happens. Sometimes with malice, sometimes ignorantly. But sometimes things are said that are not according to the mind of God. Again, I can still remember a remark that some of us heard more than once many years ago. A brother said I will never know how closely you walk with the Lord until someone crosses you and I see how you react. That is true, isn't it? We can all be nice, we can all treat people kindly as long as things are going well, as long as everyone treats us well. But let someone treat me unkindly, let someone cross my path in a wrong way. And I have to admit, in my own life there have been too many times when I have been crossed and I have reacted in the wrong way. But it shows that I wasn't walking with the Lord.

And then the 10 she is to want to render evil for evil. And then that defiles many because that root of bitterness springs up that we get reference. In Hebrews, and eventually many are defiled, I talk about it to someone else. You know what she said to me, or you know what he did well, and so on. You know I can take it to the Lord. As Steve was saying, there may be something I need to learn from it, even if it's unkind. I have to ask the Lord why He allowed it. And if I take it to the Lord and it's untrue, then I can get on my knees and pray for the individual and leave it there. And what a blessed thing it is. When that can happen, then my heart is occupied not with the evil, but with the good. And instead of turning the evil over and over and over in my mind and. Relishing it and getting all worked up about it and getting more and more bad feelings poisoning my soul. I'm free to be occupied with good. And what a mercy that is to our souls, isn't it? And I say that not because I've always done it, but because I've seen the bad consequences of not doing it. I was on a car ride, went with, uh, an unbeliever and he asked the question. He said he thought it said. No scripture said, uh, that mentioned in my said the Lord, I will repay. It's important to remember that's a promise. And so if we take vengeance into our own hands, we're doing one of two things. That individual is not a believer.

We know that what they're doing that is wrong. They will pay a lost eternity and help for it. I cannot add to a lost eternity in hell. #2 if that individual is a believer, Jesus came and died for that individual. I cannot improve on the cross. And so we're going to leave that vengeance to God. He is. He took care of the vengeance with his sacrifice on the cross so that we don't have to but live in the life of that. Change chapter UH-3 double starts with a little thing called the tongue. And I'd just like to read that verse. And verse five, if we could read the first, uh, 6 verses. I'm more interested in verse 5. And so the tongue is a little member that boasts of great things. Behold, how great a matter is little for fire, Kindred, Kindred. In other words, it starts with our little member. We have two years. It's better to listen than the tongue, which is very dangerous. That we are seeking to be a vengeance towards others you mentioned previously. And, uh, as we were discussing, it's, it's better to think positive about the world's people than negative. We're exhorted to keep the unity of the spirits in the bonds of peace, and that's repeated in so many different ways throughout all the epistles. Umm 14B is is maybe expressed in more detail in Colossians chapter 3. Chapter 3 verses starting at verse 12. Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, thousands of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering for bury one another, and forgiving one another. If any man have a quarrel against any, even if Christ forgave, you shall also do ye. And above all these things, put on talent, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God root in your hearts to the which also ye are called in one body, and be respectful. In order to. Bring glory to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in that expression of this one body here on earth. His hands, His feet, His aroma. This is what depends on us. This is what He defeated us to do. For the sake of the testimony individual, excellent.

I was thinking how it was mentioned about our own will. And recently in Kuro, we've talked a little bit about. Those that built the Tabernacle in Exodus. And it says that those with a willing heart were to come and do the work. In Exodus chapter 35, Moses gathered them together in verse one. And in verse 4, Moses fake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the Lord commanded. And in verse 21 And they came, everyone whose heart stirred him up, and everyone whom his Spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord's offering to the work. Verse 22 And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted. So we see the men, and the women, and the children. Verse 29. And the children of Israel brought a willing offering under the Lord, every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work. Verse 35 Then hath he filled with wisdom of heart to work all manner of work. Chapter 36 and verse five says the people bring much more than enough for the service of the work and it continues all the way through. And at the end of chapter 39 it says, according to all, that the Lord commanded Moses. So the children of Israel made all the work, and Moses did look upon all the work, and behold, they had done it as the Lord had commanded. I consider what a work that must have been. And how many must have been involved to do it? And we don't read of it there, but surely there must have been at times difficulties and hardships between certain ones. But I believe that they must have found a way to encourage one another and to lift one another up. We read in Hebrews and and I. Quoted often that we should provoke one another to love and the good works. I like to say that we should poke one another, the love and the good works. We should remind each other we should keep each other and help each other along the way. And that it should be with a willing heart, one that's full of the love of Christ, the example that He left for us to follow Him. And so the work that we have to do today for one another in this world surely can't be that difficult that by the strength of Him we can't have willing hearts. To go along like they did back in that day. And so if we need a little admonishment or a little correction here or there. Can't be that hard to take, can it? So the leader has the attitude of any other look up in him. Their matter of life and if you see their life right now, but the thought of one having rules towards the other. Authority is not the wrong place. The authority of the Lord and the authority of His word. We can help each other, none of us in ourselves or in a position of official authority. So just like that French translation, translation is not that we're old regions of the Lord. Once they believe and they have commanded respect to myself because they have a metal. Peter, uh, first Peter chapter 5 is a little bit more detailed on oversight. You might like to look at a few verses there. First Peter, chapter 5. Here mentioned that he was an Albert in verse one. And uh. You mentioned the verse 2 about feeding the flock of God, which is a by you taking the oversight there off not by constraint but willingly, not for filthy looper, but of a ready mind. To be Lords over God's energy, but heritage being a samples of the flock. Then in verse five he says likewise, you're younger sub submit yourself on to the elder. Yes, all of you be subject 1 to another and be close with humility. I think that's the secret of getting along, isn't it, that we.

All are to be subject 1 to another. Humility to read this. It may look very easy to read it, but it has been mentioned our wills get in the way often and only by pride. It says come with contention and we know these things can come in among us. Of the times were not that quick to own a fault or own that we've, uh, wronged somebody and so on. But, uh, the Lord would have us to be, uh, this way among ourselves would be subject going to another vote of humility. Why is it during the Millennium that there will be peace? Why is it that the reign of Christ is characterized by peace? It's because first of all, it's a reign of righteousness. It tells us that in Isaiah. The effect of righteousness is peace. Client assurance forever. And that's really what ought to characterize and assembly. Righteousness. I was thinking of what James said on the subject too. James three and verse 17. James 317 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, and then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, and so on in verse 18, And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace. Of them that make peace. So wherever sin is tolerated, there's going to be problems. And there's going to be discontentment, unrest and conflict. It's the result of sin. And so that's worked my own heart that we be willing to submit it. Somebody points out that. One is going on with something that's not according to God's word. I need to submit. It's the happy path. And rather than rise up and become resentful. The Lord can enable a person to, uh, accept that admonish. And of course the word in Romans 13 is to overcome evil with good. Good principle to keep in mind. So the three verses I would suggest are tied together in a nice way versus 1617 and 18. Rejoicing evermore is the result of carrying out what we have in verse 15. But I can't do it in my own strength, can I? I will soon find if I try to do it in my own strength, that I will fall behind. I will soon find that those things that are not the way they should be will get the best of me. I need to pray without ceasing. What does that mean? Does it mean that I neglect my normal daily responsibilities in order to pray? No, it doesn't. But it means that my soul is always in an attitude of dependence and prayer and reliance on the Lord every moment of the day. It means that I keep the channel between me and the Lord open at all times so that I can look up. And seek for help, seek for guidance, seek for strength, whatever may come across my path. And then what will be the result? Sometimes a very difficult verse in everything. Give thanks. In everything, give thanks. Why Brother Steve has been mentioning how that our own wills couldn't get in the way so often. And again, I think we all have to say, if we're honest with ourselves, how often that is the case. But whatever comes across my path is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning me. Now, of course, that doesn't take away from the fact that I can bring into my life because of my waywardness, because of my unfaithfulness, because of my getting away from the Lord.

I can bring into my path that which is very very difficult. But yet in the midst of all of that. If I turn to the Lord, I will find that His heart is still the same toward Him. His ways may change with me, I may fall under His discipline, but His love never changes. And in that sense, everything allowed in your life and mine is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. He has an individual schooling for each one of us, and He allows that in my life and in yours, which will best conform us as we get in another scripture to the image of His Son. That's in Romans 8. And so I

would suggest that these verses are tied together in a beautiful way. And as I say again, they don't need much comment. Except. Perhaps to look at them carefully and to seek grace from the Lord, To take whatever the Lord allows in my life and say no matter what the cause, don't look at the second 'cause it is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning. Reverses have no acceptance goods ever met. Right, without ceasing strong in everything. Thank. I think there were excellent comforters for seven days and they were quiet and they kind of entered into when he was going through. But when he started to respond and advised him and ignored him for both more of his coordinates and difficult. So I believe that he's ready to comfort our brother and our sister. We have some feelings about heart of the Lord or this we might come along with them and try and pray for them. And I remember it was a situation when the funeral parlor was a young sister passed away. And, uh, several were freezing to fight themselves and not at those that have no hope. And she would come around and say that it believes, Oh no, it's, it's not supposed to be supposed to rejoice the remorse. Clap our hands in Africa. And the master ceremony has three class in hand because the time who's joined in the sorrow? And so you need to take your purses for ourselves. But I just rejoined the remorse. I just pray myself. Because it's easy and I take my thermostat to come forward. And thanks for that. Thanks for this. As we go through like, we often wonder what is the will of God for me? Here's the answer. Here's certainly a very good answer. It may not be specific to my past, but this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. That is, to rejoice over war and to pray without ceasing. And in everything he sang. We read in in Hebrews about the sacrifice of praise to God continually. That is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. There's a certain amount of this that becomes a sacrifice. It's a living sacrifice. It's not gonna crawl off the altar because it's not on the altar in that sense, but it's a living, giving sacrifices as I'm going to take into my circumstances that this is the will of God and it's the goodwill of God. And I can rejoice in that. The beauty of his presence, the character of who he is, the reality of the power and of the love and the the affection that we have together. In in my life, His will is for me to rejoice in what he has brought me into the circumstances. And then we don't want to leave out the next verse because it's a quench, not the Spirit. We often speak of this out of context, but the reality is if we're not rejoicing, if we're not happy in what God has brought to us, if we're not praying like we can through each circumstance, through each moment of the day, we don't have that prayerfulness.

We are quenching the Spirit. I think it's confirmed also in the 4th is the first the first part of verse three of our of our epistle, chapter 4, verse 3. Just the first part for this is the will of God, even your sanctification. This desire is to set us apart for him. To be fully His, as he is wholly ours and gave himself completely to us and his purpose in all of this. For Him, what's important is not what happens to us, but what happens in us. It's already been mentioned earlier how we react to situations. How we react to crises will confirm the level of our walk with the Lord and how much He could be glorified in and through circumstances. That's why He allows them. He wants to be glorified with them. He wants us to have victory over and through everything He allows in our life. And that's why He allows those things to strengthen us, to build up our faith, to teach dependence and trust in Him, to learn to walk with Him, walking with Him. We'll never learn that on the picnic. We'll learn that in the hard reality of one thing that's lost into this world, and we are in this world even though we are not of this world and we are showing the world. How we have grace. Almighty power to go through circumstances and to accept everything that happens peacefully, confidently, because we have what in whom we have put our trust forever. The Lord Jesus suffered on the cross, and how could Paul be accomplishing the sufferings of Christ after that? The reality is that this life that we go through, we are going to suffer. Yes, we will. And the response to that suffering is what brings glory to God. It's specified in that 18 verse. So with finding the Lord Jesus one, one who enjoys ever more faith of Jesus. What's the difference between what we have here, praying without ceasing, and what we have in Romans 12 and uh. Chap Romans 12 and chapter 12 or verse 12 Says they're rejoicing at home, patient and tribulation, continuing instant prayer. It's a difference being the incident prayer and being and you can say the attitude of prayer. Well, I would suggest Enos. There really isn't much difference. It's the same thought really. I ought to be at any time ready and able and wanting to go to the Lord in prayer whatever difficulty I face, and not necessarily only in difficulty, but to praise Him. I ought to be able to thank Him for what He has done. I ought to be ready to thank Him even for little things, and to thank Him right away from my heart for. Perhaps something he has done for me, something he's given me, something he has preserved me from. And so these are all very, very practical things, and I heartily agree that we can quench the Spirit individually in our lives by being occupied with evil, rather than letting the Spirit minister Christ and present and present joy to my soul. But as Steve was pointing out, it can be done collectively to candid. I can quench the Spirit by failing to follow his leading when perhaps he is. Leading me and that I speak to the brothers now and leading me to take part in a public way in an assembly meeting, and I don't do it. I can quench the Spirit individually when He is leading me to speak to someone about the Lord or to give them a gospel tract, and I hang back and don't do it. Quenching the Spirit can take many forms, can't it? And in the individual sense, I suffer, I lose the opportunity.

And shall we say the Lord in that sense is not honored and glorified as he should be in the assembly? Not only I suffer, but others suffer too if I fail to respond to the spirits leading. And so it's something that we all need to be exercised about, especially those of us that are brothers. But we don't leave out the sisters because although they don't take audible part, you can be just as much in the current of the spirits leading as a brother. And I know of at least one case that was told to me personally many years ago. Where a sister made a remark after the remembrance of the Lord, to the effect that she felt some brother had quenched the spirit that morning, because a certain hymn that was sung after the breaking of bread, she felt very strongly ought to have been sung before the breaking of bread. The young brother responsible told me that himself. Of course, he was much older when he told me that, but he told me that himself and how much he hung his head afterward, hearing that comment outside the meeting room and realizing that he was the culprit. Well, the Lord allowed him to hear that so that he would be exercised not to hold back the next time. And so quenching the Spirit can take more than one form, can't it? And we need to remember that He's here to lead and to guide, whether in our individual lives or collectively as we come together in assembly. Sometimes we can doctors who have questions and cost and their souls older ones too and ask their questions. Our sisters hearts only not but the Lord would have them be asked and communicated and shyness to keep us from putting out there the one we use it for education. I'm not speaking out. You know the Spirit of God makes something in our hearts and then speaking up when you have to say something specifically on our hearts because we have knowledge and we know we can take the same truth. Because that's also clinching the Spirit when the next verse says. By my Father time the spirit is free and expect the mind of the Lord to be communicated to us and we can have an attitude of the being non receptive to what you said. So you know the real life said or will not appreciating the brother who's saying it. So despite not prophesying to receive it from the Lord rule things disconnect with the word of God. You feel like it will be reinstated talked about before. Make sure you understand your connection. What about all that it says in the meeting We say well, we would receive it without approving its own approval. And two or three seats and the other judge, we might not be, whatever you have to say. And if we do that, when we profit in our souls and being together, crafting our things, we did not be seen without, not ready for them when they lost or no, if we follow these instructions, it is not when you consider nothing, prophecy, ruling out things and we hold fast, that's true. Should we say that quenching the Spirit is? Doing anything against which would work against the leading of the Spirit. The we've been we've mentioned holding back from giving out to him or taking some part when the Spirit was actually leading. But I believe we can also be quenching the Spirit by speaking when the Spirit is not like

this. And I think in both cases we are working against the leading of the Spirit and quench therefore quenching Him. MMM Two other slides that I don't recall the verses off hand, but one is that the sister has a question she used to ask her own husband at home. To me, that's a challenge. My wife would bring a question to me. What does this verse mean? And so there should be an exercise of us husbands to be in the word of God so that we could answer the questions that our wives ask us. The other one is, well, I'm not married, I'm just a single girl. Well, if you remember the story of Ruth, Ruth was encouraged to go to the well where the young men draw from the wealth with the water. So as young as the sisters, you have a privilege of joy to go to some of the young brothers and ask them. Of course, that puts the responsibility on young people too.

To study the word of God and present it to the Word of God, to their sisters. And so far, while you say, well, I don't have a husband, I'm an older sister, but you can also mention it to someone in the assembly. So there's ways that we can present the truth of God to our lives and to our children and to our sisters without publicly quenching the Spirit of God. Good question. So I would just say this, that there is no human parameter by which we can judge the leading of the Spirit. But I believe if we are before the Lord, we will have no doubt in our souls when the Spirit is leading. And if we are led by the Spirit, it will commend itself to others too, and to those to whom we speak as being of the Lord, because the same Spirit in them will respond to what is said by the Spirit in you and me. That kind of question has often been asked out in Christendom. It was asked right at the beginning of the history, if I could say it this way, of brethren, when the leading of the Spirit and the presence of the Spirit on earth, indwelling every true believer and dwelling collectively among believers as the House of God. When that truth was first brought out in the days of the early brethren, those from the established churches. Raised questions and they said, well, that'll never work because somebody's going to say something and. He will claim his lead of the spirit and somebody else will listen and say, no, you're not. And who's going to be the judge and the advocate of whether or not this one is right or that one is right and they Pooh poohed the whole thing. I remember once talking to a woman who was a true believer and a nice believer too, who couldn't see that. And I responded to her. I don't know if it was the right way, but I said, tell me, do you think that God made a mistake in sending down the Spirit of God on the day of Pentecost to indwell every true believer? And did God make a mistake in sending the Spirit of God to indwell the House of God? To lead and guide. Well, no, no. Well, I said. Do you mean to tell me that God did something that in practice is unworkable? Did God really do that? No. Well, I said then I believe if you and I are before the Lord, we will have no question. When the Spirit is leading, the sense of it will be strong. And if we are walking with the Lord, there will not be a question as to whether the Spirit is leading either in US or in those who hear us. Now, sad to say, we're living in days of weakness and sometimes that doesn't happen. And even in Paul's day he could say to the Corinthians. Let the prophet speak two or three, and let the other judge. Others were to judge, and they had the capacity to judge. And here also the individual listening to the prophecy has the capacity to prove what is said. How? Because he or she has the Spirit of God as well. And so I don't believe God made any mistake, but what He gives us is not something that can be explained. And quantified in human language. It's something that the Lord has to make clear to us by His Spirit. Principal probably found, I think, in One Corinthians chapter 2.

First Corinthians, chapter 2. 1St 13 is the one I was thinking of there which things also we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost, The Holy Ghost teaches, comparing spiritually into spiritual. That is, what we speak should be backed up by the word of God, should be proven by the Word of God that is true. Before we speak and if we follow the instructions given here. I I believe that we. Would know that we're being led by the Spirit of God if the grades before us, the Word of God in such a way that we're able to present it, knowing that that is true because not what I say, but it's because of what the Word of God says and the Holy Spirit always directs us. To what God's Word says. Not my natural thinking. I have the old nature. I may mix up spiritual things with natural things. Not to be aware of that when you're speaking, but it should be spiritual things compared with spiritual truth. How we feel. So I know it after that's confirmed by somebody who comes to you to have the same version, the same camera, we have confirmation from that. Something that we kind of are taught by the Spirit of God through time, isn't it? It's necessary to have the proper state of souls and fellowship with the Lord. The Spirit is free not to occupy me with my failure. Please be free to bring thoughts to my work and you might have thoughts brought to my heart for me to enjoy, for me to share. And then I would go ahead and share them if I felt that was burning in my heart and I wanted others to enter into that joy. But you know, one of the secrets is dependence. We're quiet before the Lord. We're allowing the opportunity of the Spirit of God to move in our hearts and to meet someone to offer a prayer or a phrase or a hymn. And I was thinking if someone was really ignorant of the hymn book and the brethren got together and they didn't know any of that hymns. The Spirit of God knows all the hymns. You could put a number in your mind and say I've got the number 32 in my mind. You go to 32, you sing it and somebody say, well, that's wonderful, that's what I had in my heart, that's the Lord. I've been taking through us and our weakness and ignorance to bless us and the end result is we're in a fight together and challenge to enjoy the presence of the Lord and the leading of the Spirit. We might get into a pattern of meeting with the knowledge of the principles and just going ahead. And not being dependent and sure they're going to hear good things because we all read ministry and we have all the experience. We can hear one another. But what does the Lord have us enjoy this morning today together? He knows the hearts of everyone in the room. He knows the need, He needs the comfort that's required, the education, the education, the correction. And so the more we are dependent, the more we are going to experience after we've been together to administer many needs, the different ones unaware to the ones that we're speaking. Yet there was brought by him. Because he was the one doing the leading. So in fact, I couldn't tell you like no, that I'm being led by the Holy Spirit. I I'd like to refer back to the verse of Brother Steve from Isaiah chapter 32. I just want to read that verse for a second. Isaiah chapter 32. 17. And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever. Now, looking forward, that's also referring to the practical aspect of my walk in the world today. And I believe that when we remove all blockage in our relationship with the Lord Jesus. What I mean is that if I confess to the Lord anything that I know, I should have thought I did not do, or did do and should not have done. Then I have fellowship with my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, with all members of the Godhead. I have that peace and assurance. I just if I'm asked a question, I say Lord, please help me. Pray instant in prayer and go ahead trusting the Lord. I believe that He will help you and bless your answer. It will be an appropriate answer. It may not be a complete answer, but you will know that the Spirit is guided.

OK, No, I don't care to close the credit at of that, uh Alaska, it should call uh two circuit. Yet the new desktop exhausted to see the importance of all these things have been presented to us. The benefit umm oh legit said we may put some issues and Tirama. In regards He sanctified you fully and your Holy Spirit and soul and body to preserve blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wait, nobody else after a suburb C sub FC. She had a sweet the book of the show Sunday Monday down and they're $50. You know this is first comes after all these things have been mentioned to us in the proceedings in the preceding verses. No, no, my own that that's different. It's not losing money. They should work on the women. So we've had these exhortations in the preceding version and we have, we have here the very dollar piece, the gotta be himself. Sacrifice your holy. Screen we have the whole human being, spirit, soul and body. You will not move who lose somewhere else in your mouth. Ulnus sequel to someone. Do you remember the office At the moment? We listen to the Lord and we open our hearts to

the Lord. He is Himself active for us. Men. Make their women. It's not just the peace of God, the peace of God that accompany us. What we have here is a very God of Jesus himself who accompanies us. My Disability and chapter 4. We find a similar expression. And here. Seasonal result of assistance number 7 and. The seven reasons the peace of God which passed at all understanding, so keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Then we have something to encourage us to put our games and cast our grandfather in his feet. I've heard of him. Ru Guo I call that shows to tell us seniors do the man after the first aid. We also find other things that George requires of us and if that's in the new. Service. Is a free industry in our country. Everyone fixed the show in the duty festival. So this might be those things that we have both learned and received and heard and seen and meet. Do shall be with you. No, do well, I'm talking to you. I'm talking to each other. But they'll do that whole of truth. They can do that. Hometown, too. They can do that. He is not OK for the other fair and everything must affect. The show message we have here, it's not just the peace of God, it's those things that we've been read about and seen and exhorted about, and we put those things in practice and the result is that the God of peace himself will be with us. If I don't know about everything. It says rapidly, unless you another verse of the Lord Jesus called the disciples that night when she got down before them to wash their feet. John, Chapter 13. Verse 17 rupees tenure. That's 10 years.

Do what they want to happen. Which is the Lord of Lords, the King of things I've done before, his disciples that they're being to Russia. Every year. The disciples could have been dishonest and justice stop there, but the Lord reminds them of something in the 17th verse. If you know these things, happy or ye? If we do, that statement shows the correct potential. One thing to know these things. To do with the year new some of the things, but they really would have been. So we're only happy if we do them because here's the model that's going to think he wants us to do. And if you think 176. Lord, we shall see thee as thou art. Yonder mansion spare, we shall behold thee face to face thy glorious image. Bear Sauce Society, size 176. Lord, we shall see. See. You. All right, now we're going to get into the messages that I'm going to play. Before we pray, may I make one final remark with those last two verses. The order of spirit and soul and body is important. Why? Because it has to be the Lord's work in US. Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it. It has to start with Him and the Word, then work down to the soul and then to the body. Let's pray.

Scranton Conference: 2010, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-28

Reading

337. 337. It's all right. And so as far as far again tomorrow. Stroud. Long time ago and blood again, and the railroad was gone. Last week. Yeah, Oh. Oh, now I want to make a thyroid. Thyroid and shallow breathing. Around the sun. Come and start. Three, three, three in my eyes. Rewind blah blah blah. Let's. And we saw it brought over here and. There. A lot of different. Right. OK, our God and our Father, we thank thee for an opportunity to be here and thy word is open. Pray for a blessing. We just do thank Thee that we know that we do have a father and that we're the sons and daughters of that father. And we just do pray that we might be more conformed to the image of thy son that whether it's at work or at school or at home in our marriages, umm, in our local assembly, that we might, uh, consistently be. What we might appear to be here today and that, uh, we might have that, uh, consistency, that Christian consistency in our lives as those that truly belong to thee, Lord Jesus, we just do pray for encouragement in our hearts that might be built up. It might affect our feet. In Jesus name we give thanks, Amen, Amen.

For this reading, I'd like to suggest we only have one reading the last few verses of First Thessalonians chapter 5. And Him We Just Sang brought it to mind in connection with his desire that we would glorify Him here in this world, while we're still here in the past. Faith and service. And so I'd like to suggest, if we do that, that we begin at verse 16, First Thessalonians 5 and verse 16. 1St Thessalonians 516. Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the spirit, despise not prophesying, prove all things, hold fast that which is good, abstain from all appearance of evil, and the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless. Onto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faith will see that calleth you, who will also who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss. I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. While we were singing of that time when the Lord Jesus is going to come and we're going to be with him and we're going to be openly confessed as the sons and daughters. Of God, and we look forward to that moment. And in this epistle he has taken up at great length the subject of the Lord's coming. And I trust that as we think of the Lord's coming, we lift up our hearts and say, Even so come Lord Jesus. But there are some practical exhortations at the end of the epistle and a little prayer that the apostle has for the Thessalonian believers, and this is really what brought it to mind when we were. Singing the last verse of our hymn, and the apostle says here in the very God of peace, sanctify you wholly, and so on. His desire for these Thessalonians while they waited for the Lord Jesus to come, was that they would go on in the path, glorify God, so that in that day there would be a rich reward and a Hardy well done, thou good and faithful servant, and that they would be preserved spirit, soul and body blameless. Whereas he says, yes, spirit, soul and and body. But at the end of this chapter there are then these short pithy exhortations. It's not really doctrine we have here. It's some practical, some practical exhortations in connection with our walk while we're waiting for the Lord Jesus to come so that we will be preserved, blameless in that way when the Lord Jesus comes and when we stand before him at the judgment seat of Christ. They're not difficult exhortations to understand their short, their direct. And perhaps, brethren, if we just go down these Scriptures and consider them in a very simple and practical way. Perhaps it will encourage each of our hearts. The days are dark. We're right at the end. We've never been closer to the Lord's coming than we are right now. And we can go on for the Lord's glory until that moment when He calls us home. I understand that the dispersed 16 is actually the shortest verse. In the original Greek New Testament, rejoice evermore. I think it's wonderful how the Spirit of God brings before us these exhortations in just a few words and simple words. And here we have in three verses that which we are to be doing all the time. First of all, rejoicing.

Secondly, praying and thirdly, giving thanks. And notice it does say in everything. Give thanks. I heard one say it doesn't say for everything give thanks, buddy, in everything give thanks. But you know, if we turn over to Ephesians chapter 5, I believe we see something that's very precious. In Ephesians 5 and verse 20 it says giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. You know, we give thanks for that which does us good. And the fact is that no matter what takes place in our lives, I do believe. For the Christians, it's an expression of the Lord's love for us, even the difficult circumstances of life. And so as we contemplate the love of Christ. And it was manifest there at the cross. Where he offered himself without spot to God. For God's glory and for our blessing, we think of His love. We have to admit there's nothing in our lives but what His desire is that it would be for our good. And that's why I think your pastor says give

thanks always for all things. Our brother Gordon Hanley say too, to give thanks for our trials too, because, uh, we may not understand why the Lord is bringing us through this trial, whatever it happened to be me, but we can be assured for our eternal, uh, good and blessing. And that's really what you have in Ephesians is not just giving thanks in the trial, but as Wally said, for it. Mm-hmm. Because I don't believe we can really give thanks in the trial until we've come to the point in our experience that we've given thanks for it. Because until we realize that the Lord Jesus has allowed this circumstance in my life, I'm not going to give thanks for it. But when I realize that this has been allowed in my life and I give thanks for it, then there's a joy and a peace that comes in the in the trial, And I can rejoice it. I can give thanks. In it. But I, I don't, I think we ought not to skip these first two expressions. First of all, he says rejoice evermore. I like to put this verse with another short verse in the English Bible, and that is Jesus wept. If we put those two verses together, there's the two shortest verses in our English Bible and they stand in stark contrast to one another because God teaches us by contrast in His Word. And the Lord Jesus, as he walked through this world, he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Now there was joy in his pathway too. There was the joy of doing the Father's will. There was joy when souls came to repentance, there was number doubt joy when they took up the children and He took up the children in His arms and blessed them. And there was even a joy in going to the cross, knowing that He was going to return to the Father, having glorified God on the earth, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, and so on. But brethren, He was in His pathway as a man, the man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He groaned and wept. He wept at the grave of Lazarus when he saw the awful effects that sin had brought in. And the sorrow that it brought to that little home. But brethren, what does he say to you and to me today in contrast? Rejoice evermore. The Lord Jesus has accomplished the work of redemption. And, uh, he's dest, He's, uh, an old death and he's conquered death and he's risen and he's brought us into a place of blessing where we're going to spend eternity with him and enjoy all the benefits and blessings that he has for us. And what does he say? Rejoice evermore. Does that mean we're gonna see the the removal of the difficulties? No, we're gonna have, as we've already said, lots of trials, lots of difficult circumstances. But like Paul and Silas, we can rejoice even in a difficult circumstance. But notice, coupled with that, he immediately says pray without ceasing. And I suggest the two things go together. Is any Mary, let him sing psalms.

But it's any heavy lead impress is any thick. Let him prey. You get that in the end of of the Epistle to James and the two things go together. We need prayer. We need to cast our burden on the Lord. There's things to exercise. But if we do that, if we rejoice and we pray, then we can give thanks no matter what takes place. In Psalm 30, there's a connection between the verse that was referred to in John 11 and the verse in our chapter. The latter part of verse five says. Weeping may endure for a night. But joy cometh in the morning. There's different characters of prayer. We might say, uh, there's the public, uh, assembly prayer, which is very important. Umm. Uh, collectively when we come together, sometimes the prayer meeting is the uh. The uh, uh, a meeting which is uh, often, umm, omitted by people or, uh. Umm, not, uh, often. Uh, well attended, we might say, but it's important because, uh, it's the pulse of the assembly. And that's where we corporately, uh, make our request known to the Lord. That's the public prayer meeting. And the sisters have a part in that meeting too. And then there's a prayer in the closet when we can unburden our hearts to the Lord. No man, uh, observing us the greatest victories of our lives. With our families and so on, we'll be on our knees. And that's the, uh, the closet prayer outlined in, uh, Matthew's gospel. Well, this is the third, uh, character. You might say it's prey without ceasing. We are to, uh, live in a, uh, a constant spirit of dependence on the Lord. As we're walking down the street, in school or business, whatever, we can lift our hearts, uh, to the Lord. About that particular difficulty that we are faced with or problem, uh, we have an example of that in Nehemiah here. He was, uh, serving the, uh, king of Persia, a very powerful monarch and, uh, he was put on the spot, so to speak. How is he going to, uh, answer this, uh, this powerful, uh, tyrant that could have, uh, taken his life? Or, uh, he had the power to do so. And it speaks of Nehemiah praying first, just there in the palace of the king, in the, uh, in the court of the, uh, of the monarch. He just lifted his heart in prayer and then he answered the king. It's a good example for us. Sometimes we're so quick to answer, but uh, we need to, uh, be in that spirit of, uh. Constant dependence Prayer is an expression of dependence and confidence. Umm, as we have, uh, continuing prayer and watching the same with Thanksgiving. So it's so important that, uh, prayer is not neglected, uh, in our lives, umm. And, uh, if we live in that spirit of prayer and dependence, we will not have a fall. Umm. Peter when he should have been praying he was, uh. Acting in a fleshly way and following afar off and sleeping. And he had a fall. So this is a good exhortation for us to take to heart. Let's go back and just read that incident because I I think it's helpful. God teaches us by example as well as precept. Just go back to Nehemiah chapter 2. I believe it is. Yes, Nehemiah chapter 2.

We find in verse one, he's in the presence of the king as the King's cup bearer, and the King's cup bearer was to bring the cup of wine to the king, which speaks in Scripture of joy. But one day Nehemiah was sad in the presence of the king. I'll read from verse two. Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance said, seeing thou art not sick, for this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid. You know the kings in those days had the power of life and death. And the King's cup bearer was not to be said in the presence of the king. And you can just imagine Nehemiah how he felt and the king is going to ask him a question. And he knew it was a question that needed to be answered wisely. Verse three. And this is the king speaking, said unto. Then I was so afraid, the end of verse two, and said unto the king, Let the king live forever. Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my father's sepulchre, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire? Now notice this. Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? Now Nehemiah knew that his answer had to be from the Lord, because if he said the wrong thing, he was going to. I the least lose his job, if not lose his life. Now notice what it says. So I pray to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king, Well, if you go on and read this, you find that Nehemiah answered very wisely. He was given wisdom from the Lord, and the king not only granted his request, but far, far more than he asked. To think that this Gentile king would give him his request and provide for his journey so he could return to Jerusalem and view the wall and start the building. Why, it was almost unthinkable, But when Nehemiah's brother John said when he expressed that dependence on the Lord, the Lord came in. And I know you've experienced this. You've been driving your car. Some question you know you're going to have to answer when you get to work or school. And you know if you don't answer wisely to your employer or your teacher that it's going to be a difficulty. And you're praying and you're asking the Lord. Someone asks you at work to do something. Some other young person asks you to go somewhere. And you know you've got to answer carefully. I know you've done it. Just a swift little prayer. Lord, help me. Lord help me. Lord tell me what to do. Well, Nehemiah did that. He didn't have time like Daniel and his three friends when they faced the king to get together in their room and have a prayer meeting. No, he had to give an immediate answer. Well, I believe this is a wonderful illustration, as Brother John has pointed out, of praying without ceasing. It isn't that we're necessarily always forming words in our minds like we would normally think of prayer when we go into our closet or we get along with the Lord or in the assembly. But it's to be in the spirit of dependence and confidence. And if I can put it this way. To keep an open line between yourself and the Lord so that you can turn to the Lord. At any time, you may not always be actually praying, but you're in that you're walking close with the Lord, that open line. Nothing has come between you and the Lord so that when there is that question or that difficulty, you can say, Lord, what should I do? Lord help me. That's really what it is to pray without ceasing good. I was thinking also in the rejoice ever more we think of the apostle Paul and all the sufferings, afflictions. Perils that he endured. Uh, he mentions

similar words in the Philippians. 4 Rejoice always. And again I say rejoice. But his circumstances were very difficult. If Solomon had said that in, uh, the palace of Jerusalem, we might understand it. We would say, yeah, you have everything that your heart can wish. But Paul was in privation and suffering and difficulty in being persecuted and imprisoned and so on. And yet he could say, rejoice evermore. What a wonderful triumph of grace and the the we have the same God that we deal with. Yeah, prayer and Thanksgiving there too. Don't be in Philippians chapter four. First, rejoice in the Lord hallway. And again I say rejoice has been brought out. We can always rejoice in the Lord, knowing that He does not change, and we rejoice in the wonderful salvation that we have in Christ.

And the fact that we now have a relationship. With God as our Father as a result of that finished work of our Savior at the cross. And we know that the Lord Jesus always goes with us. He's promised never to leave, nor to forsake us. And so we rejoice in this companionship that we. Have with the Son of God the one who could say, all powers given unto me, both in heaven and in earth, and his love is just as great as his power. And these things don't change. You know, our circumstances do change. And so I don't believe that if we're basing happiness on circumstances. We're gonna be very happy because sometimes circumstances are very difficult. But you know the Lord is with us in those difficulties and rejoice in the Lord always doesn't say rejoice in the circumstances always. But then in verse. 5:00 and 6:00. Philippians 4. Let not let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand, Be careful for nothing. Or be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with Thanksgiving, let your requests be made known. Unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. I believe that even as we pray, we can give thanks. To the Lord for the answer that He's going to give. It may not be the answer that we expected, but it's going to be a good answer. So even as we're praying, we can be thanking the Lord for the answer He's going to give. Because we know He loves us with a perfect love. And perfect love casts out fear. And with respect to Thanksgiving? What impresses me is that the Lord Jesus. Could give thanks for that which spoke of his deepest agony, suffering. You know, when he was there in the upper room with his disciples, it tells us he took the bread and he gave thanks for it and that he break it. It's that which spoke of his death. He said this is my body which is given for you. And then it tells us that he took the cup and likewise he gave thanks for the cup. Well, I believe the Lord Jesus saw that God was in all of this that was before him. And he knew that his father made no mistake. He gives thanks. For the bread, for the wine. Well, sometimes young people ask how can we know the will of God? Or I want to know what God's will is for me in my life. And there are many things that when we seek the will of God in our lives and we do them, we have to say, well, we trust. We have the Lord's mind in doing this or that, but you know, there are some things in Scripture that were not left in any doubt as to whether it's the will of God or not. And we have just had three statements that bring before us three things that are the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. That's what he says in verse 18. And so it's God's will that we rejoice evermore. It's God's will that we pray without ceasing. It's God's will that in everything we give thanks. We don't have to wonder whether it's God's will or not. And brethren, and I can only say this to my own heart, if these three things. Are not characteristic in a practical way in my life, then I'm not fulfilling at least one aspect of God's will for me in my life. God's will is that every believer would rejoice, pray, and give thanks. And so we need, I think, to take an assessment of our lives, look back over some of us were here last year, look back over the past year. How much has this been practically true in your life and mine? Different aspects of prayer.

That we could consider and we turned over a page to 1St Corinthians 2. We see. I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, and intercessions, and giving a thanks be made for all men. Supplications have to do with our needs. And so we're noticing recently as we're looking to look at Matthew. In our assembly in Mount Tabor says in Matthew 918, Well, he speak these things under them, behold, there came a certain ruler and worshipped him, saying my daughter's even now dead. Isn't that interesting that it's called worship when he expresses? Is need and I believe it's because. He's recognizing that one as the one, uh, who could answer the need. And so that's worship. So supplications are part of prayer and it's part of worship, uh, in a certain sense, because we recognize that he's able to answer our needs. And then it says, uh, speaks of prayers and that all aspect of prayer involves devotion, so. Uh, when we express our, our worship, our praise to the Lord, uh, that's all part of prayer, of course, and but all prayer, I think suggests the thought of devotion to the Lord. And then the third aspect is mentioned here, intercessions, that is, uh, for we might pray for others and that's another aspect of prayer that we have enjoyed even today. And then finally listed as the giving of thanks. Be made for all men. Uh. Giving thanks and that's already been talked about. So we have these four things, supplications, prayers, intercession, and Thanksgiving. That's what I call the spit formula. That's for supplication, P for prayers and so on. So when we have our needs, when we have. Something to give thanks for, something to worship, something, uh, to ask for others. We need spent, uh, those four things. And we might mention also in passing that, uh, prayer is not a question of ability or gift, uh. Uh, it's a priestly function and, uh. Remember, uh, brother Gordon, uh, saying years ago that? A young brother that wanted to be a help in the meeting. He thought it would be nice first of all to hear his voice in prayer. I agree with that. Umm. We can all participate, brothers, I'm referring to in the, uh, prayer meeting. Uh, certainly it doesn't need to be a, an eloquent presentation, but it's in refreshing to hear a young brother lift his heart and maybe a simple short prayer in the assembly meeting. And, uh, it's not a question of having a gift. It's a priestly function. Now there is ministry, which we come down to here in verse 19 and 20. There is ministry in the assembly, which, uh, supposes a gift, an ability, but not in the prayer meeting. Is that right, Jim? Yes. And that really does bring us to these next few statements, doesn't it? Because we've spoken at a great length about the individual aspect of things. We've spoken about rejoicing in the Lord. Individually, we've spoken about praying. I know we've brought it out in connection with the assembly too, and but particularly in connection with personal prayer and instantaneous prayer and so on. We've spoken about giving thanks and how this is the will of God for each one of us. But now he's going to bring us to the collective side of things because our interactions with one another are important as well. And so first of all, he says quench, not the Spirit. Now in Ephesians he speaks about grieve. He says grieve not the Spirit, the Holy Spirit. To grieve, if I can put it this way, to grieve the Holy Spirit is really to hinder the work of God in US. It's more an individual side of things. If I allow sin in my life or something to come between me and the Lord, it's going to hinder the work of the Spirit of God in me. You ever get down on your knees to pray or you opened your Bible to read the Word yourself and you just felt you couldn't pray or you didn't get anything out of what you read from the Word of God?

Well, perhaps it's because you've allowed something in your life to grieve the Spirit of God so that he cannot, uh, lead you, uh, guide you in prayer because he's the one that we pray in the, in and by the Holy Spirit or he cannot minister to you the things of Christ from this book because it's the Spirit of God that takes of the pages of this book and makes it real and precious to us and brings out what God is saying to us. But that's to grieve the Spirit of God. If to grieve the Spirit of God is to hinder the work of God in me, then I suggest that to quench the Spirit is to hinder the work of God through us. That is if I can use a very practical illustration. Perhaps you've experienced it, brothers, you sit in a in a meeting and some him comes to your mind and it's pressed upon your soul and you just don't give it out. You say, oh, I'm not, I'm not going to open my mouth today. One of two things may happen the Lord may the Spirit of God may use somebody else to give out the same hymn because. God is very gracious and He's greater than our weakness. But you know, sometimes I have to say to my own soul, I've sat in a meeting and not said something that I are given out to him that I felt the Spirit of God was leading me to do. And somebody gave out

something else that didn't seem in keeping with the character of the meeting or the leading of the spirit. You can't question or judge, but you know, we need to be exercised that we don't quench the Spirit of God. If the Spirit of God, we need to maybe you won't open your mouth in a meeting, but come with exercise brothers, that if the Spirit of God desires to use you that you're a ready vessel to be used. Otherwise you may quench the Spirit of God. So he's taking up now some things in connection with the our interactions, the collective side of things. He's going to go on to say despise not prophesying. We're going to we're having ministry here. In these meetings, there's going to be some open meetings, some addresses, this reading, what are we going to do? Are we listening to what God is saying to us through his, through his servants? Are we listening to what he's ministering to us from the word of God? Or do we say, oh, well, that's not for me, or I just let that shot go over my shoulder, or we shut our ears to what is being said. Maybe it bothers our conscience, speaks to our hearts, so we just set it aside. No, we don't want to despise what God is is saying to us, what is prophesying for our purposes. It's speaking the mind of God. God raises up men to, to convey his mind. We don't have foretelling like they did in the Old Testament perhaps, but we have 4th telling and God has his prophets today and, uh, we need to listen to what they have to say and then weigh what they have to say. Prove all things. What do you think, Steve? Is that right? I think that's, uh, that's right. Not all that is said might be of the Spirit. So there is that need to prove all things. The, uh, the faithful remnant in the coming day is warned against false Christ and the earth, but we're warned against, uh, uh, false spirits and to try the spirits. And so there's needs to be carefulness that, uh, we, we prove that all that is said is really according to the word of God and, and it's the Spirit of God bringing it out. Just like to mention a brother said something to me just before the meeting that we desire good doctrine and. And exhortation and encouragement. But he said, what do we really want? He said, we really want the leading of the Spirit of God in the assembly meetings. And then we'll get all those things that we need and that we desire. And so it needs to be our desire and prayer and, uh, a real waiting in our souls on the leading of the Spirit of God that we get what the Lord has for us. Just like to mention two connection with what our brother John said and, uh, a young brother's voice being heard, perhaps first in prayer that there's really a moral order there. And because one might say, well, why first in prayer, you know, the temptation really, especially if the Lord's young brother is giving you an ability to minister the word of God, the temptation is perhaps to minister the word of God first.

The reason that it's better to be heard in prayer first is this, uh, as we have here, prophesying is forth telling and it might be edification, exhortation or comfort, but it's really. Helping your brother and on in the past and giving them what they need. But if you can't pray for your brother, how can you tell him how to go on for the Lord? And if you can't give the Lord thanks for what he's done, do you really have any business telling your brother how to go on for the Lord? There's a moral order of being able to intercede for others and give thanks to the Lord first before we're used to the Spirit of God to instruct others. And, uh, the Lord really wants. And 1St and primarily one opinion from us. What thank you of Christ before we have a lot of other opinions about how our brethren ought to go on. The Lord says I've got one opinion I want to hear from you. What do you think of my son? And if you can't OfferUp an opinion, so to speak of, of your thoughts and on behalf as and as the mouthpiece of the assembly of of your appreciation of the Son of God. Then really, uh, it's, it's getting things out of order to minister to the hearts of the Saints of God. In the assembly, we recognize the scriptural order that uh, uh. God has given gifts to his church. The Spirit of God has imparted gifts and we recognize those. The authority comes from the Lord for the exercise of those gifts in the systems of men around us. They really quench the Spirit because, uh, they don't allow the exercise of those God-given abilities and gifts in the, uh, in the church. But they, uh, confine them all in the person of, uh, one man. Uh, or, or a few, but there's not the free exercise of the Spirit of God to, uh, minister to the Saints through the gifts that have been imparted, uh, from, uh, an ascended Christ in the glory, so. Quentin, not the spirit, Uh. Well, we often apply that to, uh, the reticence to, uh, to speak, uh, when, uh, we feel, uh, that we should, uh, participate for God's glory. On the other side, some of us fail on the other side, we quench the Spirit by speaking too much. And uh, Bo, neither of them are, are correct. We need to be dependent on the Lord in, in those matters. I'd like to make a comment, umm, on proving all things in connection with, uh, what we find in Acts 17, and we could turn there for a moment. Max 17 in connection with the Bereans. Not 17 In the 10th verse we have the brethren immediately sent away, Paul and silence by night unto Berea. The coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews, and these were more noble than those in Thessalonica. I wonder if perhaps that may have been part of the reason why we have this exhortation, uh, to the Thessalonians to prove all things. We find that theft graphs didn't characterize them the same way that did the Bereans. But we read here in the 11Th verse, these were more noble than those in Thessalonica. In. That they received the word with already and searched the scriptures daily. Whether those things were so And I've just appreciated in this verse that umm in relation with searching the scriptures daily. It says here that there was a readiness of mind and I found myself sometimes having an agenda in something that I wanna do, and sometimes I search the scriptures to try to justify what I want to do. Well, here we find with the Bereans. It says they had a readiness of mind. So in relation with proving all things in our personal lives and in our assembly lives, what a marvelous thing to be able to look at the Word of God with a readiness of mind to realize what the Lord wants for us to learn as opposed to seeking to find out from the Word what we really want to do.

It's been said, I believe it's true that. The great sin of Christendom today. Is sin against the Holy Spirit? And it's been brought out how that there has introduced. Into the church, that which takes the place of the Spirit of God. You know, the Holy Spirit is really the only divine leader that is to be in control of all proceedings in the assembly. But we find. Human arrangement has come in and. Instead of waiting upon the Lord to direct by His Spirit and worship and ministry. Some individual makes up a plan and this is what we're going to follow. You know, Brother Steve, if I came to Vestal and I said now. This large day morning. Got a program and I would like this brother to give out this him and another brother to read a portion and I'd like you to break the bread. I don't think you'd accept that. You wouldn't be too pleased. And yet I believe that's what's happening. You would say, well, we'd rather be under the control of the Spirit of God to lead in this meeting this morning. And it's a wonderful thing, you know, when God is in control. So I just mentioned that because I think that we. Ought to be so thankful, if indeed we are in a place. Where the authority of the Lord Jesus is acknowledged and there's a vowing to his authority. And to his leading. By his spirit, the Spirit of God. Well, when we do prove all things, then we see them from Scripture that what we've heard is right. As Dave said, the Bereans didn't take the Apostle Paul's word for what was ministered. They went and searched the parts of the Scripture they had and they saw what he was ministering was the truth of God. Then what are we to do, brethren? To just leave it on the table, so to speak? Know where to hold it fast. And So what is right? What we we come to meetings like this. Maybe there are things we that are said that aren't according to the Spirit of God. Maybe they aren't quite accurate. We're to set those things aside. But what about the things we have proved us to be right from God's word? Well, we're to hold those things fast. And I believe that the great work of the enemy today is to get us to compromise. And to compromise is to let things slip slowly. It's to have a little pinhole in the bottom of the cup. It's as. We used to say the thin edge of the wedge, it's letting the barrier down slowly. It's not giving up in great chunks or pouring out the cup all at once. No, it's just to let things go very slowly. But what are we to do? We're to hold fast. If there's an exhortation in, well, let's just actually, let's just read it in Revelation chapter 3, I believe. S. Revelation chapter 2, Revelation chapter 2 and verse 25. But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come. And then in chapter 3 and verse 11, behold, I come quickly. Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Now what is it that we've been

given that we're to hold fast to? It's the precious truth of God. It's the word that we hold in our hands and those things that have been ministered to us from the Word of God, and we're to hold them fast and to hold fast to something. Gives the thought of energy expended. You know, if you're doing some rock climbing like they have in the back of this gymnasium. Or you're doing some gymnastics, you grip that bar, you grip those rocks and you hold them fast because you know what's going to happen if you don't.

If there isn't all your energy put into it to hold fast, you're going to fall, you're going to get injured, and so on. And brethren, we need to seek grace, to hold fast to the truth. The devil wants us just to give up a little bit, to just loosen our grip here and there. But Paul exhorts the Thessalonians, when they have proved all things, then they're to hold fast that which is good, and then abstain from all appearance of evil. But I'm gonna read this in Mr. Darby's translation because. Perhaps a little broader thought. Hold aloof from every form of wickedness. And so we're to hold fast to that which is right, that which is good. But what are we to do with that which is not right, that which is not good, that which is not according to the leading of the Spirit of God? We're to, we're to set it aside. We're to stand aloof from it. We're not to get near it. We're not to touch it. Touch not, taste not, handle not. Why is it so often we get entangled with things because we think we know our own heart and how far to go say, well, I, I can get maybe a stand on the edge of the Grand Canyon and you know, we've been there and there are barriers back from the edge and warnings not to go beyond that. But what would you think if I said, well, that's, that's too far back for me. I know how far I can go and still, still not fall. And so I climbed that barrier and I, I stand right on the edge and I go over. You say there were warnings. There were warnings to not to stand aloof from the rim. Of the Grand Canyon. But I thought I knew how far I could go. And many a believer has got entangled in false doctrine, in moral evil, in ecclesiastical associations, because they thought they knew how far their hearts could go. God says take and hold fast to the good, but that which is wicked, don't even go near it. Stand completely aloof. There's a, a helpful, uh, illustration of that brother with Samson, you know, in the end when, uh. When, uh, he had laid his head in Delilah's lap and the Philistines came and his hair was shaved off, it says he went out. To shake himself a as at other times, but he whisked not that the spirit of the Lord was departed from him. And you know when we go right to the the edge as it were, because we think we know how far we can go. We don't realize that something has changed. A moral change has come in. We're not the same person we were morally before we took that step to the edge. He wished not that the spirit of the Lord had departed from him. There was a moral change with Samson. Something had changed and he was completely unaware of it. And so when we think we're strong enough to go so far but not go over the edge. And we take that step, we're morally a different person than we were before we took that step. And we no longer have the strength to to not go over the edge. We're different, we're changed. And he was changed and his eyes were put out and he ground corn for the Philistines in the House of the Philistines. Speaks about Sampson, how that uh. The Spirit of God began to move Samson just as a young person and. And no doubt he responded to that movement of the Spirit of God and. And in the next chapter we read about. Under the control, the power of the Spirit of God, he was able to slay a lion and then he performed many amazing exploits for God. But under the power of the Spirit of God that came upon him. But you know, it tells us that the Spirit of God began to move him. And I'm thinking that here in this gym today, there is the Spirit of God working in some of these young. People. Young men and beginning to move and don't resist that, you know, don't quench that moving of the Spirit of God. The Lord leaves you give out of Him or to pray or read scriptures. I think the best thing we can do is to do that. Sometimes it's difficult because we think of the consequences and we wonder if we'll be able to do that, but you know. The Spirit of God.

Disable. To. Help us. Enablement is there. I recall the first time asked to give the gospel. And I was so. You might say reluctant to do that, but a brother, he could see my reluctance and he said. Wally won't be thinking about yourself. Think about the Lord. And it was a good word, you know, because we need to think about the Lord. Verse 23 brings before us the important subject, large subject. Perhaps we couldn't cover all the aspects of it this morning, but sanctification is really separation from evil, holiness, delight in that which is good, and abhorrence of evil. But the prayer of the apostle here, the very God of peace, sanctify you wholly. I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved, blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now sanctification is presented in two ways. I think we are all aware is a positional sanctification, absolute, uh, which we have in the Epistle to the Hebrews. We are sanctified. Through the work of Christ once for all. There's no growth there, There's no progression in that sanctification. We are set as set apart for God, perfect, holy, blameless in the sight of God, by one offering. He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. But that's not the aspect of the apostle is bringing before us in our verse here. This is the practical side. This is the progressive side. Of, uh, of sanctification, uh, and we should be more sanctified from the world this year than we were last year. And how that comes about is not presented in this, uh, particular verse, but we know from other scriptures, it's through the word of God. Uh, and occupation with, uh, Christ in the glory. But here you notice that spirit comes first and then soul and body because what we think about and pursue after as an object controls our lives. We know that too well. And the apostle would bring before us the importance of the Spirit. What we, uh, what we are occupied with is going to, uh, affect our whole lives. But it was his desire that we might be separate spirit, soul and body. Uh, from that which is a dishonouring to the Lord. And we have it all around us, do we not? So the Lord pray too for the disciples. Sanctify them through Thy Word. Thy Word is truth, and the Psalm is set in the 119th Psalm by word. Have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee? And so if we're going to walk in practical sanctification through this world, one of the keys is to have the Word of God before us at all times. It has a sanctifying, cleansing effect. And I suppose too, that's why in connection with the Spirit being first, as John said here. Our spirit, it says in Colossians, if you notice your margin and it's a better rendering, it says that we're to set our mind on things above because if we set our mind on things above where Christ sits and our minds are full of Christ and occupied with him, it's going to take care of those things that are soulish. The soul is the seed of the emotions. The spirit is the God conscious part of our being. We are a tripart being as we often say. The Spirit is the God conscious part of our being. But then the soul is the seed of affections and emotions. And why is it so often our affections and emotions are directed in the wrong way? It's because we haven't set our mind on things above. It's because our mind does affect what affect our heart. So the order is very important. And if the mind is set on Christ, full of Christ, then.

These things that we take up. As to the affections and emotions, and there are things that are soulless, they're not wrong in themselves, but they're going to be taken up in the proper balance and perspective. Eat so much honey is as good for the honey speaks of those things that are natural, natural sweetness. And it's good to eat a little honey. Jonathan took a little honey and his eyes were enlightened. But if that is in perspective, then the body is going to be preserved. But so often the body is not preserved. So often the body falls into that which leaves a mark on it, moral evil and so on and other things. The way of the transgressors hard and the body can often suffer because of it. But what is why is it so often we our bodies are abused or there's a mark of moral evil left for the rest of our lives and so on? It's because we haven't followed the order here, the Spirit first. Are our minds really set on Christ? Are they full of Christ? If they are, then yes, there are those natural things that they'll be in the proper balance and perspective. And in the proper, within the safeguard of the relationships that God has instituted for the blessing of man on the earth. And then our bodies will be preserved. And so Paul's prayer and desire for these Thessalonians while they waited for the Lord to come, was that they would be preserved spirit, soul, and body in the three parts of their being. Interesting to see our part and God's part set, uh, against each other. That is, we were exhorted to be judicial proof all things and hold fast what's good and

hold aloof from what's not good. Well then, that's our part. But then. If we just leave it there, we're in bad shape. Uh, it's really the Lord that preserves us. So we have our our responsibility to. Umm, be holy, we might say, but it's the Lord that actually preserves us. So he praised that we might be preserved under the blameless, under the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and adds that faithful as he that calls you, who also will do it, Not only is he able, but he will do it. Stop. He's the God of, of peace that's gonna stand by us, will sanctify us, able to sanctify us. And peace is a nature that's satisfying. Umm, just think of it like a dog in the front porch there in his blanket in the sun. He just, everything he wants is right there just stretched out and he soaking it in. And we have a new nature that, uh, God alone can satisfy and he can satisfy it and fill us with all that it longs for and desires. We have an old nature too, that, uh, has the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, and seeks to satisfy itself and cannot, no matter how much it gets to this world, it cannot satisfy itself. And soon it dawns on us that we have no power to satisfy what the flesh longs after. And it just is this endless agitation of desiring and desiring and never being happy because we can never be satisfied. That's the opposite of peace. But we have a new nature that, uh, is given to us of God and, ha, having its proper object, Christ set before it is satisfying. And God fills us with good things. And that new nature we have then finds its rest and satisfaction. And there's no lack of anything, so to speak. There's a contentment of peace. That's peace and nature. Satisfied. And not only that, that object that God sets before that new nature, Christ. Forms that new nature to his own image, He. He gives us what we need to be satisfied. He gives us what forms us and conforms us to that which he desires. And there's peace, a nature satisfied. But the old nature never will be and will never be at peace. There is no peace, There is no rest for the wicked, saith my God. Some years ago the question was asked to John D Rockefeller.

What is satisfaction? And he gave a very short answer, a little bit more. Than that. Well, it's interesting, isn't it, that Paul praised this for the brethren in Thessalonica, doesn't pray that they'll get a good job or get their grades or whatever it might be, but he prays that they might be preserved in this way. Not that Paul wasn't concerned in the practical things of his brethren too, but his desire, really there was a desire that superseded the practical everyday, as someone said, the lost button type of prayer, and that was that they would be preserved in this way. But isn't it interesting that as soon as he has prayed this. He turns around and says, Brethren, pray for us. Did Paul need their prayers in this regard too? The Thessalonians might have looked at Paul and said, well, he's arrived. The great apostle Paul, he's arrived. No, Paul said. We need your prayers just as much as we're praying this for you. And I just want to say this to those who are younger. Perhaps sometimes you look at your older brothers and sisters and you feel like they've arrived. They, they don't, they don't need the exhortation or the prayer anymore. None of us have arrived, no matter where we are in our Christian pathway, whether we're children, young people, middle age, raising families a little further along in the path of faith and service. We need to pray for one another in this regard. Sometimes we pray for our young people. You know, it's always encouraging when a young person comes to me and says, Mr. Hyland, I'm praying for you. I know you're going through some circumstance or you're going somewhere and I'm praying for you. You know, that does my heart good, nice to for the older ones to pray for our younger ones. But I think it's beautiful. And we who are a little older, we need the prayers of our younger brethren that we would be preserved in this way because there's always the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes. And the pride of life, I suppose those three things affect us at different times in our lives generally, But I think too that we can be affected by all three at any time in our lives. So Paul, yes, Paul, the apostle Paul, he desired the prayers of his brethren. Then I know our time is gone. But just to these last few verses, greet all the brethren within. Holy kiss. Well, brother and I, I know we don't do that so much in our society, but. The kiss has always been, in Scripture, the sign of affection. Do we greet one another warmly and affectionately? You go to different parts of the world. There's different ways that brethren perhaps carry this out, greet one another in an affectionate way. But whatever it is in our society, there needs to be that greeting one another in a in with affection. Then he says, I charge the Lord that the epistle be read to all the holy brethren. This wasn't just for some, this wasn't just for certain ones. This these exhortations were necessary for all and they're necessary for all our hearts, aren't they? And then he says the grace. Of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. So characteristic, isn't it, of Paul to end his epistles with this commendation of grace? Because as he takes up the truth, various aspects of the truth in each of his epistles, as there are the exhortations that go with the aspect of truth and doctrine that's brought out in each epistle, then at the end of the epistle the Spirit of God realizes that if there is going to be. In any measure, a taking in a holding fast and a walking, in the practical good of the truth of the Epistle, it's only the grace of God. And brethren, it is only the grace of God that preserves us. Have we been brought along in some measure, preserved in some measure, spirit, soul, and body, up until this moment? We can only look back and count it as the grace of God, of all we received, of His fullness and grace upon grace. It's for the that grace is available to everyone of God's people. Do we need more grace? He gives more grace. Is that all we need? My grace is sufficient for thee. So glorious. What comes at the end when the Lord comes. But grace is what meets our present need. And David said, I think it's the 84th Psalm. The Lord will give two things, grace and glory. Again, glory is what we're waiting for.

But in the mean time, as we wait for the glory, we need that grace. And so at the end of each of most of his epistles, I believe, if not all but maybe Hebrews, he speaks in some way of the grace of God as that preserving factor. Oh umm. It will be more than 11. Right on my heart. Uh, 5:00 most precious time sleep. I fell on the train and go. Phone number please. I'm all the heads up. And then I said I'm all. 6:00. Uh. And ourselves, our loving God and Father, we thank you for encouraging him that we have sung together and the prayer connected with it and the last verse that we have sung. We think of the short expectations given to us in this chapter. We pray, too, that we might not just give lip service to that which we have spoken about this morning, that we may truly allow the Spirit of God to work in our lives and to work in the assembly too. We've heard this morning about breathing the Spirit and quenching the Spirit, and I believe. Blessed Savior, there is much for us to reflect upon in this regard this morning. We just thank C2 for the fact that we can rejoice in our circumstances. We thank you for that joy that we have in Christ. We think of the encouraging scenario that we have read about this morning that we weeping may in endure for a period of time, but the fact that joy shall come in the morning.

We thank thee too, that we can pray for one another. We think of the words of that hymn. I need the prayers of those. Certainly we need to pray for one another on a regular basis. And we thank you too for the hope of Thy coming and Thy grace which has been given to us to sustain us on our.

Vestal Conference: 2007, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6

Reading

OK. Umm. How about you? I don't know whatever you need to do that. I don't know if it's, uh. Umm, the retaining did anything? Yeah, they were called. We look up to the. We have sung our longing spirits cry. And yet we feel all our failure, our feebleness. Often, uh. We walked by

sight and not. In the flesh rather than the spirit. For that new life that thou hast given to us in sovereign grace. That Newman. That new creation which were part of laws. Longs to be fed from heavenly springs. Long to be fed with Christ. Response to thy precious words. Loves to walk in obedience to Thy will. Loves to have Christ. Or it's object and we do pray. That Thou, within thy sovereign grace, grant us to be fed with food that is convenient for us, that would feed that you like we have in Christ. Let us know our needs and all the circumstances of each individual pathway here. And none of us is sufficient. To give forth that that would meet those needs. We thank either the sufficiency in Christ our head. To meet those needs in this land of drought and dirt.

To lift our spirits above this scene. To give us the energy. To the path of faith. So we just look to thee, our eyes are haunting, as Thou art direct to the portion of Thy precious word that would be suitable. Lord Jesus. To think of that phrase, Lord of heaven and earth. Oh Lord Jesus, we look forward to that day when thou be manifest to this world, not only Lord of Heaven, but Lord of Earth as well. And I will set all things right. We will not, uh, walk through a defiled fee and any longer. Valid no longer be the one cast out and rejected, but the. That son of man's supreme or overall things. Our hearts only that now, Lord Jesus. May it be real in a practical way in our day by day life, Lord of them. So we commit ourselves to the looking, to the Lord Jesus as Head of the Body. New Minister by every joint of supply that which is needed. We thank you for thy grief. Good evening, thanks our God our Father, and ask these things in the precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. This morning, you're a fervent. The brother read to us from First Thessalonians chapter 5. That is a lovely chapter filled with instruction through the breathing field. It may be profitable to look into that portion for the readings. First Thessalonians, chapter 5. But of the times and seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as the thief in the night. For when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light and the children of day. We are not of the night, nor of the darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night, and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and Fern helmets, the hope of salvation. 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. Wherefore comfort yourselves together and edify one another even as also ye do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you and the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake, and be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort your brethren, warn them that are unruly, Comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man, but ever follow that which is good both among yourselves and to all men. Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit, despise not prophesying, Prove all things, Hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearances of evil.

And the very God of peace sanctify you holy. And I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless under the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss. I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. The times and the seasons. You know, when the Lord was here on earth and the disciples asked him about that in Acts chapter one, the Lord said to them, it is not for you to know the times for the seasons. That's because the Holy Spirit was not yet given. You find that in the second chapter. Well, at this point the apostle Paul was not afraid, was he, to give to these new babes in Christ The full truth as to the revelation of God was revealed to him concerning the course of this world. What will take place after the believer is gone? And it certainly isn't that. A very bright prospect, is it present? We don't read in the Word of God that Christianity is going to convert the world and make it a better place in which to live. Oh no, we see things getting worse and worse. And an awful time is in view for this world. And evidently the apostle brought these things before the Thessalonians when he was there because he says, you know, it's not really. Necessary for me to write these things, you know perfectly. They should recall what the apostle Paul had told him that we are very thankful that it's recorded here. So that we can know as well as the fulfillment who's prophesied in the Old Testament and read about it in Daniel Chapter 9. You know, uh, the dear servant of God was given to see what would take place at the end of time. And here it's confirmed to us in the New Testament as well. Second of fiscal to Timothy. Fall Rd. pulled past the form of sound words which thou assertively. Another translation has have an outline of an outline I think of sound truth, And as Reuben was saying, it's encouraging to see that in spite of the little amount of time the apostle Paul had was easy in these converts, they had laid hold of an outline of sound truth. And that's a very, uh, sound and useful way for us to learn too, is to get an outline of things and then little by little, meeting by meeting, week by week, year by year for Lord Carrie's week, add little pieces. Really, the Lord gives it to us. And if we have a, a sound outline, the pieces go into their proper place and our understanding deepens in our enjoyment, deepens of the precious things of God. From Roost, do we look for signs and times or is our hope something different? Or does this take place after the rapture? Well, essentially our hope is in a person Christ Jesus, our hope says. So we're really not looking so much for events as we are for the appearing of a person who has come into our lives and delivered us from so great a death. Has told us He knows all about us and yet loves us thoroughly anyway, and has, uh, insured us that we're going to spend eternity with Him. Enjoy. And in a place where sin can never come. That's the believer's hope, what the Scriptures call the blessed hope. To be with Christ, to be with Him, and to be like Him.

I used to be a little mystified when Brother Lundin used to tell us that prophecy concerned the earth, and the years went on, I understood better. What he meant that God has a purpose concerning the earth, He's going to bring that purpose to pass. The end of the ages, the Lord Jesus is going to come into this world and take his rightful place and rule over this world to God's glory and be a priest upon his throne in the rising of the sons of the going down of the Seine. The Lord's name is going to be like incense in every nation. And that's a wonderful, uh, anticipation that we have to see him finally have his rightful place. But as believers now we're really. Not an earthly people were a heavenly people. We have a heavenly hope and. And even our the essence of our life is heavenly was considered to be seated in the heavenlies in Christ and we wait for one who's going to take us to our proper place, which is heaven. And so even though we're waiting for the Lord to come and take us to be with himself, we're not unmindful and God does have a purpose with his earth. He's going to bring it to pass. And the apostle in the first verse here referred to those times and seasons that have to do. With God's purposes with the earth. Uses that expression in verse 2. Yourselves know perfectly. In the fourth chapter it was one of them, the Saints, who passed off. And Paul says, I would not have you to be ignorant. Here's a different expression yourselves know perfectly you know the day of the Lord is mentioned at least 35 times in the Old Testament. If you turn like to the second chapter of Joel, the 2nd chapter of Isaiah, those chapters are just filled. With the day of the Lord, that's the day of judgment, isn't it expressed in the day of the Lord is not the Lord coming for his own? Uh, that's the Lord coming in judgment upon this world. And uh, so he says here yourselves know perfectly that they would know from the Old Testament that meant repeatedly the Lord was going to come in judgment upon this world, not only for their sin, but to think that when finally the Lord says. We love some saying they will reverence my son. Imagine the guilt attached to rejection of the Lord of glory. The day of the Lord is about to come, brethren. Now it

becomes us to walk in separation and that which is under the judgment of God. Sure, the residents all noticed that you have a change of the pronouns here. Ye yourselves verse one and two, but verse three it changes. It's they them and they verse four, it goes back again, Ye reverend and you are. Some of these verses apply to the world and others apply to the same entirely different destiny for two two different groups of people. We're not of this world even as the Lord is not of this world. The Apostle Paul had been a very short time with the Thessalonians and probably this is the first epistle that the apostle wrote and, uh, through persecution. And the circumstances ordered of God, he was only able to stay there, perhaps just a few weeks at the most. And so in the first chapter he rehearses how they had received the gospel. And how it was known in the region all around that they had turned from dead idols to serve the living God. But it adds a he adds something in verse 10. And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

Those things they knew perfectly what they had to be instructed in was in chapter 4. And that's where he says, I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, in verse 13. The coming of the Lord. In loneliness and grace. When he was born in Bethlehem was his first coming. His second coming is when he comes in power and glory. He appeared here in Lonely Guys. He's going to appear again in power and glory. And the Word of God only looks at 2 Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The first has taken place, the 2nd is yet to come. And so the Thessalonians had been instructed in the fact that there was a second coming of the Lord Jesus, and they were waiting for him. They were waiting for him to come in power and glory, and when some died, when some fell asleep in Christ, their concern was they're going to miss out. We're here waiting for the Lord to come back in power and glory and to set up the Kingdom, and we're going to reign with Him, and these are going to miss out. They're in the grave. And the apostle opens up to them. That the Lord, when he comes is going to bring all His own with Him and this is how it's going to be accomplished. He's going to raise the debt. He's gonna catch up the living. They're going to then proceed with him in His glorious appearing in this earth and reign with Him in the establishment of that Kingdom. The seven-year tribulation isn't taken up here. All those things are passed over. It's just is coming and we're going to come with Him. It's as if the picture that the apostle gives is the Lord is on his way from glory to this scene. And on his way, because he's going to bring us with him, he catches us up, catches us up to meet him on the way down. Now we know from other scriptures that there is a seven-year at least seven-year period in the interval between when we're caught up to when he actually appears in the Lord, but that's how it's presented in this epistle. There's only one second coming of the Lord, but his others have said in two installments 1 to catch us up to meet him on the way to his appearance. Events transpired on the way to that period the. No doubt the judgment seat of Christ, the tribulation unfolds in this world at the end of which He does appear in all his Saints with him. And that's what he's calling here. The day of the Lord that they knew perfectly. They were expecting His coming in power and glory and the day of man now man that's having his way outwardly. But the day of the Lord, the Lord is going to have His way and He's going to set all things right. They knew perfectly that that day was coming. That day was going to come as a thief in the night to this world. When He catches us up, He comes and meets us as a bridegroom, not as a deep. That part of His coming is for the affections of the believer. We look for our bridegroom. The part of it coming in power and glory is also for our longing hearts to see Him have His rightful place. We long to see Him who was cast out and rejected finally. Have his rightful place and it's the day of reward as well. For faithful service to this world. It comes as a feast. In Sardis, in Revelation, the warning to them was that there was not a turning about from their pathway because of the empty dead profession of that church, that he would come upon them as the thief in the night as well. And so the professing church is going to share in the judgment of this world when he comes as a thief in the night. But will all true believers will already be with him. 1St chapter. Uh, just to pick it up in verse 7. Waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall also conform you unto the end. That you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And then in the second official first chapter. 14 in the middle ye are. We are your rejoicing, even as you also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus. So there are other passages which speak of a very wonder wonderful aspect of this time when the Lord Jesus displaces the 1St man and in power takes over the headship of all things on this earth that Stephen was speaking about. The day of Christ, the day when all the upside down things that are exist now are turned right side up and instead of uh, evil being promoted is good and good being. Presented his evil. Things are seen in their right way and up is up and down is down, and light is light and darkness is darkness. And the Lord Jesus is going to be head over all that. And there's going to be a display of what God had in his heart all along for man. A display of what he had in his heart morally as to purity, as to righteousness and love. And then we'll be blessed by this in this period of time when God heads up all things on the earth under the Lord Jesus Christ. Will last for 1000 years. I think it's 1000 years because Revelation, I think it's chapter 24, five, maybe six times it says the 1000 years, the 1000 years. So I'm not a brilliant person, but I take from that that it's going to be 1000 years. And so God will. Uh, afford himself, so to speak, that amount of time to display his own glory and his love for man in that way. But the transition from where we are today when men rule. Into that time when Christ is heads over all things outwardly is a is a terrible transition. Time, which I believe the Old Testament prophets speak of, is the day of the Lord. It's a day of of wrath. It's a day of tumult. In a day when the Lord bears the lighting down of his arm and he comes and he says in the, uh, in the prophet Isaiah, he stains the pride of all man's glory. And it'll be as it's just briefly referred to here. The Lord coming as a thief in the night. Nobody wants to be surprised by Thief in the night. There's the element of surprise that the Lord were to come during this meeting when it's not as a thief in the night that He would come for us. But when He comes in this world, there will be a series of events like the world has never seen. The world has seen floods and tornadoes and pestilence and famine and all kinds of war as the result of man's sin, but it has never seen the wrath of God from heaven. The Lord Jesus tasted wrath of Calvary's cross, and this world has never seen God's wrath and they will see it in that horrible time when in, as I say for lack of a better word, in transition, the Lord takes that power to himself. And he himself displaces the 1St man and everything having to do with him. He takes his place as a priest upon his throne. So there's a certain sense in which the day of the Lord refers to that, those momentous times of transition, uttering, ushering in the wonderful time of peace. The day of Christ, the display of things that are good and blessed. He uses the figure in that third verse of. Sudden destruction coming upon them as travail upon a woman with child. It's a figure that everybody understands worldwide. I don't care where you go, they all understand it. Connection with childbirth is suffering. Uh, that is childbirth. Notice these children born. I believe that there will be a great multitude of. Gentiles as well as Jews that will be saved to get that in the 7th chapter of the revelation, out of all nations that will be saved during the tribulation, a child will be born at this time. Uh, it will be a different gospel today. The gospel of the grace of God is being proclaimed, but then it will be the gospel of the Kingdom that the Lord is coming to set up his Kingdom here on earth. Primarily, we'll probably use his Jewish presence to initiate the preaching of that gospel.

And they'll go forth everywhere preaching, and many will believe that that the Lord is coming. And, uh, they'll show their faith by the way they receive those messengers that the Lord sends forth. And, uh, they'll be born again and they'll enter into the earthly Kingdom, I believe, uh, a time of blessing coming out of great tribulation. The Lord speaks of those days to the disciples, and he says man's heart will be failing them for fear for those things that are coming upon the earth. And so there's an expectation. Upcoming judgment for the thought of a travel of a

woman in, uh, labor, as well as that. Once that begins, there's no reversal, there's no escape. Once in the grip of that process of Labor and delivery, it's not going to stop. They say peace and safety, but it doesn't say there is peace and safety then sudden destruction. It's just that they say it. And so isn't that what the leaders of this world say today? Isn't that how they get their votes? They get their followers? They preach peace and safety, but they have no power to bring it about. There's only one who's going to bring that about? What a interesting. The touching thing it was when the Lord set up Israel as a nation. Gave them their inheritances and assigned cities of refuge in different places so that a person who. I think it says killed someone unaware that is an accident happened. And they were entitled to flee to the city of refuge. Uh, suppose. You know, we're two of us are working together and inadvertently the axe head comes off where someone is accidentally killed. Family not understanding may desire vengeance upon that. Who killed our brother, our father or my husband? Well, the the person who experienced that, who had that happen can flee to the city of refuge and find shelter there. Until, uh, it says the depth of a high priest. And so it was, So it is really today that the Lord Jesus himself is that city of reference. When Paul writes to the Hebrews, he uses that very analogy. He says Ye have pledged for refuge, to lay hold of the whole which is before you. And so it's God's desire that not any would be would be lost. God's desire is that all men would be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. So the Lord Jesus stretched forth, stretches forth his hand all the day, and entreats men and women and country after country, day after day, to save themselves from this condemned world that is doomed to experience this sudden destruction, and individually to flee and to find shelter in the city of refuge, which is Christ. The Lord Jesus encourages all to come and says Whosoever shall call upon my name shall be saved. You won't turn aside a single person who calls upon him by faith. That's the gospel, the good news of the grace of God and the Sinner today. There comes a time when sudden destruction overtakes, grows. At that point the solemn Scripture will be true of them, that they shall not escape. There's an escape available now. It will not be then they shall not. Psalm 100 and thir 105, verse 38 says Egypt was glad when they that is the children of Israel who parted. In the in connection with our passage here, they will say peace and safety. Don't you think, Reverend, that the world will be happy once we're gone to think that the Christian, you know, like a foreign in their side, we're proving.

Telling them their ways are sinful, that they must repent, that there is no good in man. I think they will be glad when Christians depart from the scene are taken up to glory just like the Egyptians were urgent upon the children of Israel to depart unless they all be dead men. You know, I don't think the world will miss us once we're gone, but neither will we miss the world and they will be entered into uh, faithful give place to sight as we just sang and it said, you know, we won't have to exercise faith any longer. Everything will be visibly. Before us. So verse 4 teaches us that it's not just our destiny, it's our present place. Love and often think of that part of the hymn in the little clock, where it says we stand accepted in the place that none but Christ be claimed, like the Gospel tract. But if we stand where the fire has already been, place of safety. So it's not just that we have safety as our destiny, but we're safe now. And one of the wonderful truths of the gospel is that we're safe already. We're accepted already. We have as a present possession already the forgiveness of sins if we put our trust in Christ. And God would not have us live in fear of our acceptance. He wants us to know that it's been settled when we put our trust in Christ. So. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness. That that day should overtake you as the thief. You're not in that place anymore that we once inhabited. We've been taken out of the Kingdom of darkness and we've been translated into the Kingdom of the Son of his love. And even though he, you know, you may work in the city and take the subway and bustle your way down the sidewalk or, or go to a, a large high school where there's kids coming and going and you don't look any different from anybody else in general, but you're in a different place. God sees you now. As a child of light, if you're a believer and you are in the light in a place that your next door neighbor or the boy or girl the next desk over is not in if they're not in price. Again, you see that illustrated, don't you? And with the Egyptians there in Exodus chapter 10? And uh, verse it says in verse 23. That there was darkness in all the land of Egypt three days, verse 23. They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days. But notice the end of that verse. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings. Well, President, we're not in darkness, are we? Uh, God has been pleased to reveal these things to us as our present position. And enjoyment through it is by, it is by faith. It does not yet appear what we shall be, but uh, we believe this by faith. And God has been pleased to tell us what's to come upon this world, that we need not be fearful either. The Lord is able to keep in perfect peace. The mind that is stayed on him should be so thankful for the Bible. A sister once asked me and I'd like to ask the question. I think she's been reading perhaps this passage and not understanding what we've just been talking about, but she said that asked me, uh, do you think we should be getting ready for the tribulation? How would you answer that question? This church period that we live in. As I get we touched a bit on earlier forms. No part.

Of the times and seasons that have to do with this earth. It forms no part of the prophecy in the Old Testament that has to do with this earth, including the Tribulation. And though we see things about us that do remind us. Of what is yet to come on this earth, we see, uh, Israel back in the land and unbelief, not under the power of Messiah. We see the, uh, states of Europe coming closer together in a sort of union. Yeah. Do you know tomorrow all that could fall apart. Israel could be driven back out of that land. It could go back to what it was. 100 years ago. There could be 20 states in that union tomorrow, there could be 30 in it. The next day it could go back to two. The prophetic clock has not yet started, and none of those things that we see form any part. Annie Park. Of the prophetic word of God. And so it'd be pretty useless for us to prepare for the tribulation, even if we looked around and we saw things that seemed to remind us of what is to come, we're going to be caught up out of it. And so this epistle wonderfully takes up that very thought from the first chapter. Which hath, who hath delivered us from the wrath to come? That is not eternal judgment in the lake of fire that he's Speaking of, that they were delivered from. That is the wrath of God that is yet to come upon this world, because of what they did to his beloved Son. And they've been delivered from that wrath to come. And so I believe too in verse nine of our chapter, for God hath not appointed us to wrath. But to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. That is the thought of we have a present possession of salvation. Now we read in Ephesians that this is salvation from coming judgment. Not only are we delivered from the raft to come, God hasn't even appointed us to it. We're not going to pass through it. Death and judgment are behind us. Christ bore it on the cross, and we're never going to endure the wrath of God, and we're never going to stand before Him in judgment. We're never going to stand before him and judgment, even like those sheep and goats in Matthew chapters and 25. That stand before the Son of Man in his glory to find out what their eternal destiny is. We know what it is now. We're not going to even stand before Him in judgment. In that way it's behind us. It would dishonor the work of Christ on Calvary. Whoever thinks that we are going to pass through. And under the wrath of God, all we may feel the wrath of man, we may endure all kinds of persecution and tribulation and suffering for Christ and for righteousness and maybe even for our own failures. But that's not the wrath of God. That's not the judgment of God. No, we've been delivered from all that. 7853 Revelation chapter 3 and verse 10. I also got to keep it from the hour ago and he said which will come upon all the world pride us as well, all good. Illustrated in the Old Testament with Enoch and Noah. Enoch being kept from the flood, being transported to glory, and Noah, a picture of the Saints who will be kept through the tribulation, right? They go through it. But our portion is is that of Enoch. We'll be caught up. We see that picture there. So in the fourth verse here where it says ye are not in darkness. The thought is not a question of ignorance, it's a question of your moral condition, right? That we are safe. That we're in the light.

That we have peace with God and that we have been put into a new position. Not a question of our knowledge about things. It's a question of what Christ has already done for us. I've often thought, Robert, you know. Weather a St. Christian knows it or not, this is their position in Christ. How many there are who feel they can lose their salvation but they really are trusting in the shed blood of Christ. Whether they feel there they can be lost or not, they're still going to be with the Lord in glory. You know, they should know it. You know, I don't see how they can preach the gospel if they're not sure of their own salvation, but yet they go out and preach the gospel and. Temerity. But, uh, this is our position in Christ, as you say, and we should be wise as to it, you know? My own heart was converted by where it talks about the children of life. Question I want to ask my own heart is how much do I walk in that life? It's likely children sing in Sunday school this little light of mine after many nights. That brings us, I guess, to verse 6, doesn't it? The word, therefore. The pattern in the New Testament epistles in general is that our standing is put before us first. And all that Christ has done for us and all the privileges and blessings that pertain to that, and then the practical responsibilities. And are presented in exhortations and admonishment. Following that, so grace has put us into this wonderful place of light and love. And so in verse six, it says therefore, in light of the fact that we've been put in such a place. It becomes us and not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober. There's different ways that the word sleep is used in the scriptures and even in this epistle. Verse seven for they that sleep sleep in the night is natural sleep that everyone will experience tonight hopefully. Lay down and sleep and get up in the morning. And then there's the sleep that is referred to in the previous chapter, where if the Lord takes my life and I die, I'm looked upon as asleep in Jesus. It has to do with my body. The real me who I am, goes to be with the Lord, and it would be said of me absent from the body present with the Lord. But as to my body? Sleep and so there's that sense too but here in verse six therefore let us not sleep as do others its moral and if I forget what I'm really all about I forget who I am and who I belong to and the price that's been paid for my redemption and. Then my practical life will show that I have forgotten, and I will slip down in the tone and character of my life and my thoughts and my attitude to be like, uh, another regular person of the world. Except I'll probably be more unhappy. And so that is looked upon as being morally asleep. You remember that in the voyage that Paul took at the end of the book of Acts, he, he stood forth and he made that pronouncement and said, whose I am and whom I serve. The Apostle Paul was in the good of of who he belonged to and what his life was really all about, essentially. When we lose that sense, then we we morally slip back and we're looked upon, even though a true believer, as being asleep.

I think in Ephesians chapter 5, where that exhortation comes the weight. Verse 14 Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from among the dead, and Christ shall give thee light is an exhortation to that very. Condition that I might some fearlessness let myself get into. I might look even though I am sleeping. I might look like a dead person even though I'm a believer morally. I may look like the world. But the the goodness of God. Like it says in Psalm 23, he restoreth my soul. Same thought is brought out in the tenth verse. Quoting through new translation who died for us that whether we are watching, we should always have that blessed hope before us present or sleep as you were bringing out Bruce. If we passed out of this body. You know the Christian is always seen as being asleep in Christ. Our friend Lazarus sleeping now whoever we're still living, watching we're asleep. We should live together with him. So you have those 3 definitions of sleep right in this very chapter, don't you? It's often been said that. Words find their meaning by their context though. Uh, these words, sleep mean different things according to the context of the word. Well, instead of sleeping in verse six, we were exhorted to do 2 Things, to watch and to be sober. I don't believe the main force is to watch. And to awake every morning to every day to have that. Possess that hope is a real thing in our hearts that perhaps today could be the day when, uh, faith will be laid aside as an unneeded thing and I'll be ushered into the presence of the Lord and, and see him face to face. My whole earthly career will be over and yours in a moment. And like the hymn writer says, forgotten then, in glad surprise, will be our years of weeping. So we watch for him, but I suspect. Primarily here the plot is watching. Uh, ourselves and as a guy I used to work for always used to tell me. Get about this far from my face at times. And he says, son, pay attention. And then I see Yeah, yeah, yeah. And then he, he'd get me again, something that he'd almost grabbed my chin. He says. I'm I'm telling you, son, you need to pay attention. It was George, I said. George, I got it. Well, I guess he perceived that I was distractible and he knew that what we were doing for work was somewhat dangerous and he wanted to be sure I had my wits about. Well, we need to have our wits about us as believers too. Peter writes to the Saints as well, in joining us. To be watchful and to be sober. For Satan himself walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist, steadfast in the faith. A similar thought. So we need to be to be sober and to watch what we're about because there are pitfalls, there are dangers. There are things that can cause us to dishonor the Lord, cause us to incur, uh, sorrow and unhappiness. That is not easily remedied in this light down here. We're also to watch out for one another. So in Hebrews, there's the uh. I can find it real quick. Uh, I think it's in Hebrews 12 verse 15.

The early part of Hebrews 12 looking under Jesus. And then in verse 15, looking diligently. Keep our wits about us to keep our feet under us, so to speak, spiritually, but also for our brethren. Am I my brother's keeper? Yes. You are uh, sister. The other day copied me on a letter she wrote. To someone who had criticized the local assembly and she said one of the things that she said I enjoyed was that I value the sense of accountability that I have in the meeting where I go gathered together to the Lord's name. The sense of accountability where people know me and they look out for me and and they're not afraid to check up on me. And that's a wonderful thing, looking diligently. Not casually, but diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God. Failing of the grace of God is not repeated before hitting your thumb with a hammer and saying a bad word. Failing of the grace of God is losing the sense in your soul that God is for you. That he loves you. He is 100% for you in everything that he is. And that the circumstances in our life are allowed from him from his point of view of love interested in our. In our thoughts, In our moral character. In in who we are and who we are becoming. And if we lose that sense of God being for us, then bitterness comes in. Bitterness is a is a tough weed to get rid of. There are many warnings in the evening. Thistles to the Saints. Be careful that bitterness doesn't any root of bitterness springing up trouble you thereby many be defiled. These things are in opposites to each other. Having the sense of grace in my soul. Bitterness. So we need to look out for one another in that respect. And I'm sure there are other things which we that you would think of under the exhortation to watch. Verse 11 May look very much wherefore comfort yourselves. They look very much like 418 where for comfort one another but it's not. It's a much stronger word if you have the new translation, it says wherefore I adjure you. Now to adjure someone, that's the same thing as it's like putting someone under an oath. Remember, the high priest adjured the Lord Jesus Christ to answer him, put him under an oath, and the Lord did reply here, the Saints were adjourned to edify one another. That's something Brevin that has to be impressed upon us. Uh, in the 13th chapter of Revelation, it says suffer. The words of exhortation, we don't like it when someone gives the word of exhortation, but here he says, uh, even as also you do. Evidently this was their practice there at Thessaloniki. Minister the word of God to one another. And it was necessary, wasn't it, that they they bring the scriptures before them because it's very easy to turn aside. There are few admonitions later on in this chapter. I don't know if we'll get to that later on, but uh, even you take the Ephesians where fall gets in the highest truth concerning the church, and at the end of that chapter, uh, he has to reprove them. We're constantly reminded, aren't we, from that we not only have all these things in price, but we have the old nature that has to be kept in the place of death. We have to be reminded of these things. 141. Nsnoise. Good morning. Somewhere and I'll be able to grow up. Go to bed.

Read a verse in the Revelation. Revelation, Revelation chapter one and verse 3. Rita's and they that hear the words of this prophecy. Those things which are written therein, for the time is at hand to mend ourselves to the Lord. Our blessed God and loving Father. We thank Thee for this reading meeting that we've just had. We thank Thee for Thy Holy Spirit leading Thy brethren and guiding us. We thank Thee, Lord Jesus, for all the blessings that thou have blessed us with. Set our ours in thee. Thank you for bringing us into thy wonderful family. We thank you, Lord Jesus, that we are the children of light. Lord Jesus, we thank Thee that we are not of the night and that we are not of the darkness. But we are children of the light, we are children of the light, and we are children of day. And we thank you for this, Lord Jesus, and we thank you that we have the light of the Scriptures to guide us and to see the pathway. For us to to be a light and a lamp unto our feet. Lord Jesus, we thank you for this and alight to our path Lord Jesus and we just pray that thou continue to give us grace and guidance for the remainder of the day. We thank you for all the doubts. So we just looked at me, Ukraine, we ask you and I know the most precious and worthy name, Lord Jesus Christ our Savior, Amen. Amen.

Vestal Conference: 2007, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-20

Reading

Not bad enough. I don't know. What the hell I'm sorry about. Oh, I didn't know. 25300. South. Oh yeah. Uh. 5. Oh, 3-1. Nsnoise. Thank you for the reading meeting that we've had this morning without his give up. I think before the food that's out and supply for our, for our hearts and for our souls, spiritual food and the physical food. Thank you for the open meeting that we've had last meeting. We pray Lord Jesus, for grace and guidance for this coming, this, uh, reading meeting that we're about to partake of. We pray that thousands of leads and guide the brethren by thy Holy Spirit that Thou would give us more food for our souls. From that person's work. So we count on Thy grace, and we count on Thy strength and Thy guidance to teach us more of Thy left ways. So we prayed an almost precious and worthy name, Lord Jesus Christ our Savior, Amen.

The broken minded to continue with first. Thessalonians, chapter 5. First Thessalonians chapter 5 and verse 12. We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake, and be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that our unruly comfort the feeble minded, support the weak. Be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man, but ever follow that which is good both among yourselves and to all men. Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise, not prophesying. Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good, abstain from all appearance of evil, and the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body, preserve blameless under the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss. I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read. Unto all the holy brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. I suppose there would be no need for an admonition as we have in verse 12, if we had a separate clergy from the laity, but. Nothing is said in the Word of God here in the New Testament concerning any official position. We are to recognize those who have the moral qualifications. For leading the Saints. Notice that we are to esteem them very highly, not for their gift, but for their works sake, says. This takes an entirely disrupts what you have in denominationalism today, where you have a separate clergy from a laity be no need to know them, but we have a scripture. It says a man's gift maketh room for him, and the Lord is the one who qualifies different ones amongst us with their ability. A gift from above. It's not the ordination of man, is it? Although we can show fellowship with those whom the Lord has raised us. Before the apostle had only been for a short time in Thessalonica and, uh, there had not yet been time in that brief period for fully, uh, to have the characters, the moral characters of the various. Brothers in that assembly to manifest themselves. The Apostle Paul couldn't really, in that time, appoint elders to, uh, oversee the work of the Lord in that assembly. And so he has to write back to them, because now those characters would have become more manifest than he has to exhort them, than to recognize those who had taken up that work and were fitted and suited by the Spirit of God for that work that they took up. We're in the same position today. There's no apostle to appoint elders. In the assembly. And there are no delegates of the apostles to appoint elders. Titus was a delegate from the Apostle Paul to go appoint elders and Greeks. And in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, the last chapter.

17th verse He writes the salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is the token in every epistle. So I write, so Titus might go to Crete and, uh, he would, uh, evaluate me before the Lord is to the character of different brothers there and appoint elders. And they say, well, where did you get the authority for that? And he pull out this epistle to Titus and he said, here it is. And see, it's signed with Paul's own hand, his token in every epistle. It was the proof that he had authority from the apostles to do that. Well, we have no such thing today. Who can pull out an epistle from the apostle Paul signed by his own hand, saying I have authority here from the apostles to appoint elders or bishops or anything else? In the assembly. So we're in the same place as it were that these Thessalonians believers were and were to recognize those that the Spirit of God is fitted. You know, because the apostles not here or an appointed delegate does not mean that the Lord has left us. Uh, the rest of, of the value of oversight, The Spirit of God has still fitted those and morally fitted those who have the oversight in the assembly to carry on that work. Were to recognize them. Oversight, as we read about it in the New Testament, is always local. And God's view was that it would be plural. And so when you read the word for elders, it's plural. And so the Lord raises up those even today, whether official or unofficial, as you say, that know the Saints. It's a kind of a nice thing. And you're in an assembly and you see older brothers and they. UH, can look and visit and interact with Christians that they've known their grandparents and their parents and they know them very, very well. And they can interpret behavior or issues or problems in the light of that person's context and experience. And that's a local thing. But you never see in Scripture that this sort of, uh, rule is over more than one assembly. There's no such thing in the body of Christ as an organizational chart like you'd have in a company with, you know, those that would be over the assembly and those over two or three and those over 10 or 12, that does not exist. It goes from that local assembly right to the Lord who's in the midst. And that's an important thing to remember. And that's why often times and times the difficulty though we would be tempted to get. A bunch of leading men or chief men together to resolve things. It's a dangerous thing to do because it's not God's way. The Lord is by God in the midst of thee is mighty and he's the one who has wisdom himself itself. And so there is local leadership in in the assembly at times of the week. And the Lord himself is in the midst and we look to him and he guides through those and who who whom he has raised up. On the other hand, from that. There are those that the Lord gives his gifts to the church still even in our day, such as we read about in Ephesians 4 says there he gave some apostles and some prophets and some pastors and teachers and gifts like those individuals are. And there are other types of gifts are given to the church as a whole and not just the

property of one local assembly. And so if a brother is been fitted that way and raised up as a as one who can expound the Scriptures as a teacher can. Well, he's has that when he's here and he has that when he's there and he has it when he visits across the country and same with pastoring. Well, and so I suspect here in this young assembly in Thessalonica that when he says there to know them, which labor among you and are over you or take the lead in the Lord, that there were certainly believers that were more experienced in the past like Paul was, who who visited amongst them just like it is today. And when I was young in the faith and lived in a small assembly, there were older brothers from other assemblies that came periodically through. And, uh, they kind of kept an eye on our progress and kept an eye on our growth and our behavior and our attitude and we felt that sense of responsibility and we're glad for it. They were like parents that the Lord gave us for those of us who weren't raised in Christian homes. And so we knew who they were. We didn't thankfully esteem them very highly in love with the effort they made to come through. And, and even though it was sometimes with trepidation as to what they would say to us.

Umm, we, we value them highly and, and miss them a great deal to this day. And so it wasn't official. It's not official today, but by faith, we have a sense of those that the Lord raises up to take the lead amongst us or as it says, here are over you and the Lord. We accept their admonishments because we know they love us and we know they have experience in the past and what they say for us is going to be for our good. And, uh, it's our appropriate response to esteem them very highly in love. To their work sake. This is apparently the thing that didn't understand very well. Because he really got upset when brothers came from other places and wanted to exercise and, and had a burden to exercise their, their care, their gift where he was, uh, he apparently wanted that, umm, that place himself and cast some out of the church and so on. So that's really the, the exception. That's not normal Christianity. And the apostle John points that out for our instructions. How would you define the word admonish? How would you put that into it? Ease your words. Or maybe an example? As a father, sometimes I admonish my sons. I see something in their behavior and I go to them and I talk to them. Maybe it's not something very bad. Maybe it's just a trend that they're starting on and I speak to them about it to challenge them, to encourage them to go on a better path, to perform better. And so just to, I think an admonition is when somebody comes and talks to you to try and point out something in your life that could be better than what it is today. And sometimes it might be about something that's particularly bad that you really need to straighten out in a hurry. Sometimes they just leave something with you for your conscience to think about. And that, you know, in a lot of words. That's what I think admonishing is. Maybe somebody wants to add to that or have some simpler words. Just a little quiet talk to explain an idea or to point something out in your life that could be better. Exhortation seems to be just a purely positive set of words like Barnabas came in the early days and exhorted them all that with purpose of heart that they would cleave under the Lord. It's not that they weren't, but he's exhorting them to do that. But as you say, admonishment seems to have a slightly corrective element to it, which we need. If you were to make a mark, if I know a lot have read through the book of Proverbs chapter, a chapter a day throughout the month, and if you were to put a little mark in your Bible on every verse in the book of Proverbs, that has to do with correction. Or admonishment that the Spirit of God would use that verse to you. You'd have a lot of marks in the book of Proverbs because it's what we need and God graciously is gives to us what we need. We need correction and we need admonishment. And it's a, a great benefit to have brothers and sisters that are close enough to us that in love will, uh, provide that for us. There is a verse in Romans 15 that interesting uses the same word admonish. Romans chapter 15 and verse 14. And it says, I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren. They also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. And I think it's a sign of maturity that when somebody comes and speaks to you that you have the ability to listen into, pay attention to what they say. And it is something that has to be learned. Sometimes it's not easy, but it's a sign that you've grown in maturity, that you can hear a criticism, listen to it, take it to heart and profit.

I don't know if we could look maybe an example of that in the book of the Act in Acts chapter 18. Next chapter 18 in the 24th verse. In a certain the Alexandria, an eloquent man. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord, and being proven in the Spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, whom, when Akula and Priscilla had heard, they took unto him. They took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. Which I believe through grace so mightily convince the Jews not publicly showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ. When I really appreciated with this is here we have a couple that had umm a real desire to see umm to see a policy go on and to be able to use the gift that he had and what's what's beautiful in the assembly is when you have someone that has a particular gift. And there are those that come along and as long as you meant perhaps have much less care for none at all. I think probably Apollo's had much more gifts than, uh, than Aquila did. And yet this couple, they took them under them and they expounded the scriptures unto him in a way more perfectly so that the work of God could, uh, could really benefit from it. No, we all love it in a small assembly when someone comes to visit. The verse, uh, we ended the last meeting with I guess verse 11. A good thing to remember as well. Wherefore comfort yourselves together and edify one another. In the Darby translation I think it says edify each one the other. And so we're not just to wait for some noted or gifted brother from another place or sister, but to, uh, realize that that responsibility falls to us to seek to encourage one another along in the pathway. And we're very grateful for when someone comes through and uh, and has a word in season or just sometimes their mere presence. Just visiting in on a weeknight is a real lift in a place where you don't see many visitors. And you can tell that it just has an effect on the assembly for days or weeks when someone comes through like that. And then once they go and go away, uh, you're back with just a few of the local ones. And then it says at the end of verse 13, be at peace among yourselves. You know, if someone's being used to the Lord for edification, it's not going to lead to strife or divisiveness or comparing one against another. It's going to. Gonna produce good fruit. The feasible fruit. Uh. To see that brethren will, uh, be encouraged and be more inspired, if I could put it that way, to bear with one another and to, uh, esteem each one better than themselves and value our brethren for what we see in them. That's really of Christ. That's why it's further works safe. Paul said to the Corinthians about Timothy that he worketh the work of the Lord as I also do. And so there might be that and one that admonishes us or is over us in the Lord and is used as the Spirit of God to correct us that we don't like your particular personality traits. Or maybe even the flesh comes out in some way. And we, we uh, might find that our own flesh and Satan urging us on to find a way to despise that admonition. And so it's for their work's sake to realize that. Don't look at the vessel. Realize it's the work of the Lord that they're working and that they're seeking to do, Failing though it may be, it's the work of the Lord.

And says, esteemed them very highly in love for their works and sake, and that should be the motive. Uh, not only are they doing the work of the Lord, but we're to uh. Consider them with affection in our hearts and seek to help them on their way forward, as the Saints often did in the New Testament to the Apostle Paul, because Satan would rather. Stir up trouble amongst the Lord's people. That's why it says it adds to the same verse. And be at peace among yourselves. You know Satan would like to bring in quarrels and disagreements and feuds amongst the Saints. Uh, even amongst new believers here at Thessalonica, there is constantly the exhortation to be at peace among yourselves. And uh, even the Lord said, did he not? Blessed are the peacemakers. It's easy to stir up trouble, but often it's difficult to be a peacemaker. I've often enjoyed Brother **** Orgas admonition to me, he said. Rube. I have to be a peacemaker, You know, it's easy, especially as younger brothers,

to stir up trouble. That is what we hear. It says be a beast among yourselves. Brother Neil Wampo is often reminded us that, uh. As children, and we're not a child now, we were one once we. Either made it easy for our parents to correct us or we made it really hard for them to correct us. And it's the same in the assembly. My will gets active and my back gets stiff. And so the expectation, be at peace among yourselves is we have to resign our will in these things. We heard that in the open meeting to be willing to give in. To make it easy. For the Spirit of God to correct this. When my will gets active, then there's gonna be no peace because the lust is stirred up and I want this or I want that, and even if I get it, I've got it in a bad conscience and I have no power to satisfy that self will of mine. And it's less, and the result is just. A tumultuous condition in my heart, and no peace. Peace is a nature satisfying while we have a new nature and it's satisfied with its objects. Christ, and with its will, with my will renounced and laid down. That's the only way for heat. Now verse 14 is a very helpful and practical verse. Many, many air meetings that I've sat in and places I've lived where someone's behavior was, uh, a concern. The brother didn't quite know how to respond. His verse is always such a good guide to start with. We exhort you, brethren, to warn them that are unruly or. Maybe it says in the other translation, The unruly disorderly. Comfort the feeble minded or faint hearted is another translation. Support the weak. Be patient toward all. So is it a question of a person's will being active and going along in a self willed or unruly course? Well, that's where the brother was saying where admonishment is the right approach. Is it just someone who's gets faint hearted And you know, uh, we go along with brothers that we get to know year after year and it gets to be decade after decade that some just get discouraged more easily than others. And yet, fortunately, sometimes those brothers are easy to encourage, too. And they need to be comforted to be built up. Comfort the faint hearted. Some measure all of us are weak. And we need to be buoyed up in some aspect of our life. You may be strong in one thing and weak in another. We all have our tendencies, and we look out for one another and support one another in that way. And the overarching exhortation which always applies, to be patient toward all. So often you see that someone just keeps recurring into the same bad pattern. It's not rare that the brother would speak in exasperation and count the times where this has happened or or try to draw some conclusion from the recurrence of this thing.

I have to remember that we're not the ones who died for that person. The Scripture uses the expression the brother for whom Christ died, and the Lord valued that brother that we may find so nettlesome or troublesome or irritating enough to die for him. And he's not done with. Emory wouldn't still be here with us. And if we looked in the mirror, we find that we probably have similar things that are of a. 'Cause our brethren to desire patience for us. And so such a good thing to remember. Be patient toward all. The Lord when the certain Samaritan picked up that man and fell among thieves, and took him to the inn, after having set him on his own ***. And he said to the He gave him 2 Pence, and he said, Whatsoever thou spendest more. When I come again, I will. Some of us require more than two tents, more than more than 20 pence. Doesn't matter. The Lord has given us an open checkbook. Basically says whatever it takes, spend it. That should be our attitude towards our brethren. We're not trying to build up some sort of All Star team. In case you hadn't noticed, I'm not trying to take the local assembly and make it into the best and brightest Christians in the town we live. That's not the basis of being gathered together to the name of the Lord Jesus. Our commonality is that we are washing the blood of Christ and by receiving God's Holy Spirit, we've been joined to one another as members of one body. We receive whom the Lord saves, and. Seek to go on together. So it does require patience. I know I require patience from others. Umm. And uh. We all benefit from that wonderful exhortation. Be patient toward all. Apostle Paul could see the need of that admonition in verse 14 to warn them that are disorderly as you have in the margin. New Translation. Because in Second Thessalonians we find that there were some there who didn't pay any attention to that admonition. Second Thessalonians chapter 3 and verse six, they were told to withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly, not after the instruction which he received of us. And then in verse 11 we hear that there are some which walk among you. Disorderly working not at all. And our busy bodies. Well, it's all good. Maybe foresaw that when you wrote in this 5th chapter. It's a dangerous thing if you don't have occupy your time. The Lord says occupy till I come. And if we don't fill our time and service for the Lord, Satan will surely fill up the vacuum with other things that won't be profitable. The Proverbs tells us about those who have nothing to do and go about as busy bodies. They usually get in trouble. Is it possible that a believer would be tempted to render evil for evil? I guess it is, or we wouldn't have the admonition here. So we need to take heed that we're still subject to these kinds of petty feelings that. Evil has been shown to us, whether by a brother or somebody in the world. Just leave it with the Lord, take it from the Lord and leave it there. And as it says, the exhortation is such a good one be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. What a helpful practical verse that is whether his parents or in the workplace, you know, the negative aspects which may rise up can can tend to if occupied with in their correction even can end up developing the whole family or the whole assembly or the whole workplace.

Sometimes it's good to look to the Lord for what to do and then just to simply do it. And pray about it, and leave it with the Lord, and go on. Ever follow that which is good. Wisdom is plain, isn't it? In some respects and. Teenagers or young children tend to make things real complicated or things get real complicated in the workplace. You know, ask yourself, you know, why is this so difficult? It shouldn't have to be that difficult. God puts before us a plain path, and when our hearts are right, the path becomes a lot cleaner. So we have these kinds of plain expertations. Follow that which is good. Do good exhortations like be courteous. Well, there's not a big explanation of what that means. Assumes that the willing heart will know what's appropriate in a situation, in a culture and a time in which we live to be courteous or to follow that which is good. Apostle Paul says that Alexander the Coppersmith did him much evil. What was Bob's response? This is Second Timothy 4. Verse 14. The important word missing there in our King James should be the Lord will reward him according to his works. The Lord will reward him. Paul wasn't seeking to you. He did vengeance against Alexander the Coppersmith, who did him a lot of evil. Doesn't it tell us in the 6th chapter of Galatians whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap? It may not be in this life, but it certainly will be an eternity. And then there's a proverb, chapter 24, it says in verse the end of verse 12. And shall not he render to every man according to his works. So sometimes it takes patience doesn't just to leave it with the Lord. And the Lord will. Take care of things in his own time. The vengeance is mindset. The Lord I will rebate. We don't have to get revenge at all. Well, it wouldn't seem like it would be that hard of an exhortation to accept, to rejoice. Suppose in modern American language it would be be happy. Rejoice evermore and be happy. There's something in it. So I think at times that feels like we're not worthy of being happy. Manhattan is some sort of a special privilege only for a few. And it is true that. Sweet ponder what we are all about now is new creatures in Christ that. Holy Spirit is the source and the energy of our joy inside us, and then if we're going along carelessly, then the Spirit is going to be grieved in. Her joy is going to go away. But under normal. Christian. Uh, situation is. To be happy. I don't know how the rest of you feel about it, but. I know when I'm not happy, it's because I've been slothful or careless in my life. And I know that God is faithful whenever I realize it. And. And umm. In remedy that uh, destruction or carelessness. Lord brings that joy back.

So I I think it's an important thing to realize that. It's not just up to you. It's not just that you have a right to say, well, I, I can be happy if I want to be. And if I want to be kind of mopey, I can be mopey. No, you can't because you don't belong to yourself anymore. You've been purchased by another. And his desire for you and me is that we'd be happy. Christ died to make us happy. And for a believer to be happy in the midst of all the circumstances we have is quite a testimony. And the Lord desires that testimony. Faith, I think we sang in the opening hymn, can sing

through times of sorrow. And we know that's true. We've experienced it. So it's not that we go around slapping people in the back in some sort of silly giddiness. That's not the point. But to be at peace in our soul, to rejoice. But when the apostle wrote this to the Philippians, he repeats it because I think we're slow to take it in. So then again, I say rejoice. Well, what about this problem or what about this? What about this failure that I have or no? What about that situation? Well, the Lord knows all about those situations. N. He expects us to do what's appropriate in those situations, but meanwhile, having cast our care upon the Lord, we have the privilege to rise up and to walk in peace, to know the peace of God and to be happy. It says he rejoiced ever more. My brother Clyde Roberts often reminds us that in the original, that is a shorter verse than Jesus wept in John 11. Rejoice evermore. It doesn't say rejoice intermittently. But rejoice all the time. Now the classic example of one who suffered much in the Old Testament was poor Job. And notice how he passed through that trial in the first chapter in verse 21. He said, naked came out of my mother's womb and naked shall I return thither The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away notice. Blessed be the name of the Lord. In verse 10 of the next chapter, he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaking. All right, so we received good at the hand of God. And shall we not receive evil in all this? Did not Job sin with his lips? Our present before our meals, we, we thank the Lord for the food and then we start complaining about the food. Oh, that shouldn't be that way. You know, we should thank the Lord and uh, the joy of the Lord should be evident in our behavior that we're happy in the Lord. Sometimes, you know, you can't rejoice in your brethren. Maybe perhaps you can't rejoice in your circumstances. But we can always rejoice in the Lord. That's a great encouragement. The believer can always rejoice in the Lord and rejoice evermore. 313 to me. It sounds very nice that they rejoice every morning. Yeah, we should be happy and let's put a smile on our face and let's be joyful. But we can't mechanically crank it out. In fact, it was a time in David's life where he really desired the joy of his salvation. He wanted to have it he he had it in the past. He he desired to have it in his life, and he wanted it back. And it wasn't coming. So an exhortation like that just would not make them joyful. It wouldn't put a smile on his face. Now we know what he said, what David, that he said, rejoice unto me, uh, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, the joy of my salvation. It was something he realized was gone. And umm, sometimes we, we can treat joy like a, like the kitchen faucet. We can turn it off pretty quick, but we just can't put it back on.

And, uh, when we get into a bad space. In order in order for us to be joyful. I suppose that is a question of communion, isn't it? When we're in communion, we're happy. And of course that is severed. We become unhappy and and so we look around for something to bring us pleasure. And of course the state says when we return to the. Jeremiah 15 and verse 16 is a was a favorite verse of Charles Hayhouse. He quoted it often. It says, Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart. For I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts. So spending time in the Word of God is a good way to find joy, to start rejoicing. These three things think of a state of soul that he desires that we would continue on in. Rejoicing. Brand and thanks Thanksgiving, thankful heart of rejoicing heart and the heart that's dependent upon himself, as you say, it's, it's a desire for us isn't an on and off thing, But then it would be a continual state of soul just as repentance as well. And our life needs to be a continual state of soul, self judgment, a continual state of soul. And uh, it reminds me of the 12Th of Luke where we have that. Well known exhortation, but rather seeking the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you. Sometimes we think all these things being more the physical things that, uh, raised concerns in our hearts, but I think it's more than that. The Lord speaks to them of being doubtful mind. And why take eats off And uh, the occupation was earthly tanked. He said, speak ye first the Kingdom of God and all these things, not only God meeting our needs in a temporal way, but a state of soul that's not restless. That's not anxious, that's not doubting, but rather a state of soul like we find in these 3 verses. Rejoicing, thankful, dependent, prayerful. He stated, brother, that we can't crank up joy. And yet you know the Lord. Prayed in John 15 that his joy would be filled in the disciples. What joy is he referring to? For in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, he's designated as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and yet with all known as a man of joy. His joy was to do the Father's will, wasn't it? He did that perfectly. And he wanted, he says, that joy can likewise be in you, as we do the Lord's will. Now joy is, I would think, more than more than peace. I think joy is. Peace bubbling over. You know, you see in the Lord's people who walk with the Lord, they're just full of joy. Uh, my brother Hale used to say that faith and salvation go together. And obedience and happiness go together. Not true that is, isn't it? Brethren, we can't lose our salvation. We can certainly lose our joy if we. And that's very easily done. We're out of communion. Allow things that are not pleasing to the Lord. The Lord was always in the enjoyment of the Father's love, and that brought that joy in His heart, even though the cross was before him. And he wished that that joy would be in His disciples as well.

For an Ephesians, it speaks about grieving, not the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed into the day of redemption. The Spirit is holy and afar. Practical ways are inconsistent with that. The Spirit is grieved. And He will occupy us with the inconsistency or the digression, the sin, in order for us to judge it and to be restored. His desire that he would be LED in paths of righteousness for his namesake. But here in our chapter it's Quench not the spirit, so this would be an include a wider sphere of things. I would be grieving the spirit of my own conduct, but quenching the spirit might be anything which would come in to limit the Spirit of God wanting to use me in the way that He would like to. Or it could be. In some manner or other limiting the liberty of the Holy Spirit when we are together. So that the Spirit might not be free to. To edify and to exhort and to comfort the Saints or. Whether by word or worship or anything else that the Holy Spirit would desire to manifest amongst His people. And that could be a number of things. It could be our traditions that we so subtly, uh, uh. Uh, slip into or. Things of that nature. Or it could be. Uh, pride, which would make me feel embarrassed or timid to speak a word that the Lord would have me speak. There could be. Anything like that. But whatever it would be, the expectation is plain simple. It comes right in through the front door. Quench not the spirit. Spirit is a wonderful, wonderful influence. He is a divine person that has taken up his residence in our bodies. Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost. It's an amazing thing to to sit and realize as you sit here today that that's the reality for every believer. And the Holy Spirit has taken up his habitation in the Church. Consequent upon the Lord Jesus glorifying God here on Calvary's cross and ascending up to the Father's right hand. And the Holy Spirit brings the benefit and a blessing to all men by being here. That will not be the case forever. So none of us in our right mind want to in any way limit or quench the action of the Holy Spirit in this present day. When God is desirous to insult Christ and to do his work to gather out of Jew and Gentile of people for his name. That more people may be united in in exalting Christ. Picture is very graphic, isn't it the word choice quench. When I think of the word quench, I remember near where I live they have Upper Canada Village and it's in my 1850s town that's been restored and operates during the summer time as a tourist attraction. One of the places that I like in that town is the blacksmith shop. And I remember him making it a horseshoe and one of the things he did was he heated it until it was red hot in the coals and then he quenched it in a bucket of water and it's a very memorable thing. But when that horseshoe and red hot, when it came out, it was black. It was cold. And so you think about that, that the Spirit that gives energy into our Christian lives. And if we quench the Spirit, think about taking all that heat that the Spirit would have generated and cooling it off. That's the picture that I have in mind, whether it's our participation in the assembly or.

Not expressing something that the Spirit wants, or speaking out of turn and preventing somebody else from expressing something that the Spirit wanted expressed, or even in our life. What the Spirit would urge us to do if we would pour water on it, that would cool it off. Despise my

prophesying. You are to receive a message. As from God one is presented. Into it says prove all things, brethren. It doesn't mean you mean to see if it's true or not, but it means to walk in the good of it for our own blessing. Like in Malachi 3 where the Lord says prove me now herewith saith the Lord of hosts. Bring all to stores into and ties into the storehouse, and see if I will not open to you the windows of heaven to pour you out a blessing, that you shall not be able to receive it. The Lord says, prove me, see if it's not true. And so here it says, Prove all things which you walk in the good of God's word, for our own blessing and for God's glory. True, it is when the word of God is brought before us, we should. Testify the scriptures. That's what the, uh, Bereans did remember, even though the apostle Paul in Acts chapter 17 came to Berea was a message from the apostle. But they searched the scriptures to see if these things were true, that they wanted to see if it conformed with the word of God. And I believe we, we can do that too if we hear some doctrine. Is this what the word of God teaches or not? You can see it, brother Reuben, that, that what you're saying in connection with Sabri and was in contrast to the festival. And I can those of it says there that the Bereans were more noble than those of Tesla like us. And so here we find the, the, uh, exhortation to prove all things. It was perhaps a weakness to him. And so they needed to be reminded of these things. The Holy Spirit not only is the one who can truly and with liberty give out the truth, and that's what He desires to do. Lord Jesus before he went up on high said, he shall take the things of mine and show them unto you. But in you and me the Holy Spirit is, is the one who enables us to properly take in the truth in the right way and and to embrace it with affection in our hearts. So the apostle John writes to the believers and says you have an unction from the Holy One and know all things. And so the Holy Spirit is you might say on both sides of the equation so. There's to be not the quenching and allow the Holy Spirit to give out the truth. And then on my part, each of our parts, really, it's on the other side to be sure, it's the Spirit of God will indeed receive the word of God, uh, absent our will and take it in. And then the Spirit of God is the energy and the new life and the new man to try and, uh, desire and to try and walk in it, in the, in the proving of it. It's especially in the character of prophecy here, not prophecy in the sort of future events. The prophecy really is in the highest character of, of communication from God to man through a man, and that is that which brings my soul right into God's presence and into the light of his presence. And, you know, it reaches my conscience and there's a tendency to despise it. And the 4th chapter of the Gospel of John, the woman at the well, she's listening to the Lord's words. And there were wonderful words of grace and they just were like water right off a duck's back. Finally the Lord stopped, completely changed his direction. And he says, don't call thy husband. Oh, I have no husband. All that is well said. Thou hast no husband, for thou hast had five husbands, and he who thou now hast is nothing. Oh Sir, I perceive the art of profit. One, her soul was brought right into the presence of God.

And you know, like Adam in the garden, that things aren't right in our hearts. The word of the Lord comes. We're not too comfortable. As long as the word of the Lord didn't come, there he was with Eve. And they have those aprons of fig leaves and. He could look at her and say, you know, you look pretty good. And she could look at him and say, you know, as long as you're willing to say I was pretty good, I'll say you look pretty good. And we can keep each other very happy and our conscience is fully covered. But the word of the Lord came and he says, I was naked and I did myself. He was brought into the presence of God. And you know, the 1St, the 1St. Reaction of our soul is to if there's something there that the word of the Lord is searching out on us is to be uncomfortable. But the psalmist said, search me. Search me. And you know, if we don't despise those prophesying, we'll come to find out they're the greatest source of blessing to us. 100 and 69169. Lord, we can see. Migraine. So what I just wanted to do is I don't remember and when I have a little bit later for that. Oh, one or two days and I don't know the last one, so I. Uh-huh. OK. 105. Nearly in the morning. Uh-huh.

Our God and Father, we just give thanks again for thus giving us this afternoon. Let me know our minds. Tend to not hold on to things. We just asked if I was uh. Help us to, uh, not only. Hold on to this in our minds, but in our hearts and in our walk, we pray that, uh. We would. Use what thou has given us for the glory of the Lord Jesus. We just ask this in the worthy name, the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

Vestal Conference: 2007, 1 Thessalonians 5:21-28

Reading

Moving on. And our Father, we look up to thee. We stand accepted before thee and the place that none but Christ could stand. We look forward to that day when He will, as uh Joseph brought uh Manas and Ephraim out from between his knees to present them to his father Jacob. That thy beloved Son will bring us and present us before thee. Behold eye on the children whom thou hast given me. Emily is marvelous sovereign grace that picked each one of us up and uh, has, through the work of Calvary and my beloved Son, brought us back to thee thy once lost children, and not only children, but to be before thee as sons of full age and in whom thou displaced thy confidence and the understanding knowledge of thy counsels and purposes and thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. And so we do. Pray that we might have a sense. Of the grace that we have been brought into and which we stand day-to-day. The sense of the dignity. His deportments have become such a standing. In our walks laid here below. And we pray that Thy precious word, as we have it opened before us now, might have that effect upon us, to more conform us to the image of Thy beloved, beloved sons, predestinated sons. May we be practically conformed to His image even now.

So we do ask Thy blessing on Thy precious word to our souls. Pray for wisdom as to, uh, the portion that's before us. And uh, another portion, uh, is, uh, the mind of the Spirit of God, may it be made manifest to our hearts and given out. And so we look to Thee for this and this desire, spirit of dependence upon, uh, Thee and Spirit of God and His leading in the assembly. In the precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen. Amen. We did not quite. Finished First Thessalonians chapter 5. Some brother have another passage on their heart that they feel we should look into. Or is it the mind of the residence here? Continue on with this person. Brother Norm, did you have another passage there on your mind? No, I was thinking maybe we should finish this. 1St Thessalonians, chapter 5, verse 16. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing, and everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit, despise not prophesying, prove all things, hold fast that which is good, abstain from all appearance of evil, 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. Faith faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss. I charge you by the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. I think we might have gotten down maybe to about verse 21 actually. 21 I'm just thinking about verse 17 perhaps. The 11Th chapter of Luke. Uh, the first verse. Connection with pray without ceasing. Luke Chapter 11, verse one. It came to pass that as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. Well, evidently John the Baptist taught his disciples how to pray. John the Baptist went beyond Moses. The prayer. Is the expression of dependence. And below. Didn't teach them dependence on God. They are quite independent, but now under

grace, we are to be dependent upon someone else.

John began to teach his disciples to pray, and the Lord's disciples wanted to be taught also. They didn't know how to pray. They weren't instructed in prayers. Uh, they heard instructed from the rabbis. How important it is, brethren, to be in a place of dependence. For the Lord had said John 15 Without me you can do nothing. When we think, when we think we're something, we are nothing. We deceive ourselves. Uh, the Lord would have us to be in constant dependence upon him, even as the Lord was. Oftentimes he woke up long before. They began and he was found in prayer. In fact, in one instance, it says he continued all night in prayer before he chose the 12 apostles. You ever pray for an hour? I don't know I've ever prayed for a whole hour. That's a long time to pray. The Pharisees made long prayer, but it was hypocritical. They made their prayers on the street corners to be observed by others, but the Lord told his own that when they pray to enter into a closet. And that their father is a seasoned secret would hear them. In that secret place. Long prayer doesn't become a public place as a present. If you want to pray for a long time, try it in your closet privately to the Lord. And I don't know that we always have to. Uh, be on our knees in prayer. It says here. Pray without ceasing. I believe sometimes we can just lift up our hearts to the Lord in prayer without being on our knees, wherever we may be, being the attitude of dependence on the Lord. And, uh, that should of course be umm. That shouldn't cease, of course. We know it does. But. That's that's part of the message here. Free without speaking to me in communion all the time. Something that will await the glory. Interceding brothers like the universal prayer work. When you say it that way, not exactly. I think what it means is that it's not even an attitude of always being God, conscience and everything. There was a Christian man who worked in a monastery many years ago. I think he was a 15th century person. Uh, a fellow by the name of Brother Lawrence. When he was asked about his. He was, he was known to be a very special man. And when he's asked about the secret to it of that, he said that for me the time of business is no different than the time of prayer. His job was to wash dishes and he, as he washed dishes in the monastery, he was constantly enjoying the things of thinking of the Lord. And in fact, he said sometimes when the call to prayer came. It was an interruption. Of his communion with the Lord, because. For him, the time of business was the time was the same as the time of prayer and that. My business, I don't think I could probably do that, but uh. But, uh, you know, there are times perhaps painting a wall or something or, uh, or. Doing other things that we might do, cleaning our room or something. Where that can be true, that our time of business can be the same as the time of prayer that ought to be that because of his expectation is.

I've enjoyed the wording in Luke 11 That you brought the horse Reuben. Says here concerning the disciples. Became the path that he, as he was praying in a certain place where he seized, one of his disciples, said unto him. It doesn't say, Lord, teach us how to pray, not what it says. It says here, Lord teach us to pray. And the difficulty is not so much with us as to whether or not we know how to pray, But the difficulty is to pray is to actually physically get sprained. Umm, have it done in our hearts and have it, uh, as something that's part of us so that we do pray. Well, here the disciples, umm, they wanted to be taught to pray. And the Lord's holding his disciples in Luke 18, that they always to pray and not to faint, it would imply that the Lord would not be with them, that they were going to undergo difficult circumstances. That's why you have to pray. The Lord wasn't going to be there any longer. And we here in Christendom today that we should pray is so-called Lord's Prayer, which He taught his disciples. On the Mount, the Sermon on the Mount, there is the Lord's Prayer. That's what we should pray. Well, I don't think that is really the Lord's Prayer. You get the Lord's Prayer in the 17th chapter of John. And it's not really, although it has lovely sentiments in that prayer. There are things contained therein that we would not pray intelligently today because we're not looking for the Lord to set up His Kingdom here on earth. Presently we're preaching not the gospel of the Kingdom, but the gospel of the grace of God. When He comes and sets up His Kingdom, that will be different. But today we look to the Lord independence. The conversion of sinners, you know we're not looking for the Lord to to. Set up his Kingdom today while he's rejected. It's a solemn thing we're reading this morning in our motel room that the Jewish people told Pilot his blood be on us and on our children. You know, God hasn't forgotten that statement. Uh, the Roman Catholic may endeavor to exonerate the Jewish people, but God requires that which is passed. And he's remembered that statement that they wanted his blood on them and on their children. To what end do you think that the Jewish people suffer so? 2007. It's because God remembers that there's coming a time, brethren, when a prayer like that will be intelligent. But today. We are always to pray and as you say, Brother Dave, the tendency is for us to give up on prayer and not some of these prayers that they pray, They read, they have a prayer book, you know, and they said, well, didn't the Lord go away and pray the same words three times over? Well, sometimes, you know, we may, uh, ask the Lord repeatedly for something, but the Lord may give us an answer. Uh, and then we ought to see some desist, I mean. The apostle Paul besought the Lord three times that the thorn would be taken from him. And the Lord answered that prayer and said that my grace is sufficient for thee. Well, that was the answer to prayer. Sometimes the answer to our prayer is no. You referred Brother Ruth to. Luke 18 and there's a parable of the Lord Jesus tells there to illustrate what he meant by. Always praying, I think they're. A couple of things that we learned from that parable. The lady came to the unjust judge in the parable, and he says in verse five of Luke 18. Yet because this widow troubles me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. The first thing that we learned the Lord Jesus uses. This is an example, and I don't believe that that widow woman spent all day with the judge, but day after day she came back and made her request to the judge. Maybe he didn't give her a hearing, but he saw her out there.

Day after day. And so I think the first thing that we learned from the concept of pray without ceasing and always to pray is that the concept is, is that we keep coming back to the Lord, We keep coming back to God to make our request, like you said, until we get an answer, after we get an answer, we shouldn't persist if the answer was no. The second thing that we should learn from this is in verse six, the Lord said, hear what the unjust judge said. And we know what Abraham said of God, Shall not the judge of all the earth do right when we come and pray? We're not coming to an unjust judge, we're coming to a righteous judge. And then in verse 7, there's another thing that we learn. It says, shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? So if we ask things according to God's will, if God has chosen these people, he certainly wants to bless them. And that's certainly our case. We're part of the bride of Christ. We're chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. We learn in Romans chapter 8 that it's God's intention to bring us every blessing according to his purposes. And so we have No Fear of coming and asking God our Father that that brother Martin was talking about the last meeting. Four things, recognizing that he has in his heart a desire to bless us. And will give us what is good for us, We ask it according to his will. And so I think there's those, uh, three things that one that the prayer. Something that we carry on with, it's not that we're necessarily praying all day long. Not all of us have the situation of Brother Lawrence that like you say, Paul, uh, you don't have the opportunity. You have to stop to talk to customers every once in a while. But it should be that our hearts go back with what's on them to God our Father to make our requests. And that's what the intention of, uh, our verse in our chapter, that it's to be that dependence and the need that we expressed to God on an ongoing basis. It's not that we're praying all day long. That we give up on prayer, and we do because we are, has often been, said unbelieving believers. I like to have us think a little bit about Daniel who prayed for. Three full weeks and fasted until he had no strength. And then when the Angel came by, he says uh, that his prayer was heard from the first day. It wasn't after 3-4 weeks that the prayer was heard. But it was

heard from the first day and. Uh, I think that God. Valued. The prayer that went up continuously for three weeks also, but it was heard from the first day and then another. Example on somebody who gave up on prayer would be Zacharias in Luke chapter one and he and the Angel comes by and says to Zacharias and verse uh 13 the Angel said on a pure Knox for thy prayer is heard. This is a prayer that was long, long given up. Umm, it was hopeless for Zachariah, and he didn't even believe it when the Angel told him they heard from the Angel song left, so to speak, that his prayer was heard. He still didn't believe it. That prayer had been long given up. He's an old man, and he had no hope that that prayer would be answered. Daniel says if your prayer was heard. And so that prayer was probably 30 or 40 years old, I don't know, maybe more even. And. That guy had forgotten about it, but God had not forgotten about that prayer. And then the one other thought on that is? That the passage in Revelation in the Revelation where it speaks of.

Who didn't have their prayer answered on earth? But yet they were offered up as incense. And so not only does the pair change things, and not only is the pair heard from the first day, that's that it's utter. But even if it isn't that according to our thoughts, or according to our will, or according to our time. Still high as in at the front of car? There are a fine line between. Of this matter. That's a pretty plain answer, and sometimes we get an answer like that, and yet we can persist in praying from what we've already got an answer for and that. Paul, you mentioned Daniel. In Daniel's case that you referred to as very interesting, it starts out in Daniel 9 and verse 20. He says while I was speaking and praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people, Israel. And that says something. That's an important aspect of prayer too. In Psalm 66, we have a verse that says in verse 18, if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. And even in connection with what, uh, Dave was saying, if we're asking when we know we shouldn't be asking, it becomes iniquity, doesn't it? But anything that is sin that's in our life interferes with and prevents us from having the attitude that we're supposed to have when it comes to prayer. Sometimes we miss it. Why the 22nd verse? Obscene from all appearance of evil. I think a better rendering of that verse would be. Abstain from all every form of evil. Because you know, brethren, sometimes something may appear to be evil, yet it is not so. I've used this illustration. Occasionally the brother from our assembly will have to go into a liquor store. To buy the meeting room wine for the remembrance and you may get a real impression if you see him coming out of that store. But here we're to abstain from every form of evil. Not to be in any way identified with that which is, uh, wrong. I know they said of the Lord in Luke 15. He's a friend, Republicans and sinners, but. Uh, his association with them was to bring public and sinners to God. The hypocritical Pharisees didn't associate with them because they thought they were more righteous than, uh, this low class society. They would not associate with such, but uh. You have to be careful, uh, to have the same thoughts and sentiments of our Lord. Are we not willing to step down to the very dregs of society, the down and outers as they're called, and, uh, bring before them the gospel, those who are poor and needy. The Lord has thought such. When the bidden guests would not come, they declined to come. He says you go out into the highways and hedges, and call in the lame, the blind, the halt, and the main. And bid them to come. Well, the Lord wants us in like manner to seek such out. Uh, and that, that is not evil, that that's not associating with those that the Lord would not associate with. He did.

Maybe someone could comment on the end of verse 21? Hold fast that which is good. God said to the church, Philadelphia, hold fast. That was so hands. What's your thought on that day? Those of you who have the Darby translation, you'll find a very interesting note there. Connection with verse 21 and verse 22. In Darby it says, But prove all things hold fast the right hold aloof from every form of wickedness, and then the note says the distinction between the expressions the right and the word translated wickedness without an article is profoundly beautiful. The latter is looked at as a general thing. And has kinds or species they were to hold fast. The right, the thing in itself. But we cannot speak of evil as evil in itself. As an abstract existence, its most absolute form is Satan as the wicked one, though we may practically speak of evil. So part of the thought that's in this is that 2 expressions go together were to hold fast that which is good. And were to turn away from that which is evil. So I think the two expressions, you look at them side by side and uh, it's turning away from evil and towards good. It reminds me of that expression that cease to do evil, learn to do good. The expectation in the verse is 4 believers to be judicial or discriminatory. Need we need to be able to discriminate that which is good and that which is not. Well, having done that. Then we need to hold fast to that what you that was just good. Might be a connection with the first Epistle of John. Chapter 4. And verse one, beloved, believe not every spirit, the private spirits, whether they are of God, because there are many false prophets, because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God and it goes out from there. But we've had some things stumbled in the exhortations that the Spirit of God gives here there's individual. Characteristics in verses 1617 and 18, but I believe the next few verses are more what is collective. And the activity of the Spirit of God in the assembly and so. Quench not the spirit. The spirit shouldn't be hindered. And his ministry in the assembly. And the next thing, and it's connected with it is despised, not prophesying the way the Spirit of God would speak to heart and conscience. And it might even be from a lowly source, but don't despise it. But beloved pride, the spirits, not everything that might be said is of the Spirit of God. Not everything that might be uttered is, uh, of the Lord. And so there is that proving and trying of what is said. And that's the wonderful thing about the assembly meetings. There's that provision given as a check to what is said. And if correction is needed, then the Spirit of God can correct. And we can be thankful for that. And often those corrections have been very profitable for our souls. We've learned much at times in those things, and so despise not prophesying, but prove all things. And then there that which is good, hold it fast. So the good were gathered in vessels, and the bad were left on the shore.

Oh, really had a father's heart for these new converts, didn't he, after laying before them these admonitions? If they were adhered to, wouldn't the God of peace be with them? Wouldn't they be sanctified? Holy. Wouldn't we be brevin? Wouldn't we be found in peace if we implicitly obeyed the Word of God? What would disturb our peace if we were to submit ourselves to the will of God in our lives, if we walked in obedience to the Word of God? Doesn't it tell us in the Old Testament? I think Isaiah 12 Great peace have they who love thy law, and nothing shall offend them. Christian is the only person on the face of the earth who has a right to be happy and to be peaceful to it in all the circumstances. Doesn't matter if you're prison, the Lord has imprisoned you there. You could be peaceful. The apostle Paul was the most terrible circumstances, and yet he desired that these things, the peace of the Lord, would be with these Thessalonians. It wasn't going to be easy for the Thessalonians having received Christ, was it? But they knew the God of peace. And they had peace with God. And now it says the God of peace will sanctify you wholly. And then he, he puts it in the proper order. Sometimes we put it backwards. But you see this tripartite being that we are spirit, soul and body, all can be preserved blameless if we walk in obedience to the word of God. Let's go back a minute to, uh, verse 21 Through all things maybe a little practical. Thought on that. David when uh, he went out to meet Goliath, he was first given Saul's armor and uh, he never had anything like that on and he finally put it off and he says I haven't proved it. I haven't proved it. And so he wouldn't go out in what he didn't know to be tried and through he took up what he had proven a little picture of taking up what we've proven in our lives and walking in the word of God. We found it to be effectual and real in our lives. It's proven and then it was mentioned in the previous reading meeting that prove me now here with. The Lord said to those that Malachi say whether he wouldn't open the windows of heaven, but he says just before that brain the time into the storehouse. In other words, not like David who had proven. He says I want you to

prove it. Here's how you prove it. Be obedient to my word and you'll find out it's effectual. It'll bring blessing into your life and so prove all things. Is. It should have a practical effect in the life. The only way we prove it is to walk in it. There's nothing more, uh, distressing, you might say. I don't know exactly how to put the words to it. Then. To be in the condition of always wanting something that you can never, never have. And So what an awful place a lost eternity is to always be longing, longing, longing for all eternity for what you can never have. But that's how man is in his nature now. He wants, he wants, and he's never satisfied. He's never.

He cannot find his heart satisfaction in this world, and he always wants more, and he still never satisfied. But God has given us the nature, and He's given desires to that nature, and then He's given us that which satisfies that nature, until we have a new nature that possesses presently everything to satisfy. And in nature that satisfied is that peace. And so He's the God of peace. He's given us the nature, He's given us new desires, and He's given us that which satisfies those who desire absolutely and fully, and the result of that is peace, until He's the God of peace. Those desires are not unholy. That he's given that new nature, their desires that are right and good, their desires that sanctify their desires for that old nature are wicked. And they're the absolute opposite. They're unholy. They're unsanctified. Positionally we are sanctified. It says Hebrews chapter 10 by 1 offering that perfected forever them that are sanctified. But what we have in this chapter where it says the God of peace sanctify you wholly that is. Weaning us from this world. There is a natural tendency to settle down in this world and to want the things of this world. But we are to the God of peace will sanctify us. We know our affections from this world and set them on higher things above. That's what takes, I believe, walking closely with the Lord to lay aside the temporal things, those things that are eternal. The. Ensigns, the three parts again of the human being. The spirit, perhaps our intelligence and God consciousness, the soul, our feelings, our desires, our passions, whether for good or evil, and our body. The outward man, uh, the inner and the outward man age keeping does in the present, uh. And the Lord wants us to take care of our bodies too. There's a certain honor due to our bodies. The Lord doesn't want us to walk on beds of coal or lie down on nails. The Lord wants us to preserve the temple of the Holy Spirit and as well as the inward parts of the man, body, soul, and spirit. Spirit, soul and body is to be preserved for the Lord. I think there is some significance to the order of the words in that verse, says spirit, soul and body. And in the culture in which we live, very often the order is reversed. It starts with the body, it goes to the soul, and if it ever makes it to the spirit, it's remarkable. Umm, all of the advertising is focused on the body. It's focused on the, the soul, the seed of the emotions like Uncle Rube just mentioned. And uh, that's typically where it ends. It's designed to create lust based on the outward. And yet the order that God gives us is spirit, soul and body. And the practical significance of that is if I take, for example, if you're a young man looking for a young woman as a potential help me. In your life, the place where you ought to start. Is that the spiritual first? What is your heart like to start with? Are you following seeking to follow the Lord as a young man? And then the young lady that you might be considering, which direction is her heart going? Does she also wanna please the Lord? And then if that's right, then the next question is what about our our souls? What are our interests in life? What are our personalities and do those match? And then the last thing and is the body and for Christians.

The body part comes after the marriage. As those of you who are young know, the world has forgotten all about God's order and typically starts with the body and very often doesn't get beyond it. And yet we're called to something much better because God always has what's best in mind for us. And so when he put this order for us, that's the way to reach blessing. That's the way to have the very best. It's God's design for our lives. Spirit first, then the soul, and lost the body. The soul and the body are often used interchangeably. Assault spirits and assault often used interchangeably. But sometimes it's hard to tell which is which is which in your own selves and. In others even. But in Hebrews Forest speaks of that the word of God being a. Uh, quick and powerful, sharper than any sort of piercing into the dividing asunder of soul. Ferris, That's only the word of God, really, that. I maybe I shouldn't say only the word of God, but the word of God does that. It helps us to discriminate between sometimes our desires. And. Uh, in our spiritual reasoning thing. And we can argue ourselves sometimes into. Doing things that we. Uh, convince ourselves that certain things are right, for example. But the Word of God can Pierce and divide those things. What the hell used to say? Make it your daily prayer, read there in Psalm 15. One preserve me, O Gods, from in thee do I put my trust. So here this verse, it states that your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved, blameless to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. I suppose it has more in mind there the appearing rather than the rapture. And we consider ourselves very unfaithful at best. But you know, he did have Listen, Philippians, one, he's begun a good work and you will complete it till the day of Jesus Christ, the Lord is able to preserve us. If we rely upon him and uh, he's going to see each one of us safely through to the end, and if he's begun a good work in some soul, uh, we can be sure that that soul will be. If he's quickened, he'll born again. He'll be saved as the rapture. He'll be taken up. The Lord will complete the work. Many folks you know the the trusting in the work of Christ, but they're not sure. That they are going to be taken to glory. Well, I think the Lord will complete the work and they will realize at the end that the work of Christ was sufficient with their salvation. Faithful as he that called you. When the law was given. They said we will do it. Uh, there's quite a difference here. He will do it, uh, verse 24 faithful is he that called you who also will do what he will do. Well, this is this little passage that we've had before us. If you look at them, there's perhaps 10 different. Works, uh, to believers.

In the Old Testament they had 10 words. 1St UH-15 The third word be kind. Verse 16 be people of prayer, of of of people of joy and praise. 17. People of prayer verse 18 be thankful. Verse 19 be people who are spiritual. 20 one be judicial. And the 10th one, the Holy in verse 22. So there's 10 words for the believer. Uh, and he will do it. A question came up at the dinner table. Just the other. Night. Uh, it will be Friday night. On the verse 26, I don't know that I answered it too well and I appreciate it if anyone has a thought on it. My feeble answer was, well, I OK. They know it was practiced by rather more frequently who were older than I and I've often been greeted that way and have greeted older brother in in that way and and uh, appreciated it at the same time. I think it wouldn't deny the scripture it's not good for a man to touch a woman, and that it wouldn't be appropriate for a brother to greet a sister that way. But, uh. Beyond that, I really didn't have much thought, but I'm sure there's. First means what it says, and it's repeated five times in the New Testament and we still don't do it. And yet, uh, football players will rejoice on the field after a victory in Kisler. We can't do it, but we're afraid that they'll think we're. Something strange. Umm, and I'm not saying I'm practicing either. I'm acknowledging this is one of the many passages that we do not obey. And the I think that the the word is clear, we we don't like it. We will say if we do start to practice it, especially in connection with what you said with men and women, make sure it stays a holy kiss. It does show the real, genuine affection that existed amongst these early believers though, doesn't it? When they greeted one another in such a manner and if you read the letters of Jay and Darby, the early experience amongst the Saints in Plymouth, England, the love and the affection that those brethren had for one another is amazing. What they did for one another, you know and. A few boys shall all men know ye, my disciples, if ye have love one for another. And doesn't your heart just naturally go out to the brethren? I've been kissed many times by older sisters, you know, and vice versa. It's just natural to the the new nature. And to think that the apostle Paul didn't consider himself above these new converts. What does he say here? Just the prior verse. He says, brethren, pray for us.

The great Apostle Paul wanted these newly converted Christians to pray for him. Yes, you know, it doesn't take long experience in the Christian pathway to pray. Brethren, it's nice to see in prayer, meeting younger brothers, praying. There's no such thing as the gift of prayer.

No, no way. The Lord likes to hear the prayers of the youngest believers and hear the Apostle Paul asks these young believers to pray for him. He valued those prayers and they loved him and he loved them and he wanted to stir up their affections, didn't he? When he says you greet one another with holy kiss and is our brother, Robert was saying the emphasis is on holy kids. I'd like to turn to a passage in the Second Corinthians. Second Pennies, Chapter 11. You also mentioned the a number of things. You're starting with verse 24. He says that the Jews find Pines received by 40 stripes saved one the right side with people abroad 1 stone to right side suffered shipwreck. And we know that, uh, you've had at least one more shipwreck coming. A nightmare they have attended the deep, and journeyings often in pearls of waters, and perils of robbers, and perils of my own countrymen, and perils by the heathen, and perils in the city, and perils in the wilderness, and perils in the sea, and perils the false brethren. And weariness, painfulness, and watching as often hunger and thirst, fast things often, and cold and nakedness, is this next verse that I had before me, beside those things which are without that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. We read over and over in the epistles how the apostle prays for the Saints and he says, I mention us to always in my prayers. You know, I came to vessel here and I greeted many people and there were those that greeted me and it was very obvious that they had tremendous affection for me when they greeted me. You know, I'm thankful for that. And we know that there are those that greet us and they, they greet us perhaps in an old way. They, uh, they acknowledge us that there are those that greet us. And it's with obvious affection. And I've just enjoyed that in this exhortation that that's what the, uh, the apostle would bring before us when he's, he's asking the brethren to pray for them, to pray for him. But then he says, greet all the brothers with a holy kiss. And you know, it's marvelous when we see that obvious affection that brethren have for us and that brethren have for each other. 22 in the appendix. Oh. I don't know why. I understand the name of the pilot and I'll talk about that. All right, I'll give you that tomorrow. I'm waiting blah blah blah blah blah. Mend ourselves. Our God and Father, we would thank thee for thy precious word, and we thank Thee for this time that we've had to learn from its pages. We would ask that. We might seek every day to become more conformed to the image of Thy Son, Lord Jesus Christ, and we pray that when He comes, we might be found waiting and watching for His return. We ask these things in His precious and worthy name. Amen.

Burbank Conference: 2004, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:10

Reading

And 41. 5. Psalm 145. Oh, verse 15 and 16. The eyes of all wait upon thee. Now give us them their meat in due season. Now openness thy hand, and satisfy us the desire of every living thing. We ask is help and blessing. Father we look up to thee once more. Thank you for the privilege that we've had being together like this. We thank you for the scriptures that we can have open and come together with no man forbidding. Now we just would ask the our God that thou would open thy hands and give us meat in due season once more. Pray that Thou would feed our souls with heavenly things and that would lead our hearts out after Thy Son, the Lord Jesus. We pray that the Spirit of God would be free this afternoon. Take the things of Christ and to show them unto us. Now we ask these things for others. We wait before thee in the name and for the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen. We'll go into 510. First Thessalonians chapter 4, beginning at verse 13. But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep that you sorrow not even as others would have no hope for. If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, Even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with that with him. 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. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain. Shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord, Wherefore comfort one another with these words. But of the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you before yourselves. Know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them. As petrovelled upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light and the children of day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night, and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation.

For God hath not appointed us to us, 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. How thankful we can be that as we read these scriptures, we can understand them by the grace of God. For back many hundreds of years ago, they lost the sense of this truth and the church went into what was known as the dark ages. And that's what brought on the dark ages was the loss of the sense of the Lord's soon return. And how thankful we can be that the Lord and His mercy and his grace. Has recovered to his Saints the nullage of the Lord. Soon return, and it might be today. I like the 14th verse the way it reads in the new translation. We believe that Jesus has died and has risen again, so also God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus. Another rendering has been put to sleep by Jesus. It's a very precious thought that. Those that have died in faith in this present dispensation of Christian dispensation have been put to sleep by Jesus. Very sweet. He speaks here of those who have no hope. And I suppose there's nothing worse than a hopeless situation. Remember reading about, yes, 4 submarines was hit off the East Coast of the United States, rammed by a ship and it went to the bottom. And divers went down to see if they could be of assistance in getting the crew out, which they couldn't. And as one of those divers put his ear to the to the side of the submarine, he heard tapped in Morris code. Is there any hope? And there's nothing worse than a hopeless situation. Hope, someone has said, is an indispensable quality of life. Isn't it tremendous, brethren, that we are not those who have no hope? There are those in this world today who have no hope. One of the hardest things I ever did was stand up and take the funeral of an unbeliever, because there's no hope. There's no hope for the person that's died. There is hope for those who are living. And you present the gospel because that's what a funeral is for. It's for those who are living. But what a solemn thing to realize that when one draws that last breath without Christ. There's no hope but here it tells us not that, as we said earlier, not that we don't sorrow, but we sorrow not as others who have no hope. But I want to make it very clear that when we speak of hope in the sense that we have it here and in Scripture, it's not hope in the sense that it may or may not happen. We hope to return to our homes after these meetings, but something may come in and we may never return to our homes. We, we, we speak of hoping to do this and hoping to do that. Many things I hope to do that I've never been able to. To bring to fruition or to do because of circumstances. But just go over to Romans for a moment, chapter 8, to get the sense of the hope of the believer. Speak of our hope, the blessed hope we have in Titus and Peter had spoken of as a living hope. It's spoken of as a Good Hope in Second Thessalonians, spoken of in different ways. But just notice Romans chapter 8 and verse 24. For we are saved by hope. But hope that is seen is not hope for what a man hath, what a man seeth, why does he yet hope for? But if we hope for that

we see not, then do we with patience wait for it? Well, this gives us really the sense of what hope is in the light of the New Testament. It's in no way uncertainty. It's only hope. Rather, in the sense that we're not in the full reality of it yet, we speak of the hope of the Lord's coming because the Lord hasn't come yet.

But here it tells us that what a man hath, why does he yet hope for? If you have something in your hand, you don't hope for it. It might be a child here and they're hoping for something special for their birthdays. And maybe mom or dad says, well, we've already got it. It's it's hidden away in the closet. And when your birthday comes, we're going to get it. We're going to bring it out and give it to you. But it's already been bought and secured. But nevertheless, until the birthday comes, they're not in the full possession of it yet. Even though it's been promised to them. And so there's hope in that sense. They're waiting for the moment when it will be placed in their hand. Now, brethren, the hope of the Lords coming is not uncertainty. It's only hope in the sense that it hasn't happened yet. In Ephesians, I think. Two, I think 11:00 to 12:00 it says those without hope are like this, without Christ, having no hope, without God in the world. Could there be anything worse than that to die that way? Then it's second death, and second death is eternal separation. From a holy God whose love and life that is worth than the condition described there. There are many having no hope. But you know the verse for us is be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you the reason of the hope that's in you with fear and reverence. When I was working I remember getting home sometime in a real busy day. And I said to myself, why didn't? Anybody asked, they didn't see any difference. You know, that's a solemn thought. We are responsible because we have what the world needs. And if we don't give it out like the four lepers, you know, who sat at the gate of Samaria and they were being starved to death and by thirst in Samaria. The lepers, of course. 4 is universal number lepers speak of. Sin and evil. Sinners. But for us they are all sinners. And they said, if we go in, we but die. If we stay out here we die. Without realizing it, though, they threw themselves in the hands of the Lord, and they went right into the enemy's camp. And the Lord had already cleared the enemy out, and they found gold and silver and food and water. And Remix. And they took it and went and hid it. They went back and found more and they went and hid it. And after a while they said one to another, we do not. Well, there's enough here for all Samaria. And so they told the King of Samaria that there's hope there. That's like us. You know, we keep it, store it, enjoy it, but do we realize we do not? Well if we don't tell the world, isn't it precious to know, beloved brethren, that we have the privilege of being taught of God? I was just noticing the first words of that 13th verse there. I would not have you to be ignorant, brother. And all that is true of a loving God for each one of us be be taught from His precious Word. Job speaks of. He says, Who teacheth like him? And so here, that I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, turning concerning them which are asleep. That she sorrowed not as others which have no hope. Who can measure the sorrow of those who have no hope without hope and without God in the world? And lovely to see here too, when it speaks of of being asleep. It's not that evil doctrine that Satan would suggest to some that the soul sleeps. Nothing in scripture would justify that. It's only the body like Lazarus who fell asleep. Let's read a portion just in connection with Hope, not to belabor it, but in Hebrews just, I believe it goes along with what we've been saying in Hebrews chapter 6. And I'll read from verse 18, Hebrews 6, and verse 18, that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation. Who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hopes set before us. Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whether the forerunner is for us. Entered even Jesus made in high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Isn't it interesting here, brethren, that he speaks of our hope as sure and steadfast? Now, what other hope connected with this life could we set speak of in that way? Hope connected with this life is uncertainty at best. We'd be presumptuous if we said we had some hope connected with this life and with time that was sure and steadfast. But hope connected with Christ, as we've been saying, is in no way uncertain, and it's only hope connected with Christ that can be spoken. Of sure and steadfast. But what I want to point out is because we took up at some length the subject of the resurrection at the beginning of these meetings. And what I want to point out is that our hope is sure and steadfast. Our hope of being in glory in the Father's house is sure and steadfast because the forerunner has already entered there. The Lord Jesus who came forth in resurrection, entered the Father's house, went back to the Father in ascension, and at that moment the Father's house was prepared. It's someone has put it this way, his work on the cross prepared the people for the place, but his entrance into the Father's house has prepared the place for the people. It's prepared now. And the fact that he's there as a man bodily, as a man, as the forerunner is our assurance. And that's why we can say we have a hope that sure and steadfast. Do you ever doubt your hope? You ever? Find you just waver a little bit, just look up and realize that the forerunner is already there. The Lord Jesus as a man in Hebrews 6 end of verse 13 Hebrews 613. At the end God swear by himself for Abraham. That was a unilateral promise covenant and it will come true and it said for men verily swear by the greater we know that. And you take an oath, usually swear on the Bible or by God himself. They don't do that anymore, but you swear by yourself here and today bad. But anyway, men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them the end of all strife, wherein God willing more abundantly to show under the heirs of promise the immutability of His consul confirmed it by an old. That by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie. Titus 1-2. It's impossible, it says there, for God to lie. We might have a strong consolation to have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor for the soul, both shore and steadfast. Well, it's wonderful. He swore by himself. So you have this wonderful thing in First Corinthians. I think it's 120. But don't turn. It says all the promises of God are in Christ. Yeah, and in him. Amen. That's swearing by themselves. God has suggested what he wanted Christ to do. Christ said yeah, and he did it. And God said Amen. And it's sealed every promise, all the promises of God. If we started to individually, as we could think of them, name the promises in the word of God to us as believers, we could take the rest of this day and tomorrow wouldn't complete them. But it's wonderful. They're all yeah and Amen. In Christ, he said he would come or come from the sea. And in Pleasantville, Nova Scotia years ago, there were a couple of brothers that used to go out on the fishing scores. They had no power but the wind, but they also had rope, one that they reserved for emergencies and if they needed to, they could roll out with an anchor in a small boat and the rope attached and they could go right into the harbor.

And drop that anchor over and then from the ship, they would turn this capstan and bring the ship right up to the anchor. What a picture that is of this wait, we're attached. The anchor is already there. The Lord is already there. And we have that hope. That's a rope that attaches us to him. And it's a, it's a secure thing. There's no falling away from that. In view of what we have experienced, beloved brethren, so many of us, I think of the number of the large dear people who we know that have recently gone home to be with Him. And it brings our thoughts, does it not even more to this very issue. What happens to the soul after death? What about our future in Christ? And how lovely it is to consider these things. It says here that for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again. Even so, them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain to the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent or precede them which are asleep for the Lord Himself. I just love that the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout. And the with the voice of the Archangel, the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the cloud, to meet the Lord in the air, and sold them. Shall we ever be with the Lord? Just thinking a little bit of this. Dear brother recently

went home with the Lord and the verse that was so comforting to. His dear wife was this that as we read in Second Corinthians. Chapter 5, verse eight, I believe it is, it says absent from the body present with the Lord. That would be the intermediate state. And then you turn to the 16th Psalm and we read those lovely words, the 11TH verse, the last verse of that Psalm, it says. In thy presence present with the Lord. In thy presence is fullness of joy. At thy right hand there places forevermore. And to think of this, the apostle Paul with the great joy that it was his as he walked through this world in communion with the Father, communion with the Lord. He could say to depart to be with Christ, which is far better, he could say to the thief. And I love to think of that beautiful scene, that solemn scene on Calvary, the Lord Jesus there on that center cross and the we find first that those two thieves. That they had cast the same in his teeth. They had both said, If thou be the Son of God, come down to the cross. But all brethren, how thankful we are. He did not come down, but he stayed there and he went to death for us. But the moment that same thief who had earlier accused him turned to him and said, Lord, Remember Me? I love to think of the Lords immediately immediate response, the beautiful response of our Savior. This day shalt thou be with me in paradise. What is heaven like? It's to be with Christ, and the more we know of Him and learn of Him, the more thrill our souls as to the portion of everyone who knows Him. Verse verses 15 to 18 very important to see this are a parenthesis so I'm going to read it without the parenthesis. Verse 14 if we believe that Jesus died and rose again. Even so, them also which sleep in Jesus, or have been put to sleep through Jesus, will God bring with him? That's not the rapture, that's his appearing. We'll skip those parentheses and go to chapter 5. Will God bring with him? But of the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you. And when it speaks of times and seasons, it's always Speaking of an earthly event. There's no times and seasons in heaven. Those are earthly things. So how do they get to be with him so that when he returns to set up his Kingdom and to subdue his enemies under his feet, how do they get to be with Him? That's what we have in verses 15/16/17 and 18. The parenthesis. We don't have a parenthesis in the King James, but it should be there as it is in the new translation. The parenthesis gives us the truth of the rapture, which is a brand new truth.

That they didn't have yet in the first chapter they waited for God's Son from heaven. They were waiting for him to come back and set up the Kingdom. The Kingdom hasn't been set up yet. We've been in this parenthetical time when he's away and he's going to come and take us to be with himself 1St and then he'll come back with us and establish the Kingdom. So the one is the the rapture and the other is the appearing. And the appearing continues on into the 5th chapter, but the rapture is the last four verses. Of chapter 4. If you don't see that, you don't understand the truth of the rapture. It's interesting, Chuck, that when he gave them the 14th verse, they probably asked the question, and I'm not throwing things in here, but they probably said, well, how's that going to happen? And so then he, as you say, then he gives him the actual truth of the rapture. And that's a point, you know, in, in that First Thessalonians, Second Thessalonians, the Lord's rapture is mentioned. Coming is mentioned, but the Lord's coming is mentioned about twice as many times as the rapture. Oh yes, and it's interesting because in the Second Thessalonians, Second Timothy, you know, we do get ourselves occupied with the rapture, and there's nothing wrong. That's good because that's our hope. But you know, what is the thing that is uppermost in the mind of the person of Christ? Not just to have us. But to have His canyons, and that's what we have in Second Timothy. There is therefore now a crown of righteousness laid up for me, and not for me only, but for all of them that love is occurring. And that's one way we get a crown is to look forward with anticipation, not just to the rapture, but to the fact that He is coming back and setting up a Kingdom. And that's the next chapter that we haven't got. And as you said, Dave, the word coming is used. For both the rapture and the appearing. When you say coming, it's indefinite. When he comes for us, that's the rapture. When he comes with us, that's the appearing. When he'll establish his rights down here. But they're both his coming. They're coming in two stages. He comes it's it's like a victorious army that's defeated the enemy and it's coming back. And then those who are his that have been held captive in the city that he's. Come back to reestablish under his authority. They go out to meet him. That's the rapture. And then He keeps coming with them to the key to the city that has kept his own in captivity. That's a good illustration of the Rapture. He goes out to be with him, and when he comes back, He brings us with Him to establish His rights down here. Both are His coming. It's His coming 1St to get us. And then he keeps coming and establishes the Kingdom. And isn't it beautiful that it's the Lord Himself? You alluded to it, Brother Larry, but I think just to. Stop and meditate on this little expression. When the Lord Jesus comes and gives the shout, what we refer to as the rapture is coming for his Saints. He's not sending a messenger, He's coming himself. We find through the Old Testament God often used messengers in connection with His people. But it says at midnight there was a great cry. Behold, the bridegroom cometh, not his sending his servants, but coming himself. And brethren, He's not going to send an Angel for us. Not going to send Gabriel for us. He's going to come himself. He's going to give that shout. We're going to rise to meet him in the air, and he himself is going to have the joy of escorting us to the Father's house. He hasn't left it up to anyone else. When he came the first time into this world, he came himself. He offered himself without spot to God, the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. It must be solved. And the one who gave himself. Is the one who himself is going to come back and get us. You know you get that in Luke 16. I'll read verse 22. It came to pass that the bigger died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. That's not the rapture. That's angels that take it. So he had angels as his pallbearer and it doesn't say a word about the anything that the imagine the rich man had a very, very rich and lofty funeral doesn't say a thing about it.

Just as the rich man died. But it tells about the pallbearer that the poor beggar had the angels taking him into Abraham's bosom. Beautiful. Can you read Acts 111? Acts, chapter one, verse 11. Read it please. Which also which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye get? Well, let me back up to the 10th verse. Or I'll back up to the 9th person. When He had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up in a cloud, received him out of their sight, and while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why Stan Yee gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you in heaven into heaven, shall so come again in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. But this is not the rapture here. Because when the Lord Jesus comes again to stand on this earth, it will be at His appearing. When He calls His own home, He's not coming to earth, He's coming on the cloud, and we're going to be called away from this earth to meet Him in the air. But then He is going to come in like manner. His feet are going to stand on the Mount of Olives and every eye is going to see Him and so on. But I believe that this portion in Acts refers to the time when the Jewish remnant will see Him in a coming day, comes back in like manner to intercede on their behalf. Not in humility, the way it came before, but he's going to come in power and glory when the heavens open up, as you get in Revelation 19 where he's crowned with many crowns and he comes. Who's right? It is. Is that right, Bruce? It is, It is. His first coming was when he came to die, wasn't it? Yes, his second coming that we often speak of is what we have in verse two of chapter 5. But the day of the Lord cometh when he comes back. That would be at the end. Would you correct me if I'm wrong? That would be at the end of the tribulation, at the beginning of the millennial state. But in the meantime, there's this blessed time for us, for the Church. And that's what we're Speaking of is the rapture that Brother Chuck referred to in the end of the fourth chapter, last four verses. You know, we often speak of the period in which we're living as a parenthesis. Well, verses 15 to 18, our apprentices, that that's what takes us home to be with him as part of that parenthesis. Isn't it beautiful? The word, the word rapture simply means to be caught up, taken away. And it's a very important principle to lay hold of. Because there are Christians

out there that don't believe in rapture. I remember I was working with a client one day and he found out that I'm a Christian. So he said to me, he said are you pre or post? And I looked at him dumbfounded. I had no idea what he meant. And he looked at me again. He said and I thought you're a Christian. He said yes I am. I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. He said then you don't know what pre and post means. I said no I don't. And then I had to be explained. That some believe in what they call pre millennial rapture and the other one is post that's a very. Wrong teaching out there. When the Lord comes that time to ****** us away up together in the clouds to be with himself, the church is snatched away on that. There is no more chance afterwards, and there's some Christian belief that you can stay behind and still proclaim the gospel. Grace, that's the end of that time, is it not? And perhaps someone can even expand more so on that. Those that reject the the word rapture say it's not in Scripture. Well, it is in Scripture in verse 17. And we which are alive and remain shall be caught up. That's the rapture. It's just another way of expressing the word rapture. They're caught up together with them in clouds. Just because it doesn't say rapture in scripture. The word comes from reptory, which means the eagle, which can ****** things out of the water or out of the tree. It doesn't mean that there is no such work. Why get hung up on a word? We're caught away. That's a good word, but a rapture makes it more spectacular, if you will. It's something like the JWS would say. The word Trinity is not in the Bible. I said what? The names of the three persons in the Trinity in our baptismal formula, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are there. What more do you want?

The word isn't there, but the truth is there. The same thing about rapture. If we could read the Latin Bible, that word that you pointed us to in verse 17 is that you? Speak of, that's helpful. That's the what is it, the Vulgate I think it's called? The very words caught up in the Latin Bible is raptura. Well, so shall we ever be with the Lord? I think this is a tremendous statement because when He's in the Father's house, we're with Him. When He comes back to reign over the earth, we come with Him. We're going to be ever with the Lord. The whole redeemed company collectively gathered around Him for eternity. Now it's true. Individually. Now we have the Lord with us. I'll never leave thee nor forsake thee, and so on. Collectively we enjoy privileges like this. Of coming into his presence at home on Lord's Day morning in Smiths Falls. Few of us sit down to remember the Lord. We claim on the authority of the Word and by faith his presence in the midst. We enjoy his company collectively here with a few of the Saints of God from time to time. But we're governed by physical limitations, by time and distance, by clocks and so on. And so we enjoy a time collectively in the presence of the Lord. Then we get up and we leave. We, we enjoy his company individually, but I'm speaking collectively. But think of it rather, there's a time coming when we're going to be ever with the Lord and no empty seats there, no St. missing and everyone gathered around himself never to consciously lead or physically leave His presence again. Now if that doesn't do something to your heart and mind, I don't know what goes on within our hearts if when we realize there's a day coming when we're going to be ever with the Lord. Isn't that the springboard or motivation? To desire his company now, individually, collectively, and to go on and to serve him here in this world. To think that he's going to gather and surround himself ever with the Lord. He will always be. The Lord won't eat for all eternity. I was just noticing something so precious. You go back to the 45th Psalm and I believe it's verse 11 we read there. The whole Psalm is so good, but for the sake of time I won't read it. But just in verse 11 There it says part of the verse, He is thy Lord and worship thou him. What a thought for us to meditate upon. He is thy Lord all. How it would save us so many problems if we could always remember that. And something else was called to my attention in First Corinthians, the first ten chapters where we have the subject of assembly truth 40 times. You'll find that expression, Lord, and what a word that is to us, if we would really ever recognize that He is thy Lord and worship thou Him, and with eyes fixed upon Him. What a deliverance, what a freedom from fear, knowing that nothing is out of control for any of us. And the same one, the Lord himself, shall descend from heaven, and so shall he ever be with the Lord. And that's really what's going to make heaven. It's not going to be all the wonderful things that will be there. But it's the one who's going to captivate our gaze for eternity. It's interesting in the 14th of John where the Lord introduced the subject of His coming in anticipation of His leaving the disciples and going back to the Father. He didn't say I will come again and receive you to heaven. That's true, He will. He didn't say I will come again and receive you to glory. That's true, it will be glory. But he said, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am. There ye may be also, and that's really what's going to make heaven, is to be received to himself, to be gathered around himself. Because as often been said, four walls and fine furniture don't make a home, it's the presence of those that dwell there. Sometimes use this little illustration, but often when I get home from a trip during my absence, my wife has made some changes. Maybe rearrange the living room furniture, maybe done a little painting or papering or whatever it might be. And after I'm home, a day or so, she says to me, don't you notice anything different? And I haven't noticed. She's disappointed because I didn't notice those changes. But when I get home, I go home, not because I have a comfortable home in Smiths Falls. I am thankful for a comfortable home, but I go home because of the presence of those that dwell there. There's loved ones there. And when I get home, what am I occupied with? Not so much the things that make up that house, but it's those that dwell there. I'm just glad to be back with my loved ones and occupied with them.

Well, brethren, when we get to the Father's house as the children of God, we're going to be home perfectly at rest, comfortable in His presence, and we're going to be occupied with Himself. His presence is what is going to make the place, and His desire is not merely to have us in heaven or in the Father's house, but to have us with Himself. When it says at the end of verse 14, it says, will God bring with Him? When will that be? I'm going to read it in Revelation 19. And I saw heaven opened, and behold a White Horse. And he that sat upon him was called faithful and true, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns. And he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, And his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses. Clothed in fine linen, white and clean. That's us, that's us. God will bring us with him. Out of his mouth goeth the sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron. And he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written King of kings and Lord of Lords. What a day that will be will be with him to see his victory. Displayed as he subdues all his enemies under his feet. Interesting, isn't it, that the last glimpse that this world got of the Lord Jesus was hanging on a cross of shame, crowned with a crown of thorns. That's what this world awarded the Lord Jesus with. That was their estimation of the the King of kings. That was their estimation of the Messiah, their estimation of the Lord of life and glory. But the next glimpse this world gets of Christ, and it's so tremendous, brethren, to think about the next glimpse this world gets of Christ. He's going to come forth wearing many diadems, Mr. Darby's translation. He's going to come forth. Who's right? It is. And He's not coming in humility, but he's going to come with many crowns, many diadems, and every eye is going to see him, and it's going to be in power and glory, and God's heart will never be satisfied until His Son comes forth. You know what's interesting? In the interim between the crown of thorns and these crowns that Chuck has read to us about in Revelation 19, now he's in heaven, crowned with a crown of glory and honor. That's God's estimation. Because the resurrection, the ascension, and the glorification of Christ are God's Amen to the work of Calvary. And God has crowned him with many crown with with a crown of honor and glory. But it says there in that portion we see not yet all things put under him. He has his rightful place in heaven. He's crowned with a crown of honor and glory, but glory and honor. But God will never be satisfied till he has his rightful place on this planet that spit in his blessed face. This planet that beat a crown of thorns into his blessed head, they're going to see him and they're going to bow and own him as King of kings and Lord of

Lords, and he's going to reign in righteousness. And that and that alone is going to satisfy the heart of God to see his King, his Son vindicated. And brethren, to think that we're going to be associated with him. Those that the world despises now are going to come and reign with Christ. Oh, it ought to motivate us to follow him. Now. God allowed, God allowed wicked men. To mishandle his beloved Son, to crown him with thorns, to spit in his face, to whip him and scourge him. God allowed them to do that and nail him to a cross. God allowed wicked men to do that. But once he said, it is finished, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. God didn't allow any wicked man to touch him after that, only his own took him down and laid him in a new tomb where a man had never been laid. God, once man had done his worst. And he had died and put away that our sins. It was only his own that handled him after that. And Chuck, it was only his. It was only his own that saw him too. In resurrection. Sorry, Tom. Yeah. What'd you say, Tom? I didn't mean to contradict, but the spear died. And after he said it was finished, it had to be after he died. Otherwise it would have been said he bled to death. Blood was shed necessarily, but it had to be after he died. But they didn't touch him.

No. But I think it is important to realize too, that in resurrection then he only appeared to his own. And that's why I said the last glimpse this world, God of the Lord Jesus, was with that title, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, crowned with the crown of thorns. The next glimpse they get, he'll be crowned with many diadems. Well, wherefore comfort one another with these words now, brethren, what comfort would we have? Let's just stop and think for a moment. What comfort would we have in this sad old world that's right for the judgment of God? It's not getting better, it's getting worse. I remember one time visiting a couple in North Carolina that we were asked to go and see and not a Christian couple. And it was just that during at the end of the Gulf War. And the lady said, I think after the Gulf War, this world is going to be on a course that leads to better and better things. This is going to straighten out everything. Well, we can see in the years that have followed, have things got better? Are things better in the Middle East than they were back when the Gulf War came to an end? No, they're only worse. And brethren, what hope would we have? What comfort would we have? And as we see our loved ones pass on and older brethren that no longer take their seats in the meeting room because they're absent from the body and present with the Lord, what comfort would we have? Apart from this hope that we've been Speaking of, we would have no comfort. Now just go over to 2nd Thessalonians for a moment. And let me read a couple of verses here in the end of the chapter, Second Thessalonians 2, verse 16. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us and hath given us everlasting consolation and Good Hope here it's called a Good Hope through grace. Now notice this. Comfort your hearts, establish you in every good word and work. Now I just want to say this, Not only would we not have any comfort if we didn't have the truth of the Lord's coming. But I believe that those who do not have the truth of the Lord's coming or understand it, I'm talking about believers. They are not really established in every good word and work. What is it that gives us ballast and direction in our Christian life? It's to have the hope of the Lord's coming clearly delineated in our mind and have it as a reality in our soul. But you talk to Christians who are mixed up as to the the rapture and the appearing and. Post and pre and all this kind of thing that we've been Speaking of. Are they established in their Christian life? They're really like a ship without a rudder. They turn into the wind and they drift, and they'll go with every wind of doctrine. And brethren, that's why it's important for us to hold tenaciously to the truth of the Lord's coming and to be able not to be ignorant. I would not have you ignorant concerning these things. We might be ignorant of many things, of the deep things of Scripture, but He doesn't want us to be ignorant when it comes to understanding. The truth of the Lord's coming, because if we are, we're going to be just drifting. We're not going to be to have the proper character of strangers and pilgrims. We're going to be out lobbying for the betterment of this world, all this kind of thing. So it not only is our comfort, but it's our ballast and stability. It gives us that direction that keeps us on the right path. It's like a puzzle, and every piece has to be in its right place. Then you see the picture that God wants us to see. And you can't see the picture in its entirety if one piece is out of place. It just doesn't work. And so we have to be clear as to the to the Rapture and the clearest to the appearing and on and on and on every. We have it all in the book. No wonder that as Satan is so busy in propagating a false doctrine in regard to this, and I don't know, I'm sure we're all aware of the fact that there are many, many out there that disparage the thought of the rapture. They write against it. They preach against it. That's Satan's work, because as you've said, Jim, if we don't have the. Imminent return of the Lord in our heart. Well, what are we waiting for? There's nothing there and Satan knows that and Satan is using that to to turn the hearts and the minds of many who really are Christians against the truth of the Lord's coming for his Saints, the rapture. Someone once gave me a book that was denying this, the rapture truth as we know it this way. And they were saying things like, well, ask your friends that believe in this.

What scripture do you have that it's a secret rapture, you know, kinds of things like this. Well, as they went on, they found themselves trapped and they said, of course there are some things that we can't understand. Well, of course they can't understand it. And we were putting the puzzle together. You mentioned one time and we had the whole border. You usually start with the border, and we thought we had it right, but there were two pieces transposed and we didn't know until we got to the end and had six pieces leftover and six spaces that didn't match. Until we swapped the two that were wrong and it didn't fit together. So they have a couple of pieces missing and they can't figure it out. And yet they're mocking what we believe. And I think that it's a proof to us that we haven't made a mistake. We're understanding this because it all fits together properly. Now, how does a right understanding of these things affect us? Practically. Just leaving. How does it affect your life and mine? What would it be if each and everyone of us in this room knew for a fact? That at the stroke of 5:00 the Lord would come. What changes would we make in our own thoughts, in our own minds? What changes if we knew for a fact that at 10:00 tonight the Lord would come? What changes would we make in our lives, in our positions, in our homes? It's a good question, Chuck. Brother Dave, I read one time if a farmer normally milked his cows at 6:00 and he knew that the Lord was coming at 8:00. What should he do? But the answer was milk his cows at 6:00. If he was to do anything different, he should have been doing it now. So he he goes ahead. So if we knew that a certain hour the Lord was coming, we should keep going on and we should be going on the right path to begin with. In the past. That's according to what we have in our hand. The Word of God shouldn't make any change. Well, we say all run out and give out tracks. OK, let's do it. I wouldn't want to know. He's coming at 10:00. That would take my hope away. I expect him any moment. And dear brother Tansley, he was wrapped up with finding out when the Lords coming and he's over that now. But he's still in the body. But he I went with him once and and sister Dunderdale warned me. He's going to tell you all the proof he's got when the Lord's coming. She knows right where? So when he opened the door, he said go to Bowman. I know when the Lord's coming. I said, if it's one second after now don't tell me you've ruined my hope. And that if you didn't talk about it, we got reading. Well, knowing the tendency of our hearts, the Lord hasn't told us because I'm not so sure. I'll be very honest. If I had cows to milk and I knew the Lord was coming this evening, I'm not so sure I'd go out and melt the cows. And God knows the tendency of the human heart, and so He hasn't told us because, brethren, He wants us to be on tiptoe. Expectation, expecting the Lord has been said to come at any moment. Let's go to Luke 19 and see a couple of verses there in this regard. Luke 19 and verse 12. He said, Therefore a certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a Kingdom, and to return. And he called his 10 servants, and delivered them 10 lbs, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. Now, brethren, that's our responsibility. I like to connect this little expression, Occupy till I come. With the Lord's promise in John 14, I will come again. So he's promised I will come again. What is my reaction to be in connection with that occupy

till I come. And you'll notice he gave them responsibility here. He gave them each 10 talents. 10 denotes responsibility. Now in Luke's Gospel, you find there's a variance in the responsibility and or in Matthew's Gospel, I'm sorry, there's a variance in the responsibility and the same reward on his return because there it's God's sovereignty.

But here it's just the opposite. They all get the same responsibility and then reward it in connection with how they've used that. And so, brethren, the Lord is coming, but he wants us to occupy until he comes. Right up until the moment that the Lord Jesus comes, we are to be occupied with those things that are for his glory, whether it's the encouragement and blessing of the Saints of God and building one another up in our most holy faith, whether it's propagating the gospel. Whatever it is, we need to live in light of the Lord's return, because in Christianity. That's the pivotal point. Everything in Christianity is in view of the Lord's return, the moment when He's going to come back. And brethren, if we're living in view of that, then it's not going to make us lazy. It's going to give us spiritual energy to take what He's placed in our hands as to our responsibility and to use it in His absence, knowing that He's going to return. At any moment. It could be Jim fixing supper for the family. Very good occupying till he comes very good. You know actually was as you were saying that was think of scriptures matching quite a few things for us to until he comes because the word of God knows that our heart has that lazy tendency. I'd like to turn to a passage in first Corinthians Chapter 11. We know that well because we have to read his on Lord's Day morning. You know the, the, the disciples of old, when this was written almost 2000 years ago, they had the same hope that we have today. The Lord didn't say to them that, well, you got 19150 years to go. No, that that same hope was just as real then as today. And this was written to them in First Corinthians. The Chapter 11 verse 26 says for as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup. He do show the Lord's death until He come. Oh, that's one of the first thing of how we can be occupied, isn't it? Do you remember Him? You know the Lord still leave us here tomorrow morning. Do we remember that as a special privilege? And it's not a one time, it's often. But how long do we do it for? Till He comes. It could be the very last one tomorrow, and we may not even see tomorrow, but at the meantime we have that privilege to do so till He come. But what else are we to do to keep ourselves occupied? Let's turn to Timothy, I think in First Timothy, the chapter 4. It tells us another passage of what to do while we're waiting for him. First Timothy chapter 4 in verse. In verse 13, he said until I come, but what are we to do? He opened up with this. Until he come, he sits here. Give attendance to reading, to exaltation. To doctrine. Oh, how much do we need to take heed to this, give attendance to reading? Now, correct me if I'm wrong in this. I don't believe back in the days, as the apostles have written this, that they can talk about reading at home. You know, often people will say, well, I can read at home. I take this a little bit differently. I believe it's referring to the assembly reading because in those days they did not have the privilege we have today. What we all have a Bible in our home. In fact, we have many Bibles. And in some homes we've been to, if it's like ours, you can go downstairs. You'll find one. You go into the bathroom. You'll find one there too. So we have been blessed with that. But they have to share the manuscripts that was available. So I believe it's referring to give attendance to reading meeting and how sad it is. You know, sometimes people say how many are your assembly? And sometimes we look at it with shame. We don't know how to answer that because what they mean on Lord's Day morning or do they mean at a reading meeting night or do they mean at a prayer meeting night? And we should say that with shame because the prayer, especially, as many have said, that's the powerhouse, isn't it? And the judge in the sense of the polls of the Assembly. So we're to give attendance to reading, to exaltation and to doctrine. But what else do we have to? Should we do? Let's go to when. Another portion in Revelation, the Book of Revelation chapter 2. Revelation chapter 2, verse 25. But that which you have already, something that you already have, you said here, hold fast. Oh, you know, hold fast is a word that we often don't even use. We're the cold fast till he come. What we a minute now if we don't have something that we have laid hold of.

We have not bought the truth if we have not something that we value. How are we to hold fast and dear young people, we have to look into our hearts. What is it that you want to hold fast to the word of God want us to do so. Now there are a few other things that we can refer to, but we won't turn to it. We know that yesterday the young people we talked about, Samuel came and anointed David looking for his sons to be one of the sons to be anointed as kings. And if you remember, we didn't read further down. Samuel said he won't sit down. So it's something that we're to do now. I'd like to turn to one more passage that we didn't have time yesterday is First Corinthian chapter 15 that we will add. That chapter ended with a comment. We talk about that. There were three parts to it. We talked a lot about the third part. In chapter 51St Corinthians 15, verse 58, is that therefore so? It's something that's summing it up for us. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. We spent a lot of time yesterday on the work of the Lord, but I'm thinking particularly the two words here that we often don't use. We just talked about holding fast a minute ago. Here it says be steadfast, steadfast. We don't hear that often, do we? And you know, sometimes it's a glorious sight to see someone working for the Lord. It seems to be so glorious to hear someone coming back in a foreign country. You know, we get, we tend to gravitate to that. But in the meantime, we forget there are those who are quietly in their own way, holding fast. So here is a species steadfast. Unmovable And brethren, I believed that if we do what we just talked about till he come, remembering him being steadfast in our assembly, in the reading, giving attendance to the reading. And we were exalted about continuing like the Corinthian, the the apostles of old in reading and in prayer. And I believe we can learn to be steadfast and unmovable and decide of the Lord. In connection David with. Give attendance to reading. There's an underground church in China and maybe only one person has the Bible so he has to read it to the rest. Every one of us has a Bible in our lap and how privileged we are. But that's not the case in many places, right? These are the things that should characterize us. Go ahead, brother, go ahead. I was just thinking these beautiful things that have been mentioned should characterize the child of God. And I just like to add one more and the the 1St chapter of First Thessalonians 2 verses at the end of the first chapter. There, for they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and notice the order of things here. And this again is something for us to to lay hold of in our hearts. And how he turned to God, first of all, turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God. And then notice that tenth verse and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come. That's what should be should characterize us, brethren, to be waiting for his Son from heaven. If everything that we did was in view of his soon return, what an effect it would have upon our lives, would it our decision. Excuse me, Brother Tom, I wasn't saying it. The question was asked. What does the hope of the soon coming of the Lord mean to you? And it wasn't answered, but I'll answer for myself. It means a settled peace, and you know that is worth everything. Turn to John 14 and verse 27. John 1427 The Lord says, Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. When you realize all is well with your soul, nothing can harm it. You're going to go to be with the Lord.

And forever. And that's what his soon coming really means to me. Everything is at peace with the world. Even let them do what they want. But the Lord is going to take us home and any moment it's a beautiful value to your soul. Brother Bruce, would you help us in the 5th chapter? Just give us a little outline of those verses. You don't have a lot of time. As you said. The times and seasons that are referred to here are really dealing with God's dealings with the earth. So now he's Speaking of a time that will take place after the rapture. And it's interesting to see in

that third verse that the he changes his the and speaks of they and them, which is third person plural. And so he's thinking of a class of people that are not the same class as what we've had in our parentheses in the end of chapter 4. For the end of chapter four, we have had we. We which are alive and remain now he's speaking about they and them. So it's a different class of people now those who will be under the the judgment of God in that time. I might just mention about the verse two. It says the day of the Lord. Maybe some of the young are asking what that is. It's not the Lord's day. The Lord's day is a different that's the the first day of the week. That's tomorrow, but the day of the Lord is a day when Christ will intervene upon this scene in judgment at the appearing as it says he'll come as a thief in the night. Five times you'll read about the his coming in connection with being a thief in the night, and each time it's his appearing under the rapture. And so it's the time when he will come back in judgment and deal with this earth. And the day of the Lord is not a 24 hour day as we speak of it to it's really. A period of time that will stretch throughout the Millennium. So it's one period of time when he will exercise His Lordship power in the earth. But then swinging on from verse four down to verse 10 or 11, we have it again, changing back to the first person plural. He says, but ye brother, now he's Speaking of the believers again, and he gives a practical exhortation here now about the fact that we are not connected with the darkness and so we ought to live as children of the day because that's what we are. Some very practical exhortations are given to us now from verse four through 10 or 11. When he speaks of the Lord coming as a thief in the night, which expression you get in the Gospels, it never has to do with the rapture. It has to do with the Lord Jesus coming back in judgment. Because there's two things that characterize the thief. He's unwanted and he's unexpected. But that's not what our hope is. We're looking for the Lord to come. We want Him to come, and we ought to, as we've been saying, expect Him at any moment. But there is a day coming when the Lord Jesus is going to come back to this world and He's going to assert His rights here in this world, and He's coming as a thief in the night. This expression, the day of the Lord, is in contrast to what you have in First Corinthians 4, verse three. If you notice in Mr. Darby's translation, he speaks about man's day. Man's day is now man is seeking to assert his rights. Not that God isn't in control behind the scenes because he rules in the kingdoms of the Most High, but man is asserting God is allowing man to assert his rights. Today. Man thinks he's pretty clever and arranging things on the world stage. This is man's day, but in contrast, there's a day coming called the Day of the Lord, when he's going to come forth from heaven and his rights are going to be asserted and owned by once looked up. The expression The day of the Lord. And every reference, it's the day of judgment, the day of darkness, a day of gloom, a day of trouble. So it's universally used that way, isn't it? It's constantly used that way and not another way. It's not. Certainly, as it's already been said, it's not the Lord's Day, it's the day of judgment.

And then there's the Day of God. The day of God is eternity, isn't it? I think that's done in the end of Peter, isn't it? And there's no nations then yes, it's God and men like it was in the very beginning. And righteousness dwells. We don't have very much in Scripture about that eternal day, but if you look at the Revelation 21 verses one through 8, you find the eternal states, and as you say, there are no nations there. It says He dwells with men. Beautiful nations have disappeared, and God dwells with men, and they accept him and receive him. And that's the character of the eternal state. That's the earth will be above that. Whenever you get nations, it's the Millennium and men, it's the eternal state. Wonderful. Even in the church, you know you have those 3 designations of the population of the world in First Corinthians 10. Give no offense either to the Jew or the Gentile or the church so that God looks down on the man mankind and He sees the believers as part of the church. You don't need to say I'm a Gentile Christian or that's a Jewish Christian. No, either a Christian or you're one of the other. What's interesting, Tom, in connection with that is from a heavenly standpoint. In the eternal state, the bride remains distinct, not beautiful to see because when he takes up the subject of the eternal state in those first few verses of Revelation 21, then you find the bride coming down adorned, the church coming down adorned as a bride for her husband. I think this beautiful, brethren, eternity is not going to be a melting pot for us. We're going to remain the bride of Christ. And when he delivers up the Kingdom to the Father at the end of the. Millennium, there's nothing more to be put down. The last enemy that's destroyed is death. There's nothing more to be ruled over in that sense. And then he delivers up the Kingdom to the Father, that God may be All in all. Why does he do it? Well, he delivers it up as a man, that God may be All in all. And then if I could just say this, brethren, He spends the rest of eternity devoting himself to His bride. Left tremendous to think of. And so on the earth there will be no more nations or distinctions like that, as we've said. But as far as in heaven, we remain a distinct entity, the bride of Christ. To enjoy his love and that special place of relationship for eternity and no deterioration. She still adorned as a bride, adorned for her husband. And you know, after 51 years, if you looked at our wedding picture, you'd hardly recognize us. The Millennium is for the vindication of God's character, but the eternal state is for the satisfaction of his heart. That's good. God will not rest until eternity. As long as sin is in the in the creation, He enters into his rest as we get in Hebrews 4, and it's really the eternity, and that's when there is the satisfaction of His heart. Is fulfilled the sun with his bride devoting his time and his you know there is no time then but his all his devotion of heart to her wonderful. There's a beautiful verse in the 72nd Psalm. Actually, the whole Psalm is unique. I'll read the 19th verse, don't need to turn to it. And bless it, be his glorious name forever, and let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen. The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended. Well, didn't David have more to say after this? Yes, he did. But what David had in mind is when Christ gets his place, there's no need for anymore prayer. That's beautiful. It's nice to see too, about the word of God has opened up and revealed to us the the mysteries that we talked about. We're in a such a privileged time that we in a sense, were given a blueprint of what's to happen now. What what would that do for us and how does that help us? We think about the the Old Testament sayings of old. You know, they didn't get to see any of this. They, they know of the general resurrection and that's about all the knowledge they know. Here it should make our heart rejoice, because we know from the beginning to the end. So we should first of all realize that God is in control of everything. We talk about death not long ago. We talk about being raised from the dead. We talk about we which are alive to be caught up together with them in the cloud and to be forever with the Lord. But what about right now? We talked about how we ought to live, but we should also acknowledge the fact that the Lord has control of everything.

That means life or death and even every event that happens. Do we acknowledge that there is a God who knows it all? You know, we, we sometimes get frustrated, but here it gives us a road map to remind us that our journey is almost over. You know, it's kind of interesting. On the way here, I usually don't fly, we do a lot of driving, but we flew from Toronto to here, which was supposedly A5 hours flight. That turn out to be 12 hours trip. But you know, along the way it was kind of nice that we know the US geography a little bit as we look out the window. It was nice to say, hey, we've gone past Chicago finally. We're about 1/3 of the way here. And you know, as the hours going on, we look out the window and in that time we couldn't really tell. Now we, we cheated a little bit with what this little gadget called GPS. I turned it on. It took a while and then it came on and show us that we're over Colorado. We go, wow, we're halfway home, and we knew that we were almost here. Now. There were turbulences, there were problems, and there were delays, but that was OK too, because we knew that we were almost here. In fact, when we got to the airport here, we waited an hour extra to taxi in, but that was okay too. It was a little bit frustrating, but it was OK because we know that this is just a temporary problem. But where is our heart, our object, and our hope? If our object is to improve this world, if our object is to find a better life for our family and ourselves, if our object is full of I in there as we mentioned about the pride before. And then we're in the wrong place. We need to look up and knowing that the time in this world is very short and the Lord also we have to

acknowledge that he leaves us here for very special reason. That's to glorify his needs. Therefore, let us not sleep verse six of our chapter. And so in light of this, he doesn't want us to be asleep to these things. We've spoken at a great at great length about sleep in connection with the sleep of the body of the Saints when we lay one. To rest. Their body sleeps, we think, to a physical sleep. We're going to lie down this tonight and we're going to sleep for a few hours. But I believe the sleep here is something a little different. Let's go over to Romans 13 and you'll get it. Romans chapter 13 and verse 11. And that knowing the time that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed the night is far spent the days at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light, and so on. But here again he's warning about the Saints sleeping, not physical sleep, but not sleep and death. But it's here spiritual sleep. They were asleep to these precious truths. Asleep to the fact that their salvation was nearer than when we believed. It's the salvation of the body here that we've been Speaking of in these meetings. But they were asleep to this. And what was it causing? It was causing it, causing them to live carelessly, causing them to set their heart on things in this world, Drunkenness and wantonness and so on. And brethren, if we don't have this truth before us every day, if we're asleep to the fact that the Lord is coming back. And that we're almost at the end, as Brother Dave said, we're going to live careless, too. And so in the midst of all this, he exhorts these Thessalonians, he says. I let me just read it again, verse six. Therefore let us not sleep as do others. And then he says, but let us watch and be sober. Are we really watching, brethren, for the Lord to come, not just waiting, but are we really watching for the Lord to come when we get up in the morning? Is our expectation, is our thought in the morning that before another sunset we may hear the shout and be called safe home when we go to bed at night? Is it with the realization that the next time we open our eyes may to be to be look into the face of the Lord Jesus as snatched away, having heard His voice and called away to meet Him in the air? That's what He wants us to be doing. He wants us to be looking, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing.

Not just waiting, brethren, but looking, not asleep to this precious truth, but awake to it, so that we live in a that we don't live carelessly, but that we live, as we said earlier, soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age. Would you allow that? Sleep is used in three different ways in this portion. The one you just read was sleep of indifference and seven days that sleep, sleep in the night is natural sleep. And then in verse 10, those who, whether we who died for us, whether we wake or sleep, that's the sleep of that. Very good. What's the last one? Did you say? Verse 10, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with them, whether we're alive or dead in the grave when he comes, OK. Number 78. I was thinking as him here too. As we sing it, perhaps we can look at what the hymn writer trying to express. Hymn #78 in the back of the book. I'm waiting for the Lord thy beauty to see, Lord. I'm waiting for Thee for thy coming again. Thou are gone over there, Lord, A place to prepare, Lord. Thy home I shall share at thy coming again whilst thou art away, Lord, I stumble and stray. Lord, O hasten that day of thy coming again. This is not my rest, Lord. A Pilgrim confessed Lord, I wait to be blessed at thy coming again. Hymn #78 in the appendix. Oh my God. Staying over 168. That's 168.

Chicago Conference: 1981, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-5

Reading

First Thessalonians chapter 5 beginning verse one. But of the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you, for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night, for when they shall say peace and safety. Then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. Brethren. Are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief, for ye are all the children of light. And the children of the day, we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober, for they that sleep, sleep in the night. And they that be drunken or drunken in the night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love and foreign helmet the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to us, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together within. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and they defy one another, even as also you do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them, which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you. To esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves. For we exhort you, brethren. Warn them that are unruly. Comfort the feeble minded St. hearted, support the weak. Be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil under any man. Whatever. Follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men. Rejoice several more. Pray without ceasing in everything, give thanks. For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise, not prophesying. Prove all things. Hold a fast that which is good. Abstained from all appearance of evil, and the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved lameless under the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We took up and we closed our last meeting spent mentioning some of these days and there's a marginal reading on 1St Corinthians chapter 4. Is it First Corinthians chapter 4 and verse three? But with me, it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you. Or of man's day, man's day. Then we have the day of the Lord that we looked at, and the day of Jesus Christ and the day of God. So there are these four days, aren't there? And this is man's day. This is when the mystery of God is going on, the silence of God. Some people often say, why doesn't God intervene? Well, he is, He will in the coming day they're asking for. Though if they want God to intervene and so this is man's day wherein lawlessness prevails and eventually it's going to be headed up in the man of sin with violence and corruption and falsehood there when he's revealed in Second Thessalonians chapter 2. So man's day will reach its height and the display that a manifestation of the man of sin, the lawless one well. We spoke about the day of Jesus Christ, the heavenly side of it, and then the day of the day of the Lord, the earthly side that relates to the earth and the judgments of God in it, the whole millennial scene, and then the day of God. Let's just mention this one other thing then. This is a time now when righteousness suffers. You and I have been made the righteousness of God in Christ.

And as we walk in the Spirit. And the new nature is energized and strengthened, and we walk for God's glory, righteousness produced in our walking ways. The world don't want us, doesn't love us, and the Lord warned us about that. This is a day then when righteousness suffers, when the Lord Jesus Christ comes, it says in Isaiah 32A, King shall reign in righteousness. Righteousness shall reign, then, in the millennial state of things. But then in Second Peter chapter 3, when it speaks about the day of God, it says righteousness shall dwell. Righteousness in the eternal state shall permeate everything. In the millennial day there will still be that wickedness in the heart of man. As we learn from some of those songs, they will render feigned obedience. Everybody won't be born again or saved in the Millennium. But in the eternal state that is Revelation 21, one to eight, it's the day of the fruition. Of John 129 Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, and when every trace of sin has been fully eradicated, when God is All in all, will have the eternal state, and righteousness will not only reign

but dwell. It's very difficult to do the will of God on earth at this time. There's opposition, there's temptation that we're exposed to. In the millennial time, it will be easy to do God's will on earth. I don't suppose you can object to this if you wish. That you would be praying in the Holy Ghost to pray Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven, because you would really be asking for judgment. And that's not a Christian prayer now. Is important in connection with these things. Recognize that in second Peter 3 where the day of the Lord is spoken of merging into the eternal day, the day of God. It's important that it becomes very practical when you get to verse 14 of that chapter. We might do well to look at it. Because as in other things in the Word of God, as we learn of these truths, they are to translate into action in our lives. And that's what we have in second Peter three, we have in verse 10 the day of the Lord as was referenced going on. Merging into the eternal day which is the day of God in verse 12. And the question of wherein dwelleth righteousness in verse 13. Verse 14. Wherefore, beloved? Seeing that, she looked for such things. Be diligent, she may be found of him in peace. Without spot. And blameless. We've been told of that which is God's purpose and that which is His counsel. Now we're being told that as we know it, it ought to have an effect. For instance, when Abraham was told of God's counsel regarding Sodom and Gomorrah. What did it produce in his heart? The simple thought that he was intelligent as to a matter that others were not intelligent about? No, it produced a godly concern for those that are without automatically, right away he began. But Lord, there are people in that city and and what if this and what if that there was a concern? Not only did he know what was coming for Sodom and Gomorrah. But it produced its effect. Now, as he had a godly concern for the welfare of those in that city, do you think it would have been suitable for him to live in a manner inconsistent with that concern? It all has to go together. It's our position in Christ. It's the glory of God to take of the things of Christ.

And all that relates to His glory and make it real to us by the Spirit of God. Then it ought to have its effect. It ought to have its effect in my life and yours in a diligent manner of living before God, reading the Word, and knowing how to walk in the good of what is told us in it. It ought to produce in our hearts even more the thought of concern for those around us who do not know the Lord Jesus as their Savior. And as we hear of judgment, two things should. Our hearts, dear brethren, one is the fact that that judgment is that which will produce. A circumstance in which finally, everything will conform to the holiness of God in every essence, to the honor and praise of the one to whom it belongs. And our hearts beat with praise to think of the blessed Lord Jesus acknowledged in every sense. But it should also produce a godly concern for those who would be brought into judgment and those who would be dealt with in that manner, of a holy One dealing with judgment consistent with His nature, and some falling under that judgment. There ought to be that dual concern, that rejoicing concerning the blessed Savior and that which would be His glory and praise. A real concern for those without. All that this might just press upon us because responsibility is clearly brought in here. It tells us here that this day of the Lord is coming as a thief in the night. Well, how does a thief come? Does he tell you he's coming? Are people aware that the thief is coming? It's not advertised. No, people wouldn't believe it. They wouldn't understand it. And when people hear this, that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming in judgment, they don't believe it. They don't understand it. They don't. Even though they might read it in the word of God, it's no advertisement to them. It's not a notice to them, it means nothing to them. And so people are not prepared for a thief, nor are they those who will be left behind when the Lord has taken his own to be with himself. They're not. They're not expecting anything else because it says. In the third verse, for when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction comes upon them, well, that would perhaps indicate that the people have a certain reaction to certain ones that are missing. When the Saints are all gone, perhaps they say, well, now we can have it all our own way. We'll have peace and safety. We can just go on as we please. But what happens then? Sudden destruction cometh upon them. This day of the Lord comes as a thief and comes suddenly. Or many people have been hurt by burglars. And they have broken into houses unexpectedly, and lives have been lost, and the property has been stolen and havoc has been rocked. When those thieves come, well, what will it be when the Lord comes as a thief? When the day of the Lord comes as a thief to them, it will mean destruction for them. It will not simply be their property taken or their lives. Taken. But it will be moral destruction, eternal destruction, because they got to meet the one who is the judge of all the earth, the one that's been prophesied of. That's the judge, and they're going to meet him right then and there on this earth. Thousands will have to stand before him. And he will scrutinize them all and he will divide them into two companies. And destruction will come upon them. And I don't know that we know all the details of the destruction that's coming on this earth when the Lord comes as judge. But it's going to be a solemn thing because they're they're real enemies here in this world that have risen up during the tribulation period. There's the beast, the false prophet, and all those that follow them.

All these wicked people, and when the Lord comes back, and we will accompany him down. From the skies, but we will be left up above this earth in what is called the New Jerusalem. But the Lord himself will come way down to earth and the enemies of the Lord will meet him. And they think, well, this is just a usual thing. We can meet him. We're it's just an ordinary warfare. But the Lord by the word of his mouth can destroy them all, and houses will be slain there and not battle. So much so that God has to call all the flesh eating birds from all over the world to come there to feed upon that flesh, to clean, to clean it up. What a destruction that will be. And even when they're saying peace and safety, everything is lovely now. Anderson that this word, that the Lord will come as a thief in the night. There should also be a voice to the conscience of a believer, Because if we do not walk with the Lord, and if we do not have before our hearts the coming of the Lord, if we get involved in the things of this earth or this world, the coming of the Lord will not be an event to us then as individuals, as if we had been waiting and watching and longing for Him. It will overcome us at such a time when we look the least for when it may surprise us. We do not wish it to be that way. But we cannot serve 2 masters. And if we get engrossed in the world, it detracts from the hope of his coming. And it may just be as a thief in the night. And the very thing that I believe was expressed on Saturday already. That there is that within us, when we get so occupied with earthly things, that says. Well, but I'd like to get married first think that was brought up or I like to 1St have this pleasure yet, and then I'll be looking for should exercises when we read it as a thief in the night that it might not be that in that character for us. We have enough in this chapter to tell us that the believer is of the day he is does not belong to the night nor to that event when the Lord comes in judgment, but. The character of his coming to us, let us beware that it does not overtake us by surprise. For that, for that purpose, to stir up the Saints, I don't see any reason why it should be put in this letter. But we have other scriptures in other places like in Hebrews 6 warnings there and then in Philippians also we have a warning to those who are earthly minded and who are enemies of the cross of Christ. And this is written to Saints as well. The Saints is vilified. So we have other scriptures along the same lines. That these things that are brought in in this way can be a warning to any that are going on carelessly because sometimes we have a big question mark in our minds as to certain ones, whether they're really the Lords or not. There is reading and watching and there's also in that same loop 12 and aspect that connects with the appearing and there are several young people that had asked questions. And we might just take a moment rather than to go over it because there might be other young people with the same thoughts. The statement was made earlier in these meetings regarding responsibility associated with the appearing and the simple fact that we are his own is that which is associated with him coming for his office. We have those two thoughts and one chapter in Luke 12. For in verse 37, Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching. Verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meet, and will come forth and serve them. Serving them. Just a simple thought of the servants being received and Him serving them. Not a question of what they are doing other than.

Watching. But now there's another aspect, and that's in verse 43. Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. That is responsibility for how you and I have lived during this life, and it is connected with Him and with the glory of that which will be his in the future. And that also brings us the first John chapter 2 and verse 28, first John 228 and now. Little children abide in Him, that when He shall appear, we may have confidence not be ashamed before Him at His coming. Now we're committed here to abiding in Him. The sense of that very position which must be ours consciously daily in order to walk as pleasing to Himself with respect to any aspect of servantship at all, there would have to be abiding in Him that we may have confidence. And then the verse that was referred to us yesterday afternoon. And 2nd Epistle of John. Mercy, look to yourselves. And we lose not those things which we have wrought. They will receive a full reward. Very simple thought I believe is that the blessed Savior wants His own with Him and so He will come for us. But then later, at least seven years later, there is the fault of him coming with us as his own. He's going to set up a Kingdom then and we associated with him and as our brother Anderson has been bringing out some of the detail related to it. But the real thought there is the setting up of a Kingdom and the acknowledgement of him, the Lord Jesus, as King of. Lord of Lords Now how does the thief in the night aspect fit together with it? Well, perhaps we can read Matthew 24 and it might just. Make it plain to us. Matthew 24 and verse 27 for as the lightning cometh out of the East. Shineth even unto the West. So also also the coming of the Son of Man. Now the lightning shining from the east to the West is apparent to people living on the earth, and the coming of the Lord and the display of glory will be apparent to those that live on the earth. The coming of the Lord for His own will not be as we've been enjoyed. He's joined Just take us to be with Himself because He loved us and He died for us and He's waiting for that. That we would all be with him. For his praise and for his honor and for His glory. But why does it say Son of Man here? Because it's as man beloved that he was rejected. It's this man that he was cast out. It's as man that he hung upon that cross. And God is going to be honored. That blessed man is going to be honored here. Not in some other planet. Here the Son of Man is going to be acknowledged. And magnify. Why would there be that coming as a lightning from the east to the West? Because it is identified with the glory of the Lord. It says in Psalm the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Why doesn't it say that about the earth? Because man is included largely in the Earth, and in general there's been much spoiling. But man's little intrusion in the starry heavens will never disturb the glory of the fact that the heavens of God will display the wonder of who He is. The language of Scripture. Carefully then, saying that lightning from the east to the West, controlled by God himself, and in God's perfect timing, and a display to the natural eye of man, surely there will be the coming of the Son of man.

And our delight in it has spoken up in Timothy unto all them. That love is appearing is connected with the fact at the very place where that blessed Savior was crucified and cast out is the very place, this earth where he will be honored and magnified, and everyone will bow right here. You and I identified with him, all, beloved brethren, as we think of identification with himself. Do we understand the concept of sharing glory? We probably don't. We probably don't because in scripture we little grass what God tells us about us to the glory in our identification with it. Look at Zechariah 14. If there's ever a place where you would be not expecting to find the end of verse five in this at all this chapter, you would not be expecting to find an expression. All the Saints with it. Let's read verse four and five is just have the connection to forest. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the West. And there shall be a very great valley. Half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the South. That is an actual cleavage, and the marvel of the one, the Lord of glory, the very. Right here and a cleft very apparent. Now you shall flee to the valley of the mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azel. Yeah, you shall flee like as you've fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah. That is all natural circumstance in respect of the fact that this is the Lord of glory, the one who created all, and then the Lord my God shall come. And all the Saints with thee. All the Saints with thee in this kind of a context. Yes, because the purpose and counsel of God does not only relate to His power. It relates to His glorious grace, and you and I are identified with Him in that. Beloved, it's the power of God that can command your attention and respect, but it's a loving kindness of Christ. It's the glory of God and His love toward us in Christ Jesus. That alone can draw my soul and yours. For all eternity. In identification with Himself, one with Him in glory. Amen. Identification with Him in a coming day of display, Yes, And with Him and like Him for His glory for all eternity. That's what the Word of God brings us all, beloved, that we might sense how we're linked with Him, and counsel and purpose. And plan and design and all to share with him in the coming day. One and 10. When he shall come to be glorified in His Saints, not by His Saints here, but in His Saints. Is that what you were talking about brother? Believe that's that's it. I like the picture that was given to me once on this. And it's important to see that it's the Lord in the midst of his Saints here. When he shall come to be glorified in or in the midst of his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, because our testimony among you was believed in that faith. That's Second Thessalonians 110. Sometimes Jewelers or brother Tony Kelly here can vouch for this. I think that Jewelers make up some very nice arrangements of gems. And I have heard that sometimes they will take a diamond, make that the center of a ring setting, and then put pearls all around it to display it. Well, the Lord Jesus Christ is the diamond in the center, and we will be around him. And what will be we be there for? To be looked at? No, to put the Lord Jesus Christ on display.

By Him, that's what we'll be there for, to honor and glorify Him, to set him off as it were, to put Him on display. And that's what we're going to be taking the glory for, to set the Son of God on display and as Son of man to put Him on display there. God has that one thing in mind, to display the glory of His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He was denied everything when He came the first time. But the second time. He's going to have his rightful place in the whole scene where he was rejected, and he's going to be set on the pinnacle to be observed and glorified by all the Saints around him. And of course the world that's left here will see that too, and they can't help but bow before him, even though they might not like to do it. The character that the Lord comes upon the world is as a thief in the night. You said our consciences should be exercised if walking carelessly, and that's the way it's presented in the Revelation chapter 3. The messages to the seven churches and we have the church Sardis, which historically of course would have been that period right after the Protestant Reformation and how that of course the Reformation itself was a work of the Spirit of God as it degenerated into state churches and became just dead and ceremonies and forms why it was in the hands of man. And. It says here in verse three. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. So I think there's the principle of what you mentioned in Sardis, that coming upon the world, he's going to come as a thief, but also. Hearing Profession. Of Christianity, which is makes a profession that they're the Lords and ostensibly waiting for his coming and walking so carelessly. And yet of course there's a a message to our own conscience too might point out to one other correction here and that's in Matthew 25, Matthew the 25th chapter and verse 13. We know that this is the Olivet discourse in Matthew 24 and 25. In response to the questioning of the disciples, When shall all these things come to pass? What shall be the sign of thy coming, even the end of the age? So the Lord unfolds to them in this whole passages 24 and 25. And I don't want to take too long and going through the unfolding of it. It's not an address, but just here in verse 13. Watch therefore, for, you know, neither the day nor the hour period. Isn't it the new translation? That leaves the rest of that First off, because as soon as you introduce the Son of Man, you're dealing with the appearing. The revelation and this passage here is talking

about the Lord's coming for us, for believers, and it is one other correction, verse 14 for the Kingdom of heaven. You notice that's italicized. That doesn't belong there. The last similitude in this gospel of the Kingdom of heaven is in chapter 25, the first verse. Then shall the Kingdom of heaven be likened unto. There are 10 similitudes of the Kingdom. There are six of them in Matthew 13, There are three in the intervening chapters, and this is the last one, the 10th one in the Gospel of Matthew. And it makes, it completes things, the Kingdom of heaven, the whole spirit of profession. It's time, it's sojourn on earth. And here it ends with the five wise and the five foolish. And the announcement goes out. And dear ones, we believe it went out in 1830 and 1840. And then there's a little interval of time and the Lord comes. And if our understanding of the whole scope of Scripture is right. We're down and Daniel chapter 2, that whole image, we're all the way down to the toes in the formation of the 10 nations of Europe. Then the stone cut out of them out without a hand, comes down and grinds the whole thing in the powder becomes a mighty rock and fills the whole earth, the Kingdom of the Lord. Isn't that where we are down to the formation of in Europe, of the nations? Is it Matthew 25, the little interval of time after the announcement has gone out? Behold the bridegroom isn't Revelation two and three. Isn't our understanding of it that we're all the way down to lay it to see in times of indifference and lukewarmness and that they can say anything about the person of Christ, the work of Christ and the need of blood atonement just.

Shove them under the carpet. Let's get together on one big world church. We're not cared about. We don't care about doctor and truth of the Word of God. Well, that's where we are. So what should our expectation be? Oh, our hearts beat high. The dawn is nigh that ends our Pilgrim story and thine eternal glory. All dear ones were on the tiptoe of expectation. We of our understanding of the Word of God is correct. The Lord is at the door. He's about ready to open. Believe with all my heart like Albert Hale, who used to say, I expect the Lord in my generation. And remember that man, he won the Christ. One time he was thinking he was up on a ladder and Albert reached up and shook hands with him and held on. And he said with a smile on his face to us, You know what I was waiting for? I thought that maybe this was the last one and the church would be complete and we would be caught away. Well, the the how the expectation, dear ones, that this afternoon. Or before even the gospel is preached. Tonight we might be home in the glory, but the Lord Jesus Christ and all of the redeemed together. Chair another saw dive in here. We'll have to turn to 1St Kings for that to find out. Verse in the second. Of Thessalonians in the first chapter verse 10 might return to Second Chronicles the 9th chapter for couple verses there Second Chronicles Chronicles 9 it says there in King Solomon made 200 targets of beaten gold, 600 shekels of beaten gold went to one target and 300 Shields made here beaten gold. 300 shekels of gold went to one shield and the king put them. House of the Forest of Lebanon, Stay First Kings 14, First Kings 14. There's the day of Reborn and the Glorious Departed. There we read in verse 25. It came to pass in the fifth year of King Reboom, that Sheshack, king of Egypt, came up against Jerusalem, and he took away the treasures of the House of the Lord, and the treasures of the King's house. He even took away all, and he took away all the Shields of gold which Solomon had made. And King Riabour made in their stead brazen Shields, and committed them unto the hands of the chief of the guard which kept the door of the King's house. And it was so when the king went into the House of the Lord, that the guard bear them, and brought them back into the guard chamber. Now here we learned what the Shields were used for. When the king went into the House of God, these guards lined up. Can't you see them in two rows? And the king passed through this line, and these Shields from either side were facing to the inside, where the king went through and his image would be displayed on those Shields. But why wasn't this told us in Solomon's day? Because the glory of that one who was to come. And who was going to be glorified in his Saints was so tarnished in Solomon's day. That the application isn't even mentioned, but now in rehab stay there, we have find out what they were used for. But the Shields who were made after the pattern of the first ones and who were, were used here as well. They consist now of brass. They do not reflect quite the same image now beloved, I wonder. When we come together on the Lord's day and we read in First Corinthians in the 11Th chapter, so let a man examine himself and so let him eat. Brethren, our approach into the Lord's presence is mixed with judgment, self judgment, and then it doesn't say, so let him stay away. But we have the way into His very presence, but it is mixed. Was self judgment, but that's part of our earthly journey when we meet the Lord in the in the glory S will be all gone and the targets of gold will once more be displayed and our blessed Lord Jesus as he comes along and he Saints as it were on either side will reflect his image. And those Shields of gold, as it were. I've enjoyed that thought and I would like to be corrected, but I just thought I'd share it with you better. I noticed here in the end of verse three that this destruction is called sudden destruction, cometh upon them as travel I'll upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. Now every mother here.

Has gone through this experience, can understand this. You don't escape. And they're not going to escape. But a solemn thing. They may want to escape, try to escape, but they can't. This destruction comes suddenly and they have to go through it. Running awful thing it will be to be left behind. And I trust there's not anyone in this room that will be left behind when the Lord comes to catch us up to be with himself. Because if you're left behind. Look what's before you. Something is coming that you can't escape. Impossible to escape it. And now he talks he's writing to the to the brethren at Thessalonica, the Saints there. But ye, brother, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief. Now they're the darkness is connected with. Being overtaken by that which is as a thief, darkness, well, they don't have eyes to see. They're in darkness. They can't understand anything they can't preserve. That's why it comes suddenly upon them as a thief. But those who are the Lords are something else. They're not in darkness, but that day should overtake you as a thief. You're not in darkness, you're all children are sons of light. And Sons of the day, I believe it should read Sons there because it's a character brought the force of the child of God. It's his character. Person who is saved is a child of light, and he is light in the Lord. The Lord Jesus Christ is, of course, the light. We read about him in the first chapter of John, that he was that light. We read about light and doctors in the very beginning of Scripture. And we see how there's a division, a separation between light and darkness. And so we come right down to this chapter and we find the same thing, that there's a separation between light and darkness. And light and darkness have nothing to do with each other, and it's quite a subject. That we have before us now the subject of light and darkness. God is is in the light, isn't he or he wouldn't be a child of God. But every child of God isn't working, isn't walking according to that light. We have that expectation in Ephesians don't walk as children of light. Just thinking about in Ephesians. Ephesians chapter 5 verse seven be not, be not ye therefore partakers with them, that is, with these children of disobedience that are in the dark, for ye were sometimes dark. That this is a remarkable statement because. It doesn't say here you were in the dark, you were darkness itself, the darkness of the soul before God. He were sometimes darker and it's a strong statement here, isn't it? But now are you light in the Lord walk as children of light for the fruit of the light. Really it's the fruit of the light, isn't it is in all goodness and righteousness and truth. Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. This reflects back upon ourselves, doesn't it? We prove it by walking in it. We prove it by being enjoying the fact that we are in the light and a testimony to God that we are light in the Lord. So it's an expectation to it says for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and fruit. Well, this is where we are. And the expectation is if you're in that condition, if you're in that state, let's walk in it, let's enjoy it. Let's be a testimony to the fact that we are in the lake because there are many that are walking, there are children of God, but they're walking in dark paths. They not enjoying this. So it's a it's an expectation for us, isn't it?

You're all here, it says in our chapter. You're all the children of light, the children of the dead. We are not of the night, nor of dark. Why should we walk in that condition if we're not of it? God wants us in His presence, and in His presence is only light, That's all. Is connected with darkness in the very beginning. The the light he called day and the night he called darkness, or the darkness he called night. The light was day, the darkness was night, and there was a definite separation there between light and darkness. And we notice here that he says to these Thessalonians, hear all the children of light and children of the day, light and day. He says we are not of the night nor of darkness. Apostle Paul puts himself in with that company of Saints at Thessalonica. And Speaking of themselves as a body that are like. They're they're not darkness. Nor of the night. Wonderful saying, wonderful place, wonderful, wonderful condition that we've been brought into. We can look back when we were darkness. We were children of darkness, children of the night and walking in darkness, and we didn't know where we were going. We were like blind people walking through this world. And then all of a sudden, the Lord dealt with us. We were convicted of our sins. We saw the Lord Jesus Christ to die for our sins, suffered on Calvary for us. And we felt the working of the Spirit of God in our souls. Joining us that we were sinners in the need of a Savior. We accept that the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. And there was a change. We became light. We became children of the day. Well, that's God's work. That isn't our work. People try to make themselves children of light, children of the day by their own works. Well, that's not possible, because way back in the beginning in Genesis, that whole work of light and darkness was God's work. And so it is now. It's God's work, the changes from darkness to light. To make us children of the day instead of the night. It's God's work. 130 gives us a wonderful verse that fits in here. The entrance of thy words giveth light. And giveth understanding unto the simple. I think that verse was quoted already. During a conference once before. But how wonderful to see that the Word of God is that which has given us life, and when by faith we were unable to accept it and brought us into the light. If that is so, beloved, I'm sure we all realize the importance of reading and meditating. This blessed book, the Word of God. That brought us into life, saved us and transferred us from darkness into light. And it also is that which gives us intelligent and understanding all along the vast pathway. First John 1 seven or three positive statements aren't there. It's as if we walk in the light as he is in the light. We have fellowship one with another in the blood of Jesus Christ. His Son cleanseth us from all sin. The if there is not a conditional in this verse, it's the fact there. If we walk in the light that is true of every child of God. They are in the light. It's not how we walk, it's where we walk every child of God. In the light, every child of God has fellowship one with another, though in its practical demonstration it might be restricted. Like we say before, we love all the Saints of God, and there is a fellowship that we've been called into with a father, with a son, and it's just as true of every child of God. And so there is that fellowship. And the blood of Jesus Christ has its continuing efficacy before God for every child of God. So there are three positive.

In that verse, we're all in the light, we all have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ positively provides for every spot and stain of sin, and I'll never lose its power. What characterized the law and the giving of the law was thick darkness. God dwelt in thick darkness, we read. But now he dwells in the light. And He is the light, and we walk in the light, the light of the full, complete revelation of God the Father in the Person of the Son. That God cannot be more perfectly revealed than He has been revealed in the person of His Son. We walk in the light of the full, complete, total revelation of what God is. He cannot be more fully revealed. That he has been revealed. And so in second John it says, Whosoever goes forward and abides not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. I remember talking to a man on the train one day, and I gave him all the precious truths of the Gospel. He says, Oh yes, Oh yes, I know that, I know that, but I've got something beyond that. And I said, dear friend, there's nothing beyond Christ. He is the fullness of God. All the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him. And he is the full complete revelation of what God is. And that's what the light is. And we walk in the light of that in the full blessed truth of it. In the second, second chapter of first John. I'd just like to read a few verses in the seventh verse. First, John, two brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which he had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you have heard from the beginning. Again a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing, should read, and the true light already shines. Now shines he that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother is in the darkness. Even until now he that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in the darkness, and walketh in the darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes. To be in the darkness and to walk in the darkness is to be what is the darkness. It's the ignorance and non revelation of God, and that's what characterizes the world through which we're passing. We were once darkness. Once walked in darkness, as our brother has said, we were darkness itself, but now we are light in the Lord. We walk in the light as children of light. And that which was true of him when he was down here as a blessed man, is now true in us. A new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you that which was true of him as a blessed man down here. The expression of. That same life is now been communicated to you and to me, and as we walk down here and live in the power of it, we express the very same life and become the expression of the very same life. That He is the essence of Himself, that eternal life that was with the Father and was manifested unto us. And so that which was true in Him is now true in us. How blessed that we. Eternal life, and that's all connected with being in the light and walking in the light. Maybe someone can add to that. What we have in Second Corinthians chapter four, we read how the light got in Second Corinthians chapter 4 verse six. For God who commanded the light shine out of darkness going back to creation has shined in our hearts. To give the light to the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in person vessels.

Why did God put the light, this divine light, into an earthen vessel? That the Excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. Put it into a weak vessel. That God might be glorified. That the Excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. We're troubled on every side, if possible, goes on to speak of difficulties, problems, trials. We yet not distressed with, perplexed but not despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed, always bearing about in the body the dying or the putting to death of Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our bodies. Now it's not only that the light is there, but it speaks of the manifest. Of the light, that the light, the light force of Jesus might be made manifest in our bodies. She's linked with the life. Well, Jesus was that life, and he is that life. That's what we read of in the first chapter of John's Gospel. And so we have the light, and we have the light for we which are. Always. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake. Well why? Why are we delivered to death? Moral death. Feeling that we have no connection with things here, reckoning ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin. Why, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh as long as. The elements of darkness are working in us and is if morally we are not up to the light, what happens? Well, the Lord has to deal with us. He allows different things in our lives to bring in this. Grace to us, that we might reckon ourselves indeed to be dead under sin, and so death. Is there that we might be delivered to it? Why that the life also Jesus might be made manifest in our bodies? So it's something like. I read this story but. Of how they used to make lanterns. In the old country, I don't know if they ever did it as pioneers here in this country, but they would use a large turnip. I suppose. Several inches in diameter and they would hollow out that Turner, scrape all the flesh out. Of the inside, leave only the skin or the shell of the turnip, Leave it all intact. And then they would put their candlelight inside of that tournament. Well, the thinner they could make the shell of that turn of the better light they would have, the better the light would shine through. And perhaps that's the illustration of what the Lord is doing with us, working with us, delivering us to death, delivering us to circumstances where we're dead to

South, dead to sin, reckoning ourselves dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Why is God working this way in US that that light He has put in US might shine out? This is what God wants. Because. The Lord Jesus Christ, who is the light is not here anymore. They wouldn't have him here to shine in this world. He's up there shining in the glory, but he's left us here to shine and that's why the Lord kills was us to thin us down as it were, so that the light can shine out and we don't like that process that the Lord is putting us through bird to brother Anderson and I've enjoyed the thought there in in second Corinthians chapter 4. For God, verse six. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our heart, not our heads here, but in our heart. And the purpose is to give, give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, that that it might be seen that this one belongs to Christ, that that light might shine out. Well then if it does, I was thinking if you turn over to the 26th of of the book of Acts. I was thinking of this too, that not only does it give the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, but it goes out beyond that. Acts chapter 26, verse 16 to get the but rise and stand up on my feet. This was to Saul. Remember who we have here in 2nd Corinthians 4. I have appeared unto thee for the purpose to make the administer and a witness.

Both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things which. In the which I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the people, from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among them, which are sanctified by faith. Me, but I enjoyed that thought that the light of God shone in his heart that it might shine out to the glory of God and have its effect upon those around to deliver them. There was that was the purpose, wasn't it Christ having his proper place first the glory of the Lord Jesus and then this shines out to others and they're brought into that same. Precious portion of light in the Lord subject of the contrast between darkness and light is so prevalent in Scripture, and if it is so important, we would expect to find it right away in the Word of God, wouldn't we? Well, we do find it because it says in Genesis One and the evening and the morning were the first day. But you and I don't refer to days like that. We refer to the day and then the night. We're tired, we go to sleep. The Scripture says the evening and the morning were the first day. Why? Because all God's purposes. And in a glorious blaze of a displayed light, even though you and I look around and you say the world is in confusion, how will God's purposes ever be worked out? We look at everything committed to man and we say that's in confusion. He'll say, well, how will that work out? Well, everything will work out according to the truth. For instance, when the Glory left Israel, it left in Ezekiel from the eastward direction, and that's where it went, and when it is pictured as coming back in connection with Israel in the future as restored. God's glory in connection with it, where does it come from? It comes from the east. The Tabernacle was to be facing east because clearly for us to understand how gracious of God that we can understand the sun comes up in the east, as simple as that. And it's depicting that light which has to do with what comes from God. And God said let there be light. Without that statement, there is no physical light. No spiritual light and nothing else but darkness. Isn't it interesting, beloved, that the Spirit of God is seen in Genesis chapter one, although it is not the Spirit of God that is credited with the subject of creation? Why is the Spirit of God there in chapter one? I believe that we'll see very clearly. The whole Godhead gloriously interested in that marvelous way in connection with this earth, which was to be the exact place for the display of all God's purposes and all God's ways. And so the Spirit of God is there. In Genesis 1, because it was going to be that very that very place. That very sphere where the blessed Lord Jesus would be the one to work out all God's councils and the Spirit of God so divinely interested in that place, because it is here where he takes of the things of Christ. And Speaking of that which is given to him, it says the Spirit shall not speak of himself, or perhaps from himself in the sense that it's that which is his to speak of. Because the Spirit of God gives us the Word of God, and in the Word of God we are told about the Spirit of God. So it is a question of the Spirit of God speaking.

From that which is all of the display of the Council of God, making it real in your height and mind. And there in Genesis 1, because God said, let there be light, now there was going to be that very sphere of associated with that which God is in himself light. How would it work out the purpose of God in Christ Jesus, the basis of blessing? The finished work of Calvary, the testimony to that finished work, raised from among the dead and a glorious man there, the Father's right hand in glory. The Spirit of God sent down, indwelling you, indwelling me individually, indwelling in the sense collectively at First Corinthians three and 1St Corinthians 6 and the light made real in our hearts, but in that general way, right away we find. Genesis 1. The evening and the morning were the first day, and do you think the Bible would end without the glory of that thought of the day? No, for if we simply look at the last chapter of the Bible, we find I am the root, verse 16. I am the root, the offspring of David. The flight and morning star, all beloved there would have to be authority and displayed power, the root and offspring of David. But power isn't the subject, it's the glory that's the subject. And so we therefore have the bright and morning star. Then verse 20, he which testifies these things. That surely I come quickly, and our hearts, beloved brethren, surely answer Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus. Jesus came in the second chapter of John. We have that same truth. First the poor wine and last the best wine. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Spirits mind from the very beginning. All right, like the Lord Jesus Christ is. Spirit of God is connected to that light. And God has worked to put the light in us that we might be in harmony. In light with that light. And that that's the only thing that can shoot God. Shall we see how out of harmony darkness is with that whole purpose of God? And this should speak to souls who are not like in the Lord, but are still darkness, that you might leave in the Lord Jesus Christ, that that light might come into your heart, and that you might be light in the Lord and be in TuneIn harmony with God and all his purposes. Because if you're not, you're going to miss out the most wonderful thing that ever was that we come in. With the only light they'll ever see is what is radiated through you and through me. They may. They may never read the Bible. They may never. Enter to into a place where they're under the sound of the Word, that as you live, Christ in the life of Christ in you is manifested before their eyes. That very light which shot in all its blessed brightness in Him when He was here, will shine in you. And so it's so important that we realize that God has put us here to be a light and to manifest the life of Christ. In order to that, the vessel must be broken. And that's what we had before us in 2nd Corinthians 4. The vessel has to be broken, that the life that is within, which is the light, might shine out of light, isn't it? Well, God is the source of light. We now are, and now are ye light. In the Lord, the only way that we can reflect that light is in the Lord that is going on in communion with him. So it's we are reflected light, He is a source, and when we're occupied with Christ, we're in the right place before God, aren't That's the source and that's reflected light. The autumn way, the only way the moon can shine give light is when the sun shines on it, because the light is only reflected light. So sometimes there's an eclipse, and an eclipse is made by the earth getting between the sun and the moon, and then the moon isn't reflecting much of any light at all. You might see some of the fringes.

Well, I believe the moon is a picture of the church. The Son picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. And if the earth or earthly things get in between US and the Lord Jesus Christ, how much light are we going to reflect? There's an eclipse then where we don't want to be eclipsed, Christians or light fares. We want to be in the sunlight of His love as we are exhorted in Jews, keep yourselves in the love of God. Walk in the light of his love. Be occupied with his love, walking in the good of that love. And when that light is shining into our hearts in fullness, then we can shine forth in reflective way. We must remember that that the light we give forth here is only reflection is the light of the Lord Jesus Christ and how

He loves to shine through us. And so we need grace to judge the things here that they might not get in between US and the Lord. I believe that's why John wrote in the end of his epistle. Little children, keep yourselves in the love of God, keep yourselves from idols, keep yourselves from idols. Because those idols he knew would get in between them and the Lord, and then they wouldn't be giving forth light. Because in that very official, he speaks of God as being not only love, but light. And so it's important. To the apostle John, and of course to God and the Spirit of God. That we should not allow anything to come into our life as an idol to make more of it than the Lord Jesus Christ that would rob us of reflecting that light and shining for Him.

Chicago Conference: 1981, 1 Thessalonians 5:6

Reading

First Thessalonians chapter 5 and this verse as an introduction. For yet a little while. That shall come, will come, and will not tarry. Hebrews, 1037. And in chapter 5, beginning just where? Verse 5. Ye are all the children of light and the children of the day. We are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. And lay the sleep sleep in the night. And they that be drunken, or drunken in the night, But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an element the hope of salvation. Well, God has not appointed us to rise, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us. That whether we wake or sleep, we should live together within. Wherefore come from yourselves together and edify one another even as also you do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work sake, and be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, Comfort the people minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men, See that none render evil for evil unto any man. Whatever fall of that which is good both among yourselves. And to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. And everything gives thanks for this. Is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. French do not restore. Despise, not prophesying. Prove all things, hold fast that which is good. Abstained from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless under the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us. Agreed, all the brethren, with an holy Kish. I charge you by the Lord, that this official be read unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to be with you. Amen. On the 1St that bring before us. Darkness and light and night and day. Those that are connected with either one. And that sixth verse or fifth verse says you're all the children of light. Fossil was addressing the Saints in court, leavers and the Lord Jesus Christ. My faith in the Lord Jesus Christ Christ coming into their hearts. They had become children of light. Actually the word should read Sons of light. That's what's in the margin because. It's true that as children. We're light in the Lord. But the thought I believe here is a manifested character, and Son brings before us that. The manifested character of the one who's a child of God. And so it's important that we be exercised about this, that we manifest that we are children of light, sons of light. And so it goes on then in verse six, to give an exhortation. Therefore let us not sleep.

Sleep. It's interesting to see that sleep is brought before us. And they in the portion of scripture we've had before us these three days three different ways sleep is brought before us first as we. Had back in the 4th chapter. Those that sleep in Jesus. And in verse 15 them which are asleep. Well, that's referring to death. That is the sleep of the body, not the sleep of the soul, because there's no such thing as soul sleep, but it's the body that's asleep. And so some of these Saints and corns have died, and the rest were worried about them. Now what's happened? Now? What's their portion? What's going to happen to them? Well, they were asleep, the body was asleep in the grave and that's how it's referred to even as the Lord said about Lazarus, Lazarus sleeping. Well, we know he was dead and the Lord talked about raising him out of sleep. Well, it meant raising him from the dead. So that's one way sleep is used in scripture referring to death. But for the Saint of God asleep because. It's just like when we sleep at night, we expect to wake up again. And when we go to sleep, what the are put to sleep by Jesus? We expect to wake up again. The Lord is going to awaken us. And that's of course what we have brought before us in that course of scripture. The dead are raised, living, are changed, and caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Well, now we have sleep rock before us in a different way. Therefore, let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. Well, that's referring to a moral condition. That is the spiritual condition of us as children of God. And so this could be spoken of as moral sleep, referring to our state of soul, our spiritual condition. What condition are we in? Are we sleepy Saints? Well, we shouldn't be sleepy Saints, because we're children of the day. We're sons of light. And people don't usually sleep in the daytime, they sleep at night. Sleep is connected with night. But being awake, spiritually awake, is connected with being in the light in the daytime. Well, it's it must have been a striking thing for these Thessalonians to hear something like that. Have it read to them. But then there's another. The way sleep is spoken out here in verse seven, for they that sleep sleep in the night, well that's ordinary sleep is spoken of. The apostle Paul uses ordinary sleep as a figure of of moral sleep, a low spiritual state. And they that are drunken are drunken in the night, Well my wife should he connect that with with the sleeping. Well, sometimes when Christians get sleepy, they fall into bad ways, and that's something to be exercised about. Chapter 5 and verse 14. In that connection, there's an admonition and exhortation there while writing to the Ephesians in chapter 5 and verse 14. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleep us, and arise from the dead. And Christ shall give thee light. Walk circumspectly, and not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. And so here's an exhortation, and may we press it on our hearts here this afternoon. Have we fallen into a low spiritual state? Has lethargy come in into our own souls? All dear ones, In view then of the fact of what we've had before us, the Lord Jesus Christ. Coming at any moment. Oh wait, thou that sleepers arise, as it were, from among the dead. It's well enough that the people around us, those are dead in trespasses and sins, but it's not a time for us to fall in amongst them, as it were. So it's time to awake out of sleep. It's time to read the word of God. And read these things and meditate upon them, and just fill our souls with the Word of God. There's precious ministry, remember in the book of Ruth where it says that there's food and despair. Naomi heard the word, the back boom. There was plenty of food in abundance. And one brother says there never has been such an abundance of food on the shelf for the people of God. Good sound ministry as there is in this day since, you know, 1800, we have an abundance of good sound.

Ministry that are build our souls up. So awake, let's read the word of God. Let's read good solid ministry and be edified and built up. Let's arise and pray all. There's so much need about us. The servants of the Lord need to be sustained. There's the unsaved that we need to arise in the night and cry out for the loved ones. And so arise awake and let's be diligent in our prayer life. And then how about the visitation? Aren't there some old folks homes to be visited or aren't there some dear Saints of God that are shut in? Oh, there's so much yet that we can do each one. Let's not all, let's not leave it all to the front line. While we say that belongs to brother so and so. He's a laborer. He's a semi laborer. Now

there's something for all of us as believers. And so awake, awake and read. Awakened, pray awake and visit. Well, you say maybe I can't do that. Well, can you write a letter? Can you get somebody'd address and you know they're going through a trial and a nice comforting word some that you're interested in them all. There's so much if we look to the Lord that he can guide and direct us to do for his glory. And not to go beyond all we've had in the chapter, but just noticing that I was noticing as it was read. Verse 24. Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also live, who also will do it well. Here we find. The standing that we're in, don't we? God is going to bring us into that place of blessing and glory. But what we referred to back there as let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober. That's a state, isn't it? Our state and standing are quite different. Our standing is absolutely perfect in Christ. Every child of God has been cleansed by the precious blood of Christ. He's a child of God by birth into the family of God. And that standing is absolutely perfect. But the state ebbs and flows, doesn't it? So we need to be exhorted there. Therefore, let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. This brings before us that state of soul is necessary to enjoy the fact that we are children of God. And so I just thought of the just referred to that verse as. Connected with the fact that this had what would have to do with our absolute standing faithful is either calleth you and he's going to do it. He's going to bring every child of God safely home. God is going to do that and but he wants us now to be in the enjoyment of it, doesn't he as someone has said that the mistake and standing is like a like a thermometer, which is very we all are familiar with thermometers. Of course, now it's Fahrenheit and a different change in this but however. Those numbers on there are like our like our standing. They never, never change. There they are. But that our state is like that little red mercury that flows up and down. Sometimes it's down very low and sometimes it's up very high. Well, there's that's the difference, isn't it? But God always puts us, shows us where he puts us as to our standing before him. And then he says, now act upon that. As to your state. What is it that brings the liquor up in the thermometer? Its warmth and heat, isn't it? We need to keep ourselves in the love of God, keep ourselves in the sunshine of his love. That Mercury might be up there where it ought to be all the time. So if there's failure, it's our, it's our fault, isn't it? The what our brother Anderson is referred to sleep brought before us in these three different ways. How faithful God is to to bring these things before us and to expose it to show us what he has for us. God is faithful, I think.

Paul delights to use that expression, doesn't he? God is faithful and he's going to do it as we find here. Sleep brought before us in three different ways. That there be no mistake about it. Faithful to us, one who is asleep is unconscious. It is possible for us to sit here this morning. We're not sleepy, but we might be here unconscious. What has been said? And so it says, let us not sleep. But let us watch. The word watch would suggest to be on our guard, to be alert, be on our guard. A watchman that has a habit of sleeping with when he should be making his rounds is not fulfilling his responsibilities. So you and I are left here to be a testimony to our Lord Jesus and we need to be awake. You need to be conscious of His love and of His claims upon us and our responsibility towards Him. He has given us His word to instruct us and how important that we take heed to it. We've had the Lords coming brought before us during these past three days. And what a wonderful comfort it is. But there's so many things around us in the world today. That can have effect upon our lives that we might be unconscious as aware of the fact that the coming of the Lord is drawn up. So James would remind us of the coming of the Lord is draw not so how important that we be awake ever consulate is love be on our guard. You know a thief comes. At the time when he expects others to be asleep, he doesn't come to rob when he knows that, knows he wants to rob are alert and awake. He choose the time when people are unconscious, and he does his work well. The enemy of our souls is looked at as a thief and a robber, and how he'd like to rob the sinks of their joy. The Lord. The robbers of our testimony, and so unequal to be awake. To be on our guard. I watched, talked to a brother who was a watchman and he took me around. And he said, Brother, I get sleepy and he pointed out a little spot where he goes. And has his sleep well in that particular case is rounds roadside. So you had a table. He said, Brother I, I sleep on that table. But he says before I lay down, I put all these chairs around so that the thief has to move those tears to get at me. Well, the next time I visit that area I found out he was no longer what? Oh, we need to be on our guard. Why was on his guard? Why? He's open to the attacks of the enemy. He brings before the same thought. No doubt in his first letter, First Peter chapter one. And. Verse 13. Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind. Be sober. And hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation or the appearing of Jesus Christ. Well, this is really what? We're talking about here in our portion of Scripture, First Thessalonians. It's about that time when there will be the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ appearing of the Lord. It's the thought of the day of the Lord has been brought before us in the first verses of chapter 5. And. This time is connected with rewards. And the apostles who wrote they were concerned for the Saints of God, Well it was the Lord Himself expressing concern for the Saints through these men. And just to think of the Lords concern for us, He wants us to be ready. He wants us to be watching. He wants us to be sober. He wants us to gird up the loins of our mind.

And hope to the end for the grace that's to be brought unto us. After revelation, after his appearance. But what grace are we going to see there? We're going to see how his gracious rock, no doubt, in many ways. On our behalf. Grace that saved us. Grace that kept us. Grace that enabled us to do some little thing for Him, to please Him, because without Him we can do nothing. The Lord already has told us that He told that to His disciples, and we can't do anything on the Lord unless the Lord ministers grace and mercy to us to help us in every time of need. So there's going to be grace brought to us at the appeared. Well, I believe we'll see the grace that's been ministered to us all along the way. And at that time our hearts and our mouths will be open to praise Him as we have never praised Him before. And it's put before us as an incentive. It seems that we're going to see all the grace the Lord has ministered to us all along the way. When we get to the end of the road, when we stand before him and rewards are meted out. Well, it stirs us up to think about that. And so we have an incentive before us because we really want to hear His well done, our good and faithful servant, don't we? We want to hear that well done. Now, the reward may not be anything especially tangible. Or material or anything like that. But just to hear is well done is not going to be enough. Well done thou good and faithful servant, but we'll just have to turn around and give Him all the praise and glory for all that's been done, because we have to acknowledge that He was. By his grace, it was done. We couldn't do anything by ourselves, but we are given points of responsibility to watch and to be sober and so on, and the Lord brings that before us just to stir us up, to remind us things that we can do for the Lord. There's a brother that prays daily. Lord, to keep me out of the way, so thou canst work. As a state of soul, that's necessary in connection with what is suitable in the way of serving the Lord. Years ago. A brother. Was attending the general meeting in Smith's Falls. During that great heat wave that invaded Canada. And he called my attention to a Psalm. It might be 105. He had an exercise about serving the Lord. And he didn't feel free about it. There was a lack of release. And. A word to go. This is in some 105 verse 17. He sent a man before them. Even Joseph. Who is sold for a servant? Whose feet they hurt with feathers. He was laid in iron. And the margin reads, his soul came. Into iron. Until the time that his word came. The word of the Lord tried him. So in the exercise. In my own personal history. There was a time when it was not suitable. And it was necessary to be home. My soul was laid in iron. The brother that referred me to this verse is our late brother Kohler.

I believe that. Probably the saddest thing that we can witness in Christendom today. Is the latitude and Aryan spirit that pervades everything. Laodicea, the days of indifferent ISM. And that, I believe, is what this moral sleep is, is being indifferent to the things of God. Beloved, if there is one thing that is worth our everything, it's this precious book. It's the Lord Jesus. The diligent soul shall be made fat. Are we diligent in the

things of God? I remember a young brother speaking to an older once and he said I give the world to have the peace you have. And the older brother said that's what it cost me. Buy the truth and sell it not. Paul had to lament in his day and he spoke of Timothy. He said I have no man like minded who will care with genuine feeling how you get on, for all seek their own things, not the things of Jesus Christ. And I think of the address of the Lord to Laodicea, and let's turn to it in Revelation 3. I think it's good to have it before us. Revelation 3. Verse 14 Unto the Angel of the Church of the Laodiceans, right? These things say at the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. He was the Amen. He was the confirmation of all the promises of God, of all the word of God. The way he presents himself to this assembly is what the assembly ought to be for him in this scene. The assembly ought to be a little echo of what he was the Amen. The assembly ought to be a faithful and true witness of what has been committed to our trust. The assembly ought to be a true expression of the new creation, as the Lord Jesus was the beginning of the creation of God. It doesn't refer to the first creation, it refers to Him as the head of a new creation. All of these traits that the Lord Jesus presents Himself as to this assembly is what the assembly ought to be for Him. The assembly should be the confirmation of all God's Word. A faithful and true witness, and a true expression of that new creation into which we've been brought in Christ, risen and glorified. But what was there? He says, I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou word called or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, I will spew the. And so then, because thou art Luke warm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. The Luke warm condition that pervades Christendom today is the final state of the assembly, and I think of Pauls word to the Romans in the 12Th chapter. As to diligent zealousness, not slothful, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. All what is so sad is to see young brothers listless. Unconcerned anyone? Any of the Saints, unconcerned about the things of God just going on in this moral sleep? Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from among the dead, and let Christ shine upon thee. It is high time that we awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believe. All how we need to be stirred up to be in the word, to seize every opportunity to be in the in the meetings of the Saints or the Lord is in the midst where we can gather fresh precious truth for our souls and meditation so lost today. Meditate upon these things Paul said to Timothy.

That thy profiting may appear to all. How we need to ponder, to consider as we go through the day our lives. And I know what it's like and and every one of us knows what it's like. We're so weighted down with things down here. I remember an old brother said to me some years back, He said it takes me an hour or two when I get home from work just to be able to rest in the Lord's presence. You know this is a day of so much activity. You walk into the home, a hymn is being played. Cassettes are on. A message is being listened to all things which have their place. But what do we know about just being alone with the Lord quietly, just sitting quietly in his presence, taking a walk at night, just you and the Lord and talking with him, taking him by their hand and saying, Lord Jesus, let's have a talk together. I want to commune with you. We don't know what that is. I'm talking to my own soul. The sweetest moments I had in my life is when I've done that. Try it. Get equated with that Blessed One. Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace thereby good shall come unto thee. Oh, we've lost something. We're so busy doing things. We need to sit in His presence, to be with him, to walk with him, to talk with him, to enjoy him. The Lord himself shall come. To know the way. Jehovah said there's a place by me. Stand here upon the rock. There's a place by me. I've enjoyed that little expression there in in Exodus. I believe it's the 33rd chapter. Well, that's that's knowing him, that's being near the Lord Jesus, isn't it? In that sense, He said there's a place by me, let's walk together and it's solid ground, something that can't be moved. Charles Kohler a little bit ago and he was sitting in a chair one time back with a look of heaven upon his face and a sister wondered he till 5-10 minutes went by and she says I wonder if something wrong with him. So she went over and she says Brother Kohler, are you all right? He looked up. Oh yes, he says. I'm just sitting here letting the Lord love me. In contrast with enjoying the Lord, His communion with Him and His thing is that which is found in the other word, the lack of sobriety. When we are not sober, we are intoxicated, and this is what we find to be true. On the other hand, that the things that really should fill our hearts are not there, and we are turning to things that bring on a superficial excitement. Thinks that are not really a happiness in the things of the Lord. Would you agree with that better? That's right. About that over in Ephesians. Ephesians chapter 5 and verse 18. And be not drunk with wine. We're in a success, but be filled with the Spirit. Well, the expression that be filled with the spirit is somewhat similar to the other expression drunk with wine. When a person is full of wine is under the power of that the alcohol spirit. There he acts in a certain way and can go to excess. But to be filled with the Spirit is to be under the control of the Holy Spirit. That's an entirely different thing. I think it's ironical that the alcohol and liquor is called spirits. Spirits. Well, it's a spirit that brings on a condition that's all together contrary and different to and opposite to the result of being under the control of the Spirit of God. When we are yielded to the Lord Jesus Christ. And submissive to His word, were under the control of the Spirit of God.

And even in that. We go on in a sober way, a serious way. And we won't go to excesses there either because we can go to extremes and become unbalanced because one part of the fruit of the spirit is temperance or self-control or balance. And we need that very much. And I know young people can be very enthusiastic and we like that. They can be very jealous too, and that's commendable, but all has to be under control. And we can go to one extreme or the other to the other. We can become sleepy and having no care attitude, be Luke warm, cold and indifferent to Christ and to His word. Well, that's the other extreme. But I think there's a balance that we can have and the Spirit of God, God by his Spirit will help us to be balanced. To keep under control and be on an even keel all the time. Were on the ocean several times and one time we got into the Bay of Biscay on our way back from the Congo. And it was an awful storm. And my wife thought that surely every time the ship knows down, it was going down. Well, that ship was not on an even keel. It was very unbalanced one way or the other. One time we could look up and we could see the bow, the boat way up here. The next time we look down, it was way down there. We don't want to be like that. We want to stay balanced, going on with the Lord if we go on hand in hand with the Lord. And seek grace to be under the power of the Spirit of God. He'll help us. And we look to the Lord for grace and mercy to help us in our time of need. He will help us in these things so we don't go through extremes. We're glad to see younger brothers exercise about really taking hold of things and and doing the Lords work. But I would counsel them to just look to the Lord what hand in hand with the Lord and seek to be under the power of the Spirit of God and His word and the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Time that that fruit of the Spirit might be manifested. Temperance, Balance. He perhaps? Find 3 attitudes toward the Lords coming. If we notice in Matthew 24. Verse 48. But, and if that evil servant shall say in his heart. My Lord delays his coming. And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken. The Lord of that servant shall come in the day when he looketh not for him. And in an hour that he's not to wear off. And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Now here's the attitude of saying my Lord delayeth his coming. And he begins to make use. Of present. And opportunities for the indulgence of what is referred to in the way of being drunken with wine. My Lord delays his coming. That's what he says in his heart. He knows about it in his head. This is a man of profession. And there are evil servants. And this shows us the end. Of the man of profession, because he'll get his rightful appointment when the Lord returns. He's a loser. Now we have another attitude in Second Peter chapter 3. And there we read of those.

Through question. The reality of the promise of the Lord's return. The second Epistle of Peter. And chapter 3. Verse 4. Where is the promise of his coming? We don't believe that. This is the man of reason. His reasoning is to put ahead of. God's revelation to man about His Son. About his having come into this world, and that he will come again the second time, without sin unto salvation. This is the reasoner. And we have. Quite a rank of those that reason about these things and they declare that everything is just as it was in the days of our fathers and this is to be expected and we've got to work ahead and all things will continue. And that's the normal state of Christendom. There's reason mixed up with these things. With the precious truth, they say we've got to win the battle. Somewhere down the line we'll come out all right. There'll be enough of the. Word and the preaching and the Church will become enlarged, and through that the Kingdom will eventually be brought into existence. And so the Church goes through the tribulation. But that's not within the range of the revelation that God has given to us in His precious Word. He's coming again. A little while we read. So does the attitude of the man of reason toward the Lord's coming. Is it so? Nor we can't pay any attention to that. We've got to move ahead and do the work that's necessary for us to do here in this world, wherever we are. And we need the gospel, a gospel that will help us. In our purposes and plans. But now let's notice the. Refreshing. Prospects of our Lords coming in the 22nd chapter of Revelation. Here it's different. And the apostle John. Who was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day? After going through all the series of those solemn judgments which will bring the earth into line. For the reign of Christ. He closes up in verse 16 with this very personal name. As he's under the spirit of revelation. I, Jesus have sent mine Angel, to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the roots on the offspring of David. And the bright and morning star. And dropping down a little farther. In verse 20. He which testifies these things sayeth. Surely I come quickly. The last message. To the church. To the Lord's people. And here's the man of communion. The man of God. One was who was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day? And he's ready with the right response. With two amens. Amen. Even so as the second one. Come, Lord Jesus. So we invite the Lord to come. We do not pray for him to come.

But we shall be glad. When he comes and glad to in the prospect of watching and waiting for him, you know there was a brother who had a wife that wanted to drive the car. All right, take a drive. She left. Wheel of the vehicle. He waited. She's gone a while. She hadn't come back. Then he was watching. Waiting and watching for a return. And so we need to be waiting and watching. For the blessed Lord in his return and be able to say readily, and John was old, maybe 96, Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus. We have something else putting on the breastplate of faith and love and foreign helpment, the hope of salvation. Now we know in Ephesians chapter 6. Faith is connected with the shield. Shield of Faith. Why is it connected with the breastplate here? You got to start on that, Brother John. Seemed that it might be. Two aspects of the same battle. In Ephesians chapter 6 is the shield of faith. We know what a shield is is worn on the arm. And it speaks of it. There's warding off the fire darts of the enemy. And it can be moved around. Protect various parts of the person himself. But here it seems to be the vital part that's before us, the heart. And when it's the coming of the Lord and the appearing of the Lord that's before us, the heart is surely touched by that. And that's the only concern we have. What is the concern of the heart? But it's the breastplate of faith as far as the heart is concerned. In our hearts, we trust the Lord to take care of us until we're taken home to glory. And we don't get careless then when we're in that attitude of dependence on the Lord, we don't feel independent on Him. We feel very much dependent upon Him, and we're looking to Him right in our hearts. We want to be preserved in our hearts until the Lord come. Linked together here with. Love, faith and love. It's interesting to see that the three things that are brought together many times in Scripture, faith, hope, and love, are brought together here again. So there's love, too. In that breastplate. Well, our hearts need to be kept in the love of God too. We need the breastplate on to protect us, keep us, keep us going on in faith, dependence on the Lord, and in love toward the Lord. Thinking about His faithfulness wants us to be faithful to Him and go on in faith. Thinking about His love makes us love Him more. We want to go on in His love. Precious to see that reminds me of. Incident and I was told of a ship coming in the harbor. There are two sailors on that boat. And with all the rest, they were appearing over the railing. And one said to his friend. My wife is going to be. I think I see her right out there in the frontline. On the K, waiting for me, watching for me. The others, with a sad smile, said. My wife isn't out there in the front. He's not waiting for me there.

This happened before, he says. I come home. And went to the door. And knocked on the door to open. There comes my wife. She is. I'm waiting for you. Yeah, but Jim's wife was watching for him. As the heart engaged. And I believe this is true. The best place. Of faith. The Lord Jesus expects you and I to watch. If we're just waiting. Oh, you come. Anytime is all right. I'm ready. But to be out watching, it's a different stories than engages our affections. That are coming on us quickly here. The Lord is going to have us out of this seat to Himself before this world runs into that terrible fullness of its wickedness and evil. That's how much His love is toward us when we're talking now about our love toward Him. And the thing that really keeps us, I was thinking to follow Solomon as we see that same event, but it isn't in any way an expression of violence or a quick matching outdoor. Catching up, it says here in the second chapter. 1St, 3:00 and 1:00. The bride is occupied with the love of the bridegroom and in verse four it says it's bad and over me what's love. So as she thinks of that blessed event, we do not have any big violent action. There are things that's the way what she says. Verse 8, the voice of my beloved. The holy cometh and she has that thought. And so in verse 10 she says, my beloved faith is set up to be rise up my love, my fair one. Come away well, She's watching, she's anxious, she's doing whatever is necessary. Completed when he calls. But how? How wonderful it is for us. We're waiting. We have every assurance in our heart that he himself is coming. And so the plot is a very impression thought of waiting and knowing that when he comes, it'll be that gracious word toward us right up my love is fair one and come away within the chapter of of Thessalonians, the 4th chapter that we're thinking of the day of the Lord coming after and the terrible conditions that we're going through now. It says we're caught up, we're snatched out of this scene. That's the Lord's thought toward us. Is going to happen himself before it gets so terribly bad. And we're not occupied, of course, with escaping this world. That is why we're looking for it coming just because of his love for us as we've asked the son of Solomon. So it's a completely different attitude incident, a completely different way of we hear of hearing his voice when we think of it as Father Solomon. That's what we were speaking. Our hearts are warm towards him. We have that wonderful expectancy as the bride and we are not only waiting, but we're watching for that event now with a, with a very preciousness in our heart is that anticipation. Connection with the faith, hope and love. Let's go back to the first chapter and verse three First Thessalonians. For all speaking to them says, remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father. And oftentimes the the end of the chapter has been seen in connection with those three things, the work of faith. The labor of love and the patience of hope. Notice in verse 9. How you turn to God from idols. There's the work of faith. They turn to God from idols, the labor of love to serve the living and true God, and the patience of hope to wait for his Son from heaven. And also in another passage in First Corinthians 13, we don't have to turn to it. Familiar to us, it says, and now abideth faith.

Hope, love these things. But the greatest of these is love. Why? Well, one day faith shall give place to sight. Hope shall be fully realized. It's deferred now, a deferred certainty. Hope will be realized, but love is the very nature of God and it will go on, on and on into eternity. One other thing or brother. Brought before us Revelation chapter 22. And the end of it. And not to be clever, but can we give you just a three piece in which the way the Bible ends? The last Promise. Surely I come quickly. The last prayer Amen. So come Lord Jesus and. Last provision while

we're waiting, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. The last prayer. The last promise, first the last prayer, and the last provision for its grace that has sought and found us. Grace that we need every step of the way. This faith, hope and love. I believe it's at least 10 times brought before us together in the New Testament. Very precious thought, isn't it? Faith, hope, and love. And as our brother is saying, I was thinking of that in First Corinthians 13. Now I just going over to that First Corinthians 1313 I believe it is yes, First Corinthians 1313 now abideth faith, hope and charity or love these three, but the greatest of these is love because it goes on. And on and on. And so here in our chapter. Again, we're we are reminded of responsibility as it says in our verse, but let us who are of the day be sober, putting on putting on well, God has placed us in a marvelous position and there is faith that pleases him, love that goes out to him and to others. And the hope of salvation, which, again, as our brother has said, is only deferred certainty. We're just as sure of being there as if we were there already. Hope of salvation. This is the completed man here isn't the complete thing. We have the salvation of our souls now, and so we have that faith and love. But it says the helmet for a helmet, the hope of salvation because we're not home yet. We're still here in the body, but how lovely to see that those three things, faith, hope and love. Are at least now you can check it at least 10 times given together in this area in the New Testament. It's interesting, I think that the helmet should be the hope of salvation. The helmet is put on the head, isn't it? That's where the brain is. That's where the reasoning comes from. And our brother pointed out that scripture in Peter where they say where is the promise of his coming? They were reasoning about it. They weren't believing it. They weren't finding joy in in it, reveling in it. No, they were reasoning about, well, we need to have our heads kept to our brains, our thoughts. We need to have our thoughts subject. To God and we need to have our thoughts formed by the word of God. And in connection with with the mind, we might look at Colossians chapter 3. Colossians chapter 3 and verse one. If he then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above where Christ should us on the right hand of God. Set your affections and I believe the better rendering is let your mind be on things above. Not on things on the earth. Well, if our hope is the Lord Jesus Christ and the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, if we're just occupied altogether with the hope of our salvation, well, there won't be any room for anything else but to have our minds on things above, if that's what we're waiting for, the Lord from heaven, we're waiting to be with Him.

That's really our hope, and that's. Filling our hearts, it will be controlling us. It will be controlling our minds too. And our minds will really be set on things above, not on things of the earth. The positive side of it is put before us, isn't it? And that's what we need. We might say, well, I know I'm not going on very well. I, I, I should give up this. I should give up that and all the other things. What's going to happen after you've given up everything if you don't have something positive to be occupied with, but you're occupied with a positive, the Lord Jesus Christ and glory in his coming. Setting your minds on things above it takes your mind off things here on the earth and the things of earth grow strangely, Jim, in the light of his glory and his grace. We have something very precious brought before us in the next verse, verse 9, For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. And also verse 10, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. All those two verses together really are wonderful. Not appointed to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. And he died first wife. That we should live together with Him, and that's a strong word there. Live together with Him, Co partnership with Him, being associated with Him in His glory. This is what he's looking forward to, to having us with Himself, to be associated with Him when He gets His rightful place. That he was denied when He first came into this world and we're sharing that rejection now. We've gone forth unto Him without the camp seeking to bear His reproach. Well, the reproach is still on the Lord Jesus Christ. He's still the rejected 1. And we are associated with him in that. And Paul says to Timothy, if we suffer, we shall reign with him. If we suffer, we shall reign with him. And it's put before us as an incentive, something to spurs on and to keep us, even though it costs something to be identified with the Lord Jesus Christ in this world, the Lord has a reward. Coming up for the one that's faithful in this. And we need grace to be faithful, but we're going to be associated with the Lord Jesus Christ in a special way, and he's looking forward to that. Make one more remark about the sleeping we talked about first and get back to. Something that would lead to perhaps what you were mentioning at last there. We should live together with him. Your sleep is a progressive thing, and it is preceded by tiredness. And while we're talking about sleepiness, that question came to my mind and heart. Are we by any chance becoming tired of the precious Word of God, of the ministry of Christ? We've had it before us now, for this is the 4th day, and what wonderful ministry. But I'd like to turn just. For. Word there in numbers in Chapter 11 just trusting that it might be an incentive again to our hearts. Israel got tired of the manna which God provided and in Chapter 11 of numbers in verse six it says or perhaps I should read read verse 5. We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely. The cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic. And now this verse. But now our soul is dried away. There's nothing at all beside this manner before our eyes. Beloved. You know when we get tired, when we let that tiredness, that spiritual tiredness, get the best of us, our language would be that, would it not?

Our soul is dried away. There's nothing at all beside this manner. Oh. It is dreadful if the soul gets into that condition. Tired, sleepy and then goes to sleep over it all. But when we think of these words. Nothing beside this manner. I believe we would claim this morning we've had manna. And more manner, and still more manner before us. And brethren, I like more of it. 25. In connection with the similitude of the 10 virgins. It says. And verse one, then shall the Kingdom of heaven be lightened under 10 virgins? Which took their lamp when forced to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were wise and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their laps and took no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps, While the bridegroom carried. They all slumbered and slept. Not just the foolish ones, but the wise ones too, all slumbered and slept. By the bridegroom, Terry. They got tired as you were speaking up, and then they got sleepy, and then they went to sleep. Well, something is brought before them to wake them up, and at midnight there was a cry made. Behold the blind crew. Not even cometh. Behold the bridegroom. He's right here, right the door. And maybe that's why we've had this portion of Scripture before us all four days. We need to be wakened up. We're sleeping all sleepy. We know that those aren't who aren't saved are sleeping. They they're really asleep in their sins and they're dead in trespasses and sins. About how sad when the rest of us get sleepy and go to sleep. And we have to wait for some special awakening, something special to wake us up. But this is the faithfulness of God. That's why we have His Word. And by His Spirit He seems to direct us to something like this, to wake us up. All how he'd love to have his awake going on with him. That verse 10 with him and the fact of the Lord's coming in different ways in which it's presented in the word of God and I'm sure the Lord would have us to enjoy each of these in June, 20 in June, I'm sure which verse now it says looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh what a blessedness that'll be, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. You and I have a nature that suited the glory. We are redeemed, but we're down here in a scene in which there's violence and corruption. We hear the blasphemy of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, what a what a joy. The Lord is going to take us out of it all when he comes looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. John 14 says in my Father's house. Oh, can we describe the joy and the blessedness of the Father's house? Where all is light and love and joy. Where there's no sorrow, not a discordant note. It's indescribable. Oh, that should fill our hearts. Is it not true that as long as we're here, we have a sinful nature? And we're in a body that is subject to disease and decay and sickness. Well, when he comes, what does it tell us in Philippians is going to change this vile body, this body of humiliation and fashion it like in those body of glory? Oh, that'll be blessing. Then we shall be where we would be. Then we shall be what we should be. So we're going to be like Him physically and morally. So all of these are ways in which the Lord's coming is presented.

The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ being brought out of the scene, the glorious scene of the Father's house on high. This body of humiliation fashion like under his body of glory. We're going to be like him physically and morally, and we're going to see loved ones. They're there, we'll know them. And as I say, all of this is blessing in the form, shall we say, a perimeter. But the center, center of it all, his himself, the Lord Jesus Christ himself, the man of Calvary, the man that, as Paul can say, the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

He'll be the object, bright and fair before our souls. In First Corinthians. 13 We've been talking about this. Faith, hope and love. Very first clause of the next verse of the 1St to the 14th chapter. Follow after love. That's the one to follow, not man. We're an active preacher in verse 11. It says wherefore comfort yourselves together and edify one another even as also you do. Now this is not just each one of us individually, but it seems to be a collective phase. Comfort yourselves together. And the word comfort there, I believe means also encouragement. Encourage yourselves together. And what an encouragement this is to us. I have visited in homes, especially where they're aged ones, perhaps they can't get out to meeting, they're shut in. And whenever I have read some scripture concerning the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, it has. Up more than once I have seen this, how their eyes light up and they find joy in in hearing that word about the coming of the Lord. It's a real comfort and encouragement to them. And so surely this is a very practical thing here. Comfort yourselves together and then edify one another even as all you do. Well, they were already doing that. Yes, they had been saved and then they were waiting for the Lord to come. So it was an encouragement to them, it was a comfort to them, and now they had to have the added light that the apostle gives to them in connection with being caught up to meet the Lord in the air now that they would have something more in and in addition to comfort and and encourage them. And we're to enter into this too, to comfort and encourage one another together. Together. That's that's the ground of the one body there is. It's a collective seed for all the Saints of God. And we can speak to any child of God anywhere about these things and we can encourage one another.

Things New and Old: Volume 24, Who Will Be Taken to Meet the Lord and Who Will Be Left?

These are important questions as we hourly draw nearer the coming of our Lord. “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. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” (1 Thess. 4:15-17.) In contrast with these words of comfort, we read further on of others, “For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.” (Chap. 5:3.) Who are these respective companies? Will the first company comprise all true believers, all the saints of God? or, will some believers be taken to meet the Lord, and others be left to pass through the tribulation? This question is important, as it affects the value of the atoning death of Christ, and the eternal redemption which every believer has through that death.

When the Lord Jesus appears in glory, and comes in judgment and to reign, we find from scripture:—1St, “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” Surely this marvelous statement is true of all believers now as then; for all can give thanks to the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. (Col. 1:12.)

2nd, “We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” (1 John 3:2.)

3rd, when He comes, all His saints come with Him—“At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.” (1 Thess. 3:13.) “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him” (Chap. 4:14.) “Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all,” &c. (Jude 14, 15.) This also in-eludes Old Testament saints. “And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives..... And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.” It is, then, certain that when the Lord Jesus appears in glory, all the saints will appear with Him, and be like Him. Oh, blessed hope! And also it is certain that all His saints will come with Him to judgment. It follows, then, that if all come with Him, then all must have first been taken up to meet Him in the air; and to this agree other scriptures, whether as to those who are asleep, or those who are alive and remain unto His coming.

“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.” (1 Cor. 15:22, 23.) Just as all who are in Adam are involved in death, so all that are in Christ shall be made alive at His coming. Christ has been raised from among the dead: we are now waiting the next event—they that are Christ’s at His coming. Equally certain is the word as to all who are alive and shall be changed. “Behold I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” &c. And mark, the address of this epistle evidently includes all Christians. “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.” (1 Cor. 1:2.) To all these the apostle could say, “So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall confirm you unto the end.... blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.” This epistle further teaches that all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, now compose the one body of Christ. “For by one Spirit are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” Part of the one body cannot be taken, and a part left behind.

It may be asked, Then is there no difference between those persons who are waiting for the Lord from heaven, and those who are not looking for Him? There is; and we will look at those scriptures that speak of it, that we may see how great that contrast is.

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, hut after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation.” (Heb. 9:27.) It is not appointed unto all men once to die; neither did He bear the sins of all men; but those who know that He bore their sins at His first coming, instead of looking for death and judgment, may look for Christ who shall come without a question of sin or judgment to them. “Without sin.” If we are not clear as to His having put away our sins, we cannot look for Him the second time, we should rather dread Him as a judge. Which is it, reader? Do you look for Him as Savior, sin and sins forever settled, or, is judgment for sins still before you? Again, “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Savior Jesus Christ.” (Titus 2:11-13.)

Thus in the scriptures we find that all, not some few believers, are taught to look for the Lord Jesus. It is the effect of the grace of God. When Paul preached the gospel, those who believed were turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven. (1 Thess. 1:9, 10.) To Timothy Paul said, “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” To the Philippians he says, “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body.” &c. (Phil, 3:20.) Yes, it is evident, when the church was in the freshness of its first love, that love to the Lord Jesus was preeminently seen in their looking for Him from heaven. Could it be otherwise? Is it possible for a wife to love her absent husband and not look for his return? And is it possible to hear the Bridegroom’s tender words, and not wait for His dear return? He says to us, a Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house arc many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” (John 14:1-3.) How is it possible, then, to love the Lord Jesus, and not love His appearing and wait for His return?

But are there not many who even profess to be ministers or servants of the Lord Jesus who do not look for His return? There are, and we will now turn to the words of the Lord to such. “If that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matt. 24:4851.) Thus, to say even in the heart, My Lord delayeth his coining, and not to look for the Lord Jesus, is given by the Lord as a mark of the evil servant—that he is not a Christian at all—and when Jesus comes in the air, he will not be taken, but left behind for judgment. This brings us to the striking parable of the ten virgins, which parable brings our subject to such an issue.

In the beginning all go out to meet the bridegroom, wise and foolish. Those who have oil, and those who have none; those who were saved, and those who were not. For the oil is a figure of the Spirit; and if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. Such was Christianity in the beginning. All took that profession, whether true or false, to look for, and wait for, the Bridegroom from heaven—not Christ as Judge to them, but as Bridegroom. We have seen this everywhere in the epistles. While Christ tarried, they all slumbered and slept. Now, in these days, the very midnight of forgetfulness of Him, the cry has gone forth, “Behold the Bridegroom, go ye out to meet Him.” These words are being fulfilled at this very moment. The Holy Ghost is presenting the Person of Christ, the loving Bridegroom; and the Spirit is moving Christians to go out and meet Christ. Sad indeed that we should have to go out again from that world which crucified and still hates our Lord. Are you being thus moved to meet the Lord? or do you say, Nay, I am not sure that I have oil in the vessel? Take care how you delay. Mark how suddenly and unexpectedly to those who have no oil He comes, and the door is shut. “And they that were ready went in with him.... and the door was shut.” Then how sad the cry, “Lord, Lord, open unto us.” And, oh, those words from Him, “Verily, I say unto you, I know you not.” Do you notice that these very persons were not only professors, but those who got mixed up with the movement, they, in a half sleepy way, arose and trimmed their lamps. Is this your condition? Are you ready to meet the Lord? Have you believed God? Have you come to Him, owning your sins in self-judgment?

Have you the Holy Spirit dwelling in you? Oh, think of half those professors being shut out at last!

Neither will it do to rest on religious activities; you maybe doing great things according to human thoughts—greatly praised by your fellow-men; you may be said to have done great good in your day; and yet lost forever—left behind for judgment. Oh, how many will find themselves deceived when it is forever too late I Jesus says, u Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity.’’ (Matt. 7:22, 23.) How few think of these words of Jesus! Yet it will surely be so. Not a few, but many, will thus be rejected. We have just seen a most attractive memoir of a christian lady. Works in abundance, sacraments, and holy communions, but not one thought of that only foundation on which a soul can rest in peace—eternal redemption through the blood of Jesus. We hope this is the writer’s fault. We are assured all will be left, and given to strong delusion, who do not receive the truth of the Person and work of Christ.

We will now, in conclusion, just point out those scriptures which prove this. When He comes “in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.....When he shall came to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.” Read 2 Thess. 1:6-10. Thus all believers have been taken to be with the Lord; and when He appears in glory and for judgment, He shall be seen and admired in all them that believe. This is very blessed, and takes in every one on earth who has received the truth.

But in the next chapter (2), the doom of every soul who has heard the gospel, and rejected it, is equally certain. “Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” Thus it is most certain that all, without a single exception, who have been chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, will be caught up to meet the Lord; and that the “they” who say “peace and safety,” when sudden destruction cometh, will be all those who have not received the truth. How solemn this is; and we know not the moment when He shall come to take us to be with Himself. Beloved reader, are you ready? Can you say, “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood”? If so, you will be glad to hear His words, “Surely I come quickly.”

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Girdle of Truth: Volume 8, Armor of Light, The

1 Thess. 5:8

" But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation."

In the outset of this epistle, the three cardinal principles of Christianity," faith, hope, and charity," are presented as formative of the divine life of a believer here on earth, of which the epistle itself affords us so striking an example. It was, in all likelihood, the first inspired writing of the apostle, and it exhibits the ardent glow of his affection toward those who, in so powerful a way, had received the testimony of the gospel through him; and at the same time exhibits the bright and lovely freshness of that morning of Christianity, to which its testimony especially belongs. With delighted heart he says of these Thessalonians, " Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." And he adds, " Ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: so that ye were en-samples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia."

It is comforting to find, in a subsequent epistle, the apostle declaring that, amidst much that would pass away that distinguished the history of the early Church, the three great principles, that figure so prominently here, would remain as long as Christianity should remain, as its characteristic power and force. " And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity." " Faith," that lays hold of God's past and present revelations of Himself and of His ways, that brings to the soul " the evidence of things not seen," abides; for, without it, His salvation is unrealized and Himself unknown. " Hope," too, abides, and is the power of patience to the soul. As the apostle says, " If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." So essential is it to the Christian life, that he says, if the future, which is hope's province, were once withdrawn, the most absolute misery would be his lot. " If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." And, blessed be God, " charity," or love, abides. For when faith shall have gone with us until we pass the veil that hides the world unseen; and hope shall have no further aspirations, because all that was once longed for has become the scene of present and eternal enjoyment; love will still abide. Faith may drop its glass, and hope may quench its torch-they were our needed companions and instruments in a world of darkness and of sorrow-but for love to depart would " unheaven heaven." For" God is love," and heaven is the place where love eternal and universal reigns.

"The Lamb is there, my soul-There, God Himself doth rest,In love divine diffused through all,With Him supremely blest."

And where is the heart that has not known enough of strife and sorrow to Make it long for a world of perfect peace and goodness-a world of perfect love? This I know, that I would gladly pillow my aching heart on the bosom of eternal love. Well, the day will come, and till then I wait.

But the order of these three principles is different in the epistle on which we for the moment rest. Here their energetic and appropriate action is presented as forming the life of the believer in this world. " Remembering," says the apostle, " your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope, in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father."

Each aspect of Christian life is here seen taking its spring from its only true and legitimate source, and linked with its appropriate heavenly object. They were distinguished not only by work and labor and patience; these might exist in the Church's life, and yet leave room for reprehension. " I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience." But then it is added, " nevertheless, I have against thee, that thou hast left thy first love." But here it was work in which faith was the direct and immediately inspiring power. It was labor that was undertaken and continued at the bidding of heavenly love. It was patience that sustained itself by a constant gaze toward the object of christian hope. This is seen where the apostle describes the utter revolution which the reception of the gospel wrought in their hearts and lives, their habits and their aims. He says, " They themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead." Here, without naming them, the apostle presents faith's work, and love's labor, and hope's patience; and how needful is it in a day like this to watch that they be not in their action divorced from their divine and essential spring!

But I pass from this to notice how these three principles, in altered aspect, re-appear in the close of the epistle. Having given us the bright picture of christian life, as exhibited in these converts to its power in the early dawn of that day of which we have nearly reached the troubled close, the apostle turns to present by prophetic ken what would he the condition of the world, and the thoughts of men in the midst of which Christianity had run its course. He says, " But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you; for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation; 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."

Christianity does not alter the circumstances of the world, nor change its course; but, by its own intrinsic power, it raises the Christian above the world, by the impartation of a life which is divine, and whose whole energy results, as we have seen, from its connection with God, and Christ, and the things which are eternal and unseen. It was of force in early days to detach the heart from earth, and from all things that are seen, and to set the soul to battle its way to immortality and a crown: moreover, it furnished him with armor to contend against principalities and powers, who would fain prevent his enjoyment of the portion to which he is brought by the travail and victory of his Lord. And in that sphere where fighting is not his work, but the quiet expectancy of deliverance by the coming of his Lord, it holds forth to him " the armor of light"-the attire of those who are " the children of light, and the children of the day." For it must be remembered, when the world is in question, separation from it, by the energy of grace, is that which is enforced, and not conflict with it in its own arena. When the surroundings of evil and the false security of men, whom the clarion of judgment will alone awake to listen to the claims of God, are contemplated, what is the rightful posture of the Christian's soul? It is not to evolve some new truth or power in Christianity that he has not known before, but simply to take its cardinal principles, and to bind them the more earnestly to his heart: " Putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation," and thus to stand forth a child of light-a child of day.

God grant that it may be so more and more with us all!

Bible Treasury: Volume N10, Over You in the Lord

In 1 Thess. 5:12, 13 the apostle writes, “We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.” The presence of elders is not requisite in order to have and to own those who are over us in the Lord. There is much of importance for us now in that Scripture, for we, have elders no more than they. I think we ought to lay its exhortations to heart. There are within and without, not a few ill-instructed souls who hold the notion that, unless there be official appointment, they cannot have anybody over them in the Lord. This is all a mistake. No doubt, when a man was officially appointed, there was a definite guarantee in the face of the church given by an apostle or an apostolic man; and there was thereby no little weight given to those who were thus appointed. Such a sanction had great and just value in the church, and would be of consequence among the unruly. But none the less did God know how to provide instruction for assemblies where there was not yet official oversight. How merciful for times when, for want of apostles, there could be no elders! But it will be noticed that the Corinthian assembly abounded in gift, though elders are seen nowhere among them. The Thessalonians do not appear to have possessed the same variety of outward power, while elders or bishops again are never hinted at. Yet at Corinth the household of Stephanas devoted themselves regularly () to the service of the saints; and the apostle beseeches the brethren to submit themselves to such, and to every one that helped and labored. The Thessalonians he prays to know those who labored among them, and presided in the Lord, and admonished them. Evidently this did not depend upon their being apostolically appointed, which could hardly have been in their circumstances as lately gathered. It is founded upon that which after all is intrinsically better, if we must be content with one blessing out of two. Surely, if it comes to be a question between real spiritual power and outward office, no Christian ought to hesitate between them. To have the power and the office combined is no doubt the best of all, when the Lord is pleased to give both; but in those early days we see that individuals were often and rightly engaged in the work of the Lord before there could be the seal of an apostle, as it were, affixed; and such the apostle encourages and commends earnestly to the love and esteem of the saints before and independently of that seal. How precious that we can fall back on this principle now!

Even at Corinth and Thessalonica then those were raised up in the midst of the saints who showed spiritual ability in guiding and directing others. That was the work of those to whom one epistle exhorted subjection, and whom the other epistle commended as “over them in the Lord.” Such men as these did not labor only; because some might be actively engaged in the Lord's work who might not be over others in the Lord. But these manifested power to meet difficulties in the church, and to battle with that which was ensnaring souls, and so to guide and encourage the weak and baffle the efforts of the enemy. They were not afraid to trust the Lord in times of trial and danger, and therefore the Lord used them, giving them power to discern and courage to act upon what they did discern.

Bible Treasury: Volume N11, Joy, Prayer, and Thanksgiving

Brief Notes of a Reading on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

I think we might profitably dwell on these important verses. They are so sweet and precious especially to the young believer. These Thessalonians were Paul's joy and crown of rejoicing, and we cannot read these Epistles and not notice the spirit in which they were written.

In these verses we have the normal state of the Christian—perpetual joy, perpetual prayer, and perpetual thanksgiving. What do we know of perpetual joy, of a joy that never wanes? If we were marked more by these three things what a different people we should be!

If we turn to 2 Kings 18:14 we find Hezekiah not prayerful, and the means God took to make him so. He never turned to God at all when the king of Assyria first came up, but God would not let this go on. The devil tried to hinder his confidence. After Rabshakeh's insolence Hezekiah went into the house of Jehovah (19:1). What a pity he did not go before! Hezekiah was learning a profitable lesson, but it needed to be deepened; so he gets the letter which he spreads before the Lord, and gets God's magnificent answer. Does not this show how much better it would be for us if we were more constantly in prayer? Hezekiah had beautified the house of the Lord more than any; but after opening the house, through not praying, he had to cut off the gold.

In the order in Thessalonians, joy comes before prayer; and the question is, Where is true Christian joy to be found? The joy of the Lord is our strength, and how is this joy to be maintained? Paul had this joy in prison and he told the Philippians to rejoice always. It is only to be found where the. Lord Himself found it. He found it through obedience, and as we are obedient we shall prove it likewise. The dependent Alan could say in Psalm 16, “the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places.” We are no doubt living in the last moments of the church's history, and it is only conscious communion with the Lord that can keep one happy. If you meditate on the Lord, even through a heavy day's work, you will find joy.

Next we have “Pray without ceasing.” “Open thy mouth wide,” He has said, “and I will fill it.” The Lord does not want us to close our mouths. The answer in Malachi is, “I will open the windows of heaven.” Don't we want that? In Acts 16 we find the Lord opened Lydia's heart. If you and I open our mouths wide the Lord will fill them. Then He will do what we cannot do. He will open hearts.

In Luke, the Lord is seen praying more than in any other Gospel. At His baptism He comes up praying. So on the mountain top, or in the garden, He is always praying. Confidence and dependence mark Him all through. Only in that Gospel too is it said by Him, “Men ought always to pray.”

“Pray without ceasing” does not forbid the thought of definite times for prayer, nor does it detract from the proper carrying out of our service to the Lord. Prayer should indeed have the first place in all our service. Then are we strengthened of God, for whatever He gives us to do. But alas! are we not ready to put our work in the front place, and to give a subsidiary place to prayer? Not so the apostles, but “We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4).

In ver. 18 we have “thanksgiving.” How the Lord loves to hear it! In Hebrews there are three sacrifices; one never to be repeated, two never to be left off. The Lord's one offering can never be repeated; then in chap. 13 “by Him let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually,” and, “to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”

Four times in our Lord's own life He gave thanks. With five thousand starving men before Him, He gave thanks because He knew what He would do. When His testimony was rejected (Matthew 11) He gave thanks. At the grave of Lazarus He gave thanks, before He raised him. And in the presence of His own death He gave thanks (Luke 22:17-19). “In everything give thanks,” but that is not so difficult as “giving thanks

always for all things.” This is God's will for us.

Christian Friend: Volume 7, Sanctification

1Th 5:23And 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. (1 Thessalonians 5:23))Let us here examine a little into that which this passage teaches us with regard to sanctification. It is connected indeed with a nature; but it is linked with an object; and it depends for its realization on the operation of another; namely, of God Himself; and it is founded on a perfect work of reconciliation with God already accomplished. Inasmuch as it is founded on an accomplished reconciliation, into which we enter by the reception of a new nature, the Scriptures consider Christians as already perfectly sanctified in Christ. It is practically carried out by the operation of the Holy Spirit, who, in imparting this nature, separates us, as thus born again, entirely from the world. It is important to maintain this truth, and to stand very clearly and distinctly on this ground: otherwise practical sanctification soon becomes detached from a new nature received, and is but the amelioration of the natural man; and then it is quite legal, a return, after reconciliation, into doubt and uncertainty, because, though justified, the man is not accounted meet for heaven-this depends on progress, so that justification does not give peace with God. Scripture says, “Giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.” Progress there is, but it is not in Scripture connected with meetness. The thief was meet for paradise, and went there. Such views are enfeebling, not to say destructive, of the work of redemption, that is, of its appreciation in our hearts by faith.

We are then sanctified (it is thus the Scripture most frequently speaks) by God the Father, by the blood and the offering of Christ, and by the Spirit—-that is to say, we are set apart for God personally and forever. In this point of view justification is presented in the Word as consequent upon sanctification, a thing into which we enter through it. Taken up as sinners in the world, we are set apart by the Holy Spirit to enjoy all the efficacy of the work of Christ according to the counsels of the Father: set apart by the communication of a new life no doubt, but placed by this setting apart in the enjoyment of all that Christ has gained for us. I say again, it is very important to hold fast this truth, both for the glory of God, and for our own peace: but the Spirit of God in this epistle does not speak of it in this point of view, but of the practical realization of the development of this life of separation from the world and from evil. He speaks of this divine development in the inner man, which makes sanctification a real and intelligent condition of soul, a state of practical communion with God, according to that nature and to the revelation of God with which it is connected.

In this respect we find, indeed, a principle of life which works in us that which is called a subjective state; but it is impossible to separate this operation in us from an object (man would be God if it were so), nor consequently from a continual work of God in us that holds us in communion with that object, which is God Himself. Accordingly it is through the truth by the Word, whether at first in the communication of life, or in detail all along our path. “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”

Man, we know, has degraded himself. He has enslaved himself to the lusts of the animal part of his being. But how? By departing from God. God does not sanctify man apart from the knowledge of Himself, leaving man still at a distance from Him; but, while giving him a new nature which is capable of it, by giving to this nature (which cannot even exist without it) an object-Himself. He does not make man independent, as He wished to be: the new man is the dependent man; it is his perfection. Jesus Christ exemplified this in His life. The new man is a man dependent in his affections, who desires to be so, who delights in, who cannot be happy without being so, and whose dependence is on love while still obedient as a dependent being ought to be.

Thus they who are sanctified possess a nature that is holy in its desires and its tastes. It is the divine nature in them, the life of Christ. But they do not cease to be men. They have God revealed in Christ for their object. Sanctification is developed in communion with God, and in affections which go back to Christ, and which wait for Him. But the new nature cannot reveal an object to itself; and still less could it have its object by setting God aside at its will. It is dependent on God for the revelation of Himself. His love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom He has given us; and the same Spirit takes of the things of Christ, and communicates them to us. Thus we grow in the knowledge of God, being strengthened mightily by His Spirit in the inner man, that we may understand with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height; and know the love of Christ, and be filled unto the fullness of God. Thus, gazing with open face upon the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord. “For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth.”

We see by these passages, which might be multiplied, that we are dependent on an object, and that we are dependent on the strength of another. Love acts in order to work in us according to this need.

Our setting apart for God, which is complete (fd it is by means of a nature that is purely of Himself, and in absolute responsibility to Him, for we are no longer our own, but are bought with a price, and sanctified by the blood of Christ according to the will of God, who will have us for His own), places us in a relationship, the development of which (by an increasing knowledge of God, who is the object of our new nature) is practical sanctification, wrought in us by the power of the Holy Spirit, the witness in us of the love of God. He attaches the heart to God, ever revealing Him more and more, and at the same time unfolding the glory of Christ and all the divine qualities that were displayed in Him in human nature, thus forming ours as born of God.

Therefore it is that we have seen in this epistle that love, working in us, is the means of sanctification. (chap. 3: 12, 13) It is the activity of the new nature, of the divine nature in us, and that connected with the presence of God; for he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God. And in this chap. v., the saints are commended to God Himself, that He may work it in them, while we are always set in view of the glorious objects of our faith in order to accomplish it.

We may here more particularly call the reader’s attention to these objects. They are God Himself, and the coming of Christ: on the one hand, communion with God; on the other, waiting for Christ. It is most evident that communion with God is the practical position of the highest sanctification. He who knows that we shall see Jesus as He now is, and be like Him, purifies himself even as He is pure. By our communion with the God of peace we are wholly sanctified. If God is practically our all, we are altogether holy. (We are not speaking of any change in the flesh, which can neither be subjected to God nor please Him) The thought of Christ and His coming preserves us practically, and in detail, and

intelligently, blameless. It is God Himself who thus preserves us, and who works in us to occupy our hearts and cause us continually to grow.

But this point deserves yet a few more words. The freshness of Christian life in the Thessalonians made it, as it were, more objective; so that these objects are prominent, and very distinctly recognized by the heart. We have already said that they are God the Father and the Lord Jesus. With reference to the communion of love with the saints as His crown and glory, he only speaks of the Lord Jesus. This has a special character of reward, although a reward in which love reigns. Jesus Himself had the joy that was set before Him as sustainment in His sufferings, a joy which thus was personal to Himself. The apostle also, as regarded his work and labor, waited with Christ for its fruit. Besides this case of the apostle (chap. 2), we find God Himself and Jesus as the object before us, and the joy of communion with God-and this in the relationship of Father-and with Christ, whose glory and position we share through grace.

J. N. D.

The Remembrancer: 1904, "The Very God of Peace Sanctify You Wholly"

There is something very sweet to the heart to notice (and ponder over) the different titles God takes to Himself in the word, and how He, in matchless grace, adapts Himself to the circumstances and needs of His people. How peculiarly appropriate then, in view of all the troubles and persecutions the Thessalonians were called to pass through (see Acts 17:1-15; 1 Thess. 2:14-16), that, in concluding this precious epistle, the apostle should bring before them God in the title of " The very God of peace." After an epistle like this his heart turned readily to God in this character; for we enjoy peace in the presence of God-not only peace of conscience, on the ground of the work of the Lord Jesus, but peace of heart.

In the previous part is found the activity of love in the heart; that is to say, God present and acting in us, who are viewed as partaking, at the same time, of the divine nature, which is the spring of that holiness which will be manifested in all its perfection before God at the coming of Jesus with all His saints. Here it is the God of peace, to whom the apostle looks for the accomplishment of this work. There it was the activity of a divine principle in us-a principle connected with the presence of God and our communion with Him. Here it is the perfect rest of heart in which holiness develops itself. The absence of peace in the heart arises from the activity of the passions and the will, increased by the sense of powerlessness to satisfy or even to gratify them.

But in God all is peace. He can be active in love; He can glorify Himself by creating what He will; He can act in judgment to cast out the evil that is before His eyes. But He rests ever in Himself, and both in good and in evil He knows the end from the beginning and is undisturbed. When He fills the heart, He imparts this rest to us: we cannot rest in ourselves; we cannot find rest of heart in the actings of our passions, either without an object or upon an object, nor in the rending and destructive energy of our own will. We find our rest in God-not the rest that implies weariness, but rest of heart in the possession of all that we desire, and of that which even forms our desires and fully satisfies them, in the possession of an object in which conscience has nothing to reproach' us and has but to be silent, in the certainty that it is the Supreme Good which the heart is enjoying, the supreme and only authority to whose will it responds-and that will is love towards us. God bestows rest, peace. He is never called the God of joy. He gives us joy truly, and we ought to rejoice; but joy implies something surprising, unexpected, exceptional, at least in contrast with, and in consequence of, evil. The peace that we possess, that which satisfies us, has no element of this kind, nothing which is in contrast, nothing which disturbs. It is more deep, more perfect than joy. It is more the satisfaction of a nature in that which perfectly answers to it, and in which it develops itself, without any contrast being necessary to enhance the satisfaction of a heart that has not all which it desires, or of which it is capable.

God, as has been said, rests thus in Him-self—is this rest for Himself. He gives us, and is for us, this entire peace. The conscience being perfect through the work of Christ who has made peace and reconciled us to God, the new nature—and consequently the heart—finds its perfect satisfaction in God, and the will is silent; moreover, it has nothing further to desire.

It is not only that God meets the desires that we have: He is the source of new desires to the new man by the revelation of Himself in love.1

He is both the source of the nature and its infinite object; and that, in love. It is His part to be so. It is more than creation; it is reconciliation, which is more than creation, because there is in it more development of love, that is to say, of God: and it is thus that we know God. It is that which He is essentially in Christ.

In the angels He glorifies Himself in creation: they excel us in strength. In Christians he glorifies Himself in reconciliation, to make them the first fruits of His new creation, when He shall have reconciled all things in heaven and on earth by Christ. Therefore it is written, " Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children [sons] of God." They have His nature and His character.

It is in these relationships with God-or rather it is God in these relationships with us in peace, in His communion, who develops sanctification, our inward conformity of affection and intelligence (and consequently of outward conduct) with Him and His will. " The God of peace himself sanctify you wholly." May there be nothing in us that does not yield to this benignant influence of peace which we enjoy in communion with God! May no power or force in us own anything but Himself! In all things may He be our all, so that He only may rule in our hearts!

He has brought us perfectly into this place of blessedness in Christ and by His work. There is nothing between us and God but the exercise of His love, the enjoyment of our happiness, and the worship of our hearts. We are the proof before Him, the testimony, the fruit, of the accomplishment of all that He holds most precious, of that which has perfectly glorified Him, of that in which He delights, and of the glory of the One who has accomplished it, namely, of Christ, and of His work. We are the fruit of the redemption that Christ has accomplished, and the objects of the satisfaction which God must feel in the exercise of His love.

God in grace is the God of peace for us; for here divine righteousness finds its satisfaction, and love its perfect exercise.

The apostle here prays that, in this character, God may work in us to make everything respond to Himself thus revealed. Here only is this development of humanity given" body, soul and spirit." The object is assuredly not metaphysical, but to express man in all the parts of his being; the vessel by which he expresses that which he is, the natural affections of his soul, the elevated workings of his mind, through which

he is above the animals and in intelligent relationship with God. May God be found in each, as the mover, spring and guide!

In general, the words " soul and spirit " are used without making any distinction between them, for the soul of man was formed very differently from that of animals, in that God breathed into his nostrils the breath (spirit) of life, and it was thus that man became a living soul. Therefore it suffices to say soul as to man and the other is supposed. Or, in saying spirit, in this sense the elevated character of his soul is expressed. The animal has also its natural affections, has a living soul, attaches itself, knows the persons who do it good, devotes itself to its master, loves him, will even give its life for him; but it has not that which can be in relationship with God (alas! which can set itself at enmity against Him), which can occupy itself with things outside its own nature as the master of others.

The Holy Spirit then wills that man, reconciled with God, should be consecrated, in every part of his being, to the God who has brought him into relationship with Himself by the revelation of His love, and by the work of His grace, and that nothing in the man should admit an object beneath the divine nature of which he is partaker; so that he should thus be preserved blameless unto the coming of Christ.

Let us observe here, that it is in no wise beneath the new nature in us to perform our duties faithfully in all the various relationships in which God has placed us; but quite the contrary. That which is required is to bring God into them, His authority, and the intelligence which that imparts. Therefore it is said to husbands to live with their wives "according to knowledge," or intelligence; that is to say, not only with human and natural affections (which, as things are, do not by themselves even maintain their place), but as before God and conscious of His will. It may be that God may call us, in connection with the extraordinary work of His grace, to consecrate ourselves entirely to it; but otherwise the will of God is accomplished in the relationships in which He has placed us, and divine intelligence and obedience to God are developed in them. Finally God has called us to this life of holiness with Himself; He is faithful, and He will accomplish it. May He enable us to cleave to Him, that we may realize it!

Observe again here, how the coming of Christ is introduced, and the expectation of this coming, as an integral part of Christian life. " Blameless," it says, " at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." The life which had developed itself in obedience and holiness meets the Lord at His coming. Death is not in question. The life which we have found is to be such when He appears. The man, in every part of his being, moved by this life, is found there blameless when Jesus comes. Death was overcome (not yet de=stroyed): a new life is ours. This life, and the man living of this life, are found, with their Head and Source, in the glory. Then will the weakness disappear which is connected with his present condition. That which is mortal shall be swallowed up of life: that is all. We are Christ's: He is our life. We wait, for Him, that we may be with Him, and that He may perfect all things in the glory.

Let us also here examine a little into that which this passage teaches us with regard to sanctification. It is connected indeed with a nature, but it is linked with an object; and it depends for its realization on the operation of another, namely, of God Himself; and it is founded on a perfect work of reconciliation with God already accomplished. Inasmuch as it is founded on an accomplished reconciliation, into which we enter by the reception of a new nature, the Scriptures consider Christians as already perfectly sanctified in Christ. It is practically carried out by the operation of the Holy Ghost, who, in imparting this nature, separates us—as thus born again—entirely from the world. It is important to maintain this truth, and to stand very clearly and distinctly on this ground: otherwise practical sanctification soon becomes detached from a new nature received, and is but the amelioration of the natural man and then it is quite legal, a return-after reconciliation—into doubt and uncertainty, because, though justified, the man is not accounted meet for heaven—this depends on progress, so that justification does not give peace with God. Scripture says, " Giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." Progress there is, but not in Scripture connected with meetness. (The thief was meet for Paradise and went there.) Such views are an enfeebling not to say destructive, of the work of redemption, that is, of its appreciation in our hearts by faith.

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Therefore it is, as brought out in this epistle, that love, working in us, is the means of sanctification (Chapter 3:12,13). It is the activity of the new nature, of the divine nature in us; and that connected with the presence of God; for he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God. And in this chapter 5., the saints are commended to God Himself, that He may work it in them; while we are always set in view of the glorious objects of our faith in order to accomplish it.

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It is important to remark, that the more vigorous and living Christianity is, the more objective it is: it is but saying that God and the Lord Jesus have a greater place in our thoughts; and that we rest more really upon them. The Epistle to the Thessalonians is the part of Scripture which instructs on this point; and it is a means of judging many a fallacy in the heart, and of giving a great simplicity to our Christianity.

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