

Don Hargrove
Faith Bible Church
Thursday, January 30, 2014
<http://www.fbcweb.org/doctrines.html>

Personal Study of the Bible-59

1 Thessalonians: The Lord Jesus Christ is Coming

The return of our Lord Jesus Christ is the dominant doctrinal truth that Paul is presenting in the two letters to the Thessalonians. Christ's return is the Great Hope for the Church; and the believer who has this "hope fixed on Him ____ himself, just as He is pure" (1 John 3:3). Note how this hope, this eager anticipation, of Christ's return closes every chapter in 1 Thessalonians:

1:10, "to ____ for His son from heaven."

2:19, "in the presence of our Lord at His ____ ."

3:13, "so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at the ____ of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

4:17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to ____ the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.

5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the ____ of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There should be nothing doubtful or divisive about this "blessed hope" of our Lord's return; read Titus 2:12-14 and note the connection between orientation to the Rapture and the believer's character in verse 12 along with zealotness for good ____ in verse 14 (= virtue). All healthy believers are zealous about the Lord, Bible doctrine, and fulfilling God's plan, i.e. glorifying Him. No one can read 1-2 Thessalonians without seeing the emphasis on the Lord's return. I am afraid that the quarrels among Christians about the Rapture have blunted, for some, the sweet message of our Lord that "if I go and prepare a place for you, I will ____ again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also," (John 14:23). This is the Christian hope. Instead of being distracted by Christians who reject and ridicule the Rapture, let us rather be watchful, for we know not the day nor the hour when the Son of man comes. When He does come at the Second Advent in judgment (7 years after the Rapture), the world will be involving in partying and celebrating, totally unaware of the impending judgment upon them; read Matt. 24:35-38.

Last evening in Bible class, I ended with teaching some basic principles on the importance of prayer, that 2nd person communication and intimacy with the Lord. Consider Paul in 1 Thessalonians 1:2 *We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in*

our prayers. Do you make mention of fellow believers and people you come into contact with before God? Do you pray for others by name? Do you have a personal prayer list? If you find it difficult to speak to others about God, you should at least speak to God about them. All of us can do that, even the most timid. This is the best way to cultivate our 2nd personal, trans-propositional, relationship with God.

Paul thanks God for the church of the Thessalonians. The beauty of that church did not consist of a gorgeous building or “impressive” Christian programs. What he thanked God for was the wonderful growth in these young believers. Even though they were new believers, he holds them up as examples everywhere he goes; read 1 Thessalonians 1:7. Their zeal had a profound impression all over Macedonia and Greece, and everyone was talking about the wonderful way God was working in this young vigorous church at Thessalonica. *They became examples* to all believers. This is what the world and the church needs—Christians who, instead of suppressing certain truths they do not care for, learn, grow, and live out the Christian life, those who will act on what they believe, in other words, who are spiritually virtuous. They were what every church should be: believers who receive the Word of God in the Holy Spirit and with full _____, (1 Thess. 1:5), which made it possible for them to receive supernatural *faith, hope,* and *love* which resulted in their supernatural “work of *faith,* labor of *love,* and steadfastness of *hope,*” 1 Thess. 1:3.

*In ‘Ehyeh,
Pastor Don Hargrove*