

3. EDUCATION PROMOTED v. 11.

The "wherefore" of this verse presents the conclusion. With all that has been noted, what now? Two items are given:

a. Encourage

This comes from a common Greek verb which has a root signifying the Holy Spirit: Paraclete. Perhaps to encourage one to be of a good heart would be acceptable. This is the same concern as earlier (4:18). The fact of mutuality in this activity is advanced by the term "one another."

b. To edify

This verb really means to build up. That is a large order. With this verb is associated a phrase which gets down to the one by one effort. Building up apparently for Paul meant a personal relationship and ministry.

NOTE: While the above verbs are apparently imperatival in force and form, they are supported by an indicative form which means they are in fact doing this. What a glory for an assembly to have the members constantly (present tense) giving encouragement and edifying. It is to Paul's credit and joy for the Thessalonians that this was what was going on.

Conclusion If ever there was a passage which teaches the pretribulation rapture of the church, this is it (5:1-11). There is no intent to get Christians away from problems (John 16:33; 1 Cor. 10:13), but there is no reason to suggest that believers of this present dispensation of grace will ever be a part of the great tribulation which is to try the inhabitants of this world (Rev. 3:10). From this, He has delivered us. We have been appointed for the finality of our salvation (heaven) and not the earth (tribulation). It is His Word and we rest thereon. Amen.

THE BOOK OF FIRST THESSALONIANS

"Appointed to Salvation"
1 Thessalonians 5:8-11

Introduction

1. This is the capstone of the section relating to the "day of the Lord" (5:1-11). The time span for the "day" includes the tribulation and the millennium. It speaks of God's special divine intervention in the affairs of the Jews and the Gentiles.
2. The "day of the Lord" does not affect the church, the body of Christ. Rather, the church is raptured before the tribulation and as such is treated by God as a unique entity (1 Thess. 4:13-18). This view of events is termed the pretribulation premillennial view. It makes a clear distinction between the purpose of God for the church and that which He has designed for the Jews and Gentiles.
3. The previous section concluded with a three-fold call to arms: a. Regarding sensibility - an appeal to spiritual aliveness. b. Regarding alertness - an appeal to spiritual watchfulness. c. Regarding stability - an appeal to spiritual level-headedness. It is with this background that the present portion is to be seen.

1. EXHORTATION CONTINUED v. 8.

The basic issue here is one of assumption. It is that which relates to those "who are of the day." The emphatic personal pronoun "we" is used. This is a special class of people. The present active participle notes that this is their character and being. The genitive case for "day" points to a "belonging" situation. There is no sense making an appeal to the non-believer about spiritual things. A huge assumption is made--being "of the day." That admitted, action is expected. Here it is:

a. To stableness

This is the import of the present tense verb "be sober." This hortatory form calls for freedom from intoxicants which would bring about excitability. The

term bears the meaning of sobriety as the result of self-control (cf. 1 Tim. 3:11; 2 Tim. 4:5; Tit. 2:2; 1 Pet. 1:13; 4-7; 5:8).

b. To preparedness

The verb "putting on" is in the aorist tense. Hence, while the call to soberness is present and demands constancy, this verb expects singleness of action. It is a once-for-all action. Being middle voice, the sense of personal involvement is patent. Two items are noted: 1) Breastplate. This concerns faith and love. Quite obviously, this is the life of faith and the life of love. Both words are anarthrous and take in the quality of each of these virtues. 2) Helmet. Hope is a dominant theme in this book (cf. 1:3; 2:19). Being related to "salvation," the idea is that the hope is what belongs to salvation.

NOTE: The call of Paul to those who belong to the day has nothing to do with ordinary events of the day (e.g. eating, working, sleeping, home). The call is to spiritual attentiveness. God give us priorities as He sees them!

2. EXPLANATION ADVANCED v. 9.

The opening particle in this verse gives the reason for the appeal of v. 8. Here, then, is a doctrinal reason for the behavior expected in the previous verse. Let no one ever say there is no connection between doctrine and practice. This is one large illustration!

a. Negatively

The verb "appointed" is the aorist middle of a root meaning to put or place (cf. John 15:16). The "us" is an obvious reference to those who are of the day (v. 8). The prepositional phrase "unto wrath" shows that this is not God's design for us. The context tells what is in view (cf. v. 3; 2 Thess. 1:7-9). It is true that ultimate destruction is included, but the immediate force relates to the time of the "day of the Lord." What a powerful reason for the pretribulation viewpoint.

b. Positively

The same verb which governs our lack of wrath

controls our appointment unto salvation. This is also a purposeful prepositional clause. But "salvation" is in the genitive case. The object of the preposition is the word "obtain" which is a noun to be rendered "obtaining." It is rendered "possession" elsewhere (Eph. 1:14; 1 Pet. 2:9). What a glory: God has appointed us unto the obtaining of salvation. That is the goal of our entire arrangement with God. Hallelujah. Now this salvation is:

1) Immediate By this is meant that the instrument through whom the salvation comes is Christ the Lord. His full title is given here: Lord (sovereignty), Jesus (Saviorhood), and Christ (Messianic position). Salvation for anyone is through the value of an infinite person.

2) Mediate By this is meant the death of our Lord. This is probably the oldest written statement of fundamental doctrine of our faith. There is much emphasis on this subject (1 Cor. 2:2; 15:1-3). It is true that by metonymy we use death for blood, but the essential type is blood (Luke 22:20; Rom. 3:25; 5:9; Eph. 1:7; 2:13; Col. 1:20; Heb. 9:12; 13:20). The preposition used with the verb to die means that Christ died "concerning" sin (cf. 1 John 2:2; 4:10; Heb. 10:12). There are other prepositions which are found in relation to His death: "dia" which means on account of (1 John 2:12), "huper" which means on behalf of (2 Cor. 5:14), and "anti" which means instead of (Matt. 20:28). All of these prepositions connote substitution in some way.

3) Meaning The basic concern of the death of our Lord is stated: to have the believer enjoy the resurrection with the Lord. That is the significance of the idea to live. But the amazing point of grace in the passage is that God notes that whether we "wake" (i.e. are watchful) or "sleep" (are indifferent) we might live with Him. These two verbs are subjunctive and part of a third class condition. While some might misinterpret this as approving of "sleep" (laxness), this is furthest from the case. The context should put that sort of reasoning to rest (vv. 6, 7). It may well be that those who continually sleep are not born of God's Spirit in any way whatsoever (vv. 5, 6).