

*S. A. Wellman*  
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THE CHURCH OF THESSALONICA WAS THE RESULT OF  
PAUL'S ANSWER TO THE "MACEDONIAN CALL."

EPISTLES TO THE THESSALONIANS AND PHILEMON

# INDIVIDUAL SABBATH SCHOOL OFFERING GOAL

*"As God hath prospered him"*

MY WEEKLY GOAL (Check Amount)

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## DAILY LESSON STUDY PLEDGE

As one who greatly desires to improve my knowledge of the Scriptures, I pledge myself to the careful and prayerful study of some portion of my Sabbath school lesson each day of the week.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Place a check (✓) mark in each space below for the days you have studied.

STUDY RECORD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1ST DAY'S STUDY													
2D DAY'S STUDY													
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6TH DAY'S STUDY													
7TH DAY'S STUDY													

"Let the Sabbath school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost."—"Education," pages 251, 252.

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# Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly

## EPISTLES TO THE THESSALONIANS AND PHILEMON

Lesson 1, for October 6, 1945

### The Effectiveness of Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica

MEMORY VERSE: "In every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak anything." 1 Thess. 1:8.

STUDY HELP: "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 221-230. Read as an introduction to the study of the Thessalonian Epistles.

#### *Paul Prays for the Thessalonians*

1. Who were associated with Paul at the time of writing the First Epistle to the Thessalonians? In whom was the church in Thessalonica said to be established? What salutation is given them? 1 Thess. 1:1.

NOTE.—"Grace, . . . and peace" toward man express the attitude of God and of Christ toward sinful man. In the announcement of the birth of Jesus, this was revealed in the angel song: "On earth peace, good will toward men." God is not angry with the sinner. Sin alone has provoked His wrath, which will finally fall "upon the head of the wicked." Jer. 30:23, 24.

"The arrival of Silas and Timothy from Macedonia, during Paul's sojourn in Corinth, had greatly cheered the apostle. They brought him 'good tidings' of the 'faith and charity' of those who had accepted the truth during the first visit of the gospel messengers to Thessalonica. Paul's heart went out in tender sympathy toward these believers, who, in the midst of trial and adversity, had remained true to God. He longed to visit them in person, but as this was not then possible, he wrote to them."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 255.

2. What assurance is given of Paul's interest in the welfare of the church at Thessalonica? 1 Thess. 1:2.

3. What did the writer remember without ceasing? Verse 3.

NOTE.—The following comment on verse 3, is taken from Adam Clarke's *Commentary*: "They had *faith*, not speculative and indolent, but true, sound, and operative; their faith worked. They had *love*, . . . such a love as labored with faith to fulfill the whole will of God. Faith worked; but love, because it can do more, did more, and therefore labored—worked energetically, to promote the glory of God and the salvation of men. They had *hope*; . . . such a hope as produced a satisfying expectation of a future life and state of blessedness, the reality of which faith had descried, and love anticipated; a hope, not hasty and impatient to get out of the trials of life and possess the heavenly inheritance, but one that was as willing to endure hardships as to enjoy glory itself, when God might be most honored by this patient endurance. *Faith* worked, *love* labored, and *hope* endured patiently."

4. What did they know with certainty? 1 Thess. 1:4.

NOTE.—“No irrespective, unconditional, eternal, and personal election to everlasting glory, is meant by the apostle. As God had chosen the Jews, whom, because of their obstinate unbelief, He had now rejected; so He had now chosen or elected the Gentiles. And in neither case was there anything absolute; all was most specifically conditional, as far as their final salvation was concerned; without any merit on their side, they were chosen and called to those blessings which, if rightly used, would lead them to eternal glory.”—Adam Clarke, *Commentary*, Note on 1 Thess. 1:4.

*The Gospel as Preached by Paul*

5. In what had the gospel come to them? Verse 5, first part.

6. What made power and assurance possible in the apostles? Verse 5, last part.

7. Of whom did the Thessalonians become followers? Verse 6, first part. See 1 Cor. 11:1.

NOTE.—“Ye became followers of us, and of the Lord.” In some instances the work of an evangelist lives only so long as he is present to give inspiration to the new believer. The convert has followed the evangelist, but failed to follow him “in the Lord.” In the Corinthian letter, Paul makes clear exactly how far the convert can follow the human representative of his Lord. “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” The moment human leadership departs from the plain teaching of the word, it is unsafe leadership. It is for this reason also that every disciple should exercise the greatest care in his daily living lest the weak, because of his failure in the line of duty, be turned from the divine Example and from the way of righteousness. Read 2 Cor. 4:1, 2.

8. Under what conditions had the word come to them? 1 Thess. 1:6, last part.

*Examples to All the Believers*

9. To whom was the church in Thessalonica an example? Verse 7.

10. What particularly distinguished their Christian life and example? Verse 8.

NOTE.—“The Thessalonian believers were true missionaries. Their hearts burned with zeal for their Saviour, who had delivered them from fear of ‘the wrath to come.’ Through the grace of Christ, a marvelous transformation had taken place in their lives; and the word of the Lord, as spoken through them, was accompanied with power. Hearts were won by the truths presented, and souls were added to the number of believers.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 256.

11. What did the earnest service of the Thessalonian church show? Verse 9, first part.

12. To whom had they turned with all their hearts? Verse 9, last part.

## Waiting in Expectation

13. For whom were they expectantly waiting? 1 Thess. 1:10, first part.

NOTE.—“As with holy boldness Paul proclaimed the gospel in the synagogue at Thessalonica, a flood of light was thrown upon the true meaning of the rites and ceremonies connected with the tabernacle service. He carried the minds of his hearers beyond the earthly service and the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, to the time when, having completed His mediatorial work, Christ would come again in power and great glory, and establish His kingdom on the earth. Paul was a believer in the second coming of Christ; so clearly and forcibly did he present the truths concerning this event, that upon the minds of many who heard, there was made an impression which never wore away.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 228, 229.

14. From what has Christ delivered His people? Verse 10, last part.

NOTE.—In his epistles to the churches which he had established during his ministry, Paul constantly holds before them the grace and power of their Saviour, Jesus Christ. Here again he reminds the Thessalonians that they had been led from idolatry and degradation to the worship of the true and living God; that they had received the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit and were now living happily in the assurance of sins forgiven and in anticipation of that eternal glory which had been promised to them through the death and resurrection of Christ. With joy they were looking forward to life with the Lord who had bought them. Their lives testified to the salvation they had found in Jesus.

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Lesson 2, for October 13, 1945

## Examples of Kindly Ministry

MEMORY VERSE: “That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory.” 1 Thess. 2:12.

STUDY HELP: “Gospel Workers,” pages 58-62.

### *Paul's Company Comes to Thessalonica*

1. What did the Thessalonian brethren know concerning the coming of Paul and his company into their community? 1 Thess. 2:1.
2. Where had they been shamefully treated previous to their arrival in Thessalonica? Verse 2, first part; Acts 16:22-40.

NOTE.—“Stirred by a frenzy of excitement, the multitude rose against the disciples. A mob spirit prevailed, and was sanctioned by the authorities, who tore the outer garments from the apostles, and commanded that they should be scourged. . . . The apostles suffered extreme torture because of the painful position in which they were left, but they did not murmur. Instead, in the utter darkness and desolation of the dungeon, they encouraged each other by words of prayer, and sang praises to God because they were found worthy to suffer shame for His sake.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 213, 214.

3. On arrival in Thessalonica, what did they immediately do? 1 Thess. 2:2, last part; Acts 17:1-10.

NOTE.—The word here translated, "contention" is from the same root as our English word "agony," and here conveys the thought that the apostle and his company were in constant peril of their lives as they made known to the Thessalonians the gospel of God.

### *The Quality of Their Message*

4. What does Paul declare was not the nature of their message? 1 Thess. 2:3. Compare Acts 20:29, 30.

NOTE.—The apostle here affirms that they came to the Thessalonians under no false pretense to allure them to a new way; their teaching had nothing in it that could appeal to the earthly or sensual, as did the heathen religions in which they had been reared; nor had they any sinister motives in the background. Their exhortation had but one object: to turn men from evil to good, from misery to happiness, and from the service of Satan to the service of God.

5. According to what commission did they speak? Whom did they seek to please? Why? 1 Thess. 2:4.

6. What instruction concerning faithfulness in proclaiming the gospel did Paul give in his letter to Timothy? 2 Tim. 4:1-4.

NOTE.—"Ministers of God, with hearts aglow with love for Christ and your fellow men, seek to arouse those who are dead in trespasses and sins. Let your earnest entreaties and warnings pierce their consciences. Let your fervent prayers melt their hearts, and lead them in penitence to the Saviour. You are ambassadors for Christ, to proclaim His message of salvation. Remember that a lack of consecration and wisdom in you may turn the balance for a soul, and send it to eternal death. You cannot afford to be careless and indifferent. You need power, and this power God is willing to give you without stint. He asks only a humble contrite heart, that is willing to believe and receive His promises. You have only to use the means that God has placed within your reach, and you will obtain the blessing."—*Gospel Workers*, page 35.

7. In their ministry, what wrong methods had they not used? Who witnessed to the correctness of their behavior? 1 Thess. 2:5.

8. What had they refrained from seeking? Verse 6. See margin.

NOTE.—"As we preached not for worldly gain, so we preached not for popular applause; we had what we sought for—the approbation of God, and the testimony of a good conscience."—Adam Clarke, *Commentary*.

### *First of All, Gentle*

9. With what does the apostle illustrate the spirit of their ministry? Verse 7.

10. What instruction concerning the attitude of the minister did Paul later give to Timothy? 2 Tim. 2:24, 25.

NOTE.—“Courtesy is one of the graces of the Spirit. To deal with human minds is the greatest work ever given to man; and he who would find access to hearts must heed the injunction, ‘Be pitiful, be courteous.’ Love will do that which argument will fail to accomplish. But a moment’s petulance, a single gruff answer, a lack of Christian politeness and courtesy in some small matter, may result in the loss of both friends and influence.”—*Gospel Workers*, page 121.

11. How fully were Paul and his company willing to devote themselves to giving the gospel to the Thessalonians? 1 Thess. 2:8.

NOTE.—The words used here by the apostle are expressive of the strongest affection and attachment. In giving the truths of the gospel of Jesus to them, he was giving of his own heart. By laboring with his own hands to support himself and his fellow workers, he was demonstrating that no selfish purpose or thought controlled even his slightest action.

12. What was the measure of their labors? What had they done to avoid being a burden? Verse 9; Acts 20:34.

13. How did they conduct themselves among those who believed? 1 Thess. 2:10.

NOTE.—“What a consciousness of his own integrity must St. Paul have had to use the expressions that are here! No hypocrite, and none who did the work of the Lord carelessly, could make such an appeal both to God and man.”—Adam Clarke, *Commentary*.

14. How had they dealt with the Thessalonian believers? Verse 11.

NOTE.—In a previous statement (verse 7) Paul speaks of his relationship to the church in Thessalonica as that of a nurse. We were “gentle among you.” Here, “as a father doth his children,” he exhorts and comforts and charges them. Such is the burden of responsibility which God places upon those whom He has called to lead His people. With the tenderness and love of a nurse caring for her own children, there is combined in the ministry of God’s servants the necessity for exhortation to faith and obedience; for strength to comfort and encourage in the hour of trial and suffering; for admonition and witness against wrongdoing in the life of the church and the individual. As a father, Paul sought thus to measure up to his full responsibility as a minister of Christ.

15. What was the end sought in all Paul’s labors for the Thessalonians? Verse 12.

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### Lesson 3, for October 20, 1945

## Paul’s Crown of Rejoicing

MEMORY VERSE: “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?” 1 Thess. 2:19.

STUDY HELP: “Gospel Workers,” pages 512-519.

### *Cause for Gratitude*

1. In what state of continuous thankfulness did Paul say he was? 1 Thess. 2:13, first part.

2. What was a cause of Paul's continuous gratitude? What does the word of God do in those who receive it gladly? 1 Thess. 2:13, last part.

NOTE.—“The whole Bible is a manifestation of Christ, and the Saviour desired to fix the faith of His followers on the word. When His visible presence should be withdrawn, the word must be their source of power. Like their Master, they were to live ‘by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’ As our physical life is sustained by food, so our spiritual life is sustained by the word of God. And every soul is to receive life from God’s word for himself. As we must eat for ourselves in order to receive nourishment, so we must receive the word for ourselves. We are not to obtain it merely through the medium of another’s mind. We should carefully study the Bible, asking God for the aid of the Holy Spirit, that we may understand His word.”—*The Desire of Ages*, page 390.

3. What change in the life is effected by the word of God? 1 Peter 1:23; Heb. 4:12.

NOTE.—“The word of God is the seed. Every seed has in itself a germinating principle. In it the life of the plant is enfolded. So there is life in God’s word. Christ says, ‘The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.’ ‘He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life.’ In every command and in every promise of the word of God is the power, the very life of God, by which the command may be fulfilled and the promise realized. He who by faith receives the word is receiving the very life and character of God.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 38.

### *Conflict With Unbelieving Jews*

4. Of whom had the Thessalonian brethren become followers? 1 Thess. 2:14, first part.

5. What had they in common with the churches in Judea? Verse 14, last part.

NOTE.—From Adam Clarke’s *Commentary*, we give this comment on the latter part of verse 14: “It is worthy of remark that, in almost every case, the Jews were the leaders of all persecutions against the apostles and the infant church. And what they could not do themselves, they instigated others to do; and, by gathering together lewd fellows of the baser sort from among the Gentiles, they made frequent uproars, and especially at Thessalonica, where the opposition to the gospel was very high, and the persecution of the Christians very hot.”

6. What had the Jews done against God and against Paul? Whom were they displeasing? With how many were they in conflict? Verse 15.

NOTE.—The guilt that the Jews incurred by putting to death the Son of God, saying, “His blood be on us,” needs more than a passing thought. This crime heads the list of all the sins charged against them.

7. What had the Jews forbidden the disciples to do? With what result to themselves? Verse 16.



8. How does Paul express his great desire to visit the Thessalonian brethren personally? 1 Thess. 2:17.

### *The Apostle's Hope and Joy*

9. Why had he been unable to do this? Verse 18.

NOTE.—Paul had already sent Timothy and Silas to Thessalonica, but he earnestly desired to go in person. There was, however, such a storm of persecution raised up against him that his friends did not think it expedient or prudent for him to go, lest he endanger his life.

10. What question does the apostle now ask? Verse 19, first part.

11. How does he answer his own question? Verse 19, last part.

NOTE.—In this verse, Paul both asks and answers a question that often arises in the minds of earnest, persevering servants of the Lord. To both ministry and laity, the service of Christ frequently brings disappointments in that some who enter upon the way, depart therefrom, and thus impose heartaches and deep sorrow upon those who have won them to Christ. But there are many others, as the church at Thessalonica, who are loyal, steadfast followers of the Master. These are the hope and the joy of the faithful worker for Christ. The apostle asks the question to emphasize his answer. He adds "in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming" to emphasize that his greatest joy will come when he sees them triumphant and victorious at Christ's appearing and kingdom.

12. In what similar words does the apostle John speak of his affection for his spiritual children? 3 John 3, 4.

13. How does Paul again state the relation of the believers to him? 1 Thess. 2:20.

NOTE.—"Every impulse of the Holy Spirit leading men to goodness and to God, is noted in the books of heaven, and in the day of God everyone who has given himself as an instrument for the Holy Spirit's working, will be permitted to behold what his life has wrought."—*Gospel Workers*, pages 517, 518.

14. What promise of like joy is given to every wholehearted worker for Christ? Ps. 126:5, 6.

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## Lesson 4, for October 27, 1945

### To Strengthen and to Comfort

MEMORY VERSE: "Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith: for now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord." 1 Thess. 3:7, 8.

STUDY HELP: "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 255-257; 575-577.

### *Paul Sends Timothy to Thessalonica*

1. Though hindered from visiting Thessalonica, what unselfish decision did Paul make? 1 Thess. 3:1.

2. Whom did he send to them? What does he call him? 1 Thess. 3:2, first part.

3. For what purpose had Timothy been sent to them? Verse 2, last part.

NOTE.—The preferred reading for “to comfort,” is “to exhort,” “to encourage.” The apostle’s intent was for Timothy to bring to the church members in Thessalonica a fuller knowledge of the gospel than was possible for Paul and his company to give them in the short period of their first visit, when, because of persecution, they had been compelled to leave Thessalonica hastily. Thus he sought to instruct them and strengthen them for the conflict which he knew the bitter enemies of the faith would continue to bring upon them.

### *Christians in Tribulation*

4. In writing to Timothy, what general statement does Paul make concerning tribulation? 2 Tim. 3:12.

NOTE.—“Persecution in its varied forms is the development of a principle which will exist as long as Satan exists and Christianity has vital power. No man can serve God without enlisting against himself the opposition of the hosts of darkness. Evil angels will assail him, alarmed that his influence is taking the prey from their hands. Evil men, rebuked by his example, will unite with them in seeking to separate him from God by alluring temptations. When these do not succeed, then a compelling power is employed to force the conscience.”—*The Great Controversy*, page 610.

5. In face of affliction, how should every man stand? Why? 1 Thess. 3:3.

6. What had Paul previously told the Thessalonian brethren? Verse 4.

7. How did he restate his purpose in sending Timothy to them? Verse 5.

### *Paul Reassured*

8. What report did Timothy bring to Paul? What desire does he again express? Verse 6.

9. How did this report affect the apostle? How did he express the intensity of his desire for them? Verses 7, 8.

NOTE.—His own tribulations sink into insignificance as he hears through Timothy of the persevering faith of his beloved children. He exclaims: “Now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.” Their steadfastness had given him new life. He felt that he had labored to some real purpose and had not labored in vain.

### *Rejoicing in God*

10. What question does he ask? For what was he diligently praying? Verses 9, 10.

11. Upon whom does he rely for the fulfillment of his desire? Verse 11.

NOTE.—Paul here expresses a thought that should dominate every plan and purpose of the servant of God. With great longing he desired to be able to meet again with the church at Thessalonica. Yet he exclaims: "God Himself and our Father, . . . direct our way unto you." He dared not make the decision merely by consulting his own inclinations, although he prayed and hoped that it might be God's will to so arrange. As a matter of history, it was some five or six years later that Paul revisited Thessalonica. He was God's servant, under God's orders, subject wholly to His direction, as should be every servant of Jesus.

### *The End for Which We Strive*

12. What desire did Paul express on behalf of his Thessalonian brethren? 1 Thess. 3:12.

13. What was the object of the abounding love he desired in their behalf? Verse 13, first part.

NOTE.—"Unblamable in holiness." Paul's wish for the believers to increase and abound in love toward each other and toward all mankind had an objective—the establishment of their hearts "unblamable in holiness" before God the Father. Only as the love of God permeates and controls the life can holiness be developed. He who has the love of God in his heart becomes a partaker of the divine nature.

14. Before whom and when will this condition of holiness be established? Verse 13, last part.

NOTE.—If God's love is an abiding presence in the life, it will be known to all about us by our holy life and conversation. The day will come when we must appear before the "Judge of all the earth." Will that which appears to be unblamable and holy to our fellow men stand the searching scrutiny of God? This is a question every Christian should frequently ask himself.

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## Lesson 5, for November 3, 1945

### Growing Up Into Christ

MEMORY VERSE: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication." 1 Thess. 4:3.

STUDY HELP: "Growing Up Into Christ," chapter 8, "Steps to Christ."

#### *Steady Growth Required*

1. What specific exhortation does the apostle give to the Thessalonian church? 1 Thess. 4:1.

NOTE.—"As your soul yearns after God, you will find more and still more of the unsearchable riches of His grace. As you contemplate these riches, you will come into possession of them, and will reveal the merits of the Saviour's sacrifice, the protection of His righteousness, the fullness of His wisdom,

and His power to present you before the Father 'without spot, and blameless.'"—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 567.

2. To what former experience does Paul appeal? 1 Thess. 4:2.

### *God's Will—Our Sanctification*

3. What is God's will for His children? Verse 3, first part.

NOTE.—"True sanctification is an entire conformity to the will of God."—Mrs. E. G. White, *The Sanctified Life*, page 8.

"As in nature, so in grace; there can be no life without growth. The plant must either grow or die. As its growth is silent and imperceptible, but continuous, so is the development of the Christian life. At every stage of development our life may be perfect; yet if God's purpose for us is fulfilled, there will be continual advancement. Sanctification is the work of a lifetime."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 65.

4. What is specifically mentioned as being included in the will of God? Verses 3-5.

NOTE.—In the days of Paul the heathen world was without moral standards such as are taught in the word of God. The early churches were to some extent influenced by their surroundings the same as today the spirit of unbelief, love of pleasure, and certain loose standards of morality have invaded, in some cases, the lives of the professed children of God. Paul was writing definite warnings to the Thessalonian brethren that these conditions must not obtain in the churches of Christ. Read *The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 299, 300.

5. What must be the relation of brother to brother? Who would avenge the wronged? Verse 6.

### *Walking Honestly*

6. Unto what has God not called us? To what has He called His children? Verse 7.

7. What does the apostle say of those who reject this instruction? What has God done for His true servants? Verse 8.

NOTE.—He who fails to accept the robe of Christ's righteousness, places himself on dangerous ground. In *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 318, 319 (new edition, pages 324, 325), we read: "Sad will be the retrospect in that day when men stand face to face with eternity. The whole life will present itself just as it has been. The world's pleasures, riches, and honors will not then seem so important. Men will then see that the righteousness they despised is alone of value. They will see that they have fashioned their characters under the deceptive allurements of Satan. The garments they have chosen are the badge of their allegiance to the first great apostate. Then they will see the results of their choice. They will have a knowledge of what it means to transgress the commandments of God."

8. Of what had the Thessalonians no need that Paul write to them? What had God taught them? Verse 9.

9. What proof had they given of their love? For what did Paul plead? 1 Thess. 4:10.

10. What three things were they to study? Verse 11.

NOTE.—“Though in general the church at Thessalonica was pure and exemplary, yet there seem to have been some idle, tattling people among them, who disturbed the peace of others; persons who, under the pretense of religion, gadded about from house to house; did not work, but were burdensome to others; and were continually meddling with other people’s business, making parties, and procuring their bread by religious gossiping. To these the apostle gives those directions which the whole church of God should enforce wherever such troublesome and dangerous people are found; viz.: That they should study to be quiet, to hold their peace, as their religious cant will never promote true religion; that they should do their own business, and let that of others alone; and that they should work with their own hands, and not be a burden to the church of God, or to those well-meaning but weak and inconsiderate people who entertain them, being imposed on by their apparent sanctity and glozing conversation. An idle person, though able to discourse like an angel, or pray like an apostle, cannot be a Christian; all such are hypocrites and deceivers; the true members of the church of Christ walk, work, and labor.”—Adam Clarke, *Commentary*.

11. In living such a life of quiet service, what would be their relation to those without? Verse 12.

NOTE.—The Syriac translation of “that ye may have lack of nothing” reads as follows: “That ye be dependent upon no man.”

“That ye may be able to get your bread by honest labor, which God will ever bless; and be chargeable to no man. He that is dependent on another is necessarily in bondage; and he who is able to get his own bread by the sweat of his brow, should not be under obligation even to a king.”—Adam Clarke, *Commentary*.

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## Lesson 6, for November 10, 1945

### The Blessed Hope

MEMORY VERSE: “If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.” 1 Thess. 4:14.

STUDY HELP: “The Acts of the Apostles,” pages 257-259.

#### *Thy Dead Shall Live*

1. Of what did the apostle Paul desire that the Thessalonians should not be in ignorance? 1 Thess. 4:13, first part.

NOTE.—“The Thessalonians had eagerly grasped the idea that Christ was coming to change the faithful who were alive, and to take them to Himself. They had carefully guarded the lives of their friends, lest they should die, and lose the blessing which they looked forward to receiving at the coming of their Lord. But one after another their loved ones had been taken from them; and with anguish the Thessalonians had looked for the last time upon

the faces of their dead, hardly daring to hope to meet them in a future life."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 258.

2. What does he indicate is the condition of those who are ignorant of God's plans for His children who sleep in death? 1 Thess. 4:13, last part.

NOTE.—How different is the attitude of those who have faith in God as contrasted with those who have no hope! The former see their loved ones laid away in the full knowledge that they will meet again in the home of the redeemed, while with those who have no hope, death is a final parting, and there is nothing to which they may hopefully look forward. The child of hope, in full acceptance of God's promises, looks forward to companionship with the resurrected righteous through the eternal years. To those who sleep, the next moment will be the awaking to the promise of endless life and companionship with God and Christ and the multitude of the saved.

3. In Isaiah's day, what promise was made concerning the dead? Isa. 26:19.

NOTE.—Isaiah's prophecy had a partial fulfillment in the resurrection which took place when Christ died on the cross of Calvary. Matt. 27:51-53. "Those who were called from their graves went into the city, and appeared unto many in their resurrected forms, and testified that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead, and that they had risen with Him. The voice that cried, 'It is finished,' was heard among the dead. It pierced the walls of sepulchers, and summoned the sleepers to arise. Thus shall it be when God's voice shall be heard shaking the heavens and earth."—Mrs. E. G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, p. 223.

4. How was this same hope and confidence expressed by Job? Job 14:14, 15.

5. On what does the apostle base his hope of the resurrection of the dead? 1 Thess. 4:14, first part.

6. What conclusion does he draw from his faith in Christ's death and resurrection? Verse 14, last part.

NOTE.—"The Bible clearly teaches that the dead do not go immediately to heaven. They are represented as sleeping until the resurrection. In the very day when the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl broken, man's thoughts perish. They that go down to the grave are in silence. They know no more of anything that is done under the sun. Blessed rest for the weary righteous! Time, be it long or short, is but a moment to them. They sleep; they are awakened by the trump of God to a glorious immortality. . . . As they are called forth from their deep slumber, they begin to think just where they ceased. The last sensation was the pang of death, the last thought that they were falling beneath the power of the grave. When they arise from the tomb, their first glad thought will be echoed in the triumphal shout, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?'"—*The Great Controversy*, page 550.

### *The Lord Himself Will Come*

7. By whose instruction was Paul speaking? Verse 15, first part.

8. What statement does he make concerning our relation in that day to those who are raised from the dead? 1 Thess. 4:15, last part.

NOTE.—The word “prevent” in the text has the meaning of preceding, or going before. See Strong’s *Concordance*, Greek Dictionary Section, page 75.

“Paul showed that those living when Christ should come would not go to meet their Lord in advance of those who had fallen asleep in Jesus. The voice of the Archangel and the trump of God would reach the sleeping ones, and the dead in Christ should rise first, before the touch of immortality should be given to the living.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 258.

9. What is asserted as to the Lord’s part in the raising of the dead? Who would be first to rise? Verse 16.

10. In what beautiful words did the apostle speak to the Corinthian church concerning this same hope? 1 Cor. 15:15-22, 51, 52.

11. What follows immediately after the resurrection of the righteous dead? 1 Thess. 4:17, first part.

12. For how long will the resurrected and the living remain with their Lord? Verse 17, last clause; Rev. 21:3.

### *Exhortation and Comfort*

13. With what exhortation does the apostle close this chapter? 1 Thess. 4:18.

NOTE.—Each chapter of the first Thessalonian epistle thus far has closed with a direct reference to the hope of Christ’s second appearing. It appears in the closing verses of chapter one, in the 19th and 20th verses of chapter two, and in verse 13 of chapter three. The fourth chapter devotes six full verses to the subject of the resurrection as connected with the second coming and the gathering of the saints.

14. In Paul’s letter to Titus, how does he refer to the second coming of Jesus? Titus 2:13.

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## Lesson 7, for November 17, 1945

### Peace and Safety; Faithfulness

MEMORY VERSE: “Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.” 1 Thess. 5:6.

STUDY HELP: “The Desire of Ages,” chapter 69, or pages 627-636.

#### *A Harbinger of Destruction*

1. Of what had Paul no need to write unto the Thessalonians? 1 Thess. 5:1.

2. What did they know perfectly concerning the coming of the Lord? Verse 2; Rom. 13:11, 12.

3. What would many be saying in that day? With what result to themselves? 1 Thess. 5:3.

NOTE.—“The judgments of God are soon to be poured out upon the earth. ‘Escape for thy life,’ is the warning from the angels of God. Other voices are heard saying, ‘Do not become excited; there is no cause for special alarm.’ Those who are at ease in Zion cry peace and safety, while heaven declares that swift destruction is about to come upon the transgressor. The young, the frivolous, the pleasure loving, consider these warnings as idle tales, and turn from them with a jest. Parents are inclined to think their children about right in the matter, and all sleep on at ease. Thus it was at the destruction of the old world, and when Sodom and Gomorrah were consumed by fire. On the night prior to their destruction, the cities of the plain rioted in pleasure. Lot was derided for his fears and warnings. But it was these scoffers that perished in the flames. That very night the door of mercy was forever closed to the wicked, careless inhabitants of Sodom.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 233, 234.

Read *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 411-413 (new edition, pages 419-422), for further comment on this subject.

4. How does the apostle again emphasize the awareness of the children of the kingdom? Verse 4.

5. What are they said to be? To what do they not belong? Verse 5.

NOTE.—The children of God do not know either the day or the hour of Christ's return. But He has not left us in darkness as to “the times and the seasons.” He has made clear by unmistakable signs when His coming will be near, “even at the doors.” Those who keep close to God and to His revealed word will be “children of light, and the children of the day.”

“We have reached the period foretold in these scriptures. The time of the end is come, the visions of the prophets are unsealed, and their solemn warnings point us to our Lord's coming in glory as near at hand.”—*The Desire of Ages*, page 234.

### *Admonitions to Watchfulness*

6. In what important respect is the church to be different from the world? Verse 6.

7. What is the common practice of the indifferent and the careless? Verse 7.

8. What preparation will the church be making? Verse 8. See Eph. 5:13-16.

NOTE.—“What the breastplate and helmet are to the soldier's heart and head, such are faith, love, and hope to us. Faith enables us to endure, as seeing Him who is invisible; love excites us to diligence and activity, and makes us bear our troubles and difficulties pleasantly; hope helps us to anticipate the great end, the glory that shall be revealed, and which we know we shall in due time obtain, if we faint not.”—Adam Clarke, *Commentary*, note on 1 Thess. 5:8.



9. To what has God appointed His children? 1 Thess. 5:9.

10. What has Christ done, that life with Him might be possible to all? Verse 10.

NOTE.—The apostle seeks to bring home to the church the truth that wherever the Christian is, he is safe with Christ, and that the hour is approaching when he will live together with his Lord. Even now, amid earth's turmoil, strife, and suffering, it is possible for the follower of Christ to have peace in the heart. Ahead is the better land where God and Christ shall dwell forever with the redeemed.

11. Because of this hope, what were all to do? Verse 11.

### *Esteem for Leadership*

12. How was the church admonished to regard its leaders? Verse 12.

NOTE.—“The Thessalonian believers were greatly annoyed by men coming among them with fanatical ideas and doctrines. Some were ‘disorderly, working not at all, but . . . busybodies.’ The church had been properly organized, and officers had been appointed to act as ministers and deacons. But there were some, self-willed and impetuous, who refused to be subordinate to those who held positions of authority in the church. They claimed not only the right of private judgment, but that of publicly urging their views upon the church. In view of this, Paul called the attention of the Thessalonians to the respect and deference due to those who had been chosen to occupy positions of authority in the church.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 261, 262.

13. How and for what were they to hold these leaders in esteem? Verse 13, first part.

NOTE.—“Christian ministers, who preach the whole truth, and labor in the word and doctrine, are entitled to more than respect; the apostle commands them to be esteemed, abundantly, and superabundantly; and this is to be done in love.”—Adam Clarke, *Commentary*.

14. What condition was to be maintained among the members? Verse 13, last part.

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Lesson 8, for November 24, 1945

## Preparing to Meet the Lord

MEMORY VERSE: “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.

STUDY HELP: “The Acts of the Apostles,” pages 263, 264.

### *An Exhortation to Godliness*

1. How did the apostle point out the duty of the church toward various elements in their midst? 1 Thess. 5:14.

2. What attitude should the Christian take when ill-treated? Among how many should this spirit be shown? 1 Thess. 5:15.

NOTE.—Said Christ: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil." Matt. 5:38, 39. See also Exodus 21:23-25. So, too, the apostle sought not only to preach the principles of the kingdom of Christ, but to live them. His experiences through suffering in Jerusalem, in Asia Minor, in Macedonia, in Greece, and in Rome brought out no spirit of retaliation. As he had seen Stephen stoned and heard his triumphant cry, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," he had learned the spirit of the Lord, and in his afterlife he sought to exemplify it.

3. What state of heart will characterize the Christian at all times? 1 Thess. 5:16; Matt. 5:12

NOTE.—The established Christian is ever joyful. He rejoices even in tribulation, happy that he can suffer with his Lord.

4. In what exercise will he engage without ceasing? 1 Thess. 5:17.

NOTE.—"It is in the mount with God—the secret place of communion—that we are to contemplate His glorious ideal for humanity. . . . While engaged in our daily work, we should lift the soul to heaven in prayer. These silent petitions rise like incense before the throne of grace; and the enemy is baffled. The Christian whose heart is thus stayed upon God cannot be overcome. No evil arts can destroy his peace. All the promises of God's word, all the power of divine grace, all the resources of Jehovah, are pledged to secure his deliverance."

"Ask, then; ask, and ye shall receive. Ask for humility, wisdom, courage, increase of faith. To every sincere prayer an answer will come."—*Gospel Workers*, pages 254, 258.

5. In every situation, what should the Christian do? Why? Verse 18.

### *The Holy Spirit Must Work*

6. What brief admonition concerning the Holy Spirit does the apostle give? Verse 19; Eph. 4:30.

NOTE.—"The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. . . . Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 671.

"The Spirit works upon man's heart, according to his desire and consent implanting in him a new nature."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 411.

"The heart that does not respond to divine agencies becomes hardened until it is no longer susceptible to the influence of the Holy Spirit. Then it is that the word is spoken, 'Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?'"—*Ibid.*, page 218.

**7. What manifestation of the Spirit is not to be despised? 1 Thess. 5:20.**

NOTE.—The gift of prophecy comes not only to foretell future events, but also to interpret and make clear those things which are occurring about us, and to prepare the church and the individual to meet the fiery trials of their day. To no church since apostolic times has God given a clearer revelation of His will than to the remnant church, "which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 12:17. And "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Rev. 19:10. Richly blessed with the prophetic gift, let the church today receive it and "despise not prophesyings."

**8. How are we to recognize and regard the good? 1 Thess. 5:21.**

NOTE.—It is evident that the apostle is still speaking of "prophesyings." Our Lord has told us that in these last days "there shall arise false christs, and false prophets." Matt. 24:24. Tragic as it might be to be deceived by one of these, it may be equally tragic to turn away from the messages that God sends through His chosen messengers. Any claimant to the prophetic gift is to be tested or proved. He is to be accepted only if his teachings are in harmony with the word of God and His sacred law, if they magnify Jesus as the world's Redeemer and tend to build up His church. The same Greek word translated in 1 Thessalonians 5:21 as "hold fast," is found in Revelation 12:17, where, speaking of the remnant church, it is said that they "have the testimony of Jesus," which, in Revelation 19:10, is called "the spirit of prophecy."

**9. From what should every Christian disciple abstain? 1 Thess. 5:22.**

NOTE.—We are to avoid even the appearance of sin. God would have every word, every act of life, acceptable to Him and above reproach in the sight of men. It should be said of the church as of old time concerning Daniel: "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." Dan. 6:5.

*Final Prayer and Admonition*

**10. For what did the apostle pray in behalf of the Thessalonians? 1 Thess. 5:23.**

**11. Of what does he assure them? Verse 24.**

**12. What would he have them do for him? Verse 25.**

**13. What custom of the time were they to follow among themselves? Verse 26.**

NOTE.—In the Coptic, "greet all the brethren" is rendered, "greet one another." This would appear more in harmony with the instruction given elsewhere in Paul's epistles.

"The men and women [in the early church] were placed in separate parts of the building where they met for worship; and then, before receiving the holy communion, the men kissed the men, and the women the women."—Conybeare and Howson, *The Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul*, note, page 326.

14. What charge does the apostle give? What final salutation?  
1 Thess. 5:27, 28.

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## Lesson 9, for December 1, 1945

### Resting With Christ

MEMORY VERSE: "Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power." 2 Thess. 1:11.

STUDY HELP: "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 264-266.

#### *The Salutation*

1. With what greeting does the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians open? 2 Thess. 1:1, 2.

2. How did Paul customarily address the brethren in the churches to whom he wrote? Rom. 1:1, 7; 1 Cor. 1:1, 2.

NOTE.—Paul addressed the churches in Christ with a clear claim to apostleship, a deep and unfeigned love for all the brethren, a definite and abiding confidence in the working of God's Spirit in their hearts, and a prayer expressing gratitude for what Christ had done for them and would do as His grace was bestowed upon the church in preparation for service. It was "Paul, called to be an apostle," "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ," "Paul, a prisoner." "Grace be unto you," "Grace, mercy, and peace," are frequent salutations of desire expressed for their temporal and spiritual welfare. The apostle wrote with an apparent familiarity with their lives in Christ, and a consuming desire for their welfare that demonstrated his love for all his children in Christ and his all-consuming longing for them to find Christ in His fullness.

#### *God's Righteous Judgment*

3. What does the apostle say is proper for him to do in behalf of the Thessalonians? 2 Thess. 1:3, first part.

4. What Christian grace had grown in them? What other grace abounded in all? Verse 3, last part.

5. How were their patience and faith made manifest? Verse 4.

6. Of what was their patient suffering a manifest token? Of what would they be counted worthy? Verse 5.

NOTE.—Paul "expressed his confidence in their [the Thessalonian church] integrity, and his gratitude that their faith was strong, and that their love

abounded for one another, and for the cause of their Master. He told them that he presented them to other churches as an example of the patient, persevering faith that bravely withstands persecution and tribulation; and he carried their minds forward to the time of the second coming of Christ, when the people of God shall rest from all their cares and perplexities."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 264.

7. What recompense would God give to those who troubled the church? 2 Thess. 1:6.

NOTE.—Those who bring persecution upon the people of God must face the certainty of that tribulation which God will surely bring upon an unrepentant world. Christ said: "Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily." Luke 18:7, 8. None can oppress or persecute God's own without suffering the penalty of His oppressions. How carefully then ought every member of the church to pattern his life after the love and mercy shown by the Master.

### *God's Power Manifested*

8. To what event is the troubled child of God to look for deliverance? 2 Thess. 1:7.

9. On what two classes of God's enemies will He then take vengeance? Verse 8.

10. What will be the form of their punishment? Verse 9.

11. In whom will Christ then be glorified? In whom admired? Verse 10.

### *Desire and Commendation*

12. Of what did Paul pray that they might be counted worthy? Verse 11, first part.

13. What did he desire to see fulfilled to them? Verse 11, last part.

NOTE.—God counts him worthy of being called in Christ who shows a willing submission of his life to the molding influences of the Holy Spirit. When Christ comes and dwells in the heart by faith, controlling, guiding, influencing every word and act, this is the beginning of the life eternal. When His Holy Word is our daily food, when its influence makes evident that we practice its principles, we are even now eating of the leaves of the tree of life. The "bread of life" has become a reality. We no longer "live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

14. What did he desire for them in Jesus? According to what? Verse 12.

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## THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERING

December 29

SOUTH AMERICAN DIVISION

## The Mystery of Iniquity

**MEMORY VERSE:** "The mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." 2 Thess. 2:7.

**STUDY HELP:** "The Great Controversy," pages 355, 356, 443, 444, 49-60 (new edition, pages 407, 408, 506, 507, 55-67).

### *Words of Warning*

1. By what does the apostle beseech the church of God? 2 Thess. 2:1.
2. Concerning what particular hope does he warn against deception? Verse 2.

**NOTE.**—"When the Thessalonian Church received erroneous views concerning the coming of Christ, the apostle Paul counseled them to test their hopes and anticipations carefully by the word of God. He cited them to prophecies revealing the events to take place before Christ should come, and showed that they had no ground to expect Him in their day. 'Let no man deceive you by any means,' are his words of warning. Should they indulge expectations that were not sanctioned by the Scriptures, they would be led to a mistaken course of action; disappointment would expose them to the derision of unbelievers, and they would be in danger of yielding to discouragement, and would be tempted to doubt the truths essential for their salvation. The apostle's admonition to the Thessalonians contains an important lesson for those who live in the last days. Many Adventists have felt that unless they could fix their faith upon a definite time for the Lord's coming, they could not be zealous and diligent in the work of preparation. But as their hopes are again and again excited, only to be destroyed, their faith receives such a shock that it becomes well-nigh impossible for them to be impressed by the great truths of prophecy."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 456, 457.

### *The Man of Sin*

3. Before the day of Christ's coming, what must take place? Verse 3, first part.
4. Who would be revealed before Christ's appearing? Verse 3, last part.
5. What would the man of sin do? Whose place would he attempt to usurp? Verse 4.

**NOTE.**—"The apostle Paul warned the church not to look for the coming of Christ in his day. 'That day shall not come,' he says, 'except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed.' Not till after the great apostasy, and the long period of the reign of the 'man of sin,' can we look for the advent of our Lord. The 'man of sin,' which is also styled the 'mystery of iniquity,' the 'son of perdition,' and 'that wicked,' represents the papacy, which, as foretold in prophecy, was to maintain its supremacy for 1260 years. This period ended in 1798. The coming of Christ could not take place before

that time. Paul covers with his caution the whole of the Christian dispensation down to the year 1798. It is this side of that time that the message of Christ's second coming is to be proclaimed."—*The Great Controversy*, page 356.

6. What had Paul told the Thessalonians while he was yet with them? 2 Thess. 2:5.

7. As a result of Paul's oral instruction, what did the members of the Thessalonian church know? Verse 6.

NOTE.—Without a doubt, the apostle's oral instruction regarding the future events referred to had been based upon the prophecies of Daniel. The "man of sin," says Paul, should be revealed "in his time." He assured them that there was a restraining power that would hold in check the forces of evil, that they should not accomplish their ends prematurely. The time for the rise of this power had been clearly set forth by the prophet Daniel. Not until that world empire should be divided into ten kingdoms, and not until three of these had been removed before it, could that power represented by the little horn of Daniel 7:24, be seated upon the throne of universal civil and religious rule. The Christians of the early centuries knew of these prophecies, and they used to pray for the continuance of the Roman Empire, because they dreaded the appearance of the antichrist, who would arise after its division.

It is also true that behind the external power of civil governments there is ever the divine power that restrains the working of the forces of evil. And there were the restraining influences of the word of God and of His Spirit that held back the development of the "falling away" or the apostasy in the church. Not until the time should come when, by resisting the Holy Spirit and setting aside the word of God, His own church would refuse to be guided by Him, could the apostate power so exalt itself as to sit in the seat of God.

8. How does the apostle more specifically portray the restraint of the workings of the enemy until the appointed time? What would eventually be done to this hindering power? 2 Thess. 2:7.

9. With the removal of the restraining power, who should be revealed? What should be done with him? Verse 8.

NOTE.—This verse clearly introduces the portrayal of final events that take place in close connection with the second coming of Christ. After probation has closed, "when the restraining Spirit of God shall be wholly withdrawn from the wicked, no longer to hold in check the outburst of human passion and satanic wrath," the inhabitants of earth will see "as never before, the results of Satan's rule."—*The Great Controversy*, page 37.

"As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. . . . In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air, 'Christ has come! Christ has come!' . . . Only those who have been diligent students of the Scriptures, and who have received the love of the truth, will be shielded

from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 624, 625. (Study context.)

10. What is further said of the unprecedented deceptive working of the forces of evil led by Satan at this time? 2 Thess. 2:9.

11. Who would be especially deceived by Satan's signs and wonders? Verse 10, first part.

12. Why had these individuals been easy prey to the deceptions of Satan? Verse 10, last part.

NOTE.—The apostle in the latter part of verse 10 states a truth that is vital to Christian living. Those only are deceived by the miracle-working power and sophistries of Satan who "received not the *love of the truth*." It is one thing to have a form of godliness; it is quite another to have a "love of the truth" born in the heart that will bind one to God and give such a desire to know the Lord as will cause him to follow on to know his Saviour's love until he is "filled with all the fullness of God." Eph. 3:19. Those who so love truth will not be led astray by "cunningly devised fables."

13. Why did God send them a strong delusion? 2 Thess. 2:11.

14. What cause is given for their lack of belief? Verse 12.

NOTE.—Again the apostle emphasizes an attitude that obtains in the lives of many who profess a love for, and adherence to, truth. They "believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." The two cannot be united. One cannot truly believe and have pleasure in those things that are unrighteous. A love of pleasure in the Christian leads to "a form of godliness" but denies "the power thereof." There can be but one end of that road—rejection by the Lord and eternal death.

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## Lesson 11, for December 15, 1945

### Comfort and Admonition

MEMORY VERSE: "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you." 2 Thess. 3:1.

STUDY HELP: "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 266-268.

#### *Standing Fast in Christ*

1. For what does the apostle feel bound to give thanks? 2 Thess. 2:13.

2. What were the Thessalonians to obtain through their call by the gospel? Verse 14.

NOTE.—"Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life



for earth and heaven; that the love which 'seeketh not her own' has its source in the heart of God; and that in the meek and lowly One is manifested the character of Him who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 20.

3. In view of these assurances, what should believers do? To what are they to hold? 2 Thess. 2:15.

4. What had their loving Saviour given to the church? Verse 16.

5. What results did the apostle expect in their lives? Verse 17.

NOTE.—God's gifts to His children are intended for a definite purpose and work in human hearts and lives—that they may be stablished "in every good word and work." God does not give that His gifts may be wasted or consumed upon ourselves, but that we may serve. "As He is, so are we in this world." 1 John 4:17. He came "to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10.

### *Final Admonitions*

6. For what did Paul especially ask the prayers of the Thessalonian church? 2 Thess. 3:1.

NOTE.—Notice the humility of the apostle. He acknowledges the presence of the word of God in the lives of the Thessalonian Church, and asks their prayers that the same word may have free course and be glorified in their ministry.

7. From whom did he wish to be delivered? Why? Verse 2.

8. What witness does he bear to the Lord? Verse 3.

9. In what did he have confidence concerning the believers? Verse 4.

10. How does this touching confidence in them parallel Christ's attitude toward His disciples? John 17:9-11.

NOTE.—The Saviour's love for, and confidence in, His disciples is touchingly portrayed in His prayer as recorded in John 17. Knowing their human weaknesses, He could say, "None of them is lost, but the son of perdition" (verse 12), referring to Judas who betrayed Him. "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Verse 19. Again He prays: "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one." Verse 23. His love for His disciples was deep enough to lead Him to Calvary in their behalf. Their love for Him developed into a sacrificial service for their Master which led them to endure hardship, trial, and persecution, and to die as martyrs for the Saviour whom they loved more than life itself.

11. Into what Christian graces did he desire the Lord to direct their hearts? 2 Thess. 3:5.

NOTE.—How inclined the church has ever been to be impatient over the delayed return of our Lord! We long for Him to come. Our souls groan within us as we see the evils growing in the world, and yet He delays His appearing. We are not ready! The world is not ready! The gospel of the

kingdom has not been preached in *all* the world for a witness to *all* nations! We are nearing that desired goal, but the work is not complete.

"Had the purpose of God been carried out by His people in giving to the world the message of mercy, Christ would, ere this, have come to the earth, and the saints would have received their welcome into the city of God."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 450.

"Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.

"It is the privilege of every Christian, not only to look for, but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 69.

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## Lesson 12, for December 22, 1945

### Warning and Encouragement

**MEMORY VERSE:** "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." 2 Thess. 3:5.

**STUDY HELP:** "Gospel Workers," pages 234-238.

#### *Warning Against Disorderliness*

1. What command does the apostle give concerning association with disorderly church members? 2 Thess. 3:6.

**NOTE.**—This is the word of the Lord, and the church which fails to heed it will suffer. It is also worth while to study what it does not mean. It does not mean ill-treatment of the person, nor arbitrary action in his absence, nor voting him out of the church without labor with him, nor leaving our responsibility of his soul to others, nor sympathizing with him in his wrong when someone has faithfully admonished him. It does not mean that any un-Christlike course should be pursued toward him. It does not mean that we should hold with him in the wrong, but rather that we should labor to show him the wrong. The whole intent of the labor should not be to please ourselves, but to please God by the conversion of the wrongdoer, if possible. Read Matthew 18:15-17; Romans 14; Galatians 6:1, 2; James 5:19, 20. After all gospel means are exhausted, then, for the sake of Christ's cause, take the ultimate action of withdrawing from him, yet standing ever ready to help him.

2. What did each member know he should do? 2 Thess. 3:7, first part.

3. What had been the attitude of the apostle and his helpers while among them? Verse 7, last part.

4. How had their daily food been provided while in Thessalonica? How arduously had they labored? Verse 8.

**NOTE.**—"Work is a blessing, not a curse. A spirit of indolence destroys

godliness, and grieves the Spirit of God. A stagnant pool is offensive, but a pure, flowing stream spreads health and gladness over the land. Paul knew that those who neglect physical work soon become enfeebled. He desired to teach young ministers that by working with their hands, by bringing into exercise their muscles and sinews, they would become strong to endure the toils and privations that awaited them in the gospel field."—*Gospel Workers*, pages 236, 237.

5. What had been their purpose in such toil? 2 Thess. 3:9.

### *No Rewards Without Labor*

6. In this matter, what command had they given the church? Verse 10.

7. What had the apostle since heard concerning the conduct of some of the membership? Verse 11.

NOTE.—“Busybodies,” “disorderly”—such are the terms the apostle uses concerning some who professed godliness. There can be no indolent Christian. When such individuals are found, either inside or outside the church, they are usually “busybodies,” who walk “disorderly.” A true Christian is diligent, loyal to Christ and to his fellow Christians, faithful in daily life and service, seeking only to glorify his Lord. A Christian is never weary of doing good, of living righteously.

8. What command does Paul give to those who thus walk? Verse 12.

9. In what were the believers never to become weary? Verse 13.

10. What course should they take with those who were disobedient regarding the instruction given? For what purpose? Verse 14.

11. What further caution does the apostle add concerning their relationship to such as disobeyed? Verse 15.

NOTE.—“Have no company with him,” “yet count him not as an enemy.” This instruction is not always easy to carry out. The meaning, however, is clear. While we are not to give the same fellowship to the disobedient as to the loyal Christian, we are to admonish and counsel him, and to make it our business to seek to redeem the lost one and reclaim him for Christ.

12. What peace did Paul wish them to possess? Verse 16.

13. How does he say he authenticates each epistle? Verse 17.

14. What final benediction does he give to the Thessalonian brethren? Verse 18.

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The deeper we drink of the word, the more  
we possess for blessing others.

NOTE.—Paul's stay at Thessalonica was brief, yet there were gathered into the church a goodly company of believers whose faith and devotion led to his addressing these epistles to them. It is said in Acts 17:4 that some of the Jews to whom he first preached Christ, believed and consorted with (joined themselves to) Paul and Silas, together with a great multitude of devout Greeks, "and of the chief women not a few." Paul's stay was shortened by persecutions which arose. He was "sent away" by the brethren.

Following the dictation of this epistle, Paul affixes the salutation with his own hand as evidence of his authorship. This prevented enemies of the truth from circulating forged letters pretending to be his. Confusion had already been brought into the churches because of this, as stated in 2 Thessalonians 2:2.

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## Lesson 13, for December 29, 1945

### Paul's Letter to Philemon

MEMORY VERSE: "If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account." Philemon 17, 18.

STUDY HELP: "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 456-460.

#### *Introductory Note*

Paul's letter to Philemon is a personal epistle, not one of instruction to the church. He had brought to Christ an escaped slave who belonged to Philemon, one Onesimus, and returns him with this letter to his master. Yet with a delicacy and tactfulness that was both a plea for the Christian kindness of Philemon toward Onesimus and a claim on Paul's part of the debt Philemon owed to the apostle for bringing to him the knowledge of Christ Jesus, Paul sought the recognition by Philemon that one who had become a brother in Christ was more than a slave.

#### *Paul's Salutory*

1. How does Paul address Philemon and his household? Philemon 1-3.

NOTE.—By some, Philemon was thought to have been a member of the church at Colosse, and born in that city. Other writers think that he was from Ephesus. He was evidently a person of some importance in his city, and a sincere and active member of the Christian church, which met in his house.

2. For what does the apostle thank God concerning Philemon's life and example? Verses 4, 5.

3. To what end did he desire Philemon's faith to become effectual? Verse 6.

4. What in the experience of Philemon had brought joy to Paul? Verse 7.

NOTE.—The expression “bowels of the saints” is better understood in our day as rendered in the Revised Version: “The hearts of the saints are refreshed by thee.” In Paul’s day, the intestines, like the heart today, “were regarded as the seat of the tender affections, especially kindness, benevolence, compassion.”—*Pulpit Commentary*. See also verse 20.

The apostle here refers to the works of charity of Philemon who had ministered of his bounties to the necessities of the saints. He had demonstrated this love for his brethren not only in a spiritual way, but also by caring for the poorer Christians who were members of the church. This in itself gives evidence of the genuineness of Philemon’s conversion to Christ. Paul was not aged as we now look at old age. Authorities vary as to his age, but evidently he was between fifty-five and sixty years old. But in years, in service, in hardships endured, he was at an age where his counsel was to be valued.

### *In Behalf of Onesimus*

5. How does Paul approach Philemon in behalf of Onesimus? Philemon 8, 9.

6. What does Paul state to be his relationship to Onesimus? Verse 10.

7. Since his conversion, what had Onesimus become to Paul? Verse 11.

8. For what did Paul ask? What would he have liked to do? Why did he not retain Onesimus? Verses 12-14.

NOTE.—Paul returns Onesimus to his master Philemon. That he was now a Christian did not release him from his civil obligations. Yet because of Onesimus’s faithful ministry to the apostle, Paul pleads in his behalf with Philemon, who himself was equally indebted to the apostle for his knowledge of the saving grace of Christ. Indeed the apostle tactfully suggests, though indirectly, that Philemon return Onesimus to serve him in his bonds to repay, in a way, Philemon’s debt to Paul for the light of the gospel.

9. How beautifully does Paul state the new relationship of the former slave? Verses 15, 16.

10. What was Paul willing to do in Onesimus’s behalf? Verses 17, 18.

NOTE.—“Paul voluntarily proposed to assume the debt of Onesimus in order that the guilty one might be spared the disgrace of punishment, and might again enjoy the privileges he had forfeited. . . .

“How fitting an illustration of the love of Christ for the repentant sinner! The servant who had defrauded his master had nothing with which to make restitution. The sinner who has robbed God of years of service has no means of canceling the debt. Jesus interposes between the sinner and God, saying, I will pay the debt. Let the sinner be spared; I will suffer in his stead.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 458.

11. What did Philemon owe to the apostle? Verse 19.

NOTE.—Onesimus had so faithfully served Paul that the apostle was willing to have charged to his account any loss Philemon had sustained through Onesimus's flight. Yet he reminded Philemon: "Thou owest unto me even thine own self besides."

12. What would compliance with Paul's plea do for the apostle? Philemon 20.

13. How confidently did the apostle look to a favorable response from Philemon? Verse 21.

14. To what was Paul also looking forward? Verse 22.

NOTE.—When this letter to Philemon was written, Paul was near the close of his first imprisonment in Rome. He trusted that through the prayers of the believers, and God's grace, he might be liberated. Later the faithful apostle was liberated, and he spent this extended period of opportunity in seeking to fortify the minds of the believers. However, it was not many years until he was called upon to suffer imprisonment, and at last death by the headsman's ax in Rome.

15. In his benediction, who are especially mentioned? Verses 23-25.

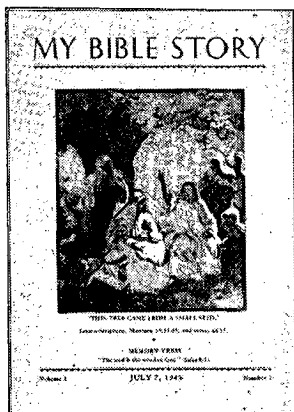
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## SABBATH SCHOOL LESSONS FOR THE FIRST QUARTER

If you are without a Lesson Quarterly the first Sabbath of next quarter, you may study the lesson from the outline following. The lessons for the quarter are on the "Life and Teachings of Jesus," and the first lesson, for January 5, is entitled "The Pre-existence of Christ and the First Rebellion." The memory verse is John 17:5; the Study Help is "Patriarchs and Prophets," pages 33-43. Secure a Lesson Quarterly without delay.

Ques. 1: Micah 5:2, margin.  
Ques. 2: Col. 1:17; John 17:1, 5.  
Ques. 3: Heb. 1:8, first part.  
Ques. 4: Heb. 1:8, last part;  
Jer. 17:12.  
Ques. 5: Heb. 1:3.  
Ques. 6: John 1:1-3, 10; Col. 1:16.  
Ques. 7: 1 John 4:8, 16;  
Matt. 22:37-40.

Ques. 8: Isa. 14:12; Eze. 28:15.  
Ques. 9: Eze. 28:14, 12, 13.  
Ques. 10: Eze. 28:17, first part;  
Isa. 14:13, 14.  
Ques. 11: Rev. 12:7-9.  
Ques. 12: Eze. 28:18, 19; Rev. 20:10.  
Ques. 13: Isa. 1:28; Rev. 20:7-9.



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## THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERING

December 29

**T**HE overflow of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering the last Sabbath of the quarter goes to the South American Division. One of the outstanding needs of this field is the relocation of the training school in Peru. Twenty-five years ago this school was in the rural section of Lima, but the city has grown to such a size that it now envelops the training school. The school must be relocated at once, for a new road is in progress which cuts through the school buildings. A new site has been secured a number of miles out of the city, but the buildings for the training school must be erected. Many workers in South America have received their education at this school, and it is anticipated that many more will be graduated from this school.

In 1943 when Sabbath school members gave toward the Rio de Janeiro sanitarium project, there was a magnificent overflow of \$23,804.26. Can we not do even more for the erection of the new Inca Union Training School?