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July 27, 2001

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1 Thessalonians

1 Greetings from Paul, Silas, and Timothy. To the church (*group of believers*) that lives in Thessalonica. That church is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. [God's] grace (*kindness*) and peace be yours.

The Life and Faith of the Thessalonians

2We always remember you when we pray and we thank God for all of you. **3**When we pray to God our Father we always thank him for the things you have done because of your faith. And we thank him for the work you have done because of your love. And we thank him that you continue to be strong because of your hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. **4**Brothers and sisters, God loves you. And we know that he has chosen you to be his people. **5**We brought the Good News* to you. But we did not use only words. We brought that Good News with power. We brought it with the Holy Spirit* and with sure knowledge that it was true. Also you know how we lived when we were with you. We lived that way to help you. **6**And you became like us and like the Lord. You suffered much, but still you accepted the teaching with joy. The Holy Spirit gave you that joy. **7**You became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. **8**The Lord's teaching spread from you in Macedonia and Achaia. And also your faith in God has become known everywhere. So we don't need to say anything about your faith. **9**People everywhere tell about the good way you accepted us when we

were there with you. Those people tell about how you stopped worshiping idols* and changed to serve the living and true God. **10**You began waiting for God's Son to come from heaven. God raised that Son from death. He is Jesus, who saves us from God's angry judgment that is coming.

Paul's Work in Thessalonica

2 Brothers and sisters, you know that our visit to you was not a failure. **2**Before we came to you, we suffered in Philippi. People there said bad things against us. You know all about that. And when we came to you, many people were against us. But our God helped us to be brave. He helped us to tell you his Good News.* **3**We encourage (*teach*) people. No person has fooled us. We are not evil. We are not trying to trick people. Those are not our reasons for doing what we do. **4**No. We speak the Good News because God tested us and trusted us to tell the Good News. So when we speak, we are not trying to please men. We are trying to please God. God is the One who tests (*looks closely at*) our hearts. **5**You know that we never tried to influence you by saying nice things about you. We were not trying to get your money. We had no greed to hide from you. God knows that this is true. **6**We were not looking for praise from people. We were not looking for praise from you or any other people.

7We are apostles* of Christ. And so when we were with you, we could have used our authority to make you do things. But we were

Good News The news that God has made a way for people to have their sins forgiven and live with him forever.

Spirit, Holy Spirit Also called the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, and the Comforter. Joined with God and Christ, he does God's work among people in the world.

idols False gods made of wood or stone and worshiped by the non-Jewish people.

apostles The men Jesus chose to represent him in a special way.

very gentle* with you. We were like a mother caring for her little children. ⁸We loved you very much. So we were happy to share God's Good News* with you; but not only that—we were also happy to share even our own lives with you. ⁹Brothers and sisters, I know that you remember how hard we worked. We worked night and day. We did not want to burden you [by making you pay us] while we did the work of telling God's Good News to you.

¹⁰When we were with you believers, we lived in a holy and right way, without fault. You know that this is true, and God knows that this is true. ¹¹You know that we treated each one of you like a father treats his own children. ¹²We encouraged you, we comforted you, and we told you to live good lives for God. God calls you to his kingdom and glory.

¹³Also, we always thank God because of the way you accepted God's message (*teaching*). You heard that message from us, and you accepted it like it was God's words, not the words of men. And it really is God's message (*teaching*). And that message works in you people who believe. ¹⁴Brothers and sisters, you are like God's churches (*people*) in Christ Jesus that are in Judea.* God's people in Judea suffered bad things from the other Jews there. And you suffered the same bad things from the people of your own country. ¹⁵Those Jews killed the Lord Jesus. And they killed the prophets.* And those Jews forced us to leave that country (*Judea*). God is not pleased with them. They are against all people. ¹⁶Yes. They try to stop us from teaching the non-Jews. We teach the non-Jews so that the non-Jews can be saved. But those Jews are adding more and more sins to the sins they already have. The anger of God has fully come to them now.

Paul's Desire to Visit Them Again

¹⁷Brothers and sisters, we were separated from you for a short time. (We were not there

with you, but our thoughts were still with you.) We wanted very much to see you, and we tried very hard to do this. ¹⁸Yes, we wanted to come to you. Truly I, Paul, tried to come many times, but Satan (*the devil*) stopped us. ¹⁹You are our hope, our joy, and the crown we will be proud of when our Lord Jesus Christ comes. ²⁰Truly you are our glory and our joy.

3^{1–2}We couldn't come to you, but it was very hard to wait any longer. So we decided to send Timothy to you and stay in Athens alone. Timothy is our brother. He works with God to tell people the Good News* about Christ. We sent Timothy to strengthen and encourage you in your faith. ³We sent Timothy so that none of you would be upset by these troubles we have now. You yourselves know that we must have these troubles. ⁴Even when we were with you, we told you that we all would have to suffer. And you know that it happened the way we said. ⁵This is why I sent [Timothy] to you, so that I could know about your faith. I sent him when I could not wait any more. I was afraid that the one (*the devil*) who tempts people might have defeated you with temptations. Then our hard work would have been wasted.

⁶But Timothy came back to us from you. He told us good news about your faith and love. Timothy told us that you always remember us in a good way. He told us that you want very much to see us again. And it is the same with us—we want very much to see you. ⁷So, brothers and sisters, we are comforted about you, because of your faith. We have much trouble and suffering, but still we are comforted. ⁸Our life is really full if you stand strong in the Lord. ⁹We have so much joy before our God because of you! So we thank God for you. But we cannot thank him enough for all the joy we feel. ¹⁰We continue praying very strongly for you night and day. We pray that we can be there and see you again and give you all the things you need to make your faith strong.

¹¹We pray that our God and Father and our Lord Jesus will prepare the way for us to come to you. ¹²We pray that the Lord will make your love grow. We pray that he will give you more and more love for each other and for all people. We pray that you will love

But ... gentle Several Greek copies have: "But we became babies."

Good News The news that God has made a way for people to have their sins forgiven and live with him forever.

Judea The Jewish land where Jesus lived and taught and where the church first began.

prophets People who spoke for God.

all people like we love you. ¹³We pray this so that your hearts will be made strong. Then you will be holy* and without fault before our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy people.

A Life That Pleases God

4 Brothers and sisters, now I have some other things to tell you. We taught you how to live in a way that will please God. And you are living that way. Now we ask you and encourage you in the Lord Jesus to live that way more and more. ²You know the things we told you to do. We told you those things by the authority (*power*) of the Lord Jesus. ³God wants you to be holy.* He wants you to stay away from sexual sins. ⁴God wants each one of you to learn to control your own body. Use your body in a way that is holy and that gives honor to God.* ⁵Don't let your physical desires control you. The people of the world who don't know God do that. ⁶None of you should do wrong to your brother [in Christ] or cheat him in this way. The Lord will punish people that do those things. We have already told you and warned you about that. ⁷God called us to be holy. He does not want us to live in sin. ⁸So the person who refuses to obey this teaching is refusing to obey God, not man. And God is the One who gives you his Holy Spirit.*

⁹We don't need to write to you about having love for your brothers and sisters in Christ. God has already taught you to love each other. ¹⁰And truly you do love the brothers and sisters in all of Macedonia. Brothers and sisters, now we encourage you to love them more and more.

¹¹Do all you can to live a peaceful life. Take care of your own business. Do your own work. We have already told you to do these things. ¹²If you do these things, then people who are not believers will respect the way you live. And you will not have to depend on other people for what you need.

holy A holy person is pure and belongs only to God.

God wants ... honor to God Or, God wants each of you to learn to live with your wife in a way that is holy and that gives honor to God.

Spirit, Holy Spirit Also called the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, and the Comforter. Joined with God and Christ, he does God's work among people in the world.

The Lord's Coming

¹³Brothers and sisters, we want you to know about those people who have died. We don't want you to be sad like other people—people who have no hope. ¹⁴We believe that Jesus died. But we believe that Jesus rose again. So, because of Jesus, God will raise to be with Jesus those people who have died. ¹⁵What we tell you now is the Lord's own message. We who are living now might still be living when the Lord comes again. We who are living at that time will be with the Lord, but not before those people who have already died. ¹⁶The Lord himself will come down from heaven. There will be a loud command. That command will be given with the voice of the archangel* and with the trumpet call of God. And the people who have died and were in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷After that, we people who are still alive at that time will be gathered up with those people who have died. We will be taken up in the clouds and meet the Lord in the air. And we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸So encourage each other with these words.

Be Ready for the Lord's Coming

5 Now, brothers and sisters, we don't need to write to you about times and dates. ²You know very well that the day the Lord comes again will be [a surprise] like a thief who comes at night. ³People will say, "We have peace and we are safe." At that time destruction will come to them quickly. Destruction will come like the pains of a woman who is having a baby. And those people will not escape. ⁴But you, brothers and sisters, are not living in darkness (*sin*). And so that day will not surprise you like a thief. ⁵You are all people who belong to the light (*goodness*). You belong to the day. We don't belong to the night or to darkness (*evil*). ⁶So we should not be like other people. We should not be sleeping. We should be awake and have self-control. ⁷People who sleep, sleep at night. People who get drunk, get drunk at night. ⁸But we belong to the day (*goodness*), so we should control ourselves. We should wear faith and love to protect us. And the hope of salvation

archangel The leader among God's angels.

should be our helmet. ⁹God did not choose us to suffer his anger. God chose us to have salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁰Jesus died for us so that we can live together with him. It is not important if we are alive or dead _{when Jesus comes}. ¹¹So encourage each other and make each other stronger _{in faith}. And you are doing that now.

Final Instructions and Greetings

¹²Now brothers and sisters, we ask you to respect those people who work hard with you—those who lead you in the Lord and teach you. ¹³Respect those people with a very special love because of the work they do _{with you}.

Live in peace with each other. ¹⁴We ask you, brothers and sisters, to warn those people who don't work. Encourage the people who are afraid. Help the people who are weak. Be patient with every person. ¹⁵Be sure that no person pays back wrong for wrong. But

always try to do what is good for each other and for all people.

¹⁶Always be full of joy. ¹⁷Never stop praying. ¹⁸Give thanks _{to God} at all times. That is what God wants for you in Christ Jesus.

¹⁹Don't stop the work of the _{Holy} Spirit.*

²⁰Don't treat prophecy* like it is not important.

²¹But test everything. Keep what is good.

²²And stay away from everything that is evil.

²³We pray that God himself, the God of peace, will make you pure—belonging only to him. We pray that your whole self—spirit, soul, and body—will be kept safe and be without wrong when our Lord Jesus Christ comes. ²⁴The One (*God*) who calls you will do that for you. You can trust him.

²⁵Brothers and sisters, please pray for us.

²⁶Give all the brothers and sisters a holy kiss when you meet. ²⁷I tell you by the authority (*power*) of the Lord to read this letter to all the brothers and sisters. ²⁸The grace (*kindness*) of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Spirit, Holy Spirit Also called the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, and the Comforter. Joined with God and Christ, he does God's work among people in the world.

prophecy Teaching by a person who speaks for God.