1 Thessalonians

LESSON # 15

5:23-28 and Conclusion

Memory verses are 5:23-24. Now, read through the entire book of 1 Thessalonians one last time.

1. **As his letter draws to a close, Paul seems almost unwilling to end it. He begins to wrap things up with a benediction. What does he ask God to do for this beloved church (v. 23)?**
2. **Define *sanctify in v. 23.* Looking back over the letter, what areas of sanctification has Paul specifically addressed?**
3. ***Entirely. Complete. Without blame. Spirit, soul, and body*. Paul uses this language to emphasize that both his desire and God’s will are the same; that in every way and to the highest degree, the believer is to be sanctified and separated unto Him. Is this your desire for your own life? In what specific areas have you resisted Him? Write down the other things that you learned through your study specifically about these words.**
4. **It is significant that, following a section of commands and instructions for these believers, Paul now *appeals to God* to work in them. Why is it so important that God does the sanctifying and is responsible for making sure we are blameless when Christ comes?**
5. **Sometimes when we look at the high standard of Scripture and see the sins and shortcomings in our own hearts and lives, we can become overwhelmed by the gap between them. How do verses 23-24 give us both hope and help?**

*Wm. Hendrickson says this regarding Paul’s prayer for thorough and mature holiness in 1 Thess.5:23. “In this passage the author points to the source of power for the believer. It is as if he wished to say, ‘In your own strength you cannot fulfil the precepts which I have just issued. You need God, the God of peace, a peace established through the cross, a peace which implies spiritual prosperity in the fullest sense.’ May this God sanctify you, that is, may He separate you from the life of sin and cause you to be dedicated to Him through and through.”*

1. **Paul claims in verse 24 that God “will bring it to pass”. How can he be so sure? On what is his confidence based?**
2. ***“Upon God’s faithfulness rests our whole hope of future blessedness. Only as He is faithful will His covenants stand, and His promises be honored. Only as we have complete assurance that He is faithful may we live in peace and look forward with assurance to the life to come.” ~A.W. Tozer***

**How does this knowledge that God is faithful affect your life and why do we often find it so very hard to count on God’s faithfulness?**

1. **It is fitting that Paul reminds them, as well as us, that with a faithful and sovereign God, the believer is eternally secure. Read through the following Scriptures slowly and carefully, inserting your own name in order to make it personal. Write down any reflections or responses that you may have. Can you think of other prayers where you find Paul expressing similar prayers that are tied to God’s faithfulness and power?**

John 10:27-29

Romans 8:28-39

Philippians 1:6

Jude 24

1. **Finally, Paul ends his letter with a few brief instructions for the Thessalonians. What are they (vss. 25-27)? What does this tell you about the relationship he had with them?**
2. **In his closing line, Paul ends where he began, imparting grace to his readers. How can you trace the emphasis on God’s grace in each of the main themes of the book?**
3. **Take a moment to go back to the Chapter and Book Overview Charts you did in the beginning. Look over your original answers and, with a different pen, write in anything you would add or change now that we have studied the entire book. Do you see any significant changes in how you understand the book?**
4. **How has your study of 1 Thessalonians helped you to increase in the wisdom and knowledge of God?**
5. **As you think back through all that you have learned as you have studied 1 Thessalonians, have you noticed any areas (attitudes, opinions, thoughts, relationships with people, general behavior, etc.) in which you have changed as a result of your study. Write out the changes God has wrought in your heart and life and take time now to praise Him for all of it. To God be the glory-great things He has done!**

Dear Sister in Christ,

I hope that your study of First Thessalonians has born much fruit in your life and in the life of your home and church as you have desired to follow and apply the Thessalonians’ example. I believe you were blessed as you shook each limb, branch, and twig to find what was under each leaf of scripture. May you continue to study and heed the Word of God in this manner bearing much fruit for His glory!

*“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.”*

By His grace, in His strength and all for His glory!

Marie

***Luther,*** *“I study the bible as one who gathers apples.  First, shake the whole tree, so the ripest may fall.*

*Then I climb the tree and shake each limb, and then each branch, and then each twig, and then I look under each leaf.”*

**Spurgeon,** *“Oh that you and I might get into the very heart of the Word of God and get that Word into ourselves! As I have seen the silkworm eat into the leaf, ad consume it, so ought we to do with the Word of the Lord-not crawl over its surface, but eat right into it till we have taken it into our inmost parts.”*