

DAILY BIBLE STUDIES

“Paul’s Postscript”

1 Thessalonians 5:26-28

November 16 – November 22, 2008

THE LORD'S DAY –This week, we reach the end of our study of **1 Thessalonians**. I sit here typing today November 11th exactly one year to the day that we preached the first message from this Epistle. I pray the past year has been a time of true growth in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus. What are you doing differently now as a result of going through this book of **1 Thessalonians**? This week we close with looking at a few final words the Apostle Paul places in this letter and I pray you and I would listen and learn from the inspired writer as he closes the book. Read **1 Thessalonians 5:25-28**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: Ask God to teach you from His Word this week.

MONDAY –Last week were reminded of the command to pray for those who lead us as God’s people; namely the teaching and ruling Elders of local churches. Now as we look at **verse 26** we find a command given to God’s people which displays their loving affection for one another. The verse reads, “*Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss*”. We have studied this issue in the past but will address it again here in summary. The greeting of friends in the days of this letter was a kiss on the cheek. We notice it is called a “*holy kiss*”. This custom is not generally practiced in the west as our culture demonstrates friendly affection by shaking hands or an embrace. The point to be noted is the genuine love and chaste manner this greeting was to be given to each of the “*brethren*”. There was to be no hypocrisy, pretense, or sensual sinfulness present but rather a genuine holy, affection displayed among those who were brothers and sisters in Christ. Scripture speaks of this “*holy kiss*” in places such as **Romans 16:16, 1 Corinthians 16:20, 1 Peter 5:14**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: Father, help me get the point that I am to display pure, genuine love to my “family” of brothers and sisters. May others see our real love.

TUESDAY –Continuing with yesterday’s theme, I would remind us that Christ told His disciples that others would “*know*” they were His disciples “*by their love one for another (John 13:35)*.” This does not mean again that mere outward signs of affection demonstrate genuine love. All of the sexually impure hugging, kissing, and intimacy that is so graphically displayed in our culture as “*love*” is actually not a demonstration of real love; but rather of selfishness and lust. Let me hasten to say that God has commanded that physical demonstrations of intimacy take place,

Praise & Prayer	ADORATION Hallowed be Your name. (6:9)	AUTHORITY Your Kingdom come... (6:10)	APPEAL Give us this day... (6:11)	AQUITAL Forgive us our debts... (6:12)	ASSISTANCE Deliver us from evil. (6:13a)	ADMIRATION For Yours is the Kingdom... (6:13)
Lord's Day						
Mon						
Tue						
Wed						
Thu						
Fri						
Sat						

Matthew 6:9-13

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But they are to be within the context of the marriage covenant. I would also add, because many ministers seem afraid to, that you are commanded to be sexually intimate in marriage and if you don't you are sinning against God's revealed commands (**1 Corinthians 7:1-9**). I must add this because we seem to have tendency to avoid this type of conversation and even think ourselves "holy" in abstaining from God given instruction regarding sex. To bring us back to the context of our passage, we must remember that love and expressions of love that are expressed in sincerity and purity both within marriage and in this context of the Christian community, just in the greeting of our fellow Christians is pleasing to our Father.

What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Father, help me to pure and sincere in my expressions of love; whether it is to my spouse or my brother or sister in Christ.*

WEDNESDAY –In **verse 27** we find the Apostle giving a pretty stern command to these believers in Thessalonica. He says, "*I charge you by the Lord that this Epistle be read to all the holy brethren.*" This could be rendered, "I put you under oath..." We are not talking here about a suggestion but rather a forceful command. The interesting thing is that the command given is that this letter be read to all the brethren. It is implied from the text this is to be a public reading. Much could be said here but suffice to say for today, this shows us that there was an apparent understanding by the writers of the New Testament that they were inspired in their writing and were actually writing the very Word of God which demands hearing and obedience by the people of God. This letter of **1 Thessalonians** is one of the earliest of the New Testament letters (**Galatians**) and therefore we see that there is a precedent being set in this command that these pieces of Sacred Scripture were to be read in the assembly just as the law and prophets were being read in the synagogue (**Luke 4:16-20**). Read **Deuteronomy 31:12, Joshua 8:33-35, Revelation 1:3**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Father God, help me understand the importance of hearing Your Word read among Your people. Give me strength to obey it.*

THURSDAY –To elaborate on yesterdays point found in **verse 27** let me point out some particulars in relation to the command that "*this Epistle be read to all the holy brethren*". The construction of the words, "*read to all*" is in the Greek aorist tense and refers to a single action (*read*) being done at a particular time. "The meaning is, that the epistle was to be read to the whole church on some occasion on which it was assembled together. It was not merely designed for the individual or individual into whose hands it might happen to fall; but as it contained of common interest, and was designed for the whole body of believers at Thessalonica, the apostle gives a solemn charge that it should not be suppressed or kept from them" (Albert Barnes). It is obvious that Paul understood the absolute necessity of God's people hearing God speak to them from Sacred Scripture.

There can be no argument of that fact. As a note of interest, the Apostle does not leave some folks out of this command to hear the letter read; it is to be heard by all; men, women and children. Read **2 Timothy 1:5, 3:14-15**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Father, help me come to the assembly of Your people prepared to listen and hear You speak to me from Holy Scripture.*

FRIDAY –Paul ends this Epistle with the benediction he uses in other of his letters which also adds a note of genuineness (see— **2 Thessalonians 3:17-18**); "*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, Amen.*" Matthew Henry comments on this phrase as follows; "We need no more to make us happy than to know that grace which our Lord Jesus Christ has manifested, be interested in that grace which he has purchased, and partake of that grace which dwells in him as the head of the church. This is an ever-flowing and overflowing fountain of grace to supply all our wants." Much can be learned by merely meditating on the meaning of this Greek word translated "*grace*". It is the word *charis* which among other things means, "**a**, that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness; **b**, the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues; **c**, thanks, (for benefits, services, favors), recompense, reward."

What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Father, thank You for the grace You give to us through our Savior, The Lord Jesus Christ.*

SATURDAY –We have now finished our study of the book of **1 Thessalonians**. Following are some interesting things concerning this Epistle. **1 Thessalonians** is unique in that every chapter ends with a reference to the second coming of Christ—see **1 Thessalonians 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:23**. John Sott observes; "There is a kind of unmingled sweetness in this epistle," wrote Bengel about **1 Thessalonians** in the eighteenth century. I agree. Indeed, I have found much sweetness in both letters as, for many years now, I have reflected on their meaning and message. Their value, I suggest, lies in three related areas. First, these letters reveal the authentic Paul . . . We can hear his heart-beat and see his tears. It would be hard to find a finer model for ministry than Paul. Secondly, these letters address a local church, and the life of the local church is of increasing concern to many people today. Thirdly, these letters set the church in a theological, indeed an eschatological, context. In other words, it is the gospel which shapes the church, just as it is the church which spreads the gospel."

What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Father, thank You for the treasure of Your Word.*