

Last time began to look @ 1st of the 4 major sections of 1 Thess, 1:2-10.

In this section have a prayer-rprt, in which P & team expressed thx.

➤ Last wk. statement & when, v 2, ~ We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers.

☞ As noted, ~ basically, ~ in vv 3-10, ~ Paul & his team note ~ 4 reasons for giving thx.

Last time, 1st reason, vs 3 (NIV).

➤ We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

➤ 3 aspects.

▷ 1st aspect, ~ the faith of the Thessalonians expressed itself in works.

>& thereby, ~ they showed their faith to be genuine. ☞ Abraham & Rahab.

> Genuine Christian faith always displays the tangible evidence of its reality.

→ It may start out small, ~ when a person is first saved.

↳ But ~ as a genuine Christian matures spiritually, ~ tangible evidence piles up.

▷ 2nd aspect, ~ the Thessalonian believers' love for others prompted them to action on their behalf. 1/12

>This ~ is what genuine Christ-like love does.

→It will always ~ prompt us ~ to action on other believers' behalf.

►And isn't that ~ what God's love for humanity did?

→Prompted him to action ~ on our behalf?

↪1 Jn. 4:10 (NLT), ~ This is real love ~ not that we loved God, ~ but ~ that he loved us ~ and sent his Son as a sacrifice ~ to take away our sins.

▷And the 3rd aspect, ~ they tenaciously endured opposition & hostility.

>The source ~ of this tenacious endurance ~ was not some ~ inner resolve ~ or personal strength.

>No, the source ~ of this tenacious endurance ~ was our blessed hope, ~ [i.e.] ~ the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.

>This promise of a glorious eternal future ~ makes it possible for believers ~ to endure all manner of difficulty & hardship, ~ even persecution because of our faith.

→At the end of things, ~ there is for us ~ a magnificent eternal future.

→At the end of things, ~ there is for us ~ everlasting life and joy with our Savior.

→For Christians, ~ persecution, trouble, and affliction ~ are not the end.

→Beyond these, ~ there lies ~ eternal glory. 2/12

→And in the sure, ~ certain, ~ and real hope of that glory, ~ Christians can endure anything ~ that this world throws at us.

→It seems to be one of the basic facts of life ~ that a person can endure anything ~ so long as they have something to look forward to.

→And Christians ~ have more to look forward to ~ than anybody.

(NIV) Vv 4-5 today.

➤Break it down.

➤Includes 2nd reason, ~ v 4 (NIV).

▷ For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you.

➤Plus an expansion on the 2nd reason (5a).

▷How Paul knew they were genuinely part of God's people.

▷Because the gospel did not come to them in word only, ~ it came empowered by the Holy Spirit & in a fully persuasive way.

➤And this is followed by a parenthetical note ~ regarding the missionary team's conduct among the Thessalonian believers.

▷Vs 5b (NIV), You know how we lived among you for your sake.

Ok, ~ let's dig in. 3/12

The 2nd reason for thanksgiving, 1:4 (NIV).

(NIV) For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you.

➤ In brief, ~ Paul & his team gave thanks to God ~ because they knew ~ the Thess believers were genuinely part of the people/family of God.

Election/choice. ☞ Controversial. ~~ Humble. ~~ Not dogmatic.

➤ According to my research & thinking on this, ~ doubtful that Paul is talking about God choosing people for salvation.

➤ It actually seems that for Paul, ~ election/chosen ~ is always a referent ~ to those who are already believers.

➤ And thus ~ it reflects ~ a reality ~ after the fact of salvation, ~ not before.

Here in vs 4, ~ Paul is referring to the whole group of Thess believers.

➤ And he's saying that God chose this group of believers for something. ☞ Does not tell us.

➤ 2 clues in Eph.

▷ 1st, ~ 1:4a, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world.

➤ Chose us for himself.

➤ The idea here: God actually selected believers for Himself as His own people.

➤ Before the foundation of the world he chose us in Christ to be his people. 4/12

▷ And 2nd, ~ 1:5, ~ (ZECNT), ~ he predestined us to adoption through Jesus Christ to himself.

▷ Boiled down, ~ Paul's simply saying that a believer's destiny is determined beforehand

▷ And our predetermined destiny is our adoption as full-fledged children of God.

▷ NLT, ~ God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ.

▷ The thought here, ~ in these 2 vv, ~ is that in advance God chose to take those who believe in Jesus for salvation and make them his special people & his children.

▷ & this is what Paul is most likely talking about in 1 Thess. 1:4 (NIV).

▷ IOW, ~ not only did God the Father save us, ~ believers, ~ he chose to make us ~ his own people, ~ part of his own family.

So again, ~ the 2nd reason for thx.

▷ Paul & his team gave thanks to God ~ because they knew ~ the Thess believers were genuinely part of the people/family of God.

▷ No doubt the fact that they were part of God's family provided encouragement & comfort to these believers.

Going further, ~ this fact should provide encouragement & comfort to all believers.

▷ God saved us from sin, ~ death, ~ hell, ~ & all the spiritual powers of evil.

▷ Subsequently, ~ he did not then ~ put us into foster care, ~ or give us up for someone else to adopt us, ~ or leave us on our own. 5/12

► Believers, ~ Paul says in Eph., ~ are no longer foreigners and strangers, ~ but ~ fellow citizens with God's people ~ and also members of his household ~ [or, ~ family].

& that makes believers brothers & sisters in Christ, ~ as Paul notes here in v 4 (NIV).

► (NIV) For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you.

► In fact, ~ in the 2 brief letters of Paul to the Thessalonians, ~ Paul used the word for brothers & sisters ~ ἀδελφοὶ ~ 21x.

▷ This testifies ~ to the close & warm relationship ~ that Paul shared with the converts in Thessalonica.

▷ But it also emphasizes ~ the family relationship ~ between all believers.

▷ We're family

▷ Mk. 3:32-35

▷ This does not demean the importance of the nuclear family, ~ which is maintained throughout the Scriptures.

> Rather, ~ this connotes the appearance ~ of a new family, ~ the church.

> Still, Jesus is saying that spiritual "brotherhood" ~ surpasses blood relationship.

> There is a deeper relationship in the family of God ~ than in earthly ties.

► In Addition, ~ the wd for brothers & sisters ~ ἀδελφοὶ ~ functions to create unity within the church. 6/12

▷ We are 1 family.

▷ Eph. 4:4-6

Before moving on to vs 5, ~ note the phrase, ~ loved by God (NIV).

▶ We, ~ believers, ~ are the objects ~ of his affection and care.

▶ The vb form for ~ loves~ indicates that ~ God's love for believers ~ began in the past ~ and continues steadily.

▷ Jer. 31:3, ~~ I have loved you with an everlasting love.

>The Father's love for us ~ is continuous and everlasting.

▷ Ps. 36, ~~ 26x ~~ God's faithful love endures forever.

▶ And think about this.

▷ Not only has his love for us provided for our salvation through Christ.

>But also, ~ whenever we stray from him, ~ it is his constant love ~ that continually ~ works to restore us to him.

Ok, ~ to recap, ~ the 2nd reason for thx, v 4.

▶ & i.e., ~ Paul & his team gave thanks to God ~ because the Thessalonian believers were genuinely part of the people/family of God. 7/12

1:5a, ~ Expansion of vs 4.

Explains how Paul knew ~ they were genuinely part of God's family.

➤ Because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.

▷ Simply put, ~ Paul & his team knew ~ because these Thessalonians responded positively ~ to the powerful gospel that came to them via the Holy Spirit.

The word for ~ gospel ~ was common enough in the Greek-speaking world.

➤ It means simply ~ good news.

➤ However, ~ the Septuagint had already used it to designate the good news of salvation in the OT.

➤ And that ~ is its primary meaning in the NT.

The message of Christianity ~ is truly ~ a message of good news.

➤ The heart of that message ~ is the offer of God's free salvation ~ through faith in Christ Jesus.

➤ It's good news, ~ because as John says in his gospel, ~ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

➤ In 1 Jn. 4:9 we read, ~ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.

➤ And Jesus said, ~ I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 8/12

Notice carefully what Paul says here in vs 5a.

➤ Our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.

➤ In power and in the Holy Spirit, ~ expresses ~ a single idea.

➤ In a powerful way through the Holy Spirit.

➤ V 5a, ~ Because our good news did not come to you as a message only, but it also came in a powerful way through the Holy Spirit and deep conviction.

The gospel produces salvation in all who call upon Jesus for salvation.

➤ In the opening vv of Rom., ~ the gospel is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes (NIV).

➤ It is not merely a witness to God' power. ☞ It is an expression of his power.

➤ When the gospel is preached, ~ this is not simply so many words being uttered.

➤ The power of God is at work.

➤ More specifically, ~ I would suggest, ~ the gospel is heavily loaded with the power of the Holy Spirit.

➤ He works through the message to convict the sinner and then regenerate those who respond positively to the gospel.

➤ The Holy Spirit empowers the message ~ and brings it home to people's hearts with deep conviction. 9/12

➤ Furthermore, ~ God's singular purpose in thus exercising his power in the gospel is this.

▷ To change people's lives, ~ to liberate them from sin, death, & Satan, ~ and ~ to reconcile them to himself.

> To put it very succinctly, ~ to rescue them from the domain of darkness and transfer them into the kingdom of the Son he loves..

➤ The gospel has power ~ to effect the salvation it announces ~ and ~ to impart the life it promises.

Lastly for the expansion in vs 5a, ~ with deep conviction.

➤ Not talking about conviction of sin.

▷ To be completely certain of the truth of something. ⇨ Full assurance, certainty.

▷ The reference is to the Thessalonians' deep inward persuasion of the truth of the gospel.

> IOW, the Holy Spirit gave them full assurance that what the missionary team said was true.

▷ Paul also refers to their certainty of the truth of the gospel in [2:13a \(NIV\)](#).

> And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God.

➤ Back to [1:5a](#). 10/12

▷ This deep inward persuasion of the truth of the gospel ~ was a sign ~ of the Holy Spirit's work in their hearts.

▷ 1 Cor. 1:18 (NET), For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

▷ The Thessalonian Christians ~ sensed the supernatural truthfulness of the gospel Paul preached ~ as the Holy Spirit brought this conviction home to their hearts.

▷ When Christians share their faith, ~ we do not merely give our particular viewpoint on life ~ as one among the endless variety of human theories.

> We announce ~ the divinely revealed truth of God.

Ok, ~ Paul & his team knew these believers were genuinely part of God's people.

► And here's how they knew.

▷ The gospel came to them empowered by the Holy Spirit.

> The Holy Spirit persuaded them that it was truth.

→ And they responded positively.

Vs 5b ~ parenthetical note regarding the missionary team's conduct among the Thess believers.

(CSB) You know how we lived among you for your benefit.

► Not sure why this is here. 11/12

▷ I would suggest ~ that Paul was perhaps simply implying an important truth ~ that is taught explicitly elsewhere in the NT.

> & i.e., ~ there is a definite connection between our lifestyle & our evangelism.

▷ 1 Pet. 2:12, ~ Keep your conduct among the Gentiles [unbelievers] honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

➤ High moral character of Paul & his associates ~ confirms the quality & power of the gospel.

▷ Paul will address this again in 2:1-12.

▷ Not only the message ~ but also the life of the messengers ~ witnessed to the true value of God's truths for their lives.

▷ So they could trust what they were being told.

▷ Nothing Paul did was to enhance his image or wallet.

> Was all for the benefit of these new believers.

➤ The parallelism here between word and deed is noteworthy.

▷ A definite connection between our lifestyle & our evangelism. 12/12