I Thessalonians 4 & 5

Life is an opportunity for growth and betterment, sometimes in matters others would find shocking!

1. **I Thessalonians 4**
2. V.1-2 – Grow All the More!

2

* You should abound more & more – Christianity never has a coasting phase. We must grow and increase in the Lord’s work continually as the Lord gives us life.
* Ecclesiastes 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. 14 For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil. NKJV
* You received from us how you ought to walk – The Gospel is not a mysterious, hidden, occult knowledge doled out in confusing fragments – it is straightforwardly given and can be easily understood…if we choose to hear it!
* The way we should live is all about pleasing God – What objective could be greater or even begin to compare?
* V.2 – You know (the) commandments – Again, our ability to know God’s Word and understand it. While cults and religious organizations want to release shreds of “truth” as a member attains higher levels in their organization, there is no true enlightenment at all – the Word is freely given to us & should be shared likewise.
* 2 Corinthians 11:7 Did I commit sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the Gospel of God to you free of charge? NKJV
* 2 Thessalonians 3:8 nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, 9 not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us. NKJV

1. V.3-8 – Sexual Immorality

* Sexual immorality among the members of the congregation??? Remember: 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 “…you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 and to wait for His Son from Heaven, Whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus Who delivers us from the wrath to come.” NKJV

3

* Possess our vessel in sanctification & honor – Inside and out. Fornication (adultery or not, heterosexual or homosexual, etc) usually begins with desires in our heart.
* Matthew 5:27 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into Hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into Hell. NKJV
* Matthew 23:25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. 26 Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. 27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. 28 Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. NKJV

4

1. V.9-12 - Brotherly Love

* They have no need of Paul writing to them about it, and they are exemplary toward all the brethren in Macedonia, yet they are urged to “increase more and more.”

5

* How do we have brotherly love?
* Lead a quiet life – not a hermit; we’re a light to the world. Not saying to dress in plain, drab clothing, to avoid public life, or run from cameras. When we realize our God-given place in life, things will settle in properly. Acts 17:6, consider apostle Paul’s “quiet” life!
* Mind your own business – not saying to never ask about others or avoid social settings, but to avoid being busy bodies and gossips.
* Work with your own hands – not a condemnation of white collar labor, but saying to play a part in providing for yourself and your family.
* How we’re viewed by world is important. Lacking nothing –physical goods, or spiritual?

🡪Matthew 6:19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. 22 "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

25 "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? 28 "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; 29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. NKJV

1. V.13-18, Christ’s Coming

* No Scripture ever refers to the “second coming” of Jesus.
* The Thessalonians were concerned about the departed brethren, and we are not to sorrow as those “who have no hope.” Victory is assured and the victory parade is explained in vivid and comforting detail.

6

* The living faithful will not beat the departed faithful to the reward. We go together!
* Jesus’ return will not be missed by anyone. Jesus descends from Heaven. There is the shout of an archangel. The trumpet of God sounds.
* The dead in Christ rise first. John 5:28 Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 and come forth — those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. NKJV
* Jesus is never said to set foot on earth when He returns. The departed faithful will be with the Lord IN THE AIR and we will be caught up to be with them.
* Thus we shall always be with the Lord. We sing that “The gates swing outward never,” 1 Peter 1:4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, NKJV
* 1 Peter 5:4 and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. NKJV

1. **I Thessalonians 5**
2. V.1-11 – The Day of the Lord

* It comes as a thief in the night – at a time when you are not prepared. Night raids are typically 3-4 AM because the night owls have finally retired and the early risers are not up yet, but this is not saying that Jesus will return during the night at all. It’s saying that if you’re not ready for that Day right NOW, then, barring a great paradigm shift, you will NEVER be ready.

7

* Sudden destruction – Pregnant labor: you don’t have the full effect yet, but you have a strong idea of what’s coming and it’s just going to get worse. Except that there is no actual birth or passing of the terror. THEY SHALL NOT ESCAPE. You don’t want to be in that number! Eternal kidney stones? John 16:21 A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. 22 Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you. NKJV
* Brethren are not in darkness – the Word of God gives Light to all, John 1:1-5, and we are to be the light to this world, Matthew 5:14-16. We cannot be overtaken as by a thief, because the faithful are FAITHFUL. The faithful are READY. Nothing else in all this world matters more to them.
* Therefore, let us not sleep, but watch and be sober – Just because we were ready for the Lord’s return yesterday do NOT mean we’re ready today. It is a way of life and a constant decision we must make, a constant commitment we must make. Nobody gets to Heaven by accident. Nobody of accountability shows up in Heaven and wonders how they got there. Are you of accountability? Are you sure you’re ready?
* Sobriety – Note that TWICE in this short passage we are commanded to be sober, though the discussion is not directly related to intoxicants. Our need to be sober is not to allow ‘social drinking’ or other excuses for various levels of intoxication, but a clear and consistent command of the New Testament to being sober. Is getting to Heaven more important than anything else in this life?
* God appointed us to what? - 2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. NKJV
* John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have Everlasting Life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. NKJV
* God wants you to be saved. God made every provision for you to be saved. Do you WANT to be saved? You could never earn it or claim to be owed, but you must obey the Word God gave us to live by. What are you waiting for? Is there anything in this world or this life that is more important than being in Heaven for all eternity?

1. V.12-22 – Final Exhortations

* “Those who labor among you” is referring to elders, for they are “over you in the Lord.” Notice that elders doing their job “admonish.” That’s not always easy to accept, but they’re commanded to have peace among themselves, and even to “esteem them VERY HIGHLY in LOVE” not because of your appreciation for them personally, but because of their work. Their job is to help you and your loved ones get to Heaven. What is more important, or even begins to compare?

8

* Warn the unruly – immediately following the discussion of elders and their work. Things can’t be left for someone else to do. Is getting to Heaven more important than anything else? Then get up and do something about those that are about to crash on the rocks…or have been long foundering there!
* Rejoice always – spoken by Paul this means a lot. W/thanks. Consider his history:

2 Corinthians 11:22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. 23 Are they ministers of Christ? — I speak as a fool — I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. 24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness — 28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation?

30 If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity. 31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. 32 In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; 33 but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands. NKJV

* Pray without ceasing – If it has not already impressed you, read this short first letter to the Thessalonians again.
* Test (prove) all things; hold fast (tight) what is good – we’re ultimately responsible for what we believe, what we think, what we do… But consider how much of the world is on the wrong path (Matthew 7:13-14) because they do not truly examine the facts for themselves. Prove it! 1 Peter 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; NKJV
* Abstain from every form (appearance) of evil – Yes, it still means to avoid things that would have the appearance of sin, though it technically says to avoid every FORM of evil.

1. V.23-28 – Final Thoughts

* Sanctify you completely – is it possible to be only partially sanctified? Be assured that no sanctified person would dare to want to find out!

9

* Spirit, soul and body.
* Spirit – NT 4151 pneuma – breath, a breeze, figuratively the human spirit (which returns to God), the rational and immortal soul, mental disposition. Can refer to the spirit of an angel, a demon, God, Christ’s spirit, or the Holy Spirit.
* Soul – NT 5590 psuche – breath, but is used also of the breath of animals.
* Body – NT 4983 soma – the body, literally or figuratively. The body of flesh & blood.
* ALSO NOTE: NT 2222 zoe – Life in general, including animals and plants.
* He Who calls you is faithful, Who also will do it – Any breakdown in salvation is our own fault – God does not want any to perish, but come to repentance, 2 Peter 3:9.
* A holy kiss – remember that the Thessalonians had been idolaters before they were Christians, and even then some of them apparently saw nothing wrong with fornication among Christians, I Thess 1:9-10; 4:3-8. While the kiss is a greeting in that part of the world even today, ours is a handshake and others involve bowing, or other manifestations of greeting and respect. Whatever form of greeting we use, it is to be done in a way that does not incite reasonable forms of suspicion, jealousy or disgust.

**WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?**

Hear the Gospel (John 5:24; Romans 10:17)

Believe the Word of God (John 3:16-18; John 8:24)

Repent Of Your Sins (Luke 13:1-5; Acts 2:38)

Confess Jesus as Christ (Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:10)

Be Baptized (Acts 22:16; Galatians 3:27)

Remain Faithful for Life (John 8:31; Rev. 2:10)

**FOR THE ERRING CHILD OF GOD:**

Repent (Acts 8:22), Confess (I John 1:9), Pray (Acts 8:22)

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