

Characteristics of a Great Church

A Saved Church

I Thess 1:1-10

Pt. 5

1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

² We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, ³ remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father, ⁴ knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God. ⁵ For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

⁶ And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷ so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. ⁸ For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything. ⁹ For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how 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.

Introduction

A couple had two little boys, ages 8 and 10, who were excessively mischievous. The two were always getting into trouble and their parents could be assured that if any mischief occurred in their town their two young sons were in some way involved.

The parents were at their wits end as to what to do about their sons' behavior. The mother had heard that a clergyman in town had been successful in disciplining children in the past, so she asked her husband if he thought they should send the boys to speak with the clergyman.

The husband said, 'We might as well. We need to do something before I really lose my temper!' The clergyman agreed to speak with the boys, but asked to see them individually. The 8 year old went to meet with him first. The clergyman sat the boy down and asked him sternly, 'Where is God?'

The boy made no response, so the clergyman repeated the question in an even sterner tone, 'Where is God?' Again the boy made no attempt to answer. So the clergyman raised his voice even more and shook his finger in the boy's face, 'WHERE IS GOD?'

At that the boy bolted from the room and ran directly home, slamming himself in the closet. His older brother followed him into the closet and asked what had happened. The younger brother replied, 'We are in BIG trouble this time. God is missing and they think we did it.'

So I ask the Question, Where is God? Is He in Heaven, Is He on Earth, Is He in Hell, Is He in Your Home, Work, Car, The place you Worship. The answer is Yes.

We say that, yet at the same time we live inconsistent with that. We many times act as if God is only Here in the This Building the Church.

We have made the Building the dwelling place of God. So we tend to equate the the Church Building with God and God with the church Building

The word “church” tends to have a very specific image attached to it: a mid sized building with a tall steeple—usually with a cross perched at the top—sometimes with a sign in front with some sort of cheesy message spelled out in plastic letters.

Maybe you’ve rejected that traditional church image—opting instead for a gathering at a storefront or local coffeeshop. But even without the steeple and sign, many of us still think of “church” as a place we go.

But early Church folks would be confused at the sentence, "Let's go to church." They understood themselves to be the Church. It wasn't a building or tent. It was them.

Embracing church as a place causes several problems:

Church, and therefore Christianity, gets compartmentalized when we see it as a place.

We tend to compartmentalize our lives, and this has a lot to do with location. We go to work or to school and show off our professional, put-together selves. We go home and relax with our families.

This mindset often transfers over to our lives as Christians, too. We look at Sunday as the totality of the Church experience. When we see Church as a building or place, our relationship with God tends to be something that only really takes place in that particular location. It's easy to follow Christ in a place where everyone around you thinks you should follow Christ.

But, obviously, being the Church should transcend building and day. You have the hope that so many in this world need. If your faith exclusively exists in a building or around other Christians, you miss the point of the very faith you represent.

Church, and therefore Christianity, is limited when we see it as a place.

If you go to church and are not the Church, then that allows you to justifiably be less than what you were meant to be. The building becomes the place where people are supposed to be presented with the Gospel. You invite people to a building hoping that someone else will tell them about Jesus instead of telling them yourself when you get chances in your day-to-day life.

Perhaps the lack of love and power we can experience today is rooted in the idea that we view Church and Christianity as consumer events and things we do, not as identities.

Finally, Church, and therefore, Christianity, is isolated when we see it as a place.

The general consensus was that our generation sees the online world as a community.

Some people feel they can skip "going to church," because the message is online. They don't have to go, because they get plenty of stimulating discussions on Facebook (Good luck with that!). Fitting inspirational quotes in 140 characters has become an art form.

Let's not limit this to the online community and the Millennial generation. There are plenty of you who skip church because your kid has a soccer game, you are taking your 17th vacation, or the weather is too nice or too bad. You might listen to the podcast version of the sermon and not think anything of it.

In that way, we neglect or are neglected by a community of Christians because Church is viewed as a place, not people. But being an active serving part of a local body unleashes your passions and leads to more growth than you can get living your spiritual life alone.

In the early Church, believers spent time with each other, met each other's needs and confessed sin to each other. You can't get the full extent of that through a podcast or text, and you certainly can't if sleep or nice weather is more important. Personal contact,

conversations and living life together broadens our perspectives. When you view church as a place, you can isolate yourself from the people who can help you unlock your purpose.

God wants to use you in the lives of people you know and people you don't know. If you aren't an active part of a local body of believers, it is difficult to walk in your purpose.

In the Bible, "church" is always a reference to people, not a place. Church is not a building or a day. Church is the walking, talking embodiment of Christ to a world where so many are not fulfilled because they do not love Him.

Think of all the Church could do if we do not compartmentalize, limit and isolate ourselves by thinking of ourselves as a place.

Review

1. It was a saved church,

² We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, ³ remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father, ⁴ knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God.

2. It was a Surrendered Church

⁵ For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

Lesson

1. It was a saved church,

2. It was a Surrendered Church

3. It was a Suffering Church

v. 6b having received the word in much affliction,
with joy of the Holy Spirit,

Having received (1209) (**dechomai**) means to to receive something offered or transmitted by another ([Luke 2:28](#)). To take something into one's hand and so to grasp ([Luke 22:17](#)). To be receptive to someone ([Mt 10:14](#), [40](#)). To take a favorable attitude toward something ([Mt 11:14](#)).

Dechomai means to accept deliberately, readily and kindly. The picture is of one "putting out the welcome mat" for God's word of truth as one would a good friend or a guest, inviting entry into one's house ([Luke 10:8,10](#); [Heb 11:31](#)). This verb indicates that the reception was a voluntary and willing act on the Thessalonians' part.

I Thess 2:13

¹³ For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

in much affliction

Tribulation (2347) (**thlipsis [word study]** from **thlibo** = to crush, press, compress or squeeze, in turn from **thlao** = to break > Latin "*tribulum*" = farming instrument to thresh grain, separating wheat from chaff!) carries the idea of being squeezed or placed under pressure and thus refers to intense pressure, hard circumstances, suffering or trouble that inflicts anguish, distress, oppression and affliction.

Vincent writes that **thlipsis** is from **thlibo**, to press or squeeze. **Tribulation** is perhaps as accurate a rendering as is possible, being derived from *tribulum*, the threshing-roller of the Romans. In both the idea of pressure is dominant, though *thlipsis* does not convey the idea of separation (as of corn from husk) which is implied in *tribulatio*. Trench cites, in illustration of *thlipsis*, pressure, the provision of the old English law, by which those who wilfully refused to plead had heavy weights placed on their breasts, and so were pressed and crushed to death.

Thlipsis refers not to mild discomfort but to great difficulty (and notice that it is modified by "much"!)

In Scripture thlipsis is perhaps most often used of outward difficulties, but it is also used of emotional stress.

MacArthur writes that these

new believers in Thessalonica experienced severe persecution, but the genuineness of their salvation transcended that affliction so that they never lost their joy. In his second epistle Paul commends them "for (their) perseverance and faith in the midst of all (their) persecutions and **afflictions (thlipsis)** which (they) endured." ([2Th 1:4](#))

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may (continually) have peace. In the world you (continually) have **tribulation** (thlipsis), but take courage (be undaunted, of good cheer); I have overcome the world." ([John 16:33](#))

Paul and Barnabas forewarned the churches of Galatia that it is through many **tribulations** that we must enter into the kingdom of God. ([Acts 14:22](#))

The **tribulations** began almost immediately for the Thessalonians, Luke recording that Paul and Silas came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ." And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with a great multitude of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women. But the Jews, becoming jealous and taking along some wicked men from the market place, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar; and coming upon the house of

Jason, they were seeking to bring them out to the people. (Acts 17:1-5)

I Thess 2:14

¹⁴ For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they *did* from the Judeans,

I Thess 3:2

² and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith, ³ that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this. ⁴ For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.

with joy of the Holy Spirit.

which [act of welcoming] was accompanied by joy that had its source in the Holy Spirit (Wuest)

Joy of the Holy Spirit means the joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, one element of the fruit of the Spirit ([Gal 5:22-note](#)). Receiving the Word is receiving Christ, receiving Christ is receiving the Holy Spirit, and He brings joy and gladness. No other explanation for their deep joy under the circumstances was possible. A joy arising out of a spurious religious excitement will fail under such circumstances.

Hiebert adds that

The depth of a disciple's joy in the Lord may well be measured by the degree of his participation in the sufferings of the Lord. It is still true that those who pay a great price in suffering to remain true to Christ know a deep measure of this Spirit-wrought joy in their lives. Perhaps our Christian lives are so lacking in this joy because our Christian profession costs us so little." (Hiebert, D. Edmond: 1 & 2 Thessalonians)

George Peters adds these words in his excellent description of a **disciple** explaining that...

A Christian disciple is more than a believer. A disciple is more than a learner, at least, a learner in the ordinary sense of the word. A disciple is more than a follower and imitator of Christ, more than a holy enthusiast for Christ, yea even more than living a life of full devotion to the Lord. A disciple is a believing person living a life of conscious and constant identification with the Lord in life, death, and resurrection through words, behavior, attitudes, motives, and purpose, fully realizing Christ's absolute ownership of his life, joyfully embracing the Saviorhood of Christ, delighting in the Lordship of Christ and living by the abiding, indwelling resources of Christ according to the imprinted pattern and purpose of Christ for the chief end of glorifying his Lord and Savior. There is divine fullness and content in the concept of discipleship which we must not limit. Larson, referring to a study by A. Friedrichsen, points out the fact that the expression cross-bearing was a contemporary metaphor indicating "radical social isolation and humiliation."

The call to Christian discipleship must always be interpreted to involve a call to humble fellowship, constant fellowship, sanctified openmindedness, undisputed obedience, ready submission, heroic faith, arduous labor, unselfish service, self-renunciation,

patient suffering, painful sacrifice, and cross-bearing. It is the bringing of all of life under the Lordship of Christ. This is not only the purpose of salvation, but this is the fullness of salvation—redemption from self and devotion to the Lord. And to this every Christian is called.

Too often, however, Christian discipleship has been detached from the everyday life of every believer and thought of in terms of the great, the heroic, and a peculiar sense of saintliness is being attached to it, instead of being lived out daily in the ordinary affairs of life and relationships. (Peters, George: *The Call of God*. Bibliotheca Sacra: Volume 120, Issue 480, page 328, 1963. Dallas TX: Dallas Theological Seminary)

4. It was a Soul Winning Church

⁷ so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. ⁸ For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything. ⁹ For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,

You - The plural pronoun **you** points to the various individuals composing the Thessalonian church as the ones who had produced this effect. Collectively they had become **an example** to

those in the various areas where their experience had become known.

Became (1096) (**ginomai**) means to come into existence and the **orist tense** indicates a completed action in the past, specifically at the time of their new birth into God's family.

you became an example - It is worth noting that the only church Paul ever called an **example** was the church at Thessalonica, for he felt it gave a pattern for what churches ought to be both in spiritual growth and ministry. What was their example? They had a **work of faith**, a **labor of love** and a **steadfastness of hope** in our Lord Jesus Christ ([1Th 1:3-note](#)) and manifested **joy** in the midst of **tribulation**

F F Bruce explains how the Thessalonians were an **example** writing...

From following the **example** of the missionaries, the Thessalonian Christians became in turn an **example** to other believers, both in their courageous acceptance of suffering for Christ's sake and in their fearless proclamation of the message which had brought salvation to themselves. (Bruce, F F: 1 and 2 Thessalonians. Word Biblical Commentary. Dallas: Word, Incorporated. 1982 or Logos)

Example tupos from **túpto** = strike, smite with repeated strokes) literally refers to a visible mark or impression made by a stroke or blow from an instrument or object. What is left after the stroke or blow is called a print, a figure or an impression. For example, the most famous reference to a literal mark (tupos) is when Thomas

doubted Jesus' resurrection from the dead declaring "*Unless I shall see in His hands the **imprint** (tuos) of the nails*" ([John 20:25](#)).

Similarly Paul exhorted **Titus**...

In all things to show yourself to be an **example** (tuos) of good deeds with purity in doctrine, dignified

Peter instructed elders as the spiritual leaders over the flock not to lord their authority over those allotted to their charge...

but proving to be **examples** (tuos) to the flock.

IN MACEDONIA AND IN ACHAIA ([1Th 1:8](#); [Acts 16:12](#); [1:13](#); [18:1](#); [2Cor 1:1](#); [9:2](#); [11:9,10](#))

The Thessalonian believers became models of the Christ life for others to imitate, specifically in their example of joy in the midst of persecution and their proclamation of the gospel in the face of opposition ([1Th 2:14-note](#))

Macedonia (map) and Achaia (map) (Another map showing Macedonia and Achaia = region of modern day Greece) -

Their example was observed not only in their own province of **Macedonia** (northern Greece) but also in the province of **Achaia** (central and southern Greece). Paul writing from Corinth the seat of administration of the province of Achaia, would have been in an advantageous position to assess the wide-ranging impact of the Thessalonian's **example**.

⁸ For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.

Dwight Moody regularly asked complete strangers about their spiritual life. One day he stopped a young man and asked...

"Are you a Christian?"

"It is none of your business."

"Yes it is."

"Then you must be Dwight L. Moody."

For (1063) (**gar**) signifies an explanation of something previously stated. It is a good practice when you encounter a "**for**" at the beginning of a verse to ask "what is the author explaining?".

Sounded Forth

(**Sunheo** from **ex** = out + **echo** = hold; in Lxx only in [Joel 4:14](#)) means literally to sound out (the verb is found in ancient secular Greek manuscripts describing the sound of a trumpet or the sound of rolling thunder), reverberating (continuing as if in a series of echoes) or bouncing off objects (in this case the hearts and minds of lost men and women) like an **echo**. The picture is that of clearly audible, unmistakable proclamation.

Spurgeon wrote...

It is the vocation of faith to be a speaker. When the heart believes, the mouth follows suit and makes confession. Faith made Noah a preacher, and it caused it to be said of Abel, "He being dead yet speaketh" (see [note Hebrews 11:4](#)). A silent faith is a questionable grace. Faith first speaks to Christ and then for Christ. It hears his voice and then acts as an echo by repeating it.

A similar metaphor is found in God's command to the prophet Isaiah to

“Cry loudly, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet, and declare to My people their transgression and to the house of Jacob their sins.” ([Isa 58:1](#))

Warren Wiersbe has an powerful, convicting note writing that...

election (see discussion of election in [1Pe 1:1-note](#)) and evangelism go together. The person who says, "God will save those He wants to save and He doesn't need my help!" understands neither election nor evangelism. In the Bible, election always involves responsibility. God chose Israel and made them an elect nation so that they might witness to the Gentiles. In the same way, God has chosen the church that we might be witnesses today. The fact that we are God's elect people does not excuse us from the task of evangelism. On the contrary, the doctrine of election is one of the greatest encouragements to evangelism... The same God who ordains the end (the salvation of the lost) also ordains the means to the end (the preaching of the Gospel). There is no conflict between divine sovereignty and human responsibility, even though we cannot reconcile the two. We need more churches today where the people are enthusiastic to share the message of salvation with others. As I write this, 2.4 billion people in

our world have no visible witness of the Gospel in their midst, or no church body. In spite of the outreach of radio, television, and the printing press, we are losing ground in the work of reaching the lost. Are you an enthusiastic Christian? Is your church enthusiastic about witnessing? (Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor)

Spurgeon minced no words when he asked...

Have you no wish for others to be saved? Then you are not saved yourself. Be sure of that...You do not love the Lord at all unless you love the souls of others...The soul-winner must first be a soul-lover....Winners of souls must first be weepers for souls.

v8 Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.

What was being said

⁹ For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,

Turned from idols to the living and true God - It is interesting that in the OT one of the Hebrew words that conveys the abstract idea of idol is "awen" ([Isa 66:3](#)) which conveys the idea of emptiness, nothingness, as of breath or vapor! It is that which is vain or false (not true). In short, Paul's readers had repented, turning from belief in "nothing" to belief in the ultimate truth!

To God from idols - Note the order, as it is not "accidental". First = To God. Then = From idols. When our eyes of faith are opened

to see the true and living God, the vain, dead so called gods are seen for the empty unsatisfying worthless created things they are. **Do you have any worthless idols you are hiding in your heart? If you do then turn to God and confess them one by one so that by His grace and power you are enabled to turn away from them (to repent)?**

You Turned (**epistrepho** from **epi** = motion toward + **strepho** = turn) means to turn about, around or toward and then to convert, so that it frequently refers to a sinner's conversion to God as in the current use. **Epistrepho** describes what the is elsewhere termed repentance (see [Mt 3:1,2](#); [4:17](#); [Acts 2:38](#); [3:19](#); [5:31](#); [20:21](#)).

Epistrepho describes a definite turn to God in thinking and conduct and is used with this evangelical meaning most often in Acts

Turned is **orist tense** pointing to a definite crisis experience and **indicative mood** indicates that such a change had truly taken place. The **active voice** indicates that the conversion was the consequence of a deliberate choice on their part and was not an act forced upon them. Their turning was voluntary. It was evidence of their faith and love mentioned in

MacDonald rightly observes...

that they turned to God from idols, not from idols to God. It wasn't that they had become fed up with their idols and then decided to give God a chance. No, they turned to God and found Him so satisfying that they dropped their idols. Let us never lose the sense of thrill and awe that is implicit in this account. Two men go into a heathen city with the word of the Lord. They preach the gospel in the power of the Spirit. The miracle of regeneration takes place: men and women become so enraptured with the Savior that they abandon their idols. Next you have a local assembly of believers praising God, living lives of holiness, bravely enduring persecution, and winning

others to Christ. Truly the Lord's service is the prince of callings! (MacDonald, W., & Farstad, A. *Believer's Bible Commentary : Old and New Testaments*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson)

The Pagan world of Paul's day was saturated by idolatry

Writing to the Corinthians who lived a city alive (really "dead") with idol worship Paul explained...

Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to **idols** (eidolon), we know that there is no such thing as an **idol** (eidolon) in the world, and that there is no God but one." ([1Cor 8:4](#))

In [1Cor 12:2](#) Paul says that

when you were pagans, you were led astray to the dumb (speechless in contrast with the living God who does speak) **idols**, however you were led (Before conversion the Corinthians had been idolaters, enslaved by and living in fear of demonic spirits and being led about by them witnessing supernatural manifestations of the spirit world).

Morris commenting on John's warning writes...

Idols are either physical images or mental constructs with which men try to explain and control the forces and systems of nature without acknowledging the one true God as Creator and Sustainer of all things. Paganism, with its pantheism and polytheism, worshipping the various forces and systems of nature personified as Mother Earth with all her other personifications as various gods and goddesses, was rife in John's day and, through various forms of evolutionism, has always been arrayed in opposition to the true God of creation and redemption. This is more true today than ever before, and it is absolutely vital that true Christians

should refrain from all forms of idolatry, whether rationalistic humanism, economic materialism, or New Age pantheism--all of which are founded on an evolutionary world view. (Morris, Henry: Defenders Study Bible. World Publishing)

Revelation, which contains several statements concerning those who are barred from heaven. High on the list are those who worship man-made idols, John recording that...

the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the **idols** (eidolon) of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts. ([Rev 9:20-21](#)).

Ray Stedman notes that

"Modern America is surely one of the most idolatrous countries the world has ever seen. We are surrounded with idol worship. I once heard of a Chinese man who visited here and was asked upon his return to China whether Americans worshipped idols. "Yes, they do," he reported. "They have three of them. In the winter they worship a big man in a red suit. In the spring they worship a rabbit. And in the fall they sacrifice a turkey!"

Martin Luther warned of the danger of idolatry writing...

"We easily fall into idolatry, for we are inclined to it by nature; and coming to us by inheritance, it seems pleasant."

TO SERVE A LIVING AND TRUE GOD

To serve (1398) (**douleuo [word study]** from **doulos** = bondservant in turn from **deo** = to bind so one who is bound to another) means to be a slave to God and to act accordingly. The present infinitive denotes that it was a life of continual, complete, and wholehearted service to God. The Thessalonians had completely yielded their wills to continuously (**present tense**) carry out the will of their heavenly Master. A **doulos** conveys the idea of one closely bound with his master, belonging to him, obligated and desirous to do his will, in a permanent relation of servitude and having his will be altogether consumed by the will of the master. **Doulos** and **douleuo** emphasize that one is no longer their own but that they have been bought at great price and therefore willingly commit to serve their master whom they love and respect.

No one can serve (**present tense**) two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve (**present tense** -make this a habitual practice) God and mammon. ([Mt 6:24-note](#))

Calvin remarks,

Only the man who has learned to put himself wholly in subjection to God is truly converted to Him.

This Little Light Of Mine - The Lake Michigan shoreline (a short drive from where I live) is dotted with lighthouses built to enable ship captains to navigate into safe harbors. The structures are varied in size, shape, and color, but each has unique charm and beauty. Pictures of the lighthouses are featured in books and calendars, and some people collect replicas and other lighthouse items.

But lighthouses were not built just to be admired; they were built to hold lights that guide sailors to safety. A lighthouse is most useful and appreciated when, in the darkness of night, only its

light can be seen—not the structure itself.

When Jesus sent out His disciples, He called them "the light of the world" ([Matthew 5:14](#)). He also indicated that their task was not to draw attention to themselves, but to do good works that would cause people to recognize God's goodness and glorify Him.

Jesus said that just as a lamp's purpose is to give light, we also are to let our light shine (vv.15-16). We're most effective when we shine brightly in the darkness, guiding people who need to find safe harbor in Christ.

For a light to be effective, it has to be shining in a dark place. — Julie Ackerman Link ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

My life was dark until the Light shone in,
That Light was Christ, who saved me from my sin;
His light that I've received I want to share
And let it shine to people everywhere. —Hess

A little light makes a big difference in the darkest night.

5. It was a Second Coming Church

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.

Wait (**anemeno** from **ana** = upon, **Vine** says it intensifies meaning of meno + **meno** = abide, remain) conveys the meaning of expectant waiting—sustained, patient, trusting waiting. It pictures an eager looking forward to the coming of one whose arrival was anticipated at any time, waiting for one whose coming is expected.

Hiebert comments that

to wait for means "to await, expect, wait up for" and pictures them as people who were eagerly and expectantly looking forward to the coming of One Whose arrival was anticipated at any time; the **present tense** gives this as their continuing attitude

KJV Bible Commentary writes that **anemeno** means more than just wait; it emphasizes an expectant and active attempt to live for His glory in the meantime. It is an attitude of faith toward the complete fulfillment of the messianic promises of the Old Testament in the second coming of Christ. (Dobson, E G, Charles Feinberg, E Hindson, Woodrow Kroll, H L. Wilmington: KJV Bible Commentary: Nelson)

Are you were living with the assured conviction that Jesus will return? The trustworthy promise after the Resurrection was...

Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, Who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven. (**Acts 1:11**) (**Maranatha!** Our Lord Come!)

In the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also **to**

all who have loved His appearing. (see [note 2 Timothy 4:8](#))

Writing to **Titus** on the isle of Crete Paul reminds him that

the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, **looking for** the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus. (see [notes Titus 2:11, 2:12, 2:13](#))

who delivers us from the wrath to come.

Delivers ([rhuomai](#) from [rhúo](#) = to draw, drag along the ground) ([Click in depth study on rhuomai](#)) means to draw or snatch to oneself (drawing us to Himself!) from danger, evil or an enemy. The thought of deliverance by power is apparently always associated with [rhuomai](#).

Rhuomai emphasizes greatness of peril from which deliverance is given by a mighty act of power. The basic idea is that of rescuing from danger and was used of a soldier's going to a wounded comrade on the battlefield and carrying him to safety

Rhuomai is in the **present tense** indicating that is our Savior continually delivers us. The tense is not **past**, "Who delivered us," namely, by his death (which He did do); nor **future**, "Who shall deliver us," (which He will do), but **present**, "Who delivers us" which emphasizes that in one sense the deliverance is ongoing (

From

ek or ex: from, from out of**Original Word:** ἔκ, ἔξ**Part of Speech:** Preposition**Transliteration:** ek or ex**Phonetic Spelling:** (ek)**Short Definition:** from out, out from among, from**Definition:** from out, out from among, from, suggesting from the interior outwards.**HELPS Word-studies**

1537 *ek* (a preposition, written *eks* before a vowel) – properly, "*out from* and *to*" (the *outcome*); *out from within*. **1537** /*ek* ("out of") is one of the most under-translated (and therefore mis-translated) Greek prepositions – often being confined to the meaning "by." **1537** (*ek*) has a two-layered meaning ("*out from* and *to*") which makes it *out-come* oriented (out of the depths of the source and extending to its impact on the object).

The wrath

(3709) (**orge** from **orgao** = to teem, swell) is literally rendered "the unique and specific wrath which is coming". This is not a reference to hell but to a time of "hell on earth" so to speak, to "the specific" (definite article "the" precedes "orge" indicating it is not just wrath in general but is a specific wrath) coming period of wrath on earth, which almost certainly refers to the prophetically significant time period known as the **Day of the Lord** which would include the time period Jesus referred to as "The Great Tribulation" ([Mt 24:21](#)) that occurs in the last half of **Daniel's Seventieth Week**. (See also God's attribute of **Wrath**).

Arthur Pink writes in "The Attributes of God" that His **wrath** is His eternal detestation of all unrighteousness. It is the displeasure and indignation of Divine equity against evil. It is the holiness of God stirred into activity against sin"

Jonathan Edwards (in his famous sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God") writes that

The wrath of God is like great waters that are dammed for the present; they increase more and more, and rise higher and higher, till an outlet is given; and the longer the stream is stopped, the more rapid and mighty is its course, when once it is let loose. It is true, that judgment against your evil works has not been executed hitherto; the floods of God's vengeance have been withheld; but your guilt in the mean time is constantly increasing, and you are every day treasuring up more wrath; the waters are constantly rising, and waxing more and more mighty; and there is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, that holds the waters back, that are unwilling to be stopped, and press hard to go forward. If God should only withdraw his hand from the flood-gate, it would immediately fly open, and the fiery floods of the fierceness and wrath of God, would rush forth with inconceivable fury, and would come upon you with omnipotent power

1 Thess 4:13—

2 Thess 1

Matt 24