

A PASSION FOR CHRIST'S COMING

I THESS 2:8

(52-17)

What are you doing in your life that will last forever? The stock market fluctuates, real estate bottoms out, companies down size, federal funding dries up, houses wear out, bodies get sick, minds fail . . .

All of the magnificent buildings of Solomon, including the Temple are gone. All of the wonderful buildings of Herod are rubble. The Pyramids are crumbling, the Tower of Pisa is leaning . . .

Paul came to Thessalonica with an offer of something they could become a part of that never ends. Christ said here is something anyone in my family can do!

- **JESUS SAID YOUR WITNESS IS PRICELESS, I COUNT SOULS YOU POINT TO ME - WIN!**
Daniel 12:3 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.
Proverbs 11:30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.
- **JESUS SAID YOUR INVOLVEMENT IS VALUABLE, I LOVE MISSIONARIES THAT DO OUTREACH - GO!** Matthew 19:29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. (KJV)
- **JESUS SAID YOUR RESOURCES ARE VALUABLE, I MULTIPLY SACRIFICIAL GIFTS - GIVE!**
Mark 12:42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. (KJV)
- **JESUS SAID YOUR STRENGTH IS VALUABLE, I REMEMBER HUMBLE SERVICE - SERVE!**
Mark 14:3 And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. (KJV)
- **JESUS SAID YOUR TIME IS VALUABLE, I COLLECT ALL OF YOUR PRAYERS - PRAY!**
Revelation 5:8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. (KJV)

Remember the Theme of this letter? It reappears in each chapter. Through Christ's promised coming we have:

- 1:10 Present hope of salvation
- 2:19 Future joy of his homegoing

- 3:13 Constant cause for holy living
- 4:17,18 Constant source of comfort
- 5:23 Promise of completed salvation

The Apostle Paul is celebrating the new life Christ brings to all who come to Him. No less than 10 times he points out freshness of this new life in Christ. Let me just trace them across the pages of this letter.

1. They had A NEW ORIENTATION or DIRECTION IN LIFE: Turned to God [1.9].
2. They had A NEW REASON TO LIVE: Wait for Son [1:10]
3. They had A NEW PLAN IN LIFE: Walk worthy of God [2.12]
4. They had A NEW AUTHORITY IN LIFE: Take God at His Word [2.13]
5. They had A NEW MEASURING STICK IN LIFE: Measure all by Christ's coming [2.19-20]
6. They had A NEW PERSPECTIVE IN LIFE: Accept suffering from God [3.3-4]
7. They had A NEW RESOURCE IN LIFE: Abound in love [3.12]
8. They had A NEW APPETITE IN LIFE: Stay pure [4.3]
9. They had A NEW LIFESTYLE: Be quiet, Mind own business, Work [4.11]
10. They had A NEW OCCUPATION IN LIFE - MINISTRY : Comfort one another [4.18]; Edify one another [5.11]
11. They had A NEW HABIT IN LIFE: Rejoice always [5.16]
12. They had A NEW AWARENESS IN LIFE - CONTACT WITH GOD: Pray always [5.17]; Be thankful [5.18]

When Paul looked back on his work among the Thessalonians?

A life on a daily basis had:

- I. HABITS OF FEARLESSNESS [2:1]
- II. HABITS OF INTEGRITY [2:3]
- III. HABITS OF HONESTY [2:5]
- IV. HABITS OF EFFECTIVE SERVANTS #4 HUMILITY (2:6) What we need tonight is to cultivate Godly Humility. Paul said Colossians 3:12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; (NKJV)
- V. HABITS OF EFFECTIVE SERVANTS #5 LOVE (2:7)
 - A. In that excellent new book "The Discipline of Grace" Navigator theologian Jerry BRIDGES encourages us to put I Corinthians into personal actions statements. Let me share my personal action statements:
 1. I will not rejoice in sin because I love you and I know our holy god is offended by sin and sin will hurt you personally.
 2. I will take pleasure in the truth because I love you and want your life to reflect god's holiness.
 3. I will bear all things because I love you and don't want to parade your sin before other people.
 4. I will believe all things because I love you and will believe the best about you, not judging you wrongly. I will have faith in you.

5. I will hope all things because I love you and know that god is seeking you and you are made for god; I will not despair of you because I know your needs and I know god's grace.
6. I will endure all things because I love you and the love of Christ is eternal; Jesus endured all opposition and persecution and prayed on the cross for his enemies. Love never dies

VI. HABITS #6 OF PASSIONATE LIVING [2:8] How do you gain what lasts forever? What kind of heart can minister under any condition? One that is waiting for Jesus! What are the benefits of waiting for the Son? What will looking at Jesus help you overcome or at least endure? Who waited for Jesus and when? When we look for Jesus in all of Life!

- A. ENOCH LOOKED FOR JESUS THROUGH DEMON TIMES Genesis 5:24 And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him. (KJV); Hebrews 11:5-6 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. 6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. (KJV). The world was literally on its last leg. Evil was everywhere. God was almost closed out. People were so wicked they had to be exterminated! And what does one do while looking for Jesus? Jude 14-15 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. (KJV)
- B. JOB LOOKED FOR JESUS THROUGH SICKNESS AND SUFFERING TIMES Job 19:25-26 For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: 26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: (KJV) Satan buffets, beloved children die, life savings destroyed, wife torments, friends accuse and his body wastes! That is affliction! And what did he do while looking for Jesus? He spoke of Him: Job 19:25-26 For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: 26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: (KJV)
- C. MOSES LOOKED FOR JESUS THROUGH DISAPPOINTING TIMES Deuteronomy 33:2 And he said, The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them. (KJV) What amazing disappointments Moses faced!
 1. Meteoric career in Egyptian Politics and military but hot temper puts him in desert obscurity
 2. Quiet family life in the country, God's call puts him in the hot seat away from his family.
 3. As a willing servant he became the greatest deliverer of all time next to Christ.
 4. As a humble follower he became the greatest prophet, knowing God face to face. He glowed from the contact with God.

5. After leading the people 40 years as a self sacrificing servant leader, they continually (10x) rebel.
 6. In one angry act he is shut out of the Promised Land!
- D. DANIEL LOOKED FOR JESUS THROUGH PAGAN TIMES Daniel 7:9-10 I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. 10 A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. (KJV) Captivity, POW But listen to Daniel 1:8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. (KJV)
- E. ZECHARIAH LOOKED FOR JESUS THROUGH DISASTER TIMES Zechariah 14:5 And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee. (KJV) The mighty earthquakes of life, disasters unexpected, known only to God. And what was he saying? Zechariah 12:10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born. (KJV)
- F. PETER AND PAUL LOOKED FOR JESUS THROUGH PRISON AND MARTYRDOM TIMES
1. 2 Timothy 4:6-8 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. (KJV);
 2. 2 Peter 3:13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. (KJV);
 3. 2 TH. 1:7-8 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: (KJV)
- G. JOHN LOOKED FOR JESUS THROUGH LONELY TIMES Revelation 1:7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. (KJV) He was the last Apostle, disciple, last Christian? On a lonely island. . . Revelation 22:20-21 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. 21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. (KJV)

VII. HABITS OF DEDICATION [2:9-11]