

Introduction:

CONCLUDING PRAYER – vv.23-24

Now may the God of peace

- peace **with God** through the death of Christ (2Cor5:19) resulting in peace **in all areas** (2Thes 3:16)

Himself sanctify you completely

- To be sanctified is to be increasingly **transformed** from **what is wrong** in us to what is right
- emphasis has been on **our efforts and pursuit** of holiness (4:3) but **success depends on** the working of God in us
- the word completely doesn't mean just perfectly, but wholly, in **every part of our humanity**
- what this includes is found in the phrase **and may your whole spirit, soul, and body**
- this is contrary to the Platonic idea of **the body as prison house** that they would have been taught
- this sanctification includes a blameless, whole, and sound **presentation of ourselves** before Jesus

Clearly this is no piecemeal sanctification effected by human effort, for the radical completeness of the holiness required demands God for its Author. (Wilson)

be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- without spot or wrinkle (Eph 5:27) faultless or without blemish (Jude24)
- this prayer is not just wishful thinking, but is fused together with the character and promise of God

He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.

- It is **the faithfulness of God** that is at stake – it is this God who **has effectually called them**
- if it is God who has begun the good work, it is He who has promised to complete it (Phil1:6)
- What is necessary is perseverance, continuing in faith and the hope in the Gospel (Col1:22-23)

It is profoundly satisfying to the believer that in the last resort what matters is not his feeble hold on God, but God's strong grip on him. (Morris)

CONCLUDING EXHORATIONS – vv.25-27

Brethren, pray for us.

- As we have prayed for you, so pray for **the leadership** of the church; Paul aware of those unfaithful

Without those prayers, he will be likely to accomplish little in the cause of his Master. His own devotions in the sanctuary will be formal and frigid, and the word which he preaches will be likely to come from a cold and heavy heart, and to fall also on cold and heavy hearts. There is no way in which a people can better advance the cause of piety in their own hearts, than by praying much for their ministry. (Barnes)

Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss

- In his absence, he wants them to give greetings to all in the church from him, an expression of **familial love**

I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren.

- A strong term, indicating **putting them under oath** (high priest and Jesus Mt26:63)
- the things here so important, make sure that **everyone knows** about them, even if absent from the meeting
- because of the **living dynamic of the Spirit** in the church, it is important to pay attention – not just class

The richest blessing of heaven to mankind is the Bible; and there is no book ever written so admirably adapted to the common mind, and so fitted to elevate the sunken, the ignorant, and the degraded. There is no more decided enemy of the progress of the human race in intelligence, purity, and freedom, than he who prevents the free circulation of this holy volume; and there is no sincerer friend of the species than he who "causes it to be read by all," and who contributes to make it accessible to all the families and all the inhabitants of the world. (Barnes)

CONCLUDING BENEDICTION – v.28

- an **invocation of divine blessing**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

- this is what is needed, above all other things; to continue to know, think about, be aware of, and have God deal with us in Grace for the sake of His Son
- this is not the common grace and goodness of God, but that flowing out of the death-benefits of the Lord Jesus

All that God has been to man in Jesus Christ is summed up in it: all His gentleness and patience, all the holy passion of His love, is gathered up in grace. What more could one soul wish for another than that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ should be with it? (Denny)