

Ministry of Reconciliation (MOR) Bible Teachings



September 2019

Father thank you for giving us an understanding of your Word so we can have a clear picture of the hope of Christ's return. Father, thank you for letting us see how the hope of Christ's return builds our endurance to stay faithful each day on your Word.

Therefore, we can be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labor is not in vain in the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58). In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

In the August 2019 teaching, we learned there are five crowns in God's Word: the Incorruptible Crown, Crown of Rejoicing, Crown of Righteousness, Crown of Life, and Crown of Glory. These crowns are rewards for work done here on earth! Salvation is by God's grace, not of works. We don't work to get saved or to remain saved. Ephesians 2: 8-9:

For by grace are ye saved through faith [the faith of Jesus Christ]; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Each crown is received based on our walk on the rightly divided Word of God! We receive these rewards for our day-to-day walk on God's Word in this world. We walk and live our lives so that we earn rewards throughout eternity!

This month's teaching is on **1 Thessalonians Chapter 1**. Thessalonians was the first revelation given to the Apostle Paul. It is the last chapter in the seven church Epistles in the Bible. Why? It is because the return of Christ is the last event of the Grace Administration. It sums up how the believers should walk in Christ Jesus. It provides a comprehensive and precise understanding of the hope of Christ's return. The scriptures were given by inspiration of God to the Apostle Paul. He wrote Thessalonians during the seventh section in the book of Acts.

As we rightly divide the Word of truth concerning the hope of Christ's return, 1 Thessalonians gives the born-again believers the motivation to prevail with believing action in order to make an impact on the adversary's realm. 1 Thessalonians focuses on the truth concerning the hope of the Lord Jesus Christ's return. It admonishes the believers to stand, to walk, to serve, to believe, to love, and to work together as a household!

The specifics regarding the gathering together of the Church of Grace are recorded in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. Without the hope of the return of Christ, we will not endure until the end. With all the things we undergo in this life, we would just get tired. We need to know that there is something better for us in the future! We need to know that when Christ returns, we will be like him. We will have a new body. There will be no more pain, no more sickness, and no more death!

Let's look at 1 Thessalonians 1:1:

*Paul [his name means small or little], and Silvanus [his name means who loves the forest], and Timotheus [his name means honor of God; valued of God], unto the church [Greek word *ekklesia* or called out] of the Thessalonians which is in [by] God [Elohim] the Father and in the Lord [master] Jesus Christ [the humbled one now glorified]: Grace [God's unmerited divine favor] be unto you [the born-again believers], and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

God gave the revelation of Thessalonians to the Apostle Paul when Silas and Timothy were with him in Thessalonica. Thessalonica was the capital of Greece and the second-largest city in Greece. The Greek word for "church" is *ekklesia*, literally meaning the "called out." *Ekklesia* is used of any assembly which is organized for any specific purpose. If you were called out for a meeting, the get together would be an *ekklesia*. It does not refer to a building, although the get together could have occurred in a building.

In Acts 19:23-32, a union meeting was called an *ekklesia*:

And the same time there arose no small stir about that way.

For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen;

Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth.

Moreover, ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands.

So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at naught; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence

should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshipped.

And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.

And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre.

Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly [ekklesia] was confused: and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.

Demetrius a silversmith called together the workmen of similar occupation, and said, "Sirs, you know that by this craft we have our wealth." The purpose of this meeting was to maintain their profits as silversmiths of the statues of the goddess Diana. This meeting was called an *ekklesia*.

Let's break down the meaning of the words and phrases used in 1 Thessalonians 1: 1. By understanding this, we gain a richer and deeper appreciation for the Word of God. We the true Church [*ekklesia*] today are called out in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. In the phrase, the "Lord Jesus Christ," the word "Lord" means master. The word "Jesus" here refers to his humbleness and obedience to death. The word "Christ" becomes the name of his changed position after God raised him from the dead and set him at the Father's right hand. When all three are used together, it marks Christ's authority and power! Christ, in the Church Epistles represent our position, blessing, and standing before God our Father. We are in Christ, not in Jesus! The word "Grace" means God's divine unmerited favor.

We will continue with 1 Thessalonians 1:2:

We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers.

We give thanks to God always for one another, by praying in the spirit and with our understanding. 1 Thessalonians 1:3:

Remembering without ceasing your work of faith [believing], and labor of love, and patience of [patient endurance proceeding from] hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.

The Apostle Paul praised the Thessalonians on their work of believing, their love for God in the renewed mind in manifestation and their patient endurance proceeding from hope in our Lord Jesus Christ and in the sight of God and our Father! When we rightly divide the Word of truth regarding the hope, it produces energy, strength, and a readiness to believe despite the negatives.

When we study the three doctrines Epistles (Roman, Ephesians and Thessalonians), we see how Romans lines up with believing, love lines up with Ephesians, and hope lines up with Thessalonians. The February 2018 teaching showed you how love activates our believing and hope.

Continuing with 1 Thessalonians 1: 4-6:

Knowing [oida - clear mental image], brethren beloved, your election of God.

For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost [pneuma hagion or holy spirit], and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

And ye became followers [imitators] of us [Paul, Silas and Timothy], and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction [mental pressure], with joy of the Holy Ghost [holy spirit].

The Thessalonians followed the example of Paul, Silas, and Timothy who were their spiritual leaders. They imitated their heart, their knowledge of the Word, their believing, their love, their hope, and their strength. The Thessalonians imitated Paul, Silas, and Timothy's doing of the Word!

We all experience mental pressure at times in our lives. We need the endurance that the hope of Christ's return provides in order to continue to believe and walk in the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation and prevail against the attacks of the adversary. Our believing and love will dissipate if there's no hope in it! We need the knowledge of the gathering together, an understanding of the future administrations and our new bodies, the rewards we'll receive for our faithfulness, to provide us with stamina. The word of God says, "*which hope we have as an anchor of the souls*" (Hebrews 6:19).

As a united body, the Thessalonian born-again believers, received the Word despite their many mental pressures. They received the Word with the joy of the holy spirit. Remember it was Paul, Silas, and Timothy teaching them God's Word, but:

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe -- 1 Thessalonians 2:13.

These Thessalonian believers became examples of how to receive the Word of God, how to live the Word of God, and how to speak the Word of God! Acts 1:8 and Acts 2:42-47 established the foundation for the believing lifestyles seen in the examples of Paul, Silas, Timothy, and the Thessalonians believers. Acts 1:8:

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

After receiving into manifestation, the gift of holy spirit on the day of Pentecost, we see in Acts 2 essential ideologies that led to growth and powerful outreach in the early Church. Acts 2:42-47:

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

And fear [respect] came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

And all that believed were together and had all things common;

And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

Praising God, and having favors with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Back to 1 Thessalonians 1:7:

So that ye [household in Thessalonica] were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

The believers in Thessalonica had learned from Paul, Silas, and Timothy. They had become examples themselves in holding forth God's Word to others! 1 Thessalonians 1:8:

For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith [believing] to God-ward [toward God] is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak anything.

The phrase "sounded out" is translated from one Greek word, *execheomai*. There is only one occurrence of this word in God's Word. This word means echo, reverberate and resound. If you are in a big empty building and call out loudly, your voice would echo, reverberate and resound. If you were in a canyon and made a sound, your voice would echo, reverberate and resound. This is how the spoken word of God echoes, reverberates and resounds out to others! The Thessalonians' believing of God's Word spread abroad beyond Macedonia and Achaia. When we boldly speak and live God's Word as Paul, Silas and Timothy and the Thessalonians did, our believing lifestyle can reach far beyond our local areas. Thessalonian believers were so powerful, their godly walk so apparent, Paul, Silas, and Timothy did not need to say anything to endorse them. Their work of believing, their love for God in the renewed mind in manifestation and their patient endurance proceeding from the hope in our Lord Jesus Christ and in the sight of God and our Father was on display for all to see.

1 Thessalonians 1:9:

For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye [the Thessalonian believers] turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.

The Thessalonian believers received the Word of God which they heard from Paul, Silas, and Timothy. They received it not as the word of men, but as it was in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worked also in them that believed (see 1 Thessalonians 2:13). Once the Thessalonians received and believed the Word of God, they turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.

1 Thessalonians 1:10:

And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

The word “wait” does not mean to sit around and do nothing. It involves work and labor and endurance (see 1 Thessalonians 1:3). In verse 9, the Thessalonians were serving “*the living and true God.*” Their “waiting” was a part of their example that sounded out. They were doing the Word of God while waiting for the return of Christ!

The hope of Christ's return was what gave the Thessalonians joy! It gave them endurance because they knew they were saved from the wrath to come! We, the born-again believers, will not go through the tribulation period of the wrath spoken of in the book of Revelation (see 1 Thessalonians 1:10; Romans 5:9). These truths show us why we can look forward to the hope of Christ's return with great joy and anticipation because of our knowledge of the hope!

Because of our loving hearts, the blessing and benefits of this Grace Administration are wide open to us. As we remain tenderhearted and imitate Christ and our leadership that follows the ways of Christ, we build the quality of life that reverberates out to bless the faithful in Christ! Each day the hope of Christ's return is a wonderful reason for thankfulness and rejoicing!

We have reviewed the first chapter of 1 Thessalonians in detail. Thessalonians was the first revelation given to the Apostle Paul. As we rightly divide the Word of truth concerning the hope of Christ's return, 1 Thessalonians gives the born-again believers the motivation to prevail with believing action so as to have an impact on the adversary's realm.

1 Thessalonians focuses on the truth concerning the hope of the Lord Jesus Christ's return, admonishing the believers to stand, to walk, to serve, to believe, to love, and to work together as a household!

Father, thank you for this tremendous chapter on the hope of Christ's return. Thank you that your children can see what you have done for us through your son the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you that we can rightly divide the Word of truth concerning the hope of Christ's return, as we remain tenderhearted and imitate Christ and our leadership that follows the ways of Christ. Father, thank you that our work of believing, our love for You in the renewed mind in manifestation, and our endurance proceeding from hope in our Lord Jesus Christ is on display for all to see. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

Next month's teaching, the Church Epistles – 1 Thessalonians 2.

In the Lord,

Ministry of Reconciliation

Son of God through Jesus Christ

Ambassador for Christ