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**Word Pictures in
the New Testament -
1 Thessalonians**

A. T. Robertson





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Description: A. T. Robertson was a renowned Greek New Testament scholar. His work on the Greek language is still consulted today. *Word Pictures in the New Testament* is his insightful treatment of that book. In the Greek New Testament, there are a variety of meaningful pictorial nuances implicit in the Greek constructions. These nuances are often lost in translation. *Word Pictures in the New Testament* explains them. Robertson examines Greek constructions from many different Testament passages. He provides background to many of the Greek words and their connotations in the original Greek, thereby shedding new light on the meaning of passages. Many readers have gained a new, richer understanding of the New Testament by studying *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. And although no technical knowledge is required to study this work, familiarity with the Greek language makes this work much easier to digest. Consequently, it is ideal for pastors, theologians, and students of the New Testament.

Tim Perrine

CCEL Staff Writer

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Contents

Title Page	1
Chapter 1	2
Chapter 2	9
Chapter 3	16
Chapter 4	18
Chapter 5	22
Indexes	27
Index of Scripture References	28
Index of Scripture Commentary	30



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Word Pictures in the New Testament

1 Thessalonians

A. T. Robertson

Chapter 1

1:1 **Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy** [*Paulos kai Silouanos kai Timotheos*]. Nominative absolute as customary in letters. Paul associates with himself Silvanus (Silas of Acts, spelled [*Silbanos*] in D and the papyri), a Jew and Roman citizen, and Timothy, son of Jewish mother and Greek father, one of Paul's converts at Lystra on the first tour. They had both been with Paul at Thessalonica, though Timothy is not mentioned by Luke in Acts in Macedonia till Beroea ([Ac 17:14f.](#)). Timothy had joined Paul in Athens ([1Th 3:1f.](#)), had been sent back to Thessalonica, and with Silas had rejoined Paul in Corinth ([1Th 3:5](#); [Ac 18:5](#), [2Co 1:19](#)). Silas is the elder and is mentioned first, but neither is in any sense the author of the Epistle any more than Sosthenes is co-author of I Corinthians or Timothy of II Corinthians, though Paul may sometimes have them in mind when he uses "we" in the Epistle. Paul does not here call himself "apostle" as in the later Epistles, perhaps because his position has not been so vigorously attacked as it was later. Ellicott sees in the absence of the word here a mark of the affectionate relations existing between Paul and the Thessalonians. **Unto the church of the Thessalonians** [*tēi ekklēsiāi Thessalonikeōn*]. The dative case in address. Note absence of the article with [*Thessalonikeōn*] because a proper name and so definite without it. This is the common use of [*ekklēsia*] for a local body (church). The word originally meant "assembly" as in [Ac 19:39](#), but it came to mean an organization for worship whether assembled or unassembled (cf. [Ac 8:3](#)). The only superscription in the oldest Greek manuscripts (Aleph B A) is [*Pros Thessalonikeis A*] (To the Thessalonians First). But probably Paul wrote no superscription and certainly he would not write A to it before he had written II Thessalonians (B). His signature at the close was the proof of genuineness ([2Th 3:17](#)) against all spurious claimants ([2Th 2:2](#)). Unfortunately the brittle papyrus on which he wrote easily perished outside of the sand heaps and tombs of Egypt or the lava covered ruins of Herculaneum. What a treasure that autograph would be! **In God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ** [*en theōi patri kai kuriōi Jēsou Christōi*]. This church is grounded in [*en*], with the locative case) and exists in the sphere and power of **God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**. No article in the Greek, for both [*theōi patri*] and [*kuriōi Jēsou Christōi*] are treated as proper names. In the very beginning of this first Epistle of Paul we meet his Christology. He at once uses the full title, "Lord Jesus Christ," with all the theological content of each word. The name "Jesus" (Saviour, [Mt 1:21](#)) he knew, as the "Jesus of history," the personal name of the Man of Galilee, whom he had once persecuted ([Ac 9:5](#)), but whom he at once, after his conversion, proclaimed to be "the Messiah," [*ho Christos*], [Ac 9:22](#)). This position Paul never changed. In the great sermon at Antioch in Pisidia which Luke has preserved ([Ac 13:23](#)) Paul proved that God fulfilled his promise to Israel by raising up "Jesus as Saviour" [*sōtēra Iēsoun*]. Now Paul follows the Christian custom by adding [*Christos*] (verbal from [*chriō*], to anoint) as a proper name to Jesus (Jesus Christ) as later he will often say "Christ

Jesus” (Col 1:1). And he dares also to apply [*kurios*] (Lord) to “Jesus Christ,” the word appropriated by Claudius (*Dominus*, [*Kurios*] and other emperors in the emperor-worship, and also common in the Septuagint for God as in Ps 32:1f. (quoted by Paul in Ro 4:8). Paul uses [*Kurios*] of God (1Co 3:5) or of Jesus Christ as here. In fact, he more frequently applies it to Christ when not quoting the Old Testament as in Ro 4:8. And here he places “the Lord Jesus Christ” in the same category and on the same plane with “God the father.” There will be growth in Paul’s Christology and he will never attain all the knowledge of Christ for which he longs (Php 3:10-12), but it is patent that here in his first Epistle there is no “reduced Christ” for Paul. He took Jesus as “Lord” when he surrendered to Jesus on the Damascus Road: “And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said to me” (Ac 22:10). It is impossible to understand Paul without seeing clearly this first and final stand for the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul did not get this view of Jesus from current views of Mithra or of Isis or any other alien faith. The Risen Christ became at once for Paul the Lord of his life. **Grace to you and peace** [*charis humin kai eirēnē*]. These words, common in Paul’s Epistles, bear “the stamp of Paul’s experience” (Milligan). They are not commonplace salutations, but the old words “deepened and spiritualised” (Frame). The infinitive [*chairein*] so common in the papyri letters and seen in the New Testament also (Ac 15:23; 23:26; Jas 1:1) here gives place to [*charis*], one of the great words of the New Testament (cf. Joh 1:16f.) and particularly of the Pauline Epistles. Perhaps no one word carries more meaning for Paul’s messages than this word [*charis*] (from [*chairō*], rejoice) from which [*charizomai*] comes. **Peace** [*eirēnē*] is more than the Hebrew *shalōm* so common in salutations. One recalls the “peace” that Christ leaves to us (Joh 14:27) and the peace of God that passes all understanding (Php 4:7). This introduction is brief, but rich and gracious and pitches the letter at once on a high plane.

1:2 **We give thanks** [*eucharistoumen*]. Late denominative verb [*eucharisteō*] from [*eucharistos*] (grateful) and that from [*eu*], well and [*charizomai*], to show oneself kind. See [*charis*] in verse 1. “The plural implies that all three missionaries prayed together” (Moffatt). **Always** [*pantote*]. Late word, rare in LXX. So with [*eucharisteō*] in 2Th 1:3; 2:13; 1Co 1:4; Eph 5:20; Php 1:3. Moffatt takes it to mean “whenever Paul was at his prayers.” Of course, he did not make audible prayer always, but he was always in the spirit of prayer, “a constant attitude” (Milligan), “in tune with the Infinite.” **For you all** [*peri pantōn humōn*]. Paul “encircled [*peri*], around) them all,” including every one of them and the church as a whole. Distance lends enchantment to the memory of slight drawbacks. Paul is fond of this phrase “you all,” particularly in Phil. (Php 1:3,7). Making mention [*mneian poioumenoi*]. Paul uses this very idiom in Rom 1:9; Eph 1:16; Phm 1:4. Milligan cites a papyrus example of [*mneian poioumenoi*] in prayer (B. Y. U. 652, 5). Did Paul have a prayer list of the Thessalonian disciples which he read over with Silas and Timothy? In here is [*epi*] = “in the time of our

prayers.” “Each time that they are engaged in prayers the writers mention the names of the converts” (Frame).

1:3 Remembering [*mnēmoneuontes*]. Present active participle of old verb from adjective [*mnēmōn*] (mindful) and so to call to mind, to be mindful of, used either with the accusative as in [1Th 2:9](#) or the genitive as here. Without ceasing [*adialeiptōs*]. Double compound adverb of the *Koinē* (Polybius, Diodorus, Strabo, papyri) from the verbal adjective [*a-dia-leiptos*] [*a*] privative and [*dia-leipō*], to leave off). In the N.T. alone by Paul and always connected with prayer. Milligan prefers to connect this adverb (amphibolous in position) with the preceding participle [*poioumenoi*] rather than with [*mnēmoneuontes*] as Revised Version and Westcott and Hort rightly do. Your work of faith [*humōn tou ergou tēs pisteōs*]. Note article with both [*ergou*] and [*pisteōs*] (correlation of the article, both abstract substantives). [*Ergou*] is genitive case the object of [*mnēmoneuontes*] as is common with verbs of emotion (Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 508f.), though the accusative [*kopon*] occurs in [1Th 2:9](#) according to common Greek idiom allowing either case. [*Ergou*] is the general term for work or business, employment, task. Note two genitives with [*ergou*]. [*Humōn*] is the usual possessive genitive, your work, while [*tēs pisteōs*] is the descriptive genitive, marked by, characterized by, faith, “the activity that faith inspires” (Frame). It is interesting to note this sharp conjunction of these two words by Paul. We are justified by faith, but faith produces works ([Ro 6-8](#)) as the Baptist taught and as Jesus taught and as James does in [Jas 2](#). Labour of love [*tou kopou tēs agapēs*]. Note article with both substantives. Here again [*tou kopou*] is the genitive the object of [*mnēmoneuontes*] while [*tēs agapēs*] is the descriptive genitive characterizing the “labour” or “toil” more exactly. [*Kopos*] is from [*koptō*], to cut, to lash, to beat the bread, to toil. In [Re 14:13](#) the distinction is drawn between [*kopou*] (toil) from which the saints rest and [*erga*] (works, activities) which follow with them into heaven. So here it is the labour that love prompts, assuming gladly the toil. [*Agapē*] is one of the great words of the N.T. (Milligan) and no certain example has yet been found in the early papyri or the inscriptions. It occurs in the Septuagint in the higher sense as with the sensuous associations. The Epistle of Aristee calls love [*agapē*] God’s gift and Philo uses [*agapē*] in describing love for God. “When Christianity first began to think and speak in Greek, it took up [*agapē*] and its group of terms more freely, investing them with the new glow with which the N.T. writings make us familiar, a content which is invariably religious” (Moffatt, *Love in the New Testament*, p. 40). The New Testament never uses the word [*erōs*] (lust). Patience of hope [*tēs hupomonēs tēs elpidos*]. Note the two articles again and the descriptive genitive [*tēs elpidos*]. It is patience marked by hope, “the endurance inspired by hope” (Frame), yes, and sustained by hope in spite of delays and set-backs. [*Hupomonē*] is an old word [*hupo, menō*], to remain under), but it “has come like [*agapē*] to be closely associated with a distinctively Christian virtue” (Milligan). The same order as here [*ergou, kopos, hupomonē*] appears in [Re 2:2](#) and Lightfoot considers it “an ascending scale as practical proofs of self-sacrifice.” The church in Thes-

salonica was not old, but already they were called upon to exercise the sanctifying grace of hope (Denney). In our Lord Jesus Christ [*tou Kuriou hēmōn Iēsou Christou*]. The objective genitive with [*elpidos*] (hope) and so translated by “in” here (Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 499f.). Jesus is the object of this hope, the hope of his second coming which is still open to us. Note “Lord Jesus Christ” as in [verse 1](#). Before our God and Father [*emprosthen tou theou kai patros hēmōn*]. The one article with both substantives precisely as in [Ga 1:4](#), not “before God and our Father,” both article and possessive genitive going with both substantives as in [2Pe 1:1, 11](#); [Tit 2:13](#) (Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 785f.). The phrase is probably connected with [*elpidos*]. [*Emprosthen*] in the N.T. occurs only of place, but it is common in the papyri of time. The picture here is the day of judgment when all shall appear before God.

1:4 Knowing [*eidotes*]. Second perfect active participle of [*oida*] [*eidon*], a so-called causal participle = since we know, the third participle with the principal verb [*eucharistoumen*], the Greek being fond of the circumstantial participle and lengthening sentences thereby (Robertson, *Grammar*, P. 1128). Beloved by God [*ēgapēmenoi hupo [tou] theou*]. Perfect passive participle of [*agapaō*], the verb so common in the N.T. for the highest kind of love. Paul is not content with the use of [*adelphoi*] here (often in this Epistle as [2:1, 14, 17](#); [3:7](#); [4:1, 10](#)), but adds this affectionate phrase nowhere else in the N.T. in this form (cf. [Jude 1:3](#)) though in [Sirach 45:1](#) and on the Rosetta Stone. But in [2Th 2:13](#) he quotes “beloved by the Lord” from [De 33:12](#). The use of [*adelphoi*] for members of the same brotherhood can be derived from the Jewish custom ([Ac 2:29,37](#)) and the habit of Jesus ([Mt 12:48](#)) and is amply illustrated in the papyri for burial clubs and other orders and guilds (Moulton and Milligan’s *Vocabulary*). Your election [*tēn eklogēn humōn*]. That is the election of you by God. It is an old word from [*eklegomai*] used by Jesus of his choice of the twelve disciples ([Joh 15:16](#)) and by Paul of God’s eternal selection ([Eph 1:4](#)). The word [*eklogē*] is not in the LXX and only seven times in the N.T. and always of God’s choice of men ([Ac 9:15](#); [1Th 1:4](#); [Ro 9:11](#); [11:5, 7, 58](#); [2Pe 1:10](#)). The divine [*eklogē*] was manifested in the Christian qualities of [verse 3](#) (Moffatt).

1:5 How that [*hoti*]. It is not certain whether [*hoti*] here means “because” [*quia*] as in [2Th 3:7](#); [1Co 2:14](#); [Ro 8:27](#) or declarative [*hoti*] “how that,” knowing the circumstances of your election (Lightfoot) or explanatory, as in [Ac 16:3](#); [1Th 2:1](#); [1Co 16:15](#); [2Co 12:3f](#); [Ro 13:11](#). Our gospel [*to euaggelion hēmōn*]. The gospel (see on [Mt 4:23](#); [Mr 1:1, 15](#) for [*euaggelion*] which we preach, Paul’s phrase also in [2Th 2:14](#); [2Co 4:3](#); [Ro 2:16](#); [16:25](#); [2Ti 2:8](#). Paul had a definite, clear-cut message of grace that he preached everywhere including Thessalonica. This message is to be interpreted in the light of Paul’s own sermons in Acts and Epistles, not by reading backward into them the later perversions of Gnostics and sacramentarians. This very word was later applied to the books about Jesus, but Paul is not so using the term here or anywhere else. In its origin Paul’s gospel is of God ([1Th 2:2,8,9](#)), in its substance it is Christ’s ([3:2](#); [2Th 1:8](#)), and Paul is only the bearer of it ([1Th 2:4,9](#); [2Th](#)

2:14) as Milligan points out. Paul and his associates have been entrusted with this gospel (1Th 2:4) and preach it (Ga 2:2). Elsewhere Paul calls it God's gospel (2Co 11:7; Ro 1:1; 15:16) or Christ's (1Co 9:12; 2Co 2:12; 9:13; 10:14; Ga 1:7; Ro 15:19; Php 1:27). In both instances it is the subjective genitive. Came unto you [*egenēthē eis humās*]. First aorist passive indicative of [*ginomai*] in practically same sense as [*egeneto*] (second aorist middle indicative as in the late Greek generally). So also [*eis humās*] like the *Koinē* is little more than the dative [*humin*] (Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 594). Not only—but also [*ouk—monon, alla kai*]. Sharp contrast, negatively and positively. The contrast between [*logos*] (word) and [*dunamis*] (power) is seen also in 1Co 2:4; 4:20. Paul does not refer to miracles by [*dunamis*]. In the Holy Spirit and much assurance [*en pneumatī hagiōi kai plērophoriāi pollēi*]. Preposition [*en*] repeated with [*logōi, dunamei*], but only once here thus uniting closely Holy Spirit and much assurance. No article with either word. The word [*plērophoriāi*] is not found in ancient Greek or the LXX. It appears once in Clement of Rome and one broken papyrus example. For the verb [*plērophoreō*] see on Lu 1:1. The substantive in the N.T. only here and Col 2:2; Heb 6:11; 10:22. It means the full confidence which comes from the Holy Spirit. Even as ye know [*kathōs oidate*]. Paul appeals to the Thessalonians themselves as witnesses to the character of his preaching and life among them. What manner of men we showed ourselves toward you [*hoiōi egenēthēmen humin*]. Literally, What sort of men we became to you. Qualitative relative [*hoiōi*] and dative [*humin*] and first aorist passive indicative [*egenēthēmen*], (not [*ēmetha*], we were). An exegetical comment with for your sake [*di' humās*] added. It was all in their interest and for their advantage, however it may have seemed otherwise at the time.

1:6 Imitators of us and of the Lord [*mimētai hēmōn kai tou kuriou*]. [*Mimētēs*] [-*tēs*] expresses the agent) is from [*mimeomai*], to imitate and that from [*mimos*] [*mimic*], actor). Old word, more than “followers,” in the N.T. only six times (1Th 1:6; 2:14; 1Co 4:16; 11:1; Eph 5:1; Heb 6:12). Again Paul uses [*ginomai*], to become, not [*eimi*], to be. It is a daring thing to expect people to “imitate” the preacher, but Paul adds “and of the Lord,” for he only expected or desired “imitation” as he himself imitated the Lord Jesus, as he expressly says in 1Co 11:1. The peril of it all is that people so easily and so readily imitate the preacher when he does not imitate the Lord. The fact of the “election” of the Thessalonians was shown by the character of the message given them and by this sincere acceptance of it (Lightfoot). Having received the word [*dexamenoi ton logon*]. First aorist middle participle of [*dechomai*], probably simultaneous action (receiving), not antecedent. In much affliction [*en thlipsei pollēi*]. Late word, pressure. Tribulation (Latin *tribulum*) from [*thlibō*], to press hard on. Christianity has glorified this word. It occurs in some Christian papyrus letters in this same sense. Runs all through the N.T. (2Th 1:4; Ro 5:3). Paul had his share of them (Col 1:24; 2Co 2:4) and so he understands how to sympathize with the Thessalonians (1Th 3:3f.). They suffered after Paul left Thessalonica (1Th 2:14). With joy of the Holy Spirit [*meta charas*

pneumatōs hagiou]. The Holy Spirit gives the joy in the midst of the tribulations as Paul learned (Ro 5:3). “This paradox of experience” (Moffatt) shines along the pathway of martyrs and saints of Christ.

1:7 So that ye became [*hōste genesthai humas*]. Definite result expressed by [*hōste*] and the infinitive [*genesthai*] (second aorist middle of [*ginomai*] as is common in the *Koinē*. An ensample [*tupon*]. So B D, but Aleph A C have [*tupous*] (plural). The singular looks at the church as a whole, the plural as individuals like [*humās*]. [*Tupos*] is an old word from [*tuptō*], to strike, and so the mark of a blow, print as in John 20:25. Then the figure formed by the blow, image as in Ac 7:43. Then the mould or form (Ro 6:17; Ac 23:25). Then an example or pattern as in Ac 7:44, to be imitated as here, Php 3:17, etc. It was a great compliment for the church in Thessalonica to be already a model for believers in Macedonia and Achaia. Our word *type* for printers is this same word with one of its meanings. Note separate article with both Macedonia [*tēi Makedoniāi*] and Achaia [*tēi Achaiāi*] treated as separate provinces as they were.

1:8 From you hath sounded forth [*aph' humōn exēchētai*]. Perfect passive indicative of [*exēcheō*], late compound verb [*ex, ēchos, ēchō, ēchē*], our echo) to sound out of a trumpet or of thunder, to reverberate like our echo. Nowhere else in the N.T. So “from you” as a sounding board or radio transmitting station (to use a modern figure). It marks forcibly “both the clear and the persuasive nature of the [*logos tou Kuriou*]” (Ellicott). This phrase, the word of the Lord, may be subjective with the Lord as its author or objective with the Lord as the object. It is both. It is a graphic picture with a pardonable touch of hyperbole (Moffatt) for Thessalonica was a great commercial and political centre for disseminating the news of salvation (on the Egnation Way). But in every place [*all' en panti topōi*]. In contrast to Macedonia and Achaia. The sentence would naturally stop here, but Paul is dictating rapidly and earnestly and goes on. Your faith to God-ward [*hē pistis humōn hē pros ton theon*]. Literally, the faith of you that toward the God. The repeated article makes clear that their faith is now directed toward the true God and not toward the idols from which they had turned (verse 10). Is gone forth [*exelēluthen*]. Second perfect active indicative of old verb [*exerchomai*], to go out, state of completion like [*exēchētai*] above. So that we need not to speak anything [*hōste mē chreian echein hēmās lalein ti*]. [*Hōste*] with the infinitive for actual result as in verse 7. No vital distinction between [*lalein*] (originally to chatter as of birds) and [*legein*], both being used in the *Koinē* for speaking and preaching (in the N.T.).

1:9 They themselves [*autoi*]. The men of Macedonia, voluntarily. Report [*apaggellousin*]. Linear present active indicative, keep on reporting. What manner of entering in [*hopoian eisodon*]. What sort of entrance, qualitative relative in an indirect question. We had [*eschomen*]. Second aorist active (ingressive) indicative of the common verb [*echō*]. And how [*kai pōs*]. Here the interrogative adverb [*pōs*] in this part of the indirect question. This part about

“them” (you) as the first part about Paul. The verb [*epistrepḥō*] is an old verb for turning and is common in the Acts for Gentiles turning to God, as here from idols, though not by Paul again in this sense. In [Ga 4:9](#) Paul uses it for turning to the weak and beggarly elements of Judaism. From idols [*apo tōn eidolōn*]. Old word from [*eidōs*] (figure) for image or likeness and then for the image of a heathen god (our *idol*). Common in the LXX in this sense. In [Ac 14:15](#) Paul at Lystra urged the people to turn from these vain things to the living God [*apo toutōn tōn mataiōn epistrephein epi theon zōnta*], using the same verb [*epistrephein*]. Here also Paul has a like idea, to serve a living and true God [*douleuein theōi zōnti kai alēthinōi*]. No article, it is true, but should be translated “the living and true God” (cf. [Ac 14:15](#)). Not “dead” like the idols from which they turned, but alive and genuine [*alēthinos*], not [*alēthēs*].

1:10 To wait for his Son from heaven [*anamenein ton huion autou ek tōn ouranōn*]. Present infinitive, like [*douleuein*], and so linear, to keep on waiting for. The hope of the second coming of Christ was real and powerful with Paul as it should be with us. It was subject to abuse then as now as Paul will have to show in this very letter. He alludes to this hope at the close of each chapter in this Epistle. Whom he raised from the dead [*hon ēgeiren ek [tōn] nekrōn*]. Paul gloried in the fact of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead of which fact he was himself a personal witness. This fact is the foundation stone for all his theology and it comes out in this first chapter. Jesus which delivereth us from the wrath to come [*Iēsoun ton ruomenon hēmās ek tēs orgēs tēs erchomenēs*]. It is the historic, crucified, risen, and ascended Jesus Christ, God’s Son, who delivers from the coming wrath. He is our Saviour ([Mt 1:21](#)) true to his name Jesus. He is our Rescuer ([Ro 11:26](#), [*ho ruomenos*], from [Isa 59:20](#)). It is eschatological language, this coming wrath of God for sin ([1Th 2:16](#); [Ro 3:5](#); [5:9](#); [9:22](#); [13:5](#)). It was Paul’s allusion to the day of judgment with Jesus as Judge whom God had raised from the dead that made the Athenians mock and leave him ([Ac 17:31f.](#)). But Paul did not change his belief or his preaching because of the conduct of the Athenians. He is certain that God’s wrath in due time will punish sin. Surely this is a needed lesson for our day. It was coming then and it is coming now.

Chapter 2

2:1 For yourselves know [*autoi gar oidate*]. This explanatory [*gar*] takes up in [verses 1-12](#) the allusion in [1:9](#) about the “report” concerning the entrance [*eisodon*], way in, [*eis, hodon*], unto you [*tēn pros humās*]. Note repeated article to sharpen the point. This proleptic accusative is common enough. It is expanded by the epexegetic use of the [*hoti*] clause that it hath not been found vain [*hoti ou kenē gegonen*]. Literally, that it has not become empty. Second perfect active (completed state) of [*ginomai*]. Every pastor watches wistfully to see what will be the outcome of his work. Bengel says: *Non inanis, sed plena virtutis*. Cf. [1:5](#). [*Kenos*] is hollow, empty, while [*mataios*] is fruitless, ineffective. In [1Co 15:14,17](#) Paul speaks of [*kenon to kērugma*] (empty the preaching) and [*mataia hē pistis*] (vain the faith). One easily leads to the other.

2:2 But having suffered before [*alla propathontes*]. Strong adversative [*alla*], antithesis to [*kenē*]. Appeal to his personal experiences in Thessalonica known to them (as ye know, [*kathōs oidate*]). Second aorist active participle of [*propaschō*], old compound verb, but here alone in the N.T. The force of [*pro-*] (before) is carried over to the next verb. The participle may be regarded as temporal (Ellicott) or concessive (Moffatt). And been shamefully entreated in Philippi [*kai hubrithentes en Philippi*]. First aorist passive participle of [*hubrizō*], old verb, to treat insolently. “More than the bodily suffering it was the personal indignity that had been offered to him as a Roman citizen” (Milligan), for which account see [Ac 16:16-40](#), an interesting example of how Acts and the Epistles throw light on each other. Luke tells how Paul resented the treatment accorded to him as a Roman citizen and here Paul shows that the memory still rankled in his bosom. We waxed bold in our God [*eparrēsiametha en tōi theōi hēmōn*]. Ingressive first aorist middle of [*parrēsiazomai*], old deponent verb from [*parrēsia*] (full story, [*pan-, rēsia*]). In his reply to Festus ([Ac 26:26](#)) Paul uses [*parrēsiazomenos lalō*], being bold I speak, while here he has we waxed bold to speak [*eparrēsiametha lalēsai*]. The insult in Philippi did not close Paul’s mouth, but had precisely the opposite effect “in our God.” It was not wild fanaticism, but determined courage and confidence in God that spurred Paul to still greater boldness in Thessalonica, unto you [*pros humās*], be the consequences what they might, the gospel of God in much conflict, [*to euaggelion tou theou en pollōi agōni*]. This figure of the athletic games [*agōn*] may refer to outward conflict like [Php 1:30](#) or inward anxiety ([Col 2:1](#)). He had both in Thessalonica.

2:3 Exhortation [*paraklēsis*]. Persuasive discourse, calling to one’s side, for admonition, encouragement, or comfort. Not of error [*ouk ek planēs*]. This word is same as [*planaō*], to lead astray ([2Ti 3:13](#)) like Latin *errare*. Passive idea of error here rather than deceit. That is seen in nor in guile [*oude en dolōi*] from [*delō*], to catch with bait. Paul is keenly sensitive against charges against the correctness of his message and the purity of his life. Nor of uncleanness [*oude ex akatharsias*]. “This disclaimer, startling as it may seem, was not unneeded

amidst the impurities consecrated by the religions of the day” (Lightfoot). There was no necessary connection in the popular mind between religion and morals. The ecstatic initiations in some of the popular religions were grossly sensual.

2:4 But even as we have been approved by God [*alla kathōs dedokimasmetha hupo tou theou*]. Perfect passive indicative of [*dokimazō*], old verb to put to the test, but here the tense for completed state means tested and proved and so approved by God. Paul here claims the call of God for his ministry and the seal of God’s blessing on his work and also for that of Silas and Timothy. To be entrusted with the gospel [*pisteuthēnai to euaggelion*]. First aorist passive infinitive of [*pisteuō*], common verb for believing, from [*pistis*] (faith), but here to entrust rather than to trust. The accusative of the thing is retained in the passive according to regular Greek idiom as in [1Co 9:17](#); [Ga 2:7](#); [Ro 3:2](#); [1Ti 1:11](#); [Tit 1:3](#), though the active had the dative of the person. So we speak [*houtōs laloumen*]. Simple, yet confident claim of loyalty to God’s call and message. Surely this should be the ambition of every preacher of the gospel of God. Not as pleasing men [*ouch hōs anthrōpois areskontes*]. Dative case with [*areskō*] as in [Ga 1:10](#). Few temptations assail the preacher more strongly than this one to please men, even if God is not pleased, though with the dim hope that God will after all condone or overlook. Nothing but experience will convince some preachers how fickle is popular favour and how often it is at the cost of failure to please God. And yet the preacher wishes to win men to Christ. It is all as subtle as it is deceptive. God tests our hearts (the very verb [*dokimazō*] used in the beginning of this verse) and he is the only one whose approval matters in the end of the day ([1Co 4:5](#)).

2:5 Using words of flattery [*en logōi kolakeias*]. Literally, in speech of flattery or fawning. Old word, only here in N.T., from [*kolaks*], a flatterer. An Epicurean, Philodemus, wrote a work [*Peri Kolakeias*] (Concerning Flattery). Milligan (*Vocabulary*, etc.) speaks of “the selfish conduct of too many of the rhetoricians of the day,” conduct extremely repugnant to Paul. The third time ([verses 1, 2, 5](#)) he appeals to their knowledge of his work in Thessalonica. Frame suggests “cajolery.” Nor a cloke of covetousness [*oute prophasei pleonexias*]. Pretext [*prophasis*] from [*prophainō*], to show forth, or perhaps from [*pro-phēmi*], to speak forth). This is the charge of self-interest rather than the mere desire to please people. Pretext of greediness is Frame’s translation. [*Pleonexia*] is merely “having more” from [*pleonektēs*], one eager for more, and [*pleonekteō*], to have more, then to over-reach, all old words, all with bad meaning as the result of the desire for more. In a preacher this sin is especially fatal. Paul feels so strongly his innocence of this charge that he calls God as witness as in [2Co 1:23](#); [Ro 9:1](#); [Php 1:8](#), a solemn oath for his own veracity.

2:6 Nor seeking glory of men [*oute zētountes ex anthrōpōn doxan*]. “Upon the repudiation of covetousness follows naturally the repudiation of worldly ambition” (Milligan). See [Ac 20:19](#); [2Co 4:5](#); [Eph 4:2](#). This third disclaimer is as strong as the other two. Paul and his associates had not tried to extract praise or glory out of [*ex*] men. Neither from you nor from

others [*oute aph' humōn oute aph' allōn*]. He widens the negation to include those outside of the church circles and changes the preposition from [*ex*] (out of) to [*apo*] (from). When we might have been burdensome, as apostles of Christ [*dunamenoī en barei einai hōs Christou apostoloi*]. Westcott and Hort put this clause in [verse 7](#). Probably a concessive participle, though being able to be in a position of weight (either in matter of finance or of dignity, or a burden on your funds or “men of weight” as Moffatt suggests). Milligan suggests that Paul “plays here on the double sense of the phrase” like the Latin proverb: *Honos propter onus*. So he adds, including Silas and Timothy, as Christ’s apostles, as missionaries clearly, whether in the technical sense or not (cf. [Ac 14:4,14](#); [2Co 8:23](#); [11:13](#); [Ro 16:7](#); [Php 2:25](#); [Re 2:2](#)). They were entitled to pay as “Christ’s apostles” (cf. [1Co 9](#); [2Co 11:7ff.](#)), though they had not asked for it.

2:7 But we were gentle in the midst of you [*alla egenēthēmen nēpioi en mesōi humōn*]. Note [*egenēthēmen*] (became), not [*ēmetha*] (were). This rendering follows [*ēpioi*] instead of [*nēpioi*] (Aleph B D C Vulg. Boh.) which is clearly correct, though Dibelius, Moffatt, Ellicott, Weiss prefer [*ēpioi*] as making better sense. Dibelius terms [*nēpioi*] *unmöglich* (impossible), but surely that is too strong. Paul is fond of the word [*nēpioi*] (babes). Lightfoot admits that he here works the metaphor to the limit in his passion, but does not mar it as Ellicott holds. As when a nurse cherishes her own children [*hōs ean trophos thalpēi ta heautēs tekna*]. This comparative clause with [*hōs ean*] ([Mr 4:26](#); [Ga 6:10](#) without [*ean*] or [*an*] and the subjunctive (Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 968) has a sudden change of the metaphor, as is common with Paul ([1Ti 5:24](#); [2Co 3:13ff.](#)) from babes to nurse [*trophos*], old word, here only in the N.T., from [*trephō*], to nourish, [*trophē*], nourishment. It is really the mother-nurse “who suckles and nurses her own children” (Lightfoot), a use found in Sophocles, and a picture of Paul’s tender affection for the Thessalonians. [*Thalpō*] is an old word to keep warm, to cherish with tender love, to foster. In N.T. only here and [Eph 5:29](#).

2:8 Even so, being affectionately desirous of you [*houtōs omeiromenoī humōn*]. Clearly the correct text rather than [*himeiromenoī*] from [*himeirō*], old verb to long for. But the verb [*homeiromai*] (Westcott and Hort *om.*, smooth breathing) occurs nowhere else except MSS. in [Job 3:21](#); [Ps 62:2](#) (Symmachus) and the Lycaonian sepulchral inscription (4th cent. A.D.) about the sorrowing parents [*homeiromenoī peri paidos*], greatly desiring their son (Moulton and Milligan, *Vocabulary*). Moulton suggests that it comes from a root [*smer*], remember, and that [*o-*] is a derelict preposition [*o*] like [*o-duromai*, *o-kellō*, *ō-keanos*]. Wohlenberg (Zahn, *Kommentar*) calls the word “a term of endearment,” “derived from the language of the nursery” (Milligan). We were well pleased [*ēudokoumen*]. Imperfect active of [*eudokeō*], common verb in later Greek and in N.T. (see on [Mt 3:17](#)), picturing Paul’s idea of their attitude while in Thessalonica. Paul often has it with the infinitive as here. To impart [*metadounai*]. Second aorist active infinitive of [*metadidōmi*], old verb to share with (see on [Lu 3:11](#)). Possible zeugma with souls [*psuchas*], though Lightfoot renders “lives.”

Paul and his associates held nothing back. Because ye were become very dear to us [*dioti agapētoi hēmin egenēthēte*]. Note [*dioti*] (double cause, [*dia, hoti*], for that), use of [*ginomai*] again for become, and dative [*hēmin*] with verbal [*agapētoi*], beloved and so dear. A beautiful picture of the growth of Paul's affection for them as should be true with every pastor.

2:9 Travail [*mochthon*]. Old word for difficult labour, harder than [*kopos*] (toil). In the N.T. only here, [2Th 3:8](#); [2Co 11:27](#). Note accusative case here though genitive with [*mnēmoneuō*] in [1:3](#). Night and day [*nuktos kai hēmeras*]. Genitive case, both by day and by night, perhaps beginning before dawn and working after dark. So in [3:10](#). That we might not burden any of you [*pros to mē epibarēsai tina humōn*]. Use of [*pros*] with the articular infinitive to express purpose (only four times by Paul). The verb [*epibareō*] is late, but in the papyri and inscriptions for laying a burden [*baros*] on [*epi-*] one. In N.T. only here and [2Th 3:8](#); [2Co 2:5](#). Paul boasted of his financial independence where he was misunderstood as in Thessalonica and Corinth ([2Co 9-12](#)), though he vindicated his right to remuneration. We preached [*ekēruksen*]. We heralded (from [*kēruks*], herald) to you, common verb for preach.

2:10 How holily and righteously and unblameably [*hōs hosiōs kai dikaiōs kai amemptōs*]. Paul calls the Thessalonians and God as witnesses [*martures*] to his life toward you the believers [*humin tois pisteuousin*] dative of personal interest. He employs three common adverbs that show how holily toward God and how righteously toward men so that they did not blame him and his associates in either respect. So there is a reason for each adverb. All this argues that Paul spent a considerable time in Thessalonica, more than the three sabbaths mentioned by Luke. The pastor ought to live so that his life will bear close inspection.

2:11 As a father with his own children [*hōs patēr tekna heautou*]. Change from the figure of the mother-nurse in [verse 7](#). There is ellipse of a principal verb with the participles [*parakalountes, paramouthoumenoi, martouromenoi*]. Lightfoot suggests [*enouthetoumen*] (we admonished) or [*egenēthēmen*] (we became). The three participles give three phases of the minister's preaching (exhorting, encouraging or consoling, witnessing or testifying). They are all old verbs, but only the first [*parakaleō*] is common in the N.T.

2:12 To the end that [*eis to*]. Final use of [*eis*] and the articular infinitive, common idiom in the papyri and Paul uses [*eis*] to and the infinitive fifty times (see again in [3:2](#)), some final, some sub-final, some result (Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 989-91). Walk worthily of God [*peripatein axiōs tou theou*]. Present infinitive (linear action), and genitive case with adverb [*axiōs*] as in [Col 1:10](#) (cf. [Php 1:27](#); [Eph 4:1](#)), like a preposition. Callesth [*kalountos*]. Present active participle, keeps on calling. Some MSS. have [*kalesantos*], called. Kingdom [*basileian*] here is the future consummation because of glory [*doxan*] as in [2Th 1:5](#); [1Co 6:9](#); [15:50](#); [Ga 5:21](#); [2Ti 4:1, 18](#)), but Paul uses it for the present kingdom of grace also as in [1Co 4:20](#); [Ro 14:17](#); [Col 1:13](#).

2:13 And for this cause we also [*kai dia touto kai hēmeis*]. Note [*kai*] twice. We as well as you are grateful for the way the gospel was received in Thessalonica. Without ceasing

[*adialeiptōs*]. Late adverb for which see on 1:2 and for [*eucharistoumen*] see on 1:2. The word of the message [*logon akoēs*]. Literally, the word of hearing, as in Sir. 42:1 and Heb 4:2 [*ho logos tēs akoēs*], the word marked by hearing (genitive case), the word which you heard. Here with [*tou theou*] (of God) added as a second descriptive genitive which Paul expands and justifies. Ye received it so [*paralabontes*] and accepted or welcomed it [*edexasthe*] so, not as the word of men [*ou logou anthrōpōn*], but as the word of God [*alla logon theou*], as it is in truth [*kathōs alēthōs estin*]. This last clause is literally, as it truly is. Paul had not a doubt that he was proclaiming God’s message. Should any preacher preach his doubts if he has any? God’s message can be found and Paul found it. Worketh in you [*energeitai en humin*]. Perhaps middle voice of [*energeō*] [*en, ergon*], work) late verb, not in ancient Greek or LXX, but in papyri and late writers (Polybius, etc.) and in N.T. only by Paul and James. If it is passive, as Milligan thinks, it means “is set in operation,” as Polybius has it. The idea then is that the word of God is set in operation in you that believe.

2:14 Imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea [*mimētai tōn ekklēsiōn tou theou tōn ousōn en tēi Ioudaiāi*]. On [*mimētai*] see on 1:5. “This passage, implying an affectionate admiration of the Jewish churches on the part of St. Paul, and thus entirely bearing out the impression produced by the narrative in the Acts, is entirely subversive of the theory maintained by some and based on a misconception of Ga 2, and by the fiction of the Pseudo-Clementines, of the feud existing between St. Paul and the Twelve” (Lightfoot). In Christ Jesus [*en Christōi Iēsou*]. It takes this to make a *Christian* church of God. Note order here Christ Jesus as compared with Jesus Christ in 1:1, 3. Ye also—even as they [*kai humeis—kai autoi*]. Note [*kai*] twice (correlative use of [*kai*]). Countrymen [*sumphuletōn*]. Fellow-countrymen or tribesmen. Late word that refers primarily to Gentiles who no doubt joined the Jews in Thessalonica who instigated the attacks on Paul and Silas so that it “was taken up by the native population, without whose co-operation it would have been powerless” (Lightfoot). Own [*idiōn*] here has apparently a weakened force. Note [*hupo*] here with the ablative both with [*sumphuletōn*] and [*Ioudaiōn*] after the intransitive [*epathete*] (suffered). The persecution of the Christians by the Jews in Judea was known everywhere.

2:15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets [*tōn kai ton Kurion apokteinantōn Iēsoun kai tous prophētas*]. First aorist active participle of [*apokteinō*]. Vivid justification of his praise of the churches in Judea. The Jews killed the prophets before the Lord Jesus who reminded them of their guilt (Mt 23:29). Paul, as Peter (Ac 2:23), lays the guilt of the death of Christ on the Jews. And drove us out [*kai hēmās ekdiōxantōn*]. An old verb to drive out or banish, to chase out as if a wild beast. Only here in N.T. It is Paul’s vivid description of the scene told in Ac 17:5ff. when the rabbis and the hoodlums from the agora chased him out of Thessalonica by the help of the politarchs. Please not God [*Theōi mē areskontōn*]. The rabbis and Jews thought that they were pleasing God by so doing as Paul did when he ravaged the young church in Jerusalem. But Paul knows better now. And are contrary to all

men [*kai pasin anthrōpois enantiōn*]. Dative case with the adjective [*enantiōn*] (old and common word, face to face, opposite). It seems like a bitter word about Paul's countrymen whom he really loved (Ro 9:1-5; 10:1-6), but Paul knew only too well the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile as he shows in Eph 2 and which only the Cross of Christ can break down. Tacitus (*Hist. V. 5*) says that the Jews are *adversus omnes alios hostile odium*.

2:16 Forbidding us [*kōluontōn hēmās*]. Explanatory participle of the idea in [*enantiōn*]. They show their hostility to Paul at every turn. Right here in Corinth, where Paul is when he writes, they had already shown venomous hostility toward Paul as Luke makes plain (Ac 18:6ff.). They not simply oppose his work among the Jews, but also to the Gentiles [*ethnesi*], nations outside of the Abrahamic covenant as they understood it). That they may be saved [*hina sōthōsin*]. Final use of [*hina*] with first aorist passive subjunctive of [*sōzō*] old verb to save. It was the only hope of the Gentiles, Christ alone and not the mystery-religions offered any real hope. To fill up their sins alway [*eis to anaplērōsai autōn tas hamartias pantote*]. Another example of [*eis to*] and the infinitive as in verse 12. It may either be God's conceived plan to allow the Jews to go on and fill up [*anaplērōsai*], note [*ana*], fill up full, old verb) or it may be the natural result from the continual [*pantote*] sins of the Jews. Is come [*ephthasen*]. First aorist (timeless aorist) active indicative of [*phthanō*] which no longer means to come before as in 1Th 4:15 where alone in the N.T. it retains the old idea of coming before. Some MSS. have the perfect active [*ephthaken*], prophetic perfect of realization already. Frame translates it: "But the wrath has come upon them at last." This is the most likely meaning of [*eis telos*]. Paul vividly foresees and foretells the final outcome of this attitude of hate on the part of the Jews. *Tristis exitus*, Bengel calls it. Paul speaks out of a sad experience.

2:17 Being bereaved of you [*aporphanisthentes aph' humōn*]. First aorist passive participle of the rare compound verb [*aporphanizō*], in Aeschylus, but nowhere else in N.T.). Literally, being orphaned from you [*aph' humōn*], ablative case). Paul changes the figure again [*trophos*] or mother nurse in verse 7, [*nēpios*] or babe in verse 7, [*patēr*] or father in verse 11) to orphan [*orphanos*]. He refers to the period of separation from them, for a short season [*pros kairon hōras*] for a season of an hour. This idiom only here in N.T., but [*pros kairon*] in Lu 8:13 and [*pros hōran*] in 2Co 7:8. But it has seemed long to Paul. Precisely how long he had been gone we do not know, some months at any rate. In presence, not in heart [*prosōpoi ou kardiāi*]. Locative case. [*Prosōpon*], old word [*pros, ops*], in front of the eye, face) for face, look, person. Literally, in face or person. His heart was with them, though they no longer saw his face. Heart, originally [*kardia*], is the inner man, the seat of the affections and purposes, not always in contrast with intellect [*nous*]. "Out of sight, not out of mind" (Rutherford). Endeavoured the more exceedingly [*perissoterōs espoudasamen*]. Ingressive aorist active indicative of [*spoudazō*], old word to hasten (from [*spoudē, speudō*]). We became zealous. Comparative adverb [*perissoterōs*] from [*perisson*], more abundantly than before being orphaned from you. Your face [*to prosōpon humōn*]. Cf. his face above.

With great desire [*en pollēi epithumiāi*]. In much longing [*epithumia*] from [*epi*] and [*thumos*], [*epithumeō*], to run after, to yearn after, whether good or bad).

2:18 Because [*dioti*]. As in 2:8. We would fain have come to you [*ēthelēsamen elthein pros humas*]. First aorist active indicative of [*thelō*]. Literally, we desired to come to you. I Paul [*egō men Paulos*]. Clear example of literary plural [*ēthelesamen*] with singular pronoun [*egō*]. Paul uses his own name elsewhere also as in 2Co 10:1; Ga 5:2; Col 1:23; Eph 3:1; Phm 1:19. Once and again [*kai hapax kai dis*]. Both once and twice as in Php 4:16. Old idiom in Plato. And Satan hindered us [*kai enekopsen hēmas ho Satanias*]. Adversative use of [*kai =*] but or and yet. First aorist active indicative of [*enoptō*], late word to cut in, to hinder. Milligan quotes papyrus example of third century, B.C. Verb used to cut in a road, to make a road impassable. So Paul charges Satan with cutting in on his path. Used by Paul in Ac 24:4; Ga 5:7 and passive [*enektomēn*] in Ro 15:22; 1Pe 3:7. This hindrance may have been illness, opposition of the Jews in Corinth, what not.

2:19 Crown of glorying [*stephanos kauchēseōs*]. When a king or conqueror came on a visit he was given a chaplet of glorying. Paul is answering the insinuation that he did not really wish to come. At his coming [*en tēi autou parousiāi*]. This word [*parousia*] is untechnical (just *presence* from [*pareimi*] in 2Th 2:9; 1Co 16:17; 2Co 7:6f.; 10:10; Php 1:26; 2:12. But here (also 1Th 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2Th 2:1, 8; 1Co 15:23) we have the technical sense of the second coming of Christ. Deissmann (*Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 372ff.) notes that the word in the papyri is almost technical for the arrival of a king or ruler who expects to receive his “crown of coming.” The Thessalonians, Paul says, will be his crown, glory, joy when Jesus comes.

Chapter 3

3:1 When we could no longer forbear [*mēketi stegontes*]. [*Stegō*] is old verb to cover from [*stegē*], roof ([Mr 2:4](#)), to cover with silence, to conceal, to keep off, to endure as here and [1Co 9:12; 13:7](#). In the papyri in this sense (Moulton and Milligan's *Vocabulary*). [*Mēketi*] usual negative with participle in the *Koinē* rather than [*ouketi*]. We thought it good [*ēudokēsamen*]. Either literary plural as in [2:18](#) or Paul and Silas as more likely. If so, both Timothy and Silas came to Athens ([Ac 17:15f.](#)), but Timothy was sent (we sent, [*epempsamen*], [verse 2](#)) right back to Thessalonica and later Paul sent Silas on to Beroea or Thessalonica ([verse 5](#), I sent, [*epempsa*]). Then both Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia to Corinth ([Ac 18:5](#)). Alone [*monoi*]. Including Silas. God's minister [*diakonon tou theou*]. See on [Mt 22:13](#) for this interesting word, here in general sense not technical sense of deacon. Some MSS. have fellow-worker [*sunergon*]. Already apostle in [2:7](#) and now brother, minister (and possibly fellow-worker).

3:3 That no man be moved [*to mēdena sainesthai*]. Epexegetical articular infinitive in accusative case of general reference. [*Sainō*] is old word to wag the tail, to flatter, beguile and this sense suits here (only N.T. example). The sense of "moved" or troubled or disheartened is from [*siainesthai*] the reading of F G and found in the papyri. We are appointed [*keimetha*]. Present middle, used here as passive of [*tithēmi*]. We Christians are set hereunto [*eis touto*] to be beguiled by tribulations. We must resist.

3:4 We told you beforehand [*proelegomen humin*]. Imperfect active, we used to tell you beforehand. Old verb, rare in N.T. (only in Paul). That we are to suffer persecution [*hoti mellomen thlibesthai*]. [*Mellō*] and present passive infinitive. Not mere prediction, but God's appointed will as it turned out in Thessalonica.

3:5 That I might know [*eis to gnōnai*]. Paul's common idiom ([verse 2](#)), [*eis to*] and the infinitive of purpose (second aorist ingressive active of [*ginōskō*], come to know). Lest by any means the tempter had tempted you [*mē pōs epeirasen humās ho peirazōn*]. Findlay takes this as a question with negative answer, but most likely negative final clause with [*mē pōs*] about a past action with aorist indicative according to the classic idiom as in [Ga 2:2](#) [*mē pōs—edramon*] and [Ga 4:11](#) after verb of fearing (Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 988). It is a fear that the thing may turn out to be so about the past. Should be [*genētai*]. Here the usual construction appears (aorist subjunctive with [*mē pōs*] about the future).

3:6 Even now [*arti*]. Just now, Timothy having come [*elthontos Timotheou*], genitive absolute). Why Silas is not named is not clear, unless he had come from Beroea or elsewhere in Macedonia. Glad tidings of [*euaggelisamenou*]. First aorist middle participle of the verb for evangelizing (gospelizing). Good remembrance [*mneian*]. Same word used by Paul [1:2](#). Longing to see us [*epipothountes hēmās idein*]. Old and strong verb, [*epi-*], directive, to long after. Mutual longing that pleased Paul ("we also you").

3:7 Over you [*eph' humin*]. [*Epi*] with the locative, the basis on which the “comfort” rests. In [*epi*]. Locative case again with [*epi*]. Distress [*anagkēi*]. Physical necessity, common sense in late Greek, choking [*agchō, angor*], and crushing trouble [*thlipsis, thlibō*].

3:8 If ye stand fast [*ean humeis stēkete*]. Condition of first class, [*ean*] and present active indicative (correct text, not [*stēkēte*] subj.) of [*stēkō*], late form from perfect [*hestēka*] of [*histēmi*], to place.

3:9 Render again unto God [*tōi theōi antapodounai*]. Second aorist active infinitive of double compound verb [*ant-apodidōmi*], to give back [*apo*] in return for [*anti*]. Old verb rare in N.T., but again in [2Th 1:6](#). For you [*peri humōn*]. Around (concerning) you, while in [verse 2](#) [*huper*] (over is used for “concerning your faith.”) For [*epi*]. Basis again as cause or ground for the joy. Wherewith we joy [*hēi chairomen*]. Probably cognate accusative [*hēn*] with [*chairomen*] attracted to locative [*charāi*] ([Mt 2:10](#)).

3:10 Exceedingly [*huperekperissou*]. Double compound adverb, only in [1Th 3:10](#); [5:13](#) (some MSS. [-ōs]. Like piling Ossa on Pelion, [*perissōs*], abundantly, [*ek perissou*], out of bounds, [*huperekperissou*], more than out of bounds (overflowing all bounds). And perfect [*kai katartisai*]. First aorist active articular infinitive of purpose [*eis to idein—kai*] of [*katartizō*], to mend nets ([Mt 4:21](#)) or men ([Ga 6:1](#)) repair. Chiefly late. That which is lacking in [*ta husterēmata*]. The shortcomings, the lacks or left-overs ([Col 1:24](#)). From [*hustereō*] [*husteron*], to be late.

3:11 Our God and Father himself [*autos ho theos kai patēr hēmōn*]. Note one article with both substantives for one person. And our Lord Jesus [*kai ho Kurios hēmōn Iēsous*]. Separate article here with [*Iēsous*]. In [Tit 2:13](#); [2Pe 1:1](#) only one article (not two) treating “our God and Saviour Jesus Christ” as one just like “our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” in [2Pe 1:11](#); [2:20](#); [3:18](#). Direct our way [*kateuthunai tēn hodon hēmōn*]. First aorist optative (acute accent on penult, not circumflex first aorist active infinitive) of [*kateuthunō*], old verb to make straight path. Singular verb also, though both God and Christ mentioned as subject (unity in the Godhead). Apart from [*mē genoito*] (may it not come to pass) the optative in a wish of the third person is found in N.T. only in [1Th 3:11, 12](#); [5:23](#); [2Th 2:17](#); [3:5, 16](#); [Ro 15:5, 13](#).

3:12 The Lord [*ho Kurios*]. The Lord Jesus. Paul prays to Christ. Make you to increase [*humas pleonasai*]. First aorist active optative (wish for future) of [*pleonazō*], late verb from [*pleon*] (more), to superabound. And abound [*perisseusai*]. First aorist active optative (wish for future) of [*perisseuō*] from [*perissos*], old verb, to be over (common in N.T.). It is hard to see much difference between the two verbs.

3:13 To the end he may stablish [*eis to stērixai*]. Another example of [*eis*] and the articular infinitive of purpose. Same idiom in [3:2](#). From [*stērizō*], from [*stērigx*], a support. Unblameable [*amemptous*]. Old compound adjective [*a*] privative and verbal of [*memphomai*], to blame). Rare in N.T. Predicate position here. Second coming of Christ again.

Chapter 4

4:1 Finally [*loipon*]. Accusative of general reference of [*loipos*], as for the rest. It does not mean actual conclusion, but merely a colloquial expression pointing towards the end (Milligan) as in [2Co 13:11](#); [2Ti 4:8](#). So [*to loipon*] in [2Th 3:1](#); [Php 3:1](#); [4:8](#). We beseech [*erōtōmen*]. Not “question” as in ancient Greek, but as often in N.T. ([1Th 5:12](#); [2Th 2:1](#); [Php 4:3](#)) and also in papyri to make urgent request of one. How ye ought [*to pōs dei humās*]. Literally, explanatory articular indirect question [*to pōs*] after [*parelabēte*] according to common classic idiom in Luke ([Lu 1:62](#); [22:2,4,23,24](#)) and Paul ([Ro 8:26](#)). That ye abound [*hina perisseuēte*]. Loose construction of the [*hina*] clause with present subjunctive after two subordinate clauses with [*kathōs*] (as, even as) to be connected with “beseech and exhort.” More and more [*mallon*]. Simply more, but added to same idea in [*perisseuēte*]. See also [verse 11](#).

4:2 What charge [*tinās paraggelias*]. Plural, charges or precepts, command ([Ac 16:24](#)), prohibition ([Ac 5:28](#)), right living ([1Ti 1:5](#)). Military term in Xenophon and Polybius.

4:3 Your sanctification [*ho hagiastosmos humōn*]. Found only in the Greek Bible and ecclesiastical writers from [*hagiazō*] and both to take the place of the old words [*hagizō, hagismos*] with their technical ideas of consecration to a god or goddess that did not include holiness in life. So Paul makes a sharp and pointed stand here for the Christian idea of sanctification as being “the will of God” (apposition) and as further explained by the exegetical infinitive that ye abstain from fornication [*apechesthai humas apo tēs porneias*]. Pagan religion did not demand sexual purity of its devotees, the gods and goddesses being grossly immoral. Priestesses were in the temples for the service of the men who came.

4:4 That each one of you know how [*eidēnai hekaston humōn*]. Further exegetical infinitive (second perfect active), learn how and so know how (learn the habit of purity). To possess himself of his own vessel [*to heautou skeuos ktasthai*]. Present middle infinitive of [*aktaomai*], to acquire, not [*kektēsthai*], to possess. But what does Paul mean by “his own vessel”? It can only mean his own body or his own wife. Objections are raised against either view, but perhaps he means that the man shall acquire his own wife “in sanctification and honour,” words that elevate the wife and make it plain that Paul demands sexual purity on the part of men (married as well as unmarried). There is no double standard here. When the husband comes to the marriage bed, he should come as a chaste man to a chaste wife.

4:5 Not in the passion of lust [*mē en pathei epithumias*]. Plain picture of the wrong way for the husband to come to marriage. That know not God [*ta mē eidota ton theon*]. Second perfect participle of [*oida*]. The heathen knew gods as licentious as they are themselves, but not God. One of the reasons for the revival of paganism in modern life is professedly this very thing that men wish to get rid of the inhibitions against licentiousness by God.

4:6 That no man transgress [*to mē huperbainein*]. Old verb to go beyond. Final use of [*to*] (accusative of general reference) and the infinitive (negative [*mē*], parallel to [*apechesthai*] and [*eidenai ktasthai*] above. And wrong his brother [*kai pleonektein ton adelphon autou*]. To take more, to overreach, to take advantage of, to defraud. In the matter [*en tōi pragmati*]. The delicacy of Paul makes him refrain from plainer terms and the context makes it clear enough as in [2Co 7:11](#) [*tōi pragmati*]. An avenger [*ekdikos*]. Regular term in the papyri for legal avenger. Modern men and women need to remember that God is the avenger for sexual wrongs both in this life and the next.

4:7 Not for uncleanness, but in sanctification [*epi akatharsiāi all' en hagiasmōi*]. Sharp contrast made still sharper by the two prepositions [*epi*] (on the basis of) and [*en*] (in the sphere of). God has “called” us all for a decent sex life consonant with his aims and purposes. It was necessary for Paul to place this lofty ideal before the Thessalonian Christians living in a pagan world. It is equally important now.

4:8 Therefore [*toigaroun*]. This old triple compound particle [*toi, gar, oun*] is in the N.T. only here and [Heb 12:1](#). Paul applies the logic of the case. He that rejecteth [*ho athetōn*]. This late verb (Polybius and LXX) is from [*a-thetos*] [*a*] privative and verbal of [*tithēmi*], to proscribe a thing, to annul it.) But God [*alla ton theon*]. Paul sees this clearly and modern atheists see it also. In order to justify their licentiousness they do not hesitate to set aside God.

4:9 Concerning love of the brethren [*peri tēs philadelphias*]. Late word, love of brothers or sisters. In profane Greek (one papyrus example) and LXX the word means love of those actually kin by blood, but in the N.T. it is the kinship in the love of Christ as here. Are taught by God [*theodidaktoi este*]. Only here and ecclesiastical writers. Passive verbal adjective in [*-tos*] from [*didaskō*] as if [*theo-*] in ablative case like [*didaktoi theou*] ([Joh 6:45](#)). To love one another [*eis to agapāin allēlous*]. Another example of [*eis to*] and the infinitive. Only those taught of God keep on loving one another, love neighbours and even enemies as Jesus taught ([Mt 5:44](#)). Note the use of [*agapaō*], not [*phileō*].

4:10 Ye do it [*poieite auto*]. The [*auto*] refers to [*to agapāin allēlous*] (to love one another). Delicate praise.

4:11 That ye study to be quiet [*philotimeisthai hēsuchazein*]. First infinitive dependent on [*parakaloumen*] ([verse 10](#), we exhort you), the second on [*philotimeisthai*] (old verb from [*philotimos*], fond of honour, [*philos, timē*]). The notion of ambition appears in each of the three N.T. examples ([1Th 4:11](#); [2Co 5:9](#); [Ro 5:20](#)), but it is ambition to do good, not evil. The word ambition is Latin (*ambitio* from *ambo, ire*), to go on both sides to accomplish one's aims and often evil). A preacher devoid of ambition lacks power. There was a restless spirit in Thessalonica because of the misapprehension of the second coming. So Paul urges an ambition to be quiet or calm, to lead a quiet life, including silence ([Ac 11:18](#)). To do your own business [*prassein ta idia*]. Present infinitive like the others, to have the habit of attending

to their own affairs [*ta idia*]. This restless meddlesomeness here condemned Paul alludes to again in [2Th 3:11](#) in plainer terms. It is amazing how much wisdom people have about other people's affairs and so little interest in their own. To work with your own hands [*ergazesthai tais chersin humōn*]. Instrumental case [*chersin*]. Paul gave a new dignity to manual labour by precept and example. There were "pious" idlers in the church in Thessalonica who were promoting trouble. He had commanded them when with them.

4:12 That ye may walk honestly [*hina peripatēte euschēmonōs*]. Present subjunctive (linear action). Old adverb from [*euschēmōn*] [*eu, schēma*], Latin *habitus*, graceful figure), becomingly, decently. In N.T. only here and [Ro 13:13](#). This idea includes honest financial transactions, but a good deal more. People outside the churches have a right to watch the conduct of professing Christians in business, domestic life, social life, politics.

4:13 We would not have [*ou thelomen*]. We do not wish. You ignorant [*humas agnoein*]. Old word, not to know [*a*] privative, [*gno-*], root of [*ginōskō*]. No advantage in ignorance of itself. Concerning them that fall asleep [*peri tōn koimōmenōn*]. Present passive (or middle) participle (Aleph B) rather than the perfect passive [*kekoimēmenōn*] of many later MSS. From old [*koimaō*], to put to sleep. Present tense gives idea of repetition, from time to time fall asleep. Greeks and Romans used this figure of sleep for death as Jesus does ([Joh 11:11](#)) and N.T. generally (cf. our word *cemetery*). Somehow the Thessalonians had a false notion about the dead in relation to the second coming. Even as the rest which have no hope [*kathōs hoi loipoi hoi mē echontes elpida*]. This picture of the hopelessness of the pagan world about the future life is amply illustrated in ancient writings and particularly by inscriptions on tombs (Milligan). Some few pagans clung to this hope, but most had none.

4:14 For if we believe [*ei gar pisteuomen*]. Condition of first class, assuming the death and resurrection of Jesus to be true. In Jesus [*dia tou Iēsou*]. Literally, through or by means of Jesus. It is amphibolous in position and can be taken either with [*tous koimēthentas*] (that are fallen asleep in or through Jesus) like [*hoi koimēthentes en Christōi*] in [1Co 15:18](#) and probably correct or with [*axeī*] (through Jesus with God). With him [*sun autōi*]. Together with Jesus. Jesus is the connecting link [*dia*] for those that sleep [*koimēthentas*] first aorist passive, but with middle sense) and their resurrection.

4:15 By the word of the Lord [*en logōi Kuriou*]. We do not know to what word of the Lord Jesus Paul refers, probably Paul meaning only the point in the teaching of Christ rather than a quotation. He may be claiming a direct revelation on this important matter as about the Lord's Supper in [1Co 11:23](#). Jesus may have spoken on this subject though it has not been preserved to us (cf. [Mr 9:1](#)). Ye that are alive [*hēmeis hoi zōntes*]. Paul here includes himself, but this by no means shows that Paul knew that he would be alive at the Parousia of Christ. He was alive, not dead, when he wrote. Shall in no wise precede [*ou mē phthasōmen*]. Second aorist active subjunctive of [*phthanō*], to come before, to anticipate. This strong negative with [*ou mē*] (double negative) and the subjunctive is the regular idiom

(Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 929). Hence there was no ground for uneasiness about the dead in Christ.

4:16 With a shout [*en keleusmati*]. Note this so-called instrumental use of [*en*]. Old word, here only in N.T., from [*keleuō*], to order, command (military command). Christ will come as Conqueror. With the voice of the archangel [*en phōnēi archaggelou*]. Further explanation of [*keleusmati*] (command). The only archangel mentioned in N.T. is Michael in [Jude 1:9](#). But note absence of article with both [*phōnēi*] and [*archaggelou*]. The reference may be thus indefinite. With the trump of God [*en salpiggi theou*]. Trumpet. See same figure in [1Co 15:52](#). The dead in Christ shall rise first [*hoi nekroi en Christōi anastēsontai prōton*]. First here refers plainly to the fact that, so far from the dead in Christ having no share in the Parousia, they will rise before those still alive are changed.

4:17 Then [*epeita*]. The next step, not the identical time [*tote*], but immediately afterwards. Together with them [*hama sun autois*]. Note both [*hama*] (at the same time) and [*sun*] (together with) with the associative instrumental case [*autois*] (the risen saints). Shall be caught up [*harpagēsometha*]. Second future passive indicative of [*harpazō*], old verb to seize, to carry off like Latin *rapio*. To meet the Lord in the air [*eis apantēsin tou Kuriou eis aera*]. This special Greek idiom is common in the LXX like the Hebrew, but Polybius has it also and it occurs in the papyri (Moulton, *Proleg.*, p. 14, n. 3). This rapture of the saints (both risen and changed) is a glorious climax to Paul's argument of consolation. And so [*kai houtōs*]. This is the outcome, to be forever with the Lord, whether with a return to earth or with an immediate departure for heaven Paul does not say. To be with Christ is the chief hope of Paul's life ([1Th 5:10](#); [Php 1:23](#); [Col 3:4](#); [2Co 5:8](#)).

4:18 With these words [*en tois logois toutois*]. In these words. They were a comfort to the Thessalonians as they still comfort the people of God.

Chapter 5

5:1 But concerning the times and the seasons [*peri de tōn chronōn kai tōn kairōn*]. See both words used also in [Tit 1:2f](#). [*Chronos*] is rather an extended period and [*kairos*] a definite space of time.

5:2 Know perfectly [*akribōs oidate*]. Accurately know, not “the times and the seasons,” but their own ignorance. As a thief in the night [*hōs kleptēs en nukti*]. As a thief at night, suddenly and unexpectedly. Reminiscence of the word of Jesus ([Mt 24:43](#); [Lu 12:39](#)), used also in [2Pe 3:10](#); [Re 3:3](#); [16:15](#). Cometh [*erchetai*]. Prophetic or futuristic present tense.

5:3 When they are saying [*hotan legōsin*]. Present active subjunctive picturing these false prophets of peace and safety like [Eze 13:10](#) (Peace, and there is no peace). [*Asphaleia*] only in N.T. in [Lu 1:4](#) (which see); [Ac 5:23](#) and here. Sudden destruction [*aiphnidios olethros*]. [*Olethros*] old word from [*ollumi*], to destroy. See also [2Th 1:9](#). [*Aiphnidios*], old adjective akin to [*aphnō*] and in N.T. only here and [Lu 21:34](#) where Westcott and Hort spell it [*aphnidios*]. Cometh upon them [*autois epistatai*]. Unaspirated form instead of the usual [*ephistatai*] (present middle indicative) from [*ephistēmi*] perhaps due to confusion with [*epistamai*]. As travail upon a woman with child [*hōsper hē ōdin tēi en gastri echousēi*]. Earlier form [*ōdis*] for birth-pang used also by Jesus ([Mr 13:8](#); [Mt 24:8](#)). Technical phrase for pregnancy, to the one who has it in belly (cf. [Mt 1:18](#) of Mary). They shall in no wise escape [*ou mē ekphugōsin*]. Strong negative like that in [4:15](#) [*ou mē*] (double negative) and the second aorist active subjunctive.

5:4 As a thief [*hōs kleptēs*]. As in [verse 2](#), but A B Bohairic have [*kleptas*] (thieves), turning the metaphor round.

5:5 Sons of light [*huioi phōtos*], sons of day [*huioi hēmeras*]. Chiefly a translation Hebraism (Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, pp. 161ff.). Cf. words of Jesus in [Lu 16:8](#) and Paul in [Eph 5:9](#). He repeats the same idea in turning from “ye” to “we” and using [*nuktos*] (night) and [*skotous*] (darkness), predicate genitives.

5:6 So then [*ara oun*]. Two inferential particles, accordingly therefore, as in [2Th 2:15](#) and only in Paul in N.T. Let us not sleep [*mē katheudōmen*]. Present active subjunctive (volitive), let us not go on sleeping. Let us watch [*grēgorōmen*]. Present active subj. (volitive) again, let us keep awake (late verb [*grēgoreō*] from perfect [*egrēgora*]). Be sober [*nēphōmen*]. Present active subjunctive (volitive). Old verb not to be drunk. In N.T. only in figurative sense, to be calm, sober-minded. Also in [verse 8](#) with the metaphor of drunkenness in contrast.

5:7 They that be drunken are drunken in the night [*hoi methuskomenoi nuktos methuousin*]. No need of “be” here, they that are drunken. No real difference in meaning between [*methuskō*] and [*methuō*], to be drunk, except that [*methuskō*] (inceptive verb in [-*skō*])

means to get drunk. Night [*nuktos*], genitive by night) is the favourite time for drunken revelries.

5:8 Putting on the breastplate of faith and love [*endusamenoī thōraka pisteōs kai agapēs*]. First aorist (ingressive) middle participle of [*enduō*]. The same figure of breastplate in Eph 6:14, only there “of righteousness.” The idea of watchfulness brings the figure of a sentry on guard and armed to Paul’s mind as in Ro 13:12 “the weapons of light.” The word [*thōrax*] (breastplate) is common in the LXX. For a helmet, the hope of salvation [*perikephalaian elpida sōtērias*]. Same figure in Eph 6:17 and both like Isa 59:17. Late word meaning around [*peri*] the head [*kephalē*] and in Polybius, LXX, and in the papyri. [*Sōtērias*] is objective genitive.

5:9 But unto the obtaining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ [*alla eis peripoiēsīn sōtērias dia tou Kuriou hēmōn Iēsou Christou*]. The difficult word here is [*peripoiēsīn*] which may be passive, God’s possession as in 1Pe 2:9, or active, obtaining, as in 2Th 2:14. The latter is probably the idea here. We are to keep awake so as to fulfil God’s purpose [*etheto*], appointed, second aorist middle indicative of [*tithēmi*] in calling us. That is our hope of final victory (salvation in this sense).

5:10 For us [*peri hēmōn*]. Around us. So Westcott and Hort, but [*huper*] (over, in behalf of) as in many MSS. These prepositions often interchanged in N.T. MSS. Whether we wake or sleep [*eite grēgorōmen eite katheudōmen*]. Alternative condition of third class with present subjunctive, though [*eante—eante*] more usual conjunction (Robertson, *Grammar*, P. 1017). Used here of life and death, not as metaphor. That we should live together with him [*hina hama sun autōi zēsōmen*]. First aorist active subjunctive constative aorist covering all life (now and hereafter) together with [*hama sun*] as in 5:17) Jesus.

5:11 Build each other up [*oikodomeite heis ton hena*]. Literally, build ye, one the one [*heis*] nominative in partitive apposition with unexpressed [*humeis*] subject of [*oikodomeite*].) Then [*ton hena*] the accusative in partitive apposition with the unexpressed [*heautous*] or [*allēlous*]. See the same idiom in 1Co 4:6 one in behalf of the one, [*heis huper tou henos*]. Build is a favourite Pauline metaphor.

5:12 Them that labour among you [*tous kopiōntas en humin*]. Old word for toil even if weary. And are over you in the Lord [*kai proistamenous humōn en Kuriōi*]. Same article with this participle. Literally, those who stand in front of you, your leaders in the Lord, the presbyters or bishops and deacons. Get acquainted with them and follow them. And admonish you [*kai nouthetountas humas*]. Old verb from [*nouthetēs*] and this from [*nous*] (mind) and [*tithēmi*], to put. Putting sense into the heads of people. A thankless, but a necessary, task. The same article connects all three participles, different functions of the same leaders in the church.

5:13 And to esteem them [*kai hēgeisthai*]. Get acquainted with them and esteem the leaders. The idlers in Thessalonica had evidently refused to follow their leaders in church

activities. We need wise leadership today, but still more wise following. An army of captains and colonels never won a battle.

5:14 Admonish the disorderly [*noutheteite tous ataktous*]. Put sense into the unruly mob who break ranks [*a*] privative and [*taktos*], verbal adjective of [*tassō*], to keep military order). Recall the idlers from the market-place used against Paul ([Ac 17:5](#)). This is a challenging task for any leader. Encourage the fainthearted [*paramutheisthe tous oligopsuchous*]. Old verb to encourage or console as in [Joh 11:31](#), though not so common in N.T. as [*parakaleō*], the compound adjective [*oligos*], little or small, [*psuchē*], soul), small-souled, little-souled, late word in LXX. The verb [*oligopsucheō*] occurs in the papyri. Local conditions often cause some to lose heart and wish to drop out, be quitters. These must be held in line. Support the weak [*antechesthe tōn asthenōn*]. Middle voice with genitive of [*antechō*], old verb, in N.T. only in middle, to cling to, to hold on to (with genitive). The weak are those tempted to sin (immorality, for instance). Be long-suffering toward all [*makrothumeite pros pantas*]. These disorderly elements try the patience of the leaders. Hold out with them. What a wonderful ideal Paul here holds up for church leaders!

5:15 See to it that no one render unto any one evil for evil [*horate mē tis kakon anti kakou apodōi*]. Note [*mē*] with the aorist subjunctive (negative purpose) [*apodōi*] from [*apodidōmi*], to give back. Retaliation, condemned by Jesus ([Mt 5:38-42](#)) and by Paul in [Ro 12:17](#), usually takes the form of “evil for evil,” rather than “good for good” [*kalon anti kalou*]. Note idea of exchange in [*anti*]. Follow after [*diōkete*]. Keep up the chase [*diōkō*] after the good.

5:18 In everything give thanks [*en panti eucharisteite*]. There is a silver lining to every cloud. God is with us whatever befalls us. It is God’s will that we find joy in prayer in Christ Jesus in every condition of life.

5:19 Quench not the spirit [*to pneuma mē sbennute*]. [*Mē*] with the present imperative means to stop doing it or not to have the habit of doing it. It is a bold figure. Some of them were trying to put out the fire of the Holy Spirit, probably the special gifts of the Holy Spirit as [verse 20](#) means. But even so the exercise of these special gifts ([1Co 12-14](#); [2Co 12:2-4](#); [Ro 12:6-9](#)) was to be decently [*euschēmonōs*], [1Th 4:12](#)) and in order [*kata taxin*], [1Co 14:40](#)) and for edification [*pros oikodomēn*], [1Co 14:26](#)). Today, as then, there are two extremes about spiritual gifts (cold indifference or wild excess). It is not hard to put out the fire of spiritual fervor and power.

5:20 Despise not prophesyings [*prophēteias mē exoutheneite*]. Same construction, stop counting as nothing [*exoutheneō*], [*outhen = ouden*], late form in LXX. Plutarch has [*exoudenizō*]. Plural form [*prophēteias*] (accusative). Word means forth-telling [*pro-phēmi*] rather than fore-telling and is the chief of the spiritual gifts ([1Co 14](#)) and evidently depreciated in Thessalonica as in Corinth later.

5:21 Prove all things [*panta [de] dokimazete*]. Probably [*de*] (but) is genuine. Even the gift of prophecy has to be tested (1Co 12:10; 14:29) to avoid error. Paul shows fine balance here. Hold fast that which is good [*to kalon katechete*]. Keep on holding down the beautiful (noble, morally beautiful). Present imperative [*kat-echō*] (perfective use of [*kata-*] here).

5:22 Abstain from every form of evil [*apo pantos eidous ponērou apechesthe*]. Present middle (direct) imperative of [*ap-echō*] (contrast with [*kat-echō*] and preposition [*apo*] repeated with ablative as in 1Th 4:3. Note use of [*ponērou*] here for evil without the article, common enough idiom. [*Eidos*] (from [*eidon*] naturally means look or appearance as in Lu 3:23; 9:29; Joh 5:37; 2Co 5:7. But, if so taken, it is not semblance as opposed to reality (Milligan). The papyri give several examples of [*eidous*] in the sense of class or kind and that idea suits best here. Evil had a way of showing itself even in the spiritual gifts including prophecy.

5:23 The God of peace [*ho theos tēs eirēnēs*]. The God characterized by peace in his nature, who gladly bestows it also. Common phrase (Milligan) at close of Paul's Epistles (2Co 13:11; Ro 15:33; 16:20; Php 4:9) and the Lord of peace in 2Th 3:6. Sanctify you [*hagiasai humās*]. First aorist active optative in a wish for the future. New verb in LXX and N.T. for the old [*hagizō*], to render or to declare holy [*hagios*], to consecrate, to separate from things profane. Wholly [*holoteleis*]. Predicate adjective in plural [*holos*], whole, [*telos*], end), not adverb [*holotelōs*]. Late word in Plutarch, Hexapla, and in inscription A.D. 67 (Moulton and Milligan, *Vocabulary*). Here alone in N.T. Here it means the whole of each of you, every part of each of you, "through and through" (Luther), qualitatively rather than quantitatively. Your spirit and soul and body [*humōn to pneuma kai hē psuchē kai to sōma*]. Not necessarily trichotomy as opposed to dichotomy as elsewhere in Paul's Epistles. Both believers and unbelievers have an inner man (soul [*psuchē*], mind [*nous*], heart [*kardia*], the inward man [*ho esō anthrōpos*] and the outer man [*sōma, ho exō anthrōpos*]. But the believer has the Holy Spirit of God, the renewed spirit of man (1Co 2:11; Ro 8:9-11). Be preserved entire [*holoklēron tērētheiē*]. First aorist passive optative in wish for the future. Note singular verb and singular adjective (neuter) showing that Paul conceives of the man as "an undivided whole" (Frame), prayer for the consecration of both body and soul (cf. 1Co 6). The adjective [*holoklēron*] is in predicate and is an old form and means complete in all its parts [*holos*], whole, [*klēros*], lot or part). There is to be no deficiency in any part. [*Teleios*] (from [*telos*], end) means final perfection. Without blame [*amemptōs*]. Old adverb [*a*] privative, [*memptos*], verbal of [*memphomai*], to blame) only in I Thess. in N.T. (2:10; 3:13; 5:23). Milligan notes it in certain sepulchral inscriptions discovered in Thessalonica. At the coming [*en tēi parousiāi*]. The Second Coming which was a sustaining hope to Paul as it should be to us and mentioned often in this Epistle (see on 2:19).

5:24 Faithful [*pistos*]. God, he means, who calls and will carry through (Php 1:6).

5:25 Pray for us [*proseuchesthe [kai] peri hēmōn*]. He has made his prayer for them. He adds this “human touch” (Frame) and pleads for the prayers of his converts (2Th 3:1; Col 4:2f.). Probably [*kai*] also is genuine (B D).

5:26 With a holy kiss [*en philēmati hagiōi*]. With a kiss that is holy (Milligan) a token of friendship and brotherly love (1Co 16:20; 2Co 13:12; Ro 16:16). In 1Pe 5:14 it is “with a kiss of love.” This was the customary salutation for rabbis.

5:27 I adjure you by the Lord [*enorkizō humas ton Kurion*]. Late compound for old [*horkizō*] (Mr 5:7), to put one on oath, with two accusatives (Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 483f.). Occurs in inscriptions. That this epistle be read unto all the brethren [*anagnōsthēnai tēn epistolēn pasin tois adelphois*]. First aorist passive infinitive of [*anaginōskō*] with accusative of general reference in an indirect command. Clearly Paul wrote for the church as a whole and wished the epistles read aloud at a public meeting. In this first epistle we see the importance that he attaches to his epistles.

5:28 The grace [*hē charis*]. Paul prefers this noble word to the customary [*errōsthe*] (Farewell, Be strong). See 2Th 3:18 for identical close save added [*pantōn*] (all). A bit shorter form in 1Co 16:23; Ro 16:20 and still shorter in Col 4:18; 1Ti 6:21; Tit 3:15; 2Ti 4:22. The full Trinitarian benediction we find in 2Co 13:13.

Indexes

Index of Scripture References

Deuteronomy

33:12

Job

3:21

Psalms

32:1 62:2

Isaiah

59:17 59:20

Ezekiel

13:10

Matthew

1:18 1:21 1:21 2:10 3:17 4:21 4:23 5:38-42 5:44 12:48 22:13 23:29 24:8 24:43

Mark

1:1 1:15 2:4 4:26 5:7 9:1 13:8

Luke

1:1 1:4 1:62 3:11 3:23 8:13 9:29 12:39 16:8 21:34 22:2 22:4 22:23 22:24

John

1:16 5:37 6:45 11:11 11:31 14:27 15:16 20:25

Acts

2:23 2:29 2:37 5:23 5:28 7:43 7:44 8:3 9:5 9:15 9:22 11:18 13:23 14:4 14:14
14:15 14:15 15:23 16:3 16:16-40 16:24 17:5 17:5 17:14 17:15 17:31 18:5 18:5
18:6 19:39 20:19 22:10 23:25 23:26 24:4 26:26

Romans

1:1 1:9 2:16 3:2 3:5 4:8 4:8 5:3 5:3 5:9 5:20 6 6:17 8:9-11 8:26 8:27 9:1
9:1-5 9:11 9:22 10:1-6 11:5 11:7 11:26 11:58 12:6-9 12:17 13:5 13:11 13:12
13:13 14:17 15:5 15:13 15:16 15:19 15:22 15:33 16:7 16:16 16:20 16:20 16:25

1 Corinthians

1:4 2:4 2:11 2:14 3:5 4:5 4:6 4:16 4:20 4:20 6:1-20 6:9 9 9:12 9:12 9:17 11:1
11:1 11:23 12 12:10 13:7 14:1-40 14:26 14:29 14:40 15:14 15:17 15:18 15:23
15:50 15:52 16:15 16:17 16:20 16:23

2 Corinthians

1:19 1:23 2:4 2:5 2:12 3:13 4:3 4:5 5:7 5:8 5:9 7:6 7:8 7:11 8:23 9 9:13 10:1
10:10 10:14 11:7 11:7 11:13 11:27 12:2-4 12:3 13:11 13:11 13:12 13:13

Galatians

1:4 1:7 1:10 2:1-21 2:2 2:2 2:7 4:9 4:11 5:2 5:7 5:21 6:1 6:10

Ephesians

1:4 1:16 2 3:1 4:1 4:2 5:1 5:9 5:20 5:29 6:14 6:17

Philippians

1:3 1:3 1:6 1:7 1:8 1:23 1:26 1:27 1:27 1:30 2:12 2:25 3:1 3:10-12 3:17 4:3
4:7 4:8 4:9 4:16

Colossians

1:1 1:10 1:13 1:23 1:24 1:24 2:1 2:2 3:4 4:2 4:18

1 Thessalonians

1:1 1:1 1:1 1:2 1:2 1:3 1:3 1:3 1:4 1:5 1:5 1:6 1:7 1:10 1:19 2:1 2:1 2:1
2:1-12 2:2 2:2 2:4 2:4 2:5 2:7 2:7 2:7 2:7 2:7 2:8 2:8 2:9 2:9 2:9 2:9 2:10
2:11 2:12 2:14 2:14 2:14 2:16 2:17 2:18 2:19 3:1 3:2 3:2 3:2 3:2 3:2 3:2 3:3
3:5 3:5 3:7 3:10 3:10 3:11 3:12 3:13 3:13 4:1 4:3 4:10 4:10 4:11 4:11 4:12
4:15 4:15 4:15 5:2 5:8 5:10 5:12 5:13 5:17 5:20 5:23 5:23 5:23

2 Thessalonians

1:3 1:4 1:5 1:6 1:8 1:9 2:1 2:1 2:2 2:8 2:9 2:13 2:13 2:14 2:14 2:14 2:15 2:17
3:1 3:1 3:5 3:6 3:7 3:8 3:8 3:11 3:16 3:17 3:18

1 Timothy

1:5 1:11 5:24 6:21

2 Timothy

2:8 3:13 4:1 4:8 4:18 4:22

Titus

1:2 1:3 2:13 2:13 3:15

Philemon

1:4 1:19

Hebrews

4:2 6:11 6:12 10:22 12:1

James

1:1 2

1 Peter

2:9 3:7 5:14

2 Peter

1:1 1:1 1:10 1:11 1:11 2:20 3:10 3:18

Jude

1:3 1:9

Revelation

2:2 2:2 3:3 14:13 16:15

Sirach

42:1 45:1

Index of Scripture Commentary

1 Thessalonians

[1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#)