

## Faith Growing, Love Abounding

### I. Slide#1 Intro:

- A. Slide#2 Title: *Faith Growing, Love Abounding*
- B. Dating: 2 Thes. was written only a few months after 1st Thes. [from Corinth also] (51,52ad).
- C. Problem: Someone shook them up with a letter stating, *since they were experiencing persecutions & sufferings they must be IN the great & awesome Day of the Lord.*
- D. Their Confusion? The timing of Christ's Return.
- E. Slide#3 It is a letter of correction: He corrects their views on: **Persecution** (Ch.1); **Prophecy** (Ch.2); **Practice** (Ch.3).
- F. Slide#4 Outline: Praise - Promise - Prayer.

### II. Slide#5 PRAISE (1-4)

- A. (1,2) **Our Father** – Similar intro to 1st Thes. **but** notice instead of “the” it is “our”.
  - 1. He points out God's fatherhood over Believers, instead of His relation as Father to Christ His Son.
  - 2. Slide#6 **Boleslaus**, one of the kings of Poland, carried w/him *the picture of his father*, and when he was to do any great work, **or** set upon any design extraordinary, he would **look on the picture**, **and** pray that he might do nothing unworthy of such a father's name.
    - a) Let us also remember our Father, look unto Him, **&** do nothing to dishonor His name.
  - 3. Pray...
- B. Slide#7 THE CHURCH'S TESTIMONY (1-3)
  - 1. Their **Faith** was **growing** **&** their **Love** was **abounding**.
- C. FAITH GROWING (3a)
- D. **Grows exceedingly** – Indicates organic growth as of a healthy plant.
  - 1. Chinese Proverb, “**Be not afraid of growing slowly**, be afraid only of standing still.
  - 2. George Macdonald, “**All growth that is not toward God is growing to decay.**”
- E. *An advancing Christian* grows **surer** of J.C. every day.
  - 1. Note the **twin truths** in this ch: **faith** **&** **love**(3); **faith** **&** **patience**(4); **faith** **&** **power**(11).
- F. In the course of their conversation at a dinner party, Albert Einstein's young neighbor asked the white-haired scientist, “What are you actually by profession?” “I devote myself to the study of

physics,” Einstein replied. The girl looked at him in astonishment. “You mean to say you study physics at your age?” she exclaimed. “I finished mine a year ago.”<sup>1</sup>

1. Doesn't that seem how some have handled their Christianity?
  - a) Some are introduced to a course in *salvation*, others make it a life's calling.

G. Slide#8 LOVE ABOUNDING (3b)

H. We may start loving by **duty**, but end w/it being our greatest Joy.

1. *Biblical love is a decision, not just a feeling.*

I. **Abounding** = to overspread. As a fire or a flood *covers* everything in its path.

1. Rom.5:5 ...the love of God has been **poured out** (gush out, or run greedily) in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. [meditate on that]
  - a) **How do we love?** As He's loved us. **Who do we love?** One another, not pick & choose.
2. Here's a great goal for CM, that the love of *every one of you all* is **abounding**. (3b)
  - a) Slide#9 **Dolly Madison**, wife of the 4th president of the U.S., was one of the most popular women in American history. Wherever she went, she charmed and captivated everyone obscure and well-known, rich and poor, men and women alike. She was once asked to explain the **secret** of her *power over others*. Surprised by the question Mrs. Madison exclaimed, "Power over people. I have none. I desire none. I merely love everyone." And those who love are richly rewarded by love returned.

J. Slide#10 THE CHURCH'S TRIALS (4) *They have grown spiritually in spite of troubles & trials.*

K. PATIENCE (4a)

L. **Patience** = Endurance under trial.

1. Slide#11a It doesn't just passively bears things that come our way, but is a "masculine constancy under trial". Barclay
2. Slide#11b It doesn't just *endure* the circumstance, but **masters** it.
3. Slide#11c It not only **accepts** the blows of life but in accepting them **transforms them** into stepping stones to new achievement.
4. Slide#11d It is the spirit which can bear things, not simply w/resignation, but w/ **blazing hope**. LKGNT
5. Slide#11e It is not the patience which grimly *waits for the end*, but the patience which *radiantly hopes for the dawn*. LKGNT

M. Slide#12 PERSECUTIONS & TRIBULATIONS (4b)

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<sup>1</sup> Today in the Word, September 25, 1992

- N. Slide#13 Oswald Chambers, “We can never be **lilies in the garden** unless we have spent time as **bulbs in the dark**, totally ignored.”

### III. Slide#14 **PROMISE (5-10)**

- A. The apostle says their trials will be used to accomplish a **twofold purpose**:
1. Concerning the **persecuted** (5) & the **persecutors** (6).
- B. Slide#15 **CONCERNING THE PERSECUTED** (5,7,10)
1. Their **hardships** will be used to **prepare** believers for the Kingdom of God.
- C. (5) J.B.Phillips translation, “*see how justly the judgment of God works out. He intends to use your sufferings to prove you worthy of his kingdom.*”
1. Obviously not speaking of their suffering **earning** them the right to go to heaven.
- D. (7) **Rest** = relief from tension, or slackening of pressure. *As one would take down a taut bow string.* [of a bow & arrow; or a violin bow/rosin/hair from tail of a grey male horse - undo when back in case]
1. Slide#16 Rest in Greek = ανειν/anesin. *like the pill*
  2. Remember the commercial, **How do you spell relief?** R-o-l-a-i-d-s. **Others** spell it, a-n-a-s-i-n. **Others**, d-r-u-g-s. **Others**, s-e-x. **And others**, J-E-S-U-S.
  3. Our **rest** comes, when **Jesus** does. (see 7b)
- E. (10) **Glorified in** (*not by*) **His saints**. He will mirror His glory **in** us. *Wow.*
- F. Slide#17 **CONCERNING THE PERSECUTORS** (6,8,9)
1. God is **already preparing** judgment and punishment for those who harm believers.
- G. **Repay** – Guaranteed, God **will** settle up one day. He will right every wrong.
1. “Not one injustice, not one act of pain, not one transaction of torture will ever be overlooked. From one little humiliation to the horrible Holocaust, not one will be forgotten.”
  2. Slide#18 **Affliction** is coming to those **who afflict**; **rest & relief** to those **afflicted**.
    - a) **Examples: Pharaoh** tried to drown little babies/his own army drowned in the Red Sea; **Haman** plotted to wipe out the Jews, & he & his sons were wiped out; **King Darius’** advisors forced him to arrest Daniel & throw him into the lions den, later they themselves were thrown to the lions. www
- H. (8) **In flaming fire** – emphasizing **the glory** of the appearance of the Lord. LKGNT (Rev.1)
1. Describes **His person**, **not His work**.
- I. **Who is this vengeance against?** [Mass-murderers? The Saddam Hussein’s? The Osama Ben Ladin’s?]
1. It is on those who: do not **know** God & those who do not **obey** the gospel.

a) Jn.17:3 **And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.**

b) Heb.5:9 **He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.**

(1) **Is our job important on telling others that they can know Jesus in a personal way...or what?**

J. (9) **Everlasting destruction** – only here.

1. **This is everything opposite from eternal life.** [except the timing]

2. It is not annihilation **but** separation...**from the Lords presence & glory**, **NOT** from **His wrath**.

3. [LKGNT] **The word destruction does not mean annihilation, but implies the loss of all things that give worth to existence.**

4. **Slide#19a** C.S.Lewis describes Jude's words from Jude 1:13 **wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever**, this way: "in hell, everybody will be at an infinite distance from everybody else."

a) **Loneliness & emptiness** - the extreme **opposite of fellowship & fullness**.

5. This is not meanness or cruelty, **this is justice**. "His righteous reaction to cosmic treason on man's part." Ray Stedman

6. Some say, **"I can't believe a loving God would judge sinners & send them to hell"**. **Slide#19b** **Then** you may not understand **either** the **holiness of God**, **nor** the **awfulness of sin**.

a) To all those who won't say, **thy will be done**, who say "my will be done" instead,...He says, **have at it**.

#### IV. **Slide#20 PRAYER (11,12)**

A. Paul's Prayer for the Thes church, **Concerning God's Purpose & Power & Person**.

B. **Slide#21 CONCERNING GOD'S PURPOSE** (11a) *That it might be fulfilled in them.*

C. **Slide#22 CONCERNING GOD'S POWER** (11b) *That it might strengthen them.*

D. **Slide#23 CONCERNING GOD'S PERSON** (12a) *That He might be glorified in them.*

1. **He wants to be Glorified IN you.**

E. **Slide#24** The following is a wonderful prayer by Norwegian Theologian **Ole Hallesby**:

"Lord, **if** it will be to Your glory, heal suddenly. **If** it will glorify You more, heal gradually; **if** it will glorify You even more, may your servant remain sick awhile; **and if** it will glorify Your name still more, take him to Yourself in heaven."

F. **Slide#25blank**

- G. **1,2 (MSG)** I, Paul, together with Silas and Timothy, greet the church of the Thessalonian Christians in the name of God our Father and our Master, Jesus Christ. **Our God gives you everything you need, makes you everything you're to be.**

*Justice Is on the Way*

- H. **3–4** You need to know, friends, that thanking God over and over for you is not only a pleasure; it's a must. We have to do it. Your faith is growing phenomenally; your love for each other is developing wonderfully. Why, it's only right that we give thanks. We're so proud of you; you're so steady and determined in your faith despite all the hard times that have come down on you. We tell everyone we meet in the churches all about you.
- I. **5–10** All this trouble is a clear sign that God has decided to make you fit for the kingdom. You're suffering now, but justice is on the way. When the Master Jesus appears out of heaven in a blaze of fire with his strong angels, he'll even up the score by settling accounts with those who gave you such a bad time. His coming will be the break we've been waiting for. Those who refuse to know God and refuse to obey the Message will pay for what they've done. Eternal exile from the presence of the Master and his splendid power is their sentence. But on that very same day when he comes, he will be exalted by his followers and celebrated by all who believe—and all because you believed what we told you.
- J. **11,12** Because we know that this extraordinary day is just ahead, we pray for you all the time—pray that our God will make you fit for what he's called you to be, pray that he'll fill your good ideas and acts of faith with his own energy so that it all amounts to something. If your life honors the name of Jesus, he will honor you. Grace is behind and through all of this, our God giving himself freely, the Master, Jesus Christ, giving himself freely.