

CHRISTIAN HOPE (2)  
First Thessalonians  
Banska Bystrica, 20th November 2016

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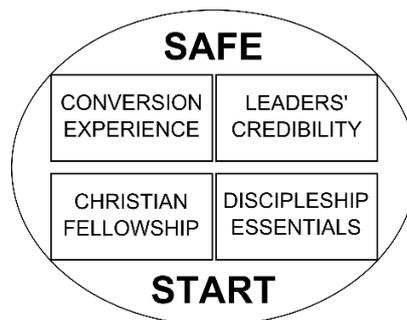
3. TO REMEMBER

0. INTRODUCTION

- reminder: method of exposition: theme “clusters”
- Love: “the trademark” of Christian religion (by this you will be known as my disciples...)

0.1. REVIEWING THE PREVIOUS LESSON

- love & labor



- impossible to distinguish sharply...
- hope belongs to the *essentials* of Christian discipleship

0.2. HOPE IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

- hope... (1) ...& fellowship, (2) ...& discipleship essentials, (3) ...& leaders, (4) ...& conversion
- the three fundamental elements of the Christian life: (1) faith, (2) love, (3) **hope** → (1) ζργον, (2) κόπος, (3) ὑπομονή. (genitives of origin [AUBERLEN & RIGGENBACH])
- ὑπομονή – [PASSOW] (ὑπομένω) I. a remaining behind. — II. a holding out under, patience under

0.3. HOPE IN THE 1<sup>ST</sup> THESSALONIANS [TEXT]

- **1:3** remembering before our God and Father your (1) work of faith and (2) labor of love (3) and

steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

- **1:9-10** ...you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, <sup>10</sup> and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.
- **4:13 – 5:7** But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. <sup>15</sup> For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede (οὐ μὴ φθάσωμεν) those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (ἀρπαγησόμεθα ἐν νεφέλαις εἰς ἀπάντησιν τοῦ κυρίου εἰς ἄερα· καὶ οὕτως πάντοτε σὺν κυρίῳ ἔσόμεθα.), and so we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore comfort one another with these words. **5:1** Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. <sup>2</sup> For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup> While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. <sup>4</sup> But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; <sup>5</sup> for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; <sup>6</sup> so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. <sup>7</sup> For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night.
- **5:23-24** Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup> He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

#### 0.4. HOPE–THEMES IN 1THESSALONIANS

- A. The hope of our Lord Jesus Christ
  - a. Genitive – subjective (Jesus’ personal hope → Heb 12)
  - b. Genitive – objective (“your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ”)
  - c. Genitive – of authorship ( )
- B. “Objective” future
  - a. The wrath to come (1:10)
  - b. Parousia (4:15–5:7)
  - c. Rejection of “eschatological timetables” (5:1-3)
- C. “Subjective” experience
  - a. Light (5:5-7)
  - b. Comfort, encouragement (4:13)
- D. Life of hope
  - a. waiting for Parousia (1:10)
  - b. spiritual watching (5:1-7)
  - c. endurance (1:3)

### 1. CHRISTIAN HOPE – AS THE WAITING FOR DELIVERANCE

#### 1.1. SALVATION IN “INSTALLMENTS”

- the Holy Spirit → ἀρραβων;
- waiting for the deliverance of our bodies: **Phil 3:20-21** But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.
- **1John 3:2-3** Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we will be like him, because we shall see him as he is. <sup>3</sup> And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.
- SALVATION: Past – Present – Future
  - (1) **Rom 8:24** in this hope we were saved (ἐσώθημεν); **2Tim 1:8-9** ...God, <sup>9</sup> who saved us and called us (σώσαντος ἡμᾶς καὶ καλέσαντος)...

- (2) **2Cor 2:15** For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are **being saved** (ἐν τοῖς σωζομένοις); **1Cor 1:18** to us who are **being saved** (τοῖς δὲ σωζομένοις ἡμῖν)
- (3) **Rom 5:9** ...we have now been justified by his blood (δικαιωθέντες νῦν), much more shall we be **saved** (σωθησόμεθα) by him from the **wrath** of God.

## 1.2. WAITING FOR THE FUTURE SALVATION

- avoid the *wrath* of God → **Rom 2:5** ...your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath (ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ὀργῆς) when God's righteous judgment will be revealed
- **1Thes 1:9-10** ...you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, <sup>10</sup> and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come (ἐκ τῆς ὀργῆς τῆς ἐρχομένης).
- **Rom 8:25** But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

## 2. THE RAPTURE

- premillennialism; postmillennialism; amillennialism...
  - (Millenium: **Rev 20:5-7** The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a **thousand years**. <sup>7</sup> And when the **thousand years** are ended, Satan will be released from his prison)
- pretributational – posttributational – mid-tributational rapture...
  - (Tribulation: **Mt 24:21** For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.)
- ἀρπάζω – to tear, snatch, ravish away, to carry off, hurry away – to seize, grasp hastily – to seize and overpower,

### 2.1. THE MEANING OF THE RAPTURE

- **Luke 17:30-37** ...so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed. <sup>31</sup> On that day, let the one who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house, not come down to take them away, and likewise let the one who is in the field not turn back. <sup>32</sup> Remember Lot's wife. <sup>33</sup> Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it. <sup>34</sup> I tell you, in that night there will be two in one bed. One will be taken and the other left (ὁ εἷς παραλημφθήσεται καὶ ὁ ἕτερος ἀφεθήσεται). <sup>35</sup> There will be two women grinding together. One will be taken and the other left." <sup>36</sup> <sup>37</sup> And they said to him, "Where, Lord?" He said to them, "Where the corpse is, there the vultures will gather."

### 2.2. MEETING THE LORD IN THE AIR

The nature of this "meeting" (apantesin, v. 17) deserves comment. Some feel that the technical force of the word obtains—i.e., a visitor would be formally met by a delegation of citizens and ceremonially escorted back into their city (Best, p. 199). On this basis, they contend that Christians go out to meet the Lord and return with him as he continues his advent to earth. Advocates of this proposal see this connotation in two other NT usages of the word (Matt 25:6; Acts 28:15, 16) (George Ladd, *The Blessed Hope* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956], p. 91; William C. Thomas, *The Blessed Hope* [William C. Thomas, 1972], pp. 5, 6). Whether or not this is true is debatable. Even if it were true, Christ would not necessarily be escorted back to earth immediately (Gundry, pp. 104, 105). Usage of the noun in LXX as well as differing features of the present context (e.g., Christians' being snatched away rather than advancing on their own to meet the visitor) is sufficient to remove this passage from the technical Hellenistic sense of the word (Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 14, n.4; Best, p. 199). A meeting in the air is pointless unless the saints continue on to heaven with the Lord who has come out to meet them (Milligan, p. 61). Tradition stemming from Jesus' parting instructions fixes the immediate destination following the meeting, as the Father's house, i.e., heaven (John 14:2, 3) John Walvoord, *The Thessalonian Epistles* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1967], p. 70). (GAEBELEIN, F. E. *Expositor's Bible Commentary*)

- **1Cor 15:51-53** Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (πάντες δὲ ἀλλαγησόμεθα) <sup>52</sup>in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye (ἐν ἀτόμῳ, ἐν ῥιπῇ ὀφθαλμοῦ),

at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed (ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ σάλπιγγι· σαλπίζει γὰρ καὶ οἱ νεκροὶ ἐγερθήσονται ἄφθαρτοι καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀλλαγησόμεθα). <sup>53</sup>For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.

### 2.3. THE “TIME-TABLE” OF THE RAPTURE?

- 4:16 ...the dead in Christ will rise first...
- 5:2 ...you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night...
- Be ready! → **5:23-24** ... spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ

### 3. TO REMEMBER

- Christian life is a life of *waiting* for Christ Second coming. With him we will meet all our loved ones who died before us.
- Waiting is a time of *preparation* → sanctification.
- The question of Rapture and its “time-table” should not become a touchstone of orthodoxy!!