

1 Thessalonians 2:17-20 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

- [1 Thes 2:1](#)
- [1 Thes 2:2](#)
- [1 Thes 2:3](#)
- [1 Thes 2:4](#)
- [1 Thes 2:5](#)
- [1 Thes 2:6](#)
- [1 Thes 2:7](#)
- [1 Thes 2:8](#)
- [1 Thes 2:9](#)
- [1 Thes 2:10](#)
- [1 Thes 2:11](#)
- [1 Thes 2:12](#)
- [1 Thes 2:13](#)
- [1 Thes 2:14](#)
- [1 Thes 2:15](#)
- [1 Thes 2:16](#)
- [1 Thes 2:17](#)
- [1 Thes 2:18](#)
- [1 Thes 2:19](#)
- [1 Thes 2:20](#)

1Thessalonians 2:17 But we, [brethren](#), having been [bereft](#) from you for a [short * while](#) --in [person](#), not in [spirit](#) --were [all](#) the [more eager](#) with [great desire](#) to [see your face](#). ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [Hemeis de adelphoi aporphanisthentes \(APPMPN\) aph' humon pros kairon oras. prosopo ou kardia. perissoteros espoudasamen \(1PAAI\) to prosopon humon idein \(AAN\) en polle epithumia.](#)

Amplified: But since we were bereft of you, brethren, for a little while in person, [of course] not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great longing to see you face to face, ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: Dear friends, after we were separated from you for a little while (though our hearts never left you), we tried very hard to come back because of our intense longing to see you again. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: Since we have been physically separated from you, my brothers (though never for a moment separated in heart), we have longed all the more to see you. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: But as for us, brethren, having been bereaved of you for a short season so far as our presence with you is concerned, not in heart, we did our best all the more with much desire to see your face.

Young's Literal: And we, brethren, having been taken from you for the space of an hour -- in presence, not in heart -- did hasten the more abundantly to see your face in much desire,

1THESSALONIANS OVERVIEW

Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5
LOOKING BACK			LOOKING FORWARD	

Personal Reflections Historical			Practical Instructions Exhortational		
Ministry In Person		Ministry in Absentia (Thru Timothy)	Ministry by Epistle		
Word and Power of the Spirit		Establishing & Comforting	Calling & Conduct	1Th 4:13ff Comfort	1Th 5:12ff Commands
1 Salvation	2 Service	3 Sanctification	4 Sorrow	5 Sobriety	
Exemplary Hope of Young Converts	Motivating Hope of Faithful Servants	Purifying Hope of Tried Believers	Comforting Hope of Bereaved Saints	Invigorating Hope of Diligent Christians	
Written from Corinth Approximately 51AD					
Modified from the excellent book Jensen's Survey of the NT					

OUTLINE OF 1THESSALONIANS CHAPTERS 1-3

CHAPTER	THEME
1	An Exemplary Conversion
2	An Exemplary Witness
3	An Exemplary Follow-Up

BUT WE, BRETHREN, HAVING BEEN TAKEN AWAY FROM YOU FOR A SHORT WHILE IN PERSON, NOT IN SPIRIT: Hemeis de, adelphoi, aporphanisthentes (APPMPN) aph' humon pros kairon oras:

- 2Kings 5:26; Acts 17:10; 1Corinthians 5:3; Colossians 2:5
- [1 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Ray Stedman introduces this section writing that...

The passage from First Thessalonians to which we now come is a great testimony to a father's love. The church, after all, is a family, and God is our great Father. No aspect of Christian faith warms my heart more than knowing that God is my Father. I lost my father when I was only ten years old, and I have never known a father other than the Fatherhood of God. But what a tremendous encouragement it has been to me to know that I have a Father who loves me. On one occasion when Jesus was informed that his mother and brothers were waiting for him, he said of those he was teaching, "These are my mother and father and brother" (cf, Mt 12:47-49, Mk 3:32, 33, 34, 35), thereby indicating that a spiritual tie is as rich and deep as a physical tie -- and oftentimes more so...

I wonder where the idea ever arose that Paul was stern and cold? You cannot read this letter without sensing the warmth of his heart and the depth of his love. At the time he wrote this letter, he was ministering alone in the city of Corinth. He was feeling the loneliness of that moment. Being far away from loved ones is a very unpleasant experience. Forgetting the danger that had driven him from Thessalonica, and the cruelty he had experienced there, he longed to be with them again. He even tried to go to see them again but was prevented by Satanic interference. ([1Thessalonians 2:17-3:13: Father's Joy](#))

Hiebert has an interesting thought on what appears to be a poor choice for a chapter break (the chapter-verse divisions are not inspired) as the subject begun in this verse continues into chapter 3...

The unity of this section would have been more evident if the new chapter had been made to begin at 1Thes 2:17 instead. The present chapter division was apparently due to the desire to have each chapter close with a

direct reference to the second coming. ([Hiebert, D. Edmond: 1 & 2 Thessalonians: BMH Book. 1996](#))

Brethren (80) (**adelphos** from collative **a** = denoting unity + **delphús** = womb) is literally one born from same womb and so a male having the same father and mother as reference person. Figuratively, **adelphos** as in this verse refers to a close associate of a group of persons having well-defined membership, specifically here referring to fellow believers in Christ who are united by the bond of affection.

Having been taken away from (bereft, bereaved of) ([642](#)) (**aporphanizo** from **apó** = preposition meaning from, away from, speaks of a rupture of a former relationship or any separation of one thing from another by which the union or fellowship of the two is destroyed + **orphanós** = an orphan, a child deprived of one or usually both parents) means to be made or caused to be an orphan and figuratively speaks of an unwanted separation as when one is torn away from, deprived of contact and society or unwillingly separated from. **Aporphanizo** can also be used to mean the separation of parents from children and a lover from his beloved. It was also used in a more general sense to denote the loss of any friend or relative.

It means to cause someone to be spatially separated with the implication of emotional deprivation. The idea is to separate and deprive of parents. Luke reminds us that this separation was somewhat abrupt or violent...

And when they did not find them (Paul and Silas), they (the jealous Jews) began dragging Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, "These men who have upset the world have come here also 7 and Jason has welcomed them, and they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus. 8 And they stirred up the crowd and the city authorities who heard these things. 9 And when they had received a pledge from Jason and the others, they released them. 10 And the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea; and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. (Acts 17:6-10)

Comment: The separation of Paul from the Thessalonians was not a physical act of removing Paul from the people, but the persecution which forced Paul and Silas to leave.

Here in 1Thessalonians Paul speaks of these newly born disciples deprived of their teacher, as children bereaved of their father. This verse is the only use of this verb in Scripture. This verb clearly underscores the tender, intimate fellowship Paul had with the believers in Thessalonica and vividly portrays the desolation of soul he felt upon being torn away from his beloved converts. But although they were out of sight, they were not out of mind ("in person, not in spirit").

Short while - is literally for the season of an hour (kairos hora)

While (2540) (**kairos [word study]**) means a point of time or period of time, time, period, frequently with the implication of being especially fit for something and without emphasis on precise chronology. It means a moment or period as especially appropriate the right, proper, favorable time (at the right time).

Kairos can refer to a fixed and definite time, the time when things are brought to crisis, the decisive epoch waited for or a strategic point in time. **Kairos** speaks of a limited period of time, with the added notion of suitability ("the suitable time", "the right moment", "the convenient time"). **Kairos** refers to a distinct, fixed time period, rather than occasional moments.

Kairos is not so much a succession of minutes (Greek **chronos 5550**), but a period of **opportunity**. **Chronos** refers to chronological time, to clock time or calendar time, to a general space or succession of time. **Kairos**, on the other hand, refers to a specific and often predetermined period or moment of time and so views time in terms of events, eras, or seasons, such as the **times of the Gentiles (see below)** In other words, **kairos** defines the best time to do something, the moment when circumstances are most suitable, the psychologically "ripe" moment.

Kairos is a season, an opportune time, an opportunity ("window of opportunity"). It is a fixed & definite time. It is a period possessed of certain characteristics. For example, a "season" is a time characterized by a particular circumstance or feature.

Hour (5610) (**hora**) means hour and then a definite space or division of time recurring at fixed intervals.

WERE ALL THE MORE EAGER WITH GREAT DESIRE TO SEE YOUR FACE: prosopo ou kardia, perissoteros espoudasamen (1PAAI) to prosopon humon idein (AAN) en polle epithumia:

- 1Thes 3:6,10,11; Genesis 31:30; 45:28; 48:11; 2Samuel 13:39; Psalms 63:1; Luke 22:15; Romans 1:13; 15:23; Philippians 1:22, 23, 24, 25, 26
- [1 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Not in spirit ([2588](#)) is literally "in presence, not in heart"

In person ([4383](#)) (**prosopon** from **prós** = toward + **ops** = the eye or face) means front (face or eye toward) (being towards view)

Eager ([4704](#)) (**spoudazo** [word study] from **spoude** = haste) conveys the idea hastening to do something with the implication of associated energy or with intense effort and motivation. It suggest zealous concentration and diligent effort, one's best effort!

Spoudazo - 11x in 11v - Gal 2:10; Eph 4:3; 1Thess 2:17; 2Tim 2:15; 4:9, 21; Titus 3:12; Heb 4:11; 2 Pet 1:10, 15; 3:14 **NAS** - diligent(6), eager(2), make every effort(3).

Spoudazo speaks of intensity of purpose followed by intensity of effort toward the realization of that purpose. **Spoudazo** is used in the papyri in such senses as "do your best, take care, hurry on the doing of something." **Spoudazo** is marked by careful unremitting attention or persistent application. The idea is give maximum effort, do your best, spare no effort, hurry on, be eager! Hasten to do a thing, exert yourself, endeavour to do it. It means not only to be willing to do with eagerness, but to follow through and make diligent effort. Give your utmost for His highest!

In other words **spoudazo** does not stop with affecting one's state of mind, but also affects one's activity. **Spoudazo** conveys the idea of exertion. It means to be conscientious, zealous and earnest in discharging a duty or obligation. The verb speaks of **intensity of purpose** followed by **intensity of effort** toward the realization of a goal or purpose.

Wuest says that **spoudazo** means "to make haste, do one's best, take care, desire. The idea of making haste, being eager, giving diligence, and putting forth effort are in the word. The word speaks of intense effort and determination."

All the more ([4053](#)) (**perissoteros**) means more superabundantly, more earnest, more exceedingly, more frequent, much more, more earnestly.

Desire ([1939](#)) (**epithumia** [word study] from verb **epithumeo** = set heart upon from **epi** = upon or intensifier + **thumos** = passion) is a drive/passion directed at an object (epi = toward) and most often in NT describes depraved cravings and inner vile unrestrained desires from our fallen flesh nature

See ([3708](#)) (**horao**) refers not merely to the act of seeing, but also to the actual perception of object.

Face ([4383](#)) (**prosopon** from **prós** = toward + **ops** = the eye or face) is literally the part toward, at, or around the eye and so the face, countenance, presence, person.

See your face - Paul always had before him the goal of maturing new believers in their faith which ultimately speaks of the practice of **discipleship** and the fulfillment of Jesus' instruction, not just to go and baptize but as Jesus concluded...

teaching (present tense - continually) them to **observe** (keep in view - present tense - continually) all that I commanded you; (how will it be possible to carry out His instruction?) and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. (Mt 28:19-20)

How is your church doing in this vital area? You may say "We're doing that at our church" but what is the evidence? Are their classes that are taking new believers through teaching on the essential doctrines of the faith? Is there an emphasis placed on the return of the Lord as we see in Paul's letter to the Thessalonians? Or does the Second Coming take "second seat" to activities, programs, videos, etc? Paul's heart beat was to...

we proclaim Him (Christ in believers the hope of glory), admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ. And for this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me. (See **notes** Colossians 1:28; 1:29)

Paul echoes this vital truth again in **Ephesians**...

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. (See **notes** Ephesians 4:11; 4:12; 4:13; 4:14; 4:15; 4:16)

1Thessalonians 2:18 For we **wanted** to **come** to you--I, **Paul**, **more * than once** --and yet **Satan hindered** (thwarted) us. (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: [dioti ethelesamen \(1PAAI\) elthein \(AAN\) pros humas, ego men Paulos kai hapax kai dis, kai enekopsen \(3SAAI\) emas o Satanas](#)

Amplified: Because it was our will to come to you. [I mean that] I, Paul, again and again [wanted to come], but Satan hindered and impeded us. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: We wanted very much to come, and I, Paul, tried again and again, but Satan prevented us. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: Yes, I, Paul, have longed to come and see you more than once - but somehow Satan prevented our coming. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: On this account we set our heart on coming to you, indeed, I, Paul, not only once but twice, but Satan cut in on us and by that means thwarted us.

Young's Literal: wherefore we wished to come unto you, (I indeed Paul,) both once and again, and the Adversary did hinder us;

FOR WE WANTED TO COME TO YOU-- I, PAUL, MORE THAN ONCE-- AND YET SATAN HINDERED US: dioti ethelesamen (1PAAI) elthein (AAN) pros humas, ego men Paulos kai hapax kai dis, kai enekopsen (3SAAI) emas o Satanas:

- 1 Cor 16:21; Colossians 4:18; 2Th 3:17; Philemon 1:9
- Job 33:14; Philippians 4:16
- Zechariah 3:1,2; Romans 1:13; 15:22; 2 Cor 11:12-14; Revelation 2:10; 12:9, 10, 11, 12
- [1 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Wanted ([2309](#)) (**thelo**) is a desire that comes from one's emotions. It is an active decision of the will, implying volition and purpose. It describes a conscious willing and denotes a more active resolution urging on to action.

I Paul - This phrase clearly identifies **Paul** as the author of this **letter**, even though he had introduced it with the names **Paul and Silvanus and Timothy**.

More than once - is literally **both once and again**.

Satan hindered us - One might ask how did Satan hinder Paul. Remembering that Satan is the prince of the power of the air and is the spirit that is now working or energizing the sons of disobedience (all unbelievers), it is possible that Satan "energized" some of his "children" (cf John 8:44) to somehow impede Paul's journey, but beyond that one cannot speculate. The main point is that Satan can hinder legitimate Christian work and workers. He has done it effectively in the past and undoubtedly continues to have apparent successes today. However, was he really successful in his thwarting of Paul? No, for although he meant it for evil, God used it for good, inspiring Paul to write the precious letter to the Thessalonians that you are reading. Furthermore, Paul was able to send Timothy which provided training for his young disciple regarding how to effectively follow up evangelistic efforts.

The other question that arises is how are believers to discern whether the hindrance is from God or from Satan. Clearly Paul knew that the hindrance in this verse was related to Satan. But Paul was also "hindered" in his missionary journey by the Spirit, Luke recording...

And they (Paul, Silas and Timothy) passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been **forbidden** (koluo - forbid by word or act thus preventing something from happening) by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia 7 and when they had come to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus **did not permit** them (Acts 16:6-7)

In his epistle to the Romans Paul twice mentions his unsuccessful attempts to go to Rome...

And I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been **prevented** {koluo - present tense = continuously} thus far) in order that I might obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles. (See **note** Romans 1:13)

For this reason I have often been **hindered** (egkopto - imperfect tense = over and over Paul was being impeded and implying a succession of hindrances) from coming to you (See **note** Romans 15:22) (See below)

Satan (4567)(**satanas**) (See **study of Satan's schemes**) ([See multiple resources](#)) (See study of synonym - Devil - diabolos) literally an adversary, the constant enemy of God and man, a supernatural evil being. Satan appears as the personal spirit of evil, the same who is called the devil, the wicked one, the prince of the power of the air, the prince of this world, the serpent, the god of this world, the tempter. He tempts to evil, opposes God's work, inspires evil dispositions, torments God's people. (See related studies on spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6:10; 6:11; 6:12; 6:13; 6:14; 6:15; 6:16; 6:17; 6:18)

Hindered (thwarted) (1465)(**egkopto/enkopto** from **en** = in + **kópto** = cut down, strike) strictly means to knock or cut into, to impede one's course by cutting off his way; and hence to hinder, impede, thwart or interrupt. It means to make progress slow or difficult. It can also convey the idea of delay (see below on Acts 24:4)

As illustrated in the verses below the NT uses always have a spiritual connotation - Paul's course hindered here and (R 15:22), the progress of the gospel hindered (1Cor 9:22), the walk of Christians hindered (Gal 5:7) and the ascension of prayer by a husband who mistreats his wife (1Peter 3:7)

In classic Greek **egkopto** was a military term meaning to cut in on, throw obstacles in the way of, or cut up the road so that normal movement was impossible. The road was so cut into and broken up that travel was blocked.

In secular Greek there **egkopto** is used in the context of interrupting (koluo) and thus hindering the progress of a discussion.

MacArthur explains that **egkopto**

is a military term referring to digging a trench or breaking up a road. One of the countermeasures an ancient army would take against the opposition was to dig a massive trench that would prevent enemy troops from reaching its men. Another way to frustrate the enemy's progress would be to tear up a brick or stone road so that he could not traverse it. Thus Paul depicted the powerful devil as supernaturally obstructing the apostle's strong desire to revisit Thessalonica. ([MacArthur, John: 1 & 2 Thessalonians. Moody Press](#))

In sum, **egkopto** means to interfere with the activity or progress of something, the word **hindered** stressing harmful and/or annoying delay or interference.

Marvin Vincent comments that **egkopto**...

means, literally, to knock in; make an incision into; and hence, generally, to hinder or thwart (Gal 5:7; 1Thess 2:18).

TDNT notes that the word group (egkopte and egkopto) originally derived their main sense from the idea of an...

"obstacle" ("conceit is an obstacle to progress") or "to impede," "to arrest" from the military practice of making slits in the street to hold up a pursuing enemy. Hence the basic meaning is "to block the way." By derivation only a temporary hold-up is suggested, in contrast to → *proskomma* (see word study), and this may still be discerned in NT usage, cf. Ro 15:22-note... But later the distinction faded... and even in the NT the thought of a definitive obstacle predominates, and the term is used in the metaphor of running on the race-track (cf. esp. Gal 5:7 [see below] but the same image lies behind 1Th 2:18 and Romans 15:22. ([Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Eerdmans](#))

Egkopto is found 5 times in the NT (no uses in the Septuagint - LXX)...

Acts 24:4 "But, that I may not **weary** (also translated "impose on", "that I may not further hinder thee or detain") you any further, I beg you to grant us, by your kindness, a brief hearing. (**Comment:** UBS note says "I do want to take up too much of your time is understood in this same fashion by most other translations, though it is faintly possible that the meaning may be "I do not want to tire you out." Ancient orators, as well as modern, felt it advisable to promise their hearers only a short speech. - [The United Bible Societies' New Testament Handbook Series](#))

Romans 15:22 (note) For this reason I have often been **hindered** (imperfect tense = pictures action occurring over and over) from coming to you; (**Comment:** The **imperfect tense** of **egkopto** indicates continuation, and the **passive voice** indicates that the cause was from an outside source. God was still in control and for some reason Paul was continually prevented from coming to the church at Rome)

Galatians 5:7 You were running well; who **hindered** you from obeying the truth?

1Thessalonians 2:18 For we wanted to come to you-- I, Paul, more than once-- and yet Satan **hindered** us.

1 Peter 3:7 (note) You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be **hindered**.

Stedman writes that...

Already in this chapter we have seen three sources of opposition to the apostle:

Opposition from the state (1Th 2:2-note)

Opposition from society (1Th 2:14-note) and

Opposition from Satan (1Th 2:18-note)

While this might look like three enemies, it is really only one. Other Scriptures indicate that the **state** and **society** are often the channels of the devil's attempts to hinder the spread of the good Word of God. This is what Paul was encountering here.

Have you ever experienced a frustrating time in your own life when again and again you tried to do something you knew was right and found it hard going? You met opposition and hindrance, perhaps even from your own family. That is Satanic hindrance, the psychological manipulation of minds to arouse opposition and plant obstacles in your path. ([1Thessalonians 2:17-3:13: Father's Joy](#))

Spurgeon - Morning and Evening - Since the first hour in which goodness came into conflict with evil, it has never ceased to be true in spiritual experience, that Satan hinders us. From all points of the compass, all along the line of battle, in the vanguard and in the rear, at the dawn of day and in the midnight hour, Satan hinders us. If we toil in the field, he seeks to break the ploughshare; if we build the wall, he labours to cast down the stones; if we would serve God in suffering or in conflict--everywhere Satan hinders us. He hinders us when we are first coming to Jesus Christ. Fierce conflicts we had with Satan when we first looked to the cross and lived. Now that we are saved, he endeavours to hinder the completeness of our personal character. You may be congratulating yourself, "I have hitherto walked consistently; no man can challenge my integrity." Beware of boasting, for your virtue will yet be tried; Satan will direct his engines against that very virtue for which you are the most famous. If you have been hitherto a firm believer, your faith will ere long be attacked; if you have been meek as Moses, expect to be tempted to speak unadvisedly with your lips. The birds will peck at your ripest fruit, and the wild boar will dash his tusks at your choicest vines. Satan is sure to hinder us when we are earnest in prayer. He checks our importunity, and weakens our faith in order that, if possible, we may miss the blessing. Nor is Satan less vigilant in obstructing Christian effort. There was never a revival of religion without a revival of his opposition. As soon as Ezra and Nehemiah begin to labour, Sanballat and Tobiah are stirred up to hinder them. What then? We are not alarmed because Satan hindereth us, for it is a proof that we are on the Lord's side, and are doing the Lord's work, and in his strength we shall win the victory, and triumph over our adversary.

1Thessalonians 2:19 For **who** is our **hope or joy or crown of exultation**? Is it not **even** you, in the **presence** of our **Lord Jesus** at His **coming**? ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [tis gar hemon elpis e chara e stephanos kaucheseos e ouchi kai humeis emprosthen tou kuriou hemon iesou en te autou parousia?](#)

Amplified: For what is our hope or happiness or our victor's wreath of exultant triumph when we stand in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? Is it not you? ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: After all, what gives us hope and joy, and what is our proud reward and crown? It is you! Yes, you will bring us much joy as we stand together before our Lord Jesus when he comes back again. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: Yet who could take your place as our hope and joy and pride when Jesus comes? Who but you, as you will stand before him at his coming? ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: For what is our hope or joy or victor's laurel wreath of glorying? Are not even you yourselves such in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming?

Young's Literal: for what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not even ye before our Lord Jesus Christ in his presence?

FOR WHO IS OUR HOPE OR JOY OR CROWN OF EXULTATION? IS IT NOT EVEN YOU, IN THE PRESENCE OF OUR LORD JESUS AT HIS COMING: tis gar hemon elpis e chara e stephanos kaucheseos e ouchi kai humeis emprosthen tou kuriou hemon lesou en te autou parousia:

- 2Corinthians 1:14; Philippians 2:16; 4:1
- Proverbs 4:9; 12:4; 16:13; 17:6; Isaiah 62:3; 1Peter 5:4; Revelation 4:10,11
- 1Th 2:20; Romans 15:16, 17, 18, 19
- 1Th 3:13; 5:23; 1Corinthians 4:5; 15:23; 2Corinthians 1:14; Philippians 2:16; 4:1; 2Thessalonians 1:7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12; 2:1; 1Timothy 6:14,15; 2Timothy 4:1,2; Titus 2:13; 1John 2:28
- Jude 1:24
- Revelation 1:7; 22:12)
- [1 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

HOW TO MAKE A GLOBAL INVESTMENT ([Note](#))

Wiersbe comments that "Paul did not look back and give in to regret and remorse. Instead, he looked ahead and rejoiced. For the Christian, the best is yet to come. Paul looked ahead by faith and saw his friends in the presence of Jesus Christ in glory. In times of trouble and testing, it is important that we take the long view of things. Paul lived in the **future tense**, as well as in the **present**. His actions were governed by what God would do in the future. He knew that Jesus Christ would return and reward him for his faithful ministry; and on that day, the saints from Thessalonica would bring glory to God and joy to Paul's heart. As the familiar song says, "It will be worth it all, when we see Jesus." The fact that we shall one day stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ (see **bema**) ought to motivate us to be faithful in spite of difficulties. We must remember that faithfulness is the important thing (1Cor. 4:2). At the Judgment Seat of Christ, our works will be judged and rewards will be given (Ro 14:10, 11, 12-note; 1Cor. 4:1, 2, 3, 4, 5; 2Cor 5:9-note, 2Co 5:10-note). ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#))

Hope ([1680](#)) (**elpis [word study]**) in Scripture is not the world's definition of "I **hope** so", with a few rare exceptions (e.g., Acts 27:20.) **Hope** is defined as a desire for some future good with the expectation of obtaining it. **Hope** is confident expectancy. **Hope** is the looking forward to something with some reason for confidence respecting fulfillment.

(Click in depth study of Biblical hope: chart summarizing the definition of, source of, stabilizing effect of and sanctifying effect of hope)

Hope as the world typically defines it is a desire for some future occurrence of which one is not assured of attaining. The ancient world did not generally regard **hope** as a virtue, but merely as a temporary illusion. Historians tell us that a great cloud of **hopelessness** covered the ancient world. Philosophies were empty; traditions were disappearing; religions were powerless to help men face either life or death. People longed to pierce the veil and get some message of hope from the other side, but there is none outside of Christ.

Elpis - 53x in 48v in the **NAS** -

Acts 2:26; 16:19; 23:6; 24:15; 26:6 7; 27:20; 28:20; Ro 4:18; 5:2, 4 5; 8:20, 24; 12:12; 15:4, 13; 1Cor 9:10; 13:13; 2 Cor 1:7; 3:12; 10:15; Gal 5:5; Ep 1:18; 2:12; 4:4; Php 1:20; Col 1:5, 23, 27; 1Th 1:3; 2:19; 4:13; 5:8; 2Th 2:16; 1Ti 1:1; Titus 1:2; 2:13; 3:7; He 3:6; 6:11, 18; 7:19; 10:23; 1Pe 1:3, 21; 3:15; 1Jn 3:3

Gabriel Marcel said, "**Hope** is for the soul what breathing is for the living organism."

A study of concentration camp survivors found that those prisoners who were able to hold onto their sense of hope ('things are going to get better' or 'we're going to get out of here one day') were much more likely to survive. Hope then is not optional but for these prisoners proved to be a matter of life and death.

Vincent writes that **hope** "in classical Greek, has the general signification of expectancy, relating to evil as well as to good. Thus Plato speaks of living in evil hope ("Republic," i., 330); i.e., in the apprehension of evil; and Thucydides, of the hope of evils to come; i.e., the expectation or apprehension. In the New Testament the word always relates to a future good. (Vincent, M. R. Word Studies in the New Testament Vol. 1)

Seneca, Rome's leading intellectual figure, tutor of the depraved emperor Nero (who forced Seneca to commit suicide!) and contemporary of Paul tragically defined **hope** as "an uncertain good", the antithesis of Biblical **hope**! What a difference the new birth

in Christ makes in one's perspective.

The cynical editor H. L. Mencken also inaccurately defined **hope** as "a pathological belief in the occurrence of the impossible." His cynical definition does not even agree with the secular Webster's Collegiate dictionary which defines "**Hope**" much like the NT declaring that hope means "to cherish a desire with anticipation, desire with expectation of obtainment, expect with confidence."

Biblical **hope** is not "finger crossing", but is alive and certain because of the **resurrection of Jesus Christ** from the dead. Life without Christ is a hopeless end whereas life in Christ is an endless hope.

The book of Hebrews defines **hope** as that which gives "full assurance" (He 6:11-note). Thus we can have strong confidence that God is going to do good to us in future. The opposite of hope is **despair**, (hopelessness; a hopeless state; a destitution of hope or expectation) which is all that those without Christ as Savior can know, for Paul defines hope as "Christ Jesus, Who is our Hope" (1Ti 1:1). Thus genuine Biblical hope is not a concept but a Person, Christ Jesus!

Joy (5479) (**chara** from **chairo** = to rejoice) describes an attitude which is cheerful and glad. The world defines joy as the emotion evoked by well-being, success, or good fortune or by the prospect of possessing what one desires. The Bible defines joy as a gift of God, a fruit of His Spirit, which is independent of circumstances.

MacArthur - A great part of heaven's bliss for the redeemed will be the joyful presence of those whom they have been used to reach. The believer's hope of such reward is in part what Jesus in His parable of the unjust steward alluded to: "Make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings" (Luke 16:9). Even as the unbelieving steward or manager used his master's resources to purchase earthly friends, Christ said believers should use the resources their Master provides to bring people to salvation. Whether or not believers know those people now as friends, they will know them in glory as friends forever and as sources of eternal joy. The time to receive in full the promised joys is still in the future, at Christ's return. ([MacArthur, John: 1 & 2 Thessalonians. Moody Press](#))

The **Baker Encyclopedia** adds that **joy** is a...

Positive human condition that can be either feeling or action. The Bible uses joy in both senses. Joy is a feeling called forth by well-being, success, or good fortune. A person automatically experiences it because of certain favorable circumstances. It cannot be commanded. The shepherd experienced joy when he found his lost sheep (Mt 18:13). The multitude felt it when Jesus healed a Jewish woman whom Satan had bound for 18 years (Lk 13:17). The disciples returned to Jerusalem rejoicing after Jesus' ascension (Lk 24:52). Joy was also the feeling of the church at Antioch when its members heard the Jerusalem Council's decision that they did not have to be circumcised and keep the Law (Acts 15:31). Paul mentioned his joy in hearing about the obedience of the Roman Christians (Ro 16:9-note). Ps 137:3 ([Spurgeon's Note](#)) shows that the emotion cannot be commanded. The Jews' captors wanted them to sing in the land of their exile, something they were unable to do. Faraway Jerusalem was their chief joy (Ps 137:6 - [Spurgeon's Note](#)).

There is a joy that Scripture commands. That joy is action that can be engaged in regardless of how the person feels. Proverbs 5:18 tells the reader to rejoice in the wife of his youth, without reference to what she may be like. Christ instructed his disciples to rejoice when they were persecuted, reviled, and slandered (Mt 5:11, 12-notes). The apostle Paul commanded continuous rejoicing (Php 4:4-note; 1Th 5:16-note). ([Elwell, W. A., & Beitzel, B. J. Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House](#)) (See also article on [Joy](#) in [Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#))

Paul recorded a similar description of his beloved brethren of Philippi...

Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my **joy** and **crown**, so stand firm in the Lord, my beloved. (see **note** Philippians 4:1)

Later in this same letter **Paul** asks the Thessalonian saints...

For what thanks can we render to God for you in return for all the joy with which we rejoice before our God on your account, as we night and day keep praying most earnestly that we may see your face, and may complete what is lacking in your faith? (see **notes** 1Thessalonians 3:9; 3:10)

Crown (4735)(**stephanos** from **stepho** = to encircle, twine or wreath) was a wreath or garland given as prize to victors in public games and thus a symbol of honor. In Classical Greek the stephanos was used of the kingly crown but of the crown of victory in games, of civic worth, military valor, nuptial joy, festival gladness. Woven of oak, ivy, myrtle, olive leaves or flowers. Used as a wreath or garland.

Paul did not say that he would receive a **crown**, though this is suggested. He said that the saints themselves would be his crown

when he met them at the Judgment Seat.

In the first use of **stephanos** in the NT, **Matthew** says that

after weaving a **crown** (stephanos) **of thorns**, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they kneeled down before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews! (Mt 27:29)

Earlier Paul had used the verb form (**stephanoo**) reminding Timothy that

if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not **receive the victor's crown** unless he competes according to the rules. (2Ti 2:5NIVnote)

The **stephanos** was the only prize ancient Olympic athletes received and thus it was cherished as a great treasure. How much more should we as believers "run with endurance the race that is set before" (He 12:1-note) us, knowing that the Olympic athletes

do it to receive a perishable **wreath** (stephanos) but we an imperishable." (1Co 9:25-note)

According to Barclay **stephanos** had many associations in the ancient world including as already mentioned

(a) the **victor's crown** in the games. Smyrna had annual games which were famous all over Asia. As in the Olympic Games, the reward of the victorious athlete was the laurel crown. The Christian can win the crown of victory in the contest of life.

(b) When a man had **faithfully performed the work of a magistrate**, at the end of his term of office he was granted a crown. He who throughout life faithfully serves Christ and his fellow-men will receive his crown.

(c) The heathen world was in the habit of wearing crowns, chaplets of flowers, at banquets. At the end of the day, if the Christian is loyal, he will have the joy of sitting as a guest at the banquet of God.

(d) The heathen worshippers were in the habit of wearing crowns when they approached the temples of their gods. At the end of the day, if he has been faithful, the Christian will have the joy of entering into the nearer presence of God.

(e) Some scholars have seen in this crown a reference to the halo or the nimbus which is round the head of divine beings in pictures. If that is so, it means that the Christian, if he is faithful, will be crowned with the life which belongs to God himself. ([Barclay, W: The Daily Study Bible Series. The Westminster Press](#))

As John said: "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (1Jn 3:2-note). In this life it may be that the Christian's loyalty will bring him a crown of thorns, but in the life to come it will surely bring him the crown of righteousness.

Stephanos of course gives us the English name Stephen, the first NT martyr, "the crowned one". How fitting that the "**crown**" of the laurel wreath was awarded to the one who finished a race. So the crown is to the finisher, 'Stephen' who watched the heavens open (Acts 7:55-56) as his life leaves and says "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." (Acts 7:59) That is a man who "**loved His appearing**"!

The kingly crown by contrast is **diadema**, (diadem) which is only associated with the Lord, for example describing the appearance of the Lord Jesus returning as the King of kings upon Whose "head are many **diadems**" (Rev 19:12-note), His return marking the final defeat of the antichrist at the end of the **Great Tribulation**.

Scripture also mentions a

crown of life for "a man who perseveres under trial" (Jas 1:12-note)

the unfading crown of glory (1Pe 5:4-note) for those who "shepherd the flock of God" (1Pe 5:2-note),

our **hope or joy or crown of exultation** referring to believers whose life we have had a role (cf Php 4:1-note), and

a **wreath** (crown)... **imperishable** for those who run in the Christian race and are not disqualified (1Co 9:24-note, 1Co 9:25-note, 1Co 9:26-note, 1Co 9:27-note)

The crown of righteousness is a phrase which in the present context is most likely the Greek construction referred to as genitive of apposition, the crown that consists in righteousness and is also the reward for righteousness.

As we daily present our "members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification" (Ro 6:19-note) we are working "out (our salvation)" (Php 2:12-note) and this process equates with sanctification or experiential righteousness. At the completion of our life Christ's righteousness will be perfected in us. To say it another way, when death ends the process of sanctification and we enter glorification, the experiential righteousness is consummated in perfect positional righteousness. When we have finished our course,

we will receive the unfading crown of righteousness from the Lord's Himself, the righteous Judge. So here the crown Paul is referring to is the righteousness of the Redeemer granted in full perfection to the glorified believer, for as John writes "when He appears, we shall be like Him." (1Jn 3:2-note), glorified and eternally clothed in His perfect righteousness.

Exultation ([2746](#))(**kauchesis**) refers to the act of boasting about something, of glorying, or showing pride. **Kauchesis** denotes the exuberant expression of joyful feelings, and sometimes is translated **boasting** in the righteous sense. Metonymically, it can refer to the matter or cause for glorying or boasting. It is the act of taking pride in something.

Ellicott comments that the Thessalonians were "a **chaplet** of victory of which Paul might justly make his boast in the day of the Lord."

McGee sums up this last section by asking "is anyone going to be in heaven who will come up to you and thank you for having a part in giving out the Word of God? Have you given your support to missions? If you have, someone you have never known, someone from the other side of the earth, may come up to you and thank you for your support of missions. He will thank you for being interested in getting out the Word of God because the Word reached him and enabled him to be saved. That, my friend, is going to be part of the reward that we will get in heaven. We need to recognize that. It is a wonderful hope to look forward to the time when Christ Jesus takes the church out of this world. It is even more joyous to know that someone who trusted Christ because of your witness will go along with you to meet the Lord! ([McGee, J V: Thru the Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

A GLOBAL INVESTMENT - Pastor Michael Andrus says "Now this investing can be done either indirectly or directly. Whenever you give money to a Bible-believing local church where the Gospel is preached, you are indirectly using your money to make eternal friends, even if you never get to know them personally. Whenever you give to a parachurch organization that has as one of its basic goals the winning of lost people to Christ, you are indirectly using your money to make eternal friends. Whenever you give to an effective missionary, whether at home or abroad, you are using your money to make friends for God. **I am not a wealthy man by most standards, but I do have a global investment portfolio.** When I get to heaven, I expect to be greeted by some French believers. I have never met them, but my wife and I invested monthly for twelve years in the ministry of Jim and Diane Brower, our best friends in college, while they were missionaries in the northern suburbs of Paris. I also have investments in southern Mexico, in Venezuela, and in Tatarstan, where other missionaries we have supported work in God's vineyard. I have investments in Vermont and Huntington, Utah and Portland and Fort Myers, FL where men I have mentored are carrying on effective ministries. Some of my investments are in a mutual fund, called the First Free Missions budget. It allows me to have a small investment everywhere our church has missionaries and outreach. Another mutual fund is Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. As I give to that great seminary, which I do every year, I am investing in every local church, every Bible School, and every mission where it's graduates eventually end up serving!" ([Sermon on Luke 16:1-9 Money-Godly Ways of Giving It: A Bad Man's Good Example](#))

Related Resource:

YOUR PRAYERS ARE SAFELY STORED IN A BOWL - Revelation 5:8+ which describes "golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints." Now observe carefully that the next verse (Rev 5:9+) describes "men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation." Can you not see the relationship between **supplications** in verse 8 and **saved souls** in verse 9? Clearly and mysteriously, our prayers for hidden people groups (see [Ralph Winter in 1980](#) when there were 16000 hidden people groups) today will be effective in bringing souls to eternal salvation. Would you not consider storing up for yourself treasure in heaven daily for the rest of your life (Mt 6:20+)? Can I encourage you to take a step of faith and believe that God will hear your prayers for hidden people groups and that one day in eternity you will meet those for whom you have been praying day after day, year after year? And here is an easy way to pray for the hidden people groups daily - bookmark [Joshua Project](#) or download the APP from Joshua Project and select **daily notifications** and you will receive a daily text reminder with the name of the hidden people group for that day. (see also [Global Prayer Digest](#)) Now even if I forget to read the full entry for the people group of the day, the APP allows me to never miss a day praying for lost souls who have never heard the Name of Jesus (Acts 4:12+) and His saving Gospel (Ro 1:16+). This is your "[once in a lifetime opportunity!](#)" Praying for souls is something we can only do now on earth and is an exciting, rewarding way to redeem the time on earth for heaven! Indeed, if you (energized by the Spirit) pray now, your time in time eternal will be marvelously impacted by the presence of those you took time to pray for in time temporal! Don't procrastinate! Don't delay! [Bookmark the site](#) and/or download the Joshua Project APP today. If Paul were speaking to us today he might say something like this "So then, **while we have opportunity**, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith." (Gal 6:10+) Today is your "opportunity of a lifetime!" May our Father in Heaven grant you amazing grace by His Spirit to be energized and motivated to intercede for peoples you have never seen but will one day see in the presence of the Lamb Who Alone is Worthy (1 Th 2:19-20+). Amen.

Faith asks no signal from the skies,
To show that prayers accepted rise,
Our Priest is in his holy place,
And answers from the throne of grace.

"Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. (Daniel 12:3+)

See the full article - [Praying for People from Every Tribe, Tongue, People and Nation](#)

Coming (3952)(**parousia** [word study] is a combination of two Greek words **para** = with + **ousia** = being (the participial form of the verb **eimi** = to be) and literally means a "**being beside**" or a **presence**.

Parousia speaks of the personal presence of a person. In addition it is used to speak of the coming of a person and his arrival or advent. In Paul's day **parousia** was common in the Hellenistic world for the formal visits of royalty. It became a technical term for the Second Coming of Christ and is so used eighteen times in the New Testament and seven of these are in the Thessalonian epistles.

The word **parousia** has no English equivalent and thus is often transliterated in writings and discussion.

Parousia denotes both an arrival and a consequent presence with. **Parousia** thus combines the thought of an arrival, advent or the coming of a person to a place with that of their presence there subsequently until a certain event transpires.

In an ancient Greek letter a lady speaks of the necessity of her **parousia** in a place in order to attend to matters relating to her property there. In another secular Greek writing we find **parousia** used to refer to the coming of a king or other noted official. In the visit of the ruler was accompanied by magnificent ceremonies, delicacies to eat, gifts of money, street improvements, new buildings, addressing of complaints and requests! Sounds like the coming of the King to take His throne in the 1000 year Millennial or Messianic Kingdom!

As Jesus sat with Peter and James and John and Andrew, "on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your **coming**, (parousia) and of the end of the age?" (Mt 24:3+)

This passage begins what is commonly referred to as the "Olivet Discourse" (Click for a discussion on Mt 24 entitled "When Jesus Returns to the Earth: Where Will the Church Be?". See in depth commentary on Mt 24:15ff+)

Parousia refers to the Second Coming of the Lord, but be aware that the Second Coming is not just a single event taking place at a particular time. Rather the Second Coming is composed of a series of events. One can understand which event is being referred to only by a careful examination of the [context](#) ("[Context is king](#)" in interpretation in Inductive Bible Study!)

In sum, the period referred to as the **Parousia** (coming) of Christ has a beginning, a course and a final conclusion. Although there is not uniform agreement, most conservative evangelical scholars would agree that the **Parousia** of Jesus Christ begins with the Rapture, when He comes for His saints, as mentioned discussed by Paul in (1Th 4:16-note). (For more on His coming see "[The Comfort of His Coming 4:13-18](#)")

This first phase is to be followed by the period of His presence with the saints when, having come to the air for them, and received them to Himself, He will take them to the place prepared for them, the Father's "House," (cf Jn 14:2).

Related Resources:

- Table comparing Rapture vs Second Coming
- [What is the difference between the Rapture and the Second Coming?](#)
- [What is the \(2nd\) Second Coming of Jesus Christ?](#)
- [Will the generation that saw Israel re-formed as a nation still be alive for the Second Coming?](#)
- [Is it possible to know when Jesus is coming back?](#)
- [Does the Old Testament truly predict a second advent of the Messiah?](#)

At the end of the second half of **Daniel's Seventieth Week** (the last 3.5 year period being referred to as the "**Great Tribulation**") Matthew records that

"then the sign (the sign is not mystical but is Christ coming on the clouds) of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other." (Mt 24:30-31)

At that time Christ will come with His saints in manifest glory and will the overthrow of His foes and establish His kingdom on earth. (unless you do not believe the 1000 years is a literal period of time). (Click [Chart summary of Daniel's Seventieth Week](#)) (Click [comparison of Day of the Lord, Day of Christ](#))

The HOPE of Christ's 2nd coming is a ..

- **Living hope** (1Pe 1:3-note)
- **Blessed hope** (2Ti 2:13-note)
- **Joyful hope** (1Th 2:19-note)
- **Comforting hope** (1Th 4:13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18-see notes 1Th 4:13;14; 15; 16; 17;18)
- **Hope of glory** (Col 1:27-note)
- **Anchoring hope** (He 6:19- note)
- **Purifying hope** (1Jn 3:3-note)

A B Simpson writes that "**THE LORD'S COMING IS A MOTIVE TO FAITHFUL MINISTRY** - "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" (1Thes. 2:19.) Here the Apostle bears witness that the Lord's coming was a motive in his own ministry and the inspiring hope of his own loving service for the souls of men. As he tells us elsewhere, he expects to present his beloved people to the heavenly Bridegroom as a delightful trust, and to find in their joy his joy and crown. Our service for Christ is to receive both wages and fruit. The wages are paid now, but the fruit we shall share with Him. To the faithful elders Peter says in this connection, "When the chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that does not fade away." (1Pe 5:4-note) And a still more ancient promise declared that "they who turn many to righteousness [shall shine] as the stars forever and ever." (Daniel 12:3+) There is one sense in which the souls we win for Christ shall be eternally linked with our happiness and reward, and be as jewels in our crowns of rejoicing. Are there any who are reading these lines who will wear a starless crown? Have you been accumulating blessings only for yourself, and will it be your sad record, as a man once cabled across the sea to his friends at home after an awful shipwreck in which his family had all perished by his side, "Saved alone"? "Your heaven," Rutherford used to write, "will be two heavens for me; your salvation will be two salvations to me." (A. B. Simpson. Christ in the Bible - Thessalonians)

Our Daily Bread - THAT'S MY PAY! - A missionary was once asked about his salary. The inquirer knew it couldn't be much, and he wanted to know why anyone would give so generously of himself to help total strangers, yet be paid so little. The missionary pulled out a letter and read these words: "If it weren't for you, I wouldn't know Jesus Christ as my Savior. Every morning I kneel in prayer, thanking God for everything you've done for me."

"That's my pay!" exclaimed the dedicated servant of the Lord.

The apostle Paul must have had something similar in mind when he wrote to the believers in Thessalonica. Addressing himself to those he had brought to the Savior, he said, "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you?"(1Th. 2:19).

In a day when there is so much emphasis on acquiring material wealth, how refreshing it is to hear of Christians whose greatest reward is to see people accept Christ and grow in spiritual maturity.

Are you making it a practice to share the gospel with others? If you are, you'll be regarded with the best pay of all. You'll enjoy thrilling satisfaction here on earth, and you can look forward to even greater reward in heaven! -- Richard W. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

God does not pay as others pay,
In goods that perish and decay;
But this is sure, let come what may,
Who does God's work will get God's pay.-- Anon.

Work for the Lord --the retirement plan is out of this world.

F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily - The tender heart of the apostle suffered keenly in his enforced absence from these beloved converts. He had cherished them as a nurse her children; he would have gladly imparted to them his own soul. Not once nor twice he had sought to see them again, but had been hindered by malign spiritual forces that were very real to him. He found comfort, however, in the thought that, at the Lord's coming, they and he would be re-united, and that they would be his joy, as now they were

his hope. Now they lit his hope to an intenser passion; then they would intensify his joy to a more exquisite fullness.

But there is a further thought. The souls whom he had won for Jesus were to constitute his crown. It was as though they would be woven into a wreath like that given to the ancient athlete, and placed on his brow as he emerged from the terrific conflict of his life — not to be worn there, but cast forthwith at the feet of his Lord. What an incentive was this! Each soul plucked from the enemy would be another jewel for the Master's crown, and herein a fresh source of heavenly blessedness to himself.

I remember Mr. Spurgeon telling of an old Christian woman in his almshouses, who persisted in saying loving thoughts about her beloved pastor to his face, at which he greatly demurred. He feared that she was making more of him than of Christ. But she said sweetly, "It is written in the Song, 'Thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit two hundred'; so, dear pastor, you must have your two hundred." Yes, it will be so; we shall partake with Jesus of the fish that we have caught; we shall have fellowship in his exceeding joy over the saved.

The renowned 19th-century English preacher C. H. Spurgeon told this story about King Cyrus, the man who conquered Babylon and freed the Jews from captivity: A visitor who was admiring Cyrus' gardens said it gave him much pleasure. "Ah," said Cyrus, "but you have not so much pleasure in this garden as I have, for I have planted every tree in it myself."

Spurgeon then commented, "One reason some saints will have a greater fullness of heaven than others will be that they did more for heaven than others. By God's grace they were enabled to bring more souls there."

Those words should cause all of us who know the Lord to do some serious thinking.

How many people will be in heaven because of us?

Our desire should be that when we reach our eternal home, some will say to us, "I'm so thankful for you. It was your testimony, your life, your invitation to accept Christ that accounts for my being here today." The apostle Paul anticipated the joy in heaven of seeing people who were there as a result of his ministry (1 Th 2:19, 20). Yes, heaven's joys will be the fullest for those who have helped lead others to Christ. So do all you can to bring to Jesus those who are lost in sin. That's how you can lay up pleasures in heaven! - R W De Haan, ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

1Thessalonians 2:20 For you are our **glory** and **joy** ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [humeis gar este \(2PPAI\) e doxa hemon kai e chara.](#)

Amplified: For you are [indeed] our glory and our joy! ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: For you are our pride and joy. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: Yes, you are indeed our pride and joy! ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: For as for you, you are our glory and joy.

Young's Literal: for ye are our glory and joy.

FOR YOU ARE OUR GLORY AND JOY: **humeis gar este (2PPAI) e doxa hemon kai e chara**

- Proverbs 17:6; 1 Cor 11:7
- [1 Thessalonians 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

For ([gar](#)) is a term of explanation. What is Paul explaining?

Are ([2075](#)) ([eimi](#)) is in the **present tense** which means that the believers at Thessalonica continually were a source of glory and joy to Paul. Their existence in heaven would also be an eternal source of **glory and joy** to Paul, Silvanus and Timothy! **Who will be in heaven that will be your eternal source of glory and joy?**

Paul helps us understand the meaning of the Thessalonians saints as his (and Silas and Timothy's) **glory** in a parallel passage writing that his desire for the saints at Philippi was that they be found...

holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may have cause to **glory** because I did not run in vain

nor toil in vain. (Php 2:16, 17-notes)

Paul as a spiritual father felt an ever present responsibility not only to see souls saved but also to present those saved complete or fully mature in Christ...

And we proclaim Him (Christ is believers, the hope of glory), admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man **complete in Christ** (idea of maturing in Christ, no longer a spiritual babe but one who has grown into a spiritual "adult"). And for this purpose also I labor (toiling to the point of being weary, worn out, exhausted, even faint), striving (agonizomai - Continually contending, fighting, wrestling, straining every nerve to the uttermost to reach the goal) according to His power, which mightily works (continually) within me. (Col 1:28, 29-See **notes** Col 1:28; 29).

Comment: Spiritual maturity should be the goal of all preaching, warning, and teaching and not to fill seats and entertain the masses.

Joy (5479)(chara from **chaïro** = to rejoice) describes an attitude which is cheerful and glad. It is a happiness not based so much on the world's barometer of happiness (what happens determines if we are happy) but based upon the unchanging promises of God and the eternal spiritual realities which Paul knows are true in the lives of the Thessalonians because he knows their faith is genuine. Joy includes a sense of well being, especially when one knows that all is well between himself or herself and the Lord. In the final analysis although joy is something believers experience, it is ultimately a gift from God. Paul writes that...

the fruit of the Spirit is love, **joy**, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-note, Ga 5:23-note).

How is your **joy** quotient? Up? Down? If down, what has quenched the Spirit's fruitfulness in your life? Is there a sin that needs to be confessed and repented? Is there a brother or sister who you need to go to and make amends? Is there a root of bitterness springing up within because someone close has treated you unfairly? Seek first His kingdom (and the King) and His righteousness (right before Him and before men, not duplicitous or hypocritical) and all you need will be added. God's greatest desire for His children is their joy like Paul expresses and He is able to give that joy sometimes in the relationships we have with other believers as in the present scenario.

Chara - 59x in 57v in NAS - greatly(1), joy(54), joyful(1), joyfully(1), joyously(1), rejoicing(1).

Matt 2:10; 13:20, 44; 25:21, 23; 28:8; Mark 4:16; Luke 1:14; 2:10; 8:13; 10:17; 15:7, 10; 24:41, 52; John 3:29; 15:11; 16:20ff, 24; 17:13; Acts 8:8; 12:14; 13:52; 15:3; Rom 14:17; 15:13, 32; 2 Cor 1:24; 2:3; 7:4, 13; 8:2; Gal 5:22; Phil 1:4, 25; 2:2, 29; 4:1; Col 1:11; 1 Thess 1:6; 2:19f; 3:9; 2 Tim 1:4; Philemon 1:7; Heb 10:34; 12:2, 11; 13:17; Jas 1:2; 4:9; 1 Pet 1:8; 1 John 1:4; 2 John 1:12; 3 John 1:4.

Wiersbe summarizes this chapter writing that "When the Christians at Thessalonica read this letter, it must have encouraged them tremendously. They were going through intense persecution and suffering, and perhaps some of them were tempted to give up. "Don't give up!" Paul encouraged them. "Lay hold of the spiritual resources you have in Jesus Christ. You have the Word of God within you, the people of God around you, and the glory of God before you. There is no need to give up." ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#))

YOUR PRAYERS ARE SAFELY STORED IN A BOWL - Revelation 5:8+ which describes "golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints." Now observe carefully that the next verse (Rev 5:9+) describes "men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation." Can you not see the relationship between **supplications** in verse 8 and **saved souls** in verse 9? Clearly and mysteriously, our prayers for hidden people groups (see [Ralph Winter in 1980](#) when there were 16000 hidden people groups) today will be effective in bringing souls to eternal salvation. Would you not consider storing up for yourself treasure in heaven daily for the rest of your life (Mt 6:20+)? Can I encourage you to take a step of faith and believe that God will hear your prayers for hidden people groups and that one day in eternity you will meet those for whom you have been praying day after day, year after year? And here is an easy way to pray for the hidden people groups daily - bookmark [Joshua Project](#) or download the APP from Joshua Project and select **daily notifications** and you will receive a daily text reminder with the name of the hidden people group for that day. Now even if I forget to read the full entry for the people group of the day, the APP allows me to never miss a day praying for lost souls who have never heard the Name of Jesus (Acts 4:12+) and His saving Gospel (Ro 1:16+). This is your "[once in a lifetime opportunity!](#)" Praying for souls is something we can only do now on earth and is an exciting, rewarding way to redeem the time on earth for heaven! Indeed, if you (energized by the Spirit) pray now, your time in time eternal will be marvelously impacted by the presence of those you took time to pray for in time temporal! Don't procrastinate! Don't delay! [Bookmark the site](#) and/or download the Joshua Project APP today. If Paul were speaking to us today he might say something like this "So then, **while we have opportunity**, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith." (Gal 6:10) Today is your "opportunity of a lifetime!" May our Father in Heaven grant you amazing grace by His Spirit to be energized and motivated to

intercede for peoples you have never seen but will one day see in the presence of the Lamb Who Alone is Worthy (1 Th 2:19-20+).
Amen.

Faith asks no signal from the skies,
To show that prayers accepted rise,
Our Priest is in his holy place,
And answers from the throne of grace.