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| Psalm 13 2 Thess 2:13-17 | There is always Hope | Pinelands – 9am – 23/07/2023Thornton – 10:30am – 23/07/2023 |

Thessalonica was a prominent port city in it’s day…

 A trading hub in it’s time

The **Church at Thessalonica…** was a young church…

surrounded by the context of ***Paganism…***

they stood against bitter ***Persecution and Struggles***

In both of Paul’s letters, we read references to…

Persecutions and Tribulations they suffered

Also Struggled in their understanding of New Testament Theology

BUT… More appropriately both letters contain elements of…

encouragement around the promises of God.

**READ… 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17… *(Note these verses)***

***May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and in his grace gave us unfailing courage and a firm hope, encourage you and strengthen you to always do and say what is good.***

We are not sure of the specific circumstances…

under which Paul wrote this passage,

**BUT…** looking at **1+2 Thessalonians…**

We see there is a great need for…

***Comfort / Hope / Unfailing Courage.***

This is just as applicable to us.

**There is a ditty that reads…**

***For there are no eyes that have not wept,***

***nor will not weep.***

***No breath that has not sighed,***

***nor will not sigh.***

***No hearts that have not bled,***

***nor will not bleed.***

We are **ALL** in need of… ***Courage / Encouragement / Hope***

We look at the world around us…

 Mass killings and Shootings

 Truck being hijacked and set alight

 Rising Interest Rates

 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Anxiety

 Gas Explosions in Joburg

We are **ALL** in need of… ***Courage / Encouragement / Hope***

**Paul’s first note of *Encouragement…*** (In those verses)

 **The Recognition of the *Divinity of Jesus Christ.***

**Vs 16… *“our Lord Jesus Christ himself”***

**We all know that…**

**BUT…** What is soo remarkable about his affirmation is…

that **JESUS** is mentioned ***FIRST…***

mentioned before God our Father.

 Jesus is given prime position…

 With His ultimate title…

 **“Lord Jesus Christ”**

Elsewhere in Scripture…

 Whenever Paul mentions Jesus and God the Father…

 Jesus always comes second.

**In the midst of…** **THESSALONIAN TURMOIL…**

Paul points **FIRST to CHRIST.**

 Christ who shares the Throne of God.

In Paul’s theology…

 ***“we come to the Father… THROUGH Jesus the Son”***

**Amidst** our ***Turmoil and Tribulation…***

 **PAUL…** Points us ***FIRST*** to **Christ**

 **IS CHRIST…** our first point of call?

We need to ask ourselves…

**Do you believe Jesus to be who he says he is?**

**Do you believe Jesus to be Truly Divine?**

There are only ***TWO OPTIONS:***

**EITHER…** Jesus was a **good man** who died and…

lies in an unknown grave,

ignorant of all that is going on here,

and the notion that He can help is ***a delusion and a dream…***

**OR ELSE…** He is the **ever-living Divine Christ,**

to whom we poor men and women can

speak with the certainty that He hears us, and who wields the energy of Deity, and works the same works as the Father, to bless the souls that trust Him!

**You can’t have it both ways…**

Jesus is either ***DEITY*** *or* ***DELUSION.***

**Paul then *REMINDS US…***

 ***“Jesus loved us and in his grace gave us unfailing***

 ***Courage and a firm hope.”***

**LOVE…** always finds its voice in ***GIVING.***

**Love** **is nothing** unless it is expressed.

**Love** is **the infinite desire to…** give and be given,

**and** **its language is always** a **GIFT.**

**Gift of…** *Time, Resources, Skills, Ability, Ears (listening)*

According to **Paul,** **there is ONE EVENT…**

in which Christ’s ***DIVINE LOVE*** is Manifested…

in which Christ’s ***DIVINE LOVE*** is Demonstrated

**CHRIST ON CALVARY.**

Of all the Gifts God gives us…

 **There is none** greater, more eternal,

 More real, more powerful,

***THAN…*** **JESUS CHRIST ON CALVARY.**

Christ is our **HOPE**…

and the ultimate gift through whom everlasting

***encouragement and consolation***

is **given to us ALL.**

Then **Paul** describes **HOPE** as ***“a FIRM hope through grace”.***

In many ways…

We have belittled **HOPE**  by partnering it with **FEAR**

**BUT** the ***HOPE*** Paul speaks of…

 Was born on the CROSS.

 If Christ could go through all of that… ***For US.***

 And He promises… to be with us…

 To never leave us…

**THEN…** We have the **FIRM HOPE…**

 We can get through anything…

 **WITH JESUS *who is with us.***

**TO SUM UP SO FAR…**

 The Church in **Thessalonica** is struggling…

 *Persecution and Turbulent times.*

**Paul** writes to them…

 Reminding them of…

 Who Jesus is… ***The CHRIST…***

 The ***SON of God.***

 LOVE of Jesus… expressed on the ***CROSS***

 HOPE is found… **in The CHRIST**

That is what **PAUL** writes to **US…**

**BUT… *HERE IS THE CHALLENGE…***

**As much as we…** Have Christ and His Cross…

 Have ***HOPE and FAITH…***

 Are ***Encouraged*** and ***LOVED…***

**We need to be…** **HOPE GIVERS…**

 ***“to always do and say what is good.” (vs 17)***

**If we BELIEVE** all that we have said…

 We need to… Pass that on

 ***“to always DO and SAY what is good.”***

**Two Verses come to mind…**

**Colossians 3:23…**

***“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as***

 ***though you were working for the Lord and not for***

 ***people.”***

 ***…Expand***

**Proverbs 18:21…**

***“What you say can preserve life or destroy it;***

 ***so you must accept the consequences of your words.”***

 ***…Expand***

**We Need To… BE… HOPE and LIFE… GIVERS…**

 **…In all we DO and SAY !!**

**Psalm 13 A Prayer for Help**

How much longer will you forget me, Lord? Forever?

How much longer will you hide yourself from me?

How long must I endure trouble?

How long will sorrow fill my heart day and night?

How long will my enemies triumph over me?

Look at me, O Lord my God, and answer me.

Restore my strength; don't let me die.

Don't let my enemies say, “We have defeated him.”

Don't let them gloat over my downfall.

I rely on your constant love;

I will be glad, because you will rescue me.

I will sing to you, O Lord,

because you have been good to me.

**2 Thessalonians 2:13-17 You Are Chosen for Salvation**

We must thank God at all times for you, friends, you whom the Lord loves. For God chose you as the first to be saved by the Spirit's power to make you his holy people and by your faith in the truth. God called you to this through the Good News we preached to you; he called you to possess your share of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, our friends, stand firm and hold on to those truths which we taught you, both in our preaching and in our letter.

**May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and in his grace gave us unfailing courage and a firm hope, encourage you and strengthen you to always do and say what is good.**