



1 Thessalonians:

A Life of Faith

Session 2: Faith, Hope and Love

By Mary Kane

1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,



To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:



Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.



2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers,

3 remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father,

4 knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God.

5 For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

6 And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit,

7 so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe.

8 For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.

9 For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,

10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.



Welcome back for Session 2 of *A Life of Faith*. Please take a moment to pray and ask God to forgive you of any sin and open your heart to His Holy Word. Please read 1 Thessalonians 1. When you've finished reading, sign your initials on the line: _____.

Go back and skim the chapter and highlight any words or phrases that are meaningful to you. Write any thoughts in the margin.

Please read verses 2 and 3 again.

What three things did Paul mention in prayer to God about the Thessalonians?

On page one, please underline in the text the trio of phrases you listed above. We are going to spend a little time considering the "work of faith, the labor of love, and the patience of hope" of the believers of Thessalonica.

Why are the works of God "works of faith"?

They are "works of faith" because left to our own resources, we will never accomplish what God has called us to do. We step out to accomplish His work realizing our deficiencies, but acknowledging His sufficiency.

The Greek word for "work" in this verse "ergon," is very rich with meaning. It means "business, employment, any product accomplished by hand, art, industry, or mind; things formed by the hand of man; **something done by the bidding and aid of the Father**; a course of conduct which springs from faith" (emphasis mine). The definition of "ergon" also infers that struggle, toil and hindrances will be a part of the task at hand.

What things has God accomplished through you that you never could have completed by your own power?



According to our definition, why should God rightly receive all the glory for works we have accomplished (see bold part of definition)?

Go back to verse 3 and draw a symbol above the word "work." My symbol is shown below.



"... remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, ..."

"Work" is connected with what fruit of the spirit? As the book of James states, "Faith without works is dead." It is impossible to have one without the other; we cannot have true works of gold, silver, and precious stones without faith. Please read the following scriptures and note what is/was built with the gold, silver and precious stones of faithful works.

1 Chronicles 29:2:

1 Corinthians 3:11-14:

Let's draw an application from one more scripture. Please read 1 Corinthians 6:19.

According to 1 Corinthians 6:19, what is the body?

Not only will our works build the faith of others, but they will also strengthen and "build" our own temples. Go back to the text on page 1, and draw an icon above "faith."

Read verse 3 again, and write the second phrase in the space below.

We discussed "work of faith," now we will consider "labor of love." The Greek word for "labor" used in this verse is "kopos," which means "a beating, to cause one trouble, intense labor united with trouble and toil." So often we equate ease and comfort as a sign of God's approval or sanction on our work. Usually the reverse is true; if we are experiencing trouble and hardship (not caused by sin) it is a sign we are on the right track. Consider the following quote from Thayer's Lexicon concerning the definition of "kopos",

" ... the labor to which love prompts, and which voluntarily assumes and endures trouble and pains for the salvation of another ... "



Have you ever labored in love for another? If so, please describe the situation.

Please finish the following analogy:

Works is to faith, as labor is to _____.

Love is hard work. Real love involves real pain, real hardship, real sacrifice and real toil. As any loved one, parent, aunt, uncle, or married person can testify, love does not happen by accident. Just as faith without works is dead, so love without labor is dead. What was the cost of God's love for us? The blood of Christ. Imagine if God said He loved us, but the work of the cross was left undone. Please go back to page 1 and add a symbols for "labor" and for "love" in verse 3. Mine are shown below.



" ... remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love,

Finally, we turn our attention to the last of our three phrases, "the patience of hope."

Why does hope require patience?

I love the Greek definition of patience—"steadfastness, constancy, endurance; characteristic of a man who is not swerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith and piety by even the greatest trials and sufferings." As a runner, the word "endurance" particularly attracts my attention. I have learned that while endurance is built upon training, and past experiences, it is also a decision of the mind. I decide whether I will give up or continue the race.

Why is "patience of hope" only found in Christ?

With Jesus we can have patience because we have hope, real hope. Not the wishful thinking hope of the world, but real hope that arises from knowing God



is at work in our situations for our good and His glory. We can have hope because with Jesus all things are possible. The blind will see, the lame will leap, and the dead will live again. Amen!

There is blessing to be gained by studying the Greek definition for the word "hope." "Elpis," means the joyful and confident expectation of good. Why can we confidently expect good from every situation? Because God had promised to use all things for our good. (Romans 8:28).

You need not fear the hard situation that seems as if it will never go away, or the trial that feels as if it will destroy you. You have hope in these situations because God is working to bring you good. He knows the plans He has for you; plans to prosper you, not harm you; plans to give you a hope and a future. You have hope because you have the God of Hope. Hold on for your blessing. It is coming.

Think of your challenging situation and fill in the blank below.

I have hope in _____ because God is working in this for my good. I will not give up. I will continue to pray, give thanks and seek God through this hardship.

Please go back to page one, and add your symbols for "patience" and "hope." Finish your study time today by reading and praying through 1 Thessalonians 1.

Thank you for joining me for Bible study.

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