



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

BIBLICAL SERVANTHOOD (Part 2)

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As we continue our study of biblical servanthood from 1 Thessalonians chapter 2, we see the Apostle Paul giving instructions that a servant leader must understand as he minister to any people group.

Biblical Servanthood Demands—A Heart for Those to Whom You Minister; That You Understand the Hindrances and Schemes of Satan; That Ultimately Your Hope is in Heaven.

You understand the:

2. HINDRANCE AND SCHEMES OF SATAN.

Satan is real and his minions are active and fierce. He is NOT all-powerful, nor all-knowing, nor omni-presence; but he does have a third of the once "hosts of heaven" to accomplish his biddings. His goals and strategies are laid out in Scripture.

SATAN'S GOALS¹

- Dethrone God and enthrone himself (Isa. 14:12-16). (I will be. . . I will be. . . I...I...I, emphasis added).
- Degrade (slander) God's character (Job 1:1-11). Again compare the titles or descriptions given him in the Bible: Devil (slanderer), Satan (adversary), and accuser (Rev. 12:10).
- Dominate man and destroy God's purposes with man (Heb. 2:14-16).

SATAN'S STRATEGY

- Degrades and denies God's Word (Gen. 3:1). "Indeed, has God said, ..." and vs. 4 "you surely shall not die!"
- Deposposes and displaces God's plan and provision. He offers his substitutes like asceticism, religionism, ritualism, emotionalism, mysticism,

rationalism, etc., and attacks the people of God in every way he can (Col. 2:1-10, 16-23; Isa. 2:6).

- Delusions of godhood, "you will be as God" (cf. Gen. 3:5; with Isa. 14:14). Seeks to make man think he (man) is the measure and goal of everything.
- Deceives through moral relativity, "knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3).
- Disguises his presence and actions (2 Cor. 11:14).
- Distorts the truth and blessings of God (he is a pervert) (Acts 13:10). He takes that which God has created as good and perverts it through his delusions and by turning man away from the moral absolutes of the Word.

John 8:44 "You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies."

Although Satan is a force to be dealt with, he can never hinder the plan and counsel of God. He must always have divine permission to deal with God's children (Job and Peter).

You must understand the wiles and schemes of Satan.

James 4:7 "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

1 Peter 5:8 "Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

With that in mind there is a future glorious day that the child of God can anticipate. We have an eschatological

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hope. We have a face to face meeting with Jesus Christ at His return. He will take His children to heaven for the marriage of the Lamb, the marriage supper, and to reward them according to each man's work (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelations 19:7-9).

Biblical Servanthood Demands that you fix your gaze toward Eternity.

3. HOPE FROM HEAVEN

Scripture often speaks of eternal life like a victor's crown rewarded to those victorious of an athletic event. Oftentimes 1) the imperishable wreath that celebrates salvation's victory over corruption (1 Cor. 9:25); 2) the righteous wreath that celebrates salvation's victory over unrighteousness (2 Tim. 4:8); 3) the unfading wreath of glory that celebrates salvation's victory over defilement (1 Pet. 5:4); 4) the wreath of life that celebrates salvation's victory over death (James 1:12, Rev. 2:10); and here 5) the wreath of exultation which celebrates salvation's victory over Satan and mankind's persecution of believers.²

TOTAL VICTORY FOR THE BELIEVER WILL OCCUR AT THE COMING OF JESUS CHRIST—THE "PAROUSIA," WHICH MEANS "TO BE IN THE PRESENCE OF." SUCH JOY IT WILL BE WHEN WE SEE HIM. FOR THE SCRIPTURE SAYS, WHEN WE SEE HIM WE WILL BE LIKE HIM.

1 John 3:2 "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is."

Paul, in 1 Thessalonians, turns his readers attention three other times to the return of Jesus Christ (3:13; 4:15; 5:23)

and once indirectly (1:10). Context indicates Paul most likely refers here to Christ's coming for the rapture of the church, whereby they are removed from the earth and in the "face to face" presence of Jesus Christ in heaven.

The "*Parousia*" of the Lord Jesus is a period of time with a commencement, a course, and a conclusion. In some passages the beginning and the arrival are the prominent element. In others, the course, and in others, the conclusion is the prominent element.³ Joy and hope produce an eschatological assurance of a future-sure event that could take place at any moment.

- The **COMMENCEMENT**: 1 Thess. 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1; 1 Co. 15:23; Jas. 5:7,8; 2 Pet. 3:4.
- The **COURSE**: 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; Matt. 24:3, 37, 39, 1 Jn. 2:28.
- The **CONCLUSION**: 2 Thess. 2:8; Matt. 24:27.

1 Timothy 1:1 " Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope, "

Colossians 1:27 "to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. "

In conclusion, Paul encouraged the Thessalonians with the truth that he did love and have a deep concern for them. This was evidenced by his desire to see them, by the supernatural opposition it took to keep him away, and by his view of heaven in which they would be central to his eternal joy. They also were his glory, which is the true honor bestowed on him by God who used him to reach them. The pronoun "you" is in the emphatic position so as to remove any doubt that Paul was identifying his Thessalonian brethren as the source of both his eternal honor and happiness.⁴

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Jesus endured the cross “for the joy that was set before Him” (Heb. 12:2). This “joy” is surely the joy of presenting the church to His Father (Jude 24). Paul endured all kinds of suffering for this same joy. Do we rejoice as we contemplate seeing Jesus one day?

- Are you rejoicing in the midst of life circumstances?
- Are you hoping for the imminent return of Jesus Christ?
- Are you at this present time looking into Scripture to ascertain the mind of Christ, and by looking into His Word, are you being transformed into His image?

2 Corinthians 3:18 "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit."

¹ Adapted from: <http://bible.org/seriespage/commendation-and-thanksgiving-1-thess-213-20>

² MacArthur, J. J. (1997, c1997). *The MacArthur Study Bible* (electronic ed.) (1 Th 2:19). Nashville: Word Pub.

³ C. F. Hogg and W. E. Vine, *The Epistles to the Thessalonians with Notes Exegetical and Expository*, Pickering and Inglis, London, 1914, p. 88

⁴ MacArthur, J. (2002). *1 & 2 Thessalonians* (74). Chicago: Moody Press.