1 Thessalonians - Commentaries by George Vicesimus Wigram

Memorials of the Ministry of G.V. Wigram 1: Volume 1, Coming of the Lord, The

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1 Thess. 1

THE Lord is coming. Yes, that is true. It is the Lord; but I am a son of God, and I wait for God's beloved Son to come from heaven. The very inward life of the believer is formed in connection with the coining of the Lord. The night was dark when these epistles were 'written – but, as in a starlight night, there was a bright shining of the Star in heaven. However dark the night, and however many difficulties there are, we should be able to see that bright Star. These Thessalonians were not fully instructed-as to the coming; their minds were not at peace about those taken to be with the Lord; but Paul does not write as if they were puzzled and perplexed, but brings out the mind of the-Spirit quite simply.

This first epistle was probably the first of all the epistles; and when the Lord thinks of us, what are His first thoughts of us? Of the deep sands of the wilderness? No; He knows there is a certain responsiveness of heart in us to the thought of His coming. His thought is, that we are waiting for Himself from heaven. If He lets them come to their wits' end, it was that He might show them He could meet all their needs, and let in the droppings of His love. He always takes occasion of every difficulty to show forth Himself. If I get near the Lord Jesus Christ, I find that there is in His heart a specialty of thought and affection for a people down here, who are waiting for Him-not for the glory, that is quite another thing. He has everything that He can personally want; but there is a craving in His heart that cannot be satisfied till He shall come to take us home to Himself. And can I think of this, and not want to see Him? Formed for Christ's own individual presence, the heart cannot say, " satisfied," till it gets there.

Notice the place He recognizes them in. Verse 1: " In God the Father;" there is no meaning in this to an unconverted mind. On the earth among men, how can a people be " in God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ"? " Work of faith." There are many works that have the very opposite place in man's mind to what they have in God's. Man takes what would make a very good roofing, and tries to make his foundation of it. Are there no works the natural result of being " in God the Father"?

" Patience of hope of our Lord Jesus Christ " is sweeter and fuller, and I read it so. Has God made you a king and priest? Yes; but you do not look much like it now? No; but His hope does not stop short of the time when you shall be so. It is an immense help to remember that the Lord Jesus never forgets His coming. There is a fixedness of heart in Him to come and fetch the Bride home to the Father's house, and I can have sympathy with Him in that. The morrow of the believer is formed on the yesterday of the believer, and is connected with His to-day. Where does a soul get peace, but by going right inside within the veil where Christ sits? You must see the connection of what Christ did on the cross with the throne of God in heaven, if you are to have a hope that malice not ashamed. The anchorage ground of your soul is in Christ within the veil as the accepted sacrifice... Thence I have brought out the knowledge of my guilt, and of my acceptance before God. Have you brought out nothing else from the presence of God? Not the love that He bears you? Was all the love of Christ spent in proving to you that your acceptance is perfect before God? Oh no; I cannot have been intelligently in the presence of the Lord without knowing not only that I want Him, but that He wants me. The beginning of blessing is in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. We do not get to the other terminus till He has fetched us home, till the journey ends in the blessedness to which it is meant to conduct us. My to-day, whether of fifty years or less, what is it but a constant proof of His love? Himself is my yesterday; Himself my to-day; Himself my to-morrow, my Hope.

Verses 9, 10. One of the marks of the people of God is serving the true God; and another is waiting for His Son from heaven. What are you if you are believers? Are you not channels that God has digged for the rivers of eternal life to flow through? Is it no important question to Him if the water flow through them? What are you if you are not that? Naught.

In the greatness of His eternity the Lord can quietly come down and say, " I am watching you; you are My servant." A poor bed-ridden cripple, whose heart is happy in the Lord Jesus Christ, can bear no noise, no light; perhaps the lip dry, the eye dim. God knows that one, if he has the eternal life, as handing up to the living God his little quota of service by filling the little place He has put him in. How can each serve? That is a question between God and the individual soul. God in saying, " Give Me," knows He is endearing the Christ who must be looked to for grace and power to give; but He does say,

" Give Me." What can the poor sinner give to God? There are cups of cold water to be given.

Verse 10. " Our deliverer from the wrath to come," as showing His competency to settle everything even as you go through the wilderness—the present delivering power of Christ, while it is called to-day, for all the difficulties of His people. I should like this question put to your hearts by the Spirit of God: Does God love me? Has the Lord my name written on His heart? Has He had so to do with me that He has formed me for His presence? He in heaven in His Father's presence; I down here serving Him and waiting for Him? The soul formed on His coming cannot be satisfied without Him. The Lord does know all that passes inside you, whether He is the center round which all that is in your heart is wrapped or not. You cannot have blessing if you have another center than God. What can be sufficient for you but God's center, Christ?