1 Thessalonians - Commentaries by Henry Allan Ironside

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, November 5

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“For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost” —1 Thess. 1:5, 6.

THE faithful preaching of the Word of God, backed by a consecrated life, is bound to bring results. A holy minister of Christ is a tremendously effective weapon in the hand of God. Paul believed the gospel. He knew what it had done in his own life, and he proclaimed it with absolute confidence to others. He never sought simply to amuse or astonish his audiences, but he stood before them in all the holy authority of an ambassador for Christ, representing the high court of Heaven. Consequently, his word was with power. We may well follow his example today and, renouncing all the fripperies and fropperies of the present age of sham, as Carlyle called it, preach the gospel, assured that “it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”

—Mary Bowley.

Daily Sacrifice, September 30

“Our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: but as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts” —1 Thessalonians 2:3, 4.

CONSCIOUS of their own integrity, the early messengers of Christ declared the message in the fear of the Lord, with no corrupt motives, nor selfish desire simply to create a following which would prove profitable to them. Paul emphasizes the importance of reality as to one’s own life before God, if his service is to have any weight with men. To how many professed ministers of Christ might Emerson’s stinging words apply: “What you are speaks so loud I cannot hear what you say”! They who would preach Christ must needs be careful to manifest Christ in their ways; else what they are will belie their message.

—Anon.

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, November 6

“For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worth also in you that believe” —1 Thess. 2:13.

THERE is a science known as Comparative Religions. It has much in it that is worthy of our attention and consideration so long as we do not include Christianity among the “religions” to be compared. All forms of pagan systems have much in common. But the gospel of God is diverse from all of these. They are but the speculations of men’s minds, and often give evidence of Satanic origin. The Christian message is a revelation from heaven. The gospel is an inspired announcement given by God Himself to be proclaimed to all men everywhere, as the only remedy for sin. It proves its divine origin by what it does. It works miraculously in the lives of those who believe it, giving new life, in the energy of the Holy Spirit, and delivering from the power of evil.

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, November 7

“For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy” —1 Thess. 2:19, 20.

THE Thessalonian Christians were the fruit of Paul’s labor in the Lord. He looked forward to the day of manifestation when every one’s works shall be manifested, and he was sure that those whom he had led to Christ would be to him a crown of rejoicing in that day. Every soul we are privileged to bring to the Saviour will shine as a star in our crown when we give an account of our service. “They that turn many to righteousness” shall shine “as the stars forever and ever.” Are we keeping this in view or do we live selfishly, seldom telling others of Christ and so rarely, if ever, winning them for Himself? If saved ourselves we owe the gospel to those still in their sins, for it is the only way out of the darkness in which they live.

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, November 8

“This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication” —1 Thess. 4:3.

THAT which God's Word would impress upon us, above all else, in this connection, is the sinfulness of unchastity in all its forms. We live in the days of a revolting revival of paganism. Men would fain excuse every sort of impurity as "natural," and not to be held in check. Scripture well describes such as behaving like "natural brute beasts" (2 Peter 2:12), and solemnly declares that such "shall receive the reward of unrighteousness." It becomes the Christian to shun every approach to uncleanness, and to remember that "the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body" (1 Cor. 6:13). It has been purchased by the precious blood of Christ and is not to be used selfishly or made the victim of evil appetites and unholy passions.

—H. R. Palmer.

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, November 9

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" —1 Thessalonians 4:16-18.

IN these verses the Holy Spirit tells us what will transpire when the Lord returns for His own, to fulfill the promise made in the upper room, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." It tells of His personal bodily descent from heaven, of the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the rapture of the living who will be caught up without passing through death to meet the Lord in the air. This glorious event may take place at any moment. No prophecy awaits fulfillment ere it can take place. It should be our constant expectation and comfort.

Daily Sacrifice, October 1

"Let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breast-plate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation"
—1 Thessalonians 5:8.

UNLESS we distinguish carefully between salvation by pure grace and service, or discipleship, for which a sure reward is promised, we are likely to become confused when considering such a passage as this. We are not called to fight our way to heaven. But as already bound for that blessed country, we are called to be soldiers in our Lord's army, contending against every unholy thing that would impede our progress or bring dishonor upon our Saviour's name. For all such service we shall be rewarded "in that day," that is, when we stand at the judgment-seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10).

—Mrs. C. H. Morris.

Daily Sacrifice, October 2

"Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you"
—1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

WE are told that whoso offereth praise glorifies God (Psa. 50:23). One of the marks of the wicked is unthankfulness (2 Tim. 3:2). Ingratitude is a sin and reveals the state of a heart estranged from God. In prayer we are invited to come to Him, presenting our petitions, but even as we make our requests known, we are to give thanks for mercies already received (Phil. 4:6). This is emphasized in the above text, which shows that unceasing prayer and constant thanksgiving should ever be characteristic of the believer. In this, as in all else, our blessed Lord sets us an example. When things were moving on to the darkest hours for Him, He could look up to God, His Father, and say, "I thank Thee" (Matt. 11:25), as He submitted Himself in prayer to the will of God in all things.

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