**Sermon Text – 1st Thessalonians 3:12-13**

**06/26/2022**

**∆’d**

**Introduction ~**

Good morning. You may have noted the title of today’s message doesn’t have any words in it. If you’ve studied much math or physics, you probably recognized that I used the Greek letter delta “∆” to indicate change. What we’re talking about today is the change that Jesus brings to each of our lives.

To do this, I thought it might be helpful if we had an eye witness to the changes that came to the lives of those who would be members of the fledgling church in Thessalonica. OK, Jacob, the floor is yours!

Good morning, my name is Jacob, a Jew of the diaspora, living in Thessalonica. I have something to say to you. I can tell you… I’ve seen things. Not in the sense that I’ve had a little too much wine, although that happens occasionally too. But I’ve watched people transform from one person to another… right before my eyes!

It all began on the day that crazy-man, Paul of Tarsus, first came into our city. Bold as brass, he walked into our synagogue. It was clear that he was a Pharisee, maybe even a Rabbi, and we needed one. So, we gave him a chance to speak. Boy was that a mistake! He starts quoting Isaiah and Ezekiel and Jeremiah, goodness, but he seemed to know our Scriptures. What’s more, you would have thought *we* didn’t know them! (Actually, we didn’t know them as well as we should have… it’s hard to find a good Rabbi when you live in a Gentile city!)

Anyway, before you know it he’s drawing parallels between some guy named Jesus and the person described in Isaiah 53! (You should read that, sometime!) Imagine the gall of this guy! Then, Paul claims that this Jesus fellow rose from the dead after he was crucified, and that he had personally seen Him. Paul even convinced a large number of us to become followers of this Jesus! Ridiculous!

Not me! I wasn’t born yesterday, you know. Actually, I wasn’t born last year either, or even within the last couple of hundred years. Well, if I think about it, I was born a couple thousand years ago, but I digress…

I saw right through him, that Paul guy, even though I never could figure out what *he* was getting out of it. Anyway, when it became apparent that most of us weren’t falling for it, he left. But he took a lot of our people with him, and then more and more Gentiles also joined him. We couldn’t let *that* happen, so we stirred up a crowd, and ultimately succeeded in chasing Paul fellow out of our town!

But here’s the weird thing about this... The gathering of people that Paul created, they called themselves an “ecclesia,” that didn’t fade away. In fact, we discovered that no matter how we harassed them, they kept right on ecclesia-ing, gathering. They were studying *our* Scriptures, but with a funny twist to it, and they were always talking about this Jesus guy, and how He fulfilled the prophesies of *our* prophets!

Now, that’s all weird enough, but the people themselves began to change. They began to take care of people who couldn’t take care of themselves. They fed the poor. They rescued orphans. They began to call down blessings from heaven on us when we threw rotten food at them. When we spread lies, they smiled and blessed us in the name of Jesus. Some of them (in a whisper) even healed some sick people.

I’m telling you, those people were *changed*! I knew most of them before Paul came, and they were not nice people. Now, I don’t know what they’re up to, I cannot figure out what their angle is, but they are the nicest, the most loving, people you would ever meet. Disgusting! You simply cannot trust people like that!

Well, consider yourself warned, those people are peculiar!

OK, that was interesting! Now… let’s turn our attention to the Scriptures. Our text today is 1st Thessalonians 3:12-13 ~

12And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we *do* to you, 13so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Context ~**

In the Greek, “you” (υμας)[[2]](#footnote-2) [ŭ măs] is moved to the emphatic position at the start of the sentence.[[3]](#footnote-3) It literally reads, “You but the Lord may make…”[[4]](#footnote-4) This serves to convey that, whether Paul was able to return to them or not, the things Paul is praying for will happen.[[5]](#footnote-5) That is, not that the Thessalonians would make themselves to abound in the Christian virtues, but that God Himself will cause this to happen in them.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Note the emphasis on who will cause this to happen; 1st Thessalonians 3:12 ~

12And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we *do* to you,…[[7]](#footnote-7)

The Lord is going to bring this about. The petition is being offered to a God who is more mysterious and wonderful than we at first fathom; 1 Thessalonians 3:11 ~

11Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you.[[8]](#footnote-8)

The expression (ὁ κύριος) “the Lord” in verse 12 probably echoes the Lord in verse 11 and therefore refers to Jesus. He is the one κύριος “Lord,” even as the Father is the one (θεός) “God”.[[9]](#footnote-9) There’s a similar expression found in 1 Corinthians 8:6 ~

… 6yet for us *there is* one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom *are* all things, and through whom we *live*.[[10]](#footnote-10)

So Paul asks that the Lord Jesus would make the believers in Thessalonica abound in love. For Paul, it was often his desire to see followers of Jesus abounding in love,[[11]](#footnote-11) one example is Philippians 1:9 ~

9And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment,[[12]](#footnote-12) …

**Background ~**

There is a detail, a presupposition that I have never bothered to point out, but it may not have occurred to you. The New Testament was written within the world-view of the Old Testament.[[13]](#footnote-13) That means that the fundamental assumptions are Jewish rather than Greek or Roman. The assumptions made about the nature of God and His relationship with human kind would be very different from the fundamental assumptions held by most of the Thessalonians.

These assumptions included understanding that we are living in a fallen world in rebellion against its Creator.[[14]](#footnote-14) The way things are is not the way there were originally created, nor will they remain this way forever. There is an implicit expectation that one day God will restore the created order.

But, beyond that was the expectation that a new age of righteousness was coming.[[15]](#footnote-15) This would be brought about through the agency of God’s Spirit through the work of the Messiah.[[16]](#footnote-16) The Jews may not have understood the true nature of the Messiah’s coming and work, but they did know He was coming.

These assumptions stand behind all of the New Testament. This shift in their understanding of the fundamental nature of the universe and their place in it put the Thessalonian church on a pretty steep learning curve.

**Love ~**

So, behind the basic expectations of this world view is the understanding of the nature of love and how it fits into the way things work. Paul had already commended the believers for their love; but now he prays that it will increase;[[17]](#footnote-17)1 Thessalonians 3:12 ~

12And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we *do* to you,…[[18]](#footnote-18)

Paul prayed for the Lord to cause the believers’ love to “increase and overflow,” first for one another. But he didn’t stop there, he also asked that this love would overflow to everyone around them.[[19]](#footnote-19) Note that this is something God will need to bring about; Romans 5:5 ~

5Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.[[20]](#footnote-20)

The love of God poured into the believers’ hearts by the Holy Spirit could not be limited, displayed only to members of their own fellowship; rather, it must overflow to all without limit.[[21]](#footnote-21) The mental image is a love that is so overflowing that it would seep out of every aspect of their lives, and in doing so impact all that they come into contact with.[[22]](#footnote-22)

How is this going to happen? The two verbs used are, “increase” (πλεονάζω)[[23]](#footnote-23) [plĕ ŏn ăʹ dzō] and “overflow” (περισσεύω)[[24]](#footnote-24) [pĕ rĭs sūʹ ō]. These are synonyms.[[25]](#footnote-25) The first of the two, “increase” (πλεονάζω),[[26]](#footnote-26) conveys the idea of growth leading to an abundance.[[27]](#footnote-27) The second expression, “overflow” (περισσεύω),[[28]](#footnote-28) when used with reference to people, implies an overabundance of something.[[29]](#footnote-29) Together they create an emphatic prayer-wish for spiritual growth in the lives of the Thessalonian church.[[30]](#footnote-30)

It is the active expression of love that best reflects the character of God revealed in Christ.[[31]](#footnote-31) Inconveniently, if we’re going to follow Jesus Christ’s example, this also requires loving even those who are opponents of the faith.[[32]](#footnote-32)

**Changed ~**

This would require a fundamental change in the hearts of the believers in Thessalonica.

A first-grader went on her first day of school to a newly integrated school during the height of the segregation storm. At the end of the day an anxious mother met her at the door and asked, “How did everything go today, Honey?” The child responded, “Oh, Mother, you know what? A little black girl sat right next to me!”

In fear and trepidation, the mother expected trauma, but tried to ask calmly, “… and what happened?” The child replied, “We were both so frightened that we held hands all day long! I have a new best friend!”[[33]](#footnote-33)

The claims of Christ on our lives will force us to rethink our opinions, attitudes, and actions. For Paul, this always started with love as the cardinal Christian virtue;[[34]](#footnote-34) Romans 13: 8-10 ~

8Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not bear false witness,” “You shall not covet,” and if there *is* any other commandment, are *all* summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 10Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love *is* the fulfillment of the law.[[35]](#footnote-35)

From this foundational characteristic, one that’s so foreign to our native selves, all of the other Christian virtues flow.[[36]](#footnote-36) It is not by accident that the fruit of the Spirit starts with love; Galatians 5:22-23 ~

22But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.[[37]](#footnote-37)

This had practical implications for the church in Thessalonica just as it does for ourselves today. For the Thessalonians, this would include even those persecuting them.[[38]](#footnote-38) Are we ready for this kind of love? There are times when we need to stop and examine ourselves in light of the Scriptures… and then ask ourselves some pointed questions.[[39]](#footnote-39) Those questions start with, “How am I treating the people who serve me in restaurants and stores?”

**Blameless ~**

The supernatural outworking of this kind of love is going to produce a marked change in our moral character; 1 Thessalonians 3:13 ~

…. 13so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.[[40]](#footnote-40)

In the Greek text, verse 13 does not start a new sentence.[[41]](#footnote-41) Syntactically, what it does accomplish is to continue the thought by providing a purpose statement.[[42]](#footnote-42) The purpose of abounding in love is so the Lord would establish their hearts blameless and holy at His return.[[43]](#footnote-43) Love in action is evidence of a true living faith.[[44]](#footnote-44)

Jesus has a way of messing with us, and He made it abundantly clear that we are responsible to love our enemies, and to pray for those who persecute us;[[45]](#footnote-45) Luke 6:27-28 ~

27“But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.[[46]](#footnote-46)

This requires something from us that we’re incapable of doing. We may change our methods or our habits for a period of time. But lasting change that reflects a change in who we are begins with the heart.[[47]](#footnote-47) This kind of fundamental change can come only from the Lord.[[48]](#footnote-48)

At salvation God graciously gives us the “gift of righteousness”[[49]](#footnote-49) Romans 5:17 ~

17For if by the one man’s offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.[[50]](#footnote-50)

When we come to trust Jesus as our Lord, God sees us through Jesus Christ, we’re forgiven and clothed in the righteousness which belongs to Him.[[51]](#footnote-51) But God does not stop there, His intent is that we would be more than justified, that is, declared that we are no longer answerable for our sin. God’s intent is that we would exemplify the righteousness in practice that has been imputed to us by grace. Love, the love of God that we’re granted access to, strengthens the inward person so that the desires of our hearts become blameless in His sight;[[52]](#footnote-52) 1st Thessalonians 3:13 ~

… 13so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.[[53]](#footnote-53)

Note that Paul did not pray that the Thessalonians would be sinless; that’s impossible… this side of glory.[[54]](#footnote-54) What he did pray for was that they would be blameless.[[55]](#footnote-55) To be “blameless” (ἄμεμπτος)[[56]](#footnote-56) [ăʹ mĕm ptŏs] is descriptive of someone judged by God to be acceptable in sacrificial worship.[[57]](#footnote-57) Morally it would refer to one who is above censure of reproach.[[58]](#footnote-58)

To have blameless, sanctified hearts can only happen when the heart receives, and then produces genuine love.[[59]](#footnote-59) The call to true blamelessness in both word and action does not naturally come from our hearts, rather it is the fruit of inner sanctification;[[60]](#footnote-60) Philippians 2:15 ~

… 15that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,…[[61]](#footnote-61)

**Holy ~**

To be “holy” (ἁγιωσύνη)[[62]](#footnote-62) [hă gĭō sŭʹ nā] describes the state of that which is sanctified, set apart, as God’s special possession.[[63]](#footnote-63) God’s saints, also called His “holy ones,” are those who are dedicated to Him and His service.[[64]](#footnote-64) There is a moral aspect to this, but fundamentally, for humans, it is to be set apart for God.

True holiness, the result of sanctification, understands that every aspect of the Christian’s life is in and from the Spirit.[[65]](#footnote-65) This kind of holiness is both a gift and a task.[[66]](#footnote-66) The act of perfecting us is God’s work, however, this requires our cooperation;[[67]](#footnote-67) Philippians 2:12–13 ~

12Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.[[68]](#footnote-68)

**Christian Living ~**

Here the Christians of Philippi were being urged to live in the midst of their unbelieving, pagan, neighbors in such a way that even their detractors would see them as being blameless.[[69]](#footnote-69) How this change, this sanctification to God and His purposes, is to be expressed in daily life is further revealed in 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7[[70]](#footnote-70) ~

3For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; 4that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; 6that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord *is* the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. 7For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. [[71]](#footnote-71)

The heart is not only the seat of understanding and will, it is also where our hidden motives and conduct are formed.[[72]](#footnote-72) Love, along with every other Christian virtue, springs from the heart.[[73]](#footnote-73) The reality of our situation in this is world is that we operate under a different set of priorities. To be blameless in God’s sight is far more important than being blameless by constantly shifting standards of this world.[[74]](#footnote-74)

**Christ’s Return ~**

If the recipients of this letter received purity of heart leading to purity of practice, there would be no need to fear the coming of the Day of the Lord.[[75]](#footnote-75) They would, in fact be holy, set apart to God as His own people. For others, there is reason to fear since on that Day all will be revealed;[[76]](#footnote-76) 1st Corinthians 4:5 ~

5Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one’s praise will come from God.[[77]](#footnote-77)

This prayer of Paul’s looks to the future as he anticipates a present and progressive growth in love even as he looks to a future time of judgment.[[78]](#footnote-78) We, like they, are called upon to look beyond the trials and tribulations we face, and wait with expectancy for the great day of Christ’s return.[[79]](#footnote-79) On that day all our troubles will be overcome and we will be perfectly united with our Savior forever.[[80]](#footnote-80)

To appear before the Lord Jesus at his Advent involves appearing, at the same time, “before our God and Father.”[[81]](#footnote-81) The holiness that Paul desired for his readers’ lives is, in practice, nothing less than to be transformed, changed, into the likeness of Jesus Christ Himself.[[82]](#footnote-82)

**Application ~**

Now with all of that, I find myself getting a little uncomfortable. It’s time for us to wrap our minds around something that, honestly, the watching world has rightly condemned us for. How often has the Church been condemned for being rigid and judgmental? There is right and wrong, but nowhere have we been commanded to be the judge. Instead, over and over and over, we are commanded to love.

Honestly, a loveless Christianity is an oxymoron, and the proclamation of a Gospel lacking love is a heresy.[[83]](#footnote-83) The “love” we’re talking about is (ἀγάπη) [ă găʹ pā], a word used by New Testament writers to describe a new kind of love.[[84]](#footnote-84) To my knowledge we’re never given a formal definition for this peculiar kind of love. Rather, it’s demonstrated through actions recorded within the pages of the New Testament;[[85]](#footnote-85) Romans 5:8 ~

8But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.[[86]](#footnote-86)

It’s not a matter of following the rules, whatever collection of rules we may assemble, it is a matter of the inner life that makes Christianity vibrant.[[87]](#footnote-87) True Christian maturity is measured, not by how well we know our Bibles, not by how much we give to the Church, but by the character of our love.[[88]](#footnote-88)

Each Christian is commanded to love.[[89]](#footnote-89) This love is not a static quantity at our disposal, it is an ever increasing, ever overflowing, love that simply cannot be hidden.[[90]](#footnote-90) Therefore, for the Christian, brotherly love, followed by universal love, are concentric circles.[[91]](#footnote-91) The center of the circle, however, is not us. It is Christ.[[92]](#footnote-92) The narrower circles are not an expression of bigoted exclusiveness, rather they, starting with Jesus, makes possible each outward movement of love.[[93]](#footnote-93)

If the Father is love, and if we claim to be His children, then love is necessarily going to be the first thing people think about when they think about us as Christians;[[94]](#footnote-94) 1 John 4:7-12 ~

7Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. 11Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

12No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.[[95]](#footnote-95)

But we’re not called upon to batten down the hatches of our wills and drum this kind of love up, the passage continues in 1 John 4:13 ~

13By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.[[96]](#footnote-96)

What God asks of us is what God supplies for us. We’re not called upon to love the world based on what we can muster up. We’re called to love the world based in God’s love. He shows us what that love is like, and it changes us; John 3:16 ~

16For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.[[97]](#footnote-97)

This is a love that looks beyond ourselves.[[98]](#footnote-98) This requires that it will be a love which comes from the Spirit of God.[[99]](#footnote-99) Where God is granted free reign to truthfully fill the heart, it is only there that true love is also expressed.[[100]](#footnote-100) This is produced in an ever increasing manner in the life of each follower of Jesus by the Spirit whom they have received.[[101]](#footnote-101)

1. [*The New King James Version*](https://ref.ly/logosres/nkjv?ref=BibleNKJV.1Th3.12&off=0&ctx=ect+our+way+to+you.+~12%C2%A0And+may+the+Lord+) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Th 3:12–13. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Thomas Newberry and George Ricker Berry, [*The Interlinear Literal Translation of the Greek New Testament*](https://ref.ly/logosres/tr1550int?ref=Bible.1Th3.12&off=0&ctx=%CE%B4%CE%BF%CE%BD+%CE%B7%CE%BC%CF%89%CE%BD+%CF%80%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%82+%CF%85%CE%BC%CE%B1%CF%82+%0a~12+%CF%85%CE%BC%CE%B1%CF%82+%CE%B4%CE%B5+%CE%BF+%CE%9A%CF%85%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%82+) (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2004), 1 Th 3:12. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, [*Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*](https://ref.ly/logosres/jfbcomm?ref=Bible.1Th3.12&off=4&ctx=n+to+Macedonia.%0a12.+~The+%E2%80%9Cyou%E2%80%9D+in+the+Gre), vol. 2 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 388. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Thomas Newberry and George Ricker Berry, [*The Interlinear Literal Translation of the Greek New Testament*](https://ref.ly/logosres/tr1550int?ref=Bible.1Th3.12&off=0&ctx=%CE%B4%CE%BF%CE%BD+%CE%B7%CE%BC%CF%89%CE%BD+%CF%80%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%82+%CF%85%CE%BC%CE%B1%CF%82+%0a~12+%CF%85%CE%BC%CE%B1%CF%82+%CE%B4%CE%B5+%CE%BF+%CE%9A%CF%85%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%82+) (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2004), 1 Th 3:12. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, [*Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*](https://ref.ly/logosres/jfbcomm?ref=Bible.1Th3.12&off=4&ctx=n+to+Macedonia.%0a12.+~The+%E2%80%9Cyou%E2%80%9D+in+the+Gre), vol. 2 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 388. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. John Peter Lange et al., [*A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: 1 & 2 Thessalonians*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lange73th12?ref=Bible.1Th3.12&off=539&ctx=gs%2c+2+Cor.+9%3a8%3b+and+~the+passive+(Matt.+1) (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008), 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. [*The New King James Version*](https://ref.ly/logosres/nkjv?ref=BibleNKJV.1Th3.12&off=0&ctx=ect+our+way+to+you.+~12%C2%A0And+may+the+Lord+) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Th 3:12. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. [*The New King James Version*](https://ref.ly/logosres/nkjv?ref=BibleNKJV.1Th3.11&off=22&ctx=ayer+for+the+Church%0a~11%C2%A0Now+may+our+God+a) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Th 3:11. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. F. F. Bruce, [*1 and 2 Thessalonians*](https://ref.ly/logosres/wbc45?ref=Bible.1Th3.12&off=187&ctx=+further+optatives.+~By+%CE%BF%CC%94+%CE%BA%CF%85%CC%81%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%82+we+are), vol. 45, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1982), 71. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. [*The New King James Version*](https://ref.ly/logosres/nkjv?ref=BibleNKJV.1Co8.6&off=0&ctx=ds+and+many+lords)%2c+~6%C2%A0yet+h%EF%BB%BFfor+us+there) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Co 8:6. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. F. F. Bruce, [*1 and 2 Thessalonians*](https://ref.ly/logosres/wbc45?ref=Bible.1Th3.12&off=554&ctx=of+%CF%80%CE%BB%CE%B5%CE%BF%CE%BD%CE%B1%CC%81%CF%83%CE%B1%CE%B9+here.+~For+Paul%E2%80%99s+desire+to), vol. 45, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1982), 72. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. [*The New King James Version*](https://ref.ly/logosres/nkjv?ref=BibleNKJV.Php1.9&off=0&ctx=on+of+Jesus+Christ.%0a~9%C2%A0And+this+I+pray%2c+t) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Php 1:9. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Robert James Utley, [*Paul’s First Letters: Galatians and I & II Thessalonians*](https://ref.ly/logosres/blint07?ref=Bible.1Th3.13&off=3355&ctx=tion)+and+judgment.%0a~The+NT+as+a+whole+is), vol. Volume 11, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 1997), 101. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Robert James Utley, [*Paul’s First Letters: Galatians and I & II Thessalonians*](https://ref.ly/logosres/blint07?ref=Bible.1Th3.13&off=3355&ctx=tion)+and+judgment.%0a~The+NT+as+a+whole+is), vol. Volume 11, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 1997), 101. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
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