

## 1 Thessalonians 5

**5:1 But of the times [chronos] and the epochs [kairos], brothers, you have no need that I write to you.**

Περὶ δὲ τῶν χρόνων καὶ τῶν καιρῶν, ἀδελφοί, οὐ χρείαν ἔχετε ὑμῶν γράφεσθαι,

### **Dispensations:**

Dispensations are periods of human history as taught only in the Scripture. Dispensations are divine categories of human history; therefore, both the divine outline and the divine interpretation of human history. Dispensations are the vehicle by which believers living at a specific time in history can orient to God's will, plan, and purpose for their lives for God's plan is not the same for every dispensation. In fact, the plan is quite different in each dispensation. The believer's orientation to both time and to human history is vitally necessary for understanding God's plan and God's purpose. Dispensations constitute the divine administration of history.

The following Greek words *oikonomia*, *chronos*, *Kairos* and *aion* have more than one meaning. So, it is best to see them in context.

The Greek word *Oikonomia* is translated "dispensation." It means the administration of a business or an estate, the management of a household. It is translated by three words: order (instead of chaos), a plan (instead of confusion), and arrangement (instead of disarray). It was used in the Attic Greek by Xenophon and Plato, who used it for household administration. It was also used for the authority of parents over children, the provision of parents for their children, and the policy of parents for their children. The study of dispensations connotes policy, administration, and the provision of God for believers in a period of history. The word is used in Eph 1:8-10a, "From which [riches of grace] He has made us [Church Age

believers] super-rich by means of all wisdom and understanding (9) when He revealed to us the mystery of His will according to His gracious intention which He [God the Father] planned in Him [Jesus Christ], (10a) with reference to the dispensation [*oikonomia*] of the fullness of times [*Kairos*: pre-canon and post-canon period of the Church Age]"

The Greek word *chronos* is used to portray the chronology of history or time as a series of points. Occasionally, it is used for a section of time in chronology. Shortly before Christ ascended into heaven, His disciples pressed Him regarding the timing of future events in Acts 1:6-7, "And so, when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, 'Lord, is it at this time [*chronos*: the time for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent] You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?' (7) He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times [the time of the Rapture, the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> advent etc. *chronos*] or epochs [*kairos*] which the Father has fixed by His own authority.'" Occasionally *chronos* is used in the Bible for a segment of time and has a dispensational connotation as per Romans 16:25, "Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the proclaiming of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery [of the Church Age] which has been kept secret for long [aionios] ages past [*chronos*: dispensations of the gentiles and Israel]."

The Greek word *kairos* means time as an epoch or era, a chronological order or system, a period characterized by a distinctive development within that period as from the pre-canon to the post-canon periods of the Church Age. In various passages *kairos* refers to the Church Age as per Romans 8:17, 18, "Now, if we are children and we are, we are also heirs, on the one hand heirs of God [the Father], and joint heirs with Christ. If indeed, we suffer [go through undeserved suffering] with Him, that also we might be glorified together with Christ. (18) For I conclude that the sufferings of the present period [*Kairos*: the dispensation of the Church Age] are not comparable to the glory which is destined to be revealed in us." Luke 21:24, "and they will fall by the edge of the sword [1.9 million at the siege of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.] and will be led captive [97 thousand]

into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under-foot by the Gentiles until the times [Kairos: in this context more than a dispensation] of the Gentiles are fulfilled [70 AD to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent].”

The Greek word *aion* is also used for dispensations. Colossians 1:25-27, “Of which [Church] I have become a minister on the basis of this dispensation [*oikonomia*] from God, which has been given to me for your benefit, that I might implement your deficiency of the Word of God, (26) that is, the mystery [of Church Age doctrines], which has been hidden from past ages [*aion*: used also for dispensations ] and generations, but now has been revealed to the saints [is a technical term for Church Age believers], (27) to whom God has decreed to make known what is the wealth of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles [in dramatic contrast to the exclusive spiritual position of Jews in the now-suspended Age of Israel] [which mystery is] Christ in you [the indwelling of Christ in every believer, a characteristic unique to the Church Age only], the hope of glory [the believer’s confidence of fulfilling the plan of God for this dispensation].”

## **The Divine Outline of History:**

### *A. The Theocentric Dispensations*

#### **The Age of the Gentiles**

1. Positive Volition (the garden)
2. Negative Volition (from the Fall to Abraham)
3. Jewish Patriarchs (Abraham to Moses)

#### **The Nation Israel**

1. Theocracy
2. United Kingdom
3. Divided Kingdoms
4. Judea

### *B. The Christocentric Dispensations*

**The Hypostatic Union** (from the birth of Christ until His ascension; it forms a wall between Israel and the Church)

## **The Church Age**

### *C. The Eschatological Dispensations*

**1. The Tribulation** (the completion of the Dispensation of Israel as Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week)

**2. The Millennium** (The final dispensation)

For a complete presentation of dispensations, one needs to read, "Divine Outline of History" by R. B. Thieme Jr.

1 Thessalonians 5:2-4 deals with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent of Christ. So, it behooves us to distinguish between the Rapture and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent. The following chart was taken from the doctrine of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent by R. B. Thieme Jr.

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**5:2 For you yourselves know accurately that the day of the Lord [2<sup>nd</sup> Advent] comes like a thief in the night [suddenly to the earth and the enemies of Israel will be taken by surprise].**

αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἀκριβῶς οἶδατε ὅτι ἡμέρα κυρίου ὡς κλέπτῃς ἐν νυκτὶ οὕτως ἔρχεται.

There are two advents of Jesus Christ depicted in the Word of God. The First Advent begins with the virgin birth and concludes with the resurrection, ascension, and session. During the First Advent, Jesus Christ in Hypostatic Union accomplishes the strategic victory of the angelic conflict and the salvation-work for all mankind. This strategic victory gives Him battlefield royalty which requires a royal family to go with this royalty. Therefore, there is the need for the Church. The Second Advent is designed to reveal Him as both battlefield royalty and Jewish royalty. He returns to earth in resurrection body and Hypostatic Union.

### **Analogy to the Second Advent**

The Analogy of Nature: Lightning, Matthew 24:27.

- a. Seen by all, Revelation 1:7.
- b. Travels at great speed, Revelation 22:7, 12.
- c. Disturbs and frightens the unenlightened, Revelation 6:15-17.
- d. Warning of the coming storm of judgment.
  - (1) Annihilation of the invading armies.
  - (2) Judgment of Satan and the fallen angels.
  - (3) Judgment of the beast and false prophet.
  - (4) Baptism of fire removes all unbelievers from the earth.

### **Passages which shed light on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent of Christ:**

Matthew 24:27-28 “For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west so will the coming of the Son of Man be. [Lightning travels with great speed, the suddenness of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent of

the Lord Jesus Christ.] (28) Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.” [There are millions of troops launching a final attack to destroy Jerusalem toward the end of the Tribulation. These armies come from the north (the area of Russia), east (Asians) and the south (the Arabs). And possibly even the armies of the west, the Revived Roman Empire. Just when it seems hopeless for the wonderful army made up of Jewish believers defending Jerusalem, Jesus Christ returns and slaughters all these armies. After which, it will take the Jews 7 months to bury the dead (Ezekiel 39:11-20). During which time, the vultures will have a feast.]

Revelation 14:20, “Therefore, the wine press [judgment on the armies] was trampled outside of the city [Jerusalem], and the blood flowed out from the wine press up to a horses’ bridle for a distance of one hundred and seventy-five miles.”

Revelation 19:13-18, “He [the Lord Jesus at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent] is clothed with a robe dipped in blood [bloody from all the killing] and His name is called The Word of God [title of the Lord Jesus Christ]. (14) And the armies [Church Age believers in resurrection bodies] which are in heaven clothed in fine linen, white and clean [the Church Age believers do not participate in the killing], were following Him on white horses [there will be horses in heaven]. (15) From His mouth comes a sharp sword so that with it He may strike down the nations [the ones attacking Jerusalem in anti-Semitism] and He will rule them [nations in the Millennium] with a rod of iron [there will be swift justice] and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty [millions must be killed before the Millennial peace]. (16) And on His robe and on His thigh, He has a title written, “King over Kings, and Lord over Lords. (17) Then I saw an angel standing in the sun and he cried out with a loud voice saying to all the birds [the angel knows the bird language] which fly in the heaven, “Come and assemble for the great supper of God [all the armies which were slaughtered by the Lord at His Coming] (18) so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders [military] and the flesh of mighty men [great soldiers] and the flesh of horses and of those who

sit on them and the flesh of all men both free men and slaves, both insignificant and great.”

Matthew 24:29. “But immediately after the tribulation of those days [2<sup>nd</sup> Advent] the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light and the stars will fall from the sky and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. [All light to the earth is removed on the day of his return.]

Zechariah 14:6, 7, “In that day [the day of His return] there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. For it is a unique day which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night [both the sun and the moon do not give their light], but it will come about in evening time there will be light [light will accompany the return of Christ].

Isaiah 13:9, 10, “Behold the day of the Lord is coming. Cruel, with fury and burning anger [integrity of God executing judgment] to make the land a desolation; and He will exterminate its sinners from it [the anti-Semitic enemies]. For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark when it rises, and the moon will not shed its light [reflected light]”

Besides being a sign, it protects the Jews who are fighting against a tremendous number of the enemy. These Jews are about to be overrun by the enemy. So, this darkness protects them until Jesus returns for during this complete darkness it is impossible for any soldier to move and fight.

Matthew 24:30, “And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky and then all the tribes of the land [Israel] will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory.”

Zechariah 12:10, “I will pour out on the dynasty of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication [The 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent is the beginning of great spirituality in the Millennium] so that they [the unbelievers of the dynasty of David and inhabitants of

Jerusalem] will look on me [Jesus Christ at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent] whom they have pierced [rejection of Jesus Christ], and they will weep bitterly over Him as one mourns over an only son, and they will [the Jewish unbelievers] weep over Him like the bitter weeping over the death of the firstborn.”

Revelation 1:7, “Behold He is coming with the clouds and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him [unbelieving Jews who reject Jesus Christ during the Tribulation], and all the [unbelievers of the Jewish] tribes of the land will grieve over Him. So, it shall be. Amen.”

In both the Zechariah and the Revelation passages there are many people piercing Jesus Christ. So, this is not a reference to the one Roman soldier who pierced Jesus Christ while he was on the cross (John 19:34). This views the rejection of Jesus Christ in the Tribulation, the greatest period of evangelism in all of human history, a period of sensational evangelism by the 144,000 Jewish evangelists, by the two heralds, Moses and Elijah and even by angels. Even though there will be a most accurate and lucid presentation of the gospel, most will reject Jesus Christ as savior. What a shock to reject Jesus Christ as personal savior, and then to see Him return to the earth. The unbelieving Jews will mourn when they see that he truly is the Savior, “all the tribes of the land will mourn.”

Isaiah 60:2, “For behold darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the people [invading armies]. However, the Lord will rise upon you [2<sup>nd</sup> Advent] and his glory will appear [The glory of the Lord moving through supernatural darkness will be the only visible object].”

Luke 21:25-28, “There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehension of what is coming on the world for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time, they will see [the people on the earth] the Son of Man coming in



a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift-up your heads [Jewish believers] because your resurrection is drawing near.”

**5:3 For when they shall say, Peace and security** [through their political alliances]! **Then sudden** [unexpected] **destruction** [death] **comes on them** [the unbelievers on the earth at the Second Advent], **as labor pains in pregnancy. And they shall never ever** [the subjunctive of emphatic negation] **escape** [the Armageddon campaign and the Baptism of Fire].

ὅταν λέγωσιν, Εἰρήνη καὶ ἀσφάλεια, τότε αἰφνίδιος αὐτοῖς ἐφίσταται ὄλεθρος ὥσπερ ἡ ὕδιν τῆ ἐν γαστρὶ ἐχούση, καὶ οὐ μὴ ἐκφύγωσιν.

**5:4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness** [in the Cosmic System], **that the Day** [the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent] **should overtake you like a thief** [Do not remain ignorant of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent like most in the Tribulation by rejecting prophetic teaching].

ὁμοῖς δέ, ἀδελφοί, οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐν σκότει, ἵνα ἡ ἡμέρα ὑμᾶς ὡς κλέπτης καταλάβῃ,

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:20, “Stop despising prophetic teachings.” Even though Paul had taught about dispensations, 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent and the Rapture while in Thessalonica, he had to re-teach it since most had rejected his teaching on these subjects. Their attitude was for Paul to explain the spiritual life only and skip prophetic teaching for that is for the spiritual wimps.

**5:5 You are all the sons of light** [learning the spiritual life] **and the sons of the day** [applying the light of the Word]. **We are not of the night** [those who reject doctrine], **or of darkness** [functioning in the cosmic system].

πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς υἱοὶ φωτός ἐστε καὶ υἱοὶ ἡμέρας. οὐκ ἐσμὲν νυκτὸς οὐδὲ σκότους·

**5:6 Therefore let us not sleep** [functioning in a state of ignorance] **as the rest do, but let us be alert** [as to the subtleties of arrogance and the potential to fail just as one reaches spiritual self-esteem] **and let us obtain spiritual self-esteem** [hold the ground of this first tactical objective].

ἄρα οὖν μὴ καθεύδωμεν ὡς οἱ λοιποί, ἀλλὰ γρηγοροῦμεν καὶ νήφωμεν.

Like the Philippians (Philippians 3:15, 16), the Thessalonians have advanced spiritually with astounding speed. However, having arrived at spiritual self-esteem, the most vulnerable stage of the spiritual life, many are failing the subtleties of combining arrogance with emotion namely jealousy and bitterness, and from bitterness to implacability and from the frustration related to implacability comes anger and anger then adds hatred. With hatred comes vindictiveness. (Already one has used the first two Arrogance Skills namely self-justification and self-deception which is strong delusion and finally self-absorption. The believer is no longer using the Recovery Procedure.) With vindictiveness as one motivation comes the desire for action with malice, the lust to hurt, destroy the object of one's jealousy, bitterness, implacability, anger, hatred etc. Revenge motivation leads to vituperation (gossip, maligning and judging), vilification (start lying about someone; create a public lie about someone), abuse, violence, even murder.

This is why Paul had to state the following: “see that no one repays to anyone evil for evil, but always pursue the good, both towards one another [believers] and towards all [unbelievers].” (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

**5:7 For those sleeping sleep in the night** [no intake of God's Word], **and those being drunken are drunken in the night** [frantic search for happiness].

οἱ γὰρ καθεύδοντες νυκτὸς καθεύδουσιν, καὶ οἱ μεθυσκόμενοι νυκτὸς μεθύουσιν·

**5:8 But since we are of the day** [maximum light is available in the Church Age], **let us obtain spiritual self-esteem** [the Greek word *nepho*] **after we have put on the breastplate of doctrine** [what is believed namely metabolized truth] **and love** [with emphasis on virtue] **and the helmet, the confidence of salvation** [There is no advance without confidence in eternal security].

ἡμεῖς δὲ ἡμέρας ὄντες νήφωμεν, ἐνδυσάμενοι θώρακα πίστεως καὶ ἀγάπης καὶ περικεφαλαίαν ἐλπίδα σωτηρίας·

The Greek verb *nepho* means to be sober, to be self-controlled, to be well balanced, the antithesis of any kind of fuzziness (freedom from excess passion, rashness, and confusion), the honor of individual worth, a serious regulation of the powers a person has been given (in the spiritual life it would refer to the two power options). Paul uses this word to define spiritual self-esteem.



**ARMOR**

**Helmet**—A solid covering for the head.

**Breastplate**—A solid covering for the chest.

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**Shield**—A large piece of solid material carried on one arm.

**Loins girt**—*Loins* means the area between the hips and abdomen. *Girt* means tied around firmly. Girt loins don't have any loose clothing flowing around them that could trip up the legs and feet. Generally, to "gird your loins" means to prepare for action.

**Feet shod**—*Shod* means wearing shoes.

"The *putting off* of the natural man makes possible the *putting on* of the whole armor of God, which would not fully fit before!"

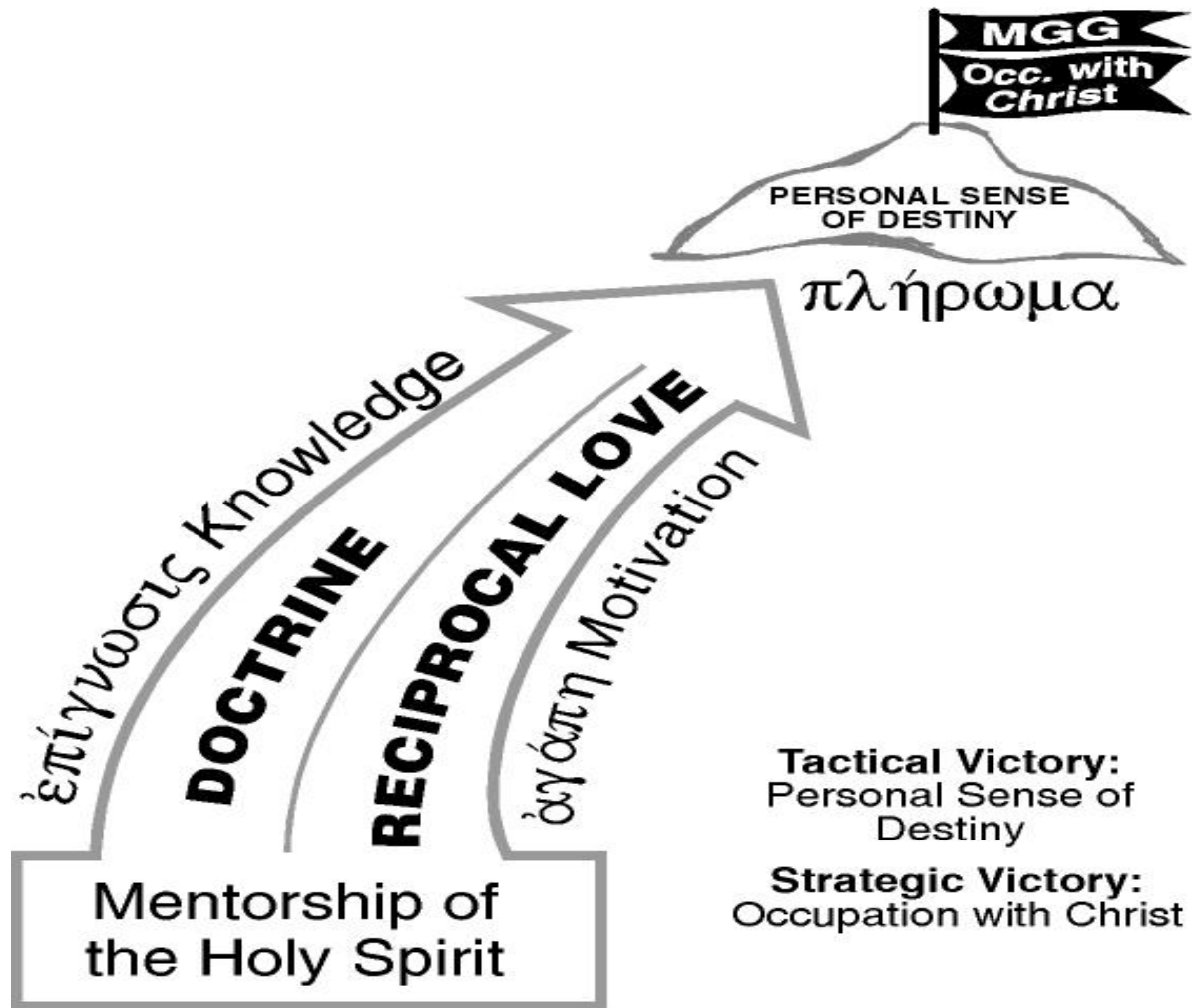
**Sword**—A weapon that can slice and stab.

Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Plow in Hope," *Ensign*, May 2001, 60.

ILLUSTRATION BY VALENTIN MAURUM

The breastplate of ‘doctrine and love’ are the two advancing columns which takes the Christian to spiritual maturity.

## SIMULTANEOUS ADVANCE TO THE HIGH GROUND



## ***Execution of Three Stages of the Adult Spiritual Life***

PERSONAL  
SENSE OF  
DESTINY



$$\text{SSE} + \text{CSC} + \text{PSDs} + \text{PPS} = \text{SA}$$

STAGE 1 #7, #8

$$\text{SA} + \text{CIND} + \text{PSD} + \text{MT}_4 = \text{SM}$$

STAGE 2 #9

$$\text{SM} + \text{CINV} + \text{PSD} + \text{ET}_2 = \text{MGG}$$

STAGE 3 #10

**5:9 For God [the Father] has not appointed us [Christians] to wrath [the Tribulation], but to obtain deliverance [at the Rapture] through our Lord Jesus Christ [His saving work on the cross],**

ὅτι οὐκ ἔθετο ἡμᾶς ὁ θεὸς εἰς ὀργὴν ἀλλὰ εἰς περιποίησιν σωτηρίας διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,

**5:10** who [Jesus Christ] **died as a substitute for us, so that whether we are awake** [alive] **or sleep** [have died], **we** [believers who die before the Rapture and those who don't] **should live together with Him** [in resurrection bodies received at the Rapture of the Church].

τοῦ ἀποθανόντος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἵνα εἴτε γρηγορῶμεν εἴτε καθεύδωμεν ἅμα σὺν αὐτῷ ζήσωμεν.

Since we are sinners, we are not qualified to pay the penalty for our sins. As it were, we were slaves in a slave market of sin; helpless to do anything about it. We needed a mediator. So, the only qualified person as a mediator between sinful mankind and perfect God was the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus then as a high priest offered himself as a sacrifice on the cross. Thus, it took the work of our mediator and high priest to bring about redemption. This was a substitutionary spiritual death namely He was punished for our sins as the result of our spiritual death. He himself never sinned and so He himself never died a real spiritual death.

While Jesus was on the cross bearing the punishment for every sin of mankind, he never lost the function of the two power options namely the use of the metabolized doctrine resident in his soul and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. In other words, he tested the spiritual life given to Him as per Isaiah 11:2 to the maximum.

### **The Substitutionary Spiritual Death of Christ on the Cross:**

1. Though Jesus Christ was in hypostatic union on the cross, only His humanity was punished for our sins. “He himself bore our sins on His body.” (1 Peter 2:24a)

2. Jesus Christ remained in the status of trichotomy on the cross as proven by his unique death namely his human spirit went into the care of God the Father, his soul went with God the Holy Spirit to Hades and his body remained in the grave.



3. Jesus personally never died a spiritual death, rather he bore the burden of mankind's spiritual death on the cross namely He was punished for the penalty of the sins of all mankind. In other words, Jesus died a substitutionary spiritual death while forsaken by the Father during the judgment. On the other hand, Adam suffered a real spiritual death as also his progeny at birth.

4. So, Jesus' substitutionary spiritual death means that He died as a substitute for the penalty of the sins related to our spiritual death namely the billions of sins which were committed in addition to Adam's original sin. In other words, he paid the penalty for our sins in toto.

5. Jesus Christ was portrayed as a male lamb unblemished and spotless (no sin nature and no sin) 1 Peter 1:18-19, "knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with the precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ." Jesus remained impeccable while being judged for the sins of the world. 2 Corinthians 5:21, "And he [God the Father] made him who knew no sin [remained impeccable both before the cross and on the cross] to be sin [imputation and judgment of the sins of the world] as a substitute for us so that we might become the righteousness of God in him."

6. Jesus Christ was not a curse, but became a curse as per Galatians 3:13, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law having become a curse for us, for it is written 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.'"

7. Hebrews 12:2, "Be concentrating on Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our doctrine, who because of the happiness that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame [from being identified with all those despicable sins], and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." Just as Jesus endured under great pressure, not reacting in bitterness, hatred, and self-pity, so we must endure under great pressure in order to achieve and preserve happiness. There is no happiness without the ability to endure under pressure.



8. The omnipotence of the Father imputed all the sins of mankind to Jesus during the last three hours on the cross, and the Justice of the Father using his omnipotence then judged the humanity of Christ on the cross, while the deity of Christ was sustaining the universe.

9. Matthew 27:46, “And about the ninth hour [3 P.M.] Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” translated [from the Aramaic into Greek], “My God, my God [addressing God the Father], why have you [in the singular] forsaken [abandoned] me?” David prophesies the shout in Psalm 22:1a, “My God, My God why have you forsaken Me far from helping Me.” This was answered in Psalm 22:3a, “because you [Father] are holy [righteous and just].” The Father had to judge Jesus for every sin of mankind and judgment implies abandonment and forsaking. There was no help nor fellowship during this judgment on the cross. So, this shout was prophesied in Hebrew (Psalm 22); shouted out in Aramaic and translated in Greek (Matthew 27:46).

10. Jesus understood why he had to be forsaken but shouted out this rhetorical question for our benefit. It was a Rhetorical question which had already been answered in Scripture as per Psalm 22:3a namely because the integrity of God demanded the punishment of all sins of mankind via a perfect sacrifice.

11. During the lifetime of the humanity of Christ, he was never forsaken by God the Holy Spirit whether it be before the cross or on the cross. The Holy Spirit always provided the enabling power for Jesus to execute the Father’s will during his entire life on this earth. So, from His birth to His physical death on the cross, He always had available and used the two power options namely the metabolized doctrine in his soul and the enabling power of the Spirit.

12. In this way, Jesus Christ demonstrated the power of the Proto-type Spiritual Life. This spiritual life called the Operational Type Spiritual Life, he gave to each Church Age believer.

13. Why was there a need for a substitutionary spiritual death? Adam and his wife suffered a real spiritual death when they ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. This involved the loss of their human spirit and acquisition of a sin nature. Hence, since the sin nature is part of the makeup of cellular genetics, all Adam's descendancy are born with the sin nature within their cells and with the imputation of Adam's Original Sin imputed to that sin nature at birth. This means that all of mankind is helplessly located in the slave market of sin. This required someone outside of the slave market of sin to provide a ransom to free mankind. Thus, the need for an impeccable person to pay the penalty of every sin of mankind. This we call the substitutionary work of Christ on the cross.

14. R. B. Thieme Jr. first taught this doctrine in 1986 during the teaching of the Ephesian series, a doctrine which has been buried for over 1500 years and is still unknown by most Christians since it is not known and subsequently not taught by any professor in any major theological seminary today.

Many of the Thessalonian believers had already died. Others were all shook up because the ones who had died had not lived long enough to see the Rapture. They thought that any Christian who died before the Rapture took place was going to miss the whole thing. It doesn't make any difference whether you die before the Rapture or whether you are alive when it comes, you are going to be included. We all are going to live with the Lord Jesus Christ, forever and ever.

**5:11 Therefore comfort one another** [for Christians will all be together in eternity], **and edify one another, even as you also do** [apparently the Thessalonians were catching on regarding the Rapture and what follows].

Διὸ παρακαλεῖτε ἀλλήλους καὶ οἰκοδομεῖτε εἷς τὸν ἕνα, καθὼς καὶ ποιεῖτε.

Through the reading of Paul's epistle especially the information regarding the resurrection of the Church and through discussion among themselves regarding this information, they were comforted and edified.

**5:12 And, brethren, we ask you to know those who labor among you** [communicators of doctrine], **and are over you** [the middle voice means to have authority for the benefit of everyone] **by agency of the Lord, and who** [the pastor] **admonish you** [regarding responsibilities, and failures; to straighten out mixed up people],

Ἐρωτῶμεν δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, εἰδέναι τοὺς κοπιῶντας ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ προϊσταμένους ὑμῶν ἐν κυρίῳ καὶ νουθετοῦντας ὑμᾶς,

You cannot operate under leadership unless you know who the leaders are. So, there is a need to understand leadership and to operate under it. No organization functions well without good leadership.

**There were two requirements for membership in the early church:**

1. You had to be 'born again.'
2. You had to submit to the authority and leadership of the local church.

**5:13 and to esteem them very highly in the sphere of love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves** [dative of advantage: peace in the congregation, rather than a lot of bickering].

καὶ ἠγεῖσθαι αὐτοὺς ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ ἐν ἀγάπῃ διὰ τὸ ἔργον αὐτῶν. εἰρηνεύετε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς.

The word "esteem" means to have high regard for someone. It is a present active infinitive expressing a habitual purpose. "Very highly" is an adverb meaning beyond measure, super abundantly, "in the sphere of love" "because of their work" (not because of their personality).

Authorized and good leadership is the basis for peace in any congregation. The absence of such leadership means perpetual trouble in a congregation. So, one purpose of leadership is to maintain the peace of the assembly or the congregation of believers.

**5:14 Now we exhort you brethren [leadership], warn those who are unruly, comfort the faint-hearted, support the weak, be patient toward all.**

παρακαλοῦμεν δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, νουθετεῖτε τοὺς ἀτάκτους, παραμυθεῖσθε τοὺς ὀλιγοψύχους, ἀντέχεσθε τῶν ἀσθενῶν, μακροθυμεῖτε πρὸς πάντας.

### **Exhortation to leadership:**

“Warn those who are unruly.” The Greek word, ‘ataktos’ (unruly) is a soldier who breaks ranks. It is the responsibility of leadership to warn those who are out of step with the doctrines of God’s Word. Obviously, the pastor must know doctrine to know when someone is not aligning himself with correct doctrinal teaching. In other words, if someone is spreading false teaching, it must be stopped.

“Comfort the fainthearted.” The Greek word means literally, “the small-souled, the fainthearted. These individuals tend to go to emotion when under pressure, and easily become hysterical. Many times, they will express their desire to die or commit suicide. They never use the faith-rest drill and consequently never live their lives by applying divine thought moment by moment. These must be encouraged gently by leadership (the pastor and deacons) by comforting words.

“Support the weak.” The word “support” means to exercise zealous care over the weak. There are two kinds of weak individuals among believers. First, new babies in Christ who haven’t learned doctrine yet, or are just in the process. They should be protected by keeping them away from legalism, from asceticism, from bullying, from negativism, etc. Secondly,

there is the believer who has not advanced spiritually even though a believer for a long time. Romans 14:1, “Now receive that one who is weak in doctrine, but not for the purpose of getting into quarrels about opinions (the non-essentials).” To expect all believers to live their lives exactly alike is ridiculous. Does a human baby conduct himself like an adult! Baby Christians and young Christians will have a different behavioral pattern from an adult believer.

“Be patient” means to exercise good control over one’s emotions. Don’t easily get upset with another believer etc., to apply impersonal love. 1 Corinthians 13:4, “Love is not swayed by emotion [is forbearing, patient; the Greek word μακροθυμεῶ (makrothumeo)], virtue love is kind [merciful], virtue love is not jealous, it does not brag [is not shamelessly disrespectful in thought, speech and behavior, insulting, presumptuous], is not inflated with arrogance [the advance stages of arrogance].

The Greek word, “Makrothumeo” most basic meaning is “not to be swayed by emotion” (not caused to swing from one side to another; not influenced by emotion). It also means to be free from the emotional reaction of annoyance; free from the irrationality that occurs when one is under pressure. It is composure under pressure and adversity. Since it is not affected by emotion, it has a steadfast patience. In the Ionic Greek which is older than the Attic Greek, it meant long-suffering toward someone (to bear injuries, insults, trouble without complaint or emotional reaction).

**5:15 See that no one repay to someone evil for evil, but always pursue the good** [intrinsic good produced when the believer is functioning under the two power options and executing the spiritual life], **both towards one another** [believers] **and towards all** [unbelievers].

ὁρᾶτε μή τις κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ τινὶ ἀποδοῖ, ἀλλὰ πάντοτε τὸ ἀγαθὸν διώκετε εἰς ἀλλήλους καὶ εἰς πάντας.

“See that none render evil for evil.” The word “render” means to recompense or pay back. There are three categories in this regard: The demonized person repays evil for good; The normal person repays evil for evil and good for good; The advanced Christian repays good for evil. So, to replace good for evil is to place injustice in the Lord’s hands instead of using natural laws of retaliation. It is the responsibility of leadership to make sure that Christians pay back good for evil and to avoid taking revenge. (Deuteronomy 32:35)

The Responsibility of the Christian in experiential righteousness.

**5:16 Always be happy** [inner happiness].

Πάντοτε χαίρετε, compare with ἐδάκρυσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς (Jesus wept)

This is not simply some sort of an ecstatic stimulation. In the Bible it is a word which means to have inner happiness through one’s relationship with the Lord. One’s happiness as a Christian does not depend upon relationships in life, pleasant circumstances, or surroundings, or because of some success. When God the Holy Spirit controls the life of the adult believer, he can have perfect inner happiness, a perfect stability, moment by moment.

If the Christian is not able to apply the following verse, he cannot share in God’s happiness. Romans 8:28, “We know, in fact, that to those who love the God [the Father], he causes all things to work together for good [intrinsic good] to those who are called according to a predetermined plan (divine decree).

In the divine decree (according to a predetermined plan) God caused all things to work together for good for the mature believer. God has a system for causing all things to work together for good namely through the application of the Problem-Solving Devices. God the Father solved every problem in human history in eternity past. However, if the believer cannot

use or does not use the Problem-Solving Devices, he is not able to benefit from these solutions which the Father has provided.

**5:17 Pray habitually** [Make prayer a habit].

ἀδιαλείπτως προσεύχεσθε,

In the middle voice, the subject is benefited by its application. The subjunctive mood means that maybe the believer will execute this command or maybe he won't. The Greek adverb *adialeiptos* (ἀδιαλείπτως) does not mean 'unceasing'. Can you imagine trying to pray for 24 hours each day without ceasing that is to attempt to pray while eating and sleeping. It would be absurd. Pictorially, the Greek adverb would look like this: \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ , not like this: \_\_\_\_\_. In other words, one should pray every day as scheduled interspersed with some spontaneous prayers as well.

**Sequence for Private Prayer:**

1. Recovery Procedure: If we name [acknowledge] our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us [cancel] our sins for our benefit and to purify us from all wrongdoing. (1 John 1:9)

Use of the Recovery Procedure is the first and most important consideration. If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear. (Psalm 66:18)

2. Thanksgiving: Thanksgiving is appreciation and gratitude for all that God has done in grace (freely given and undeserved). The more you love God and the more you appreciate Him, the greater is your "attitude of thanksgiving." In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

3. Intercession: Intercessory prayer is praying for others. This aspect of prayer is a ministry of Christian service in which you provide a barrage of

support for those in need. “With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the [power of the] Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel.” (Ephesians 6:18–19)

Prayer for others falls into two categories: believers and unbelievers. When you pray for unbelievers, it is primarily for their salvation (Romans. 10:1). Although you cannot ask God to abrogate the volition of unbelievers, you can ask Him to bring some circumstance into their lives that will direct their attention to Christ. You can pray for a personal opening to witness to someone with whom you are in contact. On the cross Jesus Christ provided the greatest example of intercession for unbelievers in all of human history. “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34a) Regarding believers, there are several categories for which you can pray. Pray for those who have certain spiritual gifts of communication—pastors, evangelists, missionaries (Acts 12:5). Comparatively few believers actually possess these communication gifts, but all believers are in full-time Christian service and can share in these ministries through prevailing prayer. Pray for those in positions of authority in the church. Pray for those who work in the church. Pray for those who are ill. Pray for missions. Pray for loved ones and friends (Acts 21:5). Pray for those in the military, the police, and the fire department. You also are mandated to pray for those who spitefully use you, for those who seek to do you harm and hurt, whether they be believers or unbelievers. Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. (Luke 6:28; cf. Matthew. 5:44) You also are mandated to pray for the nation and its leadership. Moses made some of the greatest intercessory prayers in history for the reversionistic nation of Israel (Exodus. 32:11–13; Num. 14:13–19). Such intercessory prayer is part of the deliverance of the client nation which has fallen into reversionism. “And My people [client nation] who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways [reversionism], then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” (2 Chronicles 7:14)



4. Petition: Petition is praying for your own needs. This is listed last, though it is not necessarily the least important. We all have personal needs or problems of one kind or another. In such cases, “Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace” (Hebrews 4:16a). Petitions address those particular circumstances for which there is no direct statement or solution from Scripture. (If provision for your own needs or solutions to your problems are found in the Word of God, do not petition for those things. For example, we are filled with the Spirit automatically when we use the Recovery Procedure. Therefore, do not pray a meaningless prayer by saying, “Fill me with the Spirit.”

As you learn Bible doctrine and advance to maturity in the spiritual life, you will understand both the constraints and the fantastic opportunities of your prayer life. In spiritual maturity, you will reduce the number of your personal petitions while expanding your capacity for intercessory prayer.

### **Ten reasons why prayer is not answered:**

1. Lack of faith — Matthew 21:22, “And all things, whatever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive [logical future].”
2. Lack of prayer — James 4:2c, “You quarrel and fight, and you do not have because you do not ask [failure to pray].”
3. Selfishness — James 4:3, “You ask but you do not receive because you ask for yourself that you may squander it on your lusts [in your frantic search for happiness].”
4. Carnality in general — Psalm 66:18, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear [my prayers]”
5. Lack of compassion — Proverbs 21:13, “He who shuts his ear to the cry of the poor, will also cry himself and not be answered.”

6. Lack of domestic tranquility — 1 Peter 3:7, “You husbands in a similar manner, live with them according to knowledge, as the weaker vessel [dependent upon her husband for fulfillment as a responder], since she is a woman; and show her honor as a joint-heirs of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.”

7. Pride or self-righteousness — Job 35:12,13, “There they cry out [in prayer], but He does not answer because of the pride of the evil men. (13) Surely, God will not listen to an empty cry [prayer] nor will the almighty regard it.”

8. Lack of the Filling of the Spirit — Ephesians 6:18, “By means of every prayer and petition, be praying on every occasion of prayer in the [Filling of] Spirit, also with reference to this prayer, be on the alert with all persistent determination and petition on behalf of all saints.”

9. Lack of obedience — 1 John 3:22, “Furthermore, whatever we have asked, we receive from him because we keep his mandates and keep on doing the things that are pleasing in his sight.”

10. Lack of compliance with the divine will — 1 John 5:14, “In fact, this is the confidence which we have toward him [God] that if [3<sup>rd</sup> class condition with an indirect middle] we ask anything according to his will, he [God the Father] hears us.”

### **A few statements regarding prayer:**

1. We do not use prayer to hire God to do what we want done.

2. Too many believers use prayer to get their own way, not God’s way.

3. Prayer must be compatible with God’s will and God’s way, not our will and our way.

4. Prayer must recognize who and what God is, not who and what we are.

5. Prayer is not designed to get us out of trouble, but to express our helplessness, our humility, our total dependence on God rather than on human ability and power. Prayer is our recognition and orientation to His grace and His mercy toward us.

6. Prayer is not designed to manipulate God, but to perform and conform to the will of God.

7. Prayer is not what we want but what God wants for us.

8. Prayer is our recognition and orientation to the grace of God.

9.. Prayer is an expression and extension of Bible doctrine resident in the stream of consciousness of the soul. We fail in prayer because we fail to understand and utilize Bible doctrine.

10. Prayer was never designed to fulfill our lusts and desires, but prayer was designed to fulfill the will, plan, and purpose of God for our lives and to give us access to heaven while still living on earth.

**5:18 In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you [because of verse 16].**

ἐν παντὶ εὐχαριστεῖτε· τοῦτο γὰρ θέλημα θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰς ὑμᾶς.

“In all things give thanks.” Be thankful for the blessings of life, be thankful for the adversities of life. We are to thank the Lord for everything that comes into our life, and the reason is due to our ability to apply the Ten Problems Solving Devices to any problem, difficulty, or disaster in our life.

**5:19 Stop squelching [quenching, extinguishing] the Spirit.**

τὸ πνεῦμα μὴ σβέννυτε,

“Stop squelching [quenching] the Spirit.” Since the Thessalonians are squelching the Holy Spirit, completely ignoring what the Spirit wants them to do. They are failing to apply doctrine correctly. Just examine all the commands in this chapter either to stop doing something or to do something they were not doing but should be doing.

**5:20 Stop despising [scorning, making light of] prophetic teachings.**

προφητείας μὴ ἐξουθενεῖτε·

Apparently, the Thessalonians just wanted to learn the spiritual life for example the Ten Problem Solving Devices. However, they did not realize that prophetic teachings have a critical role in support of the spiritual life. So, apparently when Paul and Timothy taught such doctrines as the Rapture of the Church, the Tribulation, and the Millennial reign of Christ, they in contempt either didn't listen or after listening disregarded it.

**5:21 Test all things, hold fast to the good [truth].**

πάντα δὲ δοκιμάζετε, τὸ καλὸν κατέχετε,

“Test all things.” The word “test” means to test for the purpose of approval. How do you test for the purpose of approval when it comes to doctrine? Gather the facts and then see if it lines up with doctrine.

**5:22 Abstain from every category of evil.**

ἀπὸ παντὸς εἴδους πονηροῦ ἀπέχεσθε.

There are many categories of evil such as any sexual activity outside of marriage between one male and one female, socialism, Marxism, redistribution of wealth, confiscatory taxes, violation of privacy, any attack on freedom, anti-Semitism etc.

**5:23 And may the God of reconciliation** [prosperity] **Himself sanctify you** [experientially; the optative mood expresses Paul's wish] **and may your whole spirit** [which has the ability to receive spiritual phenomena directly from the Spirit] **and soul** [the Holy Spirit then sends this spiritual phenomena to the soul for metabolization and application] **and body be guarded blameless** [in resurrection body] **at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ** [at the Rapture].

Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης ἀγιάσαι ὑμᾶς ὀλοτελεῖς, καὶ ὀλόκληρον ὑμῶν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα ἀμέμπτως ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τηρηθεῖη.

**5:24 Faithful is He** [God the Father] **who called you, who also will do it.**

πιστὸς ὁ καλῶν ὑμᾶς, ὃς καὶ ποιήσει.

After the Holy Spirit makes the gospel lucid to the unbeliever under the concept of Common Grace, the Father invites or calls the unbeliever through the gospel message as per 1 Corinthians 1:9, “The God [the Father] is faithful through whom you have been called [invited] into fellowship with his son, Jesus Christ, Our Lord.”

Since God the Father has perfect righteousness, justice and omnipotence, He will do all that He has said that He will do. Perfect integrity (righteousness and justice) plus immutability equals faithfulness. The Portfolio of Invisible Assets namely the primary, secondary, personal, and unique assets are guaranteed by the perfection of God.

**5:25 Brethren, keep on praying** [present tense in imperative mood] **also for us** [Paul and his team] **for your benefit** [in the middle voice, the subject participates and benefits from the action of the verb ].

Ἀδελφοί, προσεύχεσθε καὶ περὶ ἡμῶν.

God has seen fit to make us depend upon one another. This is the teamwork verse. The first word in this verse is “brethren” which means only believers should pray. This is a request to other members of the team for team support. We are all on the same team and depend upon each other.

**5:26 Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.**

Ἀσπάσασθε τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς πάντας ἐν φιλήματι ἁγίῳ.

A holy kiss was simply a means of greeting in the ancient world. Men would greet other men with a kiss, and women would greet other women with a kiss. Holy would imply that the greeting was genuine, no animosity not in violation of experiential sanctification.

**5:27 I charge you by the Lord to read this epistle to all the brethren.**

Ἐνορκίζω ὑμᾶς τὸν κύριον ἀναγνωσθῆναι τὴν ἐπιστολὴν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς.

This epistle was read to all the believers in Thessalonica and I’m sure explained as well if it needed to be.

**5:28. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you.**

Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μεθί ὑμῶν.

2 Corinthians 13:14, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ [the greatest act of grace took place on the cross] and the love of God [the Father the author of reciprocal love] and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit [the enabling power of the Spirit].”

When we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, we became the recipients of the greatest possible endowment of grace, and grace pursues the advancing believer his entire life.

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Based on the scholarly work of R.B. Thieme Jr.

I recommend downloading 'THIEME'S BIBLE DOCTRINE DICTIONARY' from this website: [rbthieme.org](http://rbthieme.org)