

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF S. PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS

THE ARGUMENT OF THE FIRST EPISTLE OF S. PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS.

How S. Paul with Silas (or Syluanus) and Timothee according to a vision calling him out of Asia in Macedonia, came to Philippi being the first citie thereof, we read *Act. 16*. And how againe from Philippi, after scourging and imprisoning there, he came to Theffalonica being the head citie of that countrie, we read *Act. 17*. where after 3. weekes preaching, the Iewes stirred the citie against them, and pursued them also to Beræa: so that Paul was conueied from thence to Athens, where he expected the comming of Silas & Timothee from the foresaid Beræa in Macedonia, but receiued them (as we haue *Act. 18.*) at Corinth in Achaia.

Hauiug therefore left the Theffalonians in such persecution, and being careful to know how they did in it, he was desirous to returne vnto them, as he signifieth in the *2. chapter of this Epistle v. 17*. But (as he there addeth) *Satan hindred vs*. Therefore tarying himself at Athens, he fendeth Timothee vnto them. At whose returne vnderstanding their constencie, he is much comforted, as he declareth, *c. 3*. So then they are all three together at the writing of this Epistle, as also we haue in the title of it: *Paul and Syluanus and Timothee to the Church of the Theffalonians*. And therefore it seemeth to haue been written at Corinth, not at Athens: because after the sending of Timothee to Theffalonica, they met not at Athens againe, but at Corinth.

The first three chapters of it are, to confirme and comfort them against the tentations of those persecutions. The other two are of exhortation, to liue according to his precepts, namely in sanctification of their bodies, & not in fornication: to loue one another: about their freinds departed, with the doctrine of the Resurrection,

and with continual preparation to die: the laietie to obey, and the Clergie to be diligent in euery point of their office.

Chapter 1

He thanketh God for them, 4. and gathereth that they are elect, becaufe his preaching at their firft conuerfion was with diuine power, and they on the other fide receiued it with al ioy, not withftanding the great perfecution that was raifed againft them.

Paule and Syluanus and Timothee to the Church of the Theffalonians in God the Father, and our Lord IESVS Chrif. Grace to you and peace.

² We giue thanks to God alwaies for al you; making a memorie of you in our praiers without intermiffion, ³ mindful of the worke of your faith and labour, and of the charitie, & of the enduring of the hope of our Lord IESVS Chrif, before God and our Father: ⁴ knowing, Brethren beloued of God, your election: ⁵ that our Ghofpel hath not been to you in word only, but in power & the holy Ghof, & in much fulneffe, as you know what manner of men we haue been among you for your fakes. ⁶ And you became ^afollowers of vs, & of our Lord; receiuing the word in much tribulation, with ioy of the Holy Ghof: ⁷ fo that you were made a paterne to al that beleue in Macedonia & in Achaia. ⁸ For from you was bruted the word of our Lord: not only in Macedonia and in Achaia, but alfo in euery place, your faith which is to God-ward, is proceeded, fo that it is not neceffarie for vs to fpeake any thing. ⁹ For they themfelues report of vs what manner of entring we had to you; and how you are turned to God ^a)from Idols, to ferue the liuing

^a In this & the like places the Heretikes maliciously and moft fallfely tranflate, contrue, and apply al things meant of the Heathen idols, to the memories and images of Chrif and his Saints, namely the

and true God, ¹⁰ and to expect his Sonne from Heauen (whom he raied vp from the dead) IESVS, who hath deliuered vs from the wrath to come.

ANNOTATIONS

6 Followers of vs.) S. Paul is bold to commend them for imitation of him, yea and to ioyne himself in that point with Chrif, to be their paterne to walke after. Where without curiofitie he nameth himself firft, and our Lord afterward, becaufe he was a more neer and ready obiet then Chrif, who was not nor could not be followed but through the preaching and conuerfation of the Apofle, who was in their fight or hearing. And this imitation of fome holy man or other, hath made fo many Religious men of diuers Orders and Rules, al tending to the better imitation of Chrif our Lord. See the like words of the Apofle, *1. cor. 11, 1.* and *Philip. 3, 17.*

Religious perfons
imitation of diuers
holy men is the
imitation of Chrif
himfelf.

Chapter 2

He calleth euen themfelues to witnes, that his preaching vnto them was as he faid, in moft commendable manner. 13. And againe on the other fide he thanketh God for their manner of receiuing it: that is, with al ioy, notwithstanding the perfecution of their owne citizens.

Act. 16, 12. 23.

For your felues know, Brethren, our entrance vnto you, that it was not vaine: ² but ^a)hauing fuffered before and been abufed with contumelies (as you know) at Philippi, we had confidence in our God, to fpeake vnto you the Ghofpel of God in much carefulnes. ³ For our exhortation was not of error, nor of vncleanneffe, nor in deceit: ⁴ but as we were approued of God that the Ghofpel should be committed to vs, fo

English Bibles of the yeares 1562. 1577. See the *Annotation 1. Io. 5, 21.*

^a A notable example for Catholike Preachers, and paffing comfortable, when in the middes of perfecutions and reproches they preach fincerely, to pleafe God & not men.

we speake: not as pleasing men, but God, who proueth our harts. ⁵ For neither haue we been, at any time in the word of adulation, as you know; nor in occasion of auarice, God is witnes: ⁶ nor seeking glorie of men, neither of you, nor of others. ⁷ Whereas we might haue been a burden to you, as the Apostles of Chrif; but we became ‘children’ in the middes of you, as if a nource should cherish her children: ⁸ fo hauing a defire to you, we would gladly deliuer vnto you not only the Ghospel of God, but also our owne foules: becaufe you are become moft deare vnto vs. ⁹ For you are mindful, Brethren, of our labour and toile. Day and night working, left we should charge any of you, we preached among you the Ghospel of God. ¹⁰ You are witneffes and God, how holily, and iuftly & without blame, we haue been to you that did beleue. ¹¹ As you know in what manner we defiring and comforting you, haue adiured euery one of you (as a father his children) that you would walke wor-thie of God, who hath called you into his Kingdome and glorie.

milde

*Act. 20, 34.**1. Cor. 4, 12.**2. Theff. 3.*

¹² Therefore we also giue thanks to God without intermiffion: becaufe that when you had receiued of vs the word of the hearing of God, you receiued it not as the word of men, but (as it is indeed) the word of God, who worketh in you that haue beleued. ¹³ For you, Brethren, are become followers of the Churches of God that be in Iewrie, in Chrif IESVS: for you also haue fuffered the fame things of your owne lineage, as they also of the Iewes, ¹⁴ who both killed our Lord IESVS, and the Prophets, and haue perfecuted vs, and please not God, and are aduerfaries to al men, ¹⁵ prohibiting vs to speake to the Gentils that they may be faued, to make vp their finnes alwaies. For the wrath of God is come vpon them euen to the end. ¹⁶ But we, Brethren, depriued of you for a fhort time, in fight, not in hart; haue haftned the more abundantly to fee your face with much defire. ¹⁷ For we would haue come to you, I Paul certes, once and againe: but Satan hath hindred vs. ¹⁸ For what is

ἀπορφανισθέντες

our hope, or ioy, or crowne of glorie? ^{a)}Are not you, before our Lord IESVS Chrif in his comming? ¹⁹ For you are our glorie and ioy.

ANNOTATIONS

12 The word of God.) The Aduerfaries wil haue no word of God but that which is written and conteined in the Scripture: but here they might learne that al Paules preaching before he wrote to them, was the very word of God. They might alfo learne that whatfoeuer the lawful Apoftles, Paftours, and Prieftes of God's Church preach in the vnitie of the fame Church, is to be taken for God's owne word, & ought not to be reputed of them for doctrines of men or Pharifaical traditions, as they fallfly cal canons, precepts, and decrees of holy Church.

Not only the written word is the word of God.

Chapter 3

Because he could not come himself, as he defired, he fent Timothee. 6. At whole returne now vnderftanding that they ftand ftill ftadfaft, notwithstanding al thofe perfecutions, he reioyceth exceedingly: 10. praying that he may fee them againe, 12. and for their increafe in charitie.

For the which caufe forbearing no longer, it pleaſed vs to remaine at Athens, alone. ² And we ſent Timothee our Brother, & the Miniſter of God in the Ghofpel of Chriſt, to confirme you and exhort you for your faith, ³ that no man be moued in theſe tribulations: for your felues know, that we are appointed to this. ⁴ For euen when we were with you, we fore-told you that we ſhould ſuffer tribulations, as alfo it is come to paſſe, and you know. ⁵ Therefore I alfo forbearing no longer, ſent to know your faith: left perhaps he that

^a If the Apoſtle without iniurie to God, in right good ſenſe cal his ſcholars the Theſſalonians, his hope, ioy, glorie; why blaſpheme the Proteſtants the Cath. Church and her children for terming our B. Ladie or other Saints, their hope, for the ſpecial confidence they haue in their praiers?

tempteth, hath tempted you, and our labour be made vaine. ⁶ But now Timothee comming vnto vs from you, *Act. 18, 5.* and reporting to vs your faith and charitie, and that you haue a good remembrance of vs alwaies, defiring to see vs, as we also you: ⁷ therefore we are comforted, Brethren, in you, in al our neceffitie, & tribulation, by your faith, ⁸ because now we liue, if you stand in our Lord. ⁹ For what thanks-giuing can we render to God for you, in al ioy wherewith we reioyce for you before our God, ¹⁰ night and day more abundantly praying that we may ^asee your face, and may accomplish those things that want of your faith?

¹¹ And God himself and our Father, & our Lord IESVS Chrif direct our way to you. ¹² And our Lord multiplie you, & make your charitie abound one to another, and toward al men: as we also in you, ¹³ to confirme your harts without blame, in holineffe, before God and our Father, in the comming of our Lord IESVS Chrif with al his Saints. Amen.

ANNOTATIONS

Chapter 4

He exhorteth them to liue as he taught them: and namely to absteine from al fornication, 9. to loue one another, 11. to meddle only with their owne matters, 12. to behaue themfelues wel toward the Infidels. 13. Touching their freinds departed he comforteth them, shewing that they shal meet againe at the Refurrection, and be with Chrif for euer.

For the reft therefore, Brethren, we desire and befeech you in our Lord IESVS, that as you haue receiued of vs how you ought to walke,

^a Though letters or epiftles in abfence giue great comfort & confirmation in faith, yet it is preaching in prefence by which the faith of Chrif and true religion is alwaies both begun and accomplished.

and to please God, as also you doe walke, that you abound more. ² For you know what precepts I haue giuen to you by our Lord IESVS. ³ For this is the wil of God, your sanctification: that you abstaine from fornication, ⁴ that euery one may know to possesse his vessel in sanctification and honour: ⁵ not in the passion of lust, as also the Gentils that know not God, ⁶ and that no man ouer-goe, nor circumuent his brother in business: because our Lord is reuenger of all these things, as we haue fore-told you, and haue testified. ⁷ For God hath not called vs vnto uncleanness, but into sanctification. ⁸ Therefore he that despiseth these things, despiseth ^anot man but God, who also hath giuen his holy Spirit in vs.

⁹ But concerning the charitie of the ^aFraternitie, we haue no need to write to you: For your selues haue learned of God to loue one another. ¹⁰ Yea and you doe it toward all the Brethren in all Macedonia. But we desire you, Brethren, that you ^babound more: ¹¹ and that you employ your endeavour to be quiet, and that you doe your owne business, and worke with your owne hands, as we haue commanded you: ¹² and that you walke honestly toward them that are without; and need nothing of any man's.

¹³ And we wil not haue you ignorant, Brethren, concerning them that ^asleep, that you be not sorrowful, as also others that haue no hope. ¹⁴ For if we beleue that IESVS died and rose againe, so also God them that haue slept by IESVS wil bring with him. ¹⁵ For this we say to you in the word of our Lord, that ^cwe which liue, which are remaining in the aduent of our Lord, shal not preuent them that haue slept. ¹⁶ For our Lord himself in commandement, and in the voice of an Archangel, & in the trumpet of God wil descend from heauen: and the dead that are in Christ, shal rise againe first. ¹⁷ Then

^a All Catholike Christians make one Fraternitie or Brotherhood.

^b Christian men ought to proceed and profit continually in good workes and iustification.

^c He speaketh in the person of those that shal be aliue when our Sauour returneth to iudgement.

we that liue, that are left, withal shal be taken vp with them in the clouds to meet Chrift, into the aire, and fo alwaies we shal be with our Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort ye one another in these words.

ANNOTATIONS

The precepts of the Church.

⁸ Not man but God.) He that despifeth the Churches or her lawful Paftours precepts, offendeth no leffe then if he contemned God's expresse commandements. For they be of the Holy Ghoft, and are not to be counted among the commandements of men only.

¹³ Sleep.) Some Heretikes peruerfly inferred of this that the foules did fleep til the day of iudgement: where it is meant of the bodies only.

Chapter 5

To talke of the time of the Refurrection is not neceffarie, but to prepare our felues againft that time fo fodaine, and fo terrible to the vnprepared. 12. He befeecheth the layetie to be obedient, 14. and the Clergie to be vigilant, with many short precepts moe.

And of the times and momentes, Brethren, you need not that we write to you. ² For your felues know perfectly that the day of our Lord fhall fo come as a theefe in the night. ³ For when they fhall fay, peace & fecuritie; then fhall fodaine deftruction come vpon them, as the paines to her that is with child, and they fhall not efcape. ⁴ But you, Brethren, are not in darkenneffe; that the fame day may as a theefe ouer-take you.

⁵ For you are the children of light, and children of the day: we are not of the night nor of darkenneffe. ⁶ Therefore let vs not fleep as alfo others: but let vs watch & be fober. ⁷ For they that fleep, fleep in the night; & they that be drunke, be drunke in the night. ⁸ But we

Mt. 24, 44.

2. Pet. 3, 10.

Apoc. 3, 3. 16, 15.

Efa. 59, 27. that are of the day, are fober, hauing on, the breaf-
Eph. 6, 17. plate of faith and ^{a)}charitie, and a helmet, the hope of
 faluation. ⁹ For God hath not appointed vs vnto wrath,
 but vnto the purchacing of faluation by our Lord IESVS
 Chrif, ¹⁰ who died for vs: that whether we watch, or
 fleep, we may liue together with him. ¹¹ For the which
 caufe comfort one another: and edifie one another, as
 alfo you doe.

¹² And we befeech you, Brethren, that you wil know
 them that labour among you, and that gouerne you in
 our Lord and admonifh you: ¹³ that you haue them more
 abundantly in charitie for their worke. Haue peace with
 them. ¹⁴ And we befeech you, Brethren, admonifh the
 vnquiet, comfort the weake-minded, beare vp the weake,
Pro. 17, 13. be patient to al. ¹⁵ See that none render euil for euil to
Ro. 12. any man: but alwaies that which is good purfue toward
1. Pet. 3, 9. each other, & towards al. ¹⁶ Alwaies reioyce. ¹⁷ ^{b)}Pray
Luc. 18, 1. without intermiffion. ¹⁸ In al things giue thanks. For
 this is the wil of God in Chrif IESVS in al you. ¹⁹ The
 Spirit extinguiſh not. ²⁰ Prophecies deſpife not. ²¹ But
 •proue al things hold that which is good. ²² From al
 appearance of euil refraine your felues.

²³ And the God of peace himſelf ſanctifie you in
 al things: that your whole ſpirit, and foule and body
 without blame may be preferued in the comming of our
 Lord IESVS Chrif. ²⁴ He is faithful, that hath called you,
 who alfo wil doe it. ²⁵ Brethren pray for vs. ²⁶ Salute al
 the Brethren in a holy kiffe. ²⁷ I adiure you by our Lord
 that this epiftle be read to al the holy Brethren. ²⁸ The
 grace of our Lord IESVS Chrif be with you. Amen.

^a A Chriftian man's whole armour is not faith only, but al the three
 vertues here named.

^b To defire eternal life of him that only can giue it, is to pray with-
 out intermiffion: but becaufe that defire is oftē by worldly cares
 cooled, certaine houres & times of vocal praier were appointed.
 See *S. Aug. ep. 121. ad Probam.*

ANNOTATIONS

Not rashly to credit eu-
ery fpirit.

21 But proue.) Though we may not extinguiſh the ſpirit,
nor contemne the Prophets, yet we muſt beware we be not de-
ceiued by giuing too light credit to euery one that vanteth himſelf
of the ſpirit, as Arch-heretikes euer did. We muſt trie them by the
doctrine of the Apoſtles and the Spirit of the Catholike Church,
which can not beguile vs.