

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2026**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—
FIRST AND SECOND THESSALONIANS**

Message Three

Faith, Love, and Hope—the Structure of a Holy Life for the Church Life

Scripture Reading: 1 Thes. 1:2-3

1 Thes. 1:2-3—We thank God always concerning all of you, making mention *of you* in our prayers, ³Remembering unceasingly your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father;

I. Faith, love, and hope are the structure of a holy life for the church life, which is the genuine Christian life and the content of Paul's first Epistle to the Thessalonians—1:2-3; 1 Cor. 13:13:

1 Thes. 1:2-3—We thank God always concerning all of you, making mention *of you* in our prayers, ³Remembering unceasingly your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father;

1 Cor. 13:13—Now there abide faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

A. Faith is the nature and strength of the work; love, the motivation for and characteristic of labor; and hope, the source of endurance—1 Thes. 1:3; 5:8.

1 Thes. 1:3—Remembering unceasingly your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father;

1 Thes. 5:8—But since we are of the day, let us be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love and a helmet, the hope of salvation.

B. Faith is toward God (1:8), love is toward the saints (3:12; 4:9-10), and hope is in the Lord's coming (2:19).

1 Thes. 1:8—For from you the word of the Lord has sounded out; not only in Macedonia and in Achaia, but in every place, your faith toward God has gone out, so that we have no need of saying anything.

1 Thes. 3:12—And the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we also to you,

1 Thes. 4:9-10—Now concerning brotherly love, you have no need *for me* to write to you, for you yourselves are taught of God to love one another; ¹⁰For you also do this unto all the brothers in the whole of Macedonia. But we exhort you, brothers, to abound still more

1 Thes. 2:19—For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at His coming? Are not even you?

- C. To turn to God from the idols is accomplished by faith infused into the new converts through their hearing of the word of the gospel; to serve a living and true God is by love produced within the believers by the Triune God as the all-inclusive Supplier who lives in them; to await the Son of God from the heavens is the hope that strengthens the believers to stand steadfastly in their faith—1:3, 9-10; cf. Ezek. 14:3; 1 John 5:21:

1 Thes. 1:3—Remembering unceasingly your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father;

1 Thes. 1:9-10—For they themselves report concerning us what kind of entrance we had toward you and how you turned to God from the idols to serve a living and true God ¹⁰And await His Son from the heavens, whom He raised from the dead, Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath which is coming.

cf. Ezek. 14:3—Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts and have put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces. Should I be inquired of at all by them?

1 John 5:21—Little children, guard yourselves from idols.

1. God must be living to us and in us in every aspect of our daily life; the fact that God controls, directs, corrects, and adjusts us, even in such small things as our thoughts and motives, is a proof that He is living—Phil. 1:8; 2:5, 13; 1:20; 1 Tim. 3:15.

Phil. 1:8—For God is my witness how I long after you all in the inward parts of Christ Jesus.

Phil. 2:5—Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,

Phil. 2:13—For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for *His* good pleasure.

Phil. 1:20—According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.

1 Tim. 3:15—But if I delay, *I write* that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.

2. We live under the control, direction, and correction of a living God to be a pattern of the glad tidings that we spread—1 Thes. 1:5-8; 2:10; 2 Thes. 3:5.

1 Thes. 1:5-8—For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, even as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷So that you became a pattern to all those who believe in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For from you the word of the Lord has sounded out; not only in Macedonia and in Achaia,

but in every place, your faith toward God has gone out, so that we have no need of saying anything.

1 Thes. 2:10—You are witnesses, as well as God, how in a holy and righteous and blameless manner we conducted ourselves toward you who believe,

2 Thes. 3:5—And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ.

3. As believers in Christ, we must live a life in our spirit which bears the testimony that the God whom we worship and serve is living in the details of our life; the reason we do not do or say certain things should be that God is living in us—Rom. 8:6, 16.

Rom. 8:6—For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Rom. 8:16—The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

II. The work of faith is the foundation of our Christian life and service— 1 Thes. 1:3:

1 Thes. 1:3—Remembering unceasingly your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father;

- A. The word *faith* refers both to the things the believers believe in (the objective faith—Eph. 4:13; 1 Tim. 1:19b; 2 Tim. 4:7) and to the believing action of the believers (the subjective faith—Gal. 2:20).

Eph. 4:13—Until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

1 Tim. 1:19—Holding faith and a good conscience, *concerning* which some, thrusting *these* away, have become shipwrecked regarding the faith;

2 Tim. 4:7—I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith.

Gal. 2:20—I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

- B. The faith of the believers is actually not their own faith but Christ entering into them to be their faith—Rom. 3:22 and footnote 1; Gal. 2:16 and footnote 1.

Rom. 3:22—Even the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ to all those who believe, for there is no distinction;

Gal. 2:16—And knowing that a man is not justified out of works of law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, we also have believed into Christ Jesus that we might be justified out of faith in Christ and not out of the works of law, because out of the works of law no flesh will be justified.

C. Faith comes out of hearing, hearing is through the word of Christ, hearing equals seeing, and seeing equals knowing Christ—Rom. 10:17:

Rom. 10:17—So faith *comes* out of hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

1. When the word of the Bible is spoken to us and heard by us, we contact Christ as the living word in the written word, and He becomes the applied word as the life-giving Spirit in us—John 1:1; 5:39-40; 6:63.

John 1:1—In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 5:39-40—You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that testify concerning Me. ⁴⁰Yet you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

John 6:63—It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

2. When we look away unto Jesus, He as the life-giving Spirit imparts Himself as the believing element into us that He may believe for us; hence, He Himself is our faith—Heb. 12:2a.

Heb. 12:2—Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

D. Faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen; nothing is impossible to faith—11:1; 2 Cor. 4:18; Matt. 17:20b; *Hymns*, #535:

Heb. 11:1—Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

2 Cor. 4:18—Because we do not regard the things which are seen but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Matt. 17:20—And He said to them, Because of your little faith; for truly I say to you, If you have faith like a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, Move from here to there, and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.

1. To substantiate is to give substance to the reality of the substance not seen; this is the action of faith; “the people who know their God will show strength and take action”—Dan. 11:32b.

Dan. 11:32—And with his smooth words he will cause those who act wickedly toward the covenant to be profane. But the people who know their God will show strength and take action.

2. The book of Acts is a record of people who take action as the acting God with the “work of faith,” which is to be those who are “working the work of the Lord”—1 Thes. 1:3; 1 Cor. 16:10; 15:58; Acts 1:8; cf. 16:22; Heb. 13:6.

1 Thes. 1:3—Remembering unceasingly your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father;

1 Cor. 16:10—Now if Timothy comes, see that he is with you without fear; for he is working the work of the Lord, even as I am.

1 Cor. 15:58—Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Acts 1:8—But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

cf. Acts 16:22—And the crowd rose up together against them, and the magistrates tore off their garments and ordered *some* to beat *them* with rods.

cf. Heb. 13:6—So that being of good courage, we say, “The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear. What shall man do to me?”

3. The Lord’s recovery is a recovery from things seen to things unseen (2 Cor. 4:18); both the eternal inheritance (Heb. 9:15) and the great reward (10:35) promised by God are things hoped for and things not seen.

2 Cor. 4:18—Because we do not regard the things which are seen but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Heb. 9:15—And because of this He is the Mediator of a new covenant, so that, death having taken place for redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, those who have been called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Heb. 10:35—Do not cast away therefore your boldness, which has great reward.

- E. Faith is the indicator of the believers’ life in the enjoyment of the Divine Trinity—1 Thes. 1:3, 5, 7-8; Rom. 1:8:

1 Thes. 1:3—Remembering unceasingly your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father;

1 Thes. 1:5—For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, even as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

1 Thes. 1:7-8—So that you became a pattern to all those who believe in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For from you the word of the Lord has sounded out; not only in Macedonia and in Achaia, but in every place, your faith toward God has gone out, so that we have no need of saying anything.

Rom. 1:8—First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all because your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world.

1. Faith is God’s word accepted by us; because this faith is living and active, it results in the work of faith, which includes all the proper actions that issue out of our living faith—1 Thes. 1:7-10.

1 Thes. 1:7-10—So that you became a pattern to all those who believe in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For from you the word of the Lord has sounded out; not only in Macedonia and in Achaia, but in every place, your faith toward God has gone out, so that we have no need of saying anything. ⁹For they themselves report

concerning us what kind of entrance we had toward you and how you turned to God from the idols to serve a living and true God ¹⁰And await His Son from the heavens, whom He raised from the dead, Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath which is coming.

2. Faith is to believe that God is; to believe that God is implies that we are not; He must be the only One, the unique One in everything, and we must be nothing in everything—Heb. 11:6; Gen. 5:24; John 8:58; 2 Cor. 5:7.

Heb. 11:6—But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing *to Him*, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Gen. 5:24—And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

John 8:58—Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Before Abraham came into being, I am.

2 Cor. 5:7—(For we walk by faith, not by appearance)—

- F. The way to receive such a faith is to contact the source, the Lord, the processed and consummated God, by calling on Him, praying to Him, and pray-reading His Word—Heb. 4:16; 12:1-2; Rom. 10:12; 2 Tim. 2:22; Eph. 6:17-18.

Heb. 4:16—Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.

Heb. 12:1-2—Therefore let us also, having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, put away every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles *us* and run with endurance the race which is set before us, ²Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

Rom. 10:12—For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord *is Lord* of all *and* rich to all who call upon Him;

2 Tim. 2:22—But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Eph. 6:17-18—And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which *Spirit* is the word of God, ¹⁸By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

- G. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in and to speak forth the Lord; faith is in our spirit, which is mingled with the Holy Spirit—2 Cor. 4:13.

2 Cor. 4:13—And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, “I believed, therefore I spoke,” we also believe, therefore we also speak,

III. The labor of love is the key of the fruitfulness of our work of faith— 1 Thes. 1:3:

1 Thes. 1:3—Remembering unceasingly your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father;

- A. Love is the intrinsic motivation, the inner life, and the real strength of our work of faith, which is to have the Lord as our “first love” in order to do “the first works”—Rev. 2:4-5; Gal. 5:6; cf. Col. 1:28—2:1; 1 Cor. 15:58; Acts 20:20, 31. **Rev. 2:4-5**—But I have *one thing* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

Gal. 5:6—For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything nor uncircumcision, but faith *avails*, operating through love.

cf. Col. 1:28—2:1—Whom we announce, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man full-grown in Christ; ²⁹For which also I labor, struggling according to His operation which operates in me in power.

¹For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and *for* those in Laodicea, even all who have not seen my face in the flesh,

cf. 1 Cor. 15:58—Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

cf. Acts 20:20—How I did not withhold any of those things that are profitable by not declaring *them* to you and by *not* teaching you publicly and from house to house,

cf. Acts 20:31—Therefore watch, remembering that for three years, night and day, I did not cease admonishing each one with tears.

- B. God is love; we love because He first loved us—1 John 4:8, 19:

1 John 4:8—He who does not love has not known God, because God is love.

1 John 4:19—We love because He first loved us.

1. God’s love motivates us, His children, to love people without any discrimination—Matt. 5:43-48; cf. 9:12-13; 27:38; Luke 23:42-43.

Matt. 5:43-48—You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.” ⁴⁴But I say to you, Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵So that you may become sons of your Father who is in the heavens, because He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the just and the unjust. ⁴⁶For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers, what better thing are you doing? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸You therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.

cf. Matt. 9:12-13—Now when He heard *this*, He said, Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are ill. ¹³But go and learn what *this* means, “I desire mercy and not sacrifice,” for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.

cf. Matt. 27:38—At that time two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left.

cf. Luke 23:42-43—And he said, Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom. ⁴³And He said to him, Truly I say to you, Today you shall be with Me in Paradise.

2. Love motivates us to shepherd people with the loving and forgiving heart of our Father God and the shepherding and seeking spirit of our Savior Christ; this is the labor of love—15:3-10, 17-18; John 10:11, 16; 21:15-17; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:4.

Luke 15:3-10—And He told them this parable, saying, ⁴Which man of you, who has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? ⁵And when he finds *it*, he lays *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶And when he comes into his house, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost. ⁷I tell you that in the same way there will be *more* joy in heaven over one sinner repenting than over ninety-nine righteous persons who have no need of repentance. ⁸Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one silver coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek carefully until she finds *it*? ⁹And when she finds *it*, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I lost. ¹⁰In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner repenting.

Luke 15:17-18—But when he came to himself, he said, How many of my father's hired servants abound in bread, but I am perishing here in famine! ¹⁸I will rise up and go to my father, and I will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you.

John 10:11—I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

John 10:16—And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must lead them also, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd.

John 21:15-17—Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. ¹⁶He said to him again a second time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. ¹⁷He said to him the third time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

1 Pet. 2:25—For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1 Pet. 5:4—And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

3. Love is not jealous, is not provoked, does not take account of evil, covers all things, endures all things, never falls away, and is the greatest—1 Cor. 13:4-8, 13. **1 Cor. 13:4-8**—Love suffers long. Love is kind; it is not jealous. Love does not brag *and* is not puffed up; ⁵It does not behave unbecomingly *and* does not seek its own things; it is not provoked *and* does not take account of evil; ⁶It does not rejoice because of unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; ⁷It covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸Love never falls *away*. But

whether prophecies, they will be rendered useless; or tongues, they will cease; or knowledge, it will be rendered useless.

1 Cor. 13:13—Now there abide faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

4. The Body of Christ builds itself up in love—Eph. 4:16; 1 Cor. 8:1.

Eph. 4:16—Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and *through* the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

1 Cor. 8:1—Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.

5. We need a burning spirit of love to overcome the degradation of today's church—2 Tim. 1:6-7; 2 Cor. 5:14; 12:15.

2 Tim. 1:6-7—For which cause I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

2 Cor. 5:14—For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died;

2 Cor. 12:15—But I, I will most gladly spend and be utterly spent on behalf of your souls. If I love you more abundantly, am I loved less?

6. To overcome the degradation of the church, we need to pursue love with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart—2 Tim. 2:22; 1 Cor. 13:1.

2 Tim. 2:22—But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

1 Cor. 13:1—If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but do not have love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

7. Love is the most excellent way for us to be anything and to do anything for the building up of the Body of Christ—12:31b—13:1.

1 Cor. 12:31—13:1—But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And moreover I show to you a most excellent way. ¹If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but do not have love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

IV. The endurance of hope is the long life of our work of faith—1 Thes. 1:3:

1 Thes. 1:3—Remembering unceasingly your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father;

- A. The life that we have received through regeneration enables us to have a hope, with numerous aspects, for this age, for the coming age, and for eternity—1 Pet. 1:3; Titus 1:2:

1 Pet. 1:3—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Titus 1:2—In the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the times of the ages,

1. In this age we have the hope of growing in life, of maturing, of manifesting our gifts, of exercising our functions, of being transformed, of overcoming, of being redeemed in our body, and of entering into glory—Col. 1:27; 1 Pet. 1:3-5, 9; Rom. 8:23-25, 30; Phil. 3:21; 2 Tim. 4:7-8.

Col. 1:27—To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

1 Pet. 1:3-5—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴Unto an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, kept in the heavens for you, ⁵Who are being guarded by the power of God through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed at the last time;

1 Pet. 1:9—Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Rom. 8:23-25—And not only *so*, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body. ²⁴For we were saved in hope. But a hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly await *it* through endurance.

Rom. 8:30—And those whom He predestinated, these He also called; and those whom He called, these He also justified; and those whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Phil. 3:21—Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of His glory, according to His operation by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself.

2 Tim. 4:7-8—I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith. ⁸Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, with which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will recompense me in that day, and not only me but also all those who have loved His appearing.

2. In the coming age we have the hope of entering into the kingdom, of reigning with the Lord, and of enjoying the blessings of eternal life in the manifestation of the kingdom of the heavens—Rev. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:18.

Rev. 5:10—And have made them a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign on the earth.

2 Tim. 4:18—The Lord will deliver me from every evil work and will save me into His heavenly kingdom, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

3. In eternity we have the hope of being the New Jerusalem, where we will participate fully in the consummated blessings of the eternal life in its ultimate manifestation in eternity—Rev. 21:1-7; 22:1-5.

Rev. 21:1-7—And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and the sea is no more. ²And I saw the holy city, New

Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. ⁴And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death will be no more, nor will there be sorrow or crying or pain anymore; for the former things have passed away. ⁵And He who sits on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said, Write, for these words are faithful and true. ⁶And He said to me, They have come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give to him who thirsts from the spring of the water of life freely. ⁷He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be God to him, and he will be a son to Me.

Rev. 22:1-5—And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street. ²And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³And there will no longer be a curse. And the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His slaves will serve Him; ⁴And they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. ⁵And night will be no more; and they have no need of the light of a lamp and of the light of the sun, for the Lord God will shine upon them; and they will reign forever and ever.

- B. The endurance of hope is the “endurance of Christ” (2 Thes. 3:5) and the “endurance in Jesus” (Rev. 1:9), and we “run with endurance the race which is set before us, looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith” (Heb. 12:1-2).

2 Thes. 3:5—And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ.

Rev. 1:9—I John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and endurance in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

Heb. 12:1-2—Therefore let us also, having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, put away every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles *us* and run with endurance the race which is set before us, ²Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

- C. The endurance of hope subdues all kinds of disappointments, discouragements, and impossibilities; it overcomes all kinds of oppositions, obstacles, and frustrations—4:16; Phil. 2:13; 4:11-13; 1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Thes. 3:5.

Heb. 4:16—Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.

Phil. 2:13—For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for *His* good pleasure.

Phil. 4:11-13—Not that I speak according to lack, for I have learned, in whatever circumstances I am, to be content. ¹²I know also how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in everything and in all things I have learned the secret both to be filled and

to hunger, both to abound and to lack. ¹³I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me.

1 Cor. 15:58—Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

2 Thes. 3:5—And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ.

D. Such endurance consummates in gaining sinners, feeding the believers, perfecting the saints, and building up the church, the Body of Christ, for the kingdom of God and of Christ—2 Cor. 6:4; 1 Cor. 15:58.

2 Cor. 6:4—But in everything we commend ourselves as ministers of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

1 Cor. 15:58—Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

V. Our work of faith, labor of love, and endurance of hope are “according to the measure of the rule which the God of measure has apportioned to us”—2 Cor. 10:13:

2 Cor. 10:13—But we will not boast beyond *our* measure but according to the measure of the rule which the God of measure has apportioned to us, to reach even as far as you.

A. In spiritual work, the most important thing is to know “the pattern...in the mountain” (Heb. 8:5); if there is no comprehension of God’s plan, there is no possibility for God’s work (Acts 26:19).

Heb. 8:5—Who serve the example and shadow of the heavenly things, even as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to complete the tabernacle; for, “See,” He said, “that you make all things according to the pattern that was shown to you in the mountain.”

Acts 26:19—Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

B. Every worker has a specific work which God measures to him and a pathway upon which God wants him to walk; if you are standing in your rightful position, working in your rightful service, and walking on your rightful pathway, that is the highest glory—13:25a, 36a; 20:24; 2 Tim. 4:7.

Acts 13:25—Now as John was completing his course, he said, What do you suppose that I am? I am not *the Christ*. But behold, One is coming after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.

Acts 13:36—Now David, having served his own generation by the counsel of God, did indeed fall asleep and was buried with his fathers and saw corruption;

Acts 20:24—But I consider my life of no account *as if* precious to myself, in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus to solemnly testify of the gospel of the grace of God.

2 Tim. 4:7—I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith.

VI. Paul said, “That I may finish my course”—Acts 20:24:

Acts 20:24—But I consider my life of no account *as if* precious to myself, in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus to solemnly testify of the gospel of the grace of God.

- A. Jessie Penn-Lewis spoke the following—“There is a ‘course’ prepared for every believer at the time of his regeneration for the purpose of bringing the new life he has just received to its full maturity, and for the purpose of making his life useful to God to the uttermost. The responsibility of every believer is to seek out this ‘course’ and walk therein. Others cannot determine and say what this course is. Only God knows and only God can make man know; only He can lead the believers into this course. Today [the situation] is the same as in the past when he led Jeremiah and the other prophets, and Paul, Philip, and other apostles.”
- B. The most glorious thing in a man’s life is that he would do the things that God wants him to do on the very ground that God has set for him; for every believer, there is a pathway predetermined by God for him to walk on.
- C. The Lord said to Jeremiah, “Everywhere I send you, you shall go; / And everything I command you, you shall speak”—Jer. 1:7b.
- D. Those who are chosen by God have absolutely no freedom; even if they want to run away, they will not succeed (cf. Jonah 1—2); today many believers zealously work, but there are few who do what God measures to them and take the way that God ordains for them—see *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 9, pp. 301-303.

VII. Our labor for the Lord in His resurrection life with His resurrection power is never in vain; such labor will be rewarded by the returning Lord with the authority to rule and with the enjoyment of the Lord in the coming kingdom—1 Cor. 15:58; 3:12; Matt. 24:45-47; 25:21, 23.

1 Cor. 15:58—Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

1 Cor. 3:12—But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble,

Matt. 24:45-47—Who then is the faithful and prudent slave, whom the master has set over his household to give them food at the proper time? ⁴⁶Blessed is that slave whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. ⁴⁷Truly I say to you that he will set him over all his possessions.

Matt. 25:21—His master said to him, Well *done*, good and faithful slave. You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.

Matt. 25:23—His master said to him, Well *done*, good and faithful slave. You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.