

Glory to Christ

Key Verse:
***“Wherefore also we
pray always for
you, that our God
would count you
worthy of this
calling, and fulfil
all the good
pleasure of his
goodness, and the
work of faith with
power.”***
***II Thessalonians
1:11***

Selected Scripture:
II Thessalonians 1

hibited in their trials and persecutions was evident.

It is clear from this lesson that the faithful members of the body of Christ, as exemplified by the brethren in Thessalonica, will go through much in the way of trials, tribulations, and even persecution. Paul says that these are tokens, or evidences, of being counted “worthy of the kingdom of God.” (vs. 5) Such trials, although difficult for the flesh, are for the purpose of helping to shape and mold the Christian character to the pattern of our master, Christ Jesus. He was tried and tested in this way in order that he might gain a feeling for the difficulties which fallen man has dealt with for thousands of years.

APOSTLE PAUL OPENS HIS

second epistle to the Thessalonians by thanking God for them, “because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure.” (II Thess. 1:3,4) He was clearly pleased with their progress, for he speaks of it along numerous lines—their faith was growing, their love was abounding, and the faithful endurance which they ex-

He was “touched with the feeling of our infirmities” (Heb. 4:15), and became a sympathetic High Priest.

The church—Jesus’ footstep followers—must also develop this same sympathetic attitude. These, along with Jesus, will constitute the great antitypical High Priest in the coming earthly kingdom, to bless and instruct all of mankind in righteousness. Having previously been developed through difficult experiences in this life, Christ and the church will be able to be patient, longsuffering, gentle, and loving as mankind gradually learns and develops the character necessary to pass the tests of that judgment day period.

In the Key Verse, Paul said that he prayed for the brethren, that God would count them worthy of their calling, and fulfill in them everything required to be counted faithful. It is noteworthy that Paul says this is a work of ‘faith with power.’ Faith implies complete and implicit trust in God, even in those experiences in which his will seems unclear, or his purposes vague. The power mentioned is the power of God’s Holy Spirit, for it is only through its guiding influence that faith can be made complete and fully function in the life of the Christian. Without the Holy Spirit and its enlightening influence, the Thessalonian brethren would surely have failed to develop the needed level of faith required to endure the trials, tribulations, and persecutions previously cited. The same is true of the Lord’s people today.

Our lesson closes with these words, “That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (II Thess. 1:12) Those who are faithful as the brethren were in Thessalonica, are such, not because of their own works, but by the grace of God and by the power of his Holy Spirit. This was exemplified in his son Jesus, who, as a perfect man, proclaimed God’s grace, and showed forth his power. Truly, the name of our Lord Jesus Christ will be glorified in us if we are faithful, even unto death. ■