

## OUR DESTINY IS JESUS

### I. 1 Thessalonians 5:8-24

A. Here's where we've been for the past month: We are *jars of clay* that contain the Gospel Treasure--the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ. We are *heralds* of this Good News. We are among those commanded and commissioned by Jesus Christ to love and to preach and make disciples. Our Lord has entrusted *minas* to us--charged us with His kingdom business--for which we will all give an account.

B. Hopefully we take our calling seriously, see it as a privilege and not a menacing burden. Hopefully we see ourselves as people called to gladly go and tell, work and serve, and keep our handkerchiefs *mina* free. Despite being clay pots, I pray we shine forth and endeavor to generously share the Priceless Treasure we've been given.

C. Today is a Communion Sunday and we come before the Lord to remember how the Gospel, that has found its way into our hearts, continues to transform us. Besides 66 books in the Bible that point to Jesus and the cross, we have the ordinances of communion and baptism as well as the institution of marriage and Christians burials to dramatize the Gospel so we see it more and more clearly. As we read the Word this morning, may it ready us to receive the Bread and Cup.

D. 1 Thessalonians 5:8-22 will take us to Communion...

1) V8 *"But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation."* (Faith, Hope, and Love form the triad of Christianity. Often they're symbolically depicted with a cross, anchor, and heart. Paul said at the end of 1 Cor. 13, "Faith, hope, and love, these three, but the greatest of these is Love." My prayer is that our faith, hope, & love are more visible in our lives than mere pieces of jewelry.)

2) V9-10 is the Gospel: *"For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with Him."* (Jesus bore the wrath of God against us on the cross. Through this bloody cross our sin became His and His righteousness became ours. What does our future hold? Our destiny is not wrath but Jesus! The Bread & Cup remind us.)

3) V11-13 *"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing." (If the cross removed our enemy status against God and brought His friendship, peace, and adoption, how should we treat one another?) "We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves." (Merely a nice suggestion? When you hear those words do you hear your Grandma or God Almighty? The Prince of Peace said: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you..." Col. 1:19-20 says: "For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him (Jesus), and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross." Paul said in Rom. 12:18: "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." Eph. 6:15 says the Armor of God includes: "having feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace." ) (Any difference between the Church and the Elks or Moose Lodge? Cross vs antlers.)*

4) V15 *"See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone." (In John 3:16-18, Jesus tells Nicodemus how God would address our evil: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him. Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because He has not believed in the name of the only Son of God."*

5) V16-22 Six or seven sermons in four brief sentences: *"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil."*

### II. Communion

A. **Let's re-read 9-10:** *"For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with Him." Our destiny is not wrath but Jesus!*

B. The Bread & Cup remind us that we are no longer under wrath **if** indeed Christ Jesus is our Lord. Only His shed blood can remove it. Only His righteous record will be good enough on that Day. The Bread & Cup vividly remind our hearts.

C. Lyrics to "*Jesus, Thank You*" by Pat Sczebel (Our Communion Song today)

## **Jesus, Thank You**

Words and Music by Pat Sczebel  
© 2003 Integrity's Hosanna! Music (ASCAP)/Sovereign Grace Worship (ASCAP).

The mystery of the cross I cannot comprehend,  
The agonies of Calvary.  
You the perfect Holy One, crushed Your Son,  
Who drank the bitter cup reserved for me.

Your blood has washed away my sin.  
Jesus, thank You,  
The Father's wrath completely satisfied,  
Jesus, thank You,  
Once Your enemy, now seated at Your table,  
Jesus, thank You.

By Your perfect sacrifice, I've been brought near,  
Your enemy You've made Your friend.  
Pouring out the riches of Your glorious grace,  
Your mercy and Your kindness know no end.

Lover of my soul,  
I want to live for You.

**\* Pray and Serve Communion...**

**\* Our destiny is not wrath but Jesus! That powerful reality should shape our minds and our hearts, our goals and aspirations, our stewardship of time, talents, gifts, and graces. And that sweet amazing grace should cause worship to erupt, obedience to dance, hope to rise, mercy to flow, and our joy to be made full.**

**\* Benediction 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24** *"Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it."*

## **Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff**

### **1 Thessalonians 5:8-24 (ESV)**

**8** But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. **9** For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, **10** who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with Him. **11** Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. **12** We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, **13** and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. **14** And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. **15** See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. **16** Rejoice always, **17** pray without ceasing, **18** give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. **19** Do not quench the Spirit. **20** Do not despise prophecies, **21** but test everything; hold fast what is good. **22** Abstain from every form of evil. **23** Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. **24** He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it.

### **John 3:16-18 (ESV)**

**16** For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. **17** For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him. **18** Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because He has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

## **Film Clips & Other Links**

"Jesus, Thank You" Led by Bob Kauflin with the group, Reilly  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zNEMUZUZhY>

The Glory of God in the Cross - John Piper  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p2A5ijUnAzk>

**The Meaning of the Cross - R.C. Sproul**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MxtPKuGiMul>

**What is the Gospel? - Tim Keller**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0g-s4Qhtyk>

**The Gospel: The Most Terrifying Truth of Scripture - Paul Washer**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TXOWyjB7d24>

### **Bonus Stuff**

#### **Romans 3:21-26 (ESV)**

**21** But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— **22** the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: **23** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **24** and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, **25** whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in His divine forbearance He had passed over former sins. **26** It was to show His righteousness at the present time, so that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

#### **Psalms 119:89, 105, 157-160 (NIV)**

**89** Your word, O LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens... **105** Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path... **159** See how I love Your precepts; preserve my life, O LORD, according to Your love. **160** All Your words are true; all Your righteous laws are eternal.

#### **Matthew 24:35 (NIV)**

**35** Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away.

#### **Colossians 3:16 (Amplified)**

**16** Let the word [spoken by] Christ (the Messiah) have its home [in your hearts and minds] and dwell in you in [all its] richness, as you teach and admonish and train one another in all insight and intelligence and wisdom [in spiritual things, and as you sing] psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody to God with [His] grace in your hearts.

#### **2 Thessalonians 1:3-12 (ESV)**

**3** We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. **4** Therefore we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions that you are enduring. **5** This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering— **6** since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, **7** and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels **8** in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. **9** They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His might, **10** when He comes on that day to be glorified in His saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed. **11** To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of His calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by His power, **12** so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **What Happens When We Die? - From the Westminster Confession**

"The bodies of men, after death, return to dust, and see corruption: but their souls, which neither die nor sleep, having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them: the souls of the righteous, being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God, in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies. And the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day. Beside these two places, for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledges none."

- *The Westminster Confession*, (Chapter XXXII), 1646.

#### **Quote by Harold Senkbeil**

"Most people think that the human dilemma is that our lives are out of adjustment; we don't meet God's expectations. Salvation then becomes a matter of rearranging our priorities and adjusting our life-style to correspond with God's

will. In its crassest form, this error leads people to think they earn their own salvation. More often in today's evangelical world, that error has a more subtle disguise: armed with forgiveness through Jesus, people are urged to practice the techniques and principles Christ gave to bring their life-style back into line. It is certainly true that sinful lives are out of adjustment. We are all in need of the Spirit's sanctifying power. But that comes only after our real problem is solved. Sins are just the symptom; our real dilemma is death. God warned Adam and Eve that the knowledge of came with a high price tag: "...when you eat of (the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) you will surely die" (Ge. 2:17). Our first parents wanted to be like God and were willing to pay the price. And we are still paying the price: "the wages of sin is death..." (Rom. 6:23) "...in Adam we all die" (1 Cor. 15:22); "...you were dead in your transgressions and sins" (Eph. 2:1). The real problem we all face is death. Physical death, to be sure. But ultimately and most horribly, spiritual death--being cut off from God forever. And everyone must die. You can either die alone or in Jesus. In His death Jesus Christ swallowed up our death, and rose again triumphantly to take all of the teeth out of the grave. In the promise of the resurrection, death loses its power. When we die with Jesus, we really live!"

- Harold Senkbeil, *Dying To Live: The Power of Forgiveness*, p 13.

#### **Quote by Charles H. Spurgeon**

"The hearing of the gospel involves the hearer in responsibility. It is a great privilege to hear the gospel. You may smile and think there is nothing very great in it. The damned in hell know. Oh, what would they give if they could hear the gospel now? If they could come back and entertain but the shadow of a hope that they might escape from the wrath to come? The saved in heaven estimate this privilege at a high rate, for, having obtained salvation through the preaching of this gospel, they can never cease to bless their God for calling them by His word of truth. O that you knew it! On your dying beds the listening to a gospel sermon will seem another thing than it seems now."

#### **Quote by A.W. Tozer**

"The cross is the lightning rod of grace that short-circuits God's wrath to Christ so that only the light of His love remains for believers."

#### **Quote by Matt Chandler**

"The place the Gospel holds out for us is where God's kindness and severity meet. This place is called the Cross, and it is where grace and wrath intersect. It is this place of shame and victory that God, in the form of the man Jesus of Nazareth, the long-expected Messiah, offered in His death the blood atonement necessary to satisfy God's justice and secure our salvation."

#### **Quote by Tim Keller**

"The Christian Gospel is that I am so flawed that Jesus had to die for me, yet I am so loved and valued that Jesus was glad to die for me. This leads to deep humility and deep confidence at the same time. It undermines both swaggering and sniveling. I cannot feel superior to anyone, and yet I have nothing to prove to anyone. I do not think more of myself nor less of myself. Instead, I think of myself less."

#### **Quote by C.S. Lewis**

"God does not love us because we are lovable but rather because He is love... Christ did not die for men because they were intrinsically worth dying for, but because He is intrinsically love, and therefore loves infinitely."

#### **Quote by Charles H. Spurgeon**

"The more unworthy you feel yourself to be, the more evidence have you that nothing but unspeakable love could have led the Lord Jesus to save such a soul as yours. The more demerit you feel, the clearer is the display of the abounding love of God in having chosen you, and called you, and made you an heir of bliss."

#### **Quote by John Newton**

"When people are right with God, they are apt to be hard on themselves and easy on other people. But when they are not right with God, they are easy on themselves and hard on others."

#### **Quote by D.L. Moody**

"The thief had nails through both hands, so that he could not work; and a nail through each foot, so that he could not run errands for the Lord; he could not lift a hand or a foot toward his salvation, and yet Christ offered him the gift of God; and he took it. Christ threw him a passport, and took him into Paradise."

- D. L. Moody, "Day by Day with D.L. Moody," Moody Press.

#### **Quote by Charles H. Spurgeon**

"I do not come into this pulpit hoping that perhaps somebody will of his own free will return to Christ. My hope lies in another quarter. I hope that my Master will lay hold of some of them and say, 'You are mine, and you shall be mine. I claim you for myself.' My hope arises from the freeness of [sovereign] grace, and not from the freedom of the will."

**Quote by LeBron James**

"It's only one guy in the world, ever, where everything will be all right when He comes back, and that's Jesus Christ. Other than that, you can't bank on nobody being OK."

- LeBron James, following his team's loss to the New Orleans Pelican, Dec. 4, 2015.