Gospel of Grace FELLOWSHIP

2 Thessalonians 1:1-4

Commendable Church Growth

by Mike Kauffmann

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Defining "Church"

2 Thessalonians 1:1,2

Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 16:18

"I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it."

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The "Church" as Local Assemblies

Acts 20:28

"Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."

Romans 16:4

who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;

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The "Church" Universal & Glorified

Ephesians 5:27

…that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless.

Hebrews 12:23

…to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect,

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The Visible and Invisible Church

1 John 2:19

They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, in order that it might be shown that they all are not of us.

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Paul's Salutation

2 Thessalonians 1:1,2

Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Uncommonly Paul adds nothing to his name--a more endearing introduction
- "In" terminology is unique to Christianity
- Not "in" Confucius, Buddha, Mohammed, Allah

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Growing in Faith and Love

2 Thessalonians 1:3

We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater;

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Indestructible Faith

James 1:2, 3

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, know that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

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Growing in Faith

Romans 4:19, 20

And without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God,

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Paul's Prayers Were Answered

- 1 Thessalonians 1:3
- 1 Thessalonians 3:10-12
- 2 Thessalonians 1: 3

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Faith, Love and Perseverance

2Thessalonians 1:4

…therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure.

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Growing in Love for One Another

1 Peter 1:22, 23

Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God.

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Differentiating Between Good and Bad Boasting

2Corinthians 10:17

But he who boasts, let him boast in the Lord.

James 4:16

But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.

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Accentuating What Jesus Commends in the Church

- Overcoming
- Perseverance
- Rejecting and Hating False Doctrine
- Being Faithful When Weak

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Commendable Church Growth Characteristics

- Genuine Conversion
- Increasing Faith
- Growing Love
- Perseverance

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