INTRODUCTION

1. Title. Since ancient times this book has been known as The Acts of the Apostles, but the title does not appear in the book itself.

In the earliest extant (but incomplete) copy of the book, known as Papyrus 45 (see Vol. V, p. 116), and in the Codex Sinaiticus the title is given simply as "Acts," with no mention of the apostles. This is reasonable, for the book is not a full history of all these men. A few chapters describe the work of Peter and John, while the remainder of the book records the conversion and ministry of Paul until his first Roman imprisonment. Consequently the book does not completely cover the work of any one of the apostles, and, indeed, is silent about most of them. Of the Twelve, only Peter, James, and John play leading parts in the narrative, but much of the book is devoted to Paul, who, though an apostle, was not one of the original disciples. The title "Acts" would therefore seem sufficient.

From the 2nd century onward there appeared a stream of tales purporting to give the lives and experiences of the apostles (see The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 8; cf. Eusebius Ecclesiastical History iii. 25. 4-7). These writings were also called "Acts." It was perhaps to distinguish the canonical Acts from these apocryphal imitations that the name of the Biblical book was variously elaborated as "Acting of the Apostles," "Acts of All the Apostles," or "Acts of the Apostles."


The early church never seriously questioned the canonicity of the book, and it soon gained a secure place among New Testament writings.

3. Historical Setting. The Roman Empire was enjoying its heyday. Augustus had laid a firm administrative foundation on which the better of his successors were able to build, and which the lesser were unable to demolish. The benefits that Roman civilization brought to the empire's inhabitants continued to be enjoyed by them even when the ruler himself was weak or tyrannical or both. Thus, during the period covered by the book of Acts, c. a.d. 31-63, the emperors were Tiberius (14-37), Caligula (37-41), Claudius (41-54), and Nero (54-68). <Page 114> Of these, Tiberius and Claudius used their abilities for the good of their far-flung possessions, whereas Caligula and Nero did little but harm. Yet, in spite of this checkered leadership, the empire maintained conditions that were favorable to the spread of the gospel. A fairly stable government, a common administrative system, Roman justice, an expanding citizenship, peace preserved by disciplined legions, roads pressing into every corner of the then-known world, a language (Greek) that was almost universally understood-these were factors that favored the program undertaken by the apostles.

At first the new religion profited from its connections with Judaism. The chosen race had been dispersed to many corners of the empire, and its basic beliefs were eventually tolerated by the Romans. Christianity, as an offshoot of the older faith, shared in this toleration. But Judaism fell into disfavor. Its adherents were expelled from Rome during the reign of Claudius (Acts 18:2), and intense Jewish national aspirations led to rebellion in Palestine and to the disastrous wars of a.d. 66-70 that culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70. As the position of Judaism worsened, the situation of Christianity grew more perilous. It was a religion with no legal standing, and its members were without protection in the eyes of the law. When trouble arose, such as when Rome burned in a.d. 64, it was easy to make a scapegoat of the Christian community, and the subsequent persecution set a terrible precedent that was all too faithfully followed in succeeding years.
It is against this background that Luke prepared his history of the early church, and wrote the Acts of the Apostles. For a fuller discussion of the subject see Vol. V, pp. 46-73, 664, 665, and Vol. VI, pp. 22-33, 71-84, 89-95.

4. Theme. Luke declares (Acts 1:1) that his "former treatise" dealt with "all that Jesus began both to do and teach." With clear historical insight he recognized that the work of Jesus on earth was but a beginning, which beginning he recorded in his Gospel. But he knew that his history would be incomplete without an account of what Jesus did through the infant church after His ascension. He therefore sets his hand to describe the continuation of Christ's work through the ministry of His disciples. He does this in an orderly way by taking Acts 1:8 as the theme around which the acts of the apostles are developed. In obedience to their Master's command, the disciples witnessed (1) in Jerusalem, (2) in all Judea, (3) in Samaria, and (4) in the uttermost parts of the earth. As Luke follows their movements, his record falls naturally into those divisions, and his book thus traces the geographical growth of the early church.

He also records another significant development. The church was Jewish in its origin, but it could never fulfill a worldwide mission if it remained within the limits of an exclusive religion like Judaism. It had to free itself from such exclusiveness. Luke outlines the steps that led to freedom. His narrative describes the growth of Christianity from a Jewish sect to an international religion, until the time when Paul could say that the gospel "was preached to every creature which is under heaven" (Col. 1:23). Luke records that thousands of Jews, including priests, early accepted the gospel (Acts 6:7); and that persecutions soon drove Philip to evangelize the Samaritans and the partly Judaized Ethiopian (ch. 8). He tells how Peter reached the Roman centurion Cornelius (ch. 10). He emphasizes how men of Cyrene and Cyprus preached to non-Jews for the first time (ch. 11); how, the way having been opened, Paul and his associates evangelized the heathen in great numbers (chs. 13; 14); how they were actually able, with the help of Peter and James, to secure for Gentile converts freedom from subjection to Jewish ritual (ch. 15). His record closes with a vivid picture of the gospel's spread throughout the eastern Roman world (chs. 16 to 28). He sees Christianity becoming largely a Gentile religion.

Luke was peculiarly fitted to be the historian of such a movement. He is thought to have been a Gentile. He showed a deep interest in ministry to non-Jews (see Vol. V, pp. 663, 664). How appropriate, then, that he should be chosen to relate the story of the proclamation of the gospel to the Gentile world!

The author of Acts fully recognizes the position of the Holy Spirit in the growth of the infant church. From the day when Jesus "through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles" (ch. 1:2), the Spirit appears as the counselor of the leaders and their associates. By the miracle of Pentecost "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (ch. 2:4). A little later the believers also were "filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness" (ch. 4:31). The seven men chosen as deacons were "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" (ch. 6:3), and one of the most prominent of their number, Stephen, was "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost" (v. 5). As the narrative progresses the Spirit continues to guide-in such situations as the ordination of Saul (ch. 9:17), in the acceptance of Gentiles into the church (ch. 10:44-47), in the separation of Barnabas and Saul for missionary work (ch. 13:2-4), in the Council of Jerusalem (ch. 15:28), and in Paul's missionary journeys (ch. 16:6, 7). The book of Acts may therefore be said to stand as a partial record of the Spirit's accomplishments through the apostles and their followers.

5. Outline.
   B. The gospel commission, 1:2-8.
   C. Christ's ascension, 1:9-11.

II. Ministry in Jerusalem, 1:12 to 7:60.
A. Waiting for the power of the Spirit, 1:12-26.
1. The apostles' return to Jerusalem, 1:12, 13.
2. The prayer season, 1:14.

2. Peter's sermon, 2:14-36.
3. Results of the sermon, 2:37-41.
4. The devotion and increase of the infant church, 2:42-47.

C. The healing of the lame man, 3:1 to 4:31.

3. The arrest of Peter and John, 4:1-4.
4. The trial and release of the apostles, 4:5-22.

1. Community of goods, 4:32 to 5:11.
a. The believers share their possessions, 4:32-37.
a. Miracles of healing, 5:12-16.
c. The defense of Peter, 5:29-32.
3. Preaching from house to house, 5:41, 42.

E. Arrest and death of Stephen, 6:8 to 7:60.
1. The preaching of Stephen, one of the deacons, 6:8-10.
2. Stephen's arrest and trial, 6:11 to 7:53.
a. The arrest, 6:11-14.
b. Stephen's illumination, 6:15.
3. The death of Stephen, 7:54-60.

III. Ministry in Palestine and Syria, 8:1 to 12:23.
A. Scattering of the church under persecution, 8:1-4.

B. Philip, Peter, and John in Samaria, 8:5-25.
2. Simon and his simony rebuked by Peter, 8:14-25.

C. Philip's further ministry, 8:26-40.
2. Philip in Azotus and Caesarea, 8:40.
   1. Saul of Tarsus the persecutor, 9:1, 2.
   2. Saul's vision of the Christ and consequent conversion, 9:3-17.
   5. His escape to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and return to Tarsus, 9:25-30.
   6. The church has rest from persecution, 9:31.

E. Peter's later ministry, 9:32 to 10:48.
      b. Dorcas resurrected, 9:36-42.
      a. Cornelius directed to Peter in Joppa, 9:43 to 10:8.
      b. Peter's vision concerning clean and unclean, 10:9-16.
      c. Peter goes to Caesarea and instructs Cornelius, 10:17-43.
      d. Cornelius and his company are baptized, 10:44-48.

   1. Peter defends his Gentile ministry before the apostles, 11:1-18.
   <Page 117>

G. Persecution of James and Peter, 12:1-23.
   1. Imprisonment and execution of James by Herod Agrippa I, 12:1, 2.
   2. Imprisonment and miraculous release of Peter, 12:3-9.

A. Paul and Barnabas at Antioch, 12:24, 25.

B. Paul and Barnabas commissioned by the prophets and teachers of Antioch, 13:1-3.

   7. The return to Antioch, 14:24-28.

V. The Council of Jerusalem, 15:1-35.
A. Trouble with the Judaizers, 15:1, 5.

B. Delegates to the council, 15:2-4.

C. The discussion, 15:6-18.

D. The decision, 15:19-29.
E. The decision made known in Antioch, 15:30-33.

F. Silas, Paul, and Barnabas remain in Antioch, 15:34, 35.

VI. Paul's Second Missionary Journey, 15:36 to 18:22.
A. Dissension between Paul and Barnabas, 15:36-39.

B. Paul and Silas depart for Cilicia, 15:40, 41.

C. The calling of Timothy at Lystra, 16:1-3.

D. The ministry in Galatia, 16:4-10.
   1. The care of the churches, 16:4, 5.
   2. The Spirit's restraint concerning Asia and Bithynia, 16:6, 7.
   3. Macedonian call at Troas, 16:8-10.

E. The gospel in Europe, 16:11 to 18:17.
   4. Athens, 17:15-34.
      a. Paul's labor, 18:1-5.
      b. Expulsion from the synagogue, 18:6-11.
      c. Intervention of Gallio, 18:12-17.

F. Return to Antioch, 18:18-22.

A. Ministry in Galatia and Phrygia, 18:23.

D. Evangelization of Ephesus, 19:8-41.
E. Ministry in Macedonia and Greece, 20:1-5.
F. The first-day meeting in Troas, 20:6-12.
G. Meeting with the elders of Ephesus at Miletus, 20:13-38.

VIII. Paul's Arrest and Trials, 21:18 to 26:32.
D. His defense before the multitude, 21:40 to 22:22.
E. Paul's first imprisonment, 22:22 to 26:32.
   4. The Jewish plot against Paul, 23:12-22.
10. His innocence confirmed, 26:30-32.

A. The voyage, 27:1 to 28:16.
1. From Caesarea to Myra, 27:1-5.
2. From Myra to The fair havens, 27:6-12.
3. From Crete to shipwreck, 27:13-44.
   c. The shipwreck, 27:27-44.


C. Paul's two years in Rome, 28:30, 31.

SDA Bible Commentary on
The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the THESSALONIANS

INTRODUCTION

1. Title. In the earliest Greek manuscript the title of this epistle is simply, Pros Thessalonikeis A ("A To [the] Thessalonians I"). The considerably lengthened title in the KJV, "The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians," is the result of later elaboration.

2. Authorship. The epistle purports to be from Paul, Silvanus (Silas), and Timotheus (Timothy) (ch. 1:1). However, it is basically the work of Paul (see chs. 3:1, 2, 6, 7; 5:27). It is included among Paul's letters in the earliest list of NT books, the Muratorian Canon (a.d. 170). The early church writers, Irenaeus (c. a.d. 130-c. 202), Clement of Alexandria (died c. 220), and Tertullian (c. a.d. 160-c. 240), considered Paul to be its author. The personality and style of the apostle Paul pervade the epistles. His love for his converts and the burden he bears for their spiritual welfare are manifest throughout. The emphasis upon the great spiritual qualities of faith, love, and hope is distinctly Pauline (cf. 1 Cor. 13:13). Scholars today are in general agreement that Paul was the author of the epistle. Concerning the date of writing see Vol. VI, pp. 102, 103.

3. Historical Setting. Thessalonica was an important city, and the capital of the second division of Macedonia (see on Acts 17:1). It was situated at the head of the Thermaic Gulf, now known as the Gulf of Salonika. The Egnatian Road, which connected the East with Rome, passed through it. The favorable location and excellent harbor of Thessalonica combined to make it of great commercial importance. Possibly for this reason it possessed a large Jewish settlement and a synagogue (Acts 17:1). The city, now called Salonika, is one of the most important commercial centers of northern Greece. In addition, it is archeological interest, for the triumphal arch that crossed the former Via Egnatia still stands as a reminder of the glory and power of ancient Rome.

Paul's first contact with Thessalonica was on his Second Missionary Journey, immediately after his departure from Philippi (Acts 16:40; 17:1). Since it was his method of evangelism to preach in the important cities first, and thus to make them centers for the spread of the gospel to the surrounding towns and villages, he and his companions made their way from Philippi directly to Thessalonica, not stopping to preach in the towns of Amphipolis and Apollonia (see on Acts 17:1). Knowing that he must reach the Jews at Thessalonica first, if at all, Paul went to the synagogue on three successive Sabbaths and presented the great
truths of the gospel to his fellow countrymen. His recent disgraceful treatment at Philippi had not intimidated him, and in the power of the Holy Spirit he presented the Messianic prophecies of the OT, and showed their fulfillment in Jesus. Some of his Jewish hearers believed (Acts 17:4). Many more of the "devout Greeks" (see on Acts 17:4) accepted his message. Among the believers at Thessalonica there were also "of the chief women not a few" (Acts 17:4).

It seems probable that the missionaries continued their work for more than the three weeks here indicated, for Paul tells of having worked night and day to support himself while he preached the gospel to them (see 1 Thess. 2:9), and in his letter to the Philippians he refers to the gifts they sent while he was at Thessalonica (see on Phil. 4:16). His successful ministry soon aroused the fierce opposition of the Jews, which fomented strife and caused Paul to leave the city (Acts 17:5, 6). After the initial three Sabbaths spent in the synagogue, it seems that Paul continued his preaching in the house of Jason (Acts 17:7). He appears to have been particularly successful with the Greeks, for the church at Thessalonica seems to have been largely Gentile in composition (see on 1 Thess. 1:9; 4:5).

Mob violence, stirred up by the Jews, brought Paul's preaching to the attention of the Roman authorities, but the charge that the apostle was guilty of treason in presenting the doctrine of Christ's coming kingdom was not accepted by the magistrates. That Paul and his companions were not officially expelled from Thessalonica and debarred from returning, is evident from the fact that the apostle found it necessary to explain to the church why he had not returned (ch. 2:17, 18), and from the fact that Timothy did return (ch. 3:2). However, the Christians there seem to have thought it best for Paul and his associates to leave the city temporarily. The evangelists made their way to Berea, a city some distance to the southwest. Here again Paul preached in the synagogue, and among these Scripture-loving Jews he had much greater success. The news of his fresh activity soon reached the Jews of Thessalonica and spurred them to immediate action. They hastened to Berea and again stirred up the rabble against the missionaries (Acts 17:10-13). Paul was sent away to Athens by friends, but his companions remained in Macedonia. The apostle was most anxious for their help in Athens, and awaited them there (Acts 17:16). Timothy seems later to have joined him at Athens, and was then sent back by Paul to Thessalonica to encourage the new believers and bring back word of their condition (see 1 Thess. 3:1, 2, 6). It appears that Silas remained in Macedonia, for when Timothy returned to Greece, Silas accompanied him, and the both joined Paul at Corinth, a short stay in Athens (Acts 18:1, 5).

Upon receiving Timothy's report the apostle wrote his first letter to the Thessalonians. Manuscripts going back to the 5th century state at the end of this epistle that it was written from Athens. This supposition is probably drawn from ch. 3:1, 2. However, from ch. 3:6 it seems clear that 1 Thessalonians was not written until after Timothy's return from Macedonia, and according to Acts 18:1, 5, Paul was then at Corinth. Consequently it seems best to conclude that 1 Thessalonians was written there. This epistle is generally considered to be the first of Paul's letters that has been preserved (see Vol. VI, p. 102), and, with the possible exception of the epistle of James, it was probably the first book of the New Testament to be written. For a discussion of the date of 1 Thessalonians see Vol. VI, p. 103.

4. Theme. A radiant glow of ardent love permeates this epistle (cf. chs. 1:2-4; 2:7, 8; 3:6, 7). The apostle is most thankful for Timothy's report of the faithfulness of the Thessalonians and of their tender regard for him. He hastens to commend them for their noble qualities of faith, love, and hope. He is most anxious to visit them, for he had not had sufficient time while he was with them to instruct them fully in the truths of the gospel.

Certain problems, too, must have been reported by Timothy. Some at Thessalonica were grieving over loved ones who had died since receiving the gospel message, fearing that these loved ones could have no part in the glorious resurrection at the Lord's return. Some were fanatical in regard to the second advent, holding that they should not work, but await the Lord's coming in idle expectancy. Some were slipping back into the world, and were in danger of being lost in immorality. Others were inclined to independence, not willing to recognize the duly appointed leaders of the church. The "unruly," the "feebleminded," and the "weak" all needed help (ch. 5:14). Had it been possible, the apostle would have hastened to give personal instruction to
these beloved believers. More than once he tried to return, but Satan hindered him (ch. 2:18), and on this account he had to content himself by writing the church a letter.

The theme of the resultant epistle is practical godliness in view of Christ's return. The glorious advent of the Lord is the most prominent doctrine presented (chs. 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:23). Other doctrines mentioned are the death and resurrection of Christ (ch. 4:14), the resurrection of the righteous dead (vs. 13-16), future rewards and punishments (chs. 4:17; 5:3), the personal existence and active working of Satan (ch. 2:18), the doctrine of redemption, including election and sanctification (chs. 1:4; 4:3-7).

5. Outline.

I. Salutation, 1:1.

II. Review of Ministry to, and Relations With, the Thessalonians, 1:2 to 3:13.
   A. Thankfulness for the members' faithful witness, 1:2-10.
      1. Gratitude for their record, 1:2-4.
      2. Review of their fruitful acceptance of the gospel, 1:5-10.

   B. Paul's review of his ministry in Thessalonica, 2:1-16.

   C. Paul's endeavors to revisit his converts, 2:17-20.

      1. Purpose of Timothy's visit, 3:1-5.
         c. Paul's continued desire to visit the church, 3:10, 11.
         d. Paul's prayer for his converts, 3:12, 13.

III. Instructions and Exhortations, 4:1 to 5:28.
   A. Introduction, 4:1, 2.

   B. True bodily sanctification, 4:3-8.

   C. The Thessalonians' brotherly love, 4:9-10a.

   D. Admonitions to quiet industry, 4:10b-12.

      1. The glorious hope of the resurrection, 4:13, 14.
      2. The circumstances of the resurrection, 4:15, 16.
      3. The righteous, living and resurrected, translated, 4:17.
      4. Believers to comfort one another with these assurances, 4:18.

      1. The sudden coming of the day of the Lord, 5:1-3.
      2. Believers to be ever prepared, 5:4-11.

   G. Closing admonitions, 5:12-22.
      1. Respect the Lord's servants, 5:12, 13.
      2. Preserve peace in the church, 5:14, 15.
      3. Encouragement to rejoice, pray, and give thanks, 5:16-18.
The **Second Epistle** of Paul the Apostle to the **THESSALONIANS**

### INTRODUCTION

**1. Title.** In the earliest extant Greek manuscripts the title of this epistle is simply, Pros Thessalonikeis B ("To [the] Thessalonians II"). The considerably lengthened title in the KJV, The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians, is the result of later elaboration.

**2. Authorship.** Until recent times the Pauline authorship of the epistle has not been seriously questioned. The character of Paul is reflected throughout the epistle. The author's tender regard for his converts (ch. 2:13-17), his commendation of their virtues (chs. 1:3-5; 3:4), the extreme care he uses in pointing out weaknesses, and yet the strong, authoritative nature of his commands (ch. 3:6, 12), all give evidence that the author was Paul.

Not until the early part of the 19th century was serious question raised over the Pauline authorship of the section dealing with the "man of sin." It was urged that there is nothing else of such an apocalyptic nature in Paul's other epistles. This fact, however, does not make unreasonable the long-held view that Paul wrote the epistle. Although he nowhere else deals so directly with the apocalyptic, the fact that he did have visions (Acts 22:17-21; 2 Cor. 12:2-4) makes it understandable that he could have written such an apocalyptic passage. The author's treatment of this prophecy, with the earnest solicitude that God's people should not be deceived with respect to the time of the Lord's coming, but be ready for that great event, is definitely Pauline.

The genuineness of the epistle is sustained by strong evidence. Besides being named in the earliest extant lists of the NT canon, the second epistle is referred to or quoted by the same early church writers as is the first epistle (see p. 223). In addition, it seems to have been known by Polycarp (c. a.d. 150; Epistle of Polycarp to the Phillipians 11); and Justin Martyr (c. a.d. 150; Dialogue With Trypho 32; 110) mentions the "man of sin," as if making reference to Paul's prophecy in 2 Thess. 2:3. Concerning the date of writing see Vol. VI, p. 103.

**3. Historical Setting.** That the time and place of writing of the second epistle are the same as for the first is evident from the fact that the same three apostles are associated together (see 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1). Paul remained at Corinth only a year and a half on his Second Missionary Tour (see Acts 18:11), and there is no evidence that Silas was associated with him later. The second letter must have been written not more than a few months after the first; consequently their historical backgrounds are in general the same (see p. 223; for a discussion of the date of writing see Vol. VI p. 103). Probably the messenger who bore the first epistle returned and brought information to Paul that there was a feverish, fanatic spirit of unrest spreading among the members at Thessalonica owing to a feeling that the Lord's advent was about to take place. This condition demanded immediate attention. Any delay would be fatal to the best interests of the church, for among these humble Christians were fainthearted ones who were in grave danger of falling a prey to the deceptions of agitators.

**4. Theme.** In view of the problems at Thessalonica that prompted this letter, one of its first objectives was to assure the humble Christians of that church of their acceptance with the Lord. He insists that he must thank God for the victories won. He notes their advance in the Christian virtues of faith (2 Thess. 1:3), brotherly love (2 Thess. 1:3; cf. 1 Thess. 4:9, 10), and steadfastness under persecution (2 Thess. 1:4).
Since the second letter says nothing further in regard to the manner of Christ’s coming and the resurrection of the righteous dead, the first letter must have succeeded in enlightening the church concerning these matters. In accomplishing this, however, the apostle had emphasized the necessity of being prepared for the great day of the Lord’s return, of daily living with the second coming of Christ constantly in view (1 Thess. 5:1-11; cf. Titus 2:11-13). This emphasis upon the second advent seems to have been understood by many as indicating that Paul expected Christ’s return almost immediately (see 2 Thess. 2:2). That such was not his meaning he now hastens to explain, reminding his readers that he had taught them in person that the apostasy, followed by the appearance of the antichrist, must first take place (see vs. 2, 3, 5). Paul appeals directly to the unruly idlers, who apparently claimed that work was unnecessary in view of the imminent advent. He had already warned them in his first epistle (1 Thess. 4:11; 5:14), and now he commands and admonishes them in the Lord (2 Thess. 3:12). He urges that the church take disciplinary measures against them, with the objective of reforming them (vs. 14, 15).

Thus the theme of the second epistle, as that of the first, is practical godliness (ch. 1:11, 12). The fainthearted must be comforted and established (ch. 2:17); the agitators must be silenced (ch. 3:12). The church must know of the deceptive work of the great adversary in bringing about the apostasy and the reign of the antichrist, and also of the final overthrow of all the power of Satan (ch. 2:3-12). With the glorious hope of the triumph of God’s cause before them, the Thessalonian Christians are urged so to live that they may be accounted worthy of the Lord’s calling (ch. 1:11, 12).

5. Outline.
I. Consolation of Persecuted Believers, 1:1-12.
   A. Salutation, 1:1, 2.
   B. Thanks to God for their spiritual growth, 1:3, 4.
      1. Marked advancement in faith and brotherly love, 1:3.
   C. The prospect of judgment and salvation, 1:5-10.
      1. Persecuted believers accounted worthy, 1:5.
      2. Tribulation recompensed to persecutors, 1:6.
      3. Rest from affliction for righteous at the Lord’s advent, 1:7.
      4. Eternal separation from God of rejectors of His mercy, 1:8, 9.
      5. Glorification of Christ in His saints, 1:10.
   D. Prayer for the afflicted ones, 1:11, 12.

II. Instruction and Exhortation Regarding the Antichristian Consummation of Evil, 2:1-17.
   A. Warning against being led into fanaticism regarding the time of Christ’s coming, 2:1-12.
      1. Not to be deceived by any means, 2:1, 2.
      2. The apostasy and the reign of the man of sin must come first, 2:3, 4.
      3. Reminder of previous oral teaching, 2:5.
      4. Mysterious work of the adversary, 2:6, 7.
      5. The revelation, destiny, and working of the wicked one, 2:8-10.
      6. The deluding and damning of those who accept the wicked one, 2:11, 12.
   B. Thanksgiving, admonition, and prayer, 2:13-17.
      1. Thanks to God for His saving choice of the Thessalonians, 2:13, 14.
      2. Admonition to stand fast and hold the truths taught, 2:15.
A. Requests for prayer on behalf of the apostles, 3:1, 2.

B. Paul's confidence and petition concerning the Thessalonians, 3:3-5.

2. The apostles' personal example, 3:7-9.
3. Previous command concerning idleness, 3:10.
5. Counsel concerning the obstinate, 3:14, 15.

IV. Closing prayers and salutation, 3:16-18.

B. Personal salutation, 3:17.

C. Benediction, 3:18.