

9.3.23 / Faith & His Saving Death/ 1 Thessalonians 1.3 & 5.9-10

You may have noticed the focus of our worship service this morning is the saving sacrificial death of Jesus. This gracious work of Jesus on the cross is at the **center of the Christian faith**.

As we take time to study the book of 1 Thessalonians this season we'll notice that faith, love, and hope are some of the primary themes that run through this letter.

In **1 Thessalonians 1:3** we read this...

Faith, love, and hope work together to fuel the life of a follower of Jesus – These three are also mentioned together in 3:6-7 and 5:8.

This Sunday and the next two Sundays we'll take up the theme of **faith** and consider it together. As I mentioned a moment ago, at the center of the Christian **faith** lies the beautiful and tragic event of the death of Jesus on the cross.

So this morning we'll examine what 1 Thessalonians says about **faith** and the **sacrificial death** of Jesus.

We'll start with **1 Thessalonians 1:8-10** (*explain along the way*)

1. Rang out... your **faith** has become known... (*bursting to share*)

2. Turned to God from idols...

- *Two chairs: Jesus / Evil One Father of light/lies*
- Idol? Anything/anyone you give your allegiance to over and above God.

3. Wait for... **Jesus** - Eyes on Him, Hope/trust/faith in Him, allegiance to Him

4. Rescues us from coming wrath

- What coming wrath? *Jesus / faith / coming wrath*
- Uncomfortable talking/thinking about wrath of God – but let's lean in and see what the rest of this letter says...

1 Thessalonians 2:14-16 (*explain...*) "you can't share redemption with those people is that way..."

God's wrath is for those who believe they deserve redemption.

Heart check – *do you believe you deserve redemption?*

Some of us place faith in our faith – because of our faith **we deserve redemption**. We're actually placing faith in ourselves and our eyes are on us – our goodness rather than on Jesus.

I deserve = prop yourself up: Fix eyes on Jesus not on you. James 4:10

In a given moment, do you feel more proud of your goodness or desperate for your Savior? clinging to deservedness... or Jesus

The wrath of God is for those who believe they deserve redemption.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-6... *explain (Sexual immorality, marriage)*

God will **punish** all who commit such sins – **God's wrath is for those who reject Him.** – His law/His way

Heart check – **do you reject God?** Allegiance, unkind words, lie, covet, lust, steal, trust Him or you...

God's wrath is for those who reject Him.

How are you feeling about the wrath of God in this moment? Defensive...

- Book of Joshua – killing peoples
- Hope from Sodom and Gomorrah – for the sake of (50, 45,30,20) 10... **The heart of God is to save those who trust Him.**

Consider this, if God is perfect, what's the most evil thing you can do? Rebel against Him. Reject goodness.

How should a perfect & all powerful God take care of evil? Crush it.

Sound of freedom: Crush them. How much more does a perfect God look upon my/your sin and rightfully say *I must crush them?*

If God is perfect **than** the most evil thing that we can do is rebel against Him.

Don't **make light of your rebellion**. There is a spiritual battle going on and when you're rebelling against your Maker you are standing on this (evil) side of the battlefield. And you rightly deserve to be crushed by a Holy God.

No excuses. No exceptions. Our rebellion against a Holy God places us rightly under the wrath of Holy God.

If God is perfect and all powerful than He must crush evil. **We actually wouldn't have it any other way... (Justice – equitable treatment – rejection for rejection)** God's wrath must come down on the evil doer. God must deliver a crushing blow to the evil doer. It is uncomfortable but it is part of Holiness and Justice.

Let's look at another passage in this letter that addresses **God's wrath.** - **1 Thessalonians 5:9-10** (there is hope in this one...)

God did not appoint us to suffer wrath.

Followers of Jesus, please hear this. God did not appoint **us** to suffer wrath but to **receive salvation** through JC.

Jesus died for us so that we live can with Him. Peace with God. Saved from wrath.

How is He going to deliver us evil doers a crushing blow of His wrath which we deserve... while... keeping us from suffering His wrath?

1 Thessalonians 5:8 *show cross covering wrath statements*

Only the armor of God can shield us from the wrath of God.

Only the death of Jesus applied to our circumstances can save us from God's just wrath.

For those who place faith in Jesus and His work – Jesus completely absorbs the blow of the just wrath of God. (*didn't look other way*)

If the sacrificial death of the Son of God is necessary to absorb God's wrath than our sin is far more serious than we realize. If the resurrection of the Son of God is true than He is far more powerful than we can imagine!

By grace, through faith, you are pardoned. Forgiven. Saved. The debt has been paid. You are free to live at peace with the Holy God.

Faith in *His Work*... not your goodness. Eyes on Him. Not on you.

He has saved you.

- If you **have not placed your faith** in Jesus than I urge you to do so right now...
- If you're **not ready yet** but you have questions... [mention David's Conversations about Christianity \(Hub 2nd Wednesdays at 7pm starting 9/13.](#)
- If you realize that **you have been slipping** into a faith in yourself rather than faith in the saving work of Jesus than I invite you to step more deeply into the study of God's Word, the community of God's people and the work of God's kingdom – I (or others) would be happy to talk to you...

End with time to consider this question in prayer:

God, how are you inviting me to respond to the sacrificial death of Jesus?

Benediction: Brothers and sisters, you are chosen by God and dearly loved. May your love for Him, for one another, and for all others grow and overflow.