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MEASURING LIFE BY CHRIST'S COMING I Thessalonians 2:19-20

In the height of WW-II as the intensity of conflict produced incredible bravery as well as intense suffering - an incident took place in the Pacific theater of warfare - details sketchy:

Navy Pilot on a mission fought, plane hit, went down. The next day, he was found badly burned, wounded, only able to crawl on his stomach thru the jungle...

The search party led by soldiers who found him exclaimed an unforgettable statement as he lurched out of the brush in such critical condition: "WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU LIVING FOR?" [or what are you doing still alive!?!]

In similar words Paul addresses a similar critical moment - life's purpose - and asks in I Thessalonians 2:19-20 are you LIVING DAILY BY MEASURING LIFE BY CHRIST'S RETURN.

Remember where we are?

- Paul's second epistle maybe in the year 50 A.D. during his second journey.
- He writes a key letter of the N.T. without a single O.T. quote! It is a fresh, vital epistle from God, thru Paul to them!
- These epistles the first and second to Thessalonian believers give a vast amount of true doctrine for us to lay hold on!

- The middle verse helps [I Thessalonians 3:13] us to distill the teaching of Paul down to some brief exhortations for blameless living [see I Thessalonians 3:13].

But, never lose sight of the fact each of these are doctrinal or teaching sections!

1. WAIT FOR THE SON [I Thessalonians 1:10] - this is the doctrine of fearing God in daily life. Always aware **He is** waiting - **He is** watching - **He is** coming.
2. We learned about the doctrine of the inspiration [authority of Scripture, I Thessalonians 2:13] TAKE GOD AT HIS WORD.

Also note:

Second Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6; 3:17

Paul [and each of the other Biblical writers] was convinced that God spoke through them.

3. We also touched on some theology or DOCTRINE OF GOD
 - There is one true God [I Thessalonians 1:9]
 - He exists in 3 persons [I Thessalonians 1:1,5,6; 4:8; 5:19; Second Thessalonians. 1:1,2; 2:13-14]
 - Jesus Christ is divine [I Thessalonians 3:11-12; 2 Th. 2:16-17]

Now let's go on to perhaps the most fascinating of all the doctrines taught in these epistles - the DOCTRINE OF LAST THINGS or things to come.

This area of eschatology or teaching on last things makes up the single largest theological contribution of these books.

Let's just survey all we will learn from Paul on this vital doctrine of last things or the future God is orchestrating!

Hold on, we will just list the points --

To summarize these teachings let's note Paul's terms:

1. Paul teaches us about the "coming of presence" PAROUSIA - most frequent term that has several aspects

- an examination of Christians before the Father and Son[I Thessalonians 2:19-20; 3:13; 5:23]
- Also it is tied to the moment of our Lord's meeting us in the air.. [I Thessalonians 4:15; 2 Th. 2:1]
- Also it is in reference to Christ's triumphant conquest of the lawless one. [Second Thessalonians 2:8]

* However, I Thessalonians 4:13-18 teaches the dead in Christ are involved in all of these!

What else? 7 more terms

1. APOKALUPSIS - Revelation
2. ORGE - Wrath
3. EKDIKESIS - Vengeance against earth's rebels II Th. 1:8; to at any moment 2 Th. 5:2-3.
4. THLIPSIS - Tribulation to the unrepentant 2 Th. 1:6.
5. APOSTASIA - Apostasy
6. DIKAIA KRISIS - Righteous Judgment of God
7. BASILEIA - God's kingdom

In brief, the panorama of God's conclusion to time is before us - Don't miss a bit. Okay!