

### GENERAL STATEMENT.

While Paul was still at Corinth, at work, as related in Lesson X., further news came to him from the Church at Thessalonica. His first epistle had been misinterpreted by some, and perverted by others. There was a great anxiety concerning the coming of the Lord. Some declared that it was near at hand, and that worldly work was too trivial when the resurrection and judgment were impending. Men had given up their business and were going from house to house in noisy talk concerning the Saviour's appearance, and a forged letter had been imposed upon the Church, purporting to come from the apostle himself, sanctioning these excesses. To calm the excitement, to explain the truth on these subjects, and to direct the minds of the Thessalonian disciples to practical duties, this second epistle was written. It showed that great events must take place before the advent of Christ, and that each disciple should live in readiness at all times, yet neglecting the daily duties of life at no time. The authority of the Church over its members is asserted, and counsels are given concerning those who are disobedient to its discipline. The apostle gives a token in his own handwriting, by which hereafter all genuine epistles are to be distinguished, and commends the Church to the peace of God and the grace of Christ.

### EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

**Verse 1. Pray for us.** Paul desired the intercessory prayers of God's people, not that he might escape danger, but that both himself and the Gospel might be sustained by it. 1. If the great apostle needed the help of prayer from his fellow-Christians, how much more do we! **The word of the Lord.** The Gospel of Christ our Lord and Saviour. **May have free course.** The Rev. Ver. gives the literal meaning, "may run." The Gospel is here illustrated by a runner upon the course. **Beglorified.** Not only "win applause," as a successful runner, but be honoured in its fruits as a saving power. 2. How much we can do to answer our own prayers for the Gospel! **With you.** For, as we learn from these epistles, the Gospel had met with singular success at Thessalonica, from which place it had sounded forth through all Macedonia. 1 Thess. 1, 5-8.

**2. That we may be delivered.** This was written while Paul was enduring the strife of the synagogue at Corinth, the persecution of the Jews, and the accusation before Gallio. (Lesson X.) **Unreasonable.** "Those who set themselves against the divine order," is the idea of the word; precisely applicable to the Jews at Corinth. **All have not faith.** Faith here means the state of willingness to believe, not belief itself. 3. There are hearts which have hardened themselves into unfitness for the Gospel.

**3. The Lord.** Here, as generally in Paul's epistles, referring to the Lord Jesus. **Is faithful.** He is faithful, while men are perverse, and can be trusted to fulfil his promises. **Stab-**

**lish you.** Give you a sure foundation, to stand firm against all the powers of evil. **Keep you.** Rev. Ver., "guard you." **From evil.** Rev. Ver., "from the evil one," that is, Satan, as in the similar expression in the Lord's Prayer. 4. There is a devil, and we need guard against his wiles.

**4. Confidence in the Lord.** Paul's confident hope that Christians would be loyal to the faith rested not in them, but in the keeping power of their Saviour. **Do and will do.** Are doing now, and will continue to do hereafter. **The things which we command.** Because the apostle's commands were not his own, but given as the messenger of the Lord Jesus, whom they had pledged to obey.

**5 The Lord.** Jesus, as above, whom the apostle regarded as a living presence, in communion with his people. **Direct your hearts.** Through the guiding, teaching, and inspiring influence of his Spirit, given to all believers. **The love of God.** Into the consciousness of God's love to them, and the impulse of love on their part toward God. **Patient waiting for Christ.** The Rev. Ver., "the patience of Christ," shows the passage to mean, not a patience in waiting for Christ's coming, but a patience such as Christ showed in his life on earth.

**6. Now we command you.** Having expressed his confidence that they would obey his commands, he now tests their obedience by an order. **In the name of our Lord.** Speaking by authority, and under revelation from Christ. **Withdraw yourselves.** Literally, "furl the sails," or, in the term of the present, "steer clear of." Paul is remarkable for the vigour of his metaphorical words, which suggest a picture in every expression. Here it does not mean excommunication, or delivering over to Satan, or injury in any way, but simply to refuse the privileges of Christian fellowship. **Walketh disorderly.** Literally, "out of rank," as soldiers who break the order of march; professed disciples, who will not act as Christians should. **The tradition.** The written or oral instruction of the apostle, given while he was among them. 5. The Christian Church has a discipline, and has a right to expect obedience to it.

**7. 8. Ye yourselves know.** From their remembrance of Paul's example among them. **Ought to follow us.** Rev. Ver., "imitate us." **Behaved not...disorderly.** See 1 Thess. 2, 10. The apostolic life was the best commentary on the apostolic teaching. **Any man's bread for nought.** Without earning it, and paying for it. **Wrought with labour.** Paul laboured in most places at his trade as a tent-maker. **Night and day.** Sometimes labouring at night, when preaching the Gospel, or talking with inquirers by day. **Not be chargeable.** Rev. Ver., "might not burden." The churches were small, weak, and unable to bear the support of Paul and his friends; there was no missionary society to send them out; Paul felt that he would lose influence among the heathen people if he claimed