

## Doctrinal Summary of Worship: Increasingly Walking with and Pleasing God

In 1 Thessalonians, Paul identifies that believers are taught how to walk with and please God.

“Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us instruction as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you excel still more.”

The word “request” is translated from the Koine Greek word ἐρωτῶμεν (“er-oh-toh-men”) which more literally means, “we really perform the continuous type of action to ask something of another.” It simply identifies that Paul and those with him continue to ask that the Thessalonian believers excel beyond where they are in their spiritual life by walking and pleasing God through continued reception of what they were instructed in by Paul and those with him.

The word “exhort” is translated from the Koine Greek word παρακαλοῦμεν (“par-a-ka-lou-men”) which more literally means, “we really perform the continuous type of action to call another alongside ourselves to share in what we are doing.” It identifies an exhortation to join in what the exhorter, or in this case, exhorters are doing themselves. By joining in, the exhorted participate and share in the activity with the exhorter. It can be used to refer to joining in physically alongside another, but is primarily used to spur on or motivate an individual accomplishing on his own what others are also individually accomplishing. Thus, by its nature, it can be carried out whether the exhorted is present with the exhorter or not. The latter is its primary focus in this passage. Paul and those with him are exhorting the Thessalonian believers to join them in walking and pleasing God more and more each moment.

The word “received” is translated from the Koine Greek word παραλάβετε (“par-a-la-be-teh”) which more literally means, “you all really performed the action in a point in time to personally take hold of something which becomes a part of the individuals or their personal possessions.” It identifies that an individual performed the action to take hold of what was offered or available to him by his own choosing and subsequent action. Consequently, having taken hold of what was offered it becomes his, either a part of him personally or a part of his personal belongings. Here what was taken hold of was the manner by which the Thessalonian believers were to walk with and please God. It is the instruction that they received by faith which makes it possible for them to excel in walking with and pleasing God more and more.

Believers do not naturally know how to walk with and please God, they must learn how to do both. So, God has revealed His Word through the apostles and prophets and has given the evangelist and pastor-teacher roles to the church for its equipping. Yet, even if the believers assigned to those roles faithfully carry out their duties in the body of Christ, it does not automatically mean that believers will walk with and please God. Believers must receive God’s instruction by mixing it with faith. This takes place only when the believer is persuaded of the truth of God’s Word and then subsequently chooses to place his personal reliance upon it.

Worshiping God requires that the believer learns how to walk with and please God. The more the believer walks with God and learns what is pleasing to Him, the more he can excel in doing so. Ergo, the believer worships God by increasingly walking with and pleasing Him. But how to do so must be learned by the believer in order that it can be carried out.