

“Apocalypse Now”

1 Thessalonians 2:14-16

I. “Real Imitation” – 2:14

“...you became imitators of the churches in Christ Jesus in Judea...”

A. Not an exceptional case with a unique problem – 1 Peter 4:12

B. Their _____ was _____ that the Word was at work in them.

C. Their imitation was not _____. What happened to other believers 1500 miles away was happening to them too: it was meant to _____ the Thessalonian believers.

D. An allusion to the _____ Church and to the _____ church.
“...in Christ Jesus in Judea...” See Ephesians 4:5; 1 Cor. 12:13; Galatians 3:27

II. “Top It Off”

“...fill up the measure of their sins, but wrath has come upon them...” – 2:15-16

A. Writers are not anti-Semitic, but saw essence of all persecution: the _____ of the Messiah, Jesus Christ the Lord.

B. Death of Christ is a question of _____. Mark 15:15-16, 20, 24; John 19:10-15; 18:30-31, 35; Mark 14:43, 55, 63-64; 15:1-3; Luke 23:10, 13-18; Mark 15:8-15, 29-32; Acts 2:23.

C. Emphasis is on “the Lord” which heightens the enormity and anticipates 1 Corinthians 2:8, *“...if the rulers of this age had understood, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory...”*

1 Thessalonians 1:1, “...the Lord Jesus Christ...”

Jesus – a common name _____; the Divine linked with the common

Lord – “Kurios” – the Greek translation of the Old Testament (the Septuagint), used in Jesus’ day – used for the Divine Name of God –

Jehovah or Yahweh – deeply significant that it is applied to Jesus – Exodus 3:14-15; Philippians 2:13

Christ – Greek word for the Hebrew Messiah, the Anointed One – King who was subject of prophecy has actually come – popular thought was expecting a deliverer to conquer Rome – for Jesus, Messiahship involved the cross, the supreme service – Jesus linked the Messiah to the Servant – Psalm 2:2; Acts 4:26; Mark 8:29; 14:61-62; Mark 1:11; Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 42:1

- D. “...drove us out...displeasing to God...oppose all men...” - A typical, hostile act of a “nation at war;” Jews in opposition to their own covenant God; hindering evangelism harms mankind. Paul not bitter or vindictive, but balanced, passionate anger. Romans 9:1-5; 10:1-4
- E. “...fill up the measure of their sins...” - A Divine Sentence Against How is it possible for a Holy God to use the sinful deeds of men for His purpose? See Acts 2:23. The meaning is that the “cup” was already partly full and all their sins “filled up the top half” of the “cup.”
- F. “...God’s wrath has come upon them to the utmost...” - Present fact and Prophetic anticipation – “has come” = “to do something before someone else does; to anticipate; brings out the sureness” = the certainty of the wrath of God. Rom 1:18 – “is being continuously revealed”

***“Wrath of God”** – “God has an attitude which is and which will be expressed in action. Attitude and action; this is what is meant by ‘the wrath of God.’ It is not emotion, temper, irascibility, spite, malice, or malignity. It is the reaction of a Holy God to all evil. Evil is an invasion of God Himself. It says in effect, ‘You are not valid.’ It is thus an affront to utter goodness, and God will not finally tolerate it. In the end goodness is left on the throne. This is what is meant by ‘the wrath to come.’ In the mercy and long-suffering of God it is dammed up in order to give men the opportunity to repent, believe, and receive salvation. But in a sense God’s wrath is ‘on its way’ and is anticipated (Romans 1:18). It is from the love in the cross of Christ that we derive salvation from wrath.” – by Ronald A. Ward*

Application: It is a matter of desperate seriousness to reject Jesus Christ Messiah, and equally serious to spurn His legitimately appointed messengers (Matthew 10:14-15; John 13:20).

1. How can suffering for Christ bind believers together in unity?
2. What should the names “Lord, Jesus, Christ” mean to believers?
3. Are you helping or hindering evangelism? Why is this important?
4. How does God’s wrath display is love and magnify His glory?