

## REJOICE EVERMORE

November 27, 2016

I Thessalonians 5:1-28

**“Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” I Thessalonians 5:16-18**

First Thessalonians was the first New Testament book written. It is notable that every chapter makes reference to the return of Christ. This suggests the eagerness with which the church awaited Christ's second coming.

Believers who were troubled that loved ones had died before Christ's return were reminded that Christ “died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him” (5:10). Whether living on earth or in heaven, God's people are with Christ. “Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another” (v. 11). This comfort and edification is advanced when believers “Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, [and] in everything give thanks” (vv. 16-18).

This is the source of that comfort: “God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us” (vv. 9, 10a). By His death, Christ accomplished salvation and deliverance from judgment for everyone who truly believes in Him. Therefore, His atoning death is the root and source of believers' rejoicing, prayer and thanksgiving.

**I. “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”** (I Timothy 1:15). “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins” (I John 3:5). “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil” (I John 3:8). “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Hebrews 2:14, 15).

**II. “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us:** for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree” (Galatians 3:13). “The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Corinthians 15:56, 57). “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:3, 4).

**III. “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God,** to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” (Romans 8:28-32).

**IV. On the merits of His death, Christ intercedes for us—He prays without ceasing.**

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25). “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died,

yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (Romans 8:33, 34).