

16.1 The Letters of Paul to the Thessalonians

Introduction

We can approach these letters by asking some kind of question regarding distinctiveness. What emphases do these letters give us that are distinct from what Paul teaches in his other letters? This approach makes us overview both letters together. Combined, there are eight chapters (5 in the first book & 3 in the second book).

Thus, what is distinctive? This is a subjective question. It is a matter of over all impressions that depend on what you know of the other letters of Paul. No matter, the concern is with impressions in general. I detect four areas that come to mind as key memories I have when I think of these letters. I go to these letters when I want to think about these four subjects.

Prophecy
Scripture
The Gospel of election and calling
Logic in context of OMH

1A. Prophecy

These books are surely distinctive in some of the things they present about the future (about eschatology). There are things in these letters that we have nowhere else and some of them are very difficult.

1) What is the rapture? 1 Thess. 4.13-18

Where does this term come from?

Why does this topic come into view in the letter?

2) When will Christ come according to Paul? 1 Thess. 5.1

What will occur?

What lesson should we learn?

3) Regarding the man of sin, we can ask, who, what, and when? 2 Thess. 2.1-4

2A. Scripture 1 Thess. 1.5; 2.13; 2 Thess. 2.15

What emphases come up in this regard?

3A. The Gospel of election and calling 1 Thess. 2.9-13; 2 Thess. 2.13-14

How do these three subjects intertwine?

4A. Logic and OMH

How do we get these subjects from 1 Thess 5.19-21?