



April 28, 2010

Structure of a Pauline letter
Chronological order (perhaps) of the letters
1 & 2 Thessalonians
The *parousia*

Typical Structure of a Pauline Letter

Greeting
Thanksgiving
Body of letter
Final greetings and blessing

When were they written?

(Council of Jerusalem: A.D. 49)

1 Thess: 51 A.D.

2 Thess: shortly after 1 Thess

Galatians: Somewhere between 48 A.D. and the mid 50s
(probably toward the later end of that range)

1 Cor: 56 A.D.

2 Cor: A few months later

Romans: 57–58 A.D.

Ephesians: 60–62 A.D.

Philippians: 60–62 A.D.

Colossians: 60–62 A.D.

Philemon: 60–62 A.D.

1 Tim: Middle 60s

Titus: About the same time

2 Tim: Late 60s (St. Paul was probably martyred in 67 A.D.)

1 Thess

- 1) Greeting
- 2) Thanksgiving (in this case, for the faith and good example of the Thessalonians)
- 3) Review of St. Paul's time with them
- 4) Report on Timothy's visit
- 5) Exhortation to lead a life pleasing to God
- 6) The return of Jesus & the Day of the Lord
- 7) Closing exhortation, greetings, etc.

The Parousia

“Parousia” is Greek for “presence” or “arrival.” THE Parousia is the Second Coming of Jesus.

“He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead.”

133. How does the Lord Jesus now reign?

As the Lord of the cosmos and of history, the Head of his Church, the glorified Christ mysteriously remains on earth where his kingdom is already present in seed and in its beginning in the Church. One day he will return in glory but we do not know the time. Because of this we live in watchful anticipation, praying "Come, Lord" (Revelation 22:20).

134. How will the coming of the Lord in glory happen?

After the final cosmic upheaval of this passing world the glorious coming of Christ will take place. Then will come the definitive triumph of God in the parousia and the Last Judgment. Thus the Kingdom of God will be realized.

Concerning times and seasons, brothers, you have no need for anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief at night.

When people are saying, "Peace and security," then sudden disaster comes upon them, like labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

But you, brothers, are not in darkness, for that day to overtake you like a thief. For all of you are children of the light and children of the day. We are not of the night or of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep as the rest do, but let us stay alert and sober.

Those who sleep go to sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we are of the day, let us be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love and the helmet that is hope for salvation. For God did not destine us for wrath, but to gain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live together with him.

2 Thessalonians

Jesus will come and punish those who do not believe and do not obey.

The penalty is "eternal ruin" and separation "from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power."

St. Paul prays that God make them worthy!

Do not believe people claiming that the day of the Lord has come!

The lawless one will come and:

- 1) claim that he is God;
- 2) dazzle the wicked because they aren't able to recognize the truth

But God has chosen you, so be faithful!

The Lord is faithful; he will
strengthen you and guard
you from the evil one.

Do not grow weary of
doing good.