

Year C #654  
**Persecution's Fruit**  
**050702-4**

*Hello! This is Dorothy-*

In the Apostle Paul's **1<sup>st</sup> Epistle to the Thessalonians**, he writes of the faith of the Thessalonians, which was spoken of. . . **in every place (1:8)**. We read in the opening chapter that Paul expresses his thanksgiving for the increase of the faith and love of the Thessalonians. The faith he mentions is in Christ; they are talking only of Him and their love which comes forth to fellow man is coming out from Him.

In **2 Thessalonians 1, verse 3**, we read - . . . **because that your faith is groweth exceedingly, -super abounds! - and the love of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth**. You know, this is tremendous language. This is what the Church of God, wherever we are, is supposed to be like: impacting the community; impacting the world! We have Christ by His Spirit living within our lives. Paul comforts the believers in their sufferings in persecution, and he prays for their continuance in the faith and for the glory of Christ's name for their steadfastness and holiness . . . **that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God. (verse 5)**. That is a tremendous thought. Whatever you are going through; you might have lost your job; you might have had some sadness in your family; you might have been ridiculed at school. Whatever it is,

remember that if you are standing in Christ, . . . **be counted worthy of the kingdom of God for which ye also suffer.** You, too, might testify in your life that God uses every trial, every persecution, that out of it He might obtain spiritual fruit.

In **Romans 8** we read -

**17**        **And if we are [His] children, then we are [His} heirs of God also: heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ [sharing his inheritance with Christ -and listen to this - [sharing His inheritance with Him] . . .** Oh, you say, "That's wonderful! I love this!" But it goes on to say - **only we must share His suffering if we are to share His glory.**

**18**        **[But what of that?] For I consider that the sufferings of this present time (this present life) are not worth being compared with the glory that is about to be revealed to us and in us and for us and conferred on us!**    Amazing verse!

Then in **2 Corinthians 4** —

**8**        **We are hedged in (pressed) on every side [troubled and oppressed in every way]- *could you identify with that today?* - but not cramped or crushed; we suffer embarrassments and are perplexed and unable to find away out, but not driven to despair.**

And in **2 Corinthians 7** —

**5**        **For even when we arrived in Macedonia, our bodies had no ease or rest - *Paul wrote* - but we were oppressed in every way and afflicted at every turn — fightings and contentions without,**

**dread and fears within [us}**. Amazing verses, but such verses speak of the triumph of this amazing apostle.

**Proverbs 25** tells us what to do in these situation.

**21 If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink.**

**22 For . . . you shall heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord will reward you.**

**Deuteronomy 32:35** tells us — **To me belongeth vengeance-says God - and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them shall make haste.** In other words, God is saying here that in His time, His perfect time, He will deal with those people who are dealing so terribly in turning every situation they can to make your life dreadful here on earth. Oh, how wonderful to have this wonderful sense of the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ — His indwelling and His comfort. This is why He is the Person I want you to love more and more; to be more available to more and more. It's the only way to get through. Draw upon Him and say, *Yes. Lord, I thank You. Vengeance is yours. You are going to sort this all out in your perfect way.*

For it says that in **Romans 12:19 - Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.**

This leads us into the thought of divine judgment. In **2 Thessalonians 1**, we read -

**6 [It is a fair decision] since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with distress and affliction those who distress and afflict you,**

**7 And to [recompense] you who are so distressed and afflicted [by granting you] relief and rest along with us [your fellow sufferers] when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in a flame of fire.** This is speaking of the Second Coming; this is speaking about the Lord Who will come . . .

**8 To deal out retribution (chastisement and vengeance) upon those who do not know or perceive or become acquainted with God, and [upon those] who ignore and refuse to obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Why not turn to Him today?

*In Jesus' Name. Amen.*