

1 Thessalonians 3:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

Analysis

To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints—eis to stērixai hymōn tas kardias amemp tous en hagiosynē emprosthen tou Theou kai Patros hēmōn en tē parousia tou Kyriou hēmōn Iēsou meta pantōn tōn hagiōn autou (εἰς τὸ στηρίξαι ὑμῶν τὰς καρδίας ἀμέμπτους ἐν ἀγιωσύνῃ ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Πατρὸς ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ μετὰ πάντων τῶν ἀγίων αὐτοῦ). Stērixai (στηρίξαι, 'to establish/strengthen') aims at the kardias (καρδίας, 'hearts')—inner character, not merely external conformity. Amemptous en hagiosynē (ἀμέμπτους ἐν ἀγιωσύνῃ, 'blameless in holiness') describes comprehensive righteousness.

At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints (en tē parousia... meta pantōn tōn hagiōn)—the parousia creates eschatological urgency. Holiness must withstand Christ's scrutinizing return. Hagiōn (saints/holy ones) could mean glorified believers returning with Christ or angels accompanying Him (2 Thess 1:7); likely both, as Mark 8:38 combines 'holy angels' with Christ's return. Present holiness prepares for future vindication. Love (v. 12) serves sanctification (v. 13)—increasing love establishes blameless hearts for Christ's return. Chapters 1-3 (pastoral relationship) lead to chapters 4-5 (ethical instruction and eschatological hope).

Historical Context

Chapter 3 concludes Paul's personal section before transitioning to ethical instruction (ch. 4) and eschatological teaching (ch. 4-5). The prayer for blameless holiness at Christ's parousia introduces themes dominating the letter's remainder: sanctification (4:3-8), mutual love (4:9-10), holy living (4:11-12), and preparedness for Christ's return (4:13-5:11). The early church's intense expectation of Christ's imminent return (which persists though timing remains unknown) created powerful motivation for present holiness—the Judge could arrive at any moment.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does expectation of Christ's imminent return ('at the coming of our Lord') motivate present holiness rather than mere intellectual acknowledgment of future judgment?
2. What does 'blameless in holiness before God' require beyond external moral conformity?
3. How does increasing love (v. 12) serve establishing blameless hearts (v. 13)—what's the relationship between these two realities?

Interlinear Text

εἰς	τὸ	στηρίξαι	ὑμῶν	τὰς	καρδίας	ἀμέμπτους		
To the end	G3588	he may establish	your	G3588	hearts	unblameable		
G1519		G4741	G5216		G2588	G273		
ἐν	ἀγιωσύνῃ	ἔμπροσθεν	τοῦ	θεοῦ	καὶ	πατρὸς	ἡμῶν	
at	holiness	before	G3588	God	even	Father	of our	
G1722	G42	G1715		G2316	G2532	G3962	G2257	
ἐν	τῇ	παρουσίᾳ	τοῦ	κυρίου	ἡμῶν	Ἰησοῦ	Χριστοῦ	μετὰ
at	G3588	the coming	G3588	Lord	of our	Jesus	Christ	with
G1722		G3952		G2962	G2257	G2424	G5547	G3326
πάντων	τῶν	ἀγίων	αὐτοῦ					
all	G3588	saints	his					
G3956		G40	G846					

Additional Cross-References

Colossians 1:22 (Holy): In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight:

1 Thessalonians 5:23 (References Jesus): And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:27 (Holy): That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

1 Thessalonians 2:19 (References Jesus): For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

Jude 1:14 (Holy): And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

Zechariah 14:5 (Holy): And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from

before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.

Jude 1:24 (Parallel theme): Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

1 Thessalonians 4:15 (References Lord): For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

1 Thessalonians 3:11 (References Jesus): Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

Deuteronomy 33:2 (Holy): And he said, The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them.