

Discussion Outline for Lesson 5

We begin with 2 Thessalonians 1. The word we are concerned about is found three times (*axios* or *kata-axios*). Can you discover where, in vv. 3-12, we find this term?

Note the manner in which God's Final Judgement is "befitting".

Reference a verse from last week's sermon from Malachi. "Yet you say, 'In what ways have we wearied Him?' In that you say, 'Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and He delights in them,' or, 'Where is the God of justice?'" Malachi was an Old Testament reformer much like Luther was in his day. The people of God had lost their capacity to make proper distinctions, discriminations that are appropriate and necessary. (See Mal. 2:17; 3:18)

God's Judgements, when accomplished, produce "peace". When the dust settles, there remains rest and orderliness in the place of chaos and confusion.

Augustine, The City of God, page 690 "The peace of the body then consists in the duly proportioned arrangement of its parts. The peace of the irrational soul is the harmonious response of the appetites, and that of the rational soul is the harmony of knowledge and action. The peace of body and soul, is the well-ordered and harmonious life and health of the living creature. Peace between man and God is the well-ordered obedience of faith to eternal law... The peace of all things is the tranquillity of order. Order is the distribution which allots things equal and unequal, each to its own place."

Go to 1 Thessalonians chapter 2. In what manner does Paul as a model pastor demonstrate the correspondence, the 'fitting-ness', the appropriateness, between position and person, between message and method?

Finish with reference to Luke 21:34-36. "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and ***pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.***" (See also Lk. 20:35; Acts 5:41; 2 Thess. 1:5; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 3:3; 10:29.)

We began this series with the thought and certainty of the worthiness of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev. 5), and to the captivity it should bring to our lives (2 Cor. 2:14). Now we should be seeing that all things in the Christian life must be compared to His worthiness - all of our thoughts, motivations, decisions, and desires. How do these comport and correspond to His worth? "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire but Thee" (Psa. 73:25). "Thou art my portion." "But a portion implies, not a source of ordinary pleasure, but of rest and satisfaction *such as leaves nothing else to be desired*. Thus the LORD can never be enjoyed, even by His own children - except as a portion - *not only above all, but in the place of all*. Other objects indeed may be subordinately loved: but of none but Himself must we say - 'He is altogether lovely (SS 5:16). 'In all things He must have the pre-eminence' (Col. 1:18) - one with the Father in our affections, as in His own subsistence. The moment that any rival is allowed to usurp

the throne of the heart, we open the door to disappointment and unsatisfied desires” - to discontent and envy. (Charles Bridges, Psalm 119:57)