

**Aiming to glorify God by calling and equipping people to be fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ**

## Setting Priorities for 2010

The beginning of a New Year is a good time to evaluate our priorities. It's an appropriate time to consider where our focus and efforts should be for the year ahead. January is a time when people will often set goals for what they'd like to achieve for the coming 12 months. But for Christians, our priorities must go beyond just considering the coming year. Our aims need to be set not just in the light of 2010. They need to be evaluated even beyond considering the decade ahead. The Lord's people need to set priorities in the light of eternity. This is what the Apostle Paul did.

In 1 Thessalonians 2:19, Paul writes,

*"For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ when he comes?"*

Paul is looking ahead to that time when he will be in eternity with the Lord Jesus. It's as if he pictures himself talking to the Lord Jesus face to face.

In effect, Paul asks himself the following questions, "What am I going to be talking to Jesus about when I meet him? In the presence of Jesus Christ, what will give me real joy? In what will I glory throughout eternity?"

We don't have to speculate about the answers to these questions. We have Paul's response to his own question at the end of the verse.

*"For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ when he comes?"*

In the last 4 words of that verse we have the answer - *"Is it not you?"*

As Paul writes to the Christians in Thessalonica, he sees that **they** are what will really matter in the light of eternity.

It's as if Paul puts himself in the position of talking to the Lord Jesus in heaven, and as he is in the presence of the Lord, he sees the Thessalonian Christians with Jesus Christ as well.

It's as if Paul is saying to Jesus with joy in his heart, "Isn't it great, they're here too".

Those who Paul had been involved in bringing to a saving faith will be his joy throughout eternity. They'll be his crown in which he will glory. The people who receive Christ's salvation are what will really count in the new creation.

As we reflect on this verse, we are helped in setting our priorities for the year ahead.

Will we seek to do all that we can, in bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ to men and women, boys and girls?

Those who have signed up to be part of the *A Passion for Life* Mission team should be encouraged that they have set a great priority for 2010.

If you are still considering if you should be part of the team, may this help you in your decision making.

For those groups and activities seeking to share the message of the Gospel this year, please be spurred on as you consider this verse.

As you plan your time, prayer and giving schedules for the coming year, consider things in the light of eternity.

As we read through the New Testament, the Apostle Paul's priority is sharing the Gospel with those who were lost.

We read of him enduring hardships and struggles to do this. We see him pressing on in difficult situations. But over and over we see that this is because his priorities are set in the light of eternity.

May we ask the Lord that we too would do the same.

**David Williams**