

lievers! We know from other writers what was the moral condition of the Roman empire, and especially of its great seaports. Thessalonica was no exception. Only the life of Jesus can account for such ideals of character and standards of moral judgment as we find in this short epistle. Grace, peace, and love are considered the highest virtues (1: 1; 1: 3; 3: 6; 4: 9). Here were people who proved faithful to high ideals under affliction and persecution (1: 6; 2: 2; 2: 14; 3: 4; 3: 7). How these Christians loved one another (2: 10, 12)! It was a missionary church (1: 7, 8), full of the joy of serving (1: 6), toiling and laboring for some high ideal (1: 3), with constant prayer to God for his assistance and blessing (1: 2; 5: 17; 5: 25). Here was a little company of men and women opposed to hypocrisy (2: 4, 5), uncleanness, error, and guile (2: 3), alive to the duty of self-support (4: 11, 12), engaged in the fight for character against Satan (3: 5), and so successful that the Apostle glories in them, rejoices in their spiritual welfare, and longs to see them (2: 17, 19; 3: 8, 12). And all this twenty years after the crucifixion!

Their ideals of married life, its purpose and purity, were high (4: 4, 5). They had learned the lesson of forgiveness (5: 15) and of universal love and benevolence. Their lives were full of prayer and gratitude at all times and for all things (5: 17, 18), they were earnestly attempting to abstain from every form of evil (5: 20), and they believed that God was able to preserve their spirit, soul,