

20.12

1 Thessalonians 1:3; 5:8—Faith, Hope, Charity

In 1 Corinthians 13:13, the apostle Paul writes, “And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.” These three virtues—faith, hope, and love (“charity” in the KJV)—are also mentioned near the beginning and the end of 1 Thessalonians:

We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. (1:2–3)

But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. (5:8)

See also Galatians 5:5–6; Colossians 1:4–5; Hebrews 10:22–24.

What could anybody have against these three things?

A. M. Klein (1909–1972) was a Canadian lawyer, poet, and novelist best known for works that reflected the cultural heritage of Jewish people and that drew inspiration from a wealth of Jewish legend, tradition, and folklore. However, in one poem, “Of Faith, Hope, and Charity,” he lashes out at what he took to be attributes of unhealthy or least unsavory piety: faith, hope, and charity.