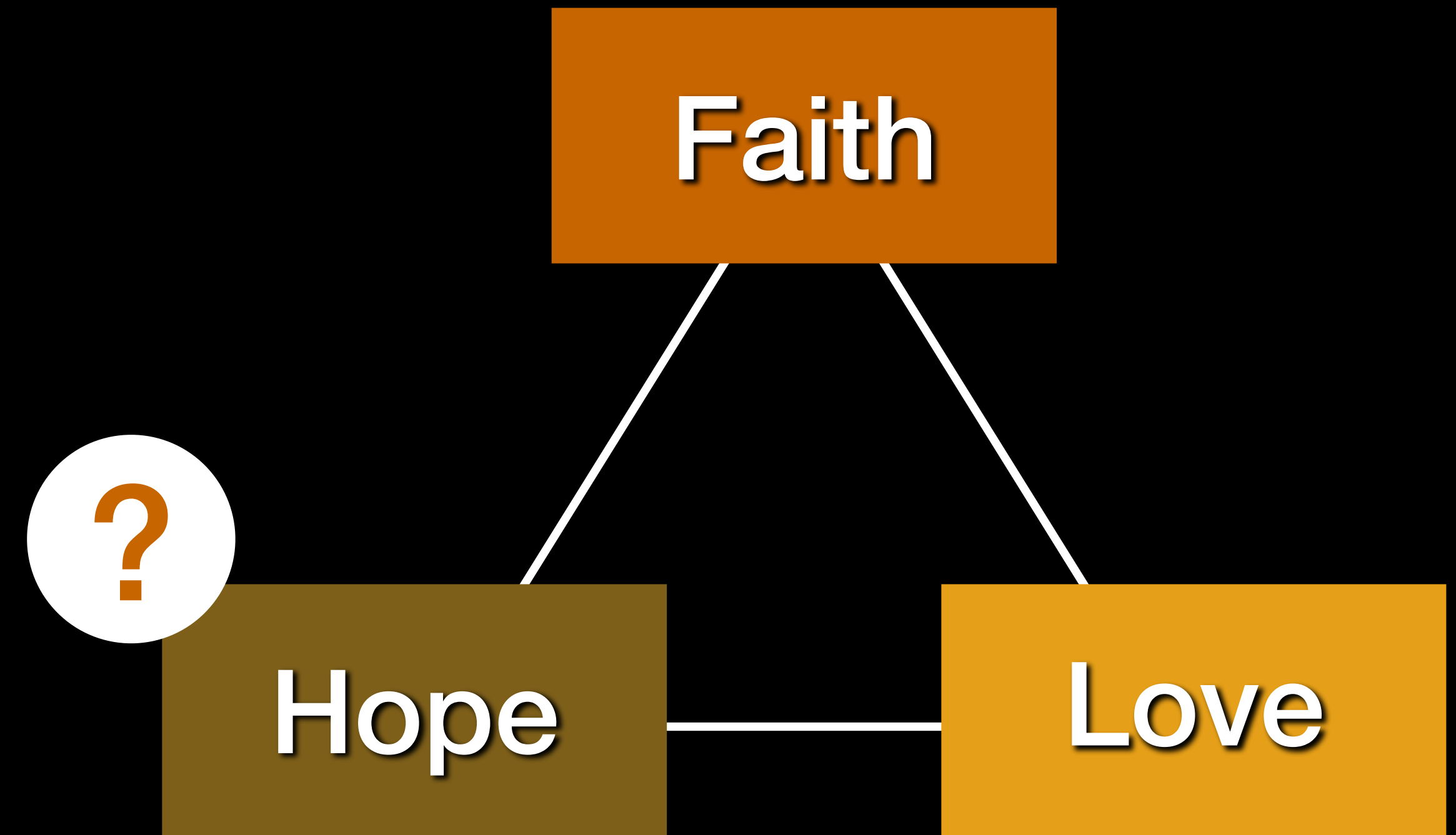


2 THESSALONIANS

STEADFAST IN SUFFERING



- ? What does this teach us about *hope*?
- ? How might it grow our *faith* and *love*?



Principle

A hope-filled church is one that is **mindful** of God's provision for eternal living, choosing to be ¹thankful for and ²continually recommitting to His unending power and equipping unto a rewardable life.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

¹ Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you, ² and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men. For not all have faith. ³ But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one. ⁴ And we have confidence in the Lord about you, that you are doing and will do the things that we command. ⁵ May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

¹ Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,
To the church of the Thessalonians...

¹ Finally, brothers, pray for **us**?

| that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored,

| as happened among you,

| ² and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men.

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| that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored,
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| ² and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men.
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How does the word of the Lord speed ahead?

Colossians 4:2-4. ³ ...pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ,... ⁴ that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

¹ Finally, brothers, pray for us,
| that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored,
| as happened among you,
| ² and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men.
| For not all have faith.

How does the word of the Lord speed ahead?

The word of the Lord speeds ahead by God opening a door for sharing and people being willing to go and shamelessly share the gospel. This is all empowered by prayer.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

¹ Finally, brothers, pray for us,
| that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored,
| as happened among you,
| ² and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men.
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How is the word of the Lord honored?

Acts 17:1–4. ¹ Now...they...came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. ² And...on three Sabbath days Paul reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³ explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead...⁴ And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

¹ Finally, brothers, pray for us,
| that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored,
| as happened among you,
| ² and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men.
| For not all have faith.

How is the word of the Lord honored?

The word of the Lord is honored when unbelievers accept the gospel by responding favorably to the conviction of the Holy Spirit concerning their sin, Jesus' righteousness, and God's judgment.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

¹ Finally, brothers, pray for us,
| that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored,
| as happened among you,
| ² and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men.
| For not all have faith.

What in the world would keep Paul motivated in the face of opposition?

¹² Not that I have already obtained this [resurrection from the dead] or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³ Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: *forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

Apostolic Ministry Considerations

Apostolic Ministry is
empowered by prayer.

Prayer moves the heart of God
to open doors for sharing.

Apostolic Ministry involves
going and sharing the gospel.

This gives opportunities for
unbelievers to honor it.

Apostolic Ministry always
encounters opposition.

Both internally from the flesh
and externally from the enemy

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

³ But the Lord is faithful.

He will establish you

and guard you against the evil one.

set fast, fix firmly, root

keep from, preserve

How does the Lord establish and guard believers against the evil one?

Option 1: Believers are so secure in their position in Christ that Satan cannot uproot and steal them back to his family.

Option 2: When believers embrace the Hope of eternity and live in God's Story, the Lord will root and protect them against the schemes of Satan.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

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⁴ And we have confidence in the Lord about you,

that you are doing

and will do the things that we command.

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What does it mean to have confidence in the Lord about someone?

2 Thessalonians 1:3-4. ³ We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. ⁴ Therefore we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions that you are enduring.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

³ But the Lord is faithful.

He will establish you
and guard you against the evil one.

⁴ And we have confidence in the Lord about you,
that you are doing
and will do the things that we command.

What does it mean to have confidence in the Lord about someone?

It means we can trust Jesus to work in and through others when they prioritize their relationship with Him and grow in their relational dependence on Him, demonstrated by their faithfulness to live in what they know.

Placement of Confidence/Trust

1. In the LORD, not in people. He is always faithful. People are not.
2. Based on people PRIORITIZING their relationship with Him.
3. Activated WHEN people choose to live in what they know.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

⁵ May the Lord **direct** your **hearts**
| to the love of God
| and to the steadfastness of Christ.

→ guide straight towards
→ the seat of the intellect,
meaning the mind and
understanding

What does it mean for the Lord to direct a heart?

Through His Spirit, the Lord guides the understanding that the mind already has straight towards something...

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

⁵ May the Lord **direct** your **hearts**
| to the love of God
| and to the steadfastness of Christ.

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What is the “love of God” Paul has in mind here?

Romans 5:8. ⁸ ...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

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What is the "love of God" Paul has in mind here?

1 John 4:10-11. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

⁵ May the Lord direct your hearts
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and to the steadfastness of Christ.

guide straight towards
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understanding

What is the "love of God" Paul has in mind here?

The love of God that Paul has in mind here is the love that God the Father demonstrated when He sent Jesus to Earth to die for undeserving sinners. Bringing this love to mind provides great motivation for believers to love one another, especially in the midst of suffering.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

⁵ May the Lord **direct** your **hearts**
to the love of God
and to **the steadfastness of Christ.**

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understanding

What “steadfastness of Christ” does Paul has in mind here?

1 Peter 2:20–23. ²³...But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. ²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps...

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

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What “steadfastness of Christ” does Paul has in mind here?

Hebrews 12:1–2. ¹ Therefore...let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

⁵ May the Lord **direct** your **hearts**
to the love of God
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What “steadfastness of Christ” does Paul has in mind here?

Paul has in mind the example of Jesus enduring during his suffering circumstances leading up to and including the cross. His steadfastness in the midst of suffering is to provide perspective and motivation for us to endure in our challenging circumstances.

How to pray for those going through trials

1. Pray to the Lord that He would bring to mind certain knowledge the person already knows and understands...
2. One powerful piece of knowledge and understanding is the LOVE OF GOD.
3. A second powerful piece of knowledge and understand is the STEADFASTNESS OF CHRIST.

Prayer Comparison During Trials

My Prayer	Paul's Prayer
Lord, take this problem away.	2 Thessalonians 3:5 Lord, direct their hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.
Lord, give them relief from this.	
Lord, take away their pain.	
In Jesus' name, bind the spirit of suffering against them.	
Cast out the spirit of hardship in Jesus' name.	

- ? What does this teach us about *hope*?
- ? How might it grow our *faith* and *love*?

? What does this teach us about *hope*?

Knowledge and understanding of the eternal Hope in Jesus that a person already has can be brought to mind by the Spirit of God through prayer on behalf of a brother or sister who is experiencing suffering.

? How might it grow our *faith and love*?

When our motivation to endure suffering is the love of God demonstrated through the sacrifice of Jesus, and the example of Jesus who faithfully endured the cross, our relational dependence on God deepens, resulting in his expressions of love pouring out of us onto others.

Principle

Being convinced of the Lord's faithfulness and praying to Him to bring to mind God's love and Christ's endurance empower believers to stand firm during suffering.

Next Week

2 Thessalonians 3:6-18