

1 Thess 2:17-20

17 But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire. 18 Therefore we wanted to come to you – even I, Paul, time and again – but Satan hindered us. 19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? 20 For you are our glory and joy.

- The Greek word used for “taken or taken away”
- is the word “Aporphanizoe.”

We get our English word “orphan” from that word.

He says this because he was accused by some outside of the church of abandoning them.

In fact, that wasn't the case at all. Paul endeavored more eagerly to see them.

Although Paul and the others were hindered from visiting, he did send Timothy to minister to them.

Paul used the word “hinder” in Galatians 5:7 when he said,

Gal 5:7

7 You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?

To the Galatians he was saying, who got in your way? Who kept you?

To the Thessalonians, he tells them, Satan hindered us.

We do have an enemy out there.

- We do have an adversary.

1 Peter 5:8

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

We know the story of Job, Satan opposed him.

- Rev 12:10 says that Satan accuses us before God night and day.

Ephesians 6 says we don't wrestle against flesh and blood.

1 Thess 2:19

19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? 20 For you are our glory and joy.

Paul is speaking of the victor's crown in verse 19, not a kingly crown.

He's saying,

- my hope, my joy, and my crown of rejoicing
- is getting to heaven and seeing you there.

We shouldn't dwell on the trials in our life

- so much as the glory to come
- when we're in the presence of the Lord.

Ps 29:1-2

1 Give unto the Lord, O you mighty ones,  
Give unto the Lord glory and strength.

2 Give unto the Lord the glory due to His name;  
Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

1 Cor 10:31

31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Phil 2:9-11

9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

God planted eternity in the heart of man.

Eccl 3:11

11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.

Mankind is never satisfied with human achievements.

- People always want more.

In chapter 1 Paul closed by telling the church:

1 Thess 1:10

10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

1 Thess 2:19-20

19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? 20 For you are our glory and joy.

This crown of rejoicing is one of the crowns

- Christians will receive

- for winning souls to Christ.

**Luke 15:7** there is rejoicing even now in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just person who need no repentance.

1 Thess 3:1-5

1 Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone, 2 and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith,

**We have already observed that when Paul was hindered from visiting the Thessalonians (2:17-18),**

- he partly made up for this by doing two things:

**One**, he sent Timothy to minister to them in his place (3:1-5);

**Two**: he wrote this epistle after receiving Timothy's report about the church (3:6-13).

**He also did a third thing for the church of Thessalonica,**

1 Thess 3:10

10 night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith?

**We're not told here, but in Acts 17**

- Paul seems to have sent Silas to Macedonia
- and planned on meeting both Timothy and Silas
- in Athens at a later date.

**We read earlier in verse 17 of chapter 2**

- that Paul felt orphaned.
- That word can also mean "bereaved."

**We in Philippians,**

- Paul was willing to stay out of heaven
- in order to encourage the church in Philippi.

**To the Corinthians he said,** "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you."

**We know according to scripture that pain is a necessary part of life.**

- Our help thru our struggles comes
- when we learn pain from God's perspective.

**His word reveals that suffering is both inevitable and essential.**

Phil 1:29

29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

He was saying that **suffering and faith walk together**.

**Don't think for a moment that God is the producer of evil**

- or the cause of sin or even temptation
- 1 Jn 1:5 that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

**Romans 8:20-22** reminds us that sin is the root cause of pain and suffering in the world.

**But God takes those pains and sufferings**

- and chooses to use them to teach us to rely on Him,
- to rely on His strength and on His word.

**If He wasn't walking with us,**

- we wouldn't learn those lessons.

Ps 119:67

67 Before I was afflicted I went astray,  
But now I keep Your word.

Ps 119:71

71 It is good for me that I have been afflicted,  
That I may learn Your statutes.

Ps 119:75

75 I know, O Lord, that Your judgments are right,  
And that in faithfulness You have afflicted me.

**It's often during times of adversity**

- that we turn our attention toward God.

Timothy means, "One who honors God."

**It was of Timothy whom Paul said he had no one like minded such as him.**

- That is, he had the same motives as Paul,
- the same character.

1 Thess 3:2

2 and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith,

**Paul identifies Timothy as a minister of God.**

- This simply means that he was serving the Lord.

**The Greek word for “minister” speaks of the dust of laboring, or running through dust.**

- It refers to a person that is always on the go for the Lord.

**He was also a fellow laborer for Christ.**

**So why did Paul send Timothy to the church?**

- He was sent in order to strengthen them,
- to set them on a firm foundation.

**What happens when someone is not firmly planted.**

- They become unstable and sometimes fall.

**James said of those who doubt that**

- they are like a wave of the sea,
- driven and tossed by the wind.

**He was also sent to encourage them.**

- Most people need encouragement from time to time.
- Why? Because our spirit is constantly warring against the flesh.

Rom 7:18

18 And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't.

**Timothy was sent to encourage them with the word of God.**

Prov 27:17

17 As iron sharpens iron,  
So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.

**Notice another reason Paul sent Timothy,**

3 that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this. 4 For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know. 5 For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain.

- Afflictions are the pressing pressures that come to an individual.

**When Stephen was martyred, the early church scattered**

- because of the persecution they encountered.

**Persecutions are no accidents, they're appointments.**

1 Peter 4:12

12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;

**Paul says,** don't be shaken by your afflictions,  
**Peter says,** don't think of your trials as some strange thing.

1 Thes 3:4

4 For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.

**When we go thru trials, thru difficult times,**

- we can easily be disturbed by questions
- that shake us to the core.

**Questions such as:**

Doesn't God care about me?

I thought He said He'd never leave me nor forsake me!

Why would God allow this to happen?

Why doesn't He do something about it?

Is He punishing me for something I did?

Acts 20:24

24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

1 Thess 3:6-10

6 But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us good news (speaks of a good report) of your faith and love, and that you always have good remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us, as we also to see you —

**Good relationships are always encouraging.**

7 therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you by your faith. 8 For now we live, if (since) you stand fast in the Lord.

**In spite of all of our trials Paul was saying,** we are comforted by your faith.

**During Paul's second missionary journey**

- he experienced hard times over and over again.

## 7

- We know from Acts 16-18 that Paul went from a Philippian jail,
- forced to leave Thessalonica and Berea,
- then he was ridiculed and rejected in Athens.

### By the time he arrived in Corinth

- he admitted he was in weakness
- with great fear and trembling.

### When Paul finally received the good news,

- he was overjoyed.

### 2 Thess 2:15

15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

### 1 Thess 3:9-10

9 For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sake before our God,

10 night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith? (to perfect means to bring to maturity, not to perfection like we might think. The word was used of a torn fishing net that was mended so that it would be useful.)

**Paul said he prayed exceedingly.** This means “all the more or much greater”

I've known people that have said they don't pray because God knows everything therefore, He already knows my needs.

### While that is true, prayer is a form of worship.

- In Luke 2 the prophetess Anna
- was married 7 years when her husband died.
- She continued to serve God with fasting and prayers
- night and day at the temple for 84 years.

### Jesus prayed:

Mark 1:35

35 Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.

### God commands us to pray,

Phil 4:6-7

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

**In Thess 5 Paul tells the church to** pray without ceasing.

James 5:16b

16 The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

**Be persistent in your prayers.**

Matt 7:7

7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

**Un-prayed prayers will be unanswered prayers.**

- Had the Syrian woman in Mark 7 not prayed
- for her demon-influenced daughter,
- her daughter would not have been made whole.

**Had the blind man outside of Jericho**

- not called out to Christ,
- he would have remained blind.

James 4:2

2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.

**In one sense, prayer is like sharing the gospel with someone,**

- some will respond, some will not.

**We never know who will respond so we share the gospel.**

**In the same way, if we don't present our requests to God,**

- we won't know what the result would have been
- had we not prayed.

1 Thess 3:11-13

11 Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you. 12 And may the Lord (Jesus) make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you,

13 so that He may establish your hearts (this is a reference to the personal being) blameless in holiness before our God (this is practical Christian living) and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.