

1 Thessalonians 3

In the previous weeks we saw the wonderful activities and witness that the Thessalonians exhibited. They were examples of how to live their faith. They endured persecution. They labored in love and diligence.

Paul provided them an example himself by doing it first. He never was a burden but rather labored with his hands to provide. He showed them how to live for Christ.

Today we have very good examples left for us on how to live for Jesus Christ. These examples given to us in the Bible allows us to examine ourselves by them.

Remember a person who examines himself by himself is a fool.

We have a standard to live by. Even though each and every one of us are unique with our own set of strengths and weaknesses, we are not permitted to live undisciplined lives for Jesus but rather as the Apostle Paul says,

“To live is Christ, and to die is gain. It is no longer I who lives but Christ within me.

Therefore I die daily in the flesh so that I may live in the spirit.”

We finished Chapter 2 with the words, “you are our crown and glory.” Any true Christian leaders' goal is to see persons saved and in heaven.

Paul is going to explain how dear the Thessalonians were to him and how glad he was to hear they were doing great.

Let us continue,

1 Thessalonians 3:1-13 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,

- A) Paul was concerned for the Thessalonians. They had endured so much tribulation and trials, he feared that they had fallen away. He mentions when we could no longer endure it.
- B) So, he stopped traveling and stayed in Athens as he sent Timothy to know their

state and to establish them and encourage them.

1. Timothy was a true servant and deacon of the Church. His job was to establish the faith of the Thessalonians.

Stērizō - stay-rid'-zo - to set fast, that is, (literally) to turn resolutely in a certain direction, to confirm.

Romans 16:25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the beginning.

2 Thessalonians 3:3-4 But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one. (4) And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, both that you do and will do the things we command you.

2. Timothy's duty was also to encourage them. par-ak-al-eh'-o

From G3844 and G2564; to call near, that is, invite, invoke (by imploration, hortation or consolation)

We as Christians are called also to encourage one another to live our faith in Christ. This is the purpose of our meetings.

Hebrews 10:24-25 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: (25) Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

He wanted to establish them and encourage them so....

(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.

A) There are many people who come to Christ under the wrong pretense. Believing that being a Christian is safety from trials, tribulations, sickness, and broken ac's. Yet, this is not true. While we believers are immune of many things this world has, the one reason we become Christians is because of Christ's love for us on the cross and His deliverance. We are saved from Hell.

The Bishop Polycarp the successor of the Apostle John said while being put on a stake to be burned. "You threaten me with fire which burns for an hour at most; you must not know about the fire of the coming judgment and of eternal punishment, reserved for the ungodly. Why are you wasting time? Kill me in whatever way you see fit."

B) The Apostle feared that because of tribulation and trials that the Thessalonians had fallen away or been discouraged and so was his

reason on sending Timothy. Timothy's report did not only bring back the fact that the Thessalonians were thriving during persecution and hard times but their faith was so strong it emulated throughout the region.

C) Notice how he also says, lest I labored in vain. It is a sad thing to see all the hard work sometimes fall on deaf ears. As leaders in the Church we work so hard to push people to serve God so that they are delivered from the heartaches of this world. Depression, addiction, sexual immoralities, and ultimate damnation. Yet, it is sad and heart breaking to see people not respond or move in the direction of Christ.

D) The tempter had tempted you. We are tested in this life. Tempted. Maybe some of you were tempted today. There are a lot of things in this life that wants to take our attention away from Christ. Jesus reminds us:

Luke 16:13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

(6) But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us good news 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—

(7) therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you by your faith.

(8) For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord. (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? (11) Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you. (12) And may the Lord 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 blameless in holiness
before our God and Father at the coming of our
Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.