

Sincere Love: A Defining Mark of God's People **1 Thessalonians 2:17–3:13**

WHAT IS TRUE? The depth of Paul's love for the Thessalonians, his constant comfort, his unwavering concern for their well-being, and his fervent prayers for them amid their trials all serve as powerful testaments to the theme of sincere love. Timothy's journey to check in on the Thessalonians, fulfilling Paul's heartfelt desire, further underscores the importance of this theme. This love, demonstrated by Paul, is a model for all of God's people, urging them to love one another in the same way.

1. Paul's love for the Thessalonians (2:17–20)

- A. His desire to see them (2:17–18)
- B. His love for them (2:19–20)

2. Paul's comfort to the Thessalonians (3:1–5)

- A. His encouragement in the faith (3:1–2)
- B. His predictions of Christian persecution (3:3–4)
- C. His fears about how they were doing (3:5)

3. Paul's comfort from Timothy about the Thessalonians (3:6–10)

- A. His joy at the good news of their love, faith, and growth (3:6–8)
- B. His thankfulness for them (3:9)
- C. His petition and desire to see and encourage them (3:10)

4. Paul's prayer of strength amid Thessalonian tribulation (3:11–13)

- A. His pining for the people (3:11)
- B. His plea for loving one another and all people just as they do (3:12)
- C. His petition for their purification and spiritual maturity (3:13)

WHAT TO DO (APPLICATION)?

- ✓ Christians should expect hard times. Sitting around worrying without prayerful action solves nothing. Paul took steps by sending Timothy (v.2), and he prayed "night and day" (v.10); He trusted God. *Do you?*
- ✓ God's people should be known for their love for one another. *Are you?*
- ✓ Do not babble in your prayers; pray confidently and leave it to God.
- ✓ Faithful obedience to Christ brings misunderstandings and tribulation from those outside the Christian faith. Encouragement in Christ to others is a source of strength and comfort in our relationships and in our ability to persevere. Does your love for God and others lead you to walk with, suffer, build up, and pray for others?

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