

GATHERING INSIGHTS

SERIES: **1 + 2 Thessalonians**

TITLE: **Expect Suffering, Abound in Love**

BIG IDEA: Paul reminds the church of Thessalonica that in order to take back what the enemy has stolen we will have to suffer and love well in the name of Jesus.

BIBLE DISCUSSION

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20

Why do you think Paul waswhelmed with grief in the fact that he had to leave Thessalonica so soon?

When you hear that God's plan to take back what was Satan stolen from Adam and Eve is us, the church. How does that make you feel?

Read 1 Thessalonians 3:1-5

Timothy was sent as 'God's coworker' to encourage the church. Who has God placed in your life as an encourager and who might you be called to encourage in their faith journey?

Paul tells the Thessalonians to expect suffering as part of their faith journey. How does this contrast with modern American Christianity, and where have you seen theology that avoids or denies suffering?

Read 1 Thessalonians 3:6-10

Where are you experiencing joy because of someone else's spiritual growth? Who are you thankful for right now because of how God is working in their lives?

Read 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13

Why do you think Paul emphasizes the importance of how you love those inside the church and those outside the church?

How is the way we love seen as evidence of being a Christ follower?

GROWING IN CHRIST

Where have you recently chosen the harder, more sacrificial path (embracing suffering, costly love, or obedience) because of following Jesus, and how is that stretching you to grow more like Him?

In what specific ways are you increasing and abounding in love—both for fellow believers and for people outside the church—and what next step would show tangible growth in that love this

How does seeing church as a family "on mission behind enemy lines" (rather than a Sunday event) change the way you show up, serve, and sacrifice for the people at Capstone?

Where do you need to grow in transparent, above-reproach love for our church family—confessing, encouraging, or bearing others' burdens—so that our life together shows Jesus more clearly to those watching?

Where might God be inviting you to intentionally step into hard or uncomfortable spaces so that someone can actually hear about Jesus through you?

Who are the specific people in your life that you are (or should be) that desperate about spiritually (like Paul), and what's one step you can take this week to move a conversation toward Jesus with them?

LIVING AS A FAMILY

SHARING THE GOSPEL