

9/21/25

1Thessalonians 3

We saw Paul's anxiety over the Thessalonians in being bereaved for an hour in presence but not in heart, Paul's longing was to see them face to face again. 1Thess. 2:17

And Paul showed them that though it was man who had driven him out and kept him from returning, the source was Satan's work. 1Thess. 2:18

He expresses his joy over them, even at the coming of Christ, before the bema-seat. 1Thess. 2:19

Chapter three is a continuation of the previous section from verse seventeen, which would be a better chapter division for chapter three. 1Thess. 2:17-3:13

1. The word “therefore”, looks back at what proceeds.
2. The **love** of Paul for the Thessalonians is revealed by his anxiety for them. 1Thess. 2:17-20
3. The **concern** of Paul for the Thessalonians is revealed by sending Timothy to them. 1Thess. 3:1-5
4. The **comfort** of Paul over the Thessalonians is revealed by the report of Timothy. 1Thess. 3: 6-8
5. The **care** of Paul for the Thessalonians is revealed by thanking God in prayer for them. 1Thess. 3:9-13

Remember each chapter deals with the Lord's coming, that is the central theme.

1. His coming in relation to salvation. 1Thess. 1

2. His coming in relation to service. 1Thess. 2
3. His coming in relation to sanctification. 1Thess. 3
4. His coming in relation to resurrection. 1Thess. 4
5. His coming in relation to God's wrath. 1Thess. 5

3:1-5 The concern of Paul in his absence.

- 3:1** The evidence of the love of Paul.
- 1) The word therefore “dio” is the conclusion of what precedes. vs. 1a
 - 2) The apostles in view that they were forced to leave Thessalonica were not thinking of themselves, “when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good.” vs. 1b
 - a) The word endure “stego” means to cover up or contain. 1Thess. 3:5; 1Cor. 9:12; 13:7
 - b) When they could no longer stand thinking about their state, implying a growing tension and uncertainty about them.
 - 3) Paul was willing to face the pagan and intellectual capital of that day alone, to make sure they wouldn't be alone, “we thought it good to be left in Athens alone.” vs. 1c
 - a) Paul decided to be left alone at Athens.
 - * Some believe the “we” indicates the others two, but it seems Paul also stipulates it was he alone decided to stay alone at Athen. vs. 5

- b) The phrase “we thought it good” is one word in Greek “eudokeo” and is a compound word.
 - 1) The word “eu” well and “dokeo” to think, decide or determine.
 - 2) The idea is to prefer and choose rather with kindness as the motive for the decision.
 - 3) The choosing in other words, was not in view of their own best interest, but the Thessalonians!
- c) The word left “katoleipo” means to leave down, abandon behind.
 - 1) It is used of severing one-self from parents at marriage. Eph. 5:31
 - 2) It is used of Jesus being left alone with the woman accused of Adultery. Jn. 8:a
 - a) Paul also would postpone heaven for the Philippians. Phil. 1:23-24
 - b) Paul was willing to go to hell for Israel, if they were saved. Rom. 9:3
* Paul modeled His Master’s passion and compassion to those he ministered to!

3:2 The particular person Paul sent.

- 1) Paul identified him by name, “and sent Timothy.” vs. 2a
 - a) Timothy “timotheos” means honoring God or he who honors God.

- b) Paul didn’t just send anyone, but Timothy, he told the Philippians, “I have no man like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state”. Phil. 2:20
- 2) Paul identified him in the family of God, “our brother”, indicating both of them had the same spiritual Father. vs. 2b
 - a) Through the new birth. Jn. 3:3-5
 - b) Timothy was his son in the faith. 1Tim. 1:2
- 3) Paul identified Timothy by his service, “and a minister of God”. vs. 2b
 - a) The word minister “deacon”, means a servant, a waiter on tables.
 - b) It is used for deacons. 1Tim. 3:8
- 4) Paul identified Timothy as a messenger of the gospel, “and a fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ.” vs. 2c
 - a) A co-participant with Paul, on equal level, not beneath him, proclaiming the Christ and His kingdom.
 - b) Paul sent Timothy to Corinth. 1Cor. 4:17
 - c) Paul sent Timothy to Philippi. Phil. 2:19
- 4) Paul clearly stated the purpose for sending Timothy, “to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith.” vs. 2d
 - a) To establish “sterizo”, to fix them in their faith.
 - 1)) Insuring that they would be growing, developing and maturing in the life of Christ, to be strong, fixed and firm!

- 2)) New believers classes are important in a church and should be ongoing, regardless of the number of people!
- b) To encourage “parakaleo” to come along side and encourage them in their faith.
 - 1)) Insuring that they are not being discourages, complacent or gripped with fear, to be obedient to the word.
 - 2)) The more mature and seasoned spiritual young men and fathers coming along side to press them forward in their faith!

3:3 The reason was in view of their suffering in persecution.

- 1) Paul’s concern was clear, “that no one should be shaken by these afflictions.” vs. 3a
 - a)) The word shaken “saino” originally it meant to wag the tail, the idea is a agitating motion, be it by flatter or beguile by deception and moved.
 - b) The word afflictions “thlipsis” means to cause pressure and use for the crushing of grapes, this was due to the gospel and becoming Christians! 1Thess. 1:6. 3:3, 7
 - c) He not only wanted to establish them in the faith, but that they understand the place of sufferings in the believer’s life.
- 2) Paul reminded them that they knew Christians were appointed to them, “for you

yourselves know that we are appointed to this.” vs. 3b

- a) All that live godly shall suffer persecution. 2Tim. 3:12
- b) We are not to think it strange concerning fiery trials. 1Pet. 4:12
- c) These sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed in us. Rom. 8:18

3:4 The apostle Paul had not hidden the fact of suffering.

- 1) The three missionaries had told them beforehand, when they excepted Christ and had spent those three weeks with them, he kept warning them, “For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation.” vs. 4a-c
 - * Tribulations, from “thlibo” to press together and cause pressure.
- 2) The Thessalonians knew it happen to Paul and the others, “just as it happened, and you know.” vs. 4d
 - * Paul told the new converts on his first missionary journey that we must enter the kingdom of God through much tribulation. Acts 14:22

3:5 The other reasons Paul sent Timothy.

- 1) Paul was concern not only to establish them, and instruct them as to afflictions, but to

receive news of their faith, “For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith.” vs. 5a-c

- a) He wanted to know how they had responded.
- b) He wanted to know if they had responded in view of what they had been taught and received, turning to Christ and His Holy Spirit or not.
- c) The word “faith” is key to the letter.
- 2) Paul wanted to know the outcome of Satan’s attack on their faith, “lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain.” vs. 5d-e
 - a) Lest Satan had tempted them.
 - 1)) The tempter is Satan, as the source of the attack!
 - * Satan hinder the apostles. 1Thess. 2:18
 - a)) He is the prince of the air. Eph. 2:2
 - b)) He is the god of this world. 2Cor. 4:4
 - c)) He is as a roaring lion. 1Pet. 5:8
 - d)) He is able to transform himself into an angel of light. 2Cor. 11:14-15
 - 2)) The word tempted “peirazo”, means solicit to do evil. 1Chron. 21:1; Job 1-2; Zech. 3:1
 - a)) As Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness. Matt. 4:3

b)) Remember the word “shaken” remember means to wag the tail by flatter, beguile or deception. vs. 3

c)) As he did to Eve in Genesis, “Has God said... 2Cor. 11:3

- b) Lest their labor might have been in vain.
 - 1)) Their labor speaks of the work of the gospel being proclaimed to them.
 - 2)) Their labor speaks of their work of teaching them after being saved.
 - * The word labor “kopos” means hard exhaustive work.
 - 3)) Their labor might be in vain if Satan had been successful.
 - * The word vain “kenos” means empty, useless or ineffective.
 - 4)) For anyone to say that there was no possibility of failure is denying the aorist tense that indicates the real anxiety regarding the potential.

3:6-10 The comfort of Paul through the report of Timothy.

3:6 The good news of Timothy.

- 1) The arrival of Timothy, “But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us good news”. vs. 6a-b
 - a) The word But “de” is a contrasting conjunction indicating the sharp contrast to their unbearable emotional and

spiritual concern over the Thessalonians when Timothy arrived at Corinth with Silas. vs. 5a; 1Cor. 18:1-5

- b)** The phrase good news “euaggelizo”, means to announce glad tidings for evangelizing for sinners to repent and be saved, found 55 times in the gospels.

* This is the only time it is used something other than the good news of salvation.

- 2)** The good news was regarded three things, “of your faith and love.” vs. 6b

- a)** Their faith “pistis” means a firm persuasion based on hearing the gospel and trusting in Christ to be sufficient, continuously and had not been shaken from their faith. 1Thess. 1:3, 6-10; 2:13-14

- b)** Their love “agape”, God’s divine love that only a Christian can possess, shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit, as the evidence of their new birth. Rom. 5:5; 1Thess. 4: 9

- 3)** The love of the Thessalonians for the three apostles, “and that you always have good remembrance of us.” vs. 6c

- a)** Their good “agathos” means good in character, care, conduct and motives that benefitted them. 1Thess. 2:5-12

* It appears one other time. 1Thess. 5:15

- b)** The phrase “always have” is in the present tense, has been and continues.

- 4)** The good news of the Thessalonians was they could not wait to see them again, likewise the three missionaries for the Thessalonians, “greatly desiring to see us, as we also to see you.” vs. 6d-e

- a)** Their desire to see them was the evidence of their mutual love, but also their future hope. 1Thess. 1:3

* The word desiring “epipothountes” means to long for after intensely with a tender yearning for Paul, Silas and Timothy, in the present active tense.

- b)** Their desire was the confirmation of the love of a father and children.

1)) The love they had received.

2)) The love they had been torn away from, so suddenly.

3:7 The relief of Paul expressed.

- 1)** Paul declare his joyous conclusion by the word “therefore brethren” “dia” on account of this or for this reason. vs. 7a-b

* Brethren “adelphos” born of the same womb, being in the same family!

- 2)** Paul declared the Thessalonians were a soothing medicine to their persecution and concern for them by the good news, “in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you by your faith.” vs. 7c

- a) Their afflictions “thlipsis”, means pressing together, resulting in pressure by the constriction, as in verse 3.
- b) Their distress “ananke” describes the condition resulting from the affliction of the persecution.
 - * The one article for both ties them together describing outward and inward toil.
- c) Their comforted “parakaleo”, means to call to one’s side to entreat and encourage, pressing them forwards by their faith abiding in Christ.
 - 1)) All had been worth it, as is true of any parent who is spent and will be spent for their children out of love!
 - 2)) There was a purpose to their mission, their salvation. 1Thess. 2:1
 - 3)) Their gospel had become effective to do what is said it can do. 1Thess. 2:13

3:8 The personal spiritual refreshing benefit the apostles Paul by the report.

* It is mutual. Rom. 1:11-12; 3Jn. 4

- 1) The refreshing was immediately when they received the report, “For now we live.” vs. 8a
 - a) They were no longer in the dark anxious, but relieved, able to rejoice.
 - b) The word live “zao”, means to be alive, to enjoy life fully.

- c) They as spiritual parents had been deeply concerned about the outcome of their faith, due to the persecution and false allegations against the apostles.
- 2) The reason being was, “if you stand fast in the Lord.” vs. 8b
 - a) The word “if” would be better translated “since”, there is no doubt about it now, but rather a declaration of the fact!
 - b) The phrase stand fast “steko”, has the idea of standing firmness and stability, qualified by the phrase “in the Lord”.
 - 1)) They had not been moved or discouraged in Christ.
 - 2)) They had not gone back to their pagan lives.
 - 3)) They were abiding, depending and trusting Jesus to make them stand, they were standing on the Rock, Jesus.

3:9-10 The prayer of thanks by Paul to God.

- 1) The prayer of thanks by Paul starts by expressing their high privilege to be used by God, “For what thanks can we render to God for you.” vs. 9a
 - a) The word render “antapodidomi” means the manner of thanksgiving prayer could they give to God, to repay God for the Thessalonians.

- b) One planted, another watered, but it was God who gave the increase. 1Cor. 3:6-7
- 2) The prayer of thanks by Paul for their joy was over the Theassonians, “for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sake before our God.” vs. 9b
 - a) Their joy of gladness and delight was not for themselves, but the Thessalonians.
 - b) All the joy they rejoice, for the sake of the Thessalonians was before God, not man. vs. 9b
 - * Paul give thank throughout the letter. 1Thess. 1:2; 2:13
- 3) The extent of the prayers of the apstotles and the two-fold purpose is stated, “night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith?”
 - a) The expression “night and day”, again means they prayed as often and whenever, they prayed exceedingly.
 - 1)) The word exceedingly is made up of “huper” above or beyond, “ek” out of, and “perissou” abundantly.
 - * Typical of Paul to stack up the superlatives! Rom. 5:20; 2Cor. 7:4
 - 2)) Paul’s priority was prayer for others.
 - b) The first reason of their prayers was that they desired to see their faces again and be reunited.

- c)) They second reason of their prayers was that they might be able to help them grow, develop and mature in Christ.
 - 1)) The word perfect “katarizo”, means to mend, complete, make sound, being new believers, babes in Christ.
 - * The word perfect has the idea of fitting in order or arrange properly and is used for mending net. Mk. 1:19
 - 2)) The word lacking “husteremata”, means incomplete or deficient, again due to their recent repentance from their sins to be saved.
 - * They had stayed there only three weeks, now being about five months or so!

3:11-13 The prayer of Paul for the Thessalonians and the church.

- 3:11 The prayer of Paul for God’s guidance.
 - 1) Paul addressees his prayer to both the Father and the Son, “Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ.” vs. 11a-b
 - a) There is only one article for both the Father and the Son, indicating both are God.
 - 1)) Both co-equal.
 - 2)) Both co-eternal.

3)) Both God, the first and second person of the Trinity.

b) This is the first of two formal prayers.

1Thess. 5:23

2) Paul prayed for God's leading and direction to get back to them, "direct our way to you." vs. 11c

a) The word direct "kateuthyno", means to make straight, removing hindrances and obstacles. 2Thess. 3:5

b) The direction is important, but God's perfect timing is part of His directing!

c) The Lord had directed them to come to Thessalonica by hindering them from preaching the word in Mysia and Bythinia. Acts

3:12 The prayer of Paul for their love to grow.

1) Paul pointed them in his prayer to the One Who was the source of love, "And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all." vs. 12a

a) The Lord Jesus is the only One that can supply us with His divine "agape" love, depicting a quality of love.

1)) Jesus does not force a believer to yield to him to manifest agape love.

2)) A person must ask and yield to Jesus to be filled with His agape love.

b) The potential of agape love is given by Paul in Corinthians. 1Cor. 13:4-8a

* "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails."

c) The prayer is that they increase and abound in agape love.

1)) The verb "make you increase" "pleonasai", means to grow from one's present condition or state.

a)) The Greek expresses the optative aorist active expressing his desire for them to be growing constantly.

b)) You "humos" is at the beginning of the sentence, making it emphatic.

- 2)) The second verb abound
 “perisseusai” means to overflow.
 - a)) This again is the optative aorist active present tense.
 - b)) The second verb strengthens the first, emphasizing one’s wish for the present growth and overflowing of love in their lives.
 - c)) The richness of being filled with God’s overflowing love.
- d) The object of agape love is “to one another and to all”.
 - 1)) First the believer, “to one another.”
 - a)) They were known for loving each other and had been commended for their labor of love in the past. 1Thess. 1:3
 - b)) They were loving each other in the present. 1Thess. 4:9
 - c)) They would be commended for abounding in love for one another in the future, the mark of a believer. 2Thess 1:3; Jn. 13:35
 - 2)) Second the unbeliever, “and to all”.
 - a)) Thew unbelieving world knows nothing about the love of God. Jn. 3:16
 - b)) They are dead in trespasses and sin. Eph. 2:1-2
- e) The comparison, “just as we do to you.”

- 1)) The three missionaries loved them as unbeliever by preaching the gospel to them.
- 2)) The three apostles loved them now as believer in Christ.
- 2) Paul pointed he ultimat purpose of his prayer that they be ready for the Lord Jesus returned for His church, “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.” vs. 13
 - a) Jesus alone can establish their hearts and our blameless and in holiness.”
 - 1)) The word establish “sterizo”, means to set fast, strengthen or fix, an infinitive aorist active, constant.
 - 2)) The idea being one with God, having a singleness of heart.
 - b) The heart “kardia, speaks of the inner man, who I really am.
 - 1)) What I am in character, involving the intellect, emotions and will.
 - 2)) Prior to Christ we had a deceitful heart and desperately wicked, ruled by our old sin nature. Jer. 17:9
 - 3)) After Christ we have a new heart, ruled by our divine nature. 2Pet. 1:3-4
 - 4)) Their ongoing abiding and depending on Jesus would result in ongoing

- strength of character, single minded and a single eye.
- c) The condition of the heart is “blameless and in holiness.”
- 1)) The word blameless “amemptos”, means irreproachable, faultless, as to character and habit of life practice, not sinlessness, free of human censure and accusations, yielding to Jesus and confessing our sins to stay right. 1Jn. 2:1
- a)) The blamelessness of the believer is the product of the state of holiness, as a lifestyle, not the reverse.
- b) Blamefulness is due to unholiness, they are directly related to an unstable heart, which is divided.
- c) Stability of heart will result in being in a sanctified state of living in holiness, therefore being blameless, as a result to yielding to the love of God.
- 2)) The word holiness “hagiosune”, refers to a state, not a process, “in holiness”.
- a)) It is the result of our new birth, living a sanctified life. 1Thess. 4:3-4
- b)) It is the condition of sanctification, living separate from sin, as a practice of life., reckoning the old man dead. Rom. 5:12-8:39
- c)) I am separated from sin to holiness.

- 3) The believers are living accountable to God,, “before our God and Father”.
- a)) He knows all things.
- b)) He sees all things.
- c)) He hears all things.
- d)) He knows all motives of the heart.
- 4) The time is the rapture, “at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.”
- a)) The word coming “parousia” means presence, arrival or advent and used four times for Jesus rapturing His church, the context is not the Second Coming. 1Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23
- * The word is also used for the presence of a visiting king.
- b)) It is also called “The day of Christ”. Phil. 1:9-10; Col. 3:12-14; 1Jn. 4:17-19
- d)) We will be judged at the Bema Seat for all we have done though fire, to judge our works good from bad in life. 1Cor. 3:11-15; 2Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10
- e)) We will be rewarded only for what was done with the right motive and attitude of agape love. 1Cor. 4:5
- f)) The coming of Jesus with His saints is interpreted for us by Paul stating Jesus would descend to the clouds with all the saints that have die and are with Him at the rapture. 1Thess. 4:14-17
- g)) The Thessalonians were waiting for His coming from heaven with all the saints

that had died, and Jesus will rapture
 “harpazo” the saints living at that time
 and meet the Lord in the air, to escape
 the wrath to come. Jn. 14:1-6; 1Thess.
1:10

1)) Some mistakenly interpret this to be
 the Second Coming out of context!

2)) Some interpret the reference of
 “saints” to angels, but the word never
 is used for them, though we know that
 angels will accompany Jesus and the
 saints. Matt. 13:41; 25:41; 2Thess.
1:7; Dan. 7:10

h)) Paul says, “When Christ who is our
 life appears, then you also will appear
 with Him in glory.” Col. 3:4

i)) This topic of His coming for His church
 is found in every chapter. 1Thess. 1:10;
2:19; 3:13; 4:16-17; 5:23