

Sermon Notes 10/31/21
“The Triumph of Teamwork”
How can we work together for the win?

1. Work together to _____ the _____.

1 Thessalonians 3:2

Luke 10:1-2

2. Work together to _____.

1 Thessalonians 3:5

Luke 22:31-32

3. Work together to _____ in our faith.

1 Thessalonians 3:7-8

Hebrews 3:12-13

4. Work together by _____ for each other.

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

Ephesians 6:18



“Paul preaching in the Areopagus” by Sir James Thornhill 1729

Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 4: October 31 – November 7

1 Thessalonians 3

This chapter continues to express the love Paul had for the Thessalonians and how much he wanted to see them. Verse 1 is the conclusion of Paul's statements in 2:17-18, when he was describing how he felt when he had to leave these new Christians in Thessalonica because of persecution (Acts 17:10-15). In this chapter we see the importance of loving one another and working together to grow in our faith.

Read Thessalonians 3:1-5

1. Where did Paul go after he left Thessalonica in verse 1?
2. Who did Paul send to Thessalonica in verse 2?

Jon Weatherly notes,

Stressing that despite his absence he did what was best for the Thessalonians, he describes Timothy in striking terms. He is not only "our brother," and so one to whom the Thessalonians were bound in Christ, but also "God's fellow worker in spreading the gospel of Christ," one dedicated to labor in the pivotal work of God himself, working with God and through his power.¹

3. What was Timothy's mission? (3:2)

Weatherly writes,

Acutely aware of the difficulties faced by new converts in adopting and maintaining Christian belief and behavior in a hostile environment, Paul knows that a hard-won faith can still be lost. Therefore, this concern for strength and encouragement is always relevant, and so Paul will repeat these two verbs in 2 Thess 2:17 as his ongoing prayer for the Thessalonians.²

4. What kind of trials was Paul talking about in verse 3?

¹ Jon A. Weatherly, *The College Press NIV Commentary: 1 & 2 Thessalonians* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1996), 104.

² Weatherly, 105.

5. What did Paul say about persecution? (3:3-4)
6. Why did Paul send someone to check on the Thessalonians in verse 5?
7. Who is the “tempter” in verse 5?
8. What was Paul afraid of in verse 5?

Read Thessalonians 3:6-13

9. What kind of news did Timothy bring to Paul in verse 6?
10. How did the message from Timothy help Paul in verse 7?

James Grant comments on verse 7:

Paul had been comforted through their faith. He was encouraged because they were "standing fast" (v. 8), and he wanted to return this back to them and "supply what is lacking" in their own faith (v. 10). That is a mutual relationship, a mutual reciprocity. Paul wanted to share with them, and he wanted them to share with him, and in that process, both would be encouraged.³

11. Why did Paul say, "for now we really live"? (3:8)
12. What did Paul thank God for in verse 9?
13. What was Paul earnestly praying for in verse 10?

Leon Morris writes,

Paul’s fervent longing to see the Thessalonians again finds expression in constant and fervent prayer. Praying *night and day* is emphatic enough, but he adds an expressive and unusual adverb (*hyperekperissou*; elsewhere in the New Testament only in 5:13; Eph. 3:20). It is a double compound, giving a twofold addition to the original ‘abundantly’; one gets the impression of a man struggling to put into words a feeling too deep for words.⁴

³ James Grant, *1–2 Thessalonians* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015), 82.

⁴ Leon Morris, *1 and 2 Thessalonians* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007), 74.

14. What did Paul pray for in verse 12?

15. Why did Paul pray for God to strengthen the hearts of the Thessalonians? (3:13)

Morris observes,

Hearts, as in 2:4, does not refer simply to the emotional side of human nature (as with us), but is the comprehensive term for the whole of our inner states, thoughts, feelings, and will. It stands for the whole personality. Paul is saying that our whole personality is established on a firm foundation only when there is a basis of abundant love. The self-centered person at best will have an element of weakness and stability. But where anyone has learned to love the Lord his God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself, then he has a firm foundation for life.⁵

As in 1:10 and 2:19, Paul concludes chapter 3 with another reference to the return of Christ. These references prepare the reader for meat of the letter in chapters 4 and 5, where Paul will focus on the practical applications of eschatology. The point Paul makes here is that the return of Christ should motivate us to grow in our faith and live holy lives.

16. What can we learn from the way Paul prayed for other Christians?

17. How can we show our concern for Christians in distant places?

18. What are the characteristics of someone who is standing firm in the Lord?

19. How does a person's love for others increase?

20. What can we do to be holy and blameless when Christ's return?

21. How can you strengthen someone's heart this week?

22. Who and what will you earnestly pray for this week?

⁵ Morris, 76-77.