



# **“LET’S BE A FAITH FELLOWSHIP!”**

## **1 Thessalonians Chapter 3**

~ Let’s practice 3 faith factors of *Faith Fellowship*:

> **Faith Factor #1 – Let’s have FAITH THAT WORKS! (1-5)**

(v1) Paul and Silvanus had working faith in Athens – Acts 17:10-34

(v2) *Observe the working faith of Timothy:*

- His **LIFE** – Brother in Christ!

- His **LOVE** – Minister (servant) of God!

- His **WORK** – Fellow laborer in the gospel!

- His **PURPOSE** – Establish Christians in the faith!

- His **DESIRE** – Encourage Christians through faith! (Hebrews 11:6 -

*But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.)*

- Insight on the **faithful minister** – Ephesians 4:11-16; 2 Timothy 3:12 – 4:1-5.

(v3-5) Working faith will face **AFFLICTIONS, SUFFER TRIBULATION, and TEMPTATION!** - - Jesus said in Matthew 5:10 - *Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*

- **Beware of the “Tempter”** - Satan's influence in worldly affairs is also clearly revealed (**John 12:31**). His various titles reflect his control of the world system: "the ruler of this world" (**John 12:31**), "the god of this age" (**2 Cor 4:4**), and "the prince of the power of the air" (**Eph 2:2**). The Bible declares, "The whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one" (**1 John 5:19**).

- **Satan exercises his evil power through demons** (**Matt 12:24; 25:41; Rev 12:7,9**). An outburst of demonic activity occurred when Jesus came to earth the first time because of the Savior's attack against Satan's kingdom (**Matt 12:28-29; Acts 10:38**). Another such outburst is expected just before the second coming of Christ, because this will bring about the downfall of Satan and his angels (**Rev 9:3-17; 12:12; 18:2**).

- **Satan also has high intelligence**. Through it he deceived Adam and Eve and took over their rule of the world for himself (**Gen 1:26; 3:1-7; 2 Cor 11:3**). His cleverness enables him to carry out his deceptive work almost at will.

- **Satan's attributes, impressive as they are, are not limitless**. His power is subject to God's restrictions (**Job 1:12; Luke 4:6; 2 Thess 2:7-8**). The reins of God on his activities are illustrated by Satan's request to God for permission to afflict Job (**Job 1:7-12**).

- **Satan is permitted to afflict God's people** (Luke 13:16; 1 Thess 2:18; Heb 2:14). But he is never permitted to win an ultimate victory over them (John 14:30-31; 16:33).

- **Satan's continuing ambition is to replace God with a passionate yearning to have others worship him** (Matt 4:8-9; Rev 13:4,12). Since God has frustrated this desire and put down Satan's rebellion, he has become God's exact opposite. He is "the wicked one" (Matt 13:19,38), while God is "the Holy One" (Isa 1:4).

- **Satan's nature is malicious.** His efforts in opposing God, His people, and His truth are tireless (Job 1:7; 2:2; Matt 13:28). He is always opposed to man's best interests (1 Chron 21:1; Zech 3:1-2). Through his role in introducing sin into the human family (Gen 3), Satan has gained the power of death—a power which Christ has broken through His crucifixion and resurrection (Heb 2:14-15).

- **Satan's Methods.** Of the various methods used by Satan in carrying out his evil work, none is more characteristic than **TEMPTATION** (Matt 4:3; 1 Thess 3:5). Satan leads people into sin by various means. Sometimes he does it by direct suggestion, as in the case of Judas Iscariot (John 13:2,27); sometimes through his agents who disguise themselves as messengers of God (2 Thess 2:9; 1 John 4:1); and sometimes through a person's own weaknesses (1 Cor 7:5). He tempted Christ directly, trying to lead Him into compromise by promising Him worldly authority and power (Luke 4:5-8).

- **Along with his work of tempting mankind, Satan also delights in deception** (1 Tim 3:6-7; 2 Tim 2:26). His lying nature stands in bold contrast to the truth for which Christ stands (John 8:32,44). The great falsehood which he uses so frequently is that good can be attained by doing wrong. This lie is apparent in practically all his temptations (Gen 3:4-5). As the great deceiver, Satan is an expert at falsifying truth (2 Cor 11:13-15).

- **Satan's methods are designed ultimately to silence the gospel.** He seeks to stop the spread of God's Word (Matt 13:19; 1 Thess 2:17-18). When the gospel is preached, Satan tries to blind people's understanding so they cannot grasp the meaning of the message (2 Cor 4:3-4; 2 Thess 2:9-10). At times he opposes the work of God by violent means (John 13:2,27; 1 Peter 5:8; Rev 12:13-17). He brings disorder into the physical world by afflicting human beings (Job 1-2; 2 Cor 12:7; Heb 2:14). Sometimes God allows him to afflict His people for purposes of correction (1 Tim 1:20).

- **Satan's Defeat.** Satan is destined to fail in his continuing rebellion against God. His final defeat is predicted in the New Testament (Luke 10:18; John 12:31; Rev 12:9; 20:10). The death of Christ on the cross is the basis for Satan's final defeat (Heb 2:14-15; 1 Peter 3:18,22). This event was the grand climax to a sinless life during which Jesus triumphed over the enemy repeatedly (Matt 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13). The final victory will come when Jesus returns and Satan is cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20).

- Christian victory. Strength for a Christian's victory over sin has also been provided through the death of Christ. We have assurance that *"the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet"* (Rom 16:20). But such personal victory depends on our will to offer resistance to Satan's temptations (Eph 4:25-27; 1 Peter 5:8-9). To help Christians win this battle against Satan, God has provided the power of Christ's blood (Rev 12:11), the continuing prayer of Christ in heaven for believers (Heb 7:25), the leading of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:16), and various weapons for spiritual warfare (Eph 6:13-18). (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright © 1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

> **Faith Factor #2 - Let's have FAITH THAT ENCOURAGES! (v6-8)**

~ Practice encouraging faith through:

- GOOD NEWS!
- LOVE!
- COMFORT!
- STAND FAST IN THE LORD!

> **Faith Factor #3 - Let's have FAITH THAT PRAYS! (v9-13)**

~ Pray faithfully:

- With THANKSGIVING (v9a)
- With JOY (v9b)
- For the opportunity to DISCIPLE (v10)
- For ONE ANOTHER to INCREASE LOVE and to have HEARTS THAT are BLAMELESS IN HOLINESS till the COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST (v11-13)

- Jesus said in John 15:9-17 - *"As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another.*