

1 THESSALONIANS 2:17-3:13

Commitment to the Gospel
Commitment to the People of God
Indeed, you are our glory and joy.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

1Th. 1:1 Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you.

1Th. 1:2 We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers.

1Th. 1:3 We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

1Th. 1:4 For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you,

1Th. 1:5 because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.

THESSALONICA (REVIEW OF LESSON 1)

How is Los Angeles like Thessalonica?

REVIEW OF LESSONS 2 & 3

1 Thess 1:9-10 They tell how you **turned** to God from idols to **serve** the living and true God, and to **wait** for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

1Th. 2:8 We loved you so much that we were delighted to **share** with you not only the **gospel** of God but our **lives** as well, because you had become so dear to us.

Terms used in explaining relationship: Steward; Father;
Mother; Brother; Child

1Th. 2:4 On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be **entrusted with the gospel**. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts.

1Th. 2:7 but we were gentle among you, like a **mother** caring for her little **children**.

1Th. 2:9 Surely you remember, **brothers**, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.

1Th. 2:11 For you know that we dealt with each of you as a **father** deals with his own **children**,

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (see map)

- Paul and Silas fled from Thessalonica to Berea (Acts 17:10)
- Paul fled to Athens due to Berean persecution (Acts 17:14)
- Paul sent word to Timothy and Silas to joined him in Athens (Acts 17:5)
- Timothy joined Paul, but was sent back to Thessalonica (1 Thess 3:1-5)
- Paul moved to Corinth (Acts 18:1)
- Silas and Timothy came to Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:5)
- Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians

TIMOTHY, THE MESSENGER

- Timothy
 - Timothy was a missionary in Asia Minor and second pastor of the church of Ephesus during the first century A.D.
 - Two of the three Pastoral epistles in the New Testament bear his name -- 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy.
 - He lived in the area of Derbe and Lystra (Acts 16:1), where many disciples had been made on the Apostle Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 14:6-22).

- His father was Greek but his mother, Eunice, was a Jewish believer.
- His grandmother, Lois, was also a believer (2 Tim. 1:5).
- Timothy was already a believer at this time -- since the brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him (Acts 16:2).
- It could well be that he was led to faith in Christ by Paul on his first missionary journey.
- It could also be that his mother and grandmother were the instruments of his salvation (2 Tim. 1:5).
- Paul and Timothy
 - Paul considered himself the "spiritual father" of Timothy, calling him "a true son in the faith" (1 Tim. 1:2, NKJV) and "a beloved son" (2 Tim. 1:2, NKJV).
 - Paul helped Timothy reach his full potential in Christ and then established him as the pastor at Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3).
 - He was Paul's closest friend, brother in the LORD, and devoted ministry helper.
 - Of Timothy, Paul noted, "For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel" (Phil 2:20-22, NKJV).
- Timothy's ministry
 - The Apostle considered Timothy an equal in his ministry when using such terms as "my fellow worker" (Rom. 16:21; 1 Thes. 3:2), "our brother" (2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Thes. 3:2; Phile. 1:1; Heb. 13:23), and "Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:1).
 - Young Timothy's faith had been tested on the missionary field with Paul, who commended him to the church at Philippi saying, "you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel" (Phil. 2:22).
 - He concludes with a reverent warning that Timothy should "guard what was committed to your trust" (1 Tim. 6:20).
 - A key verse for Timothy (and for any young minister) is: "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the

believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12, NKJV).

- At some point, Timothy suffered in prison but was released (Heb. 13:23).
- He was a faithful missionary, evangelist, and pastor.

THE THESSALONICAN CHURCH

Relationship to Thessalonian Church: What intense words reveal Paul's feelings for the church in Thessalonica?

1Th. 2:17 But, brothers, when we were torn away from you for a short time (in person, not in thought), out of our **intense longing** we made **every effort** to see you.

1Th. 2:19 For what is **our hope, our joy, or the crown** in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?

1Th. 2:20 Indeed, **you are our glory and joy**.

1Th. 3:1 So when we **could stand it no longer**, we thought it best to be left by ourselves in Athens.

1Th. 3:2 We sent Timothy, who is our brother and **God's fellow worker** in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith,

1Th. 3:6 But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has brought good news about your faith and love. He has told us that you always have **pleasant memories** of us and that **you long to see us**, just as **we also long to see you**.

1Th. 3:7 Therefore, brothers, in all our distress and persecution we were **encouraged about you** because of your faith.

1Th. 3:8 For now **we really live**, since you are standing firm in the Lord.

1Th. 3:9 **How can we thank God enough for you** in return for all the **joy we have** in the presence of our God **because of you**?

1Th. 3:10 Night and day **we pray most earnestly that we may see you** again and supply what is lacking in your faith.

1Th. 3:11 Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you.

1Th. 3:12 May the Lord **make your love increase and overflow** for each other and for everyone else, **just as ours does for you.**

Meeting resistance: Why did Paul attribute his blockage from seeing the Thessalonians to Satan, while attributing other such blocks to God? How can we tell the difference?

1Th. 2:18 For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, did, again and again—but Satan stopped us.

Acts 16:7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.

Acts 16:8 So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas.

Acts 16:9 During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”

Rewards of ministry: What did Paul hope to receive (indirectly, through Timothy’s report) from the Thessalonians?

Paul states that the Thessalonians are his hope, joy, and crown when Jesus returns. What does this mean?

1Th. 2:19 For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?

What had Paul endured from the Thessalonians? What had he received from them?

1Th. 3:7 Therefore, brothers, in all our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith.

1Th. 3:8 For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord.

1Th. 3:9 How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you?

Prayer for others: How did Paul pray for the Thessalonians? What does his prayer reveal about what he wanted for them?

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1Th. 3:13 May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

BREAKOUT QUESTIONS

- What do people receive who minister to you? Why is it important to consider this?
- What blessings have you received from ministering to others?
- Involvement in ministry can be painful. What are some of the pains associated with ministry? What are the joys?
- For further thought: Who is your Timothy? Who are you discipling? Who is discipling you
2Tim. 2:2 And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

SUMMARY VERSE (pick one you think summarizes this section)

1Th. 2:17 But, brothers, when we were torn away from you for a short time (in person, not in thought), out of our intense longing we made every effort to see you.

1Th. 2:18 For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, did, again and again—but Satan stopped us.

1Th. 2:19 For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?

1Th. 2:20 Indeed, you are our glory and joy.

1Th. 3:1 So when we could stand it no longer, we thought it best to be left by ourselves in Athens.

1Th. 3:2 We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God's fellow worker in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith,

1Th. 3:3 so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. You know quite well that we were destined for them.

1Th. 3:4 In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as you well know.

1Th. 3:5 For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith. I was afraid that in some way the tempter might have tempted you and our efforts might have been useless.

1Th. 3:6 But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has brought good news about your faith and love. He has told us that you always have pleasant memories of us and that you long to see us, just as we also long to see you.

1Th. 3:7 Therefore, brothers, in all our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith.

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