

Textual Outline: 1 Thessalonians 2 - 3

I. ¹ You know, brothers and sisters, that our visit to you was not without results.

A. ² We had previously

1. suffered and been treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know,
2. but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in the face of strong opposition.

B. ³ For the appeal we make

1. does not spring from

- a) error or
- b) impure motives,
- c) nor are we trying to trick you.

2. ⁴ On the contrary, we speak

- a) as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel.
- b) We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts.

c) ⁵ You know we never

- (1) used flattery,
- (2) nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness.

d) ⁶ We were not looking for praise from people,

- (1) not from you
- (2) or anyone else,

3. even though as apostles of Christ

- a) we could have asserted our authority.
- b) ⁷ Instead, we were like young children among you.

4. Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, ⁸ so we cared for you.

a) Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you

- (1) not only the gospel of God
- (2) but our lives as well.

5. ⁹ Surely you remember, brothers and sisters,

- a) our toil and hardship;
- b) we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.

- (1) ¹⁰ You are witnesses,
- (2) and so is God,
- (3) of how

(a) *holy,*

(b) *righteous*

(c) *and blameless we were among you who believed.*

- (4) ¹¹ For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children,

- (a) ¹² encouraging,
- (b) comforting
- (c) and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his
 - (i) kingdom
 - (ii) and glory.

C. ¹³ And we also thank God continually because,

- 1. when you received the word of God,**
 - a) which you heard from us,**
 - b) you accepted it**
 - (1) not as a human word,
 - (2) but as it actually is, the word of God,
 - (3) which is indeed at work in you who believe.
- 2. ¹⁴ For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of God's churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus:**
- 3. You suffered from your own people the same things those churches suffered from the Jews**
 - a) ¹⁵ who**
 - (1) killed the Lord Jesus
 - (2) and the prophets
 - (3) and also drove us out.
 - (4) They displease God
 - (5) and are hostile to everyone
 - b) ¹⁶ in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved.**
 - c) In this way they always heap up their sins to the limit. The wrath of God has come upon them at last.**

II. ¹⁷ But, brothers and sisters,

A. when we were orphaned by being separated from you for a short time (in person, not in thought),

- 1. out of our intense longing we made every effort to see you.**
- 2. ¹⁸ For we wanted to come to you—**
 - a) certainly I, Paul, did, again and again—**
 - b) but Satan blocked our way.**
- 3. ¹⁹ For what is**
 - a) our hope,**
 - b) our joy,**
 - c) or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes?**
 - d) Is it not you?**
 - e) ²⁰ Indeed, you are our glory and joy.**

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B. 1 So when we could stand it no longer,**1. we thought it best**

- a) **to be left by ourselves in Athens.**
- b) **² We sent Timothy,**
 - (1) **who is our brother**
 - (2) **and co-worker in God's service in spreading the gospel of Christ,**
- c) **to strengthen and encourage you in your faith,**
- d) **³ so that no one would be unsettled by these trials.**
 - (1) **For you know quite well that we are destined for them.**
 - (2) **⁴ In fact, when we were with you,**

(a) we kept telling you that we would be persecuted.

(b) And it turned out that way, as you well know.

e) ⁵ For this reason, when I could stand it no longer,

- (1) **I sent to find out about your faith.**
- (2) **I was afraid that in some way**

(a) the tempter had tempted you

(b) and that our labors might have been in vain.

C. ⁶ But Timothy**1. has just now come to us from you****2. and has brought good news**

- a) **about your faith and love.**
- b) **He has told us that**
 - (1) **you always have pleasant memories of us**
 - (2) **and that you long to see us, just as we also long to see you.**

D. ⁷ Therefore, brothers and sisters,**1. in all our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith.****2. ⁸ For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord.****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?****4. ¹⁰ Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.****E. ¹¹ Now****1. may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you.****2. ¹² May the Lord make your love increase and overflow**

- a) **for each other**
- b) **and for everyone else,**
- c) **just as ours does for you.**

3. ¹³ May he strengthen your hearts

- a) **so that you will be**
 - (1) **blameless**

- (2) **and holy in the presence of**
 - (a) *our God and Father*
 - (b) *when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.*

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Conceptual Outline I Thess 2-3

- I. The Apostle's Effective Evangelism in Thessalonica**
 - A. Reminder of their efforts despite sever suffering**
 - B. Evaluation of their work**
 - 1. Purity of motives
 - 2. No trickery
 - 3. Seeking to please God
 - 4. vs. pleasing men
 - 5. humility vs authority
 - 6. Caring as a nursing mother
 - 7. hard working as a father - encouraging, comforting, urging to live lives worthy of God
 - C. Thessalonians' Response**
 - 1. Accepted as word of God
 - 2. Imitators of God's churches in Judea
 - 3. suffered as other churches
- II. Pain of Separation**
 - A. Apostle's longing for contact**
 - B. Satan's prevention**
 - C. Purpose of Timothy's visit**
 - a) Strengthen & encourage
 - b) Comfort in trials
 - c) Find out about their condition
 - D. Timothy's Encouraging Report of their faith and affection**
 - E. Apostle was encouraged**
 - F. Intent to visit**
 - 1. Reliance on God to open the way
 - 2. Commission to keep growing
 - 3. Blessings for holiness

Theme:

The Apostle's character & motives in evangelism and his love and affection for the Thessalonians. Thus, he disputed his critics' accusations of wrong motives and abandonment.

Questions

1. If Satan wants to attack your church and destroy the faith of members, how might he do it? Whom would he attack first? How?
2. Introduce the background:
After the missionaries escaped from Thessalonica, the Thessalonians suffered a great deal of persecutions & their faith was being attacked. Not knowing how they were doing, Paul, who was in Athens at the time, was concerned about them and sent Timothy to find out about their faith. Timothy reported that their enemies were creating doubts in the minds of the Thessalonians. They attacked the missionaries' integrity and their love for the people. They accused them of having mixed motives and for abandoning the Thessalonians. In Chapters 2-3, Paul addressed these issues head on. In these chapters, we'll learn more about Paul's leadership and his passion for the gospel and the people he serves.
3. Have 2 good readers read 2:1-12 & 13-16.
4. Ch 2 starts with a double negative that their visit was not a failure. This is a theme that he alludes to again in 3:5. What evidences does he point out in v.2 & 13 to support his conclusion? Why is the conclusion important? What does the statement possibly reflect about the missionaries' and the Thessalonians' emotions? What would happen if they continue to believe that the ministry was a failure?
 - Despite severe persecutions, the gospel was preached.
 - The word was received as the Word of God and was at work in lives.
 - This conclusion is important. A perception of "failure" would lead to discouragement and potentially abandoning the faith. Seeing the ministry as a success leads to building more success. At the time, maybe there were doubts both in the missionaries' minds and the Thessalonians'.
5. After stating the conclusion Paul addresses the specifics attack to their faith which I categorized into 3 aspects. From vs. 3-11, can you identify the 3 categories of his defense?
 - The integrity of the missionaries, their motives.
 - The way they handle the gospel
 - Their love and care for the Thessalonians
6. How does Paul defend their personal integrity? How does he handle monetary gain, success, and power?
 - Money - their motives were pure, they work hard themselves vs. 3, 5, 9
 - Success/fame/praise - they look to please God, not men vs. 4, 5
 - Power/control - their authority/power is under control vs.5
 - God & the Thessalonians are they witnesses vs. 5, 10
7. How does Paul handle the gospel?
 - Boldly & faithfully proclaim the gospel in face of opposition v.2
 - treating it as the "gospel of God vs. 8, 9
 - Working as "approved" workmen v. 4
 - Treating the gospel as "entrusted by God (a steward) v. 4
 - As apostles of Christ v.6 (eye witnesses, commissioned, entrusted with gifts & miraculous power)

8. How does Paul show his love and care to the Thessalonians? What are some of the roles he takes on as he preach the gospel to them? Why are each of these roles important in preaching the gospel?
 - As "nursing mothers cares for their children" v. 7
 - loved & share the gospel & their lives with them v. 8
 - work hard not to be a burden v.9
 - lived "holy, righteous, & blameless" lives as testimonies v. 10
 - As "father deals with his own children" v.11, encouraging, comforting, & urging them to live lives worthy of God
9. Using the missionaries are standard, which of the three categories (motives, handling the word, & love) is your strength? What do you need to work on improving more?
10. Having addressed his 1st argument against failing in their missionary journey, Paul turns to his 2nd point, the response of the Thessalonians. How does the response show their genuine faith? Paul connected the Thessalonians' suffering to several groups of people. Who are they? What's the significance of these connections? Paul states that the Jews were "hostile to everyone" v. 15, how so?
 - The word was well received and practiced in their lives. Their faith was tested genuine by suffering.
 - Even the Lord, prophets, apostles, & other churches suffered. Suffering is a given as a believer. It is to be expected. They are not alone in suffering. The Lord and others can relate. They've been faithful & so can you.
11. Read 2:17-3:13. Another accusation is that the missionaries have run away and abandoned the Thessalonians. How does Paul answer this accusation? In describing his longing to see them, Paul humbles himself and admits to his need for the Thessalonians'. What roles do they play in the missionaries' life?
 - He longs to see them. He's tried to see them but "Satan has blocked their way."
 - They are his brothers & sisters, hope, joy, and crown
12. What is Timothy's assignment during his visit to the Thessalonians? What do the goals reveal about the missionaries' worry? How does it prove the missionaries' love and faithfulness in ministry? What could make their labor become "in vain" (3:5) or "failure" (2:1)? What are some of the additional ways Paul is hinting as to how we can endure suffering without losing our faith?
 - To find out about their faith v. 3:5
 - To strengthen & encourage their faith v. 3:2
 - To remind them of the predictability of suffering so that they will not be "unsettled by these trials." v. 3:3-4
 - The worry is that they faith would be unsettled, they labor would be in vain because of the suffering and challenges the Thessalonians faced. Suffering, trials, discouragement, and feeling all alone can cause faith to be shaken.
 - Suffering is to be expected. Meeting with other believers can encourage our faith & help us to hold on. Being connected with others can prevent feeling alone. Seeing others' faith and give us confidence that by God's strength we can endure & succeed.
13. What is Timothy's report about the Thessalonians? How do the missionaries respond to his finding? Do you think Paul is exaggerating? What does it show about where the missionaries get their strength to endure their suffering? How have you been an encouragement to the people who serve you? Name one thing you will do to encourage

someone you serve and someone who serves you in the next 2 weeks.

- The report was very positive - they are still faith & they love the missionaries.
- It's amazing to see Paul being so verbal about his love and passion. He's so humble to allowing others to minister to him by their love and faith. In loving, we have to also receive love. It is a 2 way street. It helps both sides to keep on keeping on.

Love grows more love. "work produced by faith...labor prompted by love" Ch. 1:3

14. After hearing Timothy's report, Paul immediately prayed for the Thessalonians. What is the content of his prayer? What does it reveal about Paul's goal in his missionary efforts? Are these just goals for the recipients? How did the missionaries demonstrate them in their lives? How can these goals orient your ministry? What do you need to change, do more/less of?
 - For the opportunity to see them & to strengthen their faith
 - For their love to increase
 - For them to live blameless & holy lives
 - His goal is not just conversion (faith & love) but also sanctification (holy and blameless) for the Thessalonians and for themselves v 2:10.
15. From the missionaries' reaction, what can we add to the list of ways to cope with sufferings?
 - pray for one another
 - focus on holy living until Christ's return v. 3:13
16. Spend a minute to pray for the people you serve modeling Paul's prayer - love, faith, & holiness.