

# 1 Thessalonians 3

A. Paul sent Timothy to Follow up (1 - 5)

B. Paul is encouraged by the good report from Timothy (6 - 13).

(V.1) "When we could endure it no Longer." What could they endure no longer?

(V.2) "We sent Timothy, who is our brother and co-worker in God's service in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in faith.

Because of the circumstances Paul could not go back to the Thessalonians himself. The first time he went there, a riot was stirred up. As the face of the growth of Christianity, this could happen again if he returned.

[Q]. What principles of ministry can we learn from this?

Teamwork:

One advantage of a team is that it creates more flexibility.

A team can cover more ground than an individual can.

A team is motivated by common goals and values. Timothy was sent with a specific goal.

[Q]. What was that goal?

Cross - References on Team

Ecclesiastes (4:9-12)

Ephesians (4:16)

1 Corinthians (1:10)

1 Peter (4:10)

Galatians (6:2)

(V.3-4) They told the Thessalonians in advance about the affliction ahead - Paul and his team faced a lot of adversity.

He told them ahead of time about the afflictions waiting for them in the future.

(NIV). "so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. For you know quite well that we are destined for them. In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as well as you know."

[Q]. Should we tell the difficulties associated with being a Christian to others when we share the gospel even though this may discourage them from believing? Why or Why not?

(V.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 had tempted you and that our labors might have been in vain."

We see again Paul's great concern for the Thessalonians.

[Q]. What does this passage teach us about the principles of the ministry and care for others?

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B. Paul is encouraged by the good report from Timothy (6-13)

(V.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.

Timothy brought a good report.

Thessalonians were doing well. Their faith and love continued.

They reciprocated Paul's feelings -

In the last couple of chapters we have been looking at the concept of modeling.

Generally disciples will follow the example of their mentors, much the same as the popular secular idiom, "like father, like son." Paul modeled Christian affection and kindness.

The Thessalonians saw Paul's sincere care for others and they also learned to care for others in this way.

[Q] Are there people who would long to see you if they didn't see you for a long time? If not, maybe you are not friendly enough!

(V.7) Therefore, brothers and sisters, in our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith.

Paul's team was comforted in the middle of their affliction - Paul faced many persecutions.

[Q] What was it that motivated him to keep going when the going got tough?

(read - Romans 8:18)

(V.8) "For now we really live if you stand firm - Paul's own life could be filled with joy and excitement if he saw them doing well. His example demonstrates the true meaning of unselfish living.

(V.9). How can we thank God enough for in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you.

[Q] What do we learn about thanksgiving from this verse?

(V.9) Joy - along with that thought, you can see what really brings joy to Paul.  
It was to see others doing well in their spiritual walks.

[Q] Do you want to live a Joyful life?

[Q] What would the world say about what it would take to have a joyful life?

[Q] What Might God say ?

(V.10) "Night and day we pray" —

[Q] What can we learn about prayer from this verse?

[Q] What can we learn from the content of Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians?