

I Thessalonians 3:1 - 4:10

I Thessalonians 3:1 - Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;

Paul was concerned for the Thessalonians. He had a pastor's **heart** and knew they needed more of the Word to help them stand for their faith under persecution.

I Thessalonians 3:2 - And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:

*Paul's urgency about the matter causes him to stay in Athens **alone** while sending the well-tested Timothy.

Note: Not everybody is matured enough to help others to grow in the Word.

Hebrews 5:12-14 - For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. Heb. 5:13 - For every one that useth milk *is* unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. Heb. 5:14 - But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

I Thessalonians 3:3 - That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

Timothy is sent to forewarn them that they should not be surprised at having to suffer for Christ. When living godly in an ungodly society that hates Christ, they will hate you. That is **normal**!

Philippians 1:29 - For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

II Timothy 3:12 - Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

I Thessalonians 3:4 - For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

This hardship of a believer needs to be told to young believers. If not, they will be **discouraged** when trials or opposition hits them.

II Corinthians 4:8-10 - *We are* troubled on every side, yet not distressed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair; II Cor. 4:9 - Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; II Cor. 4:10 - Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

I Thessalonians 3:5 - For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

Paul had fear for them because he **knew** Satan would be tempting them to turn from the faith. If that were to happen, it would cast **doubt** on the gospel throughout the region.

I Thessalonians 3:6 - But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also *to see* you:

When Timothy returned to Paul, you can imagine how relieved and encouraged Paul's heart was. The Thessalonians were standing **firm** in faith. They had not believed the lies about Paul and longed to see him again. What a bond they had in Christ.

I Thessalonians 3:7 - Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:

Seeing the Lord work in the Thessalonians, Paul knew his sharing of Christ was **not** in vain. This good news encouraged Paul to stay faithful through his persecutions (II Corinthians 22-33).

I Thessalonians 3:8 - For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

To Paul, it was not lavish lifestyles that brought real living, but simply seeing those he had influenced for Christ **live** the Christian life.

I Thessalonians 3:9 - For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;

Paul wells up with emotion because of their enduring faith in God. He is overjoyed at how God had worked in them and even favored them. Hallelujah!

I Thessalonians 3:10 - Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

Paul exhausted himself in praying for the Thessalonians. One concern of his was their lack of understanding of **end** times events. Some had been told the "Day of the Lord" was at hand. Because they feared of their loved ones missing out on Christ's return, Paul will later explain the difference between the **Rapture** and the **Revelation**. (I Thessalonians 4:13-18).

I Thessalonians 3:11 - Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

Paul hoped God would allow him to return to the Thessalonians once again. Due to all the persecutions going on everywhere, for Paul to return there, it would have to be an **act** of God.

I Thessalonians 3:12 - And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all *men*, even as we *do* toward you:

Paul's hope for the Thessalonians was for them to love the brethren, the lost, and be a testimony for Christ. Without love, you can**not** do this.

Romans 8:9 - But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Galatians 5:22 - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

I Thessalonians 3:13 - To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

Paul knew that new believers needed to grow in truth to bring their **practice** (living godly) up to match-agree with their **position** in Christ. Paul wanted them to be ready, living for Christ when He returned for them.

I Corinthians 1:8 - Who shall also confirm you unto the end, *that ye may be* blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I Thessalonians 4:1 - Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort *you* by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, *so* ye would abound more and more.

Paul challenges them to have a walk and lifestyle that practices **godly** living because that pleases God.

Note: The believer's life begins with faith in Christ (DBR), but that faith is to lead to a walk of faith.

Ephesians 4:1 - I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy (practice) of the vocation (position) wherewith ye are called,

Ephesians 5:8 - For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

I Thessalonians 4:2 - For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

Paul reminds them of the instructions he had shared when he was previously with them. They should know how they were to live for God.

I Thessalonians 4:3 - For this is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

1. Even though saved, the Thessalonians still had some loose values and needed further instruction. Paul then brings up sexual immorality.

Hebrews 13:4 - Marriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

2. The more a believer is sanctified (set apart to God), the more likely they will stay controlled concerning their flesh. Staying pure is the will of God, even if society says differently.

I Thessalonians 4:4 - That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

Paul says this is not deep. All should know it is imperative to have their body under control. We are to set ourselves away from sin (Ephesians 4:27) unto a godly way of living.

Romans 6:11, 13, 22 - Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. 6:13 - Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God. Rom. 6:22 - But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

II Timothy 2:20-21 - But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. II Tim. 2:21 - If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, *and* prepared unto every good work.

I Thessalonians 4:5 - Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

1. [concupiscence] has the idea of total abandonment of moral values and being given over to one's fleshly desires (Galatians 5:19-21). It is when one's lust is out of control. It is unleashing depravity's lust of the flesh to the world's and devil's beat.

2. Paul pleads with them not to live like unsaved Gentiles who do not know God's boundaries. Violating His truth will only bring shame, a blot on Christ's name.

I Thessalonians 4:6 - That no *man* go beyond and defraud his brother in *any* matter: because that the Lord *is* the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

1. Paul says when committing fornication, one commits fraud by going beyond God's boundary for sexual activity (Hebrews 13:4). Immorality hurts individuals, marriages, the church, and even the Body of Christ.

2. Then Paul reminds them that God will carry out His **justice** on them. Paul had previously warned the Thessalonians about sexual immorality.

Proverbs 6:29, 32-33 - So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent. Prov. 6:32 - *But* whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he *that* doeth it destroyeth his own soul. Prov. 6:33 - A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

Colossians 3:5-6 - Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: Col. 3:6 - For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

I Thessalonians 4:7 - For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

Paul tells them that God's goal in saving them was not for them to remain sinning but to live **clean**, godly lives.

I Peter 1:15 - But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

Ephesians 5:3 - But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

I Thessalonians 4:8 - He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

Paul says those upset with his teaching on this subject are not rejecting him, but **God** and His commandments!

*Paul has given a great deal of space here to sexual purity. Not only was it a critical issue here but in churches today.

**Paul now transitions back to believers maintaining love between themselves.

I Thessalonians 4:9 - But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

Paul tells them he did not need to write to them about love since God, the Word, and the Holy Spirit had already worked in their hearts to love truth.

*Believers in Christ are a brotherhood-sisterhood. We have a **bond** in Christ proven by our love for one another.

I John 3:14 - We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not *his* brother abideth in death.

I John 4:7-8 - Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. I John 4:8 - He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

I Thessalonians 4:10 - And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;

Paul says it is natural that the Thessalonians were in fellowship with believers elsewhere. He said, do not limit your love, but allow it to grow where**ever** you go.

Romans 12:10 - *Be* kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;