

A Study of 1 & 2 Thessalonians

1 Thessalonians – Chapter 3

- Verse 1 : Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone
 - What could they no longer bear?
 - What timeframe/place in Acts did this happen?

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- Verse 2: and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith
 - Look at the words Paul uses to describe Timothy,
 - Brother
 - God’s co-worker
 - Why did the church need Timothy to “establish” them in the faith?

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- Verse 3: that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this.
 - “That” refers back to what?
 - What were these folks going through now?
 - Is Paul talking predestination of being a Christian or something else

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- Verse 4: For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.
 - Why does Paul remind them of what he told them in person?
 - Did it come true?

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- Verse 5: For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain.
 - What's the reason Paul could not bear it any longer?
 - What was Paul concerned about?
 - Who is the tempter?
 - What does the tempter do?
 - Is he speaking metaphorically or was he really concerned about Satan snatching them away
 - If they gave in to temptation, what would this mean for the work of Paul in this city?

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- Verse 6: But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always have good remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us, as we also *to see you*—
 - So we are moving from the past to the present -- let's keep this in mind as we read. What kind of news did Timothy bring?
 - How does this relate to their faith?
 - To their love?
 - Does it make a difference to Paul that these folks remembered Paul and his companions?
 - Why? Didn't Paul have the Holy Spirit to comfort him?
 - Didn't Jesus sometimes speak directly to him?
 - What does it matter that some folks in a church in Greek city remembered Paul?
 - Why would Paul care that they longed to see him?

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- Verse 7: therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you by your faith.
 - When I'm going through a hard time, how can knowing others are faithful possibly help me?

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- Verse 8: For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord.
 - Is it possible to not “stand fast in the Lord”?
 - What does this mean to stand fast in the Lord?

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- Verse 9: For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sake before our God,
 - Let's stop a moment -- Paul has repeatedly told these folks how much help and joy they bring him. What impact would this have on them if they are considering sinning or leaving God?
 - Do angels rejoice when we repent? [LUKE 15:10]
 - So do they rejoice when we stay faithful?
 - If we truly believe God knows and cares about us, will this make it less likely we will sin on a day by day basis?

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- Verse 10: night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith?
 - How intense is Paul's prayers for these people?
 - Isn't it a bit insulting for Paul to say they lack something in their faith?
 - Wasn't Timothy there teaching them?
 - So if they are lacking something, is this Paul being arrogant towards Timothy and these people?
 - If not, then what is your explanation for why Paul tells them they are lacking in their faith?

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- Verse 11: Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you.
 - Is it proper to pray that God and Jesus will guide us safely to someone or to somewhere?
 - Does God want us to pray about “little things” such as safe travels, meeting friends, etc?
 - Can our prayers ever be too small for God where He says, “Don’t bother me with such trivial matters?”

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- Verse 12: And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we *do* to you,
 - Is it possible for God to actually increase our love for each other?
 - Would it be proper to pray for God to increase our love for each other in this congregation?

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- Verse 13: so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.
 - Does Paul think Jesus is coming back?
 - If he does, is he concerned about these folks being holy and blameless when that happens?
 - Why?
 - What's the application for us today?