

### **Recap of 1/12/20 (1 Thessalonians 1:3):**

1. Paul cites a trio of virtues, coupled with corresponding actions, which are the essentials of the Christian life and walk: "work produced by faith, labor prompted by love, and endurance inspired by hope." They are indispensable to growing, maturing, committed believers; the evidence of the genuineness of their conversion. Each quality is functional, not just idealistic or philosophical qualities.
2. Jabez is an excellent example of a life of faith (1 Chronicles 4:9,10)
3. Paul speaks of "labor prompted by love." The love spoken of is agape love which someone defined as "to love a person by rational choice..." It is not an emotional response to another person, it is not born of affinity for another, nor is it dependent on the desirability of the person loved (Thomas). This love was seen in the way the early church cared for each other as illustrated by the "one-another" passages, as well as the "other" passages (Philippians 2:3,4). Jesus said if we love only those who love us we are no better than tax-collectors and pagans (Matthew 5:46-47). He called Peter to express his love for Jesus by feeding and caring for Jesus' followers, His lambs, sheep. They were to put everything into it, to expend extraordinary effort, for the sake of others.
4. Hope, confidence about the future, particularly concerning the return of Jesus in the rapture and second coming, would give them the endurance needed to endure suffering for the sake of the gospel. As someone said, the ability to cope "with the trials which arise out of living for Jesus Christ.
5. Former NFL coach, Tony Dungy, illustrates: "In practice each week, our team would run our plays against a 'look squad.' That's what we call our backup players who simulate the other team's techniques as closely as possible. The simulation helps the first team's player visualize how our plays will work against the other team's. ...like the look squad during a week of practice, Scripture's descriptions of the future give us and our families an idea of where we're headed and what it will be like when we get there. We can know that God is standing there waiting for us with outstretched arms. And if we can 'see' that future, we will have a much better idea of how to prepare for it, much more confidence as we move forward, and much more courage to handle anything today." (Tony Dungy)