

Recap of 5/3/20 (1 Thessalonians 2:14-16):

1. In 1Thessalonians 2:14-16, Paul reminds the Thessalonians that suffering (trials, difficulties) is not an denial of their salvation but a confirmation of it. The mark of the believer is suffering/persecution (vs. 14-15). The goal of the persecutors is to silence the gospel (vs. 16).

2. Paul begins vs. 14 with the word “for,” a connective which explains his observation in vs. 13 that they had received the Word, accepted it, and it was at work in them. How did he know that? They were being persecuted. Persecution often arises when a person patterns their life after the Lord and His Word (2 timothy3:12 - “In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”)

-“There’s a long tradition of suffering linked with Christian commitment. Things don’t automatically get better. They may get worse! When those we love suffer for their faith, we can hurt with them. But we must remember that suffering is nothing new.” (Richards)

-“To the Thessalonians the Christian faith had brought not peace but trouble.” (Barclay)

3. The reason for the persecution is that the enemies of the gospel are bent on destroying God’s work (Acts 17:5-13).

4. God allows the sin of these persecutors to run its full course. Their actions were storing up wrath for them for a coming day of judgment (2 Thessalonians 1:6-10). Many believe this is ultimately a reference to the Tribulation.

5. Someone has said: “Sometimes even dedicated Christians are tempted to complain because of what they see in the world around them. Perplexed by the success and prosperity of the wicked, oftentimes at the expense of the righteous, they ask, why doesn’t the Lord do something about it? Why doesn’t He reward those who fear Him, and judge those who disregard Him? Be patient. He will!”

6. Remember...

“There is no oil without squeezing olives,
No wine without pressing the grapes,
No fragrance without crushing the flowers, and
No real joy without sorrow.” (Matthew Terrill)