

6/14/20

Recap of 6/7/20 (1 Thessalonians 3:1-4):

1. In 3:1,2 Paul is concerned for the Thessalonians, how had their faith fared with his absence. Faith needs to be nourished and strengthened, it's not static. If we are not going forward in our Christian walk we are going backward. Having been taken to Athens after being chased out of Thessalonica and Berea because of opposition to the gospel, he chose to be left alone in Athens in great loneliness and distress (Acts 17:14-16). But Paul was more concerned about the trials the Thessalonians were going through than about his own trials.

2. Three concepts dominate chapter three. Faith, which is mentioned in vv. 2,5,6,7 and 10.

Afflictions, mentioned in vv. 3,4,7. And the need to be strengthened vv. 2,8,13. Paul was anxious to know that their faith had withstood the attacks upon them and the challenges to their faith.

-“Thus, one of Paul’s main concerns in this letter is to instruct and encourage the Thessalonians in their newfound faith, especially in light of the persecution they...were facing.” (Source: The Bible for Dummies).

-Paul sends Timothy to strengthen and encourage them.

3. Paul second concern for the Thessalonians, seen in 3:3,4, is the way that persecution can unsettle faith.

-Paul thought of suffering for Christ’s sake as normal for the church. Indeed, suffering has been the story of the church from the first century til now. Not that believers have always suffered, for there have been long periods of peace as well, but there is nothing in Scripture to suggest that Christ’s followers will be exempt from suffering....Paul and his associated were realistic enough to inform their converts that the Christian way would be characterized by tribulation.” (Ewert)

4. The word translated “unsettle” in it’s literal is used of a dog wagging its’ tai. Figuratively it meant to be shaken, or disturbed. Trials can cause Christians to doubt that they are where God wants them to be; to doubt that they are doing His will; to think that if difficulties come, they must somehow have displeased God.

5. Part of Paul’s discipleship training was to tell them to expect difficulties/persecution.

6. “...these very things—tribulation, distress, persecution, produce in us super-joy; they are not things to fight. We are more than conquerors through Him in all these things, not in spite of them, but in the midst of them. The saint never knows they joy of the Lord in spite of tribulation, but because of it” (Oswald Chambers).