

Ready for Christ's Return | Part 4

Lesson 5

1 Thessalonians 3:1-13

October 1, 2023

Real Living

INTRODUCTION

It is not a secret the churches in our country are struggling. Some blame the effects of COVID isolation; others blame the change in the thought process of our younger generations. Regardless of the causes, we are seeing a rejection of the basic tenets of our faith. Weekly on the TV or radio we hear stories of individuals fighting what they perceive as persecution for upholding the Word of God. But the persecution we perceive today in our country is minor compared to the persecution of a new, small church in Thessalonica.

This small church was started by Paul during his second missionary journey. Christianity was new and powerful. It was hated by the Romans, Greeks, and zealous Jews. Its persecution was brutal and included stoning, crucifixions, torture, and death, but this church survived. The passage we are studying this week will show us the trials the Thessalonica church endured and how the believers found their strength. It is the story of how God uses our trials to hone us into healthy congregations.

Memory verse: "May He strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones."
—1 Thessalonians 3:13

Pray, and read 1 Thessalonians 3:1-13. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

OBSERVATION: What does the passage say?

1. What was Paul referring to when he wrote “we could stand it no longer”? (1 Thessalonians 3:4-5)
2. Who did Paul send in his place? What was his job, and what were his qualifications for it?
(1 Thessalonians 3:2)
3. What was going on in Thessalonica that led Paul to believe they needed encouragement and strength?
(1 Thessalonians 3:2-5)
4. What did Timothy find in the church at Thessalonica?
(1 Thessalonians 3:6-10)
5. What sustained the church at Thessalonica?
(1 Thessalonians 3:6-13)

INTERPRETATION: What do the passages mean?

1. Trials can be a part of God's plan for us. How should trials be faced? (Romans 5:3-5; James 1:2-4)

2. How can believers be strengthened and encouraged in their faith?
(1 Thessalonians 5:11-12, 14, 16-19, 22-23b)

3. In 1 Thessalonians 3:5, Paul said he was afraid "the tempter had tempted you". How does the "tempter" work in the lives of mankind? (Genesis 3:1-7; Matthew 4:1-11; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Ephesians 2:1-3, 6:10-12; 1 John 2:15-17)

4. What contributed to the health of the church?
(1 Corinthians 1:8; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3,
4:9-10; 2 Timothy 1:3)

APPLICATION: How do the passages apply to your life?

1. What trials do you see in the Christian church today?
Give an example of how the “tempter” influences it. How
can you combat that influence?

