

# 1 Thessalonians 3

Verse by Verse

## Good News of Your Faith

Introduction

Sending  
Timothy  
3:1-5

Timothy's  
Report  
3:6-10

A Hopeful  
Blessing  
3:11-13

Conclusions



<https://www.urbangreenup.eu/cities/urban-greenup-network-of-cities/thessaloniki.kl>

# Introduction

## Previously in 1 Thessalonians

- In the first half of **Chapter 2** Paul gave a brief reminder or defense of his ministry.
- There may have been accusations coming against him from unbelievers in Thessalonica which prompted his defense.
- He then reminded the Thessalonian believers of their positive response to God's Word.
- In the last few verses he assured this church that he is longing to see them again.



1 Thess  
2:17-20

What's in  
1 Thess 3?

Key Verses







# 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20

17 But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face, 18 because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us. 19 For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? 20 For you are our glory and joy.

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# What's in 1 Thessalonians 3?

## Three Lessons

- In this chapter we will see first hand Paul's deep concern for the Thessalonian believers.
- In order to learn more about their condition he sent Timothy to them, to strengthen them and then to report back to him.
- Timothy was able to report back good news.
- Paul will end the chapter with a blessing, in which he prays for this church to continue to grow in love and be established in a holy and hopeful faith.

# Three Lessons from 1 Thessalonians 3

1. The Certainty of Affliction
2. Our Need for One Another
3. Our Need to Stand Fast (to Be Established)

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# Key Verses: 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

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## Sending Timothy 3:1-5

From  
John Stott

The  
Certainty of  
Affliction

- **2:17-20** Paul longed to visit this church again. It was probably several years before he could do so.
- **3:1** Paul almost always worked as part of a team. In this case he made an exception.
- **Timothy and Silas** joined him again once he got to **Corinth** (Acts 18:5), where Paul had already met **Aquila and Priscilla**.
- **3:2** Timothy had two jobs. **To establish (strengthen)** the church and **to exhort (encourage - from *parakaleo*)** them.
- **3:3-5** Paul's primary concern was that their afflictions might cause them to abandon their faith.





John Stott (1921 - 2011),  
All Souls Church, London

Perhaps the best way to protect people from being upset by tribulation is to remind them that it is a necessary part of our Christian vocation. This Paul proceeded to do ... It is very interesting to learn that a regular topic of Paul's instruction to converts was the inevitability of suffering.

From *The Message of Thessalonians:  
The Gospel & the End of Time*



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# The Certainty of Affliction

Affliction can come to us in a variety of ways.

- There are physical or emotional trials.
- We can find ourselves in financial trouble.
- Historically, the church has often dealt with persecution or milder forms of bigotry or generic opposition.
- This kind of faith-based opposition can lead to many forms of trials.
- The enemy uses these to weaken our faith, the Lord allows them to strengthen it.

From Jesus

From Paul

# From Jesus

## **Matthew 5:11-12**

11 Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

## **John 15:20**

Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.

## **John 16:33**

I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.



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From Jesus

From Paul

# From Paul

## **Acts 14:21-22**

21 When they had preached the gospel [in Derbel] and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.

## **Romans 8:16-17**

16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

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## Timothy's Report 3:6-10

- Timothy returned with a good report from the Thessalonian church.
- Their faith was strong. Their love was authentic.
- They longed to see Paul again just as much as he longed to see them.
- There is nothing more encouraging to a pastor or a missionary than to know that the work they do is having an effect.
- All of us enjoy job satisfaction, but there is something especially profound when the subject is the state of people's eternal souls.

From Tony  
Evans

Our Need for  
One Another

We live in a high tech world, but even the best technology is no replacement for relationship ...

Connectivity with a solid, biblically centered local church is indispensable for properly progressing in the Christian life. ...

Faith needs community. I need you, and you need me. On our own, our faith is lacking. There are no Lone Ranger believers. If we believe all by ourselves, we will not believe for long. Any unchurched, uninvolved Christian is living outside the will of God.



Tony Evans, Bible Teacher  
and Commentator



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# Our Need for One Another

- **3:8** Paul's emotional investment in the Thessalonian church must have been enormous.
- Imagine the frustration of being run out of town when he was in the process of planting the church.
- Imagine his concern knowing that the church was continuing to face severe trials.
- **3:10** One of his important prayer requests was that he could see the Thessalonians once again.
- He wanted to personally provide more teaching.

Israel  
Defeats  
Amalek

Staying  
Connected



# Israel Defeats Amalek

## **Exodus 17:8-13**

8 Then Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. 9 So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose for us men, and go out and fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand." 10 So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. 11 Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. 12 But Moses' hands grew weary, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side. So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. 13 And Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the sword.



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# Staying Connected

## **Romans 12:4-5**

4 For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

## **1 Peter 2:4-5**

4 As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 5 you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

## **1 Peter 4:10**

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.

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## A Hopeful Blessing 3:11-13

- More than almost anything else, Paul wanted to see this church in person again.
- And beyond that, he desired that the church would experience increasing love and increasing holiness.
- In order to see that holiness it would be necessary for the Lord to establish (that is, *strengthen*) their hearts.
- Holiness goes hand in hand with a firm and growing faith.
- The ultimate fulfillment of that prayer will be when we believers are ultimately united with our Lord.

Our Need to  
Stand Fast

Key Verses

Colossians  
3:3-5

# Our Need to Stand Fast (to Be Established)

- One of Paul's motivations in sending Timothy was to make sure this church would not be moved because of their afflictions (3:2).
- Paul valued their standing firm as if his own life actually depended on it. (3:8).
- Their faith and love, according to Paul, needed to be accompanied by a blameless and holy life (3:13).

**Philippians  
1:27-30**

**Hebrews  
10:23-25**

## Philippians 1:27-30

27 Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. 29 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, 30 engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

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An aerial photograph of a city, likely Jerusalem, showing a dense urban area with a large orange circle and a red shape overlaid. The orange circle is positioned in the center, and the red shape is on the left side. The text is overlaid on these shapes.

## Hebrews 10:23-25

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.



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Colossians  
3:3-5



An aerial photograph of a city, likely Jerusalem, showing a mix of modern buildings and green spaces. A large, solid red circle is superimposed over the center of the image. In the top left corner, there is a blue rectangular box containing the text 'Colossians 3:3-5'. In the center, overlapping the red circle, is a light green rectangular box containing the text of Colossians 3:3-5.

## Colossians 3:3-5

3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.



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- In this chapter we saw first hand **Paul's deep concern** for the Thessalonian believers.
- In order to learn more about their condition he sent Timothy to them, to strengthen them and then to report back to him.
- He was able to report back good news.
- We also learned **three main lessons**.
  1. One was about the certainty of trials.
  2. Another was about our need for one another.
  3. And finally, we saw our need to stand fast (or *be established*) in our faith.

From  
Warren  
Wiersbe

From Chuck  
Smith

Key Verses

A Final  
Prayer





Warren Wiersbe  
(1929 - 2019),  
pastor and Bible  
teacher.

Faith that cannot be tested cannot be trusted. God tries our faith, not to destroy it, but to develop it. ... Paul prayed that the suffering Christians in Thessalonica might grow in their faith, and God answered his prayer. Paul wrote in his second letter, "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren ... because that your faith groweth exceedingly" (2 Thes. 1:3).

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Chuck Smith (1927-2013),  
founding pastor of the  
Calvary Chapel Movement

One of the greatest weaknesses in the church today is the lack of holiness. You rarely hear sermons preached on holiness anymore.

We go back to the writings of the Puritans, and the theme of the Puritans was holy living. But somehow, sadly, that theme has been lost. Yet that is a requirement of God. God said, "Be holy for I am holy" (1 Pet 1:16).

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# A Final Prayer

Our Father in heaven,

- What a blessing it is to see a church like the church in Thessalonica. They knew how to stand firm in their faith even in the midst of great trials.
- Help us to be strong in the midst of the afflictions that we face. And help us to rely upon one another as we also try to be strong and stand firm.
- Increase our love for one another, increase our faith and increase our holiness, so that we might better please you.
- In Christ,
- Amen.

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