

1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:5
Sanctification, Part 1: Destined To Suffer?

Introduction:

1. Paul fled from Thessalonica because of the Opposition
2. In Chapter 1, we see a deep concern Paul had for the Thessalonians in the past
3. As he speaks in his present, his level of concern is no different
4. In our text today, Paul explains his absence from them
5. Paul had difficulty coming back to them: Opposition Accuses Him of Neglect & He Doesn't Care
6. On the contrary, Paul continues his Defense and tells them He does love them, but has been hindered

Chief Consideration of 1 Thessalonians 2:7-3:5:

When Christians Do God's Will, They Will Suffer. These Momentary Afflictions Are Never An Accident. For God Appoints Trials And Tribulations To Sanctify Us!

Paul's Joy, Hope, Crown (2:17—3:2, 5)

1. Paul was *Torn* (Orphaned) Away from Them
2. Paul's Great Desire was to See the Thessalonians
3. Paul Tried Multiple Times to Come See Them
4. His Joy, Hope, & Crown is not What we Might Think
 - a. If we were Asked, What is Your Joy in the Christian Life? We probably would say Jesus
 - b. And this is True – Jesus is our greatest Treasure
5. Paul's Response is the Thessalonians are
6. Paul's Anxiety/Burden for the Church Spurred Him to Send Timothy and to be Left Alone – Why?

Paul's Aim In Ministry (3:2-3a)

1. To Establish the Church – Stable Foundation on Jesus
2. To Exhort the Church – To Encourage Endurance
3. *In Your Faith* – Stable & Enduring Faith in the Word

Satan: Hinderer & Tempter WITH Suffering (2:18, 3:5)

1. **2:18** - Paul Longed to See the Thessalonian Believers
2. Paul was Hindered by Satan (**1 Peter 5:8-9**)
3. *To Hinder*: Military Language – Rome hindered their Enemies by Breaking apart the Roads, to Stop the Advance of their Foe
4. What is the Nature of the Hindrance? It is a Mystery
5. How did Paul know it was Satan? (**Acts 16:6**)
 - Biblical Principle: Discernment Grows as You Immerse Yourself in the Truth of the Word
6. **3:5** – Paul sends Timothy to Learn of their Faith
7. Paul wanted to Make Sure they were Not Tempted
 - a. Harkens Back to Genesis 3:15
 - b. The Work of God on Earth is Done in Enemy Occupied Territory
8. As the Church is Built, the Serpent will Snap at the Heels (**Gen 3:15**), the Lion will Seek to Devour (**1 Pt 5**) – Suffering and Affliction Will Come!
9. **Ephesians 6** – The Heavenly Places is a War Zone

The Lord: Appointer & Regulator OF Suffering (3:2-4)

1. Paul sends Timothy to Establish them in their Faith
2. They Will Need to be Prepared for Coming Suffering
3. As the Church Develops & Grows, Affliction Comes
4. Paul does not want to see them Stumble or Fall
5. Paul Warned Them Suffering Was Coming
 - WE Shouldn't be Surprised, Part of Christian Life
6. Where does Paul FLEE & Cleave to when there is Suffering? The Sovereignty of God
7. Suffering is not By Accident: "We are Destined for this," Paul States (**Verse 3**)
 - a. God Disciplines Through Suffering (**Jonah**)
 - b. God Regulates Suffering: Satan is On a Leash (**Job**)
 - c. God Appoints Suffering for a Reason: To Sanctify the Bride of Christ (**James 1:2-4**)
 - d. God uses Satan & Suffering to Do His Will and bring About His Purposes (**Rom 8:28**)
8. Suffering is Coming... But God has Full Control!