

1 Thessalonians 3:6-13
Sanctification, Part 2: Established By The Lord

Introduction

1. Paul knew the Thessalonians for only a Brief Time
2. But the Bond Formed was Massive!
3. We have Seen the Great Love, Desire, and Concern Paul had for The Thessalonians' Faith
4. We have Seen the Inward Suffering Paul had for being Unable to Return to Them **(2:17, 3:1)**
5. Last week We Saw the Reason: Satan Hindered
6. We also Saw How the Lord Appoints and Regulates these Afflictions through Testing and Trial
7. This week We come to God's Hand in Establishing Believers in the Faith

Main Point of 1 Thessalonians 3:6-13

God's Goal for Christians is to be Set Apart and Established in Faith, Love, and Holiness at the Coming of His Son. We Should Pray the Lord Will Do So for Us and Others!

Timothy's Report: A Joyful Relief For Paul (3:6-9, 11)

1. Paul was *Torn* (Orphaned) Away from Them **(2:17)**
2. He was Anxious to Hear about them
3. He sent Timothy to Find Out about their Progression in the Faith **(3:1-2)**
4. Timothy Brings Good News of Comfort **(3:6-7)**
5. Paul's Life: To See Christians Stand Firm in the Lord
6. Paul is Moved to Pray with this Good News
7. The Character of Paul's Prayer Before God
 - a. Thankfulness **(3:9a; see also 1:6, 2:12-13)**
 - b. Fullness of Joy **(3:9b)**
 - c. Earnest/Intense **(3:10)**
8. Paul Maintains His Desire to Return to Thessalonica
 - a. Satan Hindered Them from Coming **(2:18)**
 - b. He Appeals to the Lord's Power **(3:11)**
 - c. God is Able to Remove the Obstacles
 - d. Paul Prays specifically the Lord will Do So!

Paul's Prayer Is For The Lord To Sanctify & Establish (3:10-13)

1. What is Sanctification?
 - a. Not Regeneration (New Birth)
 - b. Not Justification (Made Right With God)
 - c. Means by which Christians are Set Apart & Prepared by the Lord to Exist in His Presence
 - d. Childlike Faith to God and a Love for Others, **PROGRESSING** in/toward Holiness
2. God is Interested in Believers Standing Firm in His Holy Presence and at the Second Coming of Jesus
3. So The Lord Wills and Works in Believers to Purify Them **(Philippians 2:13)**
4. God Commands Us to be Holy, So He Enables Us/ Works in Us to Become Holy **(4:3-4 with 5:23)**
5. God's Method of Sanctification **(from R.C. Sproul)**
 - a. Neither Human Activism (Self-reliant activity)
 - b. NOR Human Apathy (God-reliant activity)
 - c. IT is Human Effort Dependent on God's Enabling Power **(2 Cor 7:1; Phil 3:10-14; Heb 12:14)**
6. God Works to Sanctify Us Through Different Means:
 - a. The Primary Means: The Word of God **(1:4-5, 13)** – Spiritual Growth in the Faith
 - b. The Lord Graces Us with the Fruit of the Spirit to Progress in Love for God and Others
 - c. The Lord Works in Us to Put to Death the Deeds of the Flesh **(Rom 8:13)**
7. We See Paul Praying for God to Sanctify in vv 10-13
 - a. *Supply what is Lacking in Your Faith... (v 10)*
 - Almost Sounds Insulting/Contradictory
 - b. *Increase and Abound in Love... (v 12)*
 - Agape Love, Sacrificial Love **(1 Jn 3:14)**
 - Sanctification = Conforming to Image of Christ
 - c. *Establish you blameless in Holiness before Our God and Father.... (v 13)*
 - Progressive Holiness in Life and Practice
 - Prepares Us for Christ's Second Advent