

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 30TH - 31ST, 2021 // BOOK OF 1 THESSALONIANS

SHAKEN (1 THESSALONIANS 3:1-5) APPARENTLY IT GOT BAD

Paul says that "when we could no longer stand" the persecution, he, Silas and Timothy left to go towards Athens. This doesn't mean he was a coward, but that he had to be wise and continue his ministry.

- **We must use wisdom in getting into and out of situations.** This includes **checking our pride and trusting God's direction.**

"WE SENT TIMOTHY, OUR BROTHER"

Timothy could go back to Thessalonica because he wasn't famous like Paul. Timothy was younger, probably early 30s, but he was also mature in his faith.

- The future leader of the church in Ephesus was sent to the Thessalonians to encourage, teach, care for, and just love and be there for the church.

"SO THAT NO ONE WOULD BE SHAKEN"

We need love, encouragement, and biblical teaching because the world is confusing and hostile. Tim's job was to provide this kind of care for his church family.

- This is why church community is important today. **We need God, His Spirit, His Word and other Christians in order to navigate this life.**

AND WE SHOULD KNOW IT IS COMING

Paul says "we told you in advance that we were going to experience affliction." So, it should have been no surprise that people were acting aggressively towards them.

- **Aggression towards Christianity should come as no surprise to us today either. The real question is if our hearts are prepared for it.**

"FEARING THAT THE TEMPTER HAD TEMPTED YOU"

Paul was concerned the young Christians had been seduced or distracted by the world. This is another reason he sent Tim to be with them.

- **If we're not disciplined we will get seduced or distracted by this world** and fall to temptation. To avoid this **we must pray, listen, read and obey the Word, and have accountability.**

STABILITY (1 THESSALONIANS 3:6-10) A SIGH OF RELIEF

One can almost sense Paul's excitement about hearing that the Thessalonian church was holding firmly to God in **faith** and **love**.

- **Faith is the attitude we take towards God. Love is our feeling and expression of our attitude on God.** Faith and love will also transfer onto others because loving God and people are connected.

A GENUINE LOVE FOR EACH OTHER

Paul and Timothy talked about the church's love and desire to see Paul again. This was the same feelings he had for them. This shows us how Christians are to be like family.

- It begins with **putting ourselves second and remembering that our faith can have a huge impact on others. Do we love people? Have we prayed for this love?**

WE THANK GOD FOR YOU!

The fact that the church stood firm in their faith brought Paul great joy. Not only did he thank God for their endurance, he begged God for the chance to see them in person and show them how much he was proud of them.

- **Do we find this kind of joy in others knowing Jesus? Has our culture made us self-centered in our faith?**

"WHAT IS LACKING IN YOUR FAITH"

Though the Thessalonians were moving in a great direction, they were still "lacking" in their relationship with Jesus and needed more teaching, warning, and instruction.

- **We must be careful to not think we have arrived or are complete. We are to always be evolving more into the image of Christ until the end.**

PREPARATION (1 THESSALONIANS 3:11-13) PRAYING FOR GOD'S WILL

Paul prays that "God the Father...and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you." This is Paul submitting to God's plan, and not his own desire to see the Thessalonians.

- **We can express our desires and wants to God, but at the end of all prayer we must seek God's will and trust that it is good** (Jn. 14:13-14).

LOVE MUST ALWAYS BE INCREASING

After all of the hard lessons and preparation for persecution, Paul prays and encourages that their love for God and others amplify as time goes on.

- Think about how supernatural this must be: **we're to increase in our understanding of God and our love for others as the world grows increasingly hostile towards us.**

HE MAKES OUR HEARTS "BLAMELESS"

V13 informs us that it is only by the power of God that we can live "blameless" and "holy" lives that honor God and bless others.

- **Blameless** means *innocent of wrongdoing*. **Holy** means living set apart from the corrupt standard of the world. **We can only achieve this by grace through a relationship with Jesus.**

GETTING A PARDON FROM THE JUDGE

The only way we're able to live holy lives and escape the judgment of God is to be "in" the Judge, Jesus Christ (1Cor. 1:30).

- **If we accept Christ, His purity and holiness become ours by His grace and mercy. The cross opened up forgiveness, salvation, and power so we can make sound decisions and live honorably.**

RIGHTEOUS VS. SELF-RIGHTEOUS

- There is an absolute morality and a bar to which we are called to live. **We do not set this bar, the Creator God does.** We are educated on His standard through His Word and the conviction of the Holy Spirit.
- Unfortunately, we live in a culture of self-righteousness, meaning we think we set our the standard of what is good and evil.
- Self-righteousness hasn't served us well, because **we invoke chaos without an absolute standard of good and evil.**
- Without a biblical worldview of right and wrong we are incapable of weathering the storms of this life. This is why our morally relativistic society is more broken than it's ever been.

TO LIVE HOLY AND RIGHTEOUS

- To live holy lives we need to **depend on Jesus, live in His love, read and obey His Word, and find encouragement in the local church.** This is the only way to stand in an increasingly hostile world.
- The pursuit of holiness should never stop because we will not be complete until we die or Christ returns.
- **We must also lean on the grace and mercy of God.** We will make mistakes, but Jesus is quick to forgive anyone who is humble and has a desire to do better.
- **We can live blameless, holy, peaceful, victorious, and joyful lives if we will humble ourselves and chase after the things of God.**