

The Thessalonians Church

All Scripture is KJV: 1 Thessalonians 3:1-13

INTRODUCTION: WHAT DOES THE BIBLE HAVE TO SAY

What stands out most about these 2 books is that it deals with bible prophecy, and just about every chapter deals with this fact.

The Book of 1 and 2 Thessalonians will challenge you to what you have been told before, but now you are going to see the truth for yourself, and you will have to either accept it or reject it.

What does the 2 books of Thessalonians tell us? – it teaches on

1. Jesus return, and his timing for his return? – (2 Thessalonians 2:4)
2. How Jesus will return, and in what way or manner?
3. Who are the elect, and how can we know who the elect are?
4. To whom is this book written, and for what purpose?
5. How Thessalonians fit in with other scriptures on the return of Christ?

So these are just some of the questions and answers that these books will give us.

1 Thessalonians 3 King James Version (KJV)

¹ Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;

1. The meaning of the word “Forbear” is the word meaning to “hold back”. Paul could not hold back any longer the fact that he so desperately wanted to hear how the church at Thessalonica was holding up under the strain of being persecuted by those outside of the church.
2. The church and its members were coming increasingly under persecution (tribulation) for their faith, and so those opposed to the worship of Christianity were rising up against them.
3. Whatever that persecution was, it was surely enough to affect people from worshiping the true Lord. The bible does not specifically mention they type of persecution it was, but nevertheless it was something of significance for Paul to write to them to encourage them to hang in there for the Lord.
4. Perhaps the persecution was as Paul referred to in 1 Thessalonians when he said to them as quoted in 1Thessalonians 2:14-18 in which he said.....

¹⁴ For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: **for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:**

15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

5. Paul's decision to stay back with Silvanus and only send Timothy to take a look to see what was going on, must have been a tactical decision not to put them at risk of being arrested and persecuted unto death, because there was still much work to be done.
6. We can see from his letter in 1Thessalonians 2:14-18 that Paul said "I would have come but Satan hindered me".
7. So Paul's decision was to send Timothy, a young man in the gospel, to oversee what was happening at Thessalonica.
 - ✚ Just imagine Paul's anxiety in having to wait for such a long time to get word of the situation there.
 - ✚ I believe that Paul was in severe physical danger of being killed if he himself went to Thessalonica.

2 And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:

1. So then Paul sent Timothy instead of going himself.
2. To establish the brethren there. And to comfort them concerning their faith?
3. But what was Timothy to find?
4. The words "to establish them" are words used for "teaching" them to stick to the word of the Lord, and to give them reassurance concerning their faith.
5. When we are "comforted" concerning our faith, it means just the same as it did for the church of the Thessalonians. It meant that Jesus had through the power of the gospel had overcome the enemy, and that faith in God, was a reassurance of spending and eternity with him not matter what may come their way.

3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

1. It was common for Paul to use the word affliction or tribulation, because it was what the Lord had said, that every Christian would suffer for the cause of Jesus Christ.
2. Because Jesus said himself that "if they have persecuted me, they will surely persecute you".

John 15:20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they **have persecuted me**, they **will also persecute you**; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

✚ Paul repeated the words that Jesus used when he said in.....
1 Thessalonians 2:15. **15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:**

Getting back to our text this morning in verse 3....Paul said this about being afflicted.

3. "That no man should be moved by these afflictions". Because the brethren have an appointment with affliction.
4. The key to what Paul said to them was.....that they should not be moved, and I find this very interesting as to why he said this. Because for the following reasons that I have seen.
 - a) People who call themselves Christian very often abandon the faith when a trial comes their way?
 - b) The second reason is that a person's faith can only be tested in a trial?
 - c) Thirdly "Satan wants to move you" Satan wants you to be moved from the sure foundation onto a less sure foundation, and then when another trial comes your way which may be even bigger you will tend to crack, and withdraw from the position you hold in Jesus.
 - d) Fourthly, if you move once, then the tendency is that you will move again, and your position is to move further and further away from the Lord with each trial that comes your way, until such time as Satan has got you so far away from the Lord, that you will find it difficult to return, and that's what he wants.

✚ That's why Paul says, "no man should be moved"

✚ If you know the trials are going to come as Paul warned, then drawing closer to Jesus will only strengthen your foundation against a fall.

1 Peter 4:12 Beloved, **think it not strange** concerning the **fiery trial** which is to try you, **as though some strange thing happened unto you:**

✚ If you been warned of the imminent attack, it's far easier to make a plan to withstand it. Not so?

4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

1. Trials and tribulation are not new to the believer.
2. So why should we not expect them?
3. Paul told the Thessalonians church to expect them and he told all believers to expect them.
4. The worldly preachers of the mega churches would rather have you believe that all is going to be smooth sailing.....that you won't go through any tribulation.

5 For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

1. Paul was worried about the faith of those that he had seen come to Christ for salvation.
2. He was worried that they might have been “moved” or “persuaded” by the tempter (Satan) in this case the Jews or idol worshipers, that their labour might have been in vain.
3. In other words Paul was concerned that they have gone back to worshipping idols of the pagan gods.

- ✚ So what is your faith? Or where is your faith placed would have been the questions asked by Paul if he was there.
- ✚ Those that lack the knowledge of the word of God are often easy to be tempted and to be led astray with other doctrines.

6 But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you:

✚ Imagine Pauls surprise?

1. Timothy brought good news (good tidings). He brought news of their faithfulness, and their love (charity).
2. Instead of Paul expecting Timothy to teach and exhort and encourage the Thessalonians, when Timothy got there he was the one who had received the blessing and encouragement, and now when Timothy returned and told Paul and Silvanus, they were the ones who were encouraged and exhorted.
3. This good news, lifted the spirits of Paul, Timothy and Silvanus to such an extent that they felt encouraged that their word in the Lord was not in vain, but instead had borne the fruit which Paul had so desperately prayed for.
4. It was the Thessalonians church which was even more desirous to see Paul and his colleagues than they were to see them.

- ✚ What a blessing it must have been to Paul, since all he had ever received was, people fighting with him, and hindering him, and beating him.

7 Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:

1. Paul says here that they were comforted, way beyond what ever affliction that they had received at the hand of the Jews.
2. The comfort they received of the Thessalonians more than made up for all the distress Paul said that they had received.
3. The fact that they stood by their faith in Jesus was what Paul could say, “you are our joy”.

8 For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

1. Because they had not moved from their faith in Jesus, and because they had not given an inch to the enemy, Paul said in verse 8, **For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.**
2. This was the assurance that Paul needed to press on in the Lord. He was not alone anymore in the ministry.
3. Standing fast – is not to be moved in the Lord.

⁹ For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God; ¹⁰ Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

1. Night and day Paul had prayed that he would be able to see them again so that he could perfect that which was lacking in their faith?
2. But you know what? What he prayed for he got?
3. The Lord had seen to it that those who were calling upon his name would be protected spiritually from all evil”.
4. Satan may be able to harm you physically but he cannot harm you spiritually if your mind is in Jesus Christ.

¹¹ Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

- ❖ The call and pray to the Thessalonians church was for the Lord to direct them Paul and Timothy and Silvanus way to get to see them some day.
- ❖ It is the Lord who can direct your path if you will ask him, in just the way Paul did.

Psalm 119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Matthew 6:9 ¹³ And **lead us not into temptation**, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

- ❖ This very is an interesting verse as we see the reference to God, as being both the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The two persons of the triune Godhead.

✚ **1 John 2:23 Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.**

✚ **2 John 1:9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.**

- ❖ So according to 2 John 1:9, those that don't abide in the doctrine of Christ have not God. Speaking about God the Father.
- ❖ So according to the bible those who don't believe in Jesus and his doctrine don't have God.
- ❖ Therefore the Jews for sure don't have God. Let alone countless other religions who don't believe in Jesus and His doctrine.

¹² And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:

1. According to Paul, it is the Lord who will increase our love one toward another and towards other unsaved people in general.
2. This is in support of other scriptures that we know already such as

1 John 4:19-20 ¹⁹ **We love him, because he first loved us.** ²⁰ **If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar:** for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

3. So as a Christian we are called to love the brethren.
4. This does not mean that we should every man. This is only a general call to loving those who need to get saved.

Let me explain.....

5. Do you think that we should for example love homosexuals. The bible calls them by the correct biblical name sodomites and so should we. The bible also has much to say about these kinds of people who have gone astray.
6. The bible says that those who hate God, we should not keep company with. In fact the bible says that they are reprobate and as such God is done with them.
7. It's like saying "should we as Christians love those who have taken the mark of the beast" – No.

Read Romans 1:18-32.

¹⁸ **For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;**

¹⁹ Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

²⁰ For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

²¹ **Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.**

²² Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

²³ And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

²⁴ **Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:**

²⁵ **Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.**

²⁶ **For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:**

²⁷ And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

²⁹ Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

³⁰ Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

³¹ Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

³² Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

So this is not just your every day sinner who needs God. These are people who had gone past the stage of finding God, to the stage where they have considered God, then rejected him in favour of themselves.

- ✓ These are the ones which God hates?

So now the question is:

- ✓ “If God hates these kinds of people” should we not hate them to?
- ✓ Or is God saying, well I hate them, but you go ahead and love them. That’s ok by me don’t let me stop you. Is that what God is saying?
- ✓ No – God would not have one standard himself and impose another standard for us against those who are implacable sinners.
- ✓ The word Paul uses is the word implacable in this case. It means that you cannot placate those kinds of people. You cannot “please them” they are never satisfied no matter what sin they are involved in. That’s what Romans 1:18-32 says.

¹³ To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

1. In contrast, the believer is led of God who hearts will be grounded in the Lord.
2. You are made unblameable in the sight of God, because of Jesus.
3. Therefore at the coming of our Lord the believer will be blameless in the sight of our Lord and even God the Father.

Just like Chapter 1 and chapter 2, the closure of the letter is a promise of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. At the coming of Jesus, it will be him who will cause you to be blameless of your sin because you have called upon his name.

CLOSE IN PRAYER.....

Not to be moved – verses.

Psalm 62 King James Version (KJV)

1 Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation.

2 He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.

³ How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence. ⁴ They only consult to cast him down from his excellency: they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah. ⁵ My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.

6 He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved.

⁷ In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.

8 Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.

Psalm 16 King James Version (KJV)

1 **Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.**

² O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee; ³ But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight. ⁴ Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god: their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips. ⁵ The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. ⁶ The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. ⁷ I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.

8 I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

 **Then in the NT we have this verse to be steadfast and unmovable**

1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, **be ye stedfast, unmoveable,** always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Then again in the book of Acts. Acts14:22 – confirming – establishing.

Acts 14:22 ²² Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

 What about John 16. Look what Jesus said.....in verse 1, not be offended....remember he said....so you won't be offended.

John 16:1 These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. ² They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. ³ And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

⁴ But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

Remember what Jesus also said in Mathew 13 about persecution.

Matthew 13:21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. (he is moved)

God does not always continue to Love.

- ✚ God Hates those who hate him. – the turning point of Gods love**
- ✚ There is a time when Gods stops loving the unbeliever. (same as pharaoh)**

2 Chronicles 19:1 And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem.

² And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD.

Hosea 9:15 ¹⁵ All their wickedness is in Gilgal: for there I hated them: for the wickedness of their doings I will drive them out of mine house, I will love them no more: all their princes are revolvers.

John 12:38-41 ³⁸ That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

³⁹ Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

⁴⁰ He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

⁴¹ These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.
