



LESSON FOUR

Kingdom Battle 1 Thessalonians 3

So when we could stand it no longer, we thought it best to be left by ourselves in Athens. We sent Timothy, who is our brother and co-worker in God's service in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith, so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. For you know quite well that we are destined for them. In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as you well know. For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith. I was afraid that in some way the tempter had tempted you and that our labors might have been in vain.

Timothy's Encouraging Report

But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has brought good news about your faith and love. He has told us that you always have pleasant memories of us and that you long to see us, just as we also long to see you. Therefore, brothers and sisters, in all our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith. For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord. How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.

Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you. May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

1. If you're brave, share one of the most embarrassing things you've done in public.

2. Read 1 Thessalonians 3. Identify 2-3 themes in this chapter, share where you see the themes in the chapter, and how—if at all—you notice these themes chapters 1-2.

3. Read vs. 1-3 and James 1:2-4. Why is it necessary for our faith to be tested? How have trials strengthened your faith?

4. Peter writes in 1 Peter 5:8 that, "Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." How are you learning to resist temptation?

5. In the video, Brian said that when facing a trial, many of us ask, “Why me?” However, he tries to ask, “Why not me?” Why is Brian’s question healthier to ask? How does his question help our perspective?

6. Because Paul suddenly left the Thessalonians (2:17) and didn’t get to mentor/teach them for very long, he feared they were easy prey for temptations (vs. 5). What temptations do new believers face after becoming Christians? What temptations did you experience after following Jesus?

7. In vs. 5-7, Paul is concerned for the Thessalonians' faith, but is overjoyed when he learns they are spiritually strong. Can you think of a new Christian that matured in faith despite your concern for them? If so, please share.

8. In vs. 9, what does Paul mean when he writes about wanting to supply what's lacking in their faith?

9. Read Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:14; and 1 Thessalonians 3:12. According to Paul, spiritual maturity is found loving everyone. Looking at your life, how have you developed a growing love for everyone?

PERSONAL GROWTH

1. Choose 1 or 2 verses from chapter 3 to memorize.
2. Memorize James 1:2-4.
3. Try this exercise to identify spiritual lessons and takeaways. Choose a trial that you experienced and answer the following questions:
 - What happened? What caused the trial? How did you experience pain?
 - What emotions did you have during the trial?
 - What lies did you tell yourself during the trial? What lies were you tempted to believe?
 - How does scripture speak to what you endured? What passages or verses address the kind of trial you faced?
 - Where did you see God in the midst of your trial? How did He show up after your trial?
 - How was your faith strengthened? How are you a healthier person today than before the trial?
4. Make a list of 3-5 trials you experienced in the last 5 years, as well as the lessons you learned.