



1 *Thessalonians* 3

Lesson 4

After leaving Thessalonica to avoid an uproar in the city (Acts 17), Paul and his fellow laborers fled to Athens. Due to his great concern for the new believers in Thessalonica, Paul sent Timothy back to them to minister to them and to find out how they were doing in the midst of great affliction. Upon hearing of their faith and love, Paul was not content to relax and set his care for them aside. Rather, he longed to complete what was lacking in their faith. This chapter shows the heart behind his concern leading to the next two chapters where we will see some excellent practical teaching from Paul.

OBSERVATION: Read 1 Thessalonians 3

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework) and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they are about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to the *Father*, *Jesus*, and the *Holy Spirit*.
Key Words: *God/Father*, *Jesus*, *faith*, *joy/rejoice*, *Satan (tempter)*, *love*, *gospel*, *coming*, any words that refer to *suffering* and any words that refer to *work*
3. The use of the contrasting word *but* occurs in verse 6. Mark the word and record what is being contrasted.
4. The term of conclusion, *therefore*, was used twice in these verses. Mark each time the word was used. Choose one of them; record the conclusion and what it was based upon.
5. Share one thing this chapter reveals about:

God, the Father

Jesus

The believers in Thessalonica

Paul (and those with him)

1 THESSALONIANS 3:1-5

1. This chapter begins with the term of conclusion *therefore*. Record the expressions of Paul's love for the believers in Thessalonica as expressed in the previous verse (1 Thessalonians 2:19).

2. Scan the first five verses of chapter 3. What five word phrase is repeated twice?
 - a. Consider the phrase *could no longer endure it*. What thoughts or feelings often accompany thoughts like this?
 - 1.) One might consider a statement like this to be an indication of worrying. What is the difference between something God impresses very strongly upon a person and worrying?

3. What did Paul do in response to his concern for the new believers in Thessalonica?
 - a. Using verses 2,3 describe Timothy's purpose for returning to Thessalonica.

 - b. Define the following words:
 - establish

 - encourage

 - shaken

4. Write the words of the last phrase of verse 3.
 - a. What are some ways that our *faith* can be *shaken*?

 - b. How does knowing that we can expect *afflictions* help you?

5. Record the promise of Jesus in John 16:33.

a. In what ways are we *overcomers* as it relates to the trials in this life?

6. Paul was concerned that *by some means the tempter had tempted them, and his labor might be in vain*. He was not concerned that there would be an assault on their faith. That is to be expected by every believer. Rather, Paul was concerned that the assault/*temptation* had been successful. In what ways can we prevent successful *temptations*?

a. Paul shared this concern often about those whom he had shared the gospel. What was his concern for the believers in Corinth? 2 Corinthians 11:3,4

1.) Personal (thought to ponder): You may be entrenched in God's word so well, that false teaching is not a tool Satan uses in your life. What are some areas that you should be watchful?

1 THESSALONIANS 3:6-10

1. As the first five verses of this chapter expressed Paul's overwhelming concern for the welfare of the believers in Thessalonica, the next verses reveal Paul's relief. What *good news* did Timothy bring to Paul?

a. Add to this by recording Paul's reflections of them as he wrote in 1 Thessalonians 1.

2. Notice that Paul rejoiced that they *always have good remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us*. What are your thoughts as you consider Paul's concern for their love for him?

3. *For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord*. Describe a believer who is *standing fast*.

4. Paul stated in verse 10 that he was praying night and day for them. For what two things did he pray?
 - a. Although Paul had taught them much, their faith still *lacked*. There were still things he wanted to teach them. We will discover some of those things in chapters 4 and 5. Why is it important to receive a statement like this with the realization that we have much to learn and might misunderstand some things?
 - b. What words describe the opposite of that kind of attitude?
 - 1.) Share a few of the ways you have grown in your faith since you first believed.
 - a.) What was one thing you misunderstood?

1 THESSALONIANS 3:11,12

1. Paul expressed a prayer for them in 1 Thessalonians 3:11,12. What was his desire for himself in verse 11?
 - a. What did he desire for them in verse 12?
2. Record the importance of *love* as expressed in the following verses:

Leviticus 19:18

Psalm 133:1-3

Matthew 5:42-47

Mark 12:30-33

John 13:34,35

1 Corinthians 8:1

Galatians 5:13

3. Paul desired that they would *increase* and *abound in love*. Using synonyms, define these two words.
 - a. Why is the encouragement to *increase* and *abound in love*, or any other good thing, not burdensome or demanding?

- 1.) Record the words of 1 John 5:3.

- b. In your own words, define this *love* that God requires of believers.

1 THESSALONIANS 3:13

1. Complete the words of 1 Thessalonians 3:13 by filling in the blanks.

So that He may _____ your _____ in _____
before our _____ at the _____ of our _____
_____ with all His _____.

2. Define the words:

Blameless

Holiness

3. According to Ephesians 1:4, what has God chosen to do for all believers?

- a. Consider who you are and what God is going to do. Write a sentence or two of praise to Him.

4. Who is returning with Jesus when He comes?

... "*Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints,*" - Jude 1:14

- a. What do you think that will be like?

REVIEW:

1. What are some ways you can follow Paul's example of following up on the spiritual welfare of others?
2. Share a time when someone has encouraged you in your faith.
3. In what ways has this lesson challenged or inspired you?

*And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more
in knowledge and all discernment,
- Philippians 1:9*

Observation Worksheet

1 Thessalonians 3

1 Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone, **2** and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith, **3** that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this. **4** For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know. **5** For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain. **6** But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always have good remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us, as we also *to see* you-- **7** therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you by your faith. **8** For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord. **9** For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sake before our God, **10** night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith? **11** Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you. **12** And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we *do* to you, **13** so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.