

Sustained Through Encouragement – Teaching Notes

(I Thessalonians 3:1-13; 6/20/10)

Introduction: A key idea in today's lesson is Paul was happy that the Thessalonians were doing well, and he wanted them to continue to grow. Prayerfully, we will be challenged to both minister to others and keep growing ourselves.

Body:

Read I Thessalonians 3:1-5

I. Mission for Encouragement. Paul and company have sent Timothy to the believers in Thessalonica. Paul and company are suffering afflictions and persecution. But Timothy is sent to make sure the labor invested in the readers has not been in vain.

Applications –

- **Being sendable.** Notice in vs. 2 that Timothy was sendable. Paul and company could not go to the Thessalonians, but they could send Timothy. In order for the church to be what God is calling it to be and for it to be as beneficial to its members and community as it should be, there is a great need for sendable people. In order to be sendable, one needs to be a trained and humble disciple of Christ. Without sendable people, the church is limited to only that which the Pastor or a select few can do. *Let's work on being sendable and praying that God sends more sendable people.* We need people who can be sent to develop our Senior Citizen Ministry, Health Ministry, and Family Ministry, in addition to enhancing our Men, Women, and Youth Ministries.

- **Afflictions.** Notice in vs. 3 that Paul and company were experiencing affliction and hard times as was the believers in Thessalonica. We ought not be surprised when trouble comes into our lives. The reason daily dedication is so important is because we are subject to so much affliction and trouble. *Let's work on having the faith to endure our afflictions.* No matter how saved and strong we are, troubles can come into our relationships, health, finances, and communities. Prayerful Bible study and obedience with support of other believers will help develop the faith needed to endure afflictions.

- **Establishing and edifying.** Notice in vss. 2, 5 that Timothy was sent to edify the new believers. It goes without saying that especially newer believers need to be encouraged to keep the faith. Too many churches are soul winners but not soul builders. *Let's work on edifying one another, especially our newer family members.* Being courteous, learning names, calling people when you don't see them, introducing people to others in the church, and encouraging people to attend Bible study and ministry groups are steps in the right direction.

Read I Thessalonians 3:6-10

II. Report of Encouragement. Timothy brought Paul a good report. Paul was very happy. As long as the readers live faithful lives then Paul and company would continue to live on through them.

Applications –

- **Faith and charity.** Notice in vs. 6 that the believers in Thessalonica had faith and charity to their credit. *Let's work on having some faith and charity for people to report on.* Faith includes

knowing and obeying God's word with the confidence that God will do what He said. Charity is love that gives and expects nothing in return. Bible study and Bible living are needed for faith. Being involved in a ministry group and paying your tithes, so the church can support ministry efforts, will help with charity.

- **The Pastor's joy.** Notice in vss. 7-9 that the fruit of Paul's labor gave him great happiness and joy. One of the greatest things you can do for your Pastor is to demonstrate that you are growing in the Lord. Growing in the Lord includes studying, serving, and giving. It includes loving not only the Pastor but loving the other members. *Let's work on demonstrating that the preaching and teaching of our Pastor is doing us some good.*

Read I Thessalonians 3:11-13

III. Goal of Encouragement. Paul shares words of encouragement. He wants the readers to keep growing in their Love for one another and others. Paul wants them to stand without blame when Christ returns.

Applications –

- **Jesus' return.** Notice in vs. 13 that Jesus is coming back. As believers, we cannot put our ultimate confidence in something as flimsy as the stock market, a political party, our military might, nor our relationships, wealth, or health. Only God is worthy of our ultimate confidence. Thank God that He is trust worthy. We can count on God doing what He said He would do. Jesus promised that He would return. *Let's live like we believe that He is coming back.* This kind of living is to be known for loving God, ourselves, and others.

Conclusion: Let's work on ministering to others and growing ourselves. God has much for those who obey His will.