

<p>A</p>	<p><u>Overview</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul sent Timothy to return from Athens to Thessalonica to strength and encourage the Thessalonians in their faith. Paul’s message through Timothy encourages the Thessalonians to stand firm in the Lord. While being encouraging, Paul also prayed that God may allow him to return to Thessalonica so that he could support the Thessalonians to becoming blameless in holiness when Jesus returns and works are judged. 	<p>3:1-13</p>
<p>B</p>	<p><u>Sending Timothy Back to Thessalonica</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul knew that suffering sometimes causes people to abandon their beliefs; he decided to send Timothy in his stead to Thessalonica to strengthen and encourage them in their faith. Seeds scattered along the side of the road are eaten by birds; those that fall on rocky ground withered under the sun. Since the Thessalonians had only recently become followers of Christ, Paul did not know what kind of soil they were. Regarding afflictions, Paul reminded the Thessalonians that they “are destined for this”; Paul has reminded them at the beginning of the letter that they must become “imitators of us and of the Lord” when faced with afflictions (1:6). Paul regards that suffering will lead to salvation in God. Paul does not specify the nature of their suffering. Since the Thessalonians had rejected the local customs of worshipping idols, they would have experienced the pain of segregation, rejection or persecution. 	<p>3:1-5 CCSS, Mk 4:1-20 3:3-5 CCSS Philippians 1:28-29 1:9</p>
<p>C</p>	<p><u>Timothy’s Good News</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The two parts of Timothy’s good news: they have continued in their love and faith in spite of their suffering; they long to see Paul and Timothy. Paul is consoled by this good news and because of it; “we now live”. For Paul, the Thessalonians “stand[ing] firm in the Lord” is intricately related to his eternal life. For this good news, Paul “render[s] to God ... all the joy we feel on your account before our God”. Paul prays “beyond measure” to be able to return to Thessalonica, 	<p>3:6-10 3:6 3:7-9 CCSS Ex 32:32, 1Thess 2:19-20</p>

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	<p>“to remedy the deficiencies of your faith”. Faith is described as something that can be built up and strengthened, or weakened and lost; faith must grow. Though the faith and love of Thessalonica is firm, there are still deficiencies.</p>	<p>3:10 CCSS 3:2,5 2Cor 10:15 Mk 9:24</p>
<p>D</p>	<p><u>Prayer for Reunification and Holiness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the retelling of his relationship with the Thessalonians, Paul concludes this first section of the letter with a prayer that anticipates many of the main issues that Paul will raise in the following section. Paul also reiterates his hope to return to Thessalonica and his desire to help them to be “blameless in holiness”. • 1Thess is possibly one of the earliest texts among Paul’s writings and in the NT (around 51 AD). Note that he is speaking of God and Jesus as one: “God himself, our Father, and our Lord Jesus”; the two are a singular unit (may god himself, our Father, and our Lord Jesus direct our way ...) – Paul uses the Greek verb for “direct” in the singular, presupposes a singular subject. In other words, Paul regards the Father and Lord Jesus as one God; he prays to Him; calls Him “Lord”. • Paul believes that those who are “blameless in holiness” also love each other. Holiness and love are inseparable. Love is the expression of holiness. Holiness conforms the Christian to Christ, who “loved” others and gave himself up for them. • Jesus’ return is surrounded by “all his holy ones”; may imply angels or “saints”; or both. 	<p>3:11-13</p> <p>3:11 CCSS</p> <p>Jn 10:30-33, Jn 1:1, 20:28, Col 2:9, Philippians 2:10-11, Note 1</p> <p>3:12-13 CCSS CSB Gal 2:20</p> <p>CCSS, CSB</p>

Special Notes:

1. In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the ineffable Hebrew name **YHWH**, by which God revealed himself to Moses, is rendered as “Kyrios”, "Lord". From then on, "Lord" becomes the more usual name by which to indicate the divinity of Israel's God. The New Testament uses this full sense of the title “lord” both for the Father and - what is new – for Jesus, who is thereby recognized as God Himself. (CCC 446)