



The Letters to the Thessalonians



Sermon Outline

1. Background

Paul, Silas, and probably Timothy establish the church in Thessalonica. Opposition forces them to leave suddenly.

Acts 17:1-10a

2. Paul's Concern for the Thessalonians

Paul expresses deep concern for the believers and sends Timothy to strengthen their faith.

1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:5

3. Paul's Encouragement

Paul expresses relief and joy when Timothy reports their faith and love. He longs to return and help them grow.

1 Thessalonians 3:6-10

4. Paul's Prayer

Paul prays that their love will increase and their hearts will be strengthened in holiness as they await Christ's return.

1 Thessalonians 3:11-13

STANDING FIRM TOGETHER IN CHRIST

October 18, 2026
Discussion Guide

1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:13

Ice Breaker

Have you ever been suddenly separated from a family member or friend for an extended time? What did you wish you had said or done before the separation? Even with FaceTime, texts, and phone calls, what do we miss when we cannot be together in person?

Dig Deeper

1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:5

Why was Paul so anxious about being separated from the church in Thessalonica? Many had already come to faith in Christ. **Why wasn't Paul content simply to move to the next town and lead more people to Christ? What can we learn from his concern as disciples of Jesus who seek to make other disciples?**

Paul feared that persecution and social exclusion might cause the Thessalonian believers to abandon their faith and return to their former way of life. **If Paul were writing to American Christians today, what pressures or influences might concern him about our continued faithfulness to Christ?**

1 Thessalonians 3:6-10

Paul is overjoyed by Timothy's report, yet he still longs to return and supply what is lacking in their faith (3:10). **How can we, as a local church, help one another grow in faith? In what practical ways do we support one another as we live the Christian life?**

1 Thessalonians 3:11-13

Paul turns to prayer for the Thessalonians in the middle of his letter. **Do we pray throughout the day like this? What could help us begin? Could we pray the Lord's Prayer at different points during the day or become more mindful of the needs of coworkers, family, and friends? What practices help you pray for others that you could share with the group?**