

[The Book of 1 Thessalonians](#)
Chapter 3
“To Established and Encourage you”

Return To
All Commentary

Like all companies that desire to grow and at the same time give greater benefits to their employees, a 10 year old corporation decided that they were going to begin a new retirement plan.

The pension plan required a small contribution by each worker, with the company paying the largest part of the retirement plan.

It also required 100 percent participation by every employee to make it work.

Everyone in the company signed up except one, Sam. Sam did not believe that the plan would pay off so he refused to join.

All of Sam's fellow workers, as well as his boss encouraged him to participate for his own benefit, and for the benefit of all those in the company, but Sam was not convinced.

Finally one morning, the company president called Sam into his office and said “**Sam here is a copy of the new pension plan, and there is the pen. I want you to sign the papers or you are fired, effective immediately**”

Sam signed the papers without hesitation.

The president looked at Sam in amazement, “**Would you mind telling me why you would not sign up for the retirement plan before?**”

“**Well sir**”, Sam replied, “**No one ever explained it to me so clearly before!**”

Paul wrote to the believers in Corinth:

1 Corinthians 1:4-8

4 I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus,

5 that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge,

6 even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you,

7 **so that you come short in no gift**, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

8 **who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

“**So that you come short in no gift...**”

“**...That you may be blameless...**”

1. **Paul was worried about the believers** that he is writing this letter to in Thessalonica. People just like you and I.
2. **Paul was afraid that they would somehow miss out** on those things that are going to be the most important things in the universe, to you someday.
3. **So, Paul explains it here in 1 Thessalonians**, so clear that we will not be able to refuse

I also fear that like Sam in this story this morning about the retirement plan, that you might also miss out, because you may not even know that this plan Jesus has for you has such tremendous rewards available to you.

- **That on a day that is fast approaching**, when Jesus removes us from this earth, takes us back to heaven with Him, to give tremendous rewards, that somehow you might miss out on those rewards.

I want you to have everything that Jesus bled and died to give you...

That perhaps, upon having explained to you just how important it is that you are firmly established in your faith with Jesus is, that you will “Sign up to live your life for Jesus as perhaps you never have before”.

And That you live in such a way that you are not disqualified from the rewards Jesus is about to give when He returns.

Revelation 22:12

12 "And behold, Jesus says, I am coming quickly, and **My reward is with Me, to give** to every one according to his work”.

Last week, Paul spoke of the “Crown of Rejoicing”, given to everyone who opens their mouth to tell others about Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 2:19-20

19 For **what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing?** Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?

20 For you are our glory and joy.

In the 4th chapter of the Book of Revelation, there is a very interesting statement:

Revelation 4:10-11

10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and **cast their crowns before the throne**, saying:

11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

The Bible mentions 5 Crowns that are to be given to those who devote their lives now to serving Jesus until He comes.

1. **Crown of righteousness**, Those living in expectation of the Rapture

2 Timothy 4:8

8 Finally, there is laid up for me the **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but **also to all who have loved His appearing**.

2. **Crown of glory**, To the faithful Shepherd, or teacher

1 Peter 5:2-4

2 **Shepherd the flock of God** which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

3 nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock;

4 and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive **the crown of glory** that does not fade away.

3. **Crown of life**, Those who endure trials

Revelation 2:10

10 Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be **tested**, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you **the crown of life**.

4. **The incorruptible crown**, Those who finish with Jesus

1 Corinthians 9:25-27

25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we **for an imperishable crown**.

26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air.

27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

5. **Crown of rejoicing**, Soul winners Crown

1 Thessalonians 2:19-20

19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?

20 For you are our glory and joy.

These 5 crowns are given to the person who after they have accepted Jesus sacrifice for their sins, lives their life for Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:10

10 For we must all appear before **the judgment(BEMA) seat of Christ**, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15

10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, **as a wise master builder** I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.

11 **For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ**.

12 Now if anyone **builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,**

13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.

14 **If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.**

15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

If a person is preoccupied with this life, following the things of this world, they will most likely miss all of these 5 crowns.

What seems so important now, when Jesus comes, will pale in comparison to these 5 crowns and what it means to those who will receive them and those who missed them.

1. **Paul writes this letter to the Thessalonians** that we are studying this morning, because he does not want them, or you to miss out on one of these crowns.
2. **Unless you are established in your faith with Jesus,** you will most likely not see these 5 crowns as anything important.
3. **But on that day that you meet Jesus in the clouds,** these 5 crowns will have been the most important thing that you will wish you had sought.

I am concerned this morning that if you are not living for Jesus in every area of your life, that you might miss out on so much.

Often, we think, "You know I don't really have that much that I can give to the Lord with my life. I am not talented, I am not bold to speak for Him, I don't have much money to give to help out.."

Remember the Widow who Jesus saw drop her last 2 pennies in the offering...

Mark 12:41-43

41 Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and **saw how the people put money into the treasury.** And many who were rich put in much.

42 Then one poor widow came and threw in two pennies.

43 So Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury..."

It is estimated that if the widow's 2 pennies had been deposited at the "First National Bank, of Jerusalem" to draw four percent interest semi-annually, the fund today would total \$4,800,000,000,000,000,000,000. (4 Sextillion, 800 Quintillion)

The reality is that those 2 pennies she gave 2,000 years ago, has done exactly that, earned her a reward greater than even this bank in Jerusalem would have paid her.

But unless you have been established in your faith with Jesus, then I fear also that you will place a priority on things that are coming to nothing, and miss out on those things that are most important.

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**.

Can you sense the pain that Paul feels here for these believers?

1. **Paul spent three weeks** there teaching most every doctrine that is in the Bible to these people.
2. **He wanted to come back again** to see them, but time and again he was prevented.
3. **The believers in Thessalonica** heard about all of the things that Paul himself was suffering through, this discouraged them tremendously.

“Lord, if Paul is your servant, if he belongs to you, then why are you letting all of these terrible things happen to him.”

I think that sometimes when we suffer or go through difficult times, or even see someone else who is a Christian suffer, we begin to question where the Lord is.

And if we do not understand how and why these things are this way, we can become very discouraged and even pull back from Jesus or fall away.

We just finished Judges chapters 6 and 7 in the O/T

In chapter 6 a man by the name of Gideon was living in Israel during a time when the whole nation of Israel was not doing very well.

1. **The people had so forgotten the Lord** in their life that He allowed the Midianites to attack them and steal their food and resources.
2. **When we find Gideon** in the book of Judges, he is hiding out in the threshing floor at night and the caves at daylight, from the Midianites.
3. **He is a poor farm boy**, starving to death because every time they tried to harvest food, the Midianites would come in and steal all of their food.
4. **So, Gideon** is threshing the wheat at night, and hiding in a cave during the daylight hours.
5. **The Lord calls out to Gideon** and calls him “A Might man of Valor”.
6. **Gideon says** “**You must be talking to someone else Lord, not me I am not a mighty man, and any way, if you say I am your might man, how could that be true since you have let so many bad things happen to me?**”
7. “Lord, you have forsaken us!”

Judges 6:12-14

12 And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, **“The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!”**

13 Gideon said to Him, **“O my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us?”** And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, 'Did

not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?' **But now the LORD has forsaken** us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites."

14 Then the LORD turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?"

Gideon did not think that he had anything to offer the Lord, He said:

Judges 6:15-16

15 So he said to Him, "**O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.**"

16 And the LORD said to him, "**Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man.**"

Then in chapter 7 of the book of Judges, Gideon has mustered a little faith, and so now there are about 32,000 of his people with him, against 135,000 Midianites.

1. **The Lord tells Gideon**, "You have too many men Gideon, lest when you beat the Midianites, you begin to believe that you did it instead of I..."
2. **So the Lord tells Gideon** to tell all of those who are afraid to go home, 22,000 leave to go home.
3. "Now Gideon take the 10,000 men down to the river and ask them to kneel down and drink."
4. "All those who get down on their knees and lap the water up like a dog, set them aside in one group, all the others that cup the water in their hand, set them aside in another group".
5. **There were just 300 men** that lapped the water like a dog, God told Gideon, "These are the one that shall go with you to defeat the Midianites, all the rest send home".
6. **Give me a break Lord, 300 against 135,000!**
7. **The Lord said** "I know, we have a terrible advantage over them!"

1 Samuel 14:6

...For nothing restrains the LORD from saving by many or by few."

Then Gideon takes the 300 men and breaks them into 3 companies of 100 men each.

1. He gives each man a trumpet (Shofar), a Rams horn.
2. A clay pot, or an earthen Vessel.
3. And a torch, as a light.

He tells them that when they go down into the Valley of Jezreel below them, that it will be at 10:00 o'clock at night.

- **They will light the torch before** they go down into the valley and put it into the clay pot.
- **When the torch goes into the earthen vessel** it's light will go out and it will just lay there in the pot and smolder.
- **When Gideon gives the command**, they will all blow the rams horn, break the pot and shout "The sword of Gideon and of the Lord".
- **Now when that earthen vessel is broken**, the torch re ignites and becomes a great light.

When they did all of this, it says that “**The enemy scattered in confusion**”, began killing themselves, and then ran off.

We are reading all of this and wondering, “What in the world the clay pot with the torch and the trumpet had to do with beating the enemy?”

Here is the Illustration that the Holy Spirit was saying.

1. **You and I who know Jesus** are just earthen vessels.
2. **Inside of us**, Jesus has placed His light.
3. **He wants that light to shine out** so that everyone that sees it will be attracted to Jesus and know Him.
4. **But the light just sits there** and smolders.
5. **Then when trials, the enemy, sorrow and difficulties come**, the earthen vessel is broken and then the light can ignite and be seen.

But unless our earthen vessel, unless you and I are broken, the light of Jesus cannot shine out!

1. **The believers in Thessalonica** had heard how terribly Paul was being treated, even thrown into prison for teaching Jesus.
2. **They wondered like Gideon**, “Lord, if we are your people then why has all of this happened to Paul?”
3. **Paul wanted them to know** that **having your earthen vessel broken is the way that the Lord Sanctifies us, Establishes us, Sets us apart to belong to Him**

There is no other way that this can happen.

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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**.

“Hey guys, don’t be shaken because of the afflictions we are going through, to this we are appointed...”

So, as Paul hears that they may be getting very discouraged, he send Timothy to “**Establish them and encourage them**”.

In verse 2, Paul calls Timothy a “**Diakonos**” in the ‘Greek language, literally, “**One who waits tables**”.

- **We who are established already in Jesus**, are to see ourselves as “**one who waits on the tables of those who have come to feast at Jesus table**”

We who are established are to come along side the new believers and those not yet established, and wait on them, teach, encourage, pray for them so they can be established.

1. **Did you know** that the Lord wants you to be established?
2. **Once you give your heart to Jesus**, that is just the beginning, if you do not get grounded in the Word of God, prayer and fellowship with other believers, you are not going to make it.
3. **What does it mean** to be “Established?”

There are 2 things in being established

1. Being Holy
2. Being Sanctified.

Wow!, those sound like big ole religious terms don't they?

They are not as complicated or difficult as they sound.

1. **Unless we understand** what HOLINESS and SANCTIFICATION are, we will not be established.
2. **We will not be able** to endure trials, difficulties and problems.
3. **We will fall away** from Jesus.
4. **We will not understand** that suffering is appointed by the Lord.
5. **Suffering is pre measured** by Jesus in the exact amount you need to grow, but not fall away.

So, becoming Holy, Becoming Sanctified, understanding these 2, will help you become established in your faith.

Holiness

2 Peter 1:21

21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, **but holy men of God** spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

What Holy men spoke and wrote the scriptures.

1. Moses.
2. Abraham.
3. David.

Let me ask you a question, “Was David without sin?”

How about Moses?

Abraham?

But the bible calls these men “Holy men of God”

1. **No place in the Bible**, does Holiness mean, sinless ness.
2. **The Old Testament men** who were called “Holy”, were Holy because they were set apart for God.
3. **They were Holy** because they were “Blameless”
4. **That is**, no blame for their sin could be attached to them

5. **If you are in Christ Jesus** this morning and have had your sins removed as if they never existed, **are you then blameless?, YES ABSOLUTELY.**
6. **The old testament men** that are called Holy, got that way on the same basis that you and I became Holy, by their trust in Jesus who forgave and removed their sin.

Now that you have taken the bait, then since you are blameless and belong to Jesus, then you are also HOLY!

1. If you belong to Jesus this morning, you are Holy based upon the righteousness of Jesus.
2. You are not a perfect sinless person in your behavior.
3. When the Bible says “Perfect”, it does not mean “Sinless”.

Matthew 5:48

48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

- **The Greek word** that the Holy Spirit chose here is **TELEIOS** (tel'-i-os)
- **Teleios means:** “To be complete. To fit together, To finish.

It is the term that is used to describe the mending of a broken bone or how to order or arrange things properly.

- **You are to be “Perfect” “Teleios”**, Jesus said, you are to be completed, Fit together, to be mended, arranged and in order properly...”

Perfect never means “Sinless” anywhere in the Bible, so get over that thought.

1. **Holiness is the process of belonging to Jesus.** If you have given your life to Jesus, then you are Holy already because of His righteousness.
2. **You are Holy just as Moses, Abraham, and David are**, they were not perfect and without sin, they were just set apart and belonged to the Lord, even as you do.
3. **You are Holy because you are “Blameless”**, no person in this universe can accuse you of any sin, because Jesus has washed them all away and made it as if you had never sinned.

Now Sanctification, is a whole different thing.

1. **You are Holy right now**, because of Jesus righteousness.
2. **But your sanctification**, becoming like Jesus, is a process that happens over the course of your entire lifetime.
3. **It begins the day you say** “Jesus I want to belong to you”.
4. **It continues** and becomes greater every time you suffer or go through trials.

It is also important to understand the difference between Testing and Temptation”.

In the Bible, the words “Testing” and “Temptation”, both mean the same things.

1. **What satan tries to tempt you with, the Lord turns that around and uses it to test you.**
 - **Remember Tests or Trials** are not for God to find out how strong you are.
 - **Testing is for you to see** how you will react in a difficult situation, so that you know how much work still needs to be done in that area.

2. **What God brings into your life to test you, satan always tries to turn it around and use it to tempt you.**
 - **Remember temptation** itself is not sin.
 - **It is only when you give into** the temptation that it becomes sin.
 - **The Lord promised** that with each time of testing, He will provide a way out for you.

1 Corinthians 10:13

13 No temptation has overtaken you except **such as is common to man;** but God is faithful, who **will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able,** but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

Paul says that he told them ahead of time that He was going to suffer tribulation (Trouble).

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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.

Jesus said:

John 16:33

In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

1. **In this world,** you can expect that the world will cause tribulation for you.
2. **You don't have to worry** about the trouble the world causes you, because Jesus has already overcome the world.
3. **Every trouble that comes your way,** is filtered through the Lord, and used to help you grow.

The world's tribulation is not the same as the tribulation that will happen for 7 years, that the Book of Revelation describes.

1. **That 7 year tribulation** is not from the world, it is from Jesus, it is His judgment.
2. **Jesus promised** that "because you have kept his word and not denied His name, He will keep you from this time of testing which shall come upon the whole world.
3. **Your Judgment ended at the Cross.**

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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?

One of the examples we see in every letter that Paul writes, is that he is a man of great prayer.

1. **One of the marks of a growing and maturing faith** is when you develop a consistent prayer life.
2. **It is important to remember** that "Prayer is not issuing orders to the Lord". Lord I want this, Lord do this for me..."

3. **Prayer is reporting for duty.** “Lord what do you want to do in this situation, Lord what do you want me to do?”
4. **Not issuing orders, taking orders,** falling into alignment with His will, not Him falling into alignment with your wishes.

The rest of chapter 3 is Paul’s prayer for the believers in Thessalonica

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.

There it is again, in the form of a prayer:

1. **That you would increase in your love** for the people in this room.
2. **That you would stay here** steadfast immovable.
 - **We have had some leave since I first came here,** not because we are teaching some abhorrent doctrine or because there is some secret sin going on, they left because they didn’t like the way some part of the ministry was.
 - **That is the lowest level** of maturity there is.
 - **There will always be something** that either hurts, offends or that we don’t like IN ANY CHURCH WE GO TO.
 - **Family’s don’t quit on each other,** they stick together and love each other in spite of any differences.
 - **The mark of Christian maturity** is loving each other through times of disagreement.

And that you would be ESTABLISHED, AND BLAMELESS IN HOLINESS at the coming of Jesus for us.

Think of it this way:

- **If you will continue** to come here every Sunday and every Mid week bible study,
- **If you will continue to seek** to grow in Jesus every day.
- **If you will continue to hang** in here with all of us, to love and support everyone here as they support and love you,
- Then very soon, we will all stand before Jesus in the clouds.

ESTABLISHED, BLAMELESS AND HOLY.