

## DAILY BIBLE STUDIES

### *“A Pastor’s Prayer for the Church”*

#### *1 Thessalonians 3:11-13*

*January 3-9, 2010*

**THE LORD'S DAY** –This week we wrap up **chapter 3** of **1 Thessalonians** by looking at **verses 11-13**. This passage contains a prayer of the Apostle Paul for the church in Thessalonica. We can learn some things that are important for the growth and Godliness of the people of God from this pastoral prayer. May we come to this text and ask God to teach us from it some things that are necessary for us as a local church. Read **1 Thessalonians 3:11-13**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?*

Suggestion for prayer: *Ask the Lord to teach you from His Word this week.*

**MONDAY** –If you remember back to previous verses in this Epistle, Paul had been “*hindered*” by Satan in coming to these people. He had “*sent*” his son Timothy to check on the “*faith*” of these beloved Christians. In the opening part of **verse 11** Paul follows the Biblical instruction of committing to God through prayer difficult situations that come upon us and into our lives as His children. He prays, “*Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you.*” Paul understood, as we all should, that nothing can “*hinder*” the Divine decree and will of God and he therefore prays that God would have done what He wills concerning the coming together of these people. We must always remember to pray as Jesus taught us, “*Your will be done*”. We in our limited sight and understanding err when we fail to remember the sovereignty of the Father in all things. This however does not keep us from asking God to act so that we may experience His blessing through answered prayer. Read **Psalms 37:1-7, Proverbs 3:5-6**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?*

Suggestion for prayer: Father, thank You that You are in control of all things. Teach me to trust You and to pray in a manner that You would answer for Your glory.

**TUESDAY** –We also see in **verse 11** some interesting truths concerning the relationship of Jesus Christ and The Father within The Triune Godhead. Paul uses a singular emphatic personal pronoun by the word “*Himself*” which teaches us some important things about the nature of The Divine Godhead. The actual and literal reading of the Greek text is as follows: “*Now may Himself, our God and Father and Jesus Christ our Lord...*” The significance of this grammar is that it emphasizes the unity of The Father and Son within the Godhead. It assumes the Deity of Jesus by addressing Him equally with The Father. The Father, Son, and Spirit are equally sovereign and always perfectly agree in all things. This is why in Holy Scripture we find prayers of God’s people addressing all three of the persons of the Divine Trinity. Read **Psalms 5:1-2, John 16:23-24, Acts 7:59, Romans 8:27, 2 Thessalonians 3:5**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer: Dear God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Help me to pray in a way that is pleasing and acceptable to You. Hear our prayer O God.*

**WEDNESDAY** –Paul then after directing His prayer to the Triune God begins to ask the God would do some things in the lives of these his Spiritual children. He asks that God would “direct” in their lives and going and coming. He then asks God to “increase and abound” their love to “one another and to all.” It is God who makes us grow and one who desires to grow in their faith is directed to ask God for such growth. We are reminded by this request of the “one another’s” that we have previously studied which are throughout The Scripture and teach us how to live as believers. Paul prayed that these people of God would have true agape (love) toward each other and then for the lost souls all around them. He then tells them to follow his example by loving “just as we do to you.” We have seen that this love is sacrificial and unselfish which these men so beautifully demonstrated. Read **Romans 13:8-10, 1 Peter 1:22, Matthew 5:44, 1 Timothy 2:1-4.**

*What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer: O God, help me to love my brothers and sisters in a sacrificial way. Help me also love the lost and bring them Your Gospel message.*

**THURSDAY** –Paul then prays in **verse 13** that these people would look forward to their hope of final glorification and that this truth would be a catalyst for a life of purity, holiness and love. This hope of glorification not only encourages us to keep “pressing toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” but it is also the very thing that enables us to live righteously, Christ like, and properly as we press on. Tomorrow we will see that again it is God who enables all this to happen. The Scripture many times points us toward this blessed culmination when we will be glorified and made like our Savior. Read **Romans 5:1-2, 1 John 3:2-3.**

*What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer: Father, thank You that I am kept by faith through Your power for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. I ask You to strengthen my faith and to conform me more to the image of Jesus in my thoughts and deeds.*

**FRIDAY** –Notice that Paul prays that these people may have their hearts “established blameless in holiness.” The Greek word for “establish” is the word *sterizo* which means “to make stable, place firmly, set fast, fix, to strengthen, make firm, to render constant, confirm, one's mind.” A heart fixed on God is a heart that will grow in holiness. Many people today, even within the “church” are consumed with the “lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, and the pride of life” (**1 John 2:15-17**) and therefore cannot please God much less grow in Him. The Apostle John further states concerning this earthly sinful mindset that it “...is not of the Father but is of the world.” Only God truly knows what is in man's heart and the Apostle desired that God would fix the hearts of these people on Christ, and Christ

likeness and look forward to His return. The more we focus on Jesus and commune with Him in His Word and prayer the more we will be conformed to His image. Read **1 John 2:15-17, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Colossians 3:1-7**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* *Father, fix my heart, mind, and eyes on Jesus and help me to grow to be more like Him. Protect me from the allurements of the world and help my life to be holy and blameless through obedience to Your Word.*

**SATURDAY** –This chapter and the prayer contained within it wraps up with Paul pointing to the coming of the Lord Jesus. His prayer is that these people would be riveted in their thinking and their behavior governed by the thought and expectation of the “*parousia*” (*coming*) of Christ. As Albert Barnes has said in his commentary: “As we are to appear before him, we should so live that our Judge will find nothing in us to be “*blamed*”. “*With all his saints*”. With all his holy ones \~twn agiwn\~. The word includes his *angels* who will come with him, (**Matthew 25:31**) and all the redeemed who will then surround him. The idea is that before that holy assemblage it is desirable that we should be prepared to appear *blameless*. We should be fitted to be welcomed to the goodly "fellowship" of the angels, and to be regarded as worthy to be numbered with the redeemed who "have washed their robes, and have made them pure in the blood of the Lamb." When we come to appear amidst that vast assemblage of holy beings, the honours of the world will appear to be small things; the wealth of the earth will appear worthless, and all the pleasures of this life beneath our notice. Happy will they be who are prepared for the solemnities of that day, and who shall have led such a life of holy love--of pure devotion to the Redeemer--of deadness to the world--and of zeal in the cause of pure religion--of universal justice, fidelity, honesty, and truth, as to be without reproach, and to meet with the approbation of their Lord.” Read **1 Thessalonians 1:9-10**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* *Jesus, help me to live prepared for Your glorious return.*