

I Thessalonians 2:17-3:5

First RPC Durham

I. Faithful Ministers Love the Saints (2:17-18).

- A.** Though absent in body, yet they were present in heart
- 1) They are present, as it were, through their constant loving remembrance of the saints (1 Thes 1:3)
 - 2) They are present, as it were, through their consistent prayer for the saints (1 Thes 1:2, 2:13)
 - 3) They are present, as it were, through their sending support to the saints (1 Thes 3:2, 3:6)
 - 4) *Use*, We ought not use this phrase as a cliché, without right understanding, intention and action.
 - 5) *Use*, We ought not begrudge a brother (or sister) in the Lord when he says to us that he will not be with us in person, but will be thinking and praying for us. (1 Cor 13:7, NKJV).
- B.** They earnestly desired to minister to the saints in person (1 Thes 2:8, Psa 122:1, Rom 12:3)
- C.** Yet, Satan seeks to hinder ministry (Rev 12:9)
- 1) Satan hinders the ministry with a purpose: to deter from God's glory; to destroy the wicked; and to devour (if it were possible) the saints (1 Pt 5:8)
 - 2) Satan hinders the ministry through the means of wicked men (1 Jn 3:8, Psa 58:6).
 - 3) Satan seeks to hinder the ministry by tempting Christians. (Mt 16:21-23; Psa 82A, BOPFW).
- D.** Uses from the Text
- 1) We should desire to be with God's people (1 Sam 22:5).
 - 2) We should take our desires before the Lord in prayer (Psa 42:2).
 - 3) We should delight to be with God's people (Psa 133:1).
 - 4) We should not be surprised when we are hindered in ministry (Acts 17:7, 2 Tim 2:17-18).
 - 5) We may be encouraged that God will use all things for His glory and our good.

II. The Delight in Seeing God's Work in the Lives of the Saints (2:19-20).

- A.** *Our hope*
- B.** *Our joy*
- 1) This joy perseverance together in the Lord is the work of the Word of God (1 Jn 1:4)
 - 2) We have such a joy when we see others growing in the faith. (2 Jn 4; 3 Jn 4)
 - 3) The great joy of sanctification:
 - 4) The great joy of heaven which awaits all those who are in Christ (Lk 15:7, Rev 18:20, Rev 19:7)
- C.** *Our crown of rejoicing, Our Glory*
- D.** Uses from the Text
- 1) We are to encourage others to grow in the Lord (Heb 10:23-25)
 - 2) We are to encourage others in their growth in the Lord.
 - 3) We are to rejoice in God's grace.
 - 4) Let us continue to look toward the hope we have together.

III. Strengthening the Church through the Ministry of the Word (3:1-5).

- A.** Sending a faithful minister, Timothy
- 1) Which was to their own hurt, yet for the good of the Church
 - 2) Consider the description and commendation Timothy is given: His faith, office (1 Tim 4:4), and record of service
- B.** The work and purpose of the ministry of the Word
- 1) *To establish you* (Psa 1:2-3; Jeremiah 17:7-8; Psa 77:6, ESV).
 - 2) *To encourage you concerning your faith* (Num 13-14)
- C.** The earnestness that the saints persevere in faith and godliness
- D.** Uses from the Text
- 1) Let us beware the sin of complacency (1 Thes 4:1)
 - 2) Let us beware the sin of self-reliance (Gal 3:3; Song 4:16).
 - 3) Let us make diligent use of the Word of God (2 Tim 3:16-17)
 - 4) We are to be intentional, looking to the hope we have in Christ (2 Tim 4:7-8).