

- B. Grace through prayer.
 - i. That God will clear the way in due season
 - ii. Not only will we suffer tribulation, but we were appointed to them (3:3).
 - a) Acts 9:15-16
 - b) 1 Thessalonians 1:4
- C. Grace through prayer. Grace through You!

LIVE THE STORY

The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- What surprises you as you read this text?
- What is Paul emotional about in this text? What might this reveal about him as person?
- Does it surprise you that Paul, the apostle, was hindered by Satan?
- Does Paul's passion for the church seem foreign to the experience of most, even in the church, today? Do you imitate Paul in his passion for being with the church? e.g. If you were separated from the church for reasons beyond your control, would you pray earnestly night and day to be restored to the church?
- Are spiritual forces at work against God's people today? Why might this be important to consider?
- We often focused on grace to ourselves. (Who's my Timothy? How do I receive grace?) What if God wants you to be the Timothy? ... the means of grace to others? What does that require of you?
- Why is availability essential to being used by God? Are you available?

Dissident Disciples (Part 5)

What to do When Satan Blocks Your Way

Jerry Cisar — July 15, 2018

Text: 1 Thessalonians 2:17—3:13

Introduction

I. Paul's Unfulfilled Longing

- A. Paul and Silas were truly frustrated.
 - ii. What is causing Paul's angst?
 - a) Inability to impart grace to them for spiritual growth
 - b) He has reasons to be concerned (3:3-4).
- B. Paul's affection and longing for the Thessalonians
 - i. Emotional language
- C. Satan's Roadblock (2:18)
 - i. Paul, the apostle, hindered by Satan? (Acts 19:13-16)
 - ii. Paul had been praying earnestly night and day.

II. Your Unfulfilled Longing

- A. What are the things that bring about this kind of emotional response in us?

- B. Paul's passion for the church.

- C. Are there spiritual forces still at work against God's people, or did the Age of Reason do away with that?
 - i. What hinders us from being with the saints?

 - ii. What brings about separation of relationships with others in the body of Christ?

 - iii. Why do people struggle in their faith or faithfulness to follow Jesus?

III. What Does Paul Do?

- A. Grace through Timothy (3:1-3)
 - i. Timothy vs. Paul and Silas

 - ii. Silas was a noteworthy prophet known for strengthening and encouraging the church (Acts 15:32).

- iii. Timothy also ministered grace to Paul! (3:6-8)
 - a) Timothy "brought us good news about your faith and love ...".

 - b) Timothy informs Paul that the Thessalonians do not think poorly of Paul and his visit.

 - c) Paul and Silas were encouraged about them because of Timothy's report about their faith.

B. Grace through Prayer (3:10-13)

- i. Paul prayed!
 - a) He prays that God would deal with Satan's roadblocks!

 - b) He prays that the Lord would work in the Thessalonians even in his absence.

- ii. Paul did not yell at the devil.
 - a) Jude 1:8-10

 - b) Praying is talking to God; not Satan.

IV. What Do We Do?

- A. Grace through one another!
 - i. We too receive grace from "unexpected Timothys!"

 - ii. We may be surprised to see the members of our church as they really are! (Matthew 25:31-46)