

# Message 10: But the Lord is Faithful

11.29.2020

2 Thessalonians 3:1–18 (CSB)

## PRAY FOR US

**3** In addition, brothers and sisters, pray for us that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you, <sup>2</sup>and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil people, for not all have faith. <sup>3</sup>But the Lord is faithful; he will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one. <sup>4</sup>We have confidence in the Lord about you, that you are doing and will continue to do what we command. <sup>5</sup>May the Lord direct your hearts to God's love and Christ's endurance.

## WARNING AGAINST IRRESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR

<sup>6</sup>Now we command you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from every brother or sister who is idle and does not live according to the tradition received from us. <sup>7</sup>For you yourselves know how you should imitate us: We were not idle among you; <sup>8</sup>we did not eat anyone's food free of charge; instead, we labored and toiled, working night and day, so that we would not be a burden to any of you. <sup>9</sup>It is not that we don't have the right to support, but we did it to make ourselves an example to you so that you would imitate us. <sup>10</sup>In fact, when we were with you, this is what we commanded you: "If anyone isn't willing to work, he should not eat." <sup>11</sup>For we hear that there are some among you who are idle. They are not busy but busybodies. <sup>12</sup>Now we command and exhort such people by the Lord Jesus Christ to work quietly and provide for themselves. <sup>13</sup>But as for you, brothers and sisters, do not grow weary in doing good.

<sup>14</sup>If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take note of that person; don't associate with him, so that he may be ashamed. <sup>15</sup>Yet don't consider him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

## FINAL GREETINGS

<sup>16</sup>May the Lord of peace himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord be with all of you. <sup>17</sup>I, Paul, am writing this greeting with my own hand, which is an authenticating mark in every letter; this is how I write. <sup>18</sup>The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Introduction: In Typical Pauline fashion, he ends 2 Thessalonians by cramming a lot of thoughts and truth in a short space.

A. It would be very easy to invest considerable time taking this chapter and breaking it down into it's components.

1. We could invest time in discovering what Paul meant in verse 6 about living according to the traditions that were passed on.
2. The last half provides great advice on the importance of earning your own living and working hard.
3. I'm also fascinated by Paul's advice to not associate with lazy believers, yet not treating them as an enemy.

B. But today, I feel led to focus upon a very small part of this chapter.

1. Today, I won't to join with the Apostle Paul and remind the Church in Licking that "the Lord is faithful".
2. Through all of this year, "the Lord is faithful".
3. Every follower of God, from the days of Genesis to today has found that the Lord is faithful.

C. Today' we are going to talk about the Lord's faithfulness.

1. Though the times maybe evil, the Lord is faithful.

A. Paul was writing this in evil times.

1. Let's be truthful: Since the first sin, the times have always been evil.
2. Every day, every time and every culture has been evil and sinful.

a. This is why we always have needed Jesus to forgive us and save us.

b. I really feel led to remind all of us that sinfulness and evil are nothing new.

1. Do you not think that your parents didn't struggle with sexual sin?

2. Do you not think that your grandparents didn't battle hatred, jealousy, or envy?

3. King Solomon said that there was nothing new under the sun.

4. The days have always been evil and they are going to continue to that way.

B. The Church has always lived under oppression and difficulty.

1. We often want to think that nobody has it as bad as you.

2. But that isn't true at all.

3. The Church in Thessalonica had difficulties.

4. We have difficulties.

5. Although they are different, what is the same is that the Lord is Faithful.

## 2. What does it mean for the Lord to be faithful?

A. Faithful is Covenant language.

1. It means that God is true and is to be trusted.

2. Therefore, "the Lord is faithful" means "The Lord can be trusted".

3. When we say, "He is faithful" we believe that we can trust God.

a. We can trust Him to fulfill his word.

b. We can trust Him to do what is right and just.

c. We can trust Him with our pain, our hope, our suffering, and our joy.

d. He is utterly and completely trustworthy.

B. In my mind, God's faithfulness is similar to a parent holding the hand of a little child.

1. When you lead a child across the street, you say "hold my hand".

2. When you take a child across a space that is dangerous, slippery, and steep you say "take my hand".

3. In those moments, a child will take your hand because they trust you.

C. In times of difficulty, we can trust Jesus to lead us.

1. Thessalonica was still under threat.

2. There was still danger and suffering in front of them.

3. BUT the Lord is faithful.

a. **Though the world may be evil, Jesus is good.**

b. Though the world maybe troubled, Jesus is strong.

c. **Though I may feel like I'm hopeless, or broken, or weary, I can hear this refrain: BUT the Lord is Faithful.**

D. The conjunction "But" changes everything.

1. Paul said in the midst of evil, Jesus will strengthen you.

2. He will guard you from the evil one when he comes at you.

3. Though all around you may be evil, Jesus is faithful.

4. He is utterly and complete trustworthy.

3. [Because He is faithful, do not grow weary in doing good. Vs. 13](#)

A. Many people in the Thessalonian church were unsettled.

1. Many had assumed they had missed Jesus' return, so they gave up.

2. They stopped working.

3. They stopped caring.

4. They stopped hoping.

5. **The loss of hope is deadly.**

1. I remind you that hope in the wrong place is also costly.

2. ***But hope placed in Jesus is never wasted.***

B. So no matter what happens around us, we have a calling to do good.

1. But doing good can become tiresome.

2. It's hard to love a world that is so lost, so broken, and so hurting.

a. Compassion fatigue is real.

b. Eventually, you pour yourself out so much with so little in return that you no longer feel or care like you want to.

3. **Because Jesus is the source of our love and our compassion, we can continue to do good without growing weary.**

C. Quitting has never looked so good.

1. One article I read recently said that 70% of pastors today are thinking of quitting. (I think that number is way too high).

2. I'm concerned because if the shepherd is weary, the sheep are exhausted.

3. But thankfully, the Good Shepherd never gets tired.

a. Jesus' love for us does not wax and wane like ours.

b. His oversight, his protection, His mercy does not erode over time.

c. That's because the Lord is faithful.

4. Because Jesus is faithful, I can be faithful too.

Closing: Many of you had a hard 2019 and 2020 was even harder.

A. Some of you lost parents this year, and the holidays are hard.

1. With you, I mourn.
2. Some of you have battled sickness, suffered loss of friends and family.
3. Some of us here today have had a year that we will never forget.
  - a. You have prayed like never before.
  - b. You have tried like you have never tried before.
  - c. Yet, to quote Job, "That which I have feared has come upon me."

B. What do we do when all of our prayers seem forgotten, and

- a. I remind you that the Lord is faithful.
- b. You can trust Him with your grief.
- c. You can trust Him with your wayward kid.
- d. You can trust Him with your physical health.
- e. You can trust him with your country.
- f. He is completely and utterly trustworthy.

C. Today, if you want or need prayer today, would you be so bold as to stand and stretch out your hands toward heaven.

1. And let's pray one for another.
2. Let us praise the One who is always faithful and trustworthy.
3. Let us give Him our cares, our pain, and our brokenness.
4. Would you stand and let's pray!

