

The Loft

Sunday, July 12th, 2020

Today: 1 Thessalonians 3

FORMAT = 1: Short Study... 2: Deeper Study... 3: Questions... 4: Bonus... 5: Personal Study

1: Short Study:

Equipping the Saints & Encouragement from the Saints (Believers in Christ)... This is Church that is alive!

In this section we see the Apostle Paul concerned about how the equipping of the saints have endured the stress and persecution the church was experiencing – He was greatly encouraged to see they were remaining faithful!

Prayer

Prayer is the “secret sauce” to walking in the strength of the Lord – Paul experienced this and knew the importance of this.

How do you practice prayer? Do you pray to deepen your relationship with Jesus?

Do you pray for others who are going through tough times? How is prayer a form of love?

2: Overview of Study:

3: 1 – 5 = Paul’s Longing to See the Thessalonians (continued)...

5: For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith.

I was afraid that in some way the tempter had tempted you and that our labors might have been in vain.

52: 3: 5 – 2.1*, CS = T: The tempter definitely seeks to distract us and keep us from being disciplined by the Holy Spirit, Scripture, those in the body of Christ, etc... One of his many methods is to keep you too busy to be disciplined by the Holy Spirit – so he keeps your life loud, avoiding quiet reflection and life-retooling moments. The tempter will seek to keep you away from reading Scripture, so you become easier to manipulate and mold to his lies/deception vs. God’s truth/directional discipleship which develops you vs. destroys you. And he also keeps you away from relationships that would hold you accountable in love. Seeking to put people in your life that would keep you from going to church, reading your Bible, being in healthy relationships, etc... The subtlety to sinful living is real and the tempter has many methods he uses to deceive us and distract us – we must seek to be wise and commit daily to the disciplines that ironically set us free (John 8: 31-32, etc.).

3: 6 – 13 = Timothy’s Encouraging Report...

12: May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.

13: May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

3: Questions to Consider:

1: When you seek to train people in the truth, to see them walking faithfully in it is encouraging – why/how is it encouraging?

2: Paul is encouraged by the faith expressed in love – how do you express your faith daily? What would be said of your faith?

3: Prayer is the “secret sauce” to life and ministry – what can we learn from Paul’s prayer in this section & for our life?

4: Bonus:

8: For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord.

52: 3: 8 – 1 = “For now we really live.”

52: 3: 8 – 1.1, CS = T: We are most alive, “For now we really live” when we are truly living in His will and stand firm in the faith for the glory of Christ – just as He stood firm and finished the work the Father gave Him to do (John 4: 34; John 19: 30).

52: 3: 8 – 1.2*, CS = T: As we will see later on in this letter, God’s will is the following summary in 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18.

... 1 Thess 5: 16-18 = Be joyful always; 17 pray continually; 18 give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

... T: What a witness such a person can be to an unbelieving world, to *be joyful always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you.* God makes us fully alive to life, when we are fully alive to Him and His purpose!

5: Personal Study: LIFE-APPLICATIONS... Fill-in the Blanks/Diagrams...

1: _____

2: _____

3: _____

1 Thessalonians 3

Chapter Summary...

3: 1 – 5 = Paul’s Longing to See the Thessalonians (continued)...

3: 6 – 13 = Timothy’s Encouraging Report...

52: 3: 0 – 0 = Scripture Connections...

...

52: 3: 0 – 1 = Overview =

52: 3: 0 – 1.1 = Overview = Q: What should you do when people you love need your help, but you cannot go to them? The new believers in Thessalonica desperately needed Paul’s ministry, but he was not able to return to help them. So, he did what he could.

First, he sent Timothy to minister to the church. If you cannot go, try to get somebody qualified to go in your place.

Then, he prayed for them (v. 10) because prayer is not limited by time or place.

Your prayers for your loved ones will do more good than you realize, so keep praying.

Paul encouraged them by writing them at least two letters. His great concern was not their comfort or safety but their faith (vv. 2, 5-7, 10), their love (v. 12), and their obedience to the Lord (v. 13). Perhaps today you could write a letter or send a card to someone who needs your encouragement (791, Wiersbe – CCB).

52: 3: 0 – 2 = Persecution of Christians...

52: 3: 0 – 2.1 = Q: Persecution of Christians = The early followers of Jesus were marked out by their clear convictions about doctrine and ethics. They recognized only one message of salvation, only one God, only one Savior. Once a person became a follower of ‘the Way’, a new life-style was demanded of him. This exclusiveness of early Christian belief and behavior attracted many people. But it was also a cause of offense; enemies accused Christians of aloofness and of hating the present world.

But strong forces were acting against the spread of Christianity. Paganism still maintained a strong grip on people. The world was as morally corrupt as it has ever been, and the young church soon attracted the unyielding opposition of the ruling authorities. Jesus, Paul and Peter had all been executed by the government, and other leaders were similarly dealt with (82, Dowley – Intro.to The History of Christianity).

52: 3: 0 – 2.2 = Q: As long as the church was regarded simply as a Jewish sect, it was tolerated by the Roman authorities. For its first 30 years Christianity, like Judaism, enjoyed protection by Roman law. Partly for this reason Paul emphasized the benefits of good government. But once Judaism and Christianity began to diverge Christians lost the special privileges given to Jews (82, Dowley – Intro.to The History of Christianity).

52: 3: 0 – 2.3 = Q: Persecution was a fact of life for the early Christians. The book of Acts documents the martyrdoms of Stephen (Acts 7) and James, the brother of John (Ac 12: 2), and describes Saul/Paul as breathing “murderous threats” against the church prior to his conversion (Ac 9: 1) (2067, ASB).

52: 3: 0 – 2.4 = Q: The central Christian confession “Jesus is Lord” was a particular problem in the Roman Empire, because the affirmation of the sovereignty of Jesus was a direct challenge to the absolute rule of the Roman emperor. When the emperor or his representatives called for people to honor the emperor as a deity, Christians could not comply in good conscience. It was inevitable that the Christians’ allegiance to Jesus would trouble the Roman authorities, and the situation finally erupted under the emperor Nero in A.D. 64. Searching for a scapegoat for the fires that had plagued the city, Nero seized upon the Christians. The Roman historian Tacitus (*Annals*, 15.44) reported that large numbers of Christians were arrested and killed; some were dressed in animal skins and torn apart by dogs, others crucified and set on fire to serve as outdoor lamps. The abuse was so severe that even those hostile to Christianity criticized Nero’s actions (2067, ASB).

52: 3: 0 – 3 = A Pastor’s Heart, Paul...

52: 3: 0 – 3.1* = A Pastor’s Heart, Paul = Q: If Paul is the ideal human model of one with a pastor’s heart, that is only because he carefully patterned his pastoral ministry after that of Jesus Christ, who perfectly modeled the pastor’s heart during His earthly ministry....

... He was the ultimate example of affection for His sheep (John 10: 11-16, 27-28)... unselfishness for His disciples (John 13: 3-17)... compassion for His people (John 11: 33-44; ca. Matt 23: 37-39)... protectiveness toward His lambs (John 10: 2-5)... delight for His church (Matt 16: 18-19)... gratitude for His followers (Matt 11: 25-30)... and intercession for His beloved children (John 17: 6-26). That model of the shepherd’s heart is the divine standard for all pastors today (83, MacArthur – 1 & 2 Thess).

3: 1 – 5 = Paul’s Longing to See the Thessalonians (continued)...

1: So when we could stand it no longer, we thought it best to be left by ourselves in Athens.

52: 3: 1 – 1 = “So when we could stand it no longer.”

52: 3: 1 – 1.1 = Q: The Greek verb is *stego* to cover from *stego*, roof (Mark 2: 4), to cover with silence, to conceal, to keep off, to endure (ca: 1 Cor 9: 12; 13: 7) (511, Robertson – WPNT).

2: We sent Timothy, who is our brother and co-worker in God’s service in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith,

52: 3: 2 – 1 = “We sent Timothy, who is our brother and co-worker in God’s service”

52: 3: 2 – 1.1 = Q: Because Paul could not return to Thessalonica (2: 18), he sent Timothy as his representative. According to Acts 17: 10 Paul left Thessalonica and went to Berea. When trouble broke out in Berea, some Christians took Paul to Athens, while Silas and Timothy stayed behind (Acts 17: 13-15). Then Paul directed Silas and Timothy to join him in Athens. Later Paul sent Timothy to encourage the Thessalonian Christians to be strong in their faith in the face of persecution and other troubles (2173, LAB).

52: 3: 2 – 2 = “in spreading the gospel of Christ.”

52: 3: 2 – 3 = “to strengthen and encourage you in your faith.”

3: so that no one would be unsettled by these trials.

For you know quite well that we are destined for them.

52: 3: 3 – 1 = “so that no one would be unsettled by these trials”...

52: 3: 3 – 1.1 = Q: “Trials” is a reference to the opposition and persecution suffered by the Thessalonian converts (1945, ASB).

52: 3: 3 – 1.2 = Q: The Greek verb is *saino*, to wag the tail, to flatter; “beguile” here suits the sense (511, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 3: 3 – 1.3 = Q: Some think that troubles are always caused by sin or a lack of faith. Trials may be a part of God’s plan for believers. Experiencing problems and persecutions can build character (James 1: 2-4), perseverance (Rom 5: 3-5), and sensitivity toward others who also face trouble (2 Cor 1: 3-7). Problems are unavoidable for God’s people. Your troubles may be a sign of effective Christian living (2173, LAB).

4: In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted.

And it turned out that way, as you well know.

52: 3: 4 – 1 = “In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted.”

52: 3: 4 – 1.1*, CS = T: Jesus said that persecution and pressure for faith in Him would exist and it did even within His ministry.

In the closing section of the Beatitudes of Matthew 5: 1-12, we see in 10-12 Jesus highlights persecution will happen but great is their reward in heaven...

... Matt 5: 10-12 = “Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

... T: If you notice in the verse, “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you *because of me*”... It is clear, that the pressure/persecution comes because of your commitment to Christ, not simply because you made foolish choices and the consequences of them, etc... Jesus says, if you are under pressure because of being faithful to Him and His purpose, “Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven,...” (v. 12).

52: 3: 4 – 1.1 = Q: Translate the Greek tense, “we used to tell you beforehand” (511, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 3: 4 – 1.2 = Q: Some people turn to God with the hope of escaping suffering on earth. But God doesn’t promise that.

Instead he gives us power to grow through our sufferings. The Christian life involves obedience to Christ despite temptations and hardships (2173, LAB).

5: For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith.

I was afraid that in some way the tempter had tempted you and that our labors might have been in vain.

52: 3: 5 – 1 = “For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith.”

52: 3: 5 – 1.1, CS = T: Just imagine, the Apostle Paul “I sent to find out about your faith”... is it real and do others perceive your faith in Christ to be merely talk or truth lived out in your life daily? This is a great “check-point” for us all, how real would people see our faith in Christ in our day to day life, our commitments, our ability to live as a disciple?

52: 3: 5 – 2 = “I was afraid that in some way the tempter had tempted you”

52: 3: 5 – 2.1*, CS = T: The tempter definitely seeks to distract us and keep us from being discipled by the Holy Spirit, Scripture, those in the body of Christ, etc... One of his many methods is to keep you too busy to be discipled by the Holy Spirit – so he keeps your life loud, avoiding quiet reflection and life-retooling moments. The tempter will seek to keep you away from reading Scripture, so you become easier to manipulate and mold to his lies/deception vs. God’s truth/directional discipleship which develops you vs. destroys you. And he also keeps you away from relationships that would hold you

accountable in love. Seeking to put people in your life that would keep you from going to church, reading your Bible, being in healthy relationships, etc... The subtlety to sinful living is real and the tempter has many methods he uses to deceive us and distract us – we must seek to be wise and commit daily to the disciplines that ironically set us free (John 8: 31-32, etc.).

52: 3: 5 – 2.1 = Q: Satan (“the tempter”) is the most powerful of the evil spirits. His power can affect both the spiritual world (Eph 2: 1-3; 6: 10-12) and the physical world (2 Cor 12: 7-10). Satan even tempted Jesus (Matt 4: 1-11). But Jesus defeated Satan when he died on the cross for our sins and rose again to bring us new life. At the proper time God will overthrow Satan forever (Rev 20: 7-10) (2173, LAB).

52: 3: 5 – 3 = “and that our labors might have been in vain.”

3: 6 – 13 = Timothy’s Encouraging Report...

6: But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has brought good news about your faith and love.

He has told us that you always have pleasant memories of us and that you long to see us, just as we also long to see you.

52: 3: 6 – 1 = “But Timothy has just now come to us from you”...

52: 3: 6 – 1.1 = Q: Timothy has come. Why Silas is not named here is not clear, unless he had come from Berea or elsewhere in Macedonia (511, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 3: 6 – 2 = “and has brought good news about your faith and love”

52: 3: 6 – 2.1, CS = T: Their legacy as a church, as a people was good news because they were living out their faith by sharing their faith and expressing it in ways of Christ’s love – hopefully the goal for all those who have been redeemed by Christ.

52: 3: 6 – 2.2, CS = T: Paul highlighted a portion of this at the opening to his letter in 1 Thessalonians 1: 3, the sequence to a life that is strengthened in the Lord and a life that gives to strength to others in the Lord.

... 1 Thess 1: 3 = We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

52: 3: 6 – 2.1 = Q: “Good news” this verb is sometimes translated evangelizing (gospelizing) (511, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 3: 6 – 2.2 = Q: Timothy conveyed a four-part report on the Thessalonian’s spiritual status to Paul...

... First, he delivered the good news that their faith in God and Jesus Christ was genuine. Their hearts had been like the good soil that received the seed of the gospel and bore much fruit (Matt 13: 23).

... Second, he told Paul the good news about their authentic love for the Lord, which was the clearest evidence that they were Christians (ca: Ps 5: 11; Matt 22: 37-40; John 8: 42; 13: 34-35; Rom 13: 8-10; Gal 5: 6, 22; 1 Peter 1: 8; 1 John 2: 5, 10; 3: 14; 4: 20; 5: 1-3).

... Thirdly, Timothy announced that the Thessalonians always thought kindly of Paul. It was good news for the apostle that they had cherished memories of him and were still confidently loyal to him as Christ’s true apostle....

... Finally, Timothy declared that the Thessalonians’ affection was so strong they were longing to see Paul. Pained by the separation from his spiritual children (1 Thess 2: 7-12), Paul rejoiced in the good news that they were eager to renew fellowship with him (ca: Acts 2: 42; Rom 15: 32; Heb 10: 25; 1 John 1: 3) (81-82, MacArthur – 1 & 2 Thess).

52: 3: 6 – 3 = “ He has told us that you always have pleasant memories of us” ...

52: 3: 6 – 3.1, CS = T: Faith grows through the Holy Spirit encouraging you and equipping you daily through the reading of the truth/Scripture/Bible and through relationships that encourage/equip you in the truth. As you go through life, Lord willing, you will be able to reflect on many key people/relationships that helped you grow as a follower of Jesus Christ. Do your best to hold on to those relationships and to thank them/encourage them for the role they played/continue to play in your life in Christ. And Lord willing, your name will be listed in the lives of many others, who “*always have pleasant memories of us.*”

52: 3: 6 – 4 = “and that you long to see us, just as we long to see you.”

52: 3: 6 – 4.1 = Q: Lit. “to long after [in the directions of a particular object]” (511, Robertson – WPNT).

7: Therefore, brothers and sisters, in all our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith.

52: 3: 7 – 1 = “Therefore, brothers and sisters.”

52: 3: 7 – 1.1, CS = T: Again we see the emphasis of the encouragement that the family of faith brings, amidst the distress and persecution that many of them were facing because of their faith in Christ.

52: 3: 7 – 2 = “in all our distress and persecution”

52: 3: 7 – 2.1 = Q: Lit “choking and crushing” (511, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 3: 7 – 3 = “we were encouraged about you because of your faith.”

52: 3: 7 – 3.1, CS = T: When we see people being faithful in the faith, amidst the stress, strain and struggles of life – it encourages you personally and the group / family of faith as a whole. The Lord provides the strength and encouragement needed for each trial we face, which is why we are to face Him daily so we live in His strength and not our own shallow strength.

8: For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord.

52: 3: 8 – 1 = “For now we really live.”

52: 3: 8 – 1.1, CS = T: We are most alive, “For now we really live” when we are truly living in His will and stand firm in the faith for the glory of Christ – just as He stood firm and finished the work the Father gave Him to do (John 4: 34; John 19: 30).

52: 3: 8 – 1.2*, CS = T: As we will see later on in this letter, God’s will is the following summary in 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18. ... 1 Thess 5: 16-18 = Be joyful always; 17 pray continually; 18 give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

... T: What a witness such a person can be to an unbelieving world, to *be joyful always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you*. God makes us fully alive to life, when we are fully alive to Him and His purpose!

52: 3: 8 – 1.1 = Q: It was as though he began to really live again once received a positive report about the Thessalonians. The knowledge that they stood firm in the Lord further stimulated Paul to renewed zeal in ministry. Whenever he saw any believers stand firm (*stekete*, a military term meaning not to retreat in the face of an attack), strong in their faith, he was delighted, yet he exhorted them to continued resolve (82, MacArthur – 1 & 2 Thess).

52: 3: 8 – 2 = “since you are standing firm in the Lord.”

52: 3: 8 – 2.1, CS = T: *since you are standing firm in the Lord...* God provides the strength needed to stand firm in a supernatural way and a way in which when we have success keeps us humble because we know the success is of Him not of us.

... 2 Tim 1: 6-7 = For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7 For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

... 2 Tim 1: 8-12 = So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, 9 who has saved us and called us to a holy life – not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, 10 but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. 11 And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. 12 That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

52: 3: 8 – 2.1 = Q: During persecution or pressure, believers should encourage one another. Christians who stand firm in the Lord encourage both ministers and teachers (who can see the benefit of their work in those who remain faithful), and also those who are new in their faith (who can learn from the steadfastness of the mature) (2174, LAB).

9: How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you?

52: 3: 9 – 1 = “How can we thank God enough for you in return”...

52: 3: 9 – 1.1, CS = T: One of the many passages of Scripture that calls me up, is Psalm 116: 12-14. It is a reminder that I owe all I am to the Lord and the way I can thank Him is by being faithful to Him and fulfill my commit to Christ daily.

... Ps 116: 12-14 = How can I repay the LORD for all his goodness to me? 13 I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD. 14 I will fulfill my vows to the LORD, in the presence of all his people.

52: 3: 9 – 1.1 = Q: *Render again unto God* – Lit. “to give back in return for” (ca: 2 Thess 1: 6) (511, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 3: 9 – 1.2 = Q: The devoted pastor recognizes that all thanks for spiritual progress goes to God. That the apostle Paul acknowledged that his gratitude for the Thessalonians must primarily go to God, but found no adequate words to express the fullness of his heart, is clear because he asked rhetorically, *for what thanks can we render to God for you?* (83, MacArthur – 1 & 2 Thess).

52: 3: 9 – 2 = “for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you?”

... 1 Thess 1: 3 = We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

52: 3: 9 – 2.1 = Q: *For you* – Lit. “Around (concerning) you.” (ca: 1 Thess 3: 2 “concerning your faith”) (511, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 3: 9 – 2.2 = Q: It brings great joy to a Christian to see another person come to faith in Christ and mature in their faith. Paul experienced this joy countless times. He thanked God for those who had come to know Christ and for their strong faith. He also prayed for their continued growth. If there are new Christians who have brought you joy, thank God to them and support them as they continue to grow in the faith (2174, LAB).

10: Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.

52: 3: 10 – 1 = “Night and day we pray most earnestly”...

52: 3: 10 – 1.1 = Q: (ca: 1 Thess 3: 10; 5: 13) Lit. “more than out of bounds” (overflowing all bounds) (511, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 3: 10 – 1.2 = Q: Even though the true pastor will have joy and gratitude because of his people, he will still realize the need for prayerful intercession on their behalf. He will understand that their lives are not yet perfect and that his ministry among them is incomplete.... Paul’s praying was constant and fervent. He interceded for them night and day, and did so most earnestly. The ultimate goal of his praying was to complete whatever was still lacking in their lives before God. The immediate

goal was that he may see their face, to supply the instruction they needed right away. Chapters 4 and 5 of this letter provide some of the truth they were lacking (83, MacArthur – 1 & 2 Thess).

52: 3: 10 – 2 = “that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.”

52: 3: 10 – 2.1 = Q: *And perfect* – This is the Greek verb *katartizo*, to mend nets (Matt 4: 21) or men (gal 6: 1) repair (512, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 3: 10 – 2.2 = Q: The prayer that follows (vv. 11-13) and the final two chapters, which are full of both ethical and doctrinal instructions, give us hints about what Paul felt was lacking (1170, FCA).

11: Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you.

52: 3: 11 – 1 = “Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus”.

52: 3: 11 – 1.1 = Q: Note one article with both substantives for one person. Elsewhere there is one article, treating “our God and Savior Jesus Christ” as one just like “our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” in 2 Peter 1: 11; 2: 20; 3: 18 (512, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 3: 11 – 1.2* = Q: By calling God *our... Father*, an address emphasizing personal relationship, and Jesus *our Lord*, an address emphasizing personal relationship, Paul switched the usual popular ideas about God being the ruler and Christ bring the one with whom believers have a relationship. The use of *our* before both *God* and *Jesus* underscores the relationship Paul and the Thessalonians enjoyed with both Persons of the Trinity. God came down to be intimate with them as their gracious, loving and forgiving Father, and Jesus ascended to heaven’s throne to be their sovereign Lord (87, MacArthur – 1 & 2 Thess).

52: 3: 11 – 1.3 = Q: *Himself...* That *Himself (autos)* is singular and in the emphatic position in the Greek word order provides further insight into the nature of the Godhead. Literally, verse 11 reads, “Now may Himself, our God and Father and Jesus Christ our Lord, direct our way to you.” The use of the singular pronoun (*Himself*) and the singular verb (*direct*) with the plural subject (*our God and Father... and Jesus our Lord*) emphasizes again the unmistakable unity of the Father and the Son in the Godhead (87, MacArthur – 1 & 2 Thess).

52: 3: 11 – 2 = “clear the way for us to come to you.”

52: 3: 11 – 2.1 = Q: *Direct our way* – The Greek mood communicates a wish (1 Thess 3: 11-12; 5: 23; 2 Thess 2: 17; 3: 5, 16; Rom 15: 5, 13). The Greek verb is *kateutheuno*, to make a straight path (512, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 3: 11 – 2.2 = Q: Paul wanted to return to Thessalonica. We have no record that he was able to do so, but when he was traveling through Asia on his 3rd journey, eh was joined by Aristarchus and Secundus, who were from Thessalonica (Acts 20: 4-5) (2174, LAB).

12: May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.

52: 3: 12 – 1 = “May the Lord make your love increase and overflow”.

52: 3: 12 – 1.1*, CS = T: What a great encouraging challenge... “*May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.*” The idea of growing in maturity of love for God and for one another, is the number one mission of life and a life well lived. What could happen if we all sought to live like this as a mission? Jesus gave a new command, for all of His followers to follow in John 13: 34-35.

... John 13: 34-35 = “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

52: 3: 12 – 1.1 = Q: *Make you to increase to superabound* – The Greek mood is a wish for future. It is hard to see much difference between the two verbs (512, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 3: 12 – 1.2 = Q: This petition highlights love as the defining elements in a Christian’s relationship with others (1170, FCA).

52: 3: 12 – 1.3 = Q: If we are full of God’s love, it will overflow to others. It’s not enough merely to be courteous to others, we must actively and persistently show love to them. Our love should be growing continually. If your capacity to love has remained unchanged for some time, ask God to fill you again with his never-ending supply. Then look for opportunities to express his love (2174, LAB).

52: 3: 12 – 1.4 = Q: The apostle Paul knew that genuine believers would always exhibit love (ca: John 13: 34-35), therefore he prayed that the Thessalonians’ growing faith would be accompanied by a prospering love. That Paul asked *the Lord* to *cause* the Thessalonians’ *love* to grow indicates he depended on God for the development of spiritual virtues. Whether it was the beginning of the Christian life (justification – Romans 3: 30; 8: 30, 33; ca Isa 50: 8; Jonah 2: 9; John 1: 12-13) or the process of spiritual growth (sanctification – John 17: 17; 1 Thess 5: 23; Jude 1; ca: Ezek 37: 28; Eph 5: 26), God revealed that He ultimately deserves the credit for believers’ maturity (1 Cor 3: 6-7; ca: 2 Cor 3: 5; 9: 8; Gal 2: 20) (89, MacArthur – 1 & 2 Thess).

52: 3: 12 – 2 = “for each other and for everyone else.”

52: 3: 12 – 3 = “just as ours does for you.”

13: May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

52: 3: 13 – 0 = Overview...

52: 3: 13 – 0.1, CS = Overview: A great prayer listed from a great Apostle who could “back-it-up” with his life/ministry.

A prayer for us all and a life-focus for us all who believe in Jesus Christ....

May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

The desire to walk in holiness and to be blameless, so that, when Jesus returns (as He will one day) we can rejoice with all his holy ones when He comes for His Church & we are blessed by His grace to spend eternity with Him & in true/everlasting peace.

52: 3: 13 – 1 = “May he strengthen your hearts” ...

... 2 Thess 3: 5 = May the Lord direct your hearts into God’s love and Christ’s perseverance.

52: 3: 13 – 1.1 = Q: *To the end he may establish* – (ca: 1 Thess 3: 2). The Greek verb is *sterizo*, from *sterigx*, a support (512, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 3: 13 – 2 = “so that you will be blameless and holy”

... 1 Thess 4: 7-8 = For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. 8 Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.

52: 3: 13 – 2.1 = Q: *Unblameable* – This word is rare in the NT. Each chapter ends with a verse on the 2nd coming of Christ (512, Robertson – WPNT).

52: 3: 14 – 2.2 = Q: The final objective of Paul’s prayer for the Thessalonians was that they might look to their glorification, which produces a purifying hope. All the good qualities of a strong faith and a vibrant love are incomplete unless they point one toward genuine hope (ca: Rom 5: 1-2; 15: 13; Titus 2: 13; Heb 6: 11).... The only way Thessalonians would actually live in such hope was for God to establish their hearts without blame in holiness before (literally, “in the presence of”) Him.... The apostle knew that the promise of Christ’s return to Rapture and reward the church is the essence of believer’s purifying hope... Believers’ knowing that when Christ comes to reward His people, they will have their works evaluated before the judgment seat (2 Cor 5: 10), is motivation to holy living (91, MacArthur – 1 & 2 Thess).