

Anticipation: 1 Thessalonians

Kingdom Battle: 2:17-3:10

Where there is a vibrant church there is going to be a kingdom battle...

But, brothers, when we were torn away from you for a short time (in person, not in thought), out of our intense longing we made every effort to see you. (1 Thes. 2:17)

- ***Frustration: the enemy will create road-blocks*** – “For we wanted to come to you – certainly I, Paul, did, again and again – but Satan stopped us.” (1 Thes. 2:18)

¶ ***When plan “A” is blocked, love will find a plan “B”*** – “For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy. So when we could stand it no longer, we thought it best to be left by ourselves in Athens. We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God’s fellow worker in spreading the gospel of Christ...” (1 Thes. 2:19-3:2)

- ***Affliction: trials will attack faith*** – “We sent Timothy...to strengthen and encourage you in your faith, so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. You know quite well that we were destined for them. 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.” (1 Thes. 3:2-4)

In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world. (John 16:33)

- ***Temptation: the enemy will lay traps*** – “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 might have tempted you and our efforts might have been useless.” (1 Thes. 3:5)

¶ ***Three spiritual anchors in the battle: faith, love and mentors*** – “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.” (1 Thes. 3:6)

And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe. (1 Thes. 2:13)

Remaining in the Word of God helps us overcome the enemy of God in the battle...

Therefore, brothers, in all our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith. For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord. 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? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith. (1 Thes. 3:7-10)