

When I Don't Think I Can Go On – 1 Thessalonians 3:6-13 – December 15th, 2019

- What I want to talk with you today about are those tough times in our lives when you're so down and don't think you can go on.
- Here in our text today, Paul is not giving up on the Thessalonians and was very concerned that they had given up on the Lord.
- As such, he provides us with three reasons why we should never give up, namely, because of both what and Who is coming.

1. Encouragement is coming (Verses 6-8)

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. 7 Therefore, brothers and sisters, in all our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith. 8 For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord.

- Here, Paul is very open about how he was so distressed, and actually unable to function all because of his concern for them.
- It wasn't until Timothy came back with the good news about their faith that Paul was encouraged and could now really live.
- It's important to understand that when Paul wrote this, he was in Corinth and suffering great affliction and persecution there.

1 Corinthians 2:3 - I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling.

2. Joy is coming (Verses 9-11)

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? 10 Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith. 11 Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you.

- Paul is so overjoyed and cannot thank God enough for them, in return for all the joy in the presence of God because of them.
- So much so, that he earnestly prayed night and day that God would make a way for him to come and supply what they lacked.
- This because, they were very young believers in the Lord, and they still lacked the spiritual maturity in their walk with the Lord.

3 John 4 - I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

Psalms 30:5b ...Weeping may endure for a night, But joy comes in the morning.

3. Jesus is coming (Verses 12-13)

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.

- It's interesting to note how that Paul continues pointing the Thessalonians to the Lord's return here at the end of chapter three.
- At the end of chapter one, he tells them to wait for his Son from heaven who rescues us from the coming wrath in the rapture.
- At the end of chapter two, it's that they're his hope, joy, and crown when the Lord returns and here it's when He comes with us.

- I'll bring it to a close with something the Lord has ministered to me, as of late, concerning Jacob at the lowest point of his life.
- He's grieving the death of his wife Rachel, and lived for years thinking his son Joseph was dead and is in the midst of a famine.
- If this weren't bad enough, his sons have returned from Egypt and now in addition to Simeon, he thinks he will lose Benjamin.

Genesis 42:36 - Their father Jacob said to them, "You have deprived me of my children. Joseph is no more and Simeon is no more, and now you want to take Benjamin. Everything is against me!"

- The reason I wanted to end with this account is because at this point in Jacob's life, he has no idea of what's around the corner.
- Jacob's life is about to change in ways he could have never believed when he hears the news about his beloved son Joseph.
- For those who like Jacob are thinking that everything is against you, our greater than Joseph, Jesus is right around the corner.