

Full Disclosure > 1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:5

2:17-20 *Paul's desire.* Paul explains his inability to return to the Thessalonians in heart-wrenching terms: he desperately wanted to be with them to help them grow in Christ, yet was prevented from doing so by the adversary.

3:1-2 *Timothy's mission.* Eventually, so great was Paul's concern, that he sent Timothy – one of his most valuable co-laborers in the Gospel – to go to the Thessalonians in order to encourage them and to report back to Paul.

3:3-5 *Paul's concern.* The reason for Paul's urgent desire is that he was concerned that the hardships and trials the Thessalonians were facing might have turned them from faithfulness, even though he told them to expect opposition.

Background: Paul's visit to Thessalonica is recorded in Acts 17, which started well but ended with he and those with him fleeing an angry mob. He was then unable to return there.

The Point: Christians have been told – and must not forget – to expect persecution in some form or another. This isn't to discourage us, but to prepare us to endure well.

Head: Know that Christ has taught us that following Him will bring eternal joy, but also opposition in the here and now.

Heart: Believe that following Jesus is worth whatever persecutions may come – only in Him are found the words of life. Only in Jesus is there true and lasting safety.

Hands: In what ways can you help others to endure the brokenness of this world? How will you be joy-filled and hopeful in the midst of hardship?

Here is how I will apply these truths: _____
