

“Love Lifted Me Recovery Ministries”

First Thessalonians Bible Study — I Thessalonians 2:14-20 & 3:1-5 Lesson #4

**INSTRUCTIONS: Read the entire section of Scripture in First Thessalonians before starting to look up the other Scripture verses and filling in the blanks. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give you understanding as you read God’s word. Most Scriptures used are from the New King James Version.

14-16 For you, brethren, became **IMITATORS of the CHURCHES of God which are in JUDEA** in Christ Jesus. For you also **SUFFERED the SAME THINGS from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Jews, who KILLED both the Lord Jesus and their own PROPHETS**, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, **FORBIDDING us to SPEAK to the Gentiles that they may be SAVED**, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

• **I Thessalonians 1:3-4** “We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your _____ grows exceedingly, and the _____ of every one of you all abounds towards each other, so that we ourselves boast of you among the _____ of _____ for your patience and faith in all your _____ and _____ that you _____.”

• **Matthew 5:11-12** “_____ are you when they _____ and _____ you, and say all kinds of evil against you _____ for _____ sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they _____ the _____ who were before you.”

Definition: “IMITATORS of the CHURCHES of God which are in JUDEA” – The church of Jesus Christ began in Jerusalem (in Judea) on the Day of Pentecost, and still remained the headquarters of the church in Paul’s day. Paul urges the Thessalonians to model themselves after the churches of Judea, especially in the way they handled persecution for their faith. That’s what he means by saying, “**You also SUFFERED the SAME THINGS from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Jews.**”

• **Galatians 1:20-24** “(Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie). Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; and I was _____ by _____ to the _____ of _____ which were in _____. But they were hearing only, “He who _____ us now preaches the _____ which he once _____ to _____.” And they glorified God in me.”

Definition: “Who KILLED both the Lord Jesus and their own PROPHETS” – The Jewish leaders, the pharisees and priests, continued in the steps of their fathers and ancestors by **REJECTING and KILLING Jesus, and their ancestors had done the same by KILLING many of the PROPHETS that God sent to them** to try to get them to repent of their sins. This is what Paul means by saying, “**You fill up the measure of their sins.**”

• **Matthew 23:32-35** “_____ up then, the _____ of your fathers’ _____. Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? Therefore, indeed, I send you _____, wise men, and scribes; some of them you will _____ and _____, and some of them you will scourge in your _____ and _____ from city to city, that on _____ may come all the righteous _____ shed on the earth, from the _____ of _____ Abel to the _____ of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you _____ between the temple and the altar.”

• **Acts 7:51-52** “You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in _____ and ears! You always _____ the _____; as your _____ did, so do _____. Which of the _____ did your _____ not _____? And they _____ those who _____ the _____ of the Just One (Christ), of whom _____ now have become the _____ and _____.”

Definition: “FORBIDDING us to SPEAK to the Gentiles that they may be SAVED” – The Jewish leaders **tried to get the apostles to stop teaching or preaching about Jesus**, but they were not successful. The Jewish leaders were more concerned about their position of power over the people than they were about truly seeking God. **Satan’s people will always try to get us to stop telling others about Jesus.**

• **Luke 11:52** “Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not _____ in yourselves, and those who were _____ in you _____.”

• **Acts 4:18-20** “And they called them and _____ them _____ to _____ at all _____ in the _____ of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, ‘Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.’”

• **John 11:47-48** “Then the chief _____ and the _____ gathered a council and said, ‘What shall we do? For this man works many signs. If we let Him alone like this, _____ will _____ in _____, and the romans will come and _____ both our _____ and _____.’”

17-18 But we, brethren, **having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart**, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire. Therefore we wanted to come to you – even I, Paul, time and again – **but SATAN HINDERED us.**

• **Romans 1:13** “Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often _____ to _____ to you (but was _____ until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles.”

• **Acts 17:5-6** “But the _____ who were _____ persuaded, becoming _____, took some of the _____ from the marketplace, and gathering a _____, set all the city in an _____ and _____ the _____ of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. But when they did not find them, they _____ Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, ‘These who have turned the world upside down have come here, too.’”

Definition: “But SATAN HINDERED us” – Satan, or in the case of Paul in Thessalonica, **people being INFLUENCED by Satan**, may sometimes hinder or put stumbling blocks in our way when we are trying to do God’s work. God allows this at times, in order to strengthen us and even sometimes to guide us in another direction. If we are POSITIVE that God wants us to do such and such a thing, but Satan seems to be getting in the way, we can do spiritual warfare and use the whole armor of God to fight our way through. Other times, **God MAY use visions and dreams, as he did with Paul, Peter and others, to speak to us and guide us** in the direction of ministry He desires.

• **Acts 17:13** “But when the _____ from _____ learned that the _____ of _____ was _____ by _____ at Berea, they came there also and _____ up the _____.”

• **Acts 16:6-10** “Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were _____ by the _____ to preach the word in Asia.”

After they had come to Mysia, they _____ to _____ into Bithynia, but the _____ did _____ them. So passing to Mysia, they came down to Troas. And a _____ appeared to _____ in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, 'Come over to Macedonia and _____ us.' Now after he had seen the _____, immediately we sought to _____ to Macedonia, concluding that the _____ had _____ us to _____ the _____ to them."

19-20 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? **Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?** For you are our glory and joy.

• **II Corinthians 1:13-14** "For we are not writing any other things to you than what you read or understand. Now I trust you will understand, even to the end (as also you have understood us in part), that _____ are your _____ as _____ also are _____, in the _____ of the _____."

Chapter 3

1-3 Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, **we thought it good to be left in ATHENS ALONE**, and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith, that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; **for you yourselves KNOW that WE are APPOINTED to THIS.**

• **Acts 17:14-15** "Then immediately the brethren _____ Paul _____, to go to the sea; but both _____ and _____ remained there. So those who conducted _____ brought him to _____; and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed, they departed."

Definition: "We thought it good to be left in ATHENS ALONE" – Paul was ALONE in the city of Athens for a while, until Timothy and Silas could join him. While Paul was there, **he preached Jesus Christ to both the Jews and Gentiles**, trying to show them that they were worshiping the wrong gods, and should only worship the one true God who made heaven and the earth, and who sent His Son Jesus Christ to die for our sins..

• **Acts 17:16:17** "Now while Paul _____ for them at _____, his _____ was provoked within him when he saw that the _____ was _____ over to _____. Therefore he _____ in the _____ with the _____ and with the _____ worshipers, and in the _____ daily with those who happened to be there."

Definition: "You yourselves KNOW that WE are APPOINTED to THIS" – Paul knew, from the time of his conversion to Christ, that he would have to suffer many things for the sake of the gospel. God told him ahead of time, and Paul "signed up for it" anyway, and that is why he says he was **"APPOINTED to THIS."**

• **Acts 9:15-16** "But the _____ said to him, 'Go, for he (Paul) is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My _____ before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him (Paul) how _____ things he must _____ for My _____'"

• **Acts 21:11-13** ".....he took _____ belt, bound (tied up) his own hands and feet, and said, 'Thus says the _____, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.' (Verse 13) "Then Paul answered, 'What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am _____ not only to be _____ [in prison], but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the _____'"

4-5 For in fact, **we told you BEFORE when we were with you that we would SUFFER TRIBULATION**, just as it happened, and you know. For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and **our labor might be in vain.**

●**Philippians 2:16** “Holding fast the _____ of _____, so that I may rejoice in the day Christ that I have not _____ in _____ or labored in vain.”

●**Galatians 2:2** “And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might _____, or had _____, in _____.”

Definition: “We told you BEFORE ... that we would SUFFER TRIBULATION” – Paul had just said in verse 3 that he hoped “that no one should be shaken by these afflictions.” Paul wanted to make sure they remembered that **he had told them ahead of time what would happen to him**, and that they would not lose faith. Jesus also told His disciples ahead of time what was going to happen to Him, but they just didn’t understand.

●**Acts 20:17-** “From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them, ‘You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, _____ the _____ with all humility, with many _____ and _____ which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; and how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And see, now I go _____ in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the _____ _____ testifies in every city, saying that _____ and _____ await me.’”

●**John 13:19** “Now I _____ you _____ it comes, that _____ it does _____ to pass, you may _____ that I am He.”

Definition: “Lest by any means I MIGHT RUN, or had RUN, in VAIN” – Many times, the Bible talks about **the Christian life as RUNNING a RACE**. God’s word says we should run that race with the object of winning the prize. To “run in vain” would mean you had entered the race, but dropped out or failed to finish somehow, and that **NOTHING was ACCOMPLISHED**. **Vain means EMPTY, WORTHLESS or POINTLESS**. Paul is NOT talking about running to win our salvation, because salvation is a gift, but rather that **ONCE WE ARE SAVED, it’s as if we’ve signed up for the race**, and now we are running to win a prize. The “prize” or prizes we could win are **the REWARDS we will RECEIVE in HEAVEN for our FAITHFUL SERVICE to GOD (I Corinthians 3:11-15)**. Again, it is NOT trying to win, earn or gain our salvation, but rather rewards to be received when we meet Jesus in heaven.

●**Hebrews 12:1** “Therefore, we also, since we are _____ by so great a cloud of _____, let us lay aside every _____, and the _____ which so easily ensnares us (trips us up), and let us _____ with _____ the _____ that is set before us.”

●**I Corinthians 9:24** “Do you not know that those who _____ in a _____ all _____, but one receives the _____? _____ in such a _____ that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the _____ is temperate (self-controlled, disciplined) in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable _____, but we for an imperishable _____. Therefore I _____ thus: _____ with uncertainty. Thus I _____: not as one who beats the air.”