

What Kind of Church Do We Want To Be?
1 Thessalonians 3:11-13

Background for this letter:

2nd Missionary Journey

Left Phillippi due to persecution

Plants church in Thessalonica

Forced to leave in 3 weeks

1 Thessalonians 3:1 Therefore, when we could no longer stand it, we thought it was better to be left alone in Athens.

1Thessalonians 3:5 For this reason, when I could no longer stand it, I also sent him to find out about your faith, fearing that the tempter had tempted you and that our labor might be for nothing.

What does Paul fear?

He fears they will fall apart without a seasoned leader.

1 Thessalonians 3:6-10 But now Timothy has come to us from you and brought us good news about your faith and love and reported that you always have good memories of us, wanting to see us, as we also want to see you. Therefore, brothers, in all our distress and persecution, we were encouraged about you through your faith.

For now we live, if you stand firm in the Lord. How can we thank God for you in return for all the joy we experience before our God because of you, as we pray very earnestly night and day to see you face to face and to complete what is lacking in your faith?

1 Thessalonians 3:11-13 Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you. And may the Lord cause you to increase and overflow with love for one another and for everyone, just as we also do for you. May He make your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints. Amen.

He prays for 3 things:

1. That they increase and overflow in love.
2. That they may be blameless in holiness
3. That they will be ready for Jesus' return.

First admonition: May the Lord cause you to increase and overflow with love for one another and for everyone.

Why is it listed first?

1. Jesus said love was the mark of discipleship.
John 13:35

2. Paul's experience told him without love,
nothing else mattered. 1 Corinthians 13:1

3. Jesus epitomized love.

So how do we increase and overflow in love?

1. We need to get over ourselves. It's not all
about us.

Philippians 2:3, 4

2. We need to begin seeing others and their hurts and needs.

1 Corinthians 12:26

3. We need to pray for one another. James 5:16

4. We need to do something!
1 John 3:17

5. We need to forgive people who have hurt us.