

*Paul's Response to Tidings of Thessalonica: 1 Thess 3*

Dr. John Niemelä Grace Chapel [www.mol316.com](http://www.mol316.com) December 10, 2008

**INTRODUCTION**

**Author of 1 Thessalonians: Paul**

**Recipients of 1 Thessalonians: A new church in Thessalonica comprised of new believers**

**Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica: Acts 17:1–10: November 50–January 51** (cf. last week's message)

**Dates of First and Second Thessalonians**

1 Thessalonians: Early summer 51 (only about 8 months since Paul arrived in Thessalonica)  
2 Thessalonians: Summer 51

**Occasion of First Thessalonians:**

After Paul left Thessalonica, the church there came under strong persecution. Opponents charged that Paul had fleeced & abandoned them. Furthermore, some within the congregation died. They feared that the tribulation had begun and about whether they would be reunited with deceased believers.

**Thematic Statement: 1:9–10**

<i>How you turned to God from idols</i>	(2:1–3:13)	The relationship between Paul & them
<i>to serve the living and true God</i>	(4:1–12)	Continue serving the Lord
<i>and to wait for His Son from heaven</i>	(4:13–5:11)	Expect the pre-trib rapture

**Review**

(1:2–10) Paul prays thankfully because they apply the word in love, await the Lord's deliverance & are elect; specifically, his message had power & assurance by the Holy Spirit, which they perceived in Paul's demeanor among them; so they followed Paul & God, after receiving that message in affliction, so they became examples to believers in Greece & elsewhere, so others speak of their faith: specifically, of Paul's entrance to the Thessalonians who now serve God & patiently await the rapture

(2:1–12) Paul's entry to Thess was productive, despite sufferings because, God entrusted Him to share truth, so Paul pleases God (bels' judge); he did not flatter (for gain) nor seek \$ befitting an apostle, but was gentle as a nursing mother w/ own infant, seeking to impart word & his very life, because he loves them, evidenced by his laboring to avoid burdening them; they know his integrity among them as a father directing his own children to live worth of God who calls them to the kingdom

(2:13–16) Paul thanks God that they welcomed His word, in which they were like Judean churches in facing persecution by their own countrymen who opposed God & people, killing & hindering those God sent

(2:17–20) Paul unsuccessfully sought to return to Thess, but anticipates being with them in the kingdom, because he loves them

**NEW EXPOSITION:**

**(3:1–2) After leaving Thessalonica, Paul sent Timothy to establish and encourage them, while he struggled alone in Athens**

**(3:3) [Paul sent Timothy to strengthen them] in order that afflictions would not deter them, because believers are appointed to face trials**

**(3:4) Paul had already told the Thessalonians that they would suffer and they did**

**(3:5) When Paul finally determined that the Thessalonians did need Timothy more than he and the Athenians did, he sent Timothy to be sure Satan had not (through the trials) caused some to defect, which would mean Paul had labored and suffered there in vain**

**(3:6) Timothy returned with good news that the Thessalonians continue in faith and love, desiring to see Paul, as he desires to see them**

**(3:7) In light of Timothy's report, the faith of the Thessalonians encouraged Paul**

**(3:8–11) Paul will enjoy life to the fullest before the Lord, if the Thessalonians stand firm, because Paul rejoices and gives thanks for them as he consistently prays for God to allow him to return to eliminate deficiencies in what they (know) and believe**

**(3:12–13) Paul also prays that the Lord will increase their love for each other and for all believers (to be) as Paul's love for them, so the Lord will establish them for when they accompany the Lord comes (to earth) with His saints**

**CONCLUSION**