

**Series: The Model Church**

**Title: A Strong Faith**

**Text: (1 Thes 3:1-10)**

**I. The Model Church, 1:1-3:13**

**A. A Strong Church 1:1-4**

**B. A Strong Conversion 1:5-10**

**C. A Strong Clergy: 2:1-12**

**D. A Strong Congregation: 2:13-20**

**The Model Church Has ...**

**E. A Strong Conviction (Faith): 3:1-10**

***What is the difference between Faith & Presumption***

Faith is total confidence upon Jesus Christ.

Presumption falls short of Faith.

It is a supposition without proof,

i.e. our merits will save us.

***The key to having a Strong Faith is our Focus must be on Jesus Christ and His work on the Cross.***

Faith in anything else is Presumption!

Their faith was so strong Paul comments on it 5x Vs1

Paul wanted to comfort/strengthen their faith (Vs 2)

Paul wanted to know if their faith was standing in opposition to the tempter (Vs 5)

Paul received word that their faith was strong (Vs 6)

Paul was comforted over their faith: (Vs 7)

Paul wanted to perfect their faith: (Vs 10)

***We all need a strong faith:***

A Faith that stands strong and endures.

A faith that knows Christ, walks with Him day by day.

A faith that stands fast, endures, & grows stronger

The stronger our faith, the more we can conquer in life and do the things we should do.

A Strong faith enables us to triumph over the Temptations and Trials of life.

The believers at Thessalonica had a strong faith and stands as a Model for us.

**What is a Strong Faith?**

**1. A Strong Faith made Paul extremely Anxious for the church: (Vs 1-2)**

***He knew they would be bold & suffer for it.***

*1 Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, (Hold Back) we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;*

These believers were suffering intense persecution.

From the Jews & Gentiles.

The Jews Savagely opposed Paul. (Acts 17:5-10)

Jews used the rowdy men that hung around the market

The church had been meeting in the home of Jason.

When the mob assaulted the home, Paul was not their.

Paul had to leave the city & flee for his life.

Paul hoped his absence would quell the persecution.

Paul's plan failed, the persecution increased.

The Jews were intent to stamp out Christianity.

Paul couldn't wait anymore, his heart was with the believers in Thessalonica.

If he returned, he would only fan the flames of persecution, so he did the next best thing.

*2 And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:*

Timothy was a Fellow Believer w/ the Thessalonians  
Timothy was a Fellow Laborer with Paul.

Timothy would Establish (Support & strengthen) & Comfort (Encourage & Exhort) their faith.

*A Strong Faith made Paul Anxious for the church*

**2. A Strong Faith is not moved by affliction: Vs 3-5**

*3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. 4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know. 5 For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.*

*moved* (To move, like the wagging of a dog's tail)  
To flatter, deceive, lead astray by deceptive strategy.

They attacked Paul by them spreading Lies & Rumors

A Persecution of deceit and Guile.  
A Deliberate strategy of deception.

***This is where the rumors of Immorality & False preaching was spread about Paul.***

To destroy Paul's testimony so that many would leave the church & return to Judaism. (1 Thes 2:3-6)

They will say this again in (1 Then 4:3-7)

There was Verbal Attacks:

Mockery, Cursing, & Ridicule of the life of Righteousness preached by Paul: (1 Thes 2:2)

There was direct confrontations & Opposition.

Verbal Threats: (1 Thes 2:16)

Physical Abuse by the Mobs: (Acts 17:5-7)

Use of civil authority against the believers: (17:6-10)

*Vs3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions*

**The Believer can Stand Fast by...**

***A. Knowing that we are appointed unto persecution:***

Paul told the Believers in Thessalonica would face persecution.

Believers are persecuted b/c we are not of this world.

We are in the world, but called out of the World.

Believers are separated from the Behaviors of the World, therefore the world reacts against the believers.

(Jn 15:19) *If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*

(2 Tim 3:12) *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*

(1 Pet 4:12-13)

*Are you being persecuted for your faith?*

*Why/why not?*

*Are you shocked that those around you don't share the same belief's?*

***B. The Believer is persecuted because we strip away the World's cloak of sin.***

Righteous living spotlights the sinfulness of the world  
(Phil 2:14-16)

*Do you have a spotless testimony at your office?*

*Are you known for your integrity?*

*Are you trusted by your peers b/c you don't engage in office Gossip/Politics?*

*Does your work ethic stand out?*

***C. The Believer is persecuted because the World does not know God or Christ.***

They only want to fulfill their own desire,  
worshipping themselves as god. (Jn 16:3)

***D. The Believers are persecuted because the World is deceived in its concept of God.***

(Jn 16:2-3) *They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.*

The World thinks God exists to fulfill their desires.  
Man's idea of God is as the Supreme Grandfather.  
God protects, provides, & gives, no matter what a person's behavior is.

Assuming God will work all things out in some final analysis.

The True believer teaches against this concept of God.  
***Have you found out what your co-workers view of God is? Your Siblings? Friends?***

***This is where the process of witnessing starts!***

*A Strong Faith made Paul Anxious for the church*

*A Strong Faith is not moved by affliction:*

**3. A Strong Faith has an Excellent Testimony: Vs 6**  
***6 But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you:***

Timothy returned to Paul with a Glowing Report from the FBC of Thessalonica.

They were standing fast in the face of persecution.  
They did not forsake their worship of Christ.  
They continued to study the scriptures, pray, worship,  
& share their faith even when it would stir up  
persecution.

(1 Tim 6:12) *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

The Believers were standing fast in the Love of Christ  
(Jn 13:34-35)  
(Acts 2:42)

The Believers loved Paul and wanted to see him as  
much as he wanted to see them.

***Does your life bear testimony to your faith in Christ?***

***Are you Satisfied with your testimony?***

***Is as good as it can be?***

***Ask God how can you improve upon your testimony?***

***Is your Faith so Private, that it does not reach out to others?***

***What kind of testimony does that give of God?***

***Is that private testimony acceptable to the lord?***

***Does your faith in Christ stir a deep appreciation for other believers?***

***Do you demonstrate your love & concern for your other believers?***

***What practical things can you do to include your Brothers/Sisters in times of fellowship?***

*A Strong Faith made Paul Anxious for the church*

*A Strong Faith is not moved by affliction:*

*A Strong Faith has an Excellent Testimony:*

**4. A Strong Faith stirs the heart of Fellow Believers: (Vs 7-10)**

***7 Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:***

***8 For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.***

***9 For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;***

***10 Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?***

**A. Their Strong Faith Comforted Paul: (Vs 7)**

The Testimony of FBC Thessalonica Strengthened & Encouraged Paul.

Paul was in a fight of affliction in Corinth, and their testimony encouraged Paul.

The people of FBC Corinth were a grief to him.

Our Faith is used by God to Strengthen & Encourage others in their faith.

(Rom 15:1)

***Who's Faith insider you to believe God for more?***

***Does your Faith in God inspire others to believe?***

**B. Their Strong Faith stirred a renewed life & Purpose in Paul (Vs 8)**

Paul was discouraged because of the difficulties with the church in Corinth.

When the Testimony of the Thess came, it gave Paul a renewed purpose for life.

Thess people's testimony stirred, refreshed, & encouraged Paul in his affliction.

They were suffering persecution, but remaining steadfast.

Their faithful stirred Paul's Faithfulness.

***Can you imagine being an encouragement to Paul? Wouldn't it encourage you to know that your faithfulness encourages my faithfulness?***

(Heb 13:17) *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

(Rom 12:11) *"Fervent in spirit"*

***C. There Strong Faith stirred Paul's Joy: (Vs 9)***

Stirred Joy in the Pastor's Heart (1 Pet 4:12-13)

***D. The Strong Faith of the Thess Stirred Paul to Pray for their Fellowship & Growth in Christ.***

Paul wanted them to grow in their faith.

Paul longed to be with them, so he could continue to share the Word of God with them & grow with them.

(Rom 15:2)

(Rom 14:19)

***Hudson Taylor's Trip to China on a Sailing Vessel.***

The ship was stuck in a dead calm.

It was being carried closer & closer to the island of cannabells who were anticipating a feast.

The Captain came to Hudson Taylor to ask him to pray for wind.

He said he would, if the Captain would set the sails.

At 1st the captain hesitated b/c his crew would laugh at him.

Hudson Taylor said, the Wind is useless unless we set our sail to catch it.

It wasn't long after that, there was knock at Taylor's door, the captain asked if he was still praying for wind?

Taylor said Yes, the Captain said STOP! we have more wind than we can manage.

***Is Our Faith filling the Sails of Others?***

***Even when going through a personal trial, do you try to lift up and encourage others?***

***Do only focus on yourself, or do you try to be a blessing to others?***

***What can you do to strengthen others?***

***Are you setting an example to others that stir them to encourage others.***

***Who do you look to as an example of Strength.***

*Illus: EL and Ivy Mitchell*

*I learned life altering lessons from these people.*

*They never published a book, never wrote a blog,  
never spoke at a conference.*

*I did not sit in a class taught by them.*

*But daily, in great trials of physical affliction, they  
would encourage others.*

*Save their strength to go soul winning.*