

Thessalonians were faithful through suffering and persecution.

1 Thessalonians 2:13-20

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# 1 Thessalonians 2:13–16

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- Those who truly believe the Gospel are willing to suffer for it.
- Paul transitions to thanksgiving for the Thessalonians again.
- His thanksgiving (1:2) becomes a long narrative of the apostles' relationship with them (1:5–2:12).
- It is followed by another thanksgiving (2:13), which includes another narrative about sending Timothy to the Thessalonians (2:14–3:10), before finally coming to the prayer (3:11–13).

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# 1 Thessalonians 2:13–16

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- He writes this way because of the unusual circumstances of their conversion.
- Paul and the others had only been with the Thessalonians for three weeks before they were driven out of town.
- That is why Paul spends so much time in both narratives establishing his great love for the Thessalonians and his desire to see them again.
- Paul wrote that he was thankful for the Thessalonians' acceptance of his and his coworkers' preaching as the Word of God, not the word of men.

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# 1 Thessalonians 2:13–16

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- Then Paul encouraged them that their persecution by their own countrymen was the same experience Jesus' disciples had with "the Jews" in Judea.
- "The Jews" here doesn't mean all Jewish people (since the original disciples and the prophets who were persecuted were Jewish people).
- It refers to the Jewish religious leaders in the same way John's Gospel uses "the Jews" to refer to the religious leaders who continuously challenged Jesus throughout His ministry and eventually killed Him (verse 15).

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# 1 Thessalonians 2:13–16

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- The Thessalonians were to be encouraged in their persecution because they were in good company.
- Jesus was persecuted; the prophets were persecuted; and the apostles were all persecuted as well (verse 15).
- As Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account” (Matthew 5:11).

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# 1 Thessalonians 2:13–16

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- Jesus promised that “you will be hated by all for my name’s sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved” (Matthew 10:22).
- All the New Testament writers agree that “all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Timothy 3:12). Other similar verses are: John 15:20; Acts 14:22; 1 Peter 2:21.
- The apostles even left their flogging “rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name” (Acts 5:41).

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# 1 Thessalonians 2:17–18

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- Families in Christ are bonded together, whether in person or apart.
- Paul again describes his love for the Thessalonians and his deep affection for them as his spiritual children.
- They had only been in Thessalonica for three weeks, having barely started their ministry before being run out of town by a violent mob (Acts 17:1–10).
- We can hear the pain in Paul's heart as he says, "We were torn away from you" (verse 17).

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# 1 Thessalonians 2:17–18

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- Paul and his companions felt like parents who had lost their children.
- This tone is consistent with all the ways Paul had just talked about being like mother and father to the Thessalonians in the beginning of chapter 2.
- Paul had tried to come to them again and again.
- Not only because he loved them and simply wanted to see them again, but because he felt a responsibility for them as a spiritual father and wanted to make sure they were faithful.

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# 1 Thessalonians 2:17–18

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- Paul kept trying to go see them, but Satan kept hindering them.
- The word Satan literally means “adversary,” but is also used as a proper noun, the name of the Devil.
- Satan is our adversary, our enemy. His primary objective is to hinder us from doing God’s work, either through temptation or spiritual attack.
- Whatever specific things that blocked Paul from returning to Thessalonica, he recognized that they were not just physical obstacles, they had a spiritual dimension.

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# 1 Thessalonians 2:17–18

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- “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but ... against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12).
- Paul wanted them to know that it wasn't lack of interest or concern that prevented them from returning to Thessalonica.
- It was nothing less than spiritual warfare.
- He wanted them to know that he hadn't abandoned them; he had tried everything to come to them.

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# 1 Thessalonians 2:17–18

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- Yet even though they were not with the Thessalonians in person, they would always be with them in heart (verse 17).
- All believers are bound together spiritually, as one body, whether living in the same house, across the world from each other, or even across generations of history.
- No matter how much Satan blocked them from physically seeing one another, he could never break the bond they had in Christ.

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# 1 Thessalonians 2:17–18

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- As believers, we are one body (Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12).
- Our hearts are “knit together in love” (Colossians 2:2).
- In the same way that children will always be a part of their parents, even after they grow up and leave home, Paul and his spiritual children were together in heart even though they were not together in person.
- We can always support and pray for one another, no matter how far apart we are physically.

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# 1 Thessalonians 2:19–20

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- A faithful flock is a pastor's glory and joy.
- Paul described the Thessalonians as his “glory and joy,” his hope, and his “crown of boasting” before Jesus when He comes back again.
- He described them as a parent describes their children.
- As parents rejoice in their children and have high hopes for their lives, so Paul and his companions felt about the Thessalonians.
- Paul's spiritual children were the way he passed the Gospel to the next generation (2 Timothy 2:2). They were his hope for the future.

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# 1 Thessalonians 2:19–20

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- They were also his joy.
- He was thankful for them and their faithfulness.
- His greatest joy in this life was seeing his spiritual children walk with Jesus.
- This also applies to any spiritual children we may have.
- It's not an ungodly pride, but a joy that the people whose lives you have impacted are growing in faith.

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# 1 Thessalonians 2:19–20

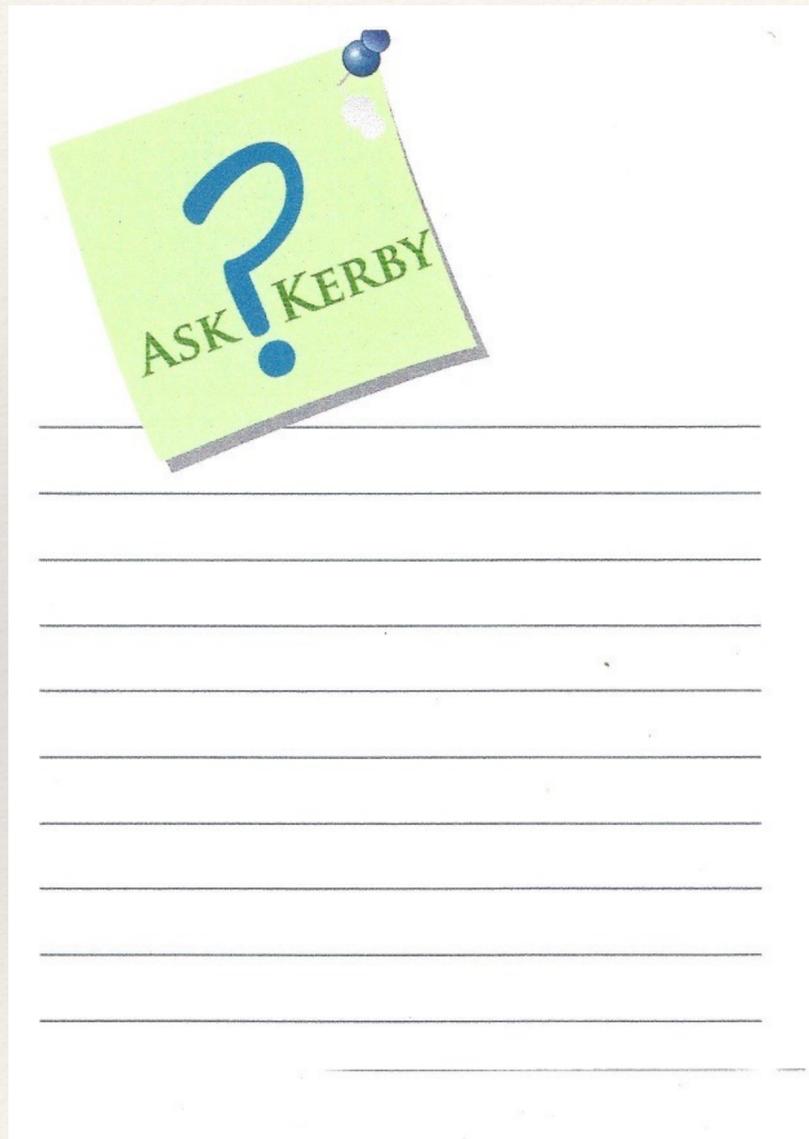
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- He also saw the Thessalonians as his “crown” or his prize.
- This Greek word refers to the wreath that was awarded to a victor in ancient athletic games.
- Paul told the Corinthians that he saw it as his job to present them as a pure bride to Christ at the wedding of the Lamb (2 Corinthians 11:2)
- He told the Philippians to keep themselves blameless and innocent so he could take pride in them on the day of Christ (Philippians 2:14–16). They were his life’s work. They were his pride and joy.

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# Ask Kerby

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An alarming percentage of the younger generation don't believe in an actual Satan.

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# Satan's Three Titles

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- Ruler of the World - John 12:31, 16:11, also 14:30.
- It means that Satan can use the elements of society, culture, and government to achieve his evil ends in the world.
- Doesn't mean every aspect of society or culture is evil and doesn't mean he has complete control.

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# Satan's Three Titles

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- God of this World - 2 Corinthians 4:4.
- Paul says has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel.
- Satan sets himself up as a false god to many.
- His power over religion and the ability to promote false religions keeps people from the true gospel.

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# Satan's Three Titles

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- Prince of the Air - Ephesians 2:2.
- Satan controls the thoughts of those in the world's system.
- 1 John 5:19 says "The whole world lies in the power of the evil one."
- That is why we find ourselves in the midst of spiritual warfare.

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# Satan's Name

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- Satan in Hebrew means “adversary.” He is opposed to God and His plans, including God’s plan for our lives.
- Old Testament uses this name 18 times, and the New Testament uses this name 34 times.
- Devil comes from the New Testament Greek word, *diabolos*. It is derived from the word “to throw.” The devil throws accusations and lies at us while he slanders us.
- This name occurs 36 times in the New Testament.

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# Satan's Name

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- Satan is also known as the tempter.
- When he appeared to Jesus in the wilderness, he was referred to as the tempter (Matthew 4:3).
- Paul also called him “the tempter” (1 Thessalonians 3:5) affirming the fact that Satan tempts people to sin.

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# Satan's Power

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- The Bible warns that Satan can affect people's minds - blind the minds of unbelievers (2 Corinthians 4:4).
- Acts 5:3 - Satan can influence people's thoughts with temptations.
- Can give us nightmares (Job 4) and cause emotional trauma (1 Samuel 16).
- Satan can hinder us (1 Thessalonians 2:18) and bring people into our lives to hinder us (Matthew 16:23).
- It also appears that Satan has the power of death (Hebrews 2:14).

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# Demons in the Old Testament

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- There are fewer references to demons in the Old Testament, but they are certainly active.
- Deuteronomy 32:17 - “sacrificed to demons.”
- Psalm 106:37 - “sacrificed their sons and daughters to the demons.”

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# Gospels

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- Demon-possessed man (Matthew 12).
- Man in synagogue (Mark 1, Luke 4).
- Cast out demons from two men into swine (Matthew 8).
- Healed demon-possessed daughter of woman (Matthew 15).
- Cast out demon that disciples could not cast out (Matthew 17).
- Cast out seven demons from Mary Magdalene (Luke 8).
- Healed woman who had sickness for 18 years caused by spirit (Luke 13).

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# Attributes of Demons

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- Jesus conversed with demons on several occasions (Matthew 8, Mark 9).
- Demons show emotion (James 2:19).
- Demons have a worldview and belief system (1 Timothy 4:1).
- Convince us there are certain things to avoid (1 Timothy 4:1).
- Convince us to pursue things that God tells us to avoid (Genesis 3).
- Try to turn people away from message of the pure gospel (2 Corinthians 11:3).

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# What Do Demons Know and Do

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- They knew who Jesus was (Mark 1:34).
- They must know biblical doctrine since they are effective in corrupting biblical truth (1 Timothy 4:1-3).
- They must know about salvation and thus keep people from trusting in Christ (1 John 4:1-4).
- They are strong (Mark 5:1-5) and uncontrollable (Acts 19:13-16).
- They can cause people to worship idols (Deuteronomy 32:17).

A BIBLICAL  
POINT OF VIEW ON  
**SPIRITUAL  
WARFARE**



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**JACK GRAHAM**

# UN SEEN

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT  
ANGELS, DEMONS, HEAVEN, & HELL