



1 Thessalonians: Part 13
A Life of Faith
Chapter 3:
Pray and Perfect

1 Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone,

2 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,

3 that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this.

4 For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.

5 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.

6 But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always have good remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us, as we also to see you—

7 therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you



9 For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sake before our God,

10 night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is

11 Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you.

12 And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you,

13 so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

"1 Thessalonians 3 (New King James Version)." Blue Letter Bible. Sowing Circle. Web. 3 Dec, 2014. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/Bible.cfm?b=1Th&c=2&p=0&rl=0&t=NKJV>>.

all Greek and Hebrew definitions are taken from: www.blueletterbible.org



I am so happy you have returned for session 13 of A Life of Faith. Hopefully, you have been strengthened by God's Holy Word to face your current challenges and opportunities with faith. As you continue to grow in your faith, you reap a harvest of righteousness and blessings, so walk on!

Please take a few moments to pray and ask God to open wide your heart so He can fill it. After you have prayed, please sign your initials on the line:

_____.

Please read 1 Thessalonians, chapter 3. Mark, highlight, or note in the margins anything that speaks to your heart.

For today's study we are going to focus on verse 10. Please go back and underline verse 10, and circle the words *pray* and *perfect*.

When did Paul pray for the Thessalonians?

Scripture says he prayed for them night and day. As in English, the phrase "night and day" in the Hebrew is a metaphor which means often, continually, frequently. Matthew Henry states,

"He prayed for them night and day (v. 10), evening and morning, or very frequently, in the midst of the business of the day or slumber of the night lifting up his heart to God in prayer. Thus we should pray always."

For whom do you often pray "day and night"?

Who else needs you to pray for them "night and day"?

Paul was discipling the Thessalonians in the faith; teaching them how to follow Jesus, and in turn, share their faith with others. Paul's work of discipling continued even when he was separated physically from the church in Thessalonica. How did Paul continue to disciple the Thessalonians? Through prayer. A great portion of the work of discipling is prayer.



Pray and Perfect

The Greek word for **prayer** used in this verse is *deomai* which means, "to want, to lack, to long for, to desire." *Deomai* descends from the root word *deo*, which translates as, "to bind, to fasten, to fasten with chains, to be bound as a husband to a wife." Discipleship is not just about leading someone to Christ—that is just the beginning. Discipleship requires prayer. The definition of *deomai* teaches our prayers bind us to one another. We also learn that praying for our disciples is a serious responsibility; as serious as marriage.

Please go back to verse 10 and draw a chain above the word pray.

Now please draw a picture of yourself and all the people you regularly pray for. Draw a chain from yourself to each person. At the top of your sketch, please draw a cross. Enclose your entire sketch with a chain that starts and ends at the cross.

Prayer forges bonds between our loved ones, ourselves and our Savior; the chains of which cannot be broken. Even if you are estranged from a family member or friend, you can bind them to Jesus through the bonds of prayer.

We know when Paul prayed for the Thessalonians, but how did he pray for them?

Verse 10 states that he prayed exceedingly. The power of this term is lost in the English translation. *Exceedingly* is an amazing collection of Greek words: *hyperekperissou*. Please study the chart on the next page.



Greek Word	Definition
<i>ek</i>	<i>exceedingly, abundantly above, heartily, vehemently</i>
<i>perissos</i>	<i>superior, extraordinary, much more</i>
<i>hyper</i>	<i>over, beyond, more than, in behalf of, for the sake of</i>

All the information you see in the chart above refers to *hyperekperissou*, the Greek word for *exceedingly*. Please take what you have learned about *exceedingly* and write your own translation for *praying exceedingly*.

“praying _____”

Do you get the feeling Paul was concerned about praying for His disciples? Please go back to verse 10 and draw a symbol for *exceedingly*. Mine is shown below.



What is Paul's main concern for his disciples (verse 10)?

He wanted to see them in person so he could help perfect/complete their faith. In this day and age of social media and digital connections, I appreciate some things require face to face communication in order to be accomplished. There is only so much relationship that can happen via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Discipleship requires depth.

Per'fect. Per·fect'. Perfection ... in English, such a high standard for a man to attain; however, for the Christian, perfection is made possible by the finished work of the cross. By the cross we are completed. In the Greek, *perfect* translates as, “to render sound and complete; to mend what is broken; to repair; ethically: to strengthen, to complete, to make one what he ought to be.” So the opposite of *perfect* is not flawed, or marred, but unfinished or incomplete.



Pray and Perfect

Do you have any weak places that need strengthening? Is your heart broken and in need of repair? Because our Father loves us so, it is His will we be made whole, healed, and perfected. To “perfect” our faith, to bring healing and restoration, God specifically appoints others to come along side and disciple us. Please go back and draw a symbol for the word *perfect* in verse 10.

Who has or is helped/ing perfect your faith?

Please go back and read verse 10 again.

Please fill in the missing word below.

“... night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what
is _____ in your faith ...”

What is lacking in your faith? Prayerfully consider the question for a moment and respond below.

The Greek transliteration for lacking is *hysterema* which means “in reference to property and resources, poverty, want, destitution.” Let’s think spiritually about this definition and apply it to what might currently be lacking in our faith.

Property: is there an area of your life which God wants you to claim for His kingdom? Is part of your “Promised Land” (marriage, relationships, children, career) still under the feet of the enemy? Put on the armor of God and the sword of the spirit, take your stand and claim your land for the kingdom of God.

Resources: Are you lacking the love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, or



self-control that is needed to be the hands and feet of Jesus? Make room for the resources of God by getting rid of the junk of the flesh.

Poverty: Are you running short on faith? Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Are you low on love? God is love and the more we know Him, the more we will have love for others. Come into His Presence and fill up.

Destitution: Do you feel you have little to give; that your small gifts cannot make a difference in the Kingdom and the world? Give your five loaves and two little fish to your Savior and watch Jesus feed thousands.

Please draw a symbol above the word *lacking* in verse 10 on page 1.

In closing, please write verse 10 in the space below.

Dear Father,

I pray for my brother or sister in Christ. Help them Lord Jesus to come to you in their brokenness, poverty, weakness and destitution and ask to be made perfect in you. Your word says those who hunger and thirst for righteousness shall be filled. Help us to make room for You so we can be pressed down, shaken together and running over in the completeness of Christ. I pray in Jesus most Holy Name,

Amen

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