

Discipleship of a Leader

I Thessalonians 2:17-3:13 / October 29, 2022

1. Emotional Plea (2:17a)

But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart,

2. Spiritual Hinderance (2:17b-20)

- we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face, because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—
- but Satan hindered us.

Satan: 5x Corinthians

TEMPTS US: Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. (I Corinthians 7:5, ESV)

DESTROYS US: When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. (I Corinthians 5:4-5, ESV)

OUTWITS US: Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs. (2 Corinthians 2:10-11, ESV)

DECEIVES US: For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds. (2 Corinthians 11:13-15, ESV)

HARASSES US: So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10, ESV)

Satan: Book of Job

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. The LORD said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?" Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for no reason? Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face." And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. (Job 1:6-12, ESV)

3. Hopeful Joy

- For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy.

And the LORD restored the fortunes of Job, when he had prayed for his friends. And the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. Then came to him all his brothers and sisters and all who had known him before, and ate bread with him in his house. And they showed him sympathy and comforted him for all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him. And each of them gave him a piece of money and a ring of gold. (Job 42:10-11, ESV)

4. Personal Sacrifice (3:1-5)

Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone, and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's coworker in the gospel of Christ,

- to establish and exhort you in your faith,

But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. (1 Timothy 6:11-12, ESV)

- that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this. For when we were with you, we kept telling you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction, just as it has come to pass, and just as you know.

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, which is why I suffer as I do. (2 Timothy 1:8-12, ESV)

- For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain.

This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith, among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme. (1 Timothy 1:18-20, ESV)

5. Thankful Comfort (3:6-9)

But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of

- your faith and love and
 - reported that you always remember us kindly and
 - long to see us, as we long to see you—
- for this reason, brothers,
- in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith.
 - For now we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord.
 - For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God,

6. Earnest Prayer (3:10-13)

- as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith?
- Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, and
- may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you,
- so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.