

Monday, February 4 - For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord. (1 Thessalonians 3:8) What makes Paul say this? Think about this. You pour into someone your wisdom, your experience and trust them to make good decisions with what you have shown them. And then, they go out and do just that! You see their success and you want to do it again. That's what happened to Paul. When he saw the time and energy that was invested in the people of Thessalonica was not in vain, it changed his attitude. It reinvigorated him to keep doing what he was doing. When we get positive feedback from anything we are doing, we want to keep at it and want to be better. Who do you need to give positive feedback to today?

Tuesday, February 5 – How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith. (1 Thessalonians 3:9-10) Since early in this letter Paul has described himself as working all the time, partly in preaching, partly in tent-making, it is difficult to see how he could pray day and night as well. Perhaps his activities overlapped one another, so that he found he could pray even while he was engaged in tent-making. What he says he prayed for was that now, in defiance of Satan's hinderances, he might be able to visit them in order to make up where they come up short in what they believe. To supply means to restore, equip or complete. What are you doing to restore your faith, to equip yourself or to complete your faith?

Wednesday, February 6 – Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you. May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. (1 Thessalonians 3:11-12) This is a prayer that is specific in its requests. 1) For Paul, Timothy & Silas to be able to visit first hand. 2) For the love for all to be ever increasing and never ceasing. We know that the first request wasn't answered until five years later. As for as the second request, it would be hard to nail down if that request was answered. When we pray, we should consider that our answers to prayers may take a long time or that we may never know specifically if they are answered. The point is to always be in communication with God and to realize our prayers don't need to be focused solely on ourselves.

Thursday, February 7 – May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones. (1 Thessalonians 3:13). Paul continues his prayer with another request. This request is one that should be for anyone who professes faith in Christ. It is a prayer we should be praying for ourselves. We should be striving to be more and more like Christ every day. Being blameless and holy is being exactly like Jesus. And no, we will not achieve 'perfection' but it's the goal in which we should be aiming.

Friday, February 8 – As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 4:1-2). What does a life that pleases God look like? This church was told by Paul, Silas and Timothy when they spent time with them. We know one aspect of this type of living was worshipping the “true God.” (They had been worshipping idols). We also know they were imitating the lives of their ‘teachers’ and this meant a “holy, righteous and blameless” life. So let’s just simply pause and check our lives. Are we worshipping the “true God?” Who or what gets your best? Who or what consumes you? Who or what occupies your mind the majority of the time? Who or what do you treasure? When you answer these questions, then you will know who you are worshipping. What does living a “holy” life look like? What does a “righteous” life look like? What does a “blameless” life look like?