

1 THESSALONIANS: FAITH. LOVE. HOPE.



Week Three: 1 Thessalonians 3:1-5

To the Teachers

This letter to the Thessalonians is one of encouragement and thanksgiving for their faithfulness, but also a call to live even more as God's people. Let's be thankful as a church how God has worked in us, and also ask Him to draw us deeper into His Story. Pray for the kids to be filled with faith, love, and hope.

- **Big Idea:** Faith carries us through troubles.

As Kids Enter (15 minutes - Classroom)

- **Question:**
Have you ever been surprised by how hard something is? If you are asked to clean your room, do you ever want to stop halfway through and say, "There's just too much stuff on the floor! I quit." You shouldn't be surprised about all the stuff on your floor or under your bed, because you put it there! In the same way, we shouldn't be surprised when things get difficult in life, because we live in a broken world. Today's lesson will help us think about how to get through it.

Sing Together (15 minutes)

STORY (30 minutes - Lead Teacher)

Paul, Silas, and Timothy risked a lot to go to Thessalonica and tell people about Jesus and God's Kingdom. They trusted the Holy Spirit to give them the strength they needed to do it. The enemy stirred up people to stop them. The leaders in that town kicked them out and threatened them not to come back. So, they went to another town and shared the good news of Jesus there. This became a pattern where they would share Jesus wherever they went, and face trouble wherever they went. Ultimately, they were thrown in prisons and even killed.

But before that happened, they wrote a letter to their friends in Thessalonica who believed the good news. They said, "We want to make sure your faith stays strong; that you do not let troubles or persecution stop you from following Jesus. We even told you ahead of time, while we were with you, that trouble would come when you follow Jesus. We told you we would suffer for bringing you this message - and we did! But now that we've been taken away from you, we want to make sure the tempter isn't tempting you to turn away from Jesus."

Paul, Silas, and Timothy wanted their friends in Thessalonica to know that it is still worth following after Jesus, even if it brings them trouble in life. Jesus is better than any comfort or joy in the world, and God is greater than any trouble. Following Jesus is the only real way to life, so it is worth suffering a little in this life in order to follow him into life forever in His Kingdom.

In the same way, Jesus told his followers ahead of time that following him would be difficult, but worth it. He said, "If the world hates you, remember it hated me first. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you as you follow me." But he also told them he was sending "an Advocate from the Father - the Spirit of truth." And he told them to "stay in [him] and his love". So, we know that we have the Spirit of God with us to help us through any troubles, and we have hope that one day those troubles will be gone as we live forever with Jesus, our King.

[Dialogue Questions - you may use some or all]

- Why do you think it can be difficult to follow Jesus at times?
- Why would some people be against followers of Jesus?
- How can you stay faithful to following Jesus at school, in your home, around your friends, etc.?
- Psalm 91 says, "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear..."

In Breakout Classes (30 minutes - Classroom)

- **Prayer:**
Father, thank you for giving us your Spirit to help us through hard times. Thank you that Jesus took on the hardest of things, including death, to save us. Help us follow him better into forever life with you. Amen.
- **Craft:**
Use the hen and chick craft on the next page to discuss how we can be safe in the cover of our God.
- **BLESS Activity:**
For kids to do during the week
Because this Story is true, we want to be faithful to live in it. We ask the Spirit to help us to *Bless, Listen, Eat, Speak, and Sabbath* (rest & celebrate) in ways that tell the good news of God's Story.

This week, focus on the **Bless** rhythm. Jesus even blessed the people who were killing him as he prayed, "Father forgive them, they don't know what they're doing." Ask God to show you how you can be a blessing to someone this week - especially someone you may not think deserves it.



Cut out the triangles and fold on the dotted lines to create a chick and hen like the picture to the left. Color and decorate and place the small chick inside the cover of the hen's wings.

*"He will cover you with his feathers,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness will be your shield" - Psalm 91:4*

