

**Title:** One of the Biggest Needs among God's People → Encouragement!

**Text:** 1 Thessalonians 3:6-13

**Date:** Oct 15, 2017

**Context:** Paul is encouraged by Timothy's good report concerning the Thessalonians. Though Paul has not seen them in a while, Timothy assured Paul the Thessalonians are continuing to grow in their faith and love. This brought tremendous encouragement to Paul's heart.

**Main Idea.** Christians are built up and encouraged when they see fellow believers persevering in faith and love.

**Key Takeaways:**

- A) They were known specifically as a church of faith and love (3:6).
- B) No one *graduates* from Christianity. No one has *grown too much*. Their key is continued maturation in the faith (3:10).
- C) Paul prays the Thessalonians will be known as a loving church (3:12) and a holy church (3:13).

**Possible Discussion Questions:**

1. What is the most encouraging thing a church can witness? According to Paul, at the top of the list are testimonies of growth and life change. How can churches today best tell these stories?
2. The Thessalonian Christians were poor and persecuted, yet they were also marked by love. How is it possible to maintain a joyous, loving attitude in the midst of suffering?
3. Ask your class to think of the most loving, caring Christian that they personally know. What does this person do? How do they maintain such love? How can the Holy Spirit help us become more like that person?
4. 1 Thessalonians 3:6 mentions: "good memories" and "longing to see one another." Can you think of a few believers you long to see? Is there someone you miss? What do you imagine heaven being like with that person?
5. Do you think Christians are jealous or envious of other Christians from time to time? But today's passage teaches we should be inspired and encouraged by other believers, not jealous. How can we find inspiration through the perseverance of others?
6. What sacrifices did Paul make for the Thessalonians? How does this challenge you today?
7. What does Paul teach you about prayer in this passage? How would your prayer life benefit if you modeled your prayer life like Paul's?
8. How should Christians pray for one another? Can you list a few specific petitions we should make on behalf of one another?