

# SPIRITUALLY THRIVING IN DIFFICULT TIMES

## II Thess. 1:1-4

Timothy reports on 3 issues the church was facing:

- 1) persecution was continuing (He deals with that in Ch. 1)
- 2) false teachers were saying that the Day of the Lord had already come (ch. 2)
- 3) some were responding to the message of Christ's return by quitting their jobs and becoming busybodies. (ch. 3)

### I. THERE ARE CHALLENGES TO LIVING IN THESE DAYS

A. There will be \_\_\_\_\_

B. There will be \_\_\_\_\_ teachers

Matt. 24:24 - "For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders. So that if it were possible, they would deceive the very Elect."

C. There will be those misinterpret (shrink from) the responsibilities of believers.

### II. WHAT WE NEED TO THRIVE IN THESE DAYS

A. A \_\_\_\_\_ around us v. 1 Paul, Silas and Timothy

1) Paul – the leader; the front man

2) Silas – the quiet support

Acts 15:22 - a chief man at the church in Jerusalem. Stayed in Antioch after the controversy re. Circumcision

Acts 15:34 - the chief man now becomes a satellite to "the great star" Paul

Acts 15:40 - 2nd Missionary Journey

In prison with Paul at Philippi (Acts 16 - singing praises at midnight); with him in Corinth

Mentioned in I & II Thess 1:1; II Cor. 1:19

I Peter 5:12 Now he is attached to Peter.

3) Timothy – the young protégé (Acts 16)

\*Grounded in Scriptures from a child – II Tim. 3:15

\*Maybe a bit hesitant – "stir up the gift" - II Tim. 1:6

\*Pastoral quality – Paul sends him to pastor the church at Ephesus – I Tim. 1:3

B. We need to experience God's \_\_\_\_\_

II Cor. 12:7-10 - Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. <sup>8</sup> Three times I asked the Lord to take it away from me. <sup>9</sup> 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 about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. <sup>10</sup> That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

I Peter 5:10 - And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will **Himself** restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

C. God's peace

We must experience God's \_\_\_\_\_ before we can experience His \_\_\_\_\_. This is part of the Fruit of the Spirit.

### III. WHAT IT MEANS TO THRIVE IN THESE DAYS – v, 3,4

#### A. Your faith is growing (v. 3). “more and more”

How to grow your faith:

1. Associate with \_\_\_\_\_ who have great faith – Rom. 1:12 – we are encouraged by each other’s faith; I Thess 3:2 – Timothy will strengthen and encourage your faith

2. Read God’s Word – Rom. 10:17 – faith comes by hearing the word of God – logos – general revelation; rhema – \_\_\_\_\_ word

3. Remember the times God honored my faith – journal, diary

4. Keep my faith \_\_\_\_\_ – Heb. 11:6 – a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

5. Ask God to increase my faith – Mark 9:24 – I believe; help my unbelief

6. \_\_\_\_\_ - James 2:26 – faith without works is dead.

B. Your \_\_\_\_\_ for each other is increasing  
Love is part of the Fruit of the Spirit.

C. You stay steady during persecution.

Keep on keeping on!

