

Why We Are Bound To Give Thanks.

2 Thess. 1:3 – 10

These 7 verses are one long sentence. The Church in Thessalonica was grateful to God for Paul's first letter, but it did not immediately solve all their problems. In fact, the persecution grew worse, and some believers thought they were living in the time of the Tribulation. We find that today, lots of believers and even some churches believe that times are so bad, trials and tribulations are so bad that we must be living in are close to the tribulation period. Folks, if Jesus has not returned, we are not in the tribulation period, I promise. We need to remember, that trials, tribulation, and persecution are all a part of being a Christian, God promised them. **2**

Timothy 3:12 - 13 *"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. (13) But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."*

These things is God's way of building our faith in Him, Jesus, and His word of truth. Do we remember what Jesus preached in the Beatitudes? **Matthew 5:10 - 12** *"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (11) Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. (12) Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."* We must be thankful for the suffering we do for God, it's our blessing.

I want us to take a little time to look at this passage of scriptures, this long sentence. Let us try to understand why God allows us to suffer, why things do not go our way, how our suffering is a blessing because God allowed it, ordained it for us to build our faith.

A. Paul begins with these words, *"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren..."*

1. The word "bound" means to heap up, to owe, figuratively to be under obligation (ought, must, should). It is an obligation because all credit is due to God.
2. One of our best weapons for fighting Satan is praise to God for our suffering. This church needed to understand our life, no matter what it is, is to praise God for what the Potter has molded for us.
3. Thanksgiving is a debt That we owe to God for His benefits of growing our faith.

Psalms 50:14 - 15 *"Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most*

High: (15) And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."

4. We promise to when we ask God for benefits, do we not. **Hosea 14:2** "Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips."
5. This is why Paul said "We are bound to thank God always for you..." It is not just pleasing, but also a required blessing.
6. God expects our thanksgiving. **Psalms 116:12 - 14** "What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? (13) I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. (14) I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people."
7. God does not want us to turn our backs on Him, But to continually remember our debt of honor and praise to Him. Hebrews **13:15 - 16** "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. (16) But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."
8. Our recognition, our continual thanksgiving, keeps God honored and the blessings keeps coming. **Psalms 67:1 - 6** "...God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. (2) That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. (3) Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. (4) O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah. (5) Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. (6) Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us." – **Lord, every reason you give us, is reason to praise thee. Colossians 2:6 - 8** "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: (7) Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. (8) Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

9. Paul wrote why he was bound to thank God. *“We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly...”*

B. Their faith grew toward God.

1. Through these trials and persecutions in life these things are a necessity in a Christian's life. Our faith in God grows because of them. **Romans 5:3 - 4** *“And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; (4) And patience, experience; and experience, hope:”*
2. Faith is the evidence of things not seen, these trials and persecutions in life keeps us in constant prayer to God. God doing what we cannot see and God working His will for each of us. **1 Corinthians 2:9** *“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”*
3. Faith is the fruit of the Spirit, trusting God to do these things in our life, even without asking.
4. This is why we are “bound” or “obligated” to thank God. God is gracious therefore we don't have to ask for God to react in blessings to us. *“because that your faith groweth exceedingly”* that is, to increase above ordinary. God is doing this for me, beloved, tell the Christian world, shout it!!!

C. Their faith grew, *“...the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;”*

1. If we grow in Christ, we will grow spiritually together. The goal for the church is unity and love, but also for the fellowship of Christians in love.
2. Trials and persecutions in life help this also, it helps to bring us all together in love.
3. Christian's love should always grow, if it stops growing then God could allow things to bring us together. Do not tempt God! It is easy to forget how much we should love each other. **John 15:17** *“These things I command you, that ye love one another.”*
4. God could use persecution or trials to teach us our direction.
5. God used persecution of the first church and scattered them. **Acts 8:2 - 4** *“And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. (3) As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and*

haling men and women committed them to prison. (4) Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."

D. Other churches also glory in their abounding faith. "So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches..." V.4

1. When a church has strong faith other churches and Christians hear of it. **2 John 1:4 - 6** "*I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. (5) And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. (6) And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.*"
2. **3 John 1:3 - 4** "*For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. (4) I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.*"

E. We praise God because of your persecutions and tribulations, not a few but all of them. "*So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:*" V. 4

1. That is, we mention your example to other churches, and glory in it, as evidence of what God is really doing.
2. Not only what we consider good, but all things. To show that God is Sovereign and in control of our life.
3. **James 5:10 - 11** "*Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. (11) Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.*"