

Sunday, February 28, 2021

“Hope for a Waiting Church; While Waiting, Practice Selflessness”

I Thessalonians 3:1-5

We definitely live in a fallen world and every person seems to feel he or she can only survive through “taking care of me first”. Add to this perspective that pain and suffering are all round us and seems to be present constantly, and we feel totally self-dependent. We feel that “nobody will take care of me, so I must protect me at all costs”, but the Lord doesn’t see it in that light at all. Often God uses afflictions to teach us to slow down, take our minds off of ourselves, and rely continually on Him for strength. God uses hardships, trials and pain in our lives to fashion us into the image of His Son, the perfect example of selflessness!

I. Practice Selflessness- Sacrifice Your Plans for Those of Another. (v.1, 2a)

- When all alone, we cannot be consumed by our own situation. (Athens)
- We never want to be so “wrapped up” in our own world so to miss what God is doing in His World!
- Paul sent Timothy instead of keeping Timothy and set aside his plans to embrace God’s Plan.
- Paul was willing to risk his own life and his strongest relationship to show love for others!

II. Practice Selflessness- Surrender Your Comforts for Another. (v.2b)

- Their “Faith” was of extreme importance to Paul as he uses the word “faith” five times in the first ten verses.
- Paul was willing to surrender Timothy because another’s hardships were more important than his!
- We must be willing to “bear another’s burdens” by forfeiting our own comforts.
- Apathy is totally destroyed when we see another encouraged and established at our expense!
- We “strengthen” another by supporting others. Like a stone buttress keeping an unstable building from falling!

III. Practice Selflessness- Submit More Willingly to Hardships. (v.3-5)

<Our trials and testing are not accidents but appointments.>

- A. Recognize when Satan Targets You. (5 questions and Biblical answers) (v.3)- “Moved”- to flatter; to fawn over.
- B. Realize that hardships are meant to be the expectation for believers, not the exception!
- C. Respond clearly by holding one another up selflessly!