



What Are We Waiting For? – 1 Thessalonians Truth & Suffering

Date: Sunday 11th September

Speaker: Jon Solway (City Centre Site), Becky Stamps (South Site)

Key Verses: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-20

Talk Summary:

The first part of this passage is Paul defending himself. After he was thrown out of Thessalonica, we assume critics start to bad-mouth him. He presents a defence that he isn't "too good to be true" - instead, he spells out that his motives were not to please people, but to plainly tell the gospel. We also need to be careful about the motivations in our lives.

Paul also unpacks suffering and answers those who were doubting whether their suffering meant that Christianity might have been "too bad to be true". On the contrary, Paul says - suffering is to be expected, and we join with Jesus who went through immense suffering, and His church, who have suffered throughout history. We are not alone in the midst of suffering.

In verse 4, Paul speaks about being "approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel." We too, have been entrusted to share the good news. Jesus himself sends us out to make disciples. And we are motivated to do this through love (v8). We have a God-given responsibility to share the gospel, and we need to do so in 4 ways:

- Being gentle, like a mother (v7)
- Teach them, like a father (v11)
- Sharing our lives with them (v8)
- Living holy, righteous and blameless among them (v10)

Worship

Worship is not just singing, it is thanking God for who he is and what he has done and is lived out through a life of trusting obedience. Discussing this together is an act of worship.

(Small group worship resources can be found at bvc.so/sgworship)

- What are you thankful for this week?
- Where has God been at work in your life?
- When have you taken risks in faith and obedience this week?

If you have a time of singing you can skip the above questions but please do ask this question each week:

- What has God been speaking to you about this week? *(Go around the group quickly don't spend a long time on it)*

Discussion Questions (choose some which are most relevant to your group)

- What false motivations might be pitfalls for us? What do we need to watch out for?
- What do you think about the idea of suffering being promised to us? How do we hold in tension that God is sovereign, yet we still suffer?
- How can we support those around us when they suffer?
- What is a disciple? How do we make disciples rather than just win converts?
- Where has God put you? In what situations has He placed you, and entrusted you to speak His truth? Who is around you who He's inviting you to speak truth to?

Witness - How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?

We want to be investing in authentic relationships with those who don't know Jesus yet and inviting them to anything where they might meet other Christians and Jesus. Pick one of the below each week:

- How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?
- What church events coming up would your friends appreciate an invitation to?
 - Upcoming Events (go to bvc.so/whats-on for details)
 - Prayer for Students Evening – City Centre Site, 7.30pm
 - Encounter Night – City Centre Site, 7.30pm