

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 – Love & Holiness.

I. Increase and abound in love (9-12).

Paul heard good news from Timothy, but it wasn't enough. He wanted to **see** the **face** of the church family in Thessalonica. Paul prayed **night and day... exceedingly** that God would make a way for him to see them.

In the midst of all this joy, Paul called attention to the fact that they were still **lacking**, there's need for continuous growth...**not that have already pertained (Philippians 3:12).**

“Prayers outlive the lives of those who uttered them; outlive a generation, outlive an age, outlive a world.” E.M Bounds

Proverbs 15:29 - The LORD is far from the wicked, But He hears the prayer of the righteous.

Abound (overflow) in love to one another and to all:

Agape, the highest/deepest/widest/furthest form of **love**; whether or not reciprocated, recognized or appreciated.

This love *begins from God and flows through* the family of God. Jesus told us that our love is small and shallow if we only love those who love us (Matthew 5:46-47).

WE CANNOT LOVE ENOUGH: This was not a loveless church, but they still had room to grown in love. **Love is a central element of Christian belief and theology.**

Paul daringly set himself as a standard of love to be emulated; he not only prayed, he maneuvered his way to make sure he saw them again.

What is love?

It is silence--when your words would hurt.

It is patience--when your extremely inconvenienced.

It is kindness—to the undeserving.

It is thoughtfulness--for other's in affliction.

It is promptness--when severe duty calls.

Proverbs 10:12 - Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins.

John 13:35 - “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

1 John 4:8 - He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

II. Blameless in Holiness (13).

“The idea behind **holiness** is to be set apart *from* the world and *unto* God. The genuinely *holy* person is separated *away from* the domination of sin and self and the world, and they are separated *to* God.”

Holiness is “whiteness, cleanliness, purity...”

In holiness and for holiness we were redeemed; though our sins were as red as crimson, they were washed away.

The coming of a supervisor prompts juniors to clean up. “Paul was reminded of Jesus’ return, because nothing can encourage us to holiness like remembering that Jesus might come today.”

A holy life will make the deepest impression. Lighthouses blow no horns, they just shine. D.L. Moody.

"In great measure, according to the purity and perfections of the instrument, will be the success. It is not great talents God blesses so much as great likeness to Jesus. A holy minister is a powerful weapon in the hand of God". Paul Borthwick,

Deuteronomy 18:13 - “You shall be blameless before the LORD your God.

Job 1:1 - There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil.

Psalms 139:23 - Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Romans 6:19 - I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.

1Peter 1:17-19 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.