

December 4, 2021

A Full Life **I Thessalonians 3:9-13**

⁹ How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? ¹⁰ Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.

Paul had been in Thessalonica less than a month when he had to hurriedly leave due to the great opposition to the gospel he was preaching. Sometime later, Timothy brought to Paul some questions and problems that were troubling the believers in Thessalonica. Paul wrote this first epistle in response to what Timothy related and to give the Thessalonians needed comfort and encouragement in addition to praising them for their continued progress and faithfulness.

In today's passage, we read how Paul wants the Thessalonians to have a full life. In the context of the Advent season's theme of waiting and watching for the birth of Jesus Christ, what better word for us than the need for us to encourage one another to have a full life?

First, a full life includes joy (v. 9). Joy is associated with life, although in our experience in this year there seems to be little joy with all the unrest, fires, storms, pandemic, lack of trust, etc. Paul wants the Thessalonians to know how to rejoice despite the persecution they continue to experience just as he wants us to know of this joy.

Secondly, Paul says that this full life includes love (v. 12). He says, "May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else..." (NIV). The world needs Godlike love, and we are called to share this love.

Thirdly, a full life includes holiness (v. 13). All God asks is that our heart should be open completely to Him and be filled with holiness. We are called to live a holy life, and with that there is assurance that at the return of Jesus Christ we will be ready.

So, as we continue through this Advent season, remembering the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, may we live a full life as we await the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Prayer: *Lord, prepare our hearts to receive anew Jesus Christ this Advent season and to go forth as your messengers, proclaiming a full life. Amen.*

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