

A Strong Church Is A Church That Cares

1 Thessalonians 2:17–3:5 (NLT) — **(17)** Dear brothers and sisters, after we were separated from you for a little while (though our hearts never left you), we tried very hard to come back because of our intense longing to see you again. **(18)** We wanted very much to come to you, and I, Paul, tried again and again, but Satan prevented us. **(19)** After all, what gives us hope and joy, and what will be our proud reward and crown as we stand before our Lord Jesus when he returns? It is you! **(20)** Yes, you are our pride and joy. **(1)** Finally, when we could stand it no longer, we decided to stay alone in Athens, **(2)** and we sent Timothy to visit you. He is our brother and God’s co-worker in proclaiming the Good News of Christ. We sent him to strengthen you, to encourage you in your faith, **(3)** and to keep you from being shaken by the troubles you were going through. But you know that we are destined for such troubles. **(4)** Even while we were with you, we warned you that troubles would soon come—and they did, as you well know. **(5)** That is why, when I could bear it no longer, I sent Timothy to find out whether your faith was still strong. I was afraid that the tempter had gotten the best of you and that our work had been useless.

I) If We Truly Care For One Another, We Will Want To Be Together.

Acts 17:1–10 (NLT) — **(1)** Paul and Silas then traveled through the towns of Amphipolis and Apollonia and came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. **(2)** As was Paul’s custom, he went to the synagogue service, and for three Sabbaths in a row he used the Scriptures to reason with the people. **(3)** He explained the prophecies and proved that the Messiah must suffer and rise from the dead. He said, “This Jesus I’m telling you about is the Messiah.” **(4)** Some of the Jews who listened were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with many God-fearing Greek men and quite a few prominent women. **(5)** But some of the Jews were jealous, so they gathered some troublemakers from the marketplace to form a mob and start a riot. They attacked the home of Jason, searching for Paul and Silas so they could drag them out to the crowd. **(6)** Not finding them there, they dragged out Jason and some of the other believers instead and took them before the city council. “Paul and Silas have caused trouble all over the world,” they shouted, “and now they are here disturbing our city, too. **(7)** And Jason has welcomed them into his home. They are all guilty of treason against Caesar, for they profess allegiance to another king, named Jesus.” **(8)** The people of the city, as well as the city council, were thrown into turmoil by these reports. **(9)** So the officials forced Jason and the other believers to post bond, and then they released them. **(10)** That very night the believers sent Paul and Silas to Berea. When they arrived there, they went to the Jewish synagogue.

2 Corinthians 2:11 (The Message) — **(11)** After all, we don’t want to unwittingly give Satan an opening for yet more mischief—we’re not oblivious to his sly ways!

James 4:7 (NLT) — **(7)** So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.