

In our passage for today we will see Paul's passion to see that the believers in the fledgling church of Thessalonica are grounded in the faith. In Acts 17ⁱ we learn that Paul's team were only there for three or four weeks when persecution forced them to leave. Paul had reasoned in the synagogue for three sabbaths that Jesus was the fulfillment of prophecies of the Messiah. That was a hard sell because Jewish traditions focused on the Messiah son of David reigning over all the earth but tended to neglect what some Jews referred to as Yeshua ben Yosef, the suffering servant. They called him Messiah son of Joseph, because, like Joseph, some believed the coming Messiah would suffer and be rejected, and in some traditions even die, before he reigned over the earth, and in the process save his family who did not recognize him until he revealed himself to them. Some early Jewish sages understood the pattern in Joseph's life to foreshadow the Messiah.

Paul reasoned with the Jews of Thessalonica from the Scriptures, explaining and proving to them from their Scriptures that it was necessary that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead (Acts 17:2,3ⁱⁱ). He was appealing to them as people of reason while relying on the Holy Spirit to help them accept the truth of his explanations and proofs. He was using a source they both agreed upon. Then he explained the Messianic predictions and how Jesus fulfilled them. It was simple logic. But logic only goes so far. Without the Holy Spirit moving on the heart, and the listener's willingness to consider what is said and accept the moving of the Holy Spirit, there is no receptivity (John 6:44ⁱⁱⁱ; Acts 17:11^{iv}).

We see this all the time in doctrinal and political discourse. One side will present facts, and the other side just shakes their heads as if to say the facts presented are not true even when they both know the facts do not lie. People want the truth, or they would rather go on believing what they *want* to be true despite the evidence. Even when caught in self-contradiction, there is often an unwillingness to consider the facts. Men can be more stubborn than mules! God has gifted most people with reasoning minds and sense of what is basically right and wrong. Paul took this for granted when he reasoned in the synagogues. He applied it methodically at the leading of the Holy Spirit. That is why the Acts passage used the word "persuade" (Acts 17:4^v). Paul was not appealing to emotions or using fancy rhetoric. He was relying on the power of the Word presented alongside the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus to persuade them (1 Corinthians 2:4,5^{vi}).

Can you take people to the Scriptures and show them the prophecies, tell them when they were written, and explain how they were fulfilled in the life of Jesus? Every believer should learn this. What Paul was sharing with the synagogue was the first thing Jesus told the believers after His resurrection. He told the eleven in the upper room all that was written about Him in the Law, the prophets, and the writings (Luke 24:44^{vii}).

¹⁷ But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face,
1 Thessalonians 2:17 After three weeks of sharing how Jesus fulfilled the prophecies concerning the Messiah the Jewish leaders had enough. Some from that congregation were meeting with Paul and his team to learn more. With the help of the town's rabble, the Jews incited a riot against the new church forcing Paul, Silas, and Timothy to leave (Acts 17:5^{viii}). That is what Paul means by being torn away. In Greek, the term means "orphaned." It implies deep emotional distress and concern. They went on to Berea and met with a more friendly synagogue that was open to seeing what the Scriptures said. But Paul's heart was

still in Thessalonica. J.B. Philips translates “in person not in heart” as “our hearts never left you.” In verses 7 and 11 he declared he was like both a father and mother to them. He longed to see them face to face. They had just become babes in Christ, and he wanted to be sure they were growing on the sincere milk of God’s Word (1 Peter 2:2^{ix}). Imagine being forced away from your three-week-old baby! That is how he felt.

I have heard of evangelists leading people to pray the prayer of salvation and then just walking away. Something is wrong with that picture. At least give them a Bible and some direction. Our brother Ron Kess gives them web sites to help them grow and encourages them to go to church with one of their Christian friends. We are to make disciples, and that means learners. The Great Commission^x tells us to teach them all that Jesus taught the disciples. It takes more than three weeks to do that.

¹⁸ *because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us.* 1 Thessalonians 2:18 Paul wanted to visit the church again, but he says that Satan hindered him. Obviously, Paul believed there were supernatural forces resisting his return to strengthen the church. He has mentioned this kind of spiritual battle as an opposition to the gospel (2 Corinthians 4:4^{xi}). We are not told what form this resistance took. Was it illness (Galatians 4:13^{xii})? Or could it have been a ruling by the political leaders in Thessalonica forbidding Paul to enter the city? In 2 Corinthians 11:13-15^{xiii} Paul tells us that people can be manipulated by Satan to oppose the good news of Jesus.

When I face a series of unusual incidents of resistance to a spiritual effort, I am encouraged. I see it as the enemy trying to slow or hinder what God is doing. I know that God will only allow it when He will use it for his good, and that his will cannot be stopped. It must be of eternal value or Satan would not bother to resist it. *Many scholars believe that 1 Thessalonians was Paul’s earliest letter written as an apostle to a church. If this is the case, then Satan’s roadblock got Paul started on writing letters to the churches.*^{xiv} God frustrates Satan’s plans by making something good result from his opposition. Not only did Paul’s letters help the church through the ages, but the Thessalonians were learning to stand on their own in the face of opposition. **The hardest learned lessons become our greatest strengths.**

When Satan hinders us, we can know that God has allowed it and will work through it. It may look like Satan has won a victory, but in time we often see why God allowed it. Sometimes Satan is allowed to sift out the chaff, the people who are not sincere and who serve other gods to keep their influence from affecting others. Some pastors call that “blessed reductions.” At other times God allows a disruption to strengthen us regarding a particular truth we need to learn to stand on. Whatever the case, we can trust that God knows what He is doing and is all-powerful. Knowing that gives us peace in the storm.

¹⁹ *For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?* 1 Thessalonians 2:19 Why was Paul so eager to be with them? What was his hope, his joy, his crown of boasting at the return of Jesus? What would you have answered? When I was younger in the Lord I would have answered, “My salvation!” As I grew in the Lord I would have answered more specifically, “The transformation, completion into Christlikeness.” But that would not exactly line up with Paul’s answer. He said it was those he had disciplined. After all, Jesus left us with one command, *“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you”* Matthew 28:19, 20a When Jesus appears, Paul wants to present those who under his teaching had become followers of Jesus.

The appearance or presence of Jesus is in Greek the word *parousia*. Witherington explains, *This is the first occurrence of the term parousia applied to Jesus. The word literally means “presence” or “arrival” (see 2 Cor. 10:10^{xv}). It was commonly used of the royal visits, which were accompanied by great ceremony. But it was also used of visitation by a deity who has come to help someone in need. This rhetoric of rulers and gods is applied to Jesus here and elsewhere in this letter. Parousia occurs some six times in 1 and 2 Thessalonians and only once elsewhere in Paul of Christ’s return (1 Cor. 15:23^{xvi}).^{xvii}* Paul is taking the language Rome used for its Caesars who Romans worshiped as gods and applied it to Jesus.

Jesus is coming back to take us home! Amen? And when He appears, what will be your hope, joy, and crown of boasting? Few of us will be able to point to entire churches like Paul could. But we should all be able to point to lives we influenced with the gospel. Our children and grandchildren are our most important disciples. But by God’s grace we should be able to point to souls the Lord brought into our lives that we were able to share the gospel with and see them come to faith. We should be very intentional about trying to help those who are open to growing in the knowledge of our Lord. On the other hand, when Jesus appears, we may be surprised by some people who came to the Lord under our influence without our knowledge. Salvation is a work of the Holy Spirit. We just get to be an instrument to share the light of Christ when God orchestrates it.

²⁰ *For you are our glory and joy.* 1 Thessalonians 2:20 Not just when Christ is revealed, but even presently they were the glory and joy of Paul and his team. The Thessalonians may not have thought they were so special, but Paul was saying they were very special to him, his glory, and his joy. There is the glory to be revealed at Christ’s return. Our disciples are our glory in that day as they are the result of our obedience to Jesus’ final command on earth. They are a demonstration of our love resulting in obedience to Jesus’ command. But Paul gloried in them even presently. It means “given cause to honor them.” I think of how we have believing guests visit this church and I can point them to people and share how God has transformed their lives.

Our disciples are our joy because we share the heart of the Father who is not willing that any should perish. Fully realizing the eternal consequences of their eternal salvation will be immense joy for those who have let God’s desires become their own. Paul is passionately expressing how dear they are to him and how he is anguished until he sees with certainty that they are growing spiritually. *Outwardly and inwardly the Thessalonian converts crowned his ministry.*^{xviii}

May we all have the same heart for those we disciple. When God does not allow us to have time with them, or the disciple moves on before he or she is well grounded, we must trust the Great Shepherd to watch over their souls. Thank the Lord that today we have email and texting as tools to continue to encourage and strengthen those who move away.

¹ *Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone,* ² *and we sent Timothy, our brother and God’s coworker in the gospel of Christ, to establish and exhort you in your faith,* 1 Thessalonians 3:1,2 Paul writes that we could bare it no longer in this first verse of chapter three, but in verse 5 he writes “I could bare it no longer.” This tells us that it is Paul writing the letter though he included Silas and Timothy in the introduction. That is the way the Lord led Paul to work as a team with one heart in Christ. Paul is the leader though he considers Silas and Timothy as equals. In the second verse he calls Timothy “brother” and “a fellow worker with God.” In 1 Corinthians

3:9^{xix} he tells us that those who share the gospel at the leading of the Holy Spirit are fellow workers with God! Think about that. What an honor. I know that when we do work with God, we often find our words to be inspired and different from what we would normally say. I have experienced that when two people are in the Spirit sharing with someone, the same verses come to our minds. It is because we are working with God to see that soul enter God's kingdom. Paul also uses the term fellow worker (*synergos*) seven times in his letters applying it to anyone who works in the church, both men and women (Romans 16:3^{xx}, 9^{xxi}).

Paul had moved on from Berea to Athens. He was so desirous to know if the Thessalonians were standing up under opposition that he sent Timothy. It was so heavy on his heart that he was willing to let his right-hand man go to establish and exhort them in the faith so that they would not be moved by the afflictions of persecution. Paul not only wanted to see that his work there was not in vain, but he wanted to know that they stood firm in the faith because he loved them and cared about their eternal souls.

This must be the heart of the pastor. A pastor is a shepherd, and a shepherd so loves his sheep that he is willing to risk his life for them fighting off predators. Some men enter the ministry because they think it will earn the respect of others. Some do it because they think it will be a comfortable living. After all, you only need to work on Sunday, that is if you do not care about the flock or feel the burden to communicate the Word of God in Spirit and in truth. But pastors who are called by God are given a heart of a shepherd, calling his sheep by name, protective of them, wanting to lead them to the best pasture. That was what Paul felt. He was concerned that the wolves might be picking off the lambs and he could not rest until he heard they were safely in Jesus' sheepfold. As Timothy was to help the church endure the hardships they faced, today's elders must help their flock face the hardships they face by establishing them in the faith.

To establish in Greek is a compound word meaning to stand firm. In Acts 16:4,5^{xxii} Paul shared the teaching of the apostles and elders which helped the churches stand strong in the faith. The Word of God is what puts our spiritual feet on an unshakable foundation. New believers come to Christ with all kinds of preconceived ideas that the Word of God must correct if they are to have a firm footing on the unshakable Rock, which is Jesus Christ. The more we know and understand God's Word, the firmer our stance becomes.

I have seen young believers give up on trying to follow the Lord because their prayers are not answered the way they wanted. They had not yet learned that the answer of "No!" is God's merciful, loving answer because He has something better for us. They had not yet learned the greatness of God's love and learned to trust no matter what, and that God knows what is best. We see that in the Bible accounts of Joseph (Genesis 50:20^{xxiii}), Paul (1 Corinthians 15:9,10^{xxiv}), and especially in Jesus' sacrifice for us (2 Corinthians 5:21^{xxv}).

Once the Thessalonians were established, Timothy could exhort and encourage them to trust God and lean on Jesus through the persecution they faced, knowing that we are laying up our treasure in heaven (Matthew 6:19,20^{xxvi}). But we must be established before we are able to be encouraged in the face of trials. That was Paul's concern. Were they mature enough to face persecution? That is often a pastor's concern when a young believer faces hardship. Are they established enough to hear the exhortation to endure?

^{3a} *that no one be moved by these afflictions.* 1 Thessalonians 3:3a The purpose of Timothy establishing and exhorting them in the faith was that they not be moved by afflictions. If we come to Christ with the idea that all will be a bed of roses, or that Christians should not suffer, then when trials come, we will doubt the whole Christian

doctrine. Some people think the only suffering believers should experience is persecution. Following Jesus does keep us from so much self-harm, but we still live in a fallen world. The difference between the suffering we endure and that of the unbeliever is that we know God will use our suffering for His glory and to mature us. Jory shared those verses from Psalm 119^{xxvii} helps us to keep God's Word and learn his statutes. Peter tells us ⁶ *In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* 1 Peter 1:6,7 He is saying the testing of our faith is more precious than gold. Suffering was even used in the life of Jesus (Hebrews 2:10^{xxviii}, 5:8^{xxix}). If He could learn from suffering, who are we to think we do not need it? Both James, Paul, and Jesus tell us to expect it and value it, even count it all joy (James 1:2^{xxx}; Romans 5:3^{xxxi}; Matthew 5:11,12^{xxxii}). It builds our character and endurance. Compared to eternity with our Savior, our suffering in this life is light and momentary (2 Corinthians 4:17^{xxxiii}).

^{3b} *For you yourselves know that we are destined for this.* 1 Thessalonians 3:3b Some Christians think their affliction means God is angry with them. God may use affliction to discipline us (4:6^{xxxiv}), but all Christians are appointed to affliction to some degree. A tree grown in a greenhouse with no wind will not have deep roots. A butterfly that does not have to push through the chrysalis shell will not be able to fly. Paul tells us *through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.* Acts 14:22b All people endure hardship. However, we know we are in the hand of our loving God. That is why we endure with purpose and find value in suffering as well as the hope of eternal reward. We know our suffering serves a purpose even when we do not understand it.

⁴ *For when we were with you, we kept telling you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction, just as it has come to pass, and just as you know.* 1 Thessalonians 3:4 Paul and team had told the believers in Thessalonica to expect affliction. Apparently, Paul had heard from Timothy that they were experiencing persecution. Paul knew this from his own experience and from that of the churches he had started. He was once one of the persecutors. Jesus also addressed the issue when talking about the different soil conditions that receive the seed of the Word. He told of the ones that fall away when tribulations arise (Mark 4:17^{xxxv}). That was the concern on Paul's heart. Everyone who discipled new believers should warn them to expect afflictions.

⁵ *For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain.*

1 Thessalonians 4:5 Paul could not bear wondering if the new believers had gone back to the world because of hardships, so he sent Timothy to find out, to establish and encourage them. Paul knew they were in a spiritual battle and that the tempter would love to nullify this new church and drive them back into the world. The tempter's lie is that everything will be easier if we just quit believing in Jesus and trying to live for His glory. It may be true for a while, but in the end, we would find we had made a horrible error, and our last state would be worse than before. Peter declared that it would better to have never known the gospel than to hear it and turn away (2 Peter 2:20,21^{xxxvi}). When you consider the eternal cost of this conflict, it is no wonder that Paul was anxious to see if they were persevering. That is the heart of a shepherd. It is the heart of Jesus for you and me. It should be our heart for others.

As God sovereignly designed it, today is the *day to remember the International Day of the Christian Martyr*. One such believer was "Kashvi," a young woman in India whose

life was forever changed when Christ healed her. Her faith burned brightly, and she boldly shared the hope of Jesus with children and families in her village—despite growing threats. Even after villagers declared her “unclean” and forced her family out, Kashvi would not be silent.

*She paid the ultimate price for her faith when she was attacked and killed while working in the rice fields with her family. And yet, her story didn’t end there. Kashvi’s family continues to worship in secret. In a small hut hidden in the jungle, their prayers rise in hope and courage. Her legacy lives on. Let us join together in remembering Kashvi and countless others who remain faithful no matter the cost? These believers remind us what it means to be a true witness—faithful unto death, holding fast to the promise of the crown of life (Revelation 2:10^{xxxvii}).^{xxxviii} By comparison our trials are truly light and momentary. By God’s grace may we count it all joy when we face trials knowing God is working in our lives ³ *for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴ And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.* James 1:3,4*

Questions:

- 1 What tools did Paul use in the synagogue?
- 2 What did Paul mean by “being torn away?”
- 3 What do we often miss in the Great Commission?
- 4 Why did God allow Satan to hinder Paul?
- 5 Why does Paul see them as his hope, joy, and crown of rejoicing?
- 6 What does verse twenty tell us about Paul’s heart?
- 7 What should be the heart of a pastor?
- 8 How are we established in the faith?
- 9 What is the difference between hardship in Christ and without him?
- 10 What sacrifice did Paul make to be assured of their faith?

ⁱ **Acts 17:2 (ESV)**

² And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures,

ⁱⁱ **Acts 17:2-3 (ESV)**

² And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures,

³ explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, “This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.”

ⁱⁱⁱ **John 6:44 (ESV)**

⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

^{iv} **Acts 17:11 (ESV)**

¹¹ Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

^v **Acts 17:4 (ESV)**

⁴ And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women.

^{vi} **1 Corinthians 2:4-5 (ESV)**

⁴ and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,

⁵ so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

^{vii} **Luke 24:44 (ESV)**

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”

viii **Acts 17:5 (ESV)**

⁵ But the Jews were jealous, and taking some wicked men of the rabble, they formed a mob, set the city in an uproar, and attacked the house of Jason, seeking to bring them out to the crowd.

ix **1 Peter 2:2 (ESV)**

² Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—

x **Matthew 28:19-20 (ESV)**

¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

xi **2 Corinthians 4:4 (ESV)**

⁴ In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

xii **Galatians 4:13 (ESV)**

¹³ You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first,

xiii **2 Corinthians 11:13-15 (ESV)**

¹³ For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. ¹⁵ So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.

xiv^{xiv} David Guzik, *1 Thessalonians*, David Guzik’s Commentaries on the Bible (Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik, 2013), 1 Th 2:17–20

xv **2 Corinthians 10:10 (ESV)**

¹⁰ For they say, “His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account.”

xvi **1 Corinthians 15:23 (ESV)**

²³ But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.

xvii Ben Witherington III, *1 and 2 Thessalonians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006), 91

xviii ¹¹ Leon Morris, *1 and 2 Thessalonians: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 13, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984), 68.

xix **1 Corinthians 3:9 (ESV)**

⁹ For we are God’s fellow workers. You are God’s field, God’s building.

xx **Romans 16:3 (ESV)**

³ Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,

xxi **Romans 16:9 (ESV)**

⁹ Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys.

xxii **Acts 16:4-5 (ESV)**

⁴ As they went on their way through the cities, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem.

⁵ So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily.

xxiii **Genesis 50:20 (ESV)**

²⁰ As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.

xxiv **1 Corinthians 15:9-10 (ESV)**

⁹ For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

xxv **2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV)**

²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

xxvi **Matthew 6:19-20 (ESV)**

¹⁹ “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal,

²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

xxvii **Psalms 119:67 (ESV)**

⁶⁷ Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word.

Psalms 119:71 (ESV)

⁷¹ It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes.

^{xxviii} **Hebrews 2:10 (ESV)**

¹⁰ For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

^{xxix} **Hebrews 5:8 (ESV)**

⁸ Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.

^{xxx} **James 1:2 (ESV)**

² Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,

^{xxxi} **Romans 5:3 (ESV)**

³ Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,

^{xxxii} **Matthew 5:11-12 (ESV)**

¹¹ "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

^{xxxiii} **2 Corinthians 4:17 (ESV)**

¹⁷ For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,

^{xxxiv} **1 Thessalonians 4:6 (ESV)**

⁶ that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you.

^{xxxv} **Mark 4:17 (ESV)**

¹⁷ And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.

^{xxxvi} **2 Peter 2:20-21 (ESV)**

²⁰ For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. ²¹ For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them.

^{xxxvii} **Revelation 2:10 (ESV)**

¹⁰ Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.

^{xxxviii} From Spirit of Martyrdom