

Letter to the Thessalonians - Part 1

by Stephen Kaung

The sermon highlights the church in Thessalonica as a model of life, demonstrating the power of the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Duration: 1:08:05

Scripture: Acts 17:1, Acts 17:4-6, Galatians 2:8, Ephesians 2:8

Topics: "First Love", "New Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of first love and its practical expressions in the life of a believer. He highlights three evidences of life: turning from idols to God, serving a true and living God, and eagerly awaiting the coming of Christ. These evidences were demonstrated by the church in Thessalonica through their work of faith, labor of love, and enduring hope. The preacher emphasizes that preaching the Gospel should result in new life and that these evidences of life should be present in individuals and the church.

Transcript

This is Monday morning, May the 7th, 1973, in Richmond, Virginia. Ministry is being given to Brother Stephen Kong. You may please turn to the book of Acts.

Acts, chapter 17. We'll read from the first verse. Acts, chapter 17, verse 1. And having journeyed through Antipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was the synagogue of the Jews.

And according to Paul's customs, he went in among them, and on three stabbeth, risen with them from the Scriptures, opening and laying down that the Christ must have settled, and risen up from among the dead, and that this is the Christ, Jesus, whom I announce to you. And some of them believed, and joined themselves to Paul and Silas, and of the Greeks who worshipped, a great multitude, and of the sheep women, not a few. For the Jews, having been stirred up to jealousy, and taken to themselves certain wicked men of the lowest level, and having got a crowd together, set the city in confusion, and having beset the house of Jason, sought to bring them out to the people, and not having found them, dragged Jason and certain brethren before the polytheists, calling out these men that have set the world in tumult, or come here also, whom Jason has received.

And these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus. And they troubled the crowds and the polytheists, when they heard these things, and having taken security of Jason

and the rest, they let them go. But the brethren immediately sent away in the night Paul and Silas to Berea, who being arrived, went away into the synagogue of the Jews.

And these were no more noble than those in Thessalonica, receiving the word with all readiness of mind, daily searching the Scriptures, if these things are so. Therefore many from among them believed, and of preaching women of the upper classes, and men not a few. But when the Jews from Thessalonica knew that the word of God was announced in Berea also by Paul, they came there also, stirring up the crowd.

And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as to the sea. But Silas and Timotheus are both there. First Thessalonians.

First letter to the Thessalonians. Chapter 1 Paul and Silvanus and Timotheus to the assembly of Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace to you and peace.

We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you at our prayer, remembering unceasingly your work of faith, and labor of love, and enduring constancy of hope of our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father. Knowing, brethren, beloved by God your election, for our glad tidings were not with you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance, even as ye know what we were among you for your faith. And ye became our imitators, and of the Lord, having accepted the word in much tribulation, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that ye became models to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

For the word of the Lord sounded out from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith which is towards God has gone abroad, so that we have no need to say anything, for they themselves relate concerning us what entering in we have to use, and how ye turn to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to await his Son from the heavens, whom ye raise from among the dead, Jesus our Deliverer from the coming rest. That's all we will read this morning. Let us have a word of prayer.

Lord, we commit thy word into thy hand, and we ask that thou would bless thy word, and make it very living and real to all of us this morning. Lord, we pray that thou will reveal thyself afresh to us through thy word, because we believe thou art the living word. It is by thy word that we live.

Lord, we look to thee together in thy precious name. Amen. We fellowship together in the recent days on the letter of Paul to the Galatians.

The churches in Galatia were the churches that were planted by the Apostle Paul in the very beginning of his apostolic ministry. Because you remember, when Barnabas and Paul and three others, they were ministering unto the Lord together in Antioch, the Holy Spirit said, set apart Barnabas and Paul for the work that I have appointed them. So they went forth from Antioch.

They passed through Cyprus. They came to the area of Galatia. And there in these cities, such as Derbe, Iconium, Lystra, God used Paul and Barnabas to raise up churches in that area.

So we say the letter to the Galatians is a letter written to the churches of Paul's first love. Because these were the fruits, first fruits, in a sense, of his ministry. That's the reason why he loved them so much.

He was so much concerned with their spiritual condition before God. And that, in a way, explains the tone of that letter. Now this morning we would like to come into the first and second letters of Paul to the

Thessalonians.

Now if the letter to the Galatians is the letter to the churches of Paul's first love, then these two letters to the Thessalonians are the letters written to the churches in their first love. As a matter of fact, these two letters were written by Paul before he wrote any other letter in the Bible. These two letters were the two first written letters by the apostle Paul to the churches.

And he wrote these letters to the churches in their first love. Why? Because these churches were just raised up. They were very, very young, infants.

And yet the church in Thessalonica was in her first love towards God. Before we enter into these two letters, we have to know a little bit of the background because that will help us to appreciate these letters. In Paul's second missionary trip, he passed through Galatia and Phrygia.

And he had the intention of going to Asia, the Roman province of Asia, to preach the gospel. But he was forbidden by the spirit of Christ. So he was thinking of going to Bithynia on the north, another Roman province, densely populated, but again the Holy Spirit forbade him.

So he could not go to the south nor to the north. He traveled on to the west until they came to Turin. That was at the sea coast.

And there was the Aegean Sea beyond that. So while Paul and his companions came to Turin, that was the end of the road. The sea was before them.

And at that very moment, Paul was given a vision. A Macedonian was calling for help. Come over and help us.

So the next morning when Paul related his dream, his vision, to his fellow companions, they all felt it was the Lord. They called them to Macedonia. So they crossed the Aegean Sea and they came to Macedonia.

Brothers and sisters, this was a tremendous move. And it was a move initiated by the Holy Spirit. So far as Paul was concerned, he was thinking all the time of laboring in Asia.

He had never thought of going to Europe. The gospel was not preached in all Asia yet. There was such great need in Asia.

So many people in Asia. So he was thinking of going to the Roman province of Asia or the Roman province of Byznia and all these were in Asia, in the continent of Asia. Humanly speaking, we were thinking the gospel should be preached to all continents of Asia first and then you go to another continent.

And probably that was what Paul was thinking about. And yet the Holy Spirit forbade him to preach in Asia or Byznia. Now, not because God did not want the gospel to be preached in these places, but God had His plan.

And the Spirit of God, as it were, restrained him from going south or north and constrained him to go west and then called him to cross the sea to Europe. That was the first time the gospel came to Europe. So you know, it was a tremendous step.

Not planned by man, but initiated by the Spirit of God. When they came into Europe, the first place they came to was Macedonia and the first city was Philippi. We know that Macedonia was the birthplace of

Alexander the Great.

Alexander the Great, he conquered the world of his time. And in history we are told that Alexander wept because there was no more world to conquer. Alexander was not only a military genius, but he was a great thinker.

He had a dream. He dreamed of uniting the East and the West into one world under Greek culture. Now that was Alexander's dream.

He seemed to be able to fulfill his dream so far as military power was concerned. He conquered the world of his time. But he failed in his dream to see the world becoming one under one culture.

When Paul stepped on the soil of Macedonia, we can imagine what went through his mind. This was the land of Alexander the Great. Philippi was called after the name of Alexander's father, Philip.

Thessalonica was a city called after the name of Alexander's half-sister. The whole place will remind Paul of the great empire, of the great dream of Alexander the Great. And Paul was one who was familiar with history and he couldn't help but think the Lord had now called him to Europe.

To the very first place of Alexander the Great. What was God doing? What was God's plan? God not came into the mind of Paul that God was doing something to him. Alexander started in Macedonia trying to unite the world into one.

But here you will find God was going to do a great work. He was going to build his own kingdom. And his own kingdom shall cover the whole world.

Uniting the East and the West under Christ. A tremendous vision. It must have come to Paul at that time.

God was not doing just some piece work. God was doing a great work. He was building his own kingdom.

The kingdom of God. Not the kingdom of this world. But the kingdom of the heavens.

And he was going to bring all people throughout the world into one. Under the king. And Paul was called into that world.

A tremendous responsibility. And this was done with great opposition. When God is building his kingdom you will find Satan will be very bitter.

He will not allow the kingdom of God to expand throughout the world without opposition. He has usurped this world long enough. And he is most unwilling to give up.

And that's the reason when the gospel was preached in Asia and now in Europe you will find Paul met great... It was not an easy job. In the city of Citiphi when God began to use Paul to preach the gospel you will find Paul and Silas were thrown into a fangirl. At midnight they were able to sing and to pray to God.

And even the gates of the prison were all open. The earth was shaken. Spiritually this was true.

The church in Citiphi was razed out. Well, they were asked by the authority to leave the city. So they left.

And they came to Thessalonica. Thessalonica was a great city. It was a seaport.

It was on the way of the Roman road from the east. An important city. So Paul and his companions they came to Thessalonica.

Now he was there only for three Saturdays. In other words, less than a month. As was his custom.

When he arrived in Thessalonica there was a synagogue in Thessalonica. You know in Citihi there was no synagogue. Only some Jewish women with some papalites they had a paragraph by the river outside the city.

Because there were not even ten leisurely leisure men to establish a synagogue. You know according to the Jewish custom if you have ten leisure men that is to say ten men Jewish men who were willing to devote some time for religion for Judaism then you can have a synagogue. But in Citihi there were not even ten leisure men.

So there was only a presidium. Women's presidium. And Paul joined them and there you find Paul started to preach the gospel.

But in the city of Thessalonica it was different. There were many Jews in that city. And there were synagogues.

So Paul went to the synagogue on the Saturday. And there he reasoned with them according to the scripture. Proved to them that Jesus is the Christ.

And the power of God was with Paul. And some Jewish people believed. And many of the Greeks who attended the Jewish synagogue they believed.

And many women Greek and women believed. For three Saturdays Paul entered into the synagogue and preached Jesus Christ. And many came to the synagogue.

Think of that. Only three Saturdays. Paul was in Thessalonica less than a month.

And yet within that month the power of God was so manifest. The gospel was preached in such power. And the Holy Spirit worked in such a way that many came to the Lord.

Many came to the Lord. And that aroused the jealousy of the Jews. You know the Jews felt that they were God's people.

God's blessings were all theirs. God certainly would not bless the Gentiles. If any Gentile desired to get God's blessings he had to become a Jew first.

He had to be apocalyptic. Circumcised. And then he would receive God's blessings.

But here you find God's blessing came upon the Greeks. The Gentiles. In such abundance they couldn't stand it.

They themselves would not believe. And yet they were jealous when they saw other people believe. So they used the very mean way to probably bribe some gangsters in the city.

You know you have gangsters everywhere. So they probably bribed some gangsters in the city and tried to start up a riot. So the whole city was in tumult.

They began to cry out and say And out here come some people that preached. Something that announced something that was against Caesar. They declared there is another king.

In other words make it a political crime. So they came. Trying to see Paul.

But Paul was not there. So they took Jason. Evidently Paul lived in the house of Jason.

So they took Jason. And after they got security from Jason they let him free. Because according to the Roman customs there must be a trial.

And the brethren there seeing such a confusion they were concerned with the life of Paul. So they sent Paul away. They sent Paul away to Berea.

And then the people in Thessalonica the Jews in Thessalonica heard what was happening in Berea. So they came again and stirred up trouble. So the brethren in Berea sent Paul to Athens.

Now brothers and sisters the first letter to the Thessalonians were written very shortly not too long after Paul left Thessalonica. From Athens he was so concerned with the saints in Thessalonica. They were new believers.

And they were being persecuted by their own people. Think of that. And infant church left without any care humanly speaking.

And being persecuted by their own countrymen. No wonder Paul's heart was concerned. Because Paul was like a father and like a mother to the saints in Thessalonica.

So he sent Timothy back. To Thessalonica. To see whether they could stand the persecution.

And also trying to encourage them and strengthen them in the Lord. And then Paul traveled on to Corinth. And most likely Timothy came back from his visit to Thessalonica.

And he met Paul in Corinth. And there he told Paul of what God had done in Thessalonica. The young church was able to say not only to say but their testimony had reached out throughout Macedonia and even Achaia.

And you know Paul's heart was so grateful to the Lord. He was so touched. And he felt he wanted to write a letter to the church in Thessalonica.

So he sent the first letter to the Thessalonians. On the one hand to express his gratitude to God. That the young church stood through the trial.

On the other hand he used the opportunity to encourage them. To comfort them. To strengthen them that they might go on even increasing love and interest.

In a way Paul was exercising his gift of prophecy towards the church in Thessalonica. You know according to 1 Corinthians 14 the gift of prophecy is to encourage to exhort and to comfort. So here you find Paul being exigent to go there in person.

He ministered to them so and that was how the first letter to the Thessalonians was written. And shortly after the first letter he wrote the second letter. Because he had something more to say.

So this letter followed one after another. And these were the first two letters written by Paul to the church. Now brothers and sisters the church in Thessalonica was a young church.

It is not a mature church. A young church. You cannot expect maturity there.

But there is one thing that stands out with that church. And because it is young and yet it is full of freshness. You sense a freshness with that church.

In a sense you know in this letter to the Thessalonians you may not find the word life there. And yet after you have read you cannot help but be impressed with one thing and that is life. There is life in that church.

And that life is very living and very fresh. Again we will say it is not noted for maturity. Because maturity takes time.

This church is not as mature as the church in Philippi. Later on Paul wrote a letter to the Philippians and you know after many years the church in Philippi was much more mature. But still you find even this church that exists only a few months there was such a demonstration of life in them.

And you know nothing is better than that. The gospel. In preaching the gospel it is like planting seeds.

Not of corruptible seeds but of incorruptible seeds. In other words when the gospel is preached in the power of the Holy Spirit and the gospel is received as the word of God the result is life. Now preaching the gospel is not preaching some teaching or doctrine.

It is not just telling some story or history. If the gospel is preached rightly and is received properly it results in life. It is the life of Christ that comes to those who believe.

And here in Thessalonica Paul says when he preached the gospel it was not in the wisdom of man but in the power of God. And they received the gospel as the word of God not as the word of man. And the result is life.

The church in Thessalonica is not by life. New life. How do we know there is life there? This life is evidence in three ways.

Number one Paul said you turn to God from Isaac. That's the first evidence of life. Turning to God from Isaac.

Number two you serve a living and true God. You serve God. Number three you awake God's Son from the heaven.

You awake for God's Son from the heaven. So here you find these three evidences of life. They turn to God from idols in a sense the past.

They serve a true and living God the present. They awake for the coming of Christ. Whenever there is life in an individual or in the church you will find these three things always are present.

These are things you know many of those who believe who are already attending the synagogue. Why? Well these were Greeks. These were Gentiles.

But evidently you know they were tired of idol worship because the Gentiles, the heathens they worshipped many gods. They worshipped idols. But the Jews worshipped only one god.

And many Gentiles at that time they were tired of idol worship. They were attracted by the purity of Judaism. And because of that many of the Greeks they attended synagogue.

They were seekers after truth. Even though they were already attending synagogue. They did not go to their temples and worship their idols.

But instead they came to the synagogue to worship God. And yet strictly speaking they could not be said as having turned to God from idols. They were not worshipping idols anymore.

They were worshipping God in the synagogue. But without receiving the gospel of Jesus Christ without being born again they were still not turning to God from idols. After they went but really no.

Why? Because God must be worshipped in the synagogue. Even though outwardly they did not worship those idols made of clay or even silver or wood or gold. And yet idols cover much more than that.

Behind idol worship there is Satan who is receiving all worship. Even though these people do not worship the idols and yet they were still under the bondage. They had not yet been delivered from the power of darkness.

Even though they tried to worship God in the synagogue yet their spirits were dead. They couldn't worship God. They couldn't.

Brothers and sisters only when we truly believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ then we are translated out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of the son of God's love. That is turning to God from idols. They were delivered from the power of darkness and they could worship God in spirit and truth.

Now that's evidence of life. Another thing. People can even worship God in an idolatrous way.

Now how do you do that? You remember the story with the children of Israel. When Moses was receiving the law on the mountain they asked Aaron to make them a god because God is a spirit. They cannot see him.

They want a god that they can see and touch and feel. So they asked that we do not know what happened to Moses. We cannot see God.

We can't see Moses. But now Moses disappears. So make us a god to lead us.

And you remember Aaron made a golden calf. And they called the golden calf the God who led them out of Egypt. They called the golden calf God who led them out of Egypt.

But that's idolatry. That's idolatry. You do not need to worship another idol.

An idol, another god. Even people want to worship God but in an idolatrous way. It is idolatry.

Stephen in Acts chapter 7 as he was witnessing to the council that judged him he quoted the prophet. You know, through the wilderness journey what did the people of Israel carry through the wilderness? Of course, the tabernacle. As they travel in the wilderness they always carry the tabernacle with the ark and all the other things.

But Stephen in witnessing to the council he quoted the prophet and said Do you carry the tabernacle of God? No. You carry the tent of Molot, your God. Physically, do they carry the tent of Molot? No.

But spiritually even the tabernacle of God was considered by the prophet as the tent of Molot. Think of that. You can turn the things of God into a thing of the devil.

You can call it God and yet it was Satan that was receiving the worship. Brothers and sisters it is not simply a matter of going to a heathen temple and worship an idol made of wood and things like that called by another name. We can even make idolatry out of God.

And this happened in the history of Israel all the time. You remember Gerald Wood? After he separated from the two tribes and set up the kingdom the nation of Israel he was afraid because all the tribes still went to Jerusalem to worship God and if that was the case he was afraid one day they would rejoin the nation of Judah. So he set up two golden towers one in Bethel and one in Dan and said these are the gods these are the gods that we worship a contest a contest using the name of God setting up priesthood out of the not of the tribes of Levi and imitating everything that was going on in Jerusalem but it was a contest in the name of God but it was a contest and because of this sin the nation of Israel finally was taken into captivity.

So God is insistent unless a person has really turned to Christ unless a person is really born again even if he is not worshiping idols even if he goes to synagogue to worship God before God he is still under the power he hasn't turned from idols to God yet but after he has believed in the Lord Jesus there is life in him and this life is evident in really turning away from idols now you are no longer under the power of God that's the past but then the present after they turned to God it was more than a turning to God in turning to God they began to serve the truth and me you cannot turn to God without serving him Israel was saved delivered out of Egypt why?

God said let my people go that they may serve me turning to God and serving God are one look how people today turn to God faith but how many are serving God we are not free we have never been free before we know the Lord we serve we serve Satan the God of this world we think we are serving ourselves you know but anyone who serves himself is serving Satan because he is behind everything we may not know it but one day we will wake up but after we are saved whom do we serve? we serve God we serve the true and living God but serving God is different because serving the world serving ourselves serving Satan you will find it was hard very hard but serving God is a service that comes out of love we love to serve him we serve him in many different ways nevertheless we all serve him so one brother

says our profession is serving God all the other jobs they are sidelines whether you are a housewife whether you are an office worker or whether you are a student studying these are sidelines but our main purpose living on this earth is to serve God we are here to serve the true and living God now that's evidence of life if any person professes to be saved and yet he has no desire to serve God and he does not serve God you wonder whether there is life the very life that we have received desires to serve the one who so loved us and gave himself and these Thessalonians even if they were just saved only a few months and yet their service to God was evident all day they loved to serve in many ways and not only that but there was a third evidence they awaited the sun from heaven if there is

life there is bound to be that waiting for Christ to come they are waiting for the Lord to come they do not know too much and if you read the first and second letter to the Thessalonians you will find that they do not know too much about second coming they still had problems about second coming because they did not know too much they were very young and yet they were waiting for the Lord to come that is the important thing you know today we know too much probably about second coming and yet we are not

ready but with these people they did not have too much knowledge and yet their heart was waiting for the Lord to come first love first love they were so loved they were so touched by the love of Christ they loved Christ so much they longed to see Him first love and these three things were

our evidences of life turning from idols to God turning to a living God and waiting the coming of the Lord we mock the church in her first love and then because there were these three evidences they produced some practical results and the practical results are found here in chapter 1 verse 3 Paul said remembering unceasingly your work of faith and labor of love and enduring constancy of hope of our Lord Jesus Christ before our God and Father you see life is very practical life is not a theory life is not something just we talk about if there is life it will come forth in practical expression in demonstration and with the young church in Thessalonica you find this life was demonstrated in three ways work of faith labor of love endurance of hope you have faith you have love you have hope

and Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 says three things are most essential today and that is faith hope and love and the young church has all these things they have work they have labor they have endurance but the work, the labor, the endurance are the result of faith, love and hope not just work not just labor not just endurance but these works are works of faith these labors are labors of love and these endurances were endurances of hope when you come to the book of Revelation chapter 2 you remember our Lord Jesus as he looked upon the church in Ephesus that was what he said chapter 2 verse 2 of Revelation I know thy work and thy labor and thy endurance verse 4 but I have again seen that thou hast left thy first love you see the church in Ephesus at the end of the first century they still

continue having work and labor and endurance thus the inward power was gone they have left their first love work became work labor became just labor and endurance became just endurance outwardly all these things were still continuing on and yet the inward motivation the inward power was gone and because of that the Lord said I am again the Lord was not looking for work he was not looking for labor he was not looking for endurance he was looking for faith for love and for hope and if there is faith there is love and there is hope there will be work and labor and endurance so brothers and sisters you know it is very easy for us to have work without faith labor without love and endurance without hope now when you are doing that who is doing that? you are doing that it is not a life of Christ

manifested in the Bible you will find even our work had to be repainted in Hebrew it is said repaint of our dead work what is dead work? why dead work? of course these dead works do not refer to sinning doing bad things no these dead works refer to doing good things we try to do some good work well that is the common notion you know whenever you are convicted in your conscience you are uneasy in your conscience immediately your reaction will be let me do some good things good deeds and we are doing some good deeds well that should cover it up you know and these are dead works dead works why dead works? because done by that person spiritually there God is not looking for dead works but God is looking for works of faith works of faith we often try to tell people not by works but by the

grace of God if you want to be saved and you try to do it to do works your works will not justify you your works will not save you because all your works are like filthy rags before God no use you have to repent of your good works you should not depend on your good works you know many people are not saved because they have faith confidence in their good works so they don't need to believe in Christ they want to save themselves but we need to repent of our dead works and see that we have to trust the Lord for our salvation but that doesn't mean after we are saved there shouldn't be good works because the decisions have to be it says very very very very plainly that for we are saved by grace through faith and this not of

yourself it is God's gift not of the principle of works that no man by

birth but the following sentence for we are his workmanship having been created in Christ Jesus for good works which God has before prepared that we shall walk what's the difference? the difference is before we are saved our works are dead works we think we can be justified by doing these works but after we are saved we are recreated in Christ for good works that God has before prepared for us to walk in in other words now after we have life in us there will be the works the works of faith because James says faith without works is dead how do you know you have faith? how are you to prove your faith? you prove your faith by faith is perfected in other words out of faith there will be a works not just works but it is the works of Abraham and James used two illustrations one Abraham the

other Rahab Abraham because he believed in God therefore he offered Isaac that's the works consecration brothers and sisters if you really believe in the Lord you must follow the consecration if you say you believe in the Lord and yet you will not present your body a living sacrifice to the Lord how do people know you have faith? not that you will be justified by your works but if you have faith out of your faith in the Lord Jesus there must be that dedication that consecration to the Lord that is the works of faith we have we have believed in God and what happened? you remember she separated herself from her own people and she joined herself with God's people she hanged that scarlet thread on the window proving that she had separated herself from her own people she now joins with

God's people brothers and sisters that's the works of faith if you believe and yet you are not separated from the world where is your faith? how do you prove your faith? you are not of the world how do you prove it? separated so these are works of faith remember not just works but these are works of faith God is not very interested in just works but it is works of faith it is living works not that works but living works and that is the practical way to express life then again labor of love not just labor you can labor yourself to death if there is no love within you or if it is not motivated by love there is nothing in the sight of you the Lord said I am against you you have labored but you have left your first love the beast is alone they love the Lord and out of their love they labor

you know love labors you cannot really love and don't do nothing that's impossible impossible if you really love your eyes are wide open to see the need your heart is wide open to sympathize and your hands are always ready to help you cannot help it the mothers because of their love how they labor with their children you cannot help it and yet it is a labor of love there is no compulsion it is not forced but it is voluntary willingly and joyfully now that labor of love you know sometimes we murmur a little bit you know it's too much you know but if there is love there you don't you don't feel it that way labor of love and then endurance of love you can bite your teeth and endure simply by your strong will I'm going to endure it no matter how hard I'm going to endure it you are doing it it

is not life it is life it is endurance of life why is it that you have the power to endure it is because you know what you endure will work towards your conformity to the image of Christ and brothers and sisters if you see that you are able to endure these Thessalonians were able to endure persecution why? because they knew these persecutions only increase their hope could not take their hope away increase their hope they have the hope of seeing the Lord and to be like him and these were used of God to perfect them so here you'll find with this young church there were these practical demonstrations of life brothers and sisters do we have work labor and endurance but are these coming out from faith love and hope life life before God nothing is more important than life without life you can

do these things but these are false imitated they cannot go to eternity God is looking for life and when there is life there will be these things if there are not these things then life is questionable and yet the emphasis is still on life so the whole letter to the Thessalonians emphasizes one point and that is life freshness of life the life there was very fresh and living not deep yet but fresh and living so may the Lord use these to help us you know that we may not get old aged you know get all these wrinkles aged but we may always be young with the freshness of his life and that is what the Lord is looking for the freshness of his life in all of us now with this young church we say because he is young but we can be young all the time our Lord is never aged our God is the living God

so may the Lord keep us in the freshness of his life all our days shall we pray our Heavenly Father we do thank thee for this young church that manifests such life freshness of life to us O Lord how much satisfied must be thy heart we pray that we may never get old but we may always live in the freshness of thy life and we pray that our life may be manifested in our work in our labor and in our enduring for thou thyself may be glorified we ask in the name of our Lord Jesus Amen

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/0/SID0929.mp3>

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