



## Going Deeper in "Dealing with Discouragement"

### Read the following a few times:

1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:8

Isaiah 49

1 Corinthians 2:2

Philippians 4:6

Paul has challenged us to not be anxious about anything, but to go to God in prayer. However, we see in today's passage that in spite of his great faith Paul still has moments of worry. The future of this young church is out of his hands and Paul was worried his efforts had been a waste of time, until he heard some good news from Timothy.

### Reflect on the following:

1. Paul and his colleagues had a deep and genuine love for the Thessalonians. How did Jesus show his love for his disciples?
2. The devil is very subtle, and he uses every opportunity to hinder the gospel and to destroy its fruit. What does the Bible tell us to do when we are under spiritual attack? Read Ephesians 6:10-18.
3. Some Christians think they see the devil in almost everything that happens, whereas other Christians hardly recognize him at all. How can we distinguish between the specific attacks of the devil and the problems that occur simply because we live in a fallen world?
4. While enduring trials, we can easily be disturbed by questions that shake us to the core: Doesn't God care about me anymore? How can a good, powerful God let this happen? If God can stop this, why doesn't He? Is it my fault that these things are happening to me?
5. What evidence do you find in this passage that Paul really did love the Thessalonians? On a scale of 1-10, how loved do you feel by the members of your church or fellowship group?
6. How do you most often express your love for others? What ideas from this passage can help you become better at expressing love?
7. What fears caused Paul to send Timothy to Thessalonica (3:2-5)?
8. What help do you think Timothy might have given during his visit?
9. How can you show love to people who are suffering?
10. Why was Timothy's report such good news to Paul (3:6-8)?

### Respond in one of the following ways:

Studies show that more people leave their churches today for lack of love than for any other reason. It is sad that even those who are committed to the Lord of love are unable to offer that love to others. Paul's example have helped the Thessalonians' love to "increase and overflow" (1 Thes. 3:12). Experiment with a few new ways to help love to increase and overflow.

Welcome to  
***Salem***

United Methodist Church



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