

Forewarned!

November 8, 20

1 Thess. 3: 1-10

The USS Forest B Royal a gearing class destroyer had the motto: Forewarned is forearmed – prior knowledge of danger or problems give one a tactical advantage!

So if we are forewarned we can be forearmed to live in the power of God for the glory of God in every situation!

1. Sometimes God places you in the position of being alone!

Paul is speaking in verse 1 of being alone! Silas is thought to have been sent to Philippi and Tim was sent to Thessalonica and Paul is in Athens! Sometimes God puts us places we have to minister/serve alone!

Then can it be that being a lone can have a benefit? Only if we are forewarned that when I ma feeling that way is because God is doing something in me, to me, for me, with me or by me! So I need to be prepared for what He will teach me, show me, school me in the times I am alone!

- a. Don't waste your alone time with God! When He puts you in that place of feeling alone don't fight it but rather seek Him in it! There are times God has to put you in that place of alone so that He can show you Himself!
- b. Be prepared for alone times! They happen to all of us! It is not some strange thing but it is common to all! Remember that God allow nothing in your life but what is for His glory and your good!

2. Sometimes He sends you to help others who need it!

Paul sent Tim to establish and encourage the church at Thessalonica!

- A. Establish their faith! That means to fix it to a secure position so it can't be lost or taken away! Every believer needs their faith firmly fixed to the truth of God's principals and precepts! We need our faith to be so fixed that when danger or difficulties come that we are fixed to God's truth that will hold us up and keep us safe!
- B. Encourage then in their faith! This is speaking more of training in the ways of walking in faith! Repetition is the best way to learn to do something in a specific way! Coaches require repetition so the team learns the play. Why do we think that because I have read the Bible I know how to walk in faith! It is only as we live out faith that we can go from faith to faith! Romans 1: 16, 17.

So why did Tim go to this church? To forewarn and forearm them to deal with life! Because Affliction is coming!

I think Paul's presentation of the gospel must have been different than what some do today! He told them affliction would come if they choose to follow Jesus! Today some say just receive Jesus and everything will be amazing and wonderful! And in a

sense they are right, but as soon as you pray that prayer Satan is now gunning for you! We need to tell others that affliction is coming so they are forewarned and maybe we can forearm them so they are prepared to meet the difficulties with the power and strength of God!

Paul was worried about the affliction and the church at Thessalonica's reaction to it! So he sent Tim and Tim bring back wonderful news that they understood and followed the teaching and training that enabled them to be that church that is an example to others!

We need to realize that we are always going to live with/in uncertainty! The only thing that is certain is uncertainty! We need to establish and encourage our fellow believer to know and walk in the truth of God!

3. Finding Life!

Verse 8 is a strange verse! What is Paul trying to say? Did the Thessalonian church give life to Paul or did Jesus? Well Paul is not saying that working in the church is what gives meaning to life but what he is saying is that his brothers and sisters standing fast in Christ is what causes him to focus his life with a new intensity for fulfilling his call from Jesus to go and make disciples!

There is a difference in doing something and doing something with joy and enthusiasm!

But hear Paul's heart! He is beside himself with joy of the Lord who has allowed him to join together with these believers to walk in truth! He is finding new energy to pray for them and has a growing desire to come to them and continue to help them become fully devoted, growing, sharing Christ followers that look like Jesus, love like Jesus and live out the Christ life daily!

His constant desire is to be together and to serve together and to walk together even when he has to do it from a distance!

Discussion:

1. When have you felt alone but now you realize it was God drawing you closer to Him?
2. What is the difference in understanding biblical precepts and being able to live them out in real life?
3. Who has God sent you to to establish and encourage them?
4. Why should we be transparent about the dangers and difficulties in our lives as believers?
5. Do we see affliction as common or as something strange to a believer? Why?