

# The Book of 1 Thessalonians

“Life in Christ  
until HE Returns”

1 Thessalonians 3: 1-5

**“The Fight for Discipleship”**



## **1 Thessalonians 3:1–5 (NKJV)**

1 Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone, 2 and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith, 3 that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this. 4 For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know. 5 For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain.



# Places Paul Visited



# Outline:

**1. The Enemies of Discipleship**

**2. The Fight for Discipleship**



# The Enemies of Discipleship

- **The World**
- **The Flesh**
- **The Devil**





## 1 Thessalonians 3:1–5 (NKJV)

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# The Enemies of Discipleship

- **The World**

- John 12:31, 17:14

- 1 Corinthians 1:20

- Galatians 4:3

- James 1:27, 4:4

- 1 John 2:15-17, 4:5





### **John 12:31 (NKJV)**

31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

### **John 17:14 (NKJV)**

14 I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

### **1 Corinthians 1:20 (NKJV)**

20 Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

### **Galatians 4:3 (NKJV)**

3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.

## **James 1:27 (NKJV)**

27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

## **James 4:4 (NKJV)**

4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.



## **1 John 2:15–17 (NKJV)**

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

## **1 John 4:5 (NKJV)**

5 They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them.



# The Enemies of Discipleship

- **The Flesh**

- Galatians 3:3, 5:13, 16-21, 24, 6:8
- Ephesians 2:3
- Philippians 3:3-11
- Colossians 2:11-18, 21-23; 3:1-10
- Romans 8:1-9, 12-13, 13:11-14
- 1 Corinthians 3:1-3, 5:1-5
- 2 Corinthians 7:1, 10:1-5



### **Galatians 3:3 (NKJV)**

3 Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?

### **Galatians 5:13 (NKJV)**

13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

### **Galatians 5:24 (NKJV)**

24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

### **Galatians 6:8 (NKJV)**

8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

## **Ephesians 2:3 (NKJV)**

3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

## **1 Corinthians 3:1–4 (NKJV)**

1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; 3 for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? 4 For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not carnal?



## **Philippians 3:3–11 (NKJV)**

3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, 4 though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. 7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

## **Romans 8:1–11 (NKJV)**

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. 10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

# The Enemies of Discipleship

- **The Devil**
  - 2 Corinthians 4:3-4
  - John 16:7-11





## **2 Corinthians 4:3–4 (NKJV)**

3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

## **John 16:7–11 (NKJV)**

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. 8 And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; 11 of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

# The Enemies of Discipleship

- **The World**
- **The Flesh**
- **The Devil**



# Outline:

**1. The Enemies of Discipleship**

**2. The Fight for Discipleship**





# The Fight *f*or Discipleship

- 1. Be an Established Believer**
- 2. Be an Encouraged Believer**



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# Application:

- Do you observe any of these enemies at work?
- Is one influencing you more than the others?
- Do you understand how to defend against it?
- Do you know the way but do not walk it?
- Are you preparing those you disciple?



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