

# The Vine

## Intro:

October 12-18, 2008

The dictionary defines joy as delight caused by something exceptionally good or satisfying. We often hear discussions about the difference between joy and happiness; happiness is related to the current situation while joy is tied to something deeper. Joy lasts. Joy satisfies. You get to take joy to heaven with you. Happiness, on the other hand, comes and goes like the wind.

So what makes you joyful? Who makes you joyful? Think about this as you work through The Vine this week. And know this week that you give joy to the Lord of the universe.

## Day One

### Background

Paul wrote two letters to this same church. An interesting note is that we do not really know which one was first. If you wish to dig deeper, take a look at 2 Thessalonians and notice the similarities and the differences. What does it say about Paul, Silas and Timothy that they would send not just one but two encouraging letters to this church?

Spend a little time looking through the first two chapters in 1 Thessalonians. What do you remember best? What have you been able to apply to your life? Now read 1 Thessalonians 2:17 to 3:13.

What words show the tone of this book and this passage?

**Prayer Reflection:** Pray about what you have learned from chapters one and two. What ideas have influenced your heart and mind? What ideas have slipped away? We study scripture to be transformed by it. Ask the Lord to prepare your heart for what He wants to show you this week. Pray that your heart will be changed to be more like His.

## Day Two

Today, just read 1 Thessalonians 2:17 to 2:20—just those four verses.

List all the passionate language used in these verses. What does this show about how Paul feels about the church in Thessalonica?

What does it mean when Paul says “you are our glory and joy”? How do you think the Thessalonians felt getting this letter? How would you feel getting this letter? Have you ever felt as if someone was your glory and your joy?

**Prayer Reflection:** Spend a good amount of time in prayer. Pray for those over whom you have influence. Pray that the Lord would fill you up with so much love for them that you could tell them they are your joy and your crown. If it is appropriate, stop right now and write them a letter or give them a phone call and tell them. Use the words in the passage and say “you are my glory and my joy.”

## Day Three

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:17 to 3:6.

Of what was Paul afraid? What does this reveal about his level of affection?

Paul explains more about why he can not come and see them. What is the reason?



What are the different reasons for sending Timothy? What do you think Timothy actually did when he was in Thessalonica? Notice that he is one of the authors of this letter. He reported back to Paul how they were doing. What was his report? (Tomorrow we will look at how this report affected Paul.)

Who are the Timothy's in your life who give you strength and give you courage? Name them. Actually write their names on this paper. Consider how much time you spend with those who strengthen and encourage you. How can you get more time with those people in the near future?

**Prayer Reflection:** Pray and thank the Lord for those names you have written down. Pray that the Lord will lift them up and give them what they need today.

### Jesus on Life

Jesus also spoke on having life in John 10. Here are some verses from that passage. If you wish to dig in more to this concept, read the whole chapter of John 10.

<sup>7</sup>Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup>All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup>I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. <sup>10</sup>The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

How does this relate to the passage in 1 Thessalonians?

## Day Four

Read all of 1 Thessalonians 3 focusing on 3:7-13.

How does Paul feel about the report he gets from Timothy? What does he mean by "Now we really live!?" Were they dead before?

What makes you feel really alive? What makes Paul feel alive?

During Paul's prayer time, what different ways does he pray for the Thessalonians?

**Prayer Reflection:** Pray verse 12. Spend several minutes praying this for yourself that your love would increase and overflow—for those in your church, for those in your small group, for those in your neighborhood, for those in your community, and for everyone. As you pray, be sensitive to when it is easy to pray for more love. Also be sensitive for when it is difficult.

## Day Five

Read all of 1 Thessalonians 3 and focus on the idea of faith.

Faith is trusting that Jesus is Who He said He is and will do what He said He will do. Faith is knowing deeply that the Lord of the universe loves you. What does this chapter say about faith? What does Paul want for the faith of those in the church in Thessalonica?

How is your faith doing? How does your answer affect your heart and your actions?

**Prayer Reflection:** Pray verse 13. (This is a great way to pray. Ponder one verse from a chapter you have studied and pray it to the Lord.) Spend time simply praying verse 13 for yourself. Does your heart need strengthening? Pray for it. Plead for it. When you pray to be blameless and holy, are you convicted of a specific sin in your life? Cry out to God. Give it to the Lord. Ask Him for help. Pray with great anticipation for when the Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

Written by The Vine Team.  
Send an e-mail to [thevine@kcconline.org](mailto:thevine@kcconline.org) with comments or questions. We would love to hear what you think about it. If you have a heart to help create The Vine, let us know that you are interested in joining the team.

## Conclusion

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