

**Wisdom not Worry**  
*Tuesday, March 24, 2020*  
1 Thessalonians 3: 2-3

“...to strengthen and encourage you in your faith, so that no one would be unsettled by these trials.”

The word Paul uses for “trials” does not refer to mild inconveniences. The Greek word *thlipsis*, used 45 times in the New Testament, is most often translated as either “tribulation” or “affliction.” It means to crush, squash or squeeze. Paul is speaking of significant hardship. He wants to ensure that we are encouraged and strengthened not only in spite of them but also *because* of them. Charles Spurgeon wrote, “They who dive in the sea of affliction bring up rare pearls.” A careful study of 1 Thessalonians 3 identifies precious pearls that are produced by the pressures of affliction.

**Affliction deepens our longing for one another.** Feel the intensity of Paul’s longing as he writes “...*when we were torn away from you for a short time (in person, not in thought), out of our intense longing we made every effort to see you...we wanted to come to you...again and again...When we could stand it no longer...when we could stand it no longer I sent to find out about your faith*” (1 Thess. 2:17-3:3). We feel it too, do we not? The longer we are apart, the greater our longing to be together. Because of our union in Christ and our bond in the Spirit, the greater the affliction, the deeper our affection. There is no need to be unsettled. The church will come out this pandemic the stronger for it!

Take a moment today to sing the familiar words of *Blest Be the Tie that Binds*.

Blest be the tie that binds  
Our hearts in Christian love;  
The fellowship kindred hearts  
Is like to that above.

Before our Father’s throne,  
We pour our ardent prayers;  
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one—  
Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes;  
Our mutual burdens bear;  
And often for each other flows  
The sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part,  
It gives us inward pain;  
But we shall still be joined in heart,  
And hope to meet again.

From sorrow, toil, and pain,  
And sin we shall be free;  
And perfect love and oneness reign  
Through all eternity.

Grateful,  
Pastor Ben