

Paul's Desire to Visit the Church Again (2:17–20)

17 But when we were separated from you, brothers and sisters, for a short time, in person not in thought, we became all the more eager to see your face with a great desire. 18 Therefore, we wanted to come to you (I, Paul, tried several times), but Satan prevented us. 19 For who is our hope and our joy and our crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it indeed not you? 20 For you are our glory and our joy.

The Reason for Timothy's Mission (3:1–5)

3:1 So when we could no longer endure it, we resolved to remain in Athens alone 2 and sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow-worker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen you and encourage you for the sake of your faith 3 so that no one would be shaken in these trials. For you yourselves know that we are appointed for this purpose. 4 For indeed when we were with you, we kept telling you that we were going to suffer afflictions, just as has happened, as you know. 5 Therefore, when I also could no longer endure it, I sent to find out about your faith, fearing that the tempter had tempted you and that our labor had been in vain.

Timothy's Encouraging Report (3:6–9)

6 But now Timothy has come to us from you and brought us the good news of your faith and love and that you always think of us affectionately and desire to see us just as we also desire to see you. 7 Therefore, we have been comforted concerning you, brothers and sisters, in view of all our distress and tribulation because of your faith, 8 for now we live if you stand firm in the Lord. 9 So then what thanks can we offer to God for you in return for all the joy we have felt because of you before our God?

Paul's Prayer for the Saints (3:10–13)

10 Night and day we pray most earnestly to see your face and complete what is lacking in your faith. 11 And may God himself, even our Father, and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. 12 And may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for each other and for all people, just as we do for you, 13 to establish your hearts as blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ together with all his saints.