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## Faith, Hope and Love

By Shannon Ford on March 17, 2022

### TODAY'S READING: 1 Thessalonians 1

In Paul's greeting to the church at Thessalonica, verse 3 highlights three characteristics of this church that should also be seen in our church and in our personal lives. First, Paul continually remembers before God that *their faith produced work*. Their faith led to action. If our faith is nothing more than a belief system, then we do not have a New Testament faith. Our faith should energize us to work. What kind of work? The kind of work that produces a growing of godliness in us through prayer, Bible study, worship and discipline; the kind of work that joins God in His work of witnessing, encouraging others, praying for others and ministering to the needs of others. Is our faith working? Our faith should touch more than Sunday. It should touch every day of the week and every part of that day.

Secondly, *their love prompted labor*. The word for labor here denotes wearying toil involving sweat and fatigue. It is a weariness that follows giving all you have. Often the attitude is, if I have made any effort (i.e., took a meal to someone, etc.) then I should get time off for good behavior. I think it seems foreign to a great many believers that their Christian life should make them tired. Our love for God and others is to move us to labor that means we are working. The Christian life should be motivated by a love to serve and help others. This is the love that sends us to our knees praying over the well-being of another.

Thirdly, they *had a hope that inspired endurance*. Hope here is not wishful thinking, but a firm confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ. They were not just hanging on and trying to survive the suffering of this world, but rather they were approaching each day with a confident hope. A hope in the fact that this world belongs to God, that He is working in it, and that He is going to come back and make things right. That hope gives us the ability to keep moving into and through each day. It lifts us out of a survival mode and gives us a greater sense of purpose and meaning. It keeps us focused on the Lord instead of our problems.

**PRAYER:** Lord, I pray that others will see these virtues in our lives. I pray our faith will affect the way we live. I pray our love will compel us to act in loving ways. I pray our hope will enable us to persevere through hard times. In Jesus' name, amen.

### TOMORROW'S READING: 1 Thessalonians 2

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