No One Said It Would Be Easy July 14, 2019

*1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:5 Series: Living Life in Light of the End*

Like a good chess player, Satan is always trying to maneuver you into a position where you can save your castle only by losing your bishop. – C. S. Lewis

Intro: The Angolan giraffe gets off to a rough start.

1. To stand against Satan, you need to know he’s coming for you.
2. We have been warned!

v. 3 *we are destined for this*

v. 4 *we kept telling you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction*

2 Tim. 3:12 *Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted …*

1 Pet. 4:12–13 *Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.*

Acts 14:22 *… through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.*

1. Know what you can expect from Satan.

We will face persecution.

* + v. 17 *we were torn away from you*

We will face accusation.

* + v. 18 *but Satan*
  + Revelation 12:10 *the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God*

We will face obstacles.

* + v. 18 *Satan hindered us …*

We will face personal attacks.

* + v. 3 *that no one be moved by these afflictions*

We will face temptation.

* + v. 5 *I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you …*

We will face false teachers.

* + 2 Thess 2:9 *The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders …*
* How much were you warned of Satan’s power and influence after you became a Christian?
* In 1 Peter 4:12, it says not to “be surprised” at trials that come to test us. Were you ever surprised that bad things were happening to you as a believer?
* Which one of Satan’s methods listed above are you least prepared for or most susceptible to?

1. To stand against Satan, you need people who have your back.
2. You need to invest in caring relationships.

v. 17 *in person not in heart*

v. 19 *what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting*

v. 20 *you are our glory and joy*

v. 1 *we could bear it no longer*

1. You need to invest in face time with other believers.

v. 17 *we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face*

1. You need to invest in people who will build up your faith.

v. 2 *we sent Timothy … to establish and exhort you in your faith*

v. 5 *I sent to learn about your faith*

* Have you always recognized your need for biblical fellowship?
* What are some things that make it hard to build healthy relationships with other believers?
* What has helped you to grow in your Christian relationships?
* Where do you feel you still need to grow in this area?

1. To stand against Satan, you need to trust in Jesus’ victory.
2. To face the battle, you need your eyes on the crown.

v. 19 *For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting …? Is it not you?*

1. To face the battle, you need your eyes on Jesus’ coming.

v. 19 *For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming?*

1. To face the battle, you need your eyes on Jesus’ victory.

Rom 16:20 *The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.*

* What are some of the world’s “crowns” that Christians are tempted to set their hope on instead of the “crown” that God offers as a reward for faithfulness?
* What can you do to keep your eyes on the crown?
* How does Satan’s ultimate defeat help us when we’re losing the battle in one of the areas of Satan’s working that we considered in point 1?
* Where do you most need prayer in applying this passage?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study 1 Thessalonians 3:6-13.

Notes