

A Father's Joy

Ray Stedman

I. Introduction.

A. Text: I Thessalonians 2:17.

B. Paul received opposition from the state, society and from Satan.

II. Satan is our opposition.

A. It is something permitted by God. (Job)

B. The reason is that these things are used by God to get our attention.

C. It underscores the value of the believers who are to be presented before Christ as mature.

1. Maturity is dealing with reality as it is.

2. Maturity is to adapt to change.

3. Maturity is dealing with anxiety.

4. Maturity is finding greater value in giving

5. Maturity is relating to others with consistency, being helpful with satisfaction.

6. Maturity is being able to use anger for a constructive effort.

III. Paul had in mind to...

A. Establish the Thessalonians in faith concerning all things about Christ, His sacrifice and the Holy Spirit.

B. Exhort them to steadiness.

C. Know what was going on. The Spirit helps us in our prayers for others. (Romans 8)

1. Paul prayed earnestly.

2. Paul prayed to see them, to minister to them, to have a realistic view of life, to overcome satanic influence, that their love might increase, and that they would continue to live righteously until the Lord comes.

3. Pray not simply that troubles go, but that we have the strength to face them.

Application questions:

1. How does God use the opposition for our benefit?

2. What does maturity look like according to the speaker, and which area challenges you the most? Explain.

3. Why does Paul emphasize prayer so much and what is important to him to pray about?
