

1st Thessalonians
Chapter 2:13-16 – Lesson 4
“Persecution and the Great Commission”

It was not easy being a Christian in Thessalonica because the believers were faced with persecution and suffering. Look at Paul’s choice of words throughout the book. In 1 Thes 1:6 and 3:3 he uses **affliction**, which means *pressure from circumstances*. In chapter 2, he uses **suffered**, which is the same word used to *describe Christ’s suffering*. In verse 15 he uses **persecuted** meaning *harassed, driven out and rejected*. Also, in verse 15 the word **contrary** is translated to be *winds that blow against and hinder progress*. Lastly, Paul uses the word **hindered** in verse 18, which can be likened to *a road so broken up that travel on it is blocked*. Surely all of us will face one or more of these different faces of suffering in our lives as we purpose to follow the Lord while we await His return.

1. Verse 13:

- a. How does **verse 13** relate to the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20?

- b. The Great Commission calls all believers to the mission field in their own spheres of influence. **Verse 13** here captures the essence of the Great Commission so well! Be ready to discuss in your small groups the following phrases from **verse 13**, not just what they meant to the Thessalonians in Paul’s day, but what they mean to you today in your own personal mission field:
 - For this reason, we also thank God without ceasing:

 - Because when you received the Word of God which you heard from us:

 - You welcomed it, not as the word of men:

- But as it is in truth, the Word of God:

- Which also effectively works in you who believe:

- c. How does God's Word work effectively in your life today?

2. Verses 14-16:

- a. If verse 13 is "the essence" of the Great Commission; **verses 14-16** summarize what happens to the mission field when the Word of God shows up. From these verses, make a (compare and contrast) list of those who believed the Word of God and those who did not.

- [illegible]

- "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.
(Matthew 28:19-20)**