

1 Thessalonians 3

“Just Checkin’ In”

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 3

Memory Verse: 1 Thessalonians 3:12 *“May the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you.”*

Lesson Focus: Continuing in our study of 1 Thessalonians we will see what happened after Paul and Silvanus sent Timothy to JUST CHECK IN on these new believers in Thessalonica after being kicked out of the city so abruptly. Afterwards, we will highlight one of our church’s own missionaries and have the kids respond by encouraging and CHECKING IN on them too!

Activities and Crafts: RMC Missionaries Coloring Page, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion and Prayer Requests for 3rd – 5th.
Activity for ALL: JUST CHECKIN’ IN on an RMC missionary

Starter Activity: JUST CHECKIN’ IN Memes

We will provide you with several print-offs of cute memes that you can use to capture the kids attention. * Each meme has a cute/funny animal/creature on it and consider showing each one to the kids and reading it to them. Consider asking them a couple of questions as you go through them like:

- 1) Do any of you have one of these in your house?
- 2) How would you feel if someone sent one of these to you?

Then after you cycle through all of them, ask the kids these questions to transition into the lesson:

Q: What phrase was common across all of these pictures/memes?

A: “JUST CHECKIN’ IN”

Q: What does that mean?

A: It means you want to know how people are doing because you care about them!

Q: Who is someone you might “check in” on?

A: Friends who are down, sick family members, etc.

You check in on people you care about and love very much and sometimes you might be the person God would appoint to cheer them up. *

As we continue in our study of 1 Thessalonians today, we are going to see that someone was sent to go “check in” on the people of Thessalonica. Let’s take a look!

Bible Study:

1 Thessalonians 3:1: Our passage begins with “Therefore”. Every time you start reading the Bible with the word “therefore” you should ask: “*What is it ‘THERE FOR?’*” * Let’s go back to chapter two and see what he is talking about.

Read **1 Thessalonians 2:17-20**. Remember that Paul, Sil, and Tim were missionaries who started this little church in Thessalonica. But they were forced out of the city because people did not want to hear the good news about Jesus. Notice how much they miss them and wish they could still be with them!

Q: Have you ever been really sad to say goodbye to someone after a visit? *

1 Thessalonians 3:1-2: So now we get the full picture and see what is going on here. Paul, Sil, and Tim dearly miss these Christians in Thessalonica so they send Tim to JUST CHECK IN on them and cheer them up. Why? Look at v. 3!

1 Thessalonians 3:3: Because they were getting persecuted. That means that others in this city were being mean and cruel to them just because they were Christians!

In another book of the Bible (Acts) we can read about what happened. **Read Acts 17:5**.

Q: What did they do? A: Attacked someone’s house in search of Paul, Sil, and Tim so that they might be thrown in jail or even killed! * **Teachers:** Instead of reading **Acts 17:6-9**, consider acting it out with the kids. See the skit at the end of the lesson. *

Read Acts 17:10. So Paul, Sil (and Tim), were secretly sent out of the city. No wonder they missed these people so much and wanted to CHECK IN on them!

1 Thessalonians 3:4-5: Imagine being Paul who just led lots of people in this town to believe and trust in Jesus but then he had to suddenly leave them because of all of this uproar. In v. 5, the Bible mentions “the tempter”.

Q: Who do you think this “tempter” is? A: The devil! He is the enemy of God and the enemy of all Christians. The Bible says that “*he comes to steal, kill, and destroy*” (**John 10:10**) which is exactly what we saw happening in this city. But the Bible also says that when we surrender to God, we can resist the devil and that he flees from us! (**James 4:7**)

1 Thessalonians 3:6a: So Paul and Silvanus secretly sent Timothy back into the city to JUST CHECK IN on them and now he has come back with news. Remember that this is years before we had phones and the internet so people had to actually meet face-to-face in order to JUST CHECK IN on each other.

Let’s pause and talk about this Tim guy a little bit. He shows up in the Bible in a lot of different places. Each place is like a different puzzle piece. And just like with a puzzle, as you put more and more of the pieces together, you begin to make out the final picture!

Let's look at some of these pieces together and put the puzzle together. **Teachers:** Consider breaking your class into groups and have them find the verse together and report back what it says about Tim. Put their responses on the white board and consider even drawing puzzle pieces around them! See verses below.

- 1) **1 Timothy 4:12** -> He was young. * Experts think he was about 20 years old.
- 2) **1 Timothy 5:23** -> He had chronic tummy aches!
- 3) **2 Timothy 1:5** -> His grandma and Mom were believers who taught him.
- 4) **2 Timothy 3:15** -> He's been a believer since he was a kid!

This last one is so important. Like you all, he was taught the Bible as a child. And he has continued to follow Jesus even as a young man in the face of much difficulty!

1 Thessalonians 3:6b-7: So this Timothy was secretly sent to JUST CHECK IN on them and now that he has come back, what kind of news did he bring? GOOD NEWS! *

The good news was that even despite all of the evil that the devil brought upon them through those evil men, they people in this church are still following Jesus, they are still trusting in God, they are still loving each other! *

1 Thessalonians 3:8: Paul, Sil, and Tim are all rejoicing! They faced tremendous hardship to bring them the gospel and they rejoice knowing that it was all worth it.

Q: What do you think it means to stand fast in Jesus?

A: To not give up! No matter what hardships might come your way, you remain loyal to Jesus! * Remember Nehemiah that we studied earlier in the year and how he stood fast even when the bad guys kept trying to stop him? He stood fast!

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13: All of the glory goes to God for protecting and strengthening these new believers. * Our chapter finishes with an awesome prayer. Check out the three things that they pray:

- 1) In v. 11, that they may be able to see each other again.
- 2) In v. 12, that they may increase in love for each other.
- 3) In v. 13, that they may be strong in the Lord and continue to stand fast until Jesus comes back.

Key Point: Guess what? I pray this for you all of the time. I look forward to seeing you every week and ask the Lord that you also may grow in love for Him and for others. *

I also pray for many of our church's missionaries. * That's right, RMC has missionaries just like Paul, Sil, and Tim that we have sent out that need our prayer. For they sometimes face similar problems like what we just read about. You can pray for them and CHECK IN ON THEM to encourage them. In fact, we're going to do that right now!

Teachers: See small group time activity below with more details on this activity.

Small Group Time Afterwards: We will give the kids an opportunity to respond to the lesson by JUST CHECKING IN on one of the missionaries of our church! We will supply you with a missionary card for you to share with the kids. * Then follow these steps:

- 1) Please pass the card around or show the kids the picture so they can see the missionary.
- 2) Share some of the info about the missionary with the kids so they can get to know them (just like what we did with Timothy during the lesson!).
- 3) Point out on the map where the missionary lives.
- 4) Mention that many of these missionaries face challenges and difficulties just like Paul, Sil, and Tim did.
- 5) Write a letter to the missionary on the template we provided. Just write one letter from the class to the missionary that will be an encouragement. Consider mentioning that we learned about how Timothy CHECKED IN with and encouraged the new believers in 1 Thess. 3 and how we wanted to JUST CHECK IN with and encourage you as well.
- 6) Pray for the missionary as a class (and refer back to our memory verse) and point out the specific prayer requests mentioned on the card.
- 7) Give us the letter afterwards and we will get it in the mail.

If there is a different RMC missionary that you support, please feel at liberty to bring in their card instead and write the letter to them!

Bring It Home

Download at: <https://rncalvary.org/volunteering/childrens-ministry/family-resources/>

Lesson Theme: “Just Checkin’ In”

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 3

Memory Verse: 1 Thessalonians 3:12 *“May the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you.”*

Teachers/Parents: We started our lesson by sharing a few warm and cute greetings to introduce the idea of “checking in” on people we care about. Who are some people that you regularly “check in” on and why do you do this? Can you think of any people that will often “check in” on you? How does that make you feel?

Discussion Questions:

- 1) **Read 1 Thessalonians 3:1.** We taught the kids an important Bible study tool on the very first word of this verse. Have your kids look up the verse and tell you what that word is (consider asking them if they remember the rule we taught them too). Point out that this verse does not make hardly any sense by itself. Because of the “therefore” you need to read what comes before it. **Read 1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:1.** Now what was it that they could no longer endure?
- 2) Read **Acts 17:5-10** to get some of the back story here. What were the Christians in Thessalonica being accused of in v. 7?
- 3) **Read 1 Thessalonians 3:2.** Who was sent to encourage and CHECK IN on the believers in Thessalonica?
- 4) In class we did a quick study on Timothy as there is a smattering of information about him scattered throughout the Bible. **Read 2 Timothy 3:15.** How was Timothy described in this verse?
- 5) In **1 Thessalonians 3:5**, the “tempter” is mentioned. Who does this refer to? How do you think he was tempting these new believers in Thessalonica? How does he tempt us today?
- 6) Read **1 Thessalonians 3:12.** Pray together as a family that you would abound together in love for one another and for those around you.
- 7) In class we introduced the kids to one of our RMC missionaries and prayed this same prayer over them. Pray this prayer over our RMC missionaries as well!

Mob Attack in Thessalonica

*Acts 17:5-10: Choose a few kids to be Paul, Sil, and Tim *. Have a leader be Jason and another leader be the angry official. Choose kids to be the guards to drag off Jason! And have another group of kids be the crowd. Finally pick one more kid to be the city ruler and give him/her a script.*

*The act should begin by having Paul, Sil, and Tim secretly lead a Bible study with Jason and others. The angry official will pound on the “door” demanding entrance. **

Angry Official: Let me in! Where are those evil Christians?

Jason quickly and quietly sends Paul, Sil, and Tim out the back before answering the official.

Jason: Um, calm down buddy. We are not evil. We’re not the one’s barging into people’s houses. We love people and we love Jesus Christ.

Angry Official: Where are Paul, Silvanus, and Tim? They must be arrested!

Jason: Who, who, and who? I’m afraid you have the wrong house, pal.

Angry Official: Very well! Then we will take YOU! Guards: SEIZE HIM!

The guards then drag Jason off to the city ruler. Make it funny!

Angry Official (to City Ruler): Jason is hiding these people who have turned the world upside down. These Christians say that Jesus is King.

City Ruler (to Jason): Is this true?

Jason: Yes, but we have done nothing wrong! We want you also to believe in King Jesus!

Have the angry official and crowd of kids do the SHAME-SHAME gesture rubbing their fingers together.

City Ruler: SILENCE! We will let you go, but do not talk about this Jesus dude anymore.