

Well Done

I wonder what it would have felt like to receive the following messages:

- **2 Thessalonians 1:3-4** We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. Therefore we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions that you are enduring.
 - Imagine hearing Paul compliment you on your growing faith. It would mean a lot coming from him, would it not? When Paul visited them, not everyone accepted his message. The Jewish leaders were furious. But you received the word and it was implanted in your heart. The seed was growing and Paul knew it. Those in Thessalonica witnessed it. Your God loved it.
- **2 Timothy 1:3-7** I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.
 - When you start bringing up family, you pull at the heart strings. One of you recently told me, "You're dad would be proud of you." I've heard that a few times over the years. It's been 17 years since he passed and that still makes me emotional.
 - Paul means so much to you. He was a spiritual father. You've known Paul well over 15 years at this point. This man changed your life. He inspired you. He raised the bar, and now, he was passing the torch. Can you feel that?
- **Philemon 4-7** I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, because I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints, and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ. For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you.
 - I've comforted Paul? I'm refreshing the hearts of others? Wow...for him to take time to write a personal letter to me while he has his own challenges. I'm comforting others like Paul comforts us. I believe Paul walks in the steps of Jesus. Perhaps I am too . . .

Or John?

- **3 John 2-4** Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul. For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.
 - John? One of Jesus' closest disciples? I'm bringing him great joy? He's been through so many difficult situations. I feel like I've made him proud by standing strong.

Can you imagine hearing this from Jesus?

- **Revelation 3:8-9** I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept My word and have not denied My name. Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who

say that they are Jews and are not, but lie - behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you.

- This is the voice, at the end of the day, that holds full weight. Can you imagine being part of the church in Philadelphia and hearing the strong tone, protection, and love from the bride's husband? It hit me hard. Then I read it for Jordan. You should have seen her face. It's like she's never heard it before. I felt the same way.
- There are only a few scriptures (that I could find) recording Jesus actually saying, "I love you." There is one more reference later in this chapter ("*Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline*"), but the rest are from His last night with the disciples before His betrayal and crucifixion.
- **John 13:34** A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.
- **John 14:21** Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."
- **John 15:9** As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.
- **John 15:12** "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

How badly do you want to hear those words from Jesus? How much weight do they hold? Whose voice means the most to you? How much effort do you put forward? What are you sacrificing to secure that moment when Jesus will look at you and say, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your Master?" **Matthew 25:21**

Today, I wanted to take a moment to appreciate the victories in Jesus. The peace that comes from knowing, one day, we'll be with Him and know His love in the most personal way. For those who are struggling to commit to Jesus, I'd like to offer a passage from the apostle Paul: **Philippians 3:1-11**. Paul knew what to look out for and what to give up. It was purposeful.

- Do you know who or what is getting in the way? Do you want to fight or not? Are you ready to sacrifice, or not? How much have you thought this through? Are you thinking long-term? I mean this with all sincerity, and, for the moment, with no judgment. It's more of an appeal. Do not let anyone or anything rob you of the joy of knowing Jesus. And if you're not persuaded, that means you haven't known what it is to be known by Him. I appeal for you to trust in Jesus. I do not judge. He will judge on that day, and we want it work out well for you. We want for you what we want for ourselves, "Well done, good and faithful servant." One day, perhaps we'll hear Jesus say, "Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."