**“Growth Despite Surroundings”**

**Colossians**

**Titus**

**Timothy**

**Thessalonians**

**Philippians**

**Ephesians**

**Galatians**

**Corinthians**

**Romans**

**Philemon**

**Hebrews**

**James**

**Jude**

**John**

**Peter**

**Scripture**

1. Read 2 Thessalonians 1:1-4. Paul sent the Thessalonians a letter (1 Thessalonians) and awaited a report on how the Thessalonians were doing before he wrote them 2 Thessalonians. How does it seem things were going in Thessalonica?
2. Paul was not boasting to glorify himself or the Thessalonians, but to glorify God. What results do you think this had? (think of 2)
3. Read 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10. List all the ways that Paul comforts the Thessalonians as they face intense persecution. Explain how each is comforting for us today as well.
   1. Agree/Disagree: We should look for opportunities to suffer.
4. Read 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12. Paul then says a prayer for the Thessalonians in verses 11-12. List what Paul prays for the Thessalonians.

**Our Congregation**

1. Throughout 1 Thessalonians and now in 2 Thessalonians we see persecution brought up over and over again. What might the Lord be trying to teach us with that?
2. What benefits can there be in trials? Do you have an example?
3. As with individuals, God also allows congregations to face challenges. Think about the future. What are some things that could be obstacles for us in the future? What sections from our text for today will we want to keep in mind if we face those obstacles? Are any of those obstacles “preventable?” (And if so, how?)
4. Make this statement correct. “If a congregation doesn’t suffer, it doesn’t hold to the true faith.”
5. Verse 11. Who is counting us worthy? By whose power? Every act prompted by what?
   1. In what ways does the devil try to get us to forget this?
6. List 3 reasons that it is comforting to know that as individuals and as congregation spiritual growth is the direct result of the work of the Holy Spirit.

***Takin’ it Home***

1. What verses can you pick out from this chapter to help your future self in times of trial?