

An Example to All Believers

1 Thessalonians Chapter 1

Thessalonica was originally called Therma because of the hot springs in the area. Cassander renamed this prominent seaport city after his wife Thessalonike. (Alexander the Great's half sister) It had a sizable Jewish population. Its population was 200,000 in Paul's day which was a good sized city. Today it is called Salonika.

Acts 17:1-9 Paul in Thessalonica (3 weeks perhaps longer.)



Acts 16:1-8 Paul is travelling through Galatia being guided by the Holy Spirit. Reaches Troas.

Acts 16:9-12 Paul has Macedonian Vision and sails to Macedonia and eventually Philippi.

Acts 16:13-40 In Philippi,

They met Lydia.

Cast a devil out of a young girl that was following Paul saying, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation."

Paul and Silas were arrested, beaten and thrown in jail.

Paul and Silas sang, an earthquake came and busted open the prison doors.

Paul leads the Jailer and all his household to salvation.

Magistrates hear Paul is a Roman and urge Paul to leave (quickly and quietly)

Acts 17:1-4 Paul comes to Thessalonica. He begins ministering by going to the synagogue. Some Jews believe.

Acts 17:5-10 The disbelieving Jews rose up to persecute Paul but could only find a local guy, Jason. They arrested him and "took security" from him then released him.

Acts 17:10-12 Paul left and went to Berea. They received the gospel. Scripture says in verse 11 "*These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*"

Acts 17:13 Jews from Thessalonica came to Berea to stir up trouble and Paul left for Athens. Timothy and Silas stayed in the area. **1 Thessalonians 3:1-6** tells us that Paul had Timothy go to Thessalonica to find out how the Christians are doing and to bring a report to him in Athens. Paul left for Corinth before Timothy and Silas arrived. When they caught up with Paul in Corinth, Paul was then moved to write 1 Thessalonians.

Last verses of every Chapter tells us a theme of 1 Thessalonians.

1:23 "wait for the Son from heaven"
2:19 "Lord Jesus Christ at His coming"
3:13 "at the coming of the Lord Jesus"
4:15-17 - caught in the air at His coming
5:23 "Be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"

1 Thessalonians Outlined

Chapters 1-3 Reflections on the Thessalonians (Looking Back)
Chapters 4-5 Instructions to the Thessalonians (Looking Forward)

1Th 1:1

1) Paul's Remembrance vs 1-5

Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

- The Thessalonians would know all three of these servants.
 - Paul the leader of the team.
 - Silas a leader in the Jerusalem Church was sent with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch to help oversee the discipleship. (Acts 15) Silas was a prophet and when Barnabas and Paul split, Paul chose Silas to Join him on his 2nd missionary journey.
 - Timothy was a resident of Lystra, a city in the province of Galatia (Acts 16:1-3). He was the son of a Greek father (Acts 16:2) and a Jewish mother named Eunice (2 Timothy 2:5). From his youth learned the Scriptures from his mother and grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15). He as an evangelist who was likely converted on Paul's 1st missionary Journey and joined Paul on his 2nd.
- Paul in including Silas and Timothy shows his attitude towards ministry. That it is not a one man show and that good ministry is accomplished by co-laboring together with others.
- In this greeting we see an **interesting equality** in "God the Father" and the "Lord Jesus Christ"
 - God (*theos*) deity, the supreme divinity
 - Father (*pater*) generator or founder of family/nation, a preserver, protector and guardian, a title of honor
 - Lord (*kyrios*) the possessor, the owner, the sovereign, the master
 - Jesus (*eusus*) Jehovah is Salvation, name of the Messiah
 - Christ (*christos*) anointed one, the Messiah

9 times in 5 chapters
"Lord Jesus Christ"

This equality is notable in that Grace and Peace come from both the Father and Lord. Also, that the church is considered the church because they are "in" both the Father and the Lord.

Deuteronomy 6:4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God [is] one LORD."

John 1:1-3 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."

John 14:9 "He who has seen Me has seen the Father"

John 10:30 "I and the Father are one."

Matthew 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit"

Romans 8:9 "you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him."

1 Corinthians 12:3-6 "Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all {persons.}"

2 Corinthians 13:14 "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, [be] with you all. Amen."

Colossians 2:9-10 "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:"

Divine title Given to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

Exodus 20:2-3 "I [am] the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

John 20:28-29 "And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed [are] they that have not seen, and [yet] have believed."

Acts 5:3-4 "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back [part] of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit share the same nature, qualities, characteristics and purpose

Eternal -Rom 16:26; Rev 22:13; Hbr 9:14
Holy -Rev 4:8; 15:4; Act 3:14; 1Jo 2:20
True -Jhn 7:28; Rev 3:7
Omnipresent -Jer 23:24; Eph 1:23; Psa 139:7
Omnipotent -Gen 17:1; Rev 1:8; Rom 15:19; Jer 32:17; Hbr 1:3; Luk 1:35
Omniscient -Act 15:18; Jhn 21:17; 1Cr 2:10,11
Creator -Gen 1:1; Col 1:16; Job 33:4; Psa 148:5; Jhn 1:3; Job 26:13
Sanctifier -Jud 1:1; Hbr 2:11; 1Pe 1:2
Author of all spiritual operations -Hbr 13:21; Col 1:29; 1Cr 12:11
Source of eternal life -Rom 6:23; Jhn 10:28; Gal 6:8
Teacher -Isa 54:13; Luk 21:15; Jhn 14:26; Isa 48:17; Gal 1:12; 1Jo 2:20
Raising Christ from the dead -1Cr 6:14; Jhn 2:19; 1Pe 3:18
Inspiring the prophets, etc -Hbr 1:1; 2Cr 13:3; Mar 13:11
Supplying ministers to the Church -Jer 3:15; Eph 4:11; Act 20:28; Jer 26:5; Mat 10:5; Act 13:2

As the *Shema* states and the scriptures prove "*The Lord our God is one Lord.*" This has not changed. God is One through the administration of a trinity. A Tri - Unity of God. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one and the same singular God.

- Grace and Peace. Peace always follows knowing God's Grace.

1Th 1:2 We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention {of you} in our prayers;

- "We give Thanks ... in Our Prayers" this is what ministers do. They Pray for the Church ...YOU.
- Are You a Leader? Are You Praying for the Church? For People?

1Th 1:3 constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father,

1Th 1:4 knowing, brethren beloved by God, {His} choice of you; (KJV = your election of God)

1Th 1:5 for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

- When Paul, Silas and Timothy thought of the Thessalonians and prayed for them they remembered Paul has written about these three great virtues but in this passage he stresses what they produce
 - Their Work of Faith WORK - there are things to be doing because of what we believe
Faith looks back to the cross
James 2:18 "I will show you my faith by my works"
John 6:28-29 "This is the works of God that you believe on Him who He sent."
 - Their Labor of Love LABOR - interesting concept Love is a feeling or requires effort
Love looks here, now, to touch lives around us
John 14:15 "If you love me keep my commandments"
 - Their Steadfastness of Hope STEADFASTNESS / PATIENCE Hope grants us to bear up under pressure
Hope looks forward to Christ's return
- Without God choosing you (electing you), Without God choosing me (electing me), We are hopelessly lost. GOD CHOOSES /ELECTS TO SAVE MAN from their own sin.
- Keep in mind they were not perfect. Paul knew this. Chapter 2 Paul need to defend himself against false accusations. In Chapter 4 Paul needs to warn them about sexual failings. In Chapters 4+5 Paul has to correct doctrine.
- Charles Spurgeon used this passage to determine a man's conversion (beloved and chose by God)
 - Not in just words but by being changed (Not ...in word only but also in power)
 - Heat felt repentance (full conviction/much assurance)
 - Verse 6 - desire to follow Jesus (became imitators of is and of the Lord)
 - Verse 6 - Spiritual joy even in difficulties (received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit)
- Verse 5 speaks of the man or woman bringing the gospel. There is a way to preach the gospel.
 - Preach the Gospel with Power to change lives not to fill the air with words.
 - Preach the Gospel with Conviction. Believe what you preach.
 - And Preacher Live what you preach.

1Th 1:6

2) Thessalonian's Example vs 6-8

You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received **the word** in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit,

- There is more to being a Christian than saying "Jesus Forgive Me" These Thessalonians became imitators of the Lord Jesus. That would require observation, study, evaluation, reforms and change.
- And on top of this demand it isn't popular and can be looked upon with reproach and persecution.
- Paul commends these saints for following through with their faith and encountering the difficulties with Joy that is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 5:22)
 - In Philippi Paul and Silas experienced this Joy in the Holy Spirit as they sang in prison.

1Th 1:7

so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.

1Th 1:8

For **the word** of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything.

- Paul was the example to the Thessalonians (verse 5) then the Thessalonians were an example to others (verse 7) That is the Christian effect in the world. What is your example?
- The Thessalonians "SOUNDED FORTH" the Word of the Lord. That means a "loud trumpet blast"
- What an opportunity to be in that prominent seaport city and preach and demonstrate Christianity to the entire region (Macedonia and Achaia)
- People had heard and seen what the gospel had done to these people, and they then travelled home or to other places they themselves spreading the testimony.
- Paul is excited he is being run out of business.

1Th 1:9

3) Other Christian's Report vs 9-10

For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God,

- Other people were testifying to the changes in Thessalonica. That is the way it should be. That God would so affect us that the changes in us are noticed by the world.
- That they turned from idols (no faith because they can see and touch their deity)
- Turning to God (by faith because the True God is Spirit and Jesus has ascended to Heaven leaving us the Holy Spirit)

1Th 1:10

and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, {that is} Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

- They are waiting for Jesus return from heaven.
 - Waiting looks like what the Thessalonians were commended for
 - Work of Faith - turned from idols
 - Labor of Love - serving the living and true God
 - Steadfastness / Patience of Hope - waiting for His Son from heaven
- And He will rescue us from the "WRATH TO COME"
 - Could be referring to the wrath of the Great Tribulation of the Last Days
 - Could be referring to the wrath of the Final Judgment of the Lake of Fire.
 - Could be both.

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