

## Textual Outline      I Thessalonians 1:1-10

- I. (Address)
  - A. <sup>1</sup> Paul, Silas and Timothy,
  - B. To the church of the Thessalonians in
    - 1. God the Father
    - 2. and the Lord Jesus Christ:
  - C. Grace and peace to you.
- II. <sup>2</sup> We
  - A. always thank God for all of you
  - B. and continually mention you in our prayers.
  - C. <sup>3</sup> We remember before our God and Father
    - 1. your work produced by faith,
    - 2. your labor prompted by love,
    - 3. and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.
- III. <sup>4</sup> For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God,
  - A. that he has chosen you,
  - B. <sup>5</sup> because our gospel came to you
    - 1. not simply with words
    - 2. but also
      - a) with power,
      - b) with the Holy Spirit
      - c) and deep conviction.
    - 3. You know how we lived among you for your sake.
    - 4. <sup>6</sup> You became imitators
      - a) of us
      - b) and of the Lord,
    - 5. for you welcomed the message
      - a) in the midst of severe suffering
      - b) with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.
  - C. <sup>7</sup> And so
    - 1. you became a model to all the believers
      - a) in Macedonia
      - b) and Achaia.
    - 2. <sup>8</sup> The Lord's message rang out from you
      - a) not only in Macedonia and Achaia—
      - b) your faith in God has become known everywhere.
    - 3. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it,
      - a) <sup>9</sup> for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us.
      - b) They tell how you
        - (1) turned to God from idols
        - (2) to serve

- (a) *the living*
- (b) *and true God,*
- (3) <sup>10</sup> **and to wait for his Son**
- (a) *from heaven,*
- (b) *whom he raised from the dead—*
- (c) *Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.*

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## Conceptual Outline – I Thess 1:1-10

### I. Address

- A. Authors - Paul, Silas, & Timothy
- B. Recipients - church of Thessalonians
- C. Greeting - Grace & peace

### II. Paul's prayer of thanksgiving for their work, labor, and endurance which are produced by their spiritual condition - faith, love, and hope

### III. Reasons for thanksgiving/Model steps for evangelism

- A. Chosen & loved by God - God initiates
- B. How the gospel came to them
  - 1. words
  - 2. work of the Holy Spirit
  - 3. backed up by the life message of the evangelists
- C. Their response to the gospel
  - 1. welcomed/received
  - 2. imitated by recipients
  - 3. became models for others

### IV. Testimony of their faith as a model to all believers

- A. Turn from idols
- B. To serve God
- C. Wait/focus on Christ's return

## Theme:

**Paul's praise for the Thessalonians' faith & response to the gospel**

## Observations:

- I. Paul's relationship with the Thessalonians is marked by affirmations, prayer, & positive memories.
- II. Thess' work, labor, & endurance are motivated by their spiritual condition with God - faith, love, and hope in the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - A. what were they enduring? Just hard work or suffering
  - B. why is the spiritual condition important? What difference do they make?
- III. Steps of their conversion
  - A. God's love and choosing - without Him, there's no salvation. He took the first step to love, plan, redeem, approach us. His choice makes the unworthy worthy.
  - B. words - truth in Jesus, vehicle for understanding, Jesus is the way God makes His love/way understandable to man. People need to hear, know, understand, before they can accept. Could the "word" actually refer to Jesus?
  - C. Holy Spirit - His power to convict our sin, turn us around. His power can overtake us, break our stubborn self-will. Yet we can also resist Him. He power will not force us. This power is also demonstrated by the missionaries' power and deep conviction.
  - D. The message is backed by real life role models. The message is consistent with what they see in the lives of those who preach the words. Otherwise, the whole foundation would collapse. This is one of the purpose of the letter as there were attacks about the integrity of the apostles - their motives, (2:2-6) and their love for them due to their absence. (2:17-3:5)
  - E. The recipients' response -
    1. complete turnaround involves leaving and receiving, abandoning the former gods and devoting to serve Go. In between is insufficient and not acceptable. This may also be the "work" that's worth remembering in prayers.
    2. Receiving also means change in lifestyle - imitating the apostles. Is that pride on the apostle's part? Are we to imitate men/women who brought us to Christ? Can we become the imitated? What an awesome responsibility!
    3. Wait for Jesus' return became their new focus/hope
  - F. Descriptions about
    1. God - living, true
    2. Jesus - from heaven, raised from the dead, recues from the coming wrath.
    3. Holy Spirit - joy, power, conviction

**These descriptions are highlighted as the work of salvation is the work on the Triune God. The evangelists were only channels of grace.**

## I Thess 1:1-10 Study Questions:

### Background:

Thessalonica is a well-established, harbor city, capital of Macedonia. It's situated on Via Egnatia, the main route between Rome & the East.

Paul, Silas, & Timothy came to Thessalonica around AD 49-50 after being in prison at Philippi, the 1<sup>st</sup> city they evangelized in Macedonia. He had great success in Thessalonica until the Jews pursued him from Philippi causing a riot. The persecution was so severe that Paul & Silas escaped to Berea at night. Jason & some of the believers were captured and had to post bond. (Acts 17:19) Thereafter, Paul was concerned & sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to see how the believers were. Upon Timothy's return, Paul wrote I Thessalonians with the following purposes:

- to affirm their steadfast faith & testimony
- to defend the integrity of their ministry as there were criticism of their motives. They were also accused of abandoning the Thess & of their lack of concern
- to correct & instruct them in the areas of sexual morality, work, the second coming, & tensions in the fellowship.

Around the time of writing this letter, there was unprecedented famine in Judea around AD45-47. That's why the gentile churches made a collection to believers in Jerusalem (I Cor 16:1-3.) In AD49, there was a brutal massacre of Jews in the temple precincts at Passover, and expulsion of Jews from Rome. Aquila & Priscilla were among them. (Acts 18:2)

1. **If someone close were to describe your conversion, what would they say about how Jesus has changed you?**
2. **Give a brief intro of the background (above.) From the vs 1-3 of chapter 1, how do the missionaries feel towards the Thessalonians? What are some of the things that mark their relationship?**  
 Prayer, affirmation, thanksgiving, mark their fondness towards the Thessalonians.  
 Always thank God for them v,2  
 Continually pray for them  
 Remember them fondly
3. **What is the missionaries' prayer for the Thessalonians? What do they remember about the Thess? How are the items similar or different? What motivated these behaviors? Why are these motivators important? What is your motivation in ministry? Which one of the three qualities do you lack the most?**

Remembering their positive actions – work, labor, endurance. Each involves discipline and action. Work & labor require endurance and also build endurance. Each seems to be more difficult than the previous one. They are motivated by inner characters and relationship with God, namely faith, love, and hope. This theme will resurface later in this passage and in 5:8. Each of them drives the actions and made work purposeful, meaningful, and bearable.

-work: doing something for a purpose	-faith: complete trust/confidence Faith is holding on to promises based on past experience
-labor: hard work, great effort Examples - farm labor, hard labor, slavery, child	-love: intense feeling of deep affection ---webster-unselfish loyal and benevolent

labor	concern for the good of another ----???action vs feeling??? Love is present action. It is the driving force for action and can even turn labor to joy as in child birth.
-endurance: fact/power of to last/withstand unpleasant/difficult process/situation w/o giving way	-hope: a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen -trust/promise Hope is focus in the future. Hope goes hand in hand with faith.

**4. After affirming them, Paul goes on to remind them about how the gospel came to them. Can you outline the different steps of evangelism to the Thessalonians? Why is each of the steps indispensable?**

- God loved & chose
- words
- power, Holy Spirit, conviction
- lived out by evangelists
- message welcomed
- imitate
- imitated

**5. How is each person of the Trinity described in this passage & active in the work of salvation?**

- God the Father -loved, chose (4), gave grace & peace(1), living, true(9), raised Jesus from the dead (10)
- Holy Spirit – power, conviction (5), gives joy (7)
- Lord Jesus Christ - gave grace & peace(1), from heaven, raised from the dead, rescues us from wrath (10)

**6. It's interesting that the Thessalonians imitated both the missionaries & the Lord. Why are both important? Isn't it dangerous to imitate other human? Whom do you imitate either consciously or unconsciously? What qualities would you like to learn from your role-model? Have you seen behaviors that's been pass on several generations?**

Missionaries provide life examples if they imitate the Lord. It is important to not only model the outward behaviors but also model how inner qualities are developed.

**7. How did the Thessalonians respond to the gospel? Why was their testimony so effective? How did Paul describe their conversion? Why is each of them essential for a genuine believer? Waiting seems pretty passive compared to the other actions, why is it important? How are these 3 things similar to the missionaries' prayer? Compare how other people described your conversion, what areas do you need to work on more?**

- turn to God from idols – faith- decisive action by faith
- serve God – love – continuous action motivated by love
- wait for Jesus' return – hope- peaceful resting & letting go of control because of hope

Again, we see inner qualities (our relationship with God) drive the visible work/testimony.