

1 Thessalonians Chapter 1

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

A. **Paul-** means *little*

1. Paul used to be Saul who was big in himself. When he got saved he went from Saul to Paul which means *little*. He became little in his own eyes so Christ would be big!

B. **Silvanus-** or Silas- means *of the woods*

1. Silas was the replacement for Barnabas when Paul and he quarreled over taking John Mark back on the mission field.

2. The book of Acts states the Silas was one of the ambassadors sent by the Jerusalem church with the ruling that the Gentiles did not have to keep the Law of Moses to be saved. [Acts 15:22](#) It states after this was done that it "seemed good" to Silas to stick around Antioch. [Acts 15:34](#) This was the time Paul and Barnabas split ways and Silas just "happened" to be there and Paul picked him to accompany him on his second missionary journey.

3. Many times a leading from the Lord is not an audible voice or a vision. It is just following what "seems good" in our heart. Silas followed that and walked into God's destiny for him as a missionary.

C. **Timothy-** means *one who honors God*

D. to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ

1. **church-** Gr. *ekklesia-* *called out ones*

2. **Thessalonians**

a. **Thessalonica-** means *victory of falsity-* *The original name of this city was Therma; and that part of the Macedonian shore, on which it was situated, retained through the Roman period, the designation of the Thermaic Gulf. Cassander, the son of Antipater, rebuilt and enlarged Therma, and named it after his wife, Thessalonica, the sister of Alexander the Great. The name ever since, under various slight modifications, has been continuous, and the city itself has never ceased to be eminent.*

Saloniki is still the most important town of European Turkey, next after Constantinople. Strabo, in the first century, speaks of Thessalonica as the most populous city in Macedonia. -Smith's Bible Dictionary

b. Paul was in Thessalonica ministering there for three weeks. After this time the Jews in the city were jealous of Paul and Silas' popularity and started a riot against them which ended their ministry there. They went on to Berea where the people were more noble than those in Thessalonica. [Acts 17:11](#)

c. During this time Paul obviously taught them that the Lord would return to the earth. This led quickly to debates concerning when this return would occur which Paul addresses in this book and in the second one written to them. Young believers often get caught up with end times and when Jesus will return. This occurred with the new believers at Thessalonica.

d. This book was written from the city of Corinth where Paul traveled to after Berea and Athens.

3. in God/Christ

a. You must first be in God and the Lord Jesus Christ in order to receive daily grace from God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

E. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ

1. grace- Gr. **charis-** *unmerited favor, strength, power, ability*

a. There is a vertical side to grace which is God's unmerited favor and there is a horizontal side to grace which is God's power and ability to do what you can't do in your own strength. Both are ours from the Father and from Jesus. The horizontal grace is our resource to live out whatever list mentioned after this verse!

2. peace- Gr. **eirene-** *harmony, tranquility, prosperity*

a. Notice peace is always mentioned after grace. Peace is a by-product of receiving grace. If you lack peace in your life you are not receiving the grace of God that is available to you. We receive this by focusing on Christ by faith.

3. from God/Christ

- a. Being in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ makes grace and peace available to us by faith.
- b. This is the most repeated phrase in the NT. It is not just a nice opening of a letter but a conferring of the resources to live the Christian life from our heavenly spiritual vine.

2. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers,

A. We give thanks to God always for you all,

1. thanks- Gr. **eucharisteo-** *to give good grace, thanks*

- a. Thanksgiving should be present in all our prayers. [Phil. 4:6](#) It is a token of faith.

B. making mention of you in our prayers

1. making mention- Gr. **poieo mneia-** *to make recollection*

- a. We are the ones who are to make recollection by choosing to ponder and reflect on what God has done and upon our past and current relationships. We need to set aside time to make recollection and then form this into thanksgiving and prayers.

2. prayers- Gr. **proseuche-** *communing towards the face, communing prayer*

- a. Prayer is the language of dependency. Out of the 613 commands of the Law not one of them was to pray because the Law was based upon your own works and ability to serve God. Man was never created to live independently from God. We need God. Prayer is our expression of faith and dependence upon Him.

3. remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father,

A. remembering without ceasing your work of faith,

1. remembering- Gr. **mnemoneuo**

2. without ceasing- Gr. **adialeiptos**

- a. Paul just could not get these people off his mind. He was

with them for only three weeks but they made such a strong impression on him that he could not forget them. He just had to write to them now to help them forward on their faith walk.

b. If someone keeps coming to your mind, stop and pray for them. You might even try to contact them and check up on them. You will be surprised how many times you will contact them just at the point of their need.

3. work- Gr. ergon

1. Work has a place in a Christian's life. It is the fruit of relationship with God, not the root of it.

4. faith- Gr. pistis

a. This is a fruit of the Spirit and it produces work.

B. labor of love,

1. labor- Gr. kopos- hard work that bring weariness

a. Again this is a fruit of our relationship with God, not a root of it. We first rest with Christ and then get up and work yoked up with Him! [Matt. 11:28-30](#)

2. love- Gr. agape

a. This is a fruit of the Spirit and it produces labor.

C. and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father

1. patience- Gr. hupomone- to remain under

a. In this verse we see that faith and love stimulates work and labor. Here we see that hope stimulates patience which is a fruit of the Spirit. Work and faith are natural by-products of faith and love. Hope is a spiritual force that stimulates the fruit of the Spirit.

2. hope- Gr. elpis- confident expectation of good

3. sight- Gr. emprosthen

a. We will only have hope when we keep Jesus and God the Father constantly in our sight.

4. knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God.

A. knowing- Gr. eido- to see or know in the mind or heart

B. beloved brethren

1. **beloved**- Gr. **agapao**- *loved*
2. **brethren**- Gr. **adelphos**- *sharing the same womb*

C. your election by God

1. **election**- Gr. **ekloge**- *to select out*
 - a. God's election is based upon His foreknowledge. [1 Peter 1:2](#)
 - b. Who does God select for salvation? Those who answer the call of salvation and accept it by grace through faith. God knows in advance who will do this. This is God's foreknowledge.
 - c. In the parable of the great wedding banquet Jesus says many are called but few are chosen. However, according to this parable who were chosen? The ones who answered the call! [Matt. 22:2-14](#)
 - d. God does not just arbitrarily pick some to go to heaven and others he sends to hell. There is no heavenly lottery!

5. For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

A. For our gospel did not come to you in word only,

1. **gospel**- Gr. **euagglion**- *good news*
2. **come**- Gr. **ginomai**- *to begin or commence*
 - a. The ministry of the Word began when we got saved, but it needs to be continued throughout our lives. [John 8:31-32](#)

3. word- Gr. **logos**

B. but also in power,

1. **power**- Gr. **dunamis**
 - a. This power was demonstrated by the signs following confirming the Word. [Mark 16:20](#), [1 Cor. 2:4](#), [Heb. 2:4](#)

C. and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance,

1. Holy Spirit

- a. The Holy Spirit does the spiritual work of ministry. [1 John 2:27](#) God just needs humans on earth to be His mouthpiece.

[1 Cor. 2:13](#)- [we speak..the Spirit teaches..]

2. **assurance**- Gr. **plerophoria**- *full conviction, firm persuasion, assurance*

a. Only the Holy Spirit can minister this in a human heart. If a minister will depend on the Holy Spirit to minister through them, then the Word will produce great assurance in the hearts of the people.

D. as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

1. **know**- Gr. **eido**

2. **kind of men**- Gr. **oios**- *such or what sort of*

a. We are not to walk as mere men, but as super men and women empowered by the Holy Spirit. [1 Cor. 3:3](#)

3. **for your sake**

a. Our living holy is not for God's benefit but for people's benefit. [Titus 3:8](#) Our holy lives are a billboard for Jesus and an attraction for the gospel. [Matt. 5:16](#), [Titus 2:10](#)

b. Here we see the importance of the Word and a holy life in a minister. Paul said to the Ephesian elders- "*I **showed** you and I **taught** you...*" [Acts 20:20](#)

c. Often more is caught than taught. Our life can help facilitate the ministry of the Word or detract from it.

6. And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit,

A. And you became followers of us and of the Lord,

1. **followers**- Gr. **mimetes**- *to mimic, copy*

a. To mimic or copy someone you must observe them closely. Is your life such that you would not mind people to give it close scrutiny?

b. The greatest leadership style is leading by example. [1Pe 5:3](#)

2. **of us**

a. People need natural examples to follow. Some young Christians have trouble following the Lord they can't see, but they can follow natural leaders they can see.

b. Some natural leaders set a bad example and make it difficult for young Christians to follow the Lord.

c. Paul said to follow him **AS HE FOLLOWED CHRIST**. [1 Cor. 11:1](#) People should not follow us if we are not following the Lord.

3. of the Lord

a. Ultimately, we are to follow the Lord. Natural leaders can fail and fall. If our full trust is in people, then when they fall we will too. Even when people fall we can continue to follow the Lord because He will never fail or fall.

B. having received the word in much affliction,

1. **received-** Gr. **dechomai-** *to welcome*

2. **word-** Gr. **logos**

a. We must receive the Word first before it can take root and bear fruit.

3. **affliction-** Gr. **thlipsis-** *crushing pressure*

a. This is one way these saints were following Paul. Even though Paul was encountering affliction he still was following the Lord.

C. with joy of the Holy Spirit

1. **joy-** Gr. **chara**

a. Paul had joy midst his afflictions. This was an example for the Thessalonians to follow.

2. **Holy Spirit**

a. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit. [Gal. 5:22](#)

7. so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe.

A. **became-** Gr. **ginomai-** *came to be*

B. **examples-** **tupos-** *type, example, a mould, a pattern, a model*

1. This is the goal for setting a good example- that those who watch us in turn become an example for others to follow and so on.

C. **Macedonia-** means *burning*

1. This is the region where Philippi and Thessalonica were located in.

D. **Achaia-** means *trouble*

1. We should be an example of faith for those who are in the fire of testing and in trouble.

2. This was where Corinth was located.

E. **believe**- Gr. **pisteuo**

8. For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.

A. **For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth,**

1. **word**- Gr. **logos**

2. **sounded forth**- Gr. **execheomai**- *to echo out, reverberate*

a. As an echo spreads out like a ripple in water, so the Word of God was spread from the Thessalonians out to everyone around them.

B. **not only in Macedonia and Achaia,**

1. In the surrounding areas.

C. **but also in every place,**

1. **place**- Gr. **topos**

D. **Your faith has gone out,**

1. **faith**- Gr. **pistis**

2. **gone out**- Gr. **exerchomai**- *to go out*

a. Not only was the Word dispersed but also their testimony was as well.

E. **so that we do not need to say anything**

1. **say**- Gr. **laleo**

a. It is great when those who we minister make our job obsolete!

9. For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,

A. **For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you,**

1. **declare**- Gr. **apaggello**- *to bring tidings (from a person or a thing),*

bring word, report

2. **manner**- Gr. **hopoios**- *what kind of, how great*

3. **entry**- Gr. **eisodos**- *coming in*

a. Their entrance was glorious but their exit was not. They were forced out of the city. It is good to focus on the good and not the bad. We need to follow [Phil. 4:8](#).

B. and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God

1. **turned**- Gr. **epistrepho**- *to be converted*

a. This Greek word is also translated "converted" in the NT. Paul is talking about their conversion experience when they first heard the gospel.

2. **idols**- Gr. **eidolon**

3. **serve**- Gr. **douleo**- *to act as a bond slave*

a. The only way we can be set free from bondage is to turn to the Lord and be His bond slave. A bond slave was set free but chose to serve their master out of love.

4. **living**- Gr. **zao**

a. Idols are not alive. They have no life in them and cannot impart life. God is **LIFE** and He imparts life to those who turn to Him. [John 14:6](#)

5. **true**- Gr. **aletheia**

a. If there is one true God then there are many false gods. The one true God is the only one with eternal life in Himself and can impart it to others. [John 17:3](#)

10. and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *even* Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

A. and to wait for His Son from heaven,

1. **wait**- Gr. **anameno**- *to wait upon, to wait for one (with the added notion of patience and trust)*

2. **Son**- Gr. **huios**

3. **heaven**- Gr. **ouranos**

a. Just as Jesus physically ascended up into heaven, so Jesus will physically descend out of heaven back to the earth. [Acts](#)

[1:11](#) Some teach that Jesus has or will come only spiritually to the earth.

B. whom He raised from the dead,

1. **raised**- Gr. **egeiro**
2. **dead**- Gr. **nekros**

C. even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

1. **delivers**- Gr. **rhuomai**
2. **wrath**- Gr. **orge**
3. **come**- Gr. **erchomai**- *present tense in Greek- coming, its on its way*
 - a. Universalists teach that Jesus died for everyone so there is no wrath coming for anyone. Let's put our thinking caps on now. If Jesus saved everyone and there is no wrath for anyone then what is this wrath that is coming mentioned in this verse? There would be no wrath coming at all, however, here we see there is wrath coming.
 - b. Jesus has delivered **believers** who have accepted Christ from wrath that is coming. [1 Thess. 5:9](#) However, for those who reject Jesus there is wrath coming upon them. [John 3:36](#), [2 Thess. 1:8](#)