

A Church Model

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Deuteronomy 10:12-22

James 2:14-26



Growing as Disciples in 2024

- Christ's Commission
- Disciples! - Not Just a Word

The Authors (1 Thessalonians 1:1)

- Paul, an apostle by the will of God
 - ★ Even Paul did not work alone.
- Silas or Silvanus: a disciple of Paul and the Lord Jesus Christ
 - Acts 15:27-40; 16:19-29; 17:4-15; 18:5
- Timothy, a disciple of Paul and the Lord Jesus Christ
 - Acts 16:1-3; 17:14-15; 20:4; Philippians 1:1; Col 1:1; 1 and 2 Timothy.

Reason for the Letter

- To ground the church in Biblical doctrine.
- To encourage them in the midst of GREAT persecution.
- To exhort them to live holy lives in the midst of moral decay.
- To clear up false teachings from false letters sent by those impersonating Paul.
- To clear up doubts/confusion:
 - Confusion about the return of Christ.
 - Confusion about the "Day of the Lord".
 - Confusion about living holy lives.
 - Confusion about respect of spiritual leadership.

The Church (1 Thessalonians 1:1; Romans 15:4)

- Church: ἐκκλησία *ekklesia* "called out ones"
 - ★ Called out from all humanity to be God's special people.
 - ★ Called out UNTO GOD. (Romans 8:29-30; Jude 1)
 - ★ Called out with a purpose/works to perform. Called out to SERVE. (Romans 8:28; 2 Timothy 1:9; Ephesians 2:10)
 - ★ Called out to be different - as different as LIGHT and DARKNESS. (2 Corinthians 6:14)
- Church: ἐκκλησία *ekklesia* "an assembly"
- Church: A **BODY** made up of many members that belong to one another (Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-22; Colossians 2:2), **grow together** (Ephesians 4:16); **prays together** (Colossians 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:17;

Romans 12:12; **Acts 2:42**; **studies together (Acts 2:42)**; **fellowships** (*koinonia* - see handout "One Another") **together (Acts 2:42**; Hebrews 10:25) and **assembled continually** with one accord **daily**. (v. 6 - remember Hebrews 10:25)

- Called "saints". (Romans 1:6-7; 1 Corinthians 1:2)
 - "saints" – "holy ones"; "separated ones"; "different ones" (2 Cor 6:14-16)
 - 3x as believers; 3x as Christians; 14x as the elect; 62x as saints.
 - One must be a saint before he dies. Only saints are allowed into heaven.

What Makes A Church A Church (1 Thessalonians 1:2-4)

- ① **Loved of God.** "Beloved brethren . . ." The love of God . . .
 - A SPECIAL Love (Romans 9:13; Psalm 5:5; 7:11; Malachi 1:2-3)
 - An UNCONDITIONAL Love (Deuteronomy 7:6-8)
 - An EVERLASTING Love (Romans 8:37-39; Jeremiah 31:3)
 - A GREAT Love (Ephesians 2:4)
 - A SERVING Love (Matthew 20:28; Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 8:1-2; 7:25)
 - A GIVING ALL Love (Galatians 2:20; 2 Cor 8:9; Philippians 2:5-8)
 - A PROPITIATORY Love (1 John 4:10-11)
 - A love that demands/commands us to love in the same way. (1 John 3:16; 4:11; John 13:34-35)
- ② **Elect of God.**
 - Chosen by God. (Ephesians 1:3-5; Romans 8:33; 9:11; 11:5-7)
- ③ **Salvation and the Trinity** (1 Peter 1:2)
 - God, the Father, elects His own. (Ephesians 1:3-4)
 - God, the Son, dies for God's elect - fulfilling the Father's will. (John 6:38-40)
 - God, the Spirit, enlightens/enlivens those for whom Christ died. (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 2:10-14)
- ④ **Works** (1 Thessalonians 1:3)
 - "work" - (ἔργον *ergon* {er'-gon}) – "that which occupies a person"; "the idea is emphasized in opposition to that which is less than work"
 - **FAITH *always*** leads to works. (James 2:14-26)
 - "*We are not saved by faith plus works, but by faith that works.*"
 - **Labor** (κόπος - *kopos* - laborious toil; wearying kind of toil; done to the point of exhaustion) of **LOVE**. Love obeys (does) the commandments/will of God. (John 14:15, 21, 23, 24; 15:14; 1 John 5:2-3)
 - ♥ This kind of labor is motivated, energized, done out of *agape* love.
 - ♥ This is a fervent love for God because of all He has done in saving us and making us His own. (John 14:15, 21, 23-24; 15:10, 13-14; 1 John 5:3) **Meditate on Luke 7:47.**

♥ This is a fervent love for the brethren. (1 Peter 1:22; 4:8; Proverbs 10:12; John 13:34-35; 1 John 3:16-18; 4:10-11)

- God given FAITH **always works**. (James 2:14-26)
- God's GRACE **always works**. (1 Corinthians 15:10)
- God saves us **unto works that He foreordained**. If God foreordained something IT WILL HAPPEN! (Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 2:13)
 - ★ THEREFORE, works is the evidence that one is saved.
- God's people are **zealous for good works**. (Titus 2:11-14)

⑤ Endurance of Hope.

- “endurance” NT definition: (ὑπομονή) - in the NT this is a characteristic of a person who is not swerved from his **deliberate purpose** and his **loyalty** to faith **and** piety by even the **greatest** trials and sufferings!
 - NEED of endurance: - Heb 10:36; Rom 2:7; **Revelation 14:12**
 - ONLY those who endure to the end are saved. (Matt 24:13)
- NT HOPE - What is it? “hope” is **NOT** an unsure expression as it is normally used in human affairs. Rather Biblical **hope** is grounded and anchored in GOD and therefore an absolutely SURE looking forward!
 - (Romans 5:2-5) . . . We rejoice in hope of the glory of God.
 - The end of **GOD's** work in us is our **glorification**. Read Romans 8:28-30.
 - We need to remind ourselves that our **glorification** is SURE because our salvation, from beginning to end is the WORK of God. (Philippians 1:6; “glorified” in Romans 8:30; Job 12:23)
 - Our glorification is SURE because it is “anchored” in the PAST in the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. (“It is finished.” – John 4:34; 6:38-40; 6:44, 65; 9:4; 17:4; 19:30; Romans 5:1)
 - Our glorification is SURE because it is “anchored” in the PRESENT in Christ's **work** today for us. He intercedes for His own. (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25)
 - Our glorification is SURE because it is “anchored” in the WORD of GOD. (1 Thess 5:23-24; Isaiah 14:24-27; Matthew 24:35; Titus 1:1-2)
 - Our glorification is SURE because it was “ordained” before the ages. (1 Corinthians 2:7; Romans 8:28-30; 9:23; Titus 1:1-2)
 - This “glory” is the **same** glory Christ had **before** He became man. It is the same glory as Christ!! (John 17:22; **2 Corinthians 3:18**)
 - And, today, we **eagerly** look forward to Christ's coming because He will transform our bodies to conform with His body of glory! (Philippians 3:20-21)
- ★ “rejoice” is **καυχάομαι** *kauchaomai* which means “to glory in”; “to boast in”; “to rejoice in”; “to be jubilant”; “**to express an unusually high degree of confidence in someone or something being exceptionally noteworthy**”.
 - It is an expression in the **confidence** we have **in** God. It really is a boast in God and what He has done, is doing and has promised to do!

(Jeremiah 9:23-24; John 17:2; 1 Corinthians 1:29- 31; 2 Corinthians 10:17; Galatians 6:13-14; Philippians 3:3)

- ★ The “hope” is SURE because this hope is NOT grounded in **our** works but is actually CHRIST HIMSELF! (1 Timothy 1:1; Colossians 1:27)
- ★ Our “hope” is in God – how sure can that be!!! – 1 Peter 1:21.
- ★ (Romans 8:25) ALL those with **this** hope persevere to the end!

Power NOT Just Words (1 Thessalonians 1:5)

- **NOT** *in word only* . . . (1 Corinthians 4:20)
 - This is not just another philosophy — this is **REAL!**
- **BUT** *with power* . . . (Romans 1:16)
 - There is a **CHANGING POWER** in the Gospel!! (Romans 1:16)
 - At rebirth one becomes a completely new creature! (2 Corinthians 5:17)
 - The plural form of this Greek word is used for miracles. Miracles are, by definition, supernatural works of God. (Matt 11:20-23; 13:54-55)
- *And in the Holy Spirit* . . . The Spirit takes the Word of God and WORKS. Remember John 3:5 - Word and Spirit.
- *with much assurance* . . . When the Spirit applies the Word of God He brings it with “much assurance” or “confidence” and those who have been enlightened **KNOW** that the Gospel is truth.

Evidence of the Power (1 Thessalonians 1:6-10)

- ❶ They received the message. (v. 6; Acts 17:1-4, 11-12; Hebrews 11:13-16)
- ❷ Imitators of the leaders and the Lord. (v. 6; 1 Cor 11:1; Hebrews 13:7)
- ❸ Suffering persecution with joy. (v. 6; See Romans 5:1-5; Philippians 1:29)
- ❹ Examples for others to follow. (vv. 7-9; **1 Timothy 4:12**)
 - We are commanded to **provoke** others unto good works. (Heb. 10:24-25)
 - Their faith was **visible** for others to see.
- ❺ Sharing the Word of the LORD. (v. 8)
 - Literally, “sounding the trumpet”. See Acts 8:1-4
- ❻ True repentance. (v. 9) - They TURNED from IDOLS to GOD. (Luke 13:5)
 - ★ IDOLATRY is the natural consequence of TURNING AWAY from God.
- ❼ Serving God (v. 9; Remember Deuteronomy 10:12-14)
- ❽ Longing for the return of their Lord. (v. 10; Hebrews 9:28)
 - ★ **PRESENT TENSE** - it was their lifestyle to “wait” (be busy and waiting with great anticipation)
 - ★ They KNEW something better was awaiting them! (Hebrews 11:13-16)

ARE YOU A CHURCH MEMBER?