

1st Thessalonians

Spring 2025

Week 1 – Intro to 1 Thessalonians

Key Verse - 1 Thessalonians 5:9

God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Background

<i>History</i>	<i>Date (AD)</i>	
Descent of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem (Acts 2)	ca. 30	
Martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 6-8)	32	Paul's conversion and Baptism (Acts 9:1-19; 22:1-16)
Caligula Roman Emperor	37-41	
Claudius Roman Emperor	41-54	
	46-48	Paul's first missionary journey
Apostolic council in Jerusalem (Acts 15)	49-52	Paul's second missionary journey
	51-52	Paul writes 1 Thessalonians (1:1) and 2 Thessalonians (1:1-2)
	53-57	Paul's third missionary journey
Nero Roman Emperor	54-68	
Martyrdom of James the Just	60-62	Paul is under house arrest in Rome
	62-67	Paul's fourth missionary journey
Rome burns: Nero begins four-year persecution of Christians	July 9, 64	
	67	Paul imprisoned and chained in a dungeon by Nero
Peter crucified upside down in Rome	67-68	Paul beheaded in Rome

- ❖ Paul writes to Timothy around 64-65 AD. His letters to Thessalonians were written around 52-53 AD.
- ❖ 1st Thessalonians is one of the earliest letters that Paul wrote. (Galatians is the first letter Paul wrote.)
- ❖ The city of Thessalonica
 - Location is modern Greece (NW Corner of the Aegean Sea)
 - Population of around 200k in Paul's time (Large City)
 - Originally called Therma because of the hot springs
 - Renamed after Alexander the Great's half-sister in 315 B.C. (Thessalonike)
 - Today is called Salonica with a pop. of 300k
 - Large Jewish population until 1941 – put into the ghetto side, then in 1943 rounded up and sent to concentration camps (Approx 54,000 or 90% of the Jewish population)
 - Today there are about 1400 Jewish people living there.
- ❖ The Church of Thessalonica was founded around 51/52 AD after only a 3 week visit from Paul.

Main Theme of the Letter: The Second Coming of Christ.

Question 1 – *What are some of the Old Testament prophecies about the coming of Christ?*

- ❖ In scripture (New and Old Testament) there are over 1000 related to the Second Coming of Christ.
- ❖ Not a matter of **“If Christ is coming back”** it is a matter of **“When.”**
- ❖ We should not be afraid, but rejoicing in the ultimate redemption when Christ returns
- ❖ The purpose of the book of Thessalonians ***is that people are to be prepared and ready for Christ’s return.***
- ❖ **Read II Thessalonians 3:10**

Question 2 – *Why is it important we continue to work and be watchful for Christ’s second coming?*

- ❖ **At the end of every Chapter in 1st Thessalonians Paul references the return of Christ.** (1 Thess. 1:10, 2:19, 3:13, 4:16, 5:23)
- ❖ Hope of the Church is our reunion with Christ and that he is coming again.

The Beginning of the Church in Thessalonica

- ❖ **Read Acts 17:1-9 and verses 13-15**
- ❖ Paul uses Jewish scriptures in a Jewish synagogue to reason with the Jewish people.

Question 3 – *Why was a mob formed in verse 5-7 and verse 13?*

Question 4 – *If you were part of a start-up church, and people were rioting about your faith, how strong would you stay in your faith?*

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Greetings from Paul

¹ Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you. ² We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. ³ We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by **faith**, your labor prompted by **love**, and your endurance inspired by **hope** in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Products of Faith

⁴ For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵ because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.

God has Created Faith as a Model for All.

⁶ You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. ⁷ And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. ⁸ The Lord’s message rang out from you not

only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore, we do not need to say anything about it,⁹ for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,¹⁰ and to **wait** for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming **wrath**.

- ❖ There is a parallel about the “Chosen people of Israel” in the Old Testament and today’s “modern church. We are all chosen and belong to Christ.

Question 5 – *What are some ways we become imitators of our spiritual leaders and of the Lord (vs.6)*

- ❖ 1 Thess 1:4-8 “**The Gospel Cycle**”

- Gospel Come to you
- We Modeled it
- Gospel is received
- You modeled it
- Gospel goes out from you

- ❖ The faith that the Thessalonians showed became known everywhere. (vs.8)

Question 6 – *Do people see our faith in Christ everywhere we go or is it a mystery to them?*

- ❖ **Read Hebrews 9:28, James 5:7-8, 2nd Peter 8-9**

Question 7 – *Why is 1st Th:10 important in a Christian’s life?*

Question 8 – *Why is God taking His time to return?*

- ❖ There will be a day when time is up. – Don’t get too comfortable
- ❖ We don’t care how the wrath comes, we all want to be rescued from it, and Christ has done that for us

Final thoughts

- ❖ Most Bible scholars agree that in context of all the discussion and papers written about the second coming of Christ, **the Church will be rescued prior to the Tribulation.**
- ❖ **1 Thess 5:9 – God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Outline of 1st Thessalonians

Three Main points of 1st Thessalonians

- ❖ Trials will Come (Ch. 1-3)
- ❖ Temptations will come (Ch.4)
- ❖ Jesus will come! (Ch. 4-5)

References

Verse by Verse Bible Study | 1 Thessalonians 1 | Gary Hamrick, 18 Feb. 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2w0Tj8meHf8>.

The First Epistle to the Thessalonians - A Study Guide with Introductory Comments, Summaries, Outlines, And Review Questions, by Mark Copeland. Executable Outlines, 2001

A Practical Study of 1 Thessalonians: Your Spiritual Checkup, Bible Teaching Resources, by Don Anderson Ministry

God's Word for Today: 1 and 2 Thessalonians, by Gary Dunker. Concordia Publishing House, 2007

Ephesians/ 1st & 2nd Thessalonians by Dean W. Nadasdy and Roger R. Somenberg, Concordia Publishing House, 2011

