

**Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church**  
**Wednesday Sermon**

**Date: January 15, 2020**

**Text: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10**

**Scripture Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10**

**Subject: Introduction & the three tenses of the believer's life with the church**

The last time you and I considered this book of First Thessalonians together in the church was 1999. As you and I can see, this letter of Paul is addressed to the church of the Thessalonians. Thessalonica was a very large, populous, and flourishing city, according to Pliny, a Roman author. It was the metropolis, the chief city, of Macedonia. It was formerly called Halis, and had the name of Thessalonica given it by Philip king of Macedon, on account of his conquest of Thessalia, which this name signifies. Thessalonica was the second largest and wealthiest city of the entire Byzantine Empire.

This letter was written from Corinth, in AD 54, shortly after Paul's departure from Thessalonica (Acts 16,17) and is the earliest of his letters. Let us notice the circumstances of his departure from Thessalonica.

**Acts 17:5-10 (KJV)** *But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. 6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; 7 Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus. 8 And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. 9 And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they*

*let them go. 10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.*

**Acts 17:13-15 (KJV)** *But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people. 17 And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still. 15 And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed.*

**THEME:** The theme of the Epistle is threefold:

- (1) To confirm a young church in the foundational truths already taught them.
- (2) to exhort those in the church at Thessalonica to go on to holiness.
- (3) to comfort them concerning those who had fallen asleep. The second coming of Christ is prominent throughout. The Epistle is incidentally most interesting as showing the richness in doctrine of the Apostle Paul with a very newly founded church. During a mission of about one month the apostle had taught this church all the great doctrines of the Christian faith.

**1 Thessalonians 1:1 (KJV)** *Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

***Paul and Silvanus (Silas), and Timotheus unto the church of the Thessalonians*** – Evidently all three of these men had ministered to the church at Thessalonica. Let us review the

founding of the church. In the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter of Acts, we read of the shameful treatment of Paul and Silas at Philippi – the conversion of the Philippian Jailor and his family. After their confrontation with the magistrates, they entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed (Acts 16:40). Paul traveled to Berea, then to Athens. Then after the preaching in Athens, traveled to Corinth. Therefore, this letter was written from Corinth.

**Acts 17:1-4 (KJV)** *Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: **2** And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, **3** Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. **4** And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.*

Thus we see that Paul was in Thessalonica three sabbath days (three weeks) preaching in the synagogue. Some believed (speaking of the Jews in the synagogue), who consorted with Paul and Silas. **and of the devout Greeks a great multitude**;-- these were Gentiles who were proselytes to the Jewish religion; and these in greater numbers believed, and joined themselves to the apostles, and became followers of them. Also a number of the chief women (these were evidently wives of the principal men of the city who attended the synagogue) – who also believed and followed Paul and Silas. Then trouble came – As we have read from Acts 17:5-15. In that brief time, the church at Thessalonica came to be. We have no other particulars about it except in this letter to them.

**1 Thessalonians 1:2 (KJV) *We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;***

Paul thanked God for the church – and prayed for them. What a blessing it must have been for Paul and his companions to see such a response to the Word of God! Clearly, as they heard and believed, though the text does not say this, it follows they were baptized after believing. The NT shows this to be the pattern. Believe and be baptized – then a church relationship. Would to God that we all thanked God for the LORD’s churches wherever they be found – and pray for them as we have opportunity.

**1 Thessalonians 1:3 (KJV) *Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;***

***Remembering without ceasing your*** – this suggests Paul and the other brethren prayed continuously for the church at Thessalonica – and continually thought of them which thoughts undoubtedly made them rejoice.

- ***Work of faith,*** - Their work, as the work of all the LORD’s churches is a work of faith. We search the scriptures for our commandments, our precepts, our ordinances, and our witness in preaching. We believe what the LORD says and so we act in faith.
- ***Labour of love,*** - Their work of faith produced a labour of love. Faith works by love. Love to the saints will exert itself, by serving them in things both temporal and spiritual, ministering cheerfully and freely to their outward wants and needs.
- ***Patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;*** - That church, like us, had patience (endurance) in both doing and in taking. Their hope was not

in this present world, but in the Lord Jesus Christ. Like Paul, they had not seen the LORD, but having not seen him and still do not see him, yet believing, they rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls. Their hope was both sure and stedfast. They know whom they had believed and were persuaded that he was able to keep that which they had committed unto him against that day.

**1 Thessalonians 1:4 (KJV) *Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.***

Ah, brothers and sisters, how oft in the Word of God doth our election appear! How precious to know that the Great God – Jehovah had been pleased to know us before the world was and set his everlasting love on us! How did Paul know these beloved brethren were God's elect? It was because they gladly received the word – obeyed the commandment to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be baptized – and continued with the church. This was positive evidence that the names of these beloved brethren were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world.

**1 Thessalonians 1:5 (KJV) *For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.***

O, how powerful that must have been in the hearts of the hearers at Thessalonica! For the gospel was not merely in word, but also in power (dunamis) – it was powerful, mighty, strong, and miraculous! That word was preached in the Holy Ghost – and was in much

assurance. The Gospel preached to them was blessed by the Holy Ghost to produce in them a large assurance, if not a full one, of the grace of faith in Christ, and of hope of eternal life by him. The hearers were persuaded of the truth of it and readily embraced it! Why did they do so? Because they were of God’s elect – and most certainly would hear the gospel and follow Christ.

**John 6:37 (KJV)** *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*

***as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.*** -- Paul appeals to themselves for the truth of what he had said. The Thessalonians must have observed, and could not help but remember, with what lowliness they appeared, with what fear and trembling, with what plainness and simplicity, without the enticing words of man's wisdom. What a contemptible figure they made, how they worked with their own hands, and endured reproach and persecution for their sakes; and had nothing to recommend them to the ones who heard – nothing with which to win them, and engage their attention, and strike their affection. In themselves, they had no power to persuade them to receive their persons, and believe their doctrines; wherefore the effects their ministry had upon them was not owing to the charms of words, the force of language, and power of oratory; or to any external thing in them, or done by them; but must be ascribed to the Spirit of God, and to the power and effectiveness of his grace.

**1 Thessalonians 1:6 (KJV)** ***And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:***

Became followers of us – they heard the gospel of Jesus Christ the LORD. In the midst of all the trouble in that city, they purposed in

their hearts to follow Paul and the other preachers – but follow the LORD. They had found joy of the Holy Ghost in believing – and knowing whom they believed.

**1 Thessalonians 1:7 (KJV) *So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.***

This church became an ensample (example) to all those who believed in both Macedonia and Achaia. They were doing as the LORD commanded them and others were watching what they did – in doing, they provided an example for others. Blessing indeed!

**1 Thessalonians 1:8 (KJV) *For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.***

***For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad;*** -- The Thessalonian church took it on themselves to sound out the word of the LORD. And they did it not only at home in Macedonia and Achaia, but every where else. The whole are was hearing of their faith in Christ.

***so that we need not to speak any thing.*** – Paul speaks of himself, of Silvanus (Silas), and Timotheous. These men had brought the gospel to them, but they took it and preached it so that it was known everywhere. There was no need for them to add anything.

**1 Thessalonians 1:9 (KJV) *For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye 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, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.***

***For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you*** – They showed the difficulties under which Paul and his companions had labored, what contention they had with the unbelieving Jews, what reproaches were cast upon them, and what persecutions they endured when they first entered their city and synagogue, and preached the Gospel to them. This turning bore witness of the manner they did preach it, with what boldness, sincerity, uprightness and affection, and without flattery, covetousness, and vain glory. It declared with what power it came to them, and how successful it was and how readily, cheerfully, and reverently they were received by them.

***And how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God***; -- To God from idols. This is conversion or turning. They believed and so they were committed to serve the living and true God. This is true in every church. We may not have served idols, in the sense that we bowed to stocks, stumps, and trees, but it most assuredly true that we served ourselves and ourselves alone before coming to Christ in faith.

***And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*** – Look at it, brethren, These turned to God and away from idols to wait for Jesus from heaven. They believed and were sure that God had raised him from the dead and that He (Jesus) had delivered them from the wrath to come. O, beloved, think of it! Jesus has delivered us from the wrath to come. What is that wrath? If we die in unbelief, we are immediately taken to hell and the flames of it to suffer. At the great white throne judgment, those who are in hell because their names are not written in the Lamb’s book of life shall be taken from hell to be judged for their works – and because their names are not in the book of life, they shall be cast into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone



forever! The blessed thing for us who believe is that in Jesus Christ, He has saved us from that wrath which surely will come – and even now is closer than it was just yesterday!