

Introduction

Thessalonica was a Roman colony and very important in the life of the Roman Empire. It was located 100 miles west of Philippi and about 50 miles north of Athens, Greece. It was the chief city of Macedonia.

This letter is believed to be the first of Paul's inspired writings. It and the subsequent letter to this Church were written from Corinth on Paul's second missionary journey.

The Apostle Paul is writing to this Church that he and Silas had founded and established along with the help of the young preacher boy Timothy!

As we view the circumstances of the founding of this Church, we understand that Paul was only personally in Thessalonica three Sabbaths before being run out of town! **(Note Acts 17:1-14)**

Paul has now been gone from there about one year. But his letter indicates that this Church was very familiar with Christian doctrine even though they had been saved only a relatively very short time.

We will see, as we move through this book, that Paul mentions **The Second Coming** in each chapter!

Paul's first purpose in writing this letter was to express his thankfulness for this Church and the work of the Gospel that was evident in their lives!

Second, Paul defended himself against the efforts of the Jewish opponents of Christianity to defame and slander him in their attempts to squash Christianity in the city!

Thirdly, the purpose of the letter was to encourage these new converts to stand fast in the face of persecutions and the pressure to forsake Christianity and return to where they were before!

A fourth purpose was to address a doctrinal question concerning the fate of Christians who had died before the second coming of Christ.

And lastly, Paul addressed some matters in relation to their Church life that needed to be dealt with.

I. THE SALUTATION OF THE LETTER.**A. The Senders—Who The Letter Is From.**

1:1a—Paul, Silvanus (Silas), and Timotheus (Timothy).

These three men had worked together in founding this Church as they were busy in the missionary work of fulfilling the great commission.

According to what we read in Acts 17:4, they had been able to reach some Jews with the Gospel, a multitude of the devout Greeks, and quite a few of the chief women!

However, there were a greater number of the Jews in the area which did not believe the Gospel! These had caused quite a stir and uproar—accusing them of treason and had run them out of town! After that, these Jews attempted to undo what Paul, Silas and Timothy had done by persecuting the new Church!

So here these three men are—still together and concerned about this Church!

B. The Recipients—The Church Of The Thessalonians. 1:1b

These men of God do not single out certain members to address here but rather they address the corporate body—The Church!

1. Their concern was for this Church and each member!

2. This Church was a unit, a local body of believers that included those they had reached at the beginning as well as new members that maybe did not know these men as well as the others!

BOOK OF 1 THESSALONIANS
INTRODUCTION—THE PEACE AND GRACE OF OUR POSITION!
1 THESSALONIANS 1:1

This Church was an autonomous body—a local Church!
(The Church of the Thessalonians!)

C. The Position Of This Church.

1. Their Position Locally Was In Thessalonica.

**2. Their Position Spiritually Was In God The Father
And The Lord Jesus Christ! (1:1c)**

Someone might well ask, well why not “*in the Holy Spirit*” too? Well, because positionally speaking, the Holy Spirit was IN THEM!

This Church was grounded and existed in the sphere and power of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Every true Church is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ and exists in the power of God the Father indwelt by His Holy Spirit!

The Church exists in the power of God that it might have the power to do the work for which it was established!

3. Their Position Circumstantially Was In Persecution!

But because of their position spiritually, the gates of Hell would not ultimately prevail against this Church!

The Church was in a STATE of persecution but nothing could change its POSITION in Christ!

D. Consider Paul's Title For Jesus—The Lord Jesus Christ!

1. “Lord” Refers To His Lordship Over Believers!

Luke 6:46—“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”

BOOK OF 1 THESSALONIANS
INTRODUCTION—THE PEACE AND GRACE OF OUR POSITION!
1 THESSALONIANS 1:1

Paul had acknowledged Jesus as Lord on the Damascus Road at the time of his salvation!

Acts 9:6—“And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?...”

Jesus remained Paul's Lord for life!

And listen, every individual Believer is called to submit to the Lordship of Christ! Not FOR salvation, but **BECAUSE OF** salvation!

1. He should be Lord over our minds!
2. He should be Lord over our bodies!
3. He should be Lord over our time!
4. He should be Lord over our finances!
5. He should be Lord over our ambitions and goals!
6. He should be Lord over our personal preferences!
7. He should be Lord over every aspect of our lives!

Every Church and every member of every Church should submit to the Lordship of Christ.

“*Lord*” also refers to His Lordship over ALL THINGS!

2. “Jesus” Refers To His Being Savior!

Matthew 1:21—“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.”

Jeshua, Jehoshua, and Joshua are forms of the common name “*Jesus*” which means “*Jehovah is Salvation!*”

**3. “Christ” Refers To His Being The Messiah!
(i.e. He is the “Anointed One” prophesied to come!)**

He is the fulfilment of the Promise of God!

2 Corinthians 1:20—“For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”

II. THE GREETINGS OF GRACE AND PEACE!

A. The Church Is Sent a Greeting Of Grace. (1:1d)

“Grace,” which is akin to the word “joy” is that which causes joy!

“Grace,” in a Christian sense, means the undeserved favor of God toward the sinner in providing the free gift of salvation through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ!

“Grace” is God’s love and mercy in action!
God saves men by His grace!

God keeps men by His grace!

God gives His grace to sustain us in the times of trial and temptation that come our way!

True grace comes only from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

B. The Church Is Sent a Greeting Of Peace. (1:1d)

In the Old Testament, “peace” meant harmony between man and God and the resultant wholeness and prosperity of the soul!

These folks had made peace with God at salvation!

Romans 5:1—“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:”

Peace with God comes when man stops fighting God!

Peace with God comes when Jesus enters the heart!

Peace with God assures the Believer of:

Being a son of God.

Being an heir of God.

Having eternal life.

Being sealed by the Holy Spirit.

Having made PEACE WITH GOD, they could now also have the PEACE OF GOD! Which was their great need at this time!

Philippians 4:6-7 –6 “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ.”

1. The peace of God is the assurance that comes from knowing God is in control of all things!
2. The peace of God comes with total commitment to Christ!

Conclusion

The Church at Thessalonica was being persecuted, yet they had infinitely more than what the world had to offer!

What they had the idols that they formerly served could not give!

What they had alcohol and drugs could not give!

What they had money could not buy!

What they had all the pleasures of sin could not produce!

They had peace with God, they had joy in the Holy Ghost, and they had satisfaction in the salvation of the LORD Jesus Christ!

The peace they had comes from knowing and receiving God's free gift of grace! That same gift and peace that comes with it is available to all who need it and want it!