



1 Thessalonians 1

Lesson 1

After you said the prayer to give your life to Jesus, did you make the right start? Paul began this letter to the believers in Thessalonica praising them that they had started well. Paul took great care in this letter to teach them about the return of Jesus. Waiting for His return produces a life that will continue to do well. May the study of this letter produce in you an eager anticipation of our Lord's return.

OBSERVATION: Read 1 Thessalonians 1

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework) and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they are about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to the *Father*, *Jesus*, and the *Holy Spirit*.
Key Words: *God/Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit, grace, peace, work/labor, patience, affliction, faith, love, hope, word, believe, and gospel.*
3. The contrasting word *but* is used twice in 1 Thessalonians 1. Mark each time the word is used. Choose one of those times and record what is being contrasted.
4. Choose one of the key words provided in question #2 and make a list of what you learn about that word as it is used in this homework.

5. Share one thing this chapter reveals about:

Jesus

The believers in Thessalonica

Paul (and those with him)

GREETING

1. The letter begins mentioning the names of Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy. Who are these men? Use the following verses to record information about each man:

Paul (formerly known as Saul): Galatians 1:13; Acts 9:1-5,15

Silvanus (also known as Silas): Acts 15:36-41; 16:23-25; 17:1-4

Timothy: Acts 16:1,2; 17:13-15

2. The believers in Thessalonica were familiar with Paul, Silas, and Timothy. They knew of their unity in serving the gospel together. Although the letter begins with greetings from the three, who actually wrote the letter? See 1 Thessalonians 2:18
3. The letter was written to *the church of the Thessalonians*. How does knowing the author and recipients of a letter give you an understanding of the contents of a letter?
4. *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*. What does this tell you about the author and recipients of the letter?
5. We have all received Christmas letters. What are some of the first things you look for as you start to read the letter?
6. It is our custom to begin a letter with the recipient's name and close with the name of the author. In the days of the early church, it was customary to begin a letter with the names of both the author and the recipients. This would save us the time of going to the end of a letter to discover who wrote it. What determinations do you make after you know who wrote the letter, the name they use to address you, and their initial greeting?
 - a. What determinations did you make about this letter from reading just the first verse?

FAITH, LOVE, AND HOPE: Read 1 Thessalonians 1:2-4

1. Paul had been God's instrument in leading these Thessalonian believers to saving faith in Jesus Christ. He had moved on to the city of Corinth and was preaching the gospel there. Yet, Paul had not forgotten those in Thessalonica. How do we know this? verse 2
 - a. What example can we learn from this?

2. Using verse 3, what three things did Paul *remember* about these believers?
 - a. Explain in your own words what you think Paul saw in their lives that would lead him to notice their:
work of faith

labor of love

patience of hope

3. Record the last phrase of verse 3.
 - a. How does knowing what you do is always done in the *sight of our God and Father*, determine your actions?
 - 1.) What are your thoughts when you are reminded that God is watching you?

4. Record the words of 1 Corinthians 13:13.
 - a. Why are *faith, hope, and love* evidence of God working in our lives?

5. Notice how Paul addresses them in 1 Thessalonians 1:4. Describe a person who is *beloved*.
 - a. The actual Greek here is *beloved by God*. What does it mean to you that God calls you His *beloved*?

1.) What can cause us to doubt God's love?

2.) What helps you to believe God's love?

6. Paul mentioned their *work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope*. In what ways do our actions help us to know our *election by God* (that we are saved)?

THE PRESENTATION OF THE GOSPEL: Read 1 Thessalonians 1:5

1. Paul mentioned several components of the presentation of the *gospel*. Fill in the blanks to reveal those components.

For our gospel did not come to you in _____ only, but also in _____, and in the _____ and in _____, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. 1 Thessalonians 1:5

2. In your own words, describe each of the components.

3. Notice the last phrase. Why is the example of the one presenting the *gospel* also important?

4. When you are listening to the Word of God being taught, what components are important to you? Why?

RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL: Read 1 Thessalonians 1:6-9

1. The reception of the *gospel* should be visible in a believer's life. Using verses 6-9, list the various evidences of their changed lives.

2. What words did Paul use to describe their reception of the word in verse 6?

- a. In what ways have you personally experienced *joy* in the midst of *affliction* as you chose to follow God's word?
 - b. How is the *joy of the Holy Spirit* different than the *joy* that is related to circumstances?
3. What effect did their changed behavior have on others?
4. Consider the last phrase of verse 9, *how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God*. Which came first – turning to God or turning from idols?
- a. Why do you think it is important to *turn to God* before we *turn* away from something?
 - b. Record the words of John the Baptist about Jesus from John 3:30.
5. What was the evidence of your new life in Christ?

WAITING FOR JESUS: Read 1 Thessalonians 1:10

1. The believers in Thessalonica *turned from idols to serve the living God*. Their active serving included an attitude of *waiting*. Who were they waiting for?
 - a. List a few words or phrases that describe a life that is *waiting for His Son from heaven*.
2. What two things does verse 10 reveal about *His Son from heaven*?
 - a. Record the glorious words of the following scriptures:
Isaiah 25:9

Romans 8:23-25

Philippians 3:20

Hebrews 9:28

3. What are you looking forward to in the return of Jesus?

4. *Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. 1 John 3:2-3* Why does waiting for His Son affect us in such a way?

REVIEW:

1. What did you learn about:

praying for others

praising others

the importance of evidence of salvation

the importance of our example

the importance of a changed life

the effect of waiting of Jesus' return

2. What characteristics do you look for in the lives of believers?

3. In what visible ways have you been changed by *turning away from idols (sin) to serve the living and true God?*

*And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence
to the full assurance of hope until the end,
- Hebrews 6:11*

Observation Worksheet

Chapter One

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. ² We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, 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, ⁴ knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God. 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. ⁶ And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷ so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. 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. 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, 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.