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# Thanksgiving for the Thessalonians' Faith - 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

*Topics:* Change, Commitment, Devotion, Faith, Persecution, Suffering

## Open It

1. Who in your opinion are the best role models for young people?
- \* 2. What would it take for someone to make a lasting impression on you?
3. What causes a person to really change his or her attitudes and behavior?

## Explore It

4. Who wrote this letter? (1:1)
5. To whom was this letter written? (1:1)
- \* 6. What did Paul remember about the Thessalonians? (1:2-3)
7. What made Paul believe God had chosen the Thessalonian believers? (1:4-10)
8. How had Paul presented the gospel to this audience? (1:5-6)
9. How had the Thessalonians responded to the gospel message? (1:6-7)
- \* 10. For what kind of faith were the Thessalonians known? (1:6)
11. Whom did the Thessalonians imitate? (1:6)
- \* 12. How had the Thessalonians' lives been a model for others? (1:7-10)
13. What changes did the Thessalonians make in their lives when they heard the gospel? (1:9)
14. What were the Thessalonians anticipating? (1:10)

## Get It

15. How was the Thessalonians' hope visible for others to see?
- \* 16. What characteristics in a person would convince you that he or she was a genuine Christian chosen by God?
17. What convinces people Christianity is true?
- \* 18. What is the difference between presenting the gospel with power and deep conviction, and presenting the gospel without it?
19. How are the Thessalonians examples for our daily living?
20. What persecution and suffering can Christians expect when they publicly declare their faith?
21. In what ways do we need to imitate Jesus Christ and other Christians we know?
22. In what visible ways have you been changed by turning away from sin and turning toward God?
23. How can actively waiting for Jesus' return affect our daily attitudes and actions?

## Apply It

- \* 24. How can you be more of a model to other believers this week?
25. In what way can you present the gospel with power and conviction the next time you share it?

## Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica - 1 Thessalonians 2:1-16

*Topics:* Integrity, Motives, Persecution, Suffering, Teaching, Work

### Open It

- \* 1. How do you know when someone is using flattery to manipulate you?
- 2. What are the signs of genuine love between a parent and a child?
- 3. What qualities should a Christian leader have?

### Explore It

- 4. Under what conditions did Paul share the gospel with the Thessalonians? (2:2)
- 5. What false charges had been made about Paul? (2:3-5)
- \* 6. How did Paul answer the charges against him? (2:3-5)
- 7. How were other traveling religious teachers deceiving people? (2:5)
- 8. How did Paul describe his relationship with the Thessalonians? (2:7)
- \* 9. What were Paul and his companions delighted to do? Why? (2:8)
- \* 10. What did Paul want the Thessalonians to remember about his time with them? (2:9)
- 11. How did Paul describe his work with the Thessalonians? (2:10)
- 12. In what way was Paul like a father to the Thessalonians? (2:11-12)
- 13. How did the Thessalonians receive the Word of God? (2:13)
- 14. How were the Thessalonians like the churches in Judea? (2:14)
- 15. What kind of opposition had Paul faced? (2:15-16)
- 16. What is God's response to people who oppose the preaching of His gospel? (2:16)

### Get It

- \* 17. How can we judge the success or failure of our work with people?
- 18. What kind of opposition can we expect whenever we speak out for Jesus Christ?
- 19. How do the opinions of others influence how we share our faith?
- \* 20. How can a desire for popularity (even among Christians) twist our desire and commitment to serve God?
- 21. Why did Paul work so hard not to be a burden to the Thessalonians?
- 22. What standards of behavior and care should Christians follow as they try to reach out to people?
- 23. What's the difference between accepting a teaching as the Word of God and responding to it?

### Apply It

- 24. In what ways can you share your life with others in your efforts to share Christ with them?
- \* 25. What can you do this week to make sure that you are trying to please God and not other people?

## Paul's Longing to See the Thessalonians - 1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:5

*Topics:* Encouragement, Future, Persecution, Rewards, Satan, Separation, Temptation

### Open It

1. If you were accused of a crime you didn't commit, how would you respond?
- \* 2. How do you encourage a friend who is feeling down and hopeless?

### Explore It

3. How did Paul describe his departure and separation from the Thessalonians? (2:17)
4. What stopped Paul from returning to Thessalonica? (2:18)
5. What did Paul say would be his crown or reward at the Second Coming of the Lord? (2:19)
6. Why did Paul consider the Thessalonians his glory and joy? (2:20)
- \* 7. Whom did the apostles send to Thessalonica to check up on the church? (3:2)
- \* 8. What was Timothy's mission? (3:2)
9. What did Paul say about trials? (3:3)
10. What concern did Paul have for the Thessalonian church? (3:3-5)
11. What did Paul think might undercut the faith of the new believers at Thessalonica? (3:3-5)
- \* 12. Why did Paul send someone to check on the Thessalonians? (3:5)

### Get It

13. How does Satan hinder or stop our efforts or plans?
- \* 14. How can investing your life in someone pay eternal dividends?
15. What personal accomplishments will count for something when we stand in the presence of Christ?
- \* 16. What practical things can we do to strengthen and encourage others in their faith?
17. How can opposition discourage and damage the faith of a young believer?
18. How could you help a young believer whose faith has been damaged by opposition or discouragement?

### Apply It

19. This week, how could you resist the temptations that hinder your spiritual progress?
- \* 20. What younger believer can you help get established in the faith? How?

## Timothy's Encouraging Report - 1 Thessalonians 3:6-13

*Topics:* Encouragement, Faith, Love, Prayer, Second Coming

### Open It

1. If you could make a surprise visit to a dear friend or relative, whom would you select?
- \* 2. How can you express love to someone when you can't see or talk to the person?

### Explore It

3. What news did Timothy bring to Paul from Thessalonica? (3:6-7)
- \* 4. How had Paul's work among the Thessalonians fared during his absence? (3:6-7)
5. How were the Thessalonians an encouragement to Paul? (3:7-9)
6. Why did Paul say, "for now we really live"? (3:8)
7. For what did Paul pray concerning the Thessalonians? (3:10)
8. How did Paul pray? (3:10)
- \* 9. When did Paul pray? For whom? (3:10)
10. What was Paul hoping for? (3:11)
11. What did Paul ask the Lord to do? (3:11-13)
- \* 12. What did Paul pray would grow and prosper among the Thessalonians? (3:11-13)
13. How should we prepare for Christ's return to earth? (3:13)

### Get It

14. How would you define and evaluate the depth of a person's faith?
15. How would you define and evaluate the depth of a person's love?
- \* 16. How do you show your concern for Christians in distant places?
17. What are the characteristics of someone who is standing firm in the Lord?
18. In what ways should we imitate Paul's example when assigning credit for bringing someone to Christ?
19. What place did the Thessalonians have in Paul's prayer life?
- \* 20. How does a person's love for others increase?
21. How can a person have his or her heart strengthened?

### Apply It

22. What preparations can you make this week to get ready for Christ's return?
- \* 23. What changes do you need to make to focus your prayer on others?

## Living to Please God - 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

*Topics:* Ambition, Faithfulness, Holiness, Immorality, Jobs, Marriage, Purity, Sex

### Open It

1. How much do you think people are influenced by what they watch on television?
- \* 2. How is sex viewed by many of the people you know and work with?

### Explore It

3. What instruction had Paul given to the Thessalonians when he was with them? (4:1)
4. What did Paul urge his audience to do? (4:1)
5. By what authority did Paul give his instructions? (4:2)
6. What are God's desires for our sexuality? (4:3-8)
- \* 7. How is the Christian's sexual conduct to be different from that of the non-Christian? (4:4-5)
- \* 8. How did Paul characterize the heathen? (4:5)
- \* 9. When people ignore or reject God's instructions on sexual behavior, what are they rejecting? (4:8)
10. What command of God were the Thessalonians known for obeying? (4:9-10)
11. What ambition were the Thessalonians to pursue? (4:11-12)
12. What is the result of living a quiet, respected, and responsible life? (4:11-12)

### Get It

13. How often do we need to be reminded about God's instructions for our lives?
14. In what way can ambition for fame, success, or wealth hurt a believer?
15. How does God want us to use our bodies?
- \* 16. How would you respond to someone who says it is possible to be a good Christian while also being sexually immoral?
17. How do the media influence our attitudes about sex?
18. How can we wrong a person through our sexual behavior?
19. What is a holy life?
- \* 20. What would motivate you to live a life that is pure and holy?
21. What influence on people and society can a hardworking, quiet person have?

### Apply It

22. In the future, how could you help a Christian caught in sexual sin?
- \* 23. What can you do to maintain your purity?
24. When can you spend some time examining your ambitions in light of God's priorities for you?

## The Coming of the Lord - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11

*Topics:* Assurance, Death, Future, Hope, Jesus Christ, Resurrection, Second Coming

### Open It

1. How can the death of a loved one change a person's life?
- \* 2. What do you think happens to us when we die?
3. How do you react when you hear predictions about the end of the world?

### Explore It

4. What concern was Paul addressing? (4:13-14)
5. How is a Christian's grief over the loss of a loved one different from a non-Christian's grief? (4:13-14)
- \* 6. What was the source of Paul's teaching about what happens to those who die? (4:15)
- \* 7. What sequence of events will signal the Lord's return? (4:16-17)
8. What effect did Paul believe this teaching about the Lord's return would have on his listeners? (4:18)
- \* 9. When will the Lord return? (5:1-2)
10. How will the Lord return? (5:1-3)
11. What contrast is there between believers and non-believers? (5:4-8)
12. What should we do to get ready for the Lord's return? (5:6-8)
13. What roles should faith, hope, and love play in our lives? (5:8)
14. To what does God appoint believers? (5:9-10)
15. For what reason can we be assured of our salvation? (5:9-10)
16. How should a believer use this information to help others? (5:11)

### Get It

- \* 17. How should a Christian mourn the death of a fellow believer?
18. Who has no hope when they die?
19. What hope do Christians have in death?
20. How can these words help a person who is grieving over loved ones who have died?
21. Why is the date and time of Christ's Second Coming of such interest to many people?
- \* 22. What influence should the promise of Christ's Second Coming have on how a person lives day to day?
23. How are faith and love like a breastplate?
24. How is salvation like a helmet?
25. How can talking about God's promises for our future encourage us in our daily lives?

### Apply It

26. What can you do to make sure you are ready for Christ's return each day?
- \* 27. What hope can you share with someone who is convinced that death is the end of our existence?

## Final Instructions - 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

*Topics:* Advice, God's Will, Leadership, Prophecy, Quarrels, Respect, Revenge, Thankfulness

### Open It

- \* 1. What instructions would you give to someone taking care of your home while you were away on a long vacation?
- 2. If you could ask God any three questions about how to live your life, what would you ask?

### Explore It

- 3. How does God want us to regard church elders? (5:12-13)
- \* 4. How does God want us to treat each other? (5:13-15)
- \* 5. What attitudes represent God's will for us? (5:16-18)
- 6. How should we pray? (5:17)
- 7. When should we give thanks? (5:18)
- 8. What is God's will for us? (5:16-18)
- 9. How should we show respect for the Holy Spirit's presence in us? (5:19-22)
- 10. What does God want to happen inside us? (5:23)
- 11. For what reason can we depend on God? (5:24)
- \* 12. What kind of affection did Paul have for the Thessalonian Christians? (5:26)
- 13. Who was to hear the contents of this letter? (5:27)

### Get It

- 14. How can you show respect for the elders of your church?
- \* 15. What can we do to live in peace with everyone in the church?
- 16. How can the peace among people in the church be damaged?
- 17. What situations tend to test your patience?
- 18. What does it mean to pray continually?
- 19. What happens when you pay back evil to a person who has done wrong to you?
- 20. Why should we give thanks in all circumstances?
- 21. What value is there in giving thanks in all circumstances?
- \* 22. How can you remain joyful when things go badly?
- 23. How does prayer relate to a person's joy?
- 24. How could a person put out the Spirit's fire?
- 25. How can we tell if God is actually at work in us?
- 26. How can we help or hinder God's work within us?

### Apply It

- \* 27. Which of Paul's short, direct commands in this passage do you most need to remember this week?
- 28. With whom do you need to make peace? How can you start?