



Bethany Bible Study & Discussion

I Thessalonians (Part-1) (Chapter 1)

Introduction & Reason for thanks (1-3): When was this letter written? When did Paul visit Thessalonica and what was his experience there? Did Paul have a fruitful ministry in Thessalonica? Why is he corresponding with them? What are two customary words in Paul's greeting to church? What good qualities did Paul observe in the Thessalonica church? **Election of God (4):** What does it mean?

Gospel work & Its Impact (5-10): What are the core ingredients for effective gospel? What are some evidences to suggest that gospel work was authentic among the believers of Thessalonica church? What are three critical outcomes of a life transformed by the gospel?

Personal Reflection: *Has your life been transformed by the gospel?*

I Thessalonians (Chapter 1)

Introduction and Reason for Thanks (1-3)

Election of God (4)

Gospel work (5)

Impact of Gospel (6-10)

Introduction

Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, Acts 17:1

Author: Paul

(gives credit to co-workers, Timothy and Silas)

(Acts 18:1-5, all three present in Corinth)

Time: A.D. 54

Written to: Thessalonian Believers

Written from Corinth (after 1 year of planting the church)

Background Reading: Acts 16-17

Themes:

- (1) **Exhortation** to strive for Excellence in Spiritual life
- (2) **Encourage** the persecuted church
- (3) Blessed **hope** of Return of Christ

Introduction : Thessalonica

Thessalonica, Greece:

Part of Paul's second missionary Journey

Preached Jesus in **Thessalonica** (Acts 17:1-5)

Facing Jewish opposition, Paul flees for **Berea** (Acts 17:10)

Jews chased him in Berea & Paul left for **Athens** (Acts 17)

Paul next went to **Corinth** (Acts 18:11, staying 18 months) ... this letter written from Corinth. Paul faced Jewish opposition in Corinth also. Paul visited Thessalonica later.

Introduction : Thessalonica

Thessalonica, Greece:

Paul was in Thessalonica for a short time (maybe few weeks or few months). Philippian church practically ministered to Paul (Philippians 4:16)

Despite persecution, Thessalonica church grew healthily.

Paul commends them for their good works and spiritual progress, and

gives them counsel on how to mature further and be a model church/believers.

Introduction : Silas

And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. Acts 15:40

Accompanied Paul during his 2nd missionary Journey. Replaced Barnabas, following conflict between Paul & Barnabas over John Mark. (Acts 15:36-40)

With Paul @ Philippi and in Prison where Jailer is saved (Acts 16:12)

also joined Paul in Thessalonica (Acts 17)

Introduction : Timothy

Then came he to Derbe and Lystra:
and, behold, a certain disciple was
there, named Timotheus, the son of
a certain woman, which was a
Jewess, and believed; but his father
was a Greek: (Acts 16:1)

Timothy

- Mixed cultural background, Jewish + Greek
- Believing mother, Eunice, with Jewish background and Greek father (most likely unbeliever), Christian grandmother, Lois (II Timothy 1:5)
- Timothy most likely saved during Paul's earlier visit to Lystra (Acts 14:8-20)
- Timothy is mentored by Paul (I Corinthians 4:17)
- Timothy was with Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:5)
- Valuable co-worker in second missionary journey, and later.

Paul preached CHRIST

CHRIST

- From Greek word, *Christos*, and means the 'anointed' or 'chosen' one
Hebrew equivalent word – *Mashiach* – Messiah

CHRIST HAS ARRIVED, BEEN CRUCIFIED/BURIED/RESURRECTED
...and CHRIST IS COMING BACK!
But some are still waiting for the Messiah!

- Jesus prophesied as Christ (Psalms 22, Isaiah 53/61)
- Jesus claimed to be Christ (Luke 4:17-21)
- Peter recognized Jesus as Christ (Mathew 16:16)
- Jesus is the anointed one and Messiah that Jews have been waiting for

Paul's opening greetings

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 (1)

Grace & Peace

God's grace leads to Peace with God and with men

Paul's ministry (2)



Paul is a good example for us to follow if we want to expand the work of the Lord.

To God be the Glory: I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase (1 Corinthians 3:6) Lord added to the church daily (Acts 2:47)

3 Reasons for thanks (3)

WORK OF FAITH

(fruit of faith = good works)

LABOR OF LOVE

(labor prompted by love)

PATIENCE OF HOPE

(endurance/patience inspired by hope in the return of Christ)

And now abideth
faith, hope and love
(I Corinthians 13:13)

What is the Motivation for our ministry?

Is it Love for God or Love for people or both?

Do we love our ministry more than we love God or His people?

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again (II Corinthians 5:14-15)

Election ... God's choice of his people

For he **chose** us in Him before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4)

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day (John 6:44)

For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath **chosen** thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. (Deuteronomy 7:6)

Gospel Work (5) & Satan's work (!)

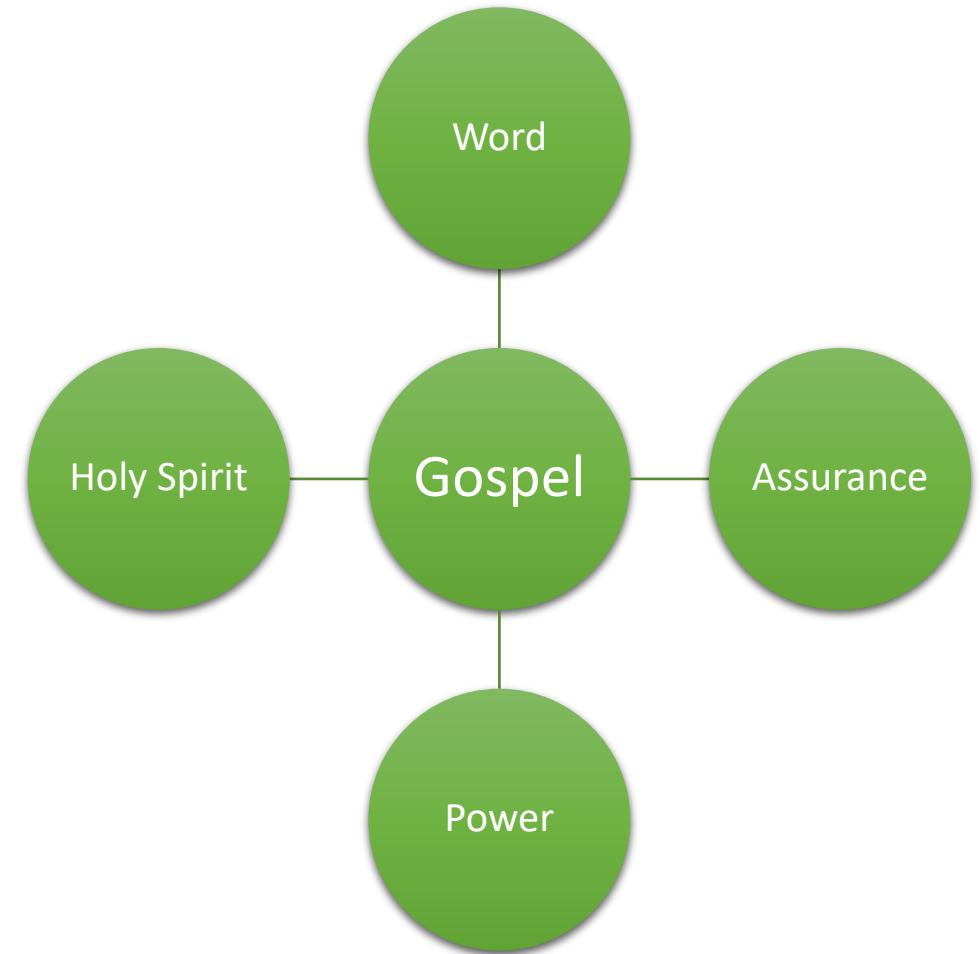
Evangelist preaches the Word

Word is heard and received

Conviction brought by the power of the Holy Spirit

Assurance of sins forgiven

Satan makes us to "doubt" that assurance



Do you have the blessed assurance?

For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; (5)

Word: So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (**Romans 10:17**)

Holy Spirit: And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin (**John 16:8**)

Assurance: For I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. (**II Timothy 1:12**)

Impact of gospel (6-10)

Affliction came (persecution) but believers did not lose Faith & Joy ... Joy during trials!

Became Followers of the Lord (and Paul)

Good example to all, and their testimony spread far and wide (7,8)

Life was Transformed (9-10)

Saved from Wrath to come (10) (Romans 5:9)

How has gospel impacted your life?

Paul's call
to follow
him

Brethren, be followers
together of me
(**Philippians 3:17**)

Be ye followers of me,
even as I also am of Christ
(**I Corinthians 11:1**)

Should church leaders exhort congregation to be
“followers of them”?


The Transformed Life (9-10)

Turned to God from Idols
(**past**, work of faith)

Serving the living God
(**present**, labor of love)

Waiting for His return
(**future**, patience of hope)





Has your life been
"transformed" by
the gospel?

If not, why not?