

Book of 1 Thessalonians

Historical Background

The book of 1 Thessalonians is the first letter Apostle Paul wrote to the church in Thessalonica from the city of Corinth around AD 50. Paul, Silas, and Timothy left Thessalonica under duress and traveled to Athens by way of Berea. After a short time in Athens, Paul sent Timothy back to serve and minister to the believers in Thessalonica church.

How is the book of 1 Thessalonians relevant to us today?

Apostle Paul sent Timothy back to Thessalonica church out of concern that false teachers might have led astray believers both new and existing. He understood that unless the young church continued to mature in its faith, persecutions, oppositions and false teachings would only increase over time. His emphasis on the return of Jesus Christ which grounds the believers with hope is what ultimately inspires transformation of saints with consistent walking in the power of God's Spirit. Overall, Paul's specific, practical instructions for the process of sanctification in light of the coming Kingdom of God can be applied directly to our current circumstances. The hope of Christ's return provides us with comfort amid uncertainties while encouraging us to trust and obey the sanctifying grace at work in our lives.

1 Thessalonians 1 (Exemplar)

Observation: What example(s) do you see in Thessalonians that Paul, Silas and Timothy celebrate? How had believers in Thessalonica prevailed amidst persecution?

Interpretation: Why do you think Paul commend Thessalonians faith?

God loving Us: How has God gifted us with people who demonstrate living faith?

God Meeting Us: In the life of the saints who were/are exemplars of faith, when and where did you experience their exemplary faith lived out?

God Refining Us: What are some people or means to help you become exemplar of faith?

God Inspiring Us to Serve: What are some ways in which you can model your faith?

Real Life Today: What kind of community would you like to play a role in modeling faith in the future?

1 Thessalonians 2 (Parenting)

Observation: What example(s) or illustration(s) does Paul use to describe his relationship with the Thessalonians?

Interpretation: Why would Paul used the imagery of parent/offspring? What core values and/or virtues do you think Paul desire to convey?

God loving Us: How has God gifted us with parents who demonstrate God's characters?

God Meeting Us: In the life of the saints who demonstrated/demonstrate godly parenting, when and where did you experience their parenthood?

God Refining Us: What are some people or means to help you cultivate godly parenting?

God Inspiring Us to Serve: What are some ways in which you can practice/demonstrate godly parenting?

Real Life Today: What kind of community would you like to play a role in practicing/demonstrating/cultivating godly parenting in the future?

1 Thessalonians 3 (Flourishing)

Observation: What was Timothy's report on Thessalonians? What did Timothy base his report on?

Interpretation: Why did Timothy prepare the report the way he did? What do you think Timothy's impression about Thessalonians?

God loving Us: How has God gifted us with people who are flourishing?

God Meeting Us: In the life of the saints who demonstrated/demonstrate flourishing lives, when and where did you experience their practices?

God Refining Us: What are some people or means to help you flourish in life?

God Inspiring Us to Serve: What are some ways in which you can flourish and help others to flourish as well?

Real Life Today: What kind of community would you like to play a role in practicing/demonstrating/cultivating flourishing life in the future?

1 Thessalonians 4 (Self-control)

Observation: What practices or activities qualify as an act of sanctification?

Interpretation: Why do you think certain practices or activities bring us closer to sanctification?

God loving Us: How has God gifted us with people with self-control?

God Meeting Us: In the life of the saints who demonstrated/demonstrate self-control, when and where did you experience their practices?

God Refining Us: What are some people or means to help you cultivate self-control?

God Inspiring Us to Serve: What are some ways in which you can practice/demonstrate self-control in your life?

Real Life Today: What kind of community would you like to play a role in practicing/demonstrating/cultivating self-control in the future?

1 Thessalonians 5 (Sense of Urgency)

Observation: What was/were (a) core message(s) Paul is sharing? How did he convey the message? What emotions did you observe from Paul, from Thessalonians?

Interpretation: Do you feel the sense of urgency from Paul? If so, why? If not, why not?

God loving Us: How has God gifted us with those who have sense of urgency?

God Meeting Us: In the life of the saints who demonstrated/demonstrate sense of urgency, when and where did you experience their healthy and balanced approach to such?

God Refining Us: What are some people or means to help you cultivate sense of urgency?

God Inspiring Us to Serve: What are some ways in which you can practice/demonstrate sense of urgency?

Real Life Today: What kind of community would you like to play a role in practicing/demonstrating/cultivating healthy sense of urgency in the future?