

1 THESSALONIANS

Lesson 1 w/Answers

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

This lesson will show us the role of the church in spreading the gospel, our role in spreading the gospel, and how we can know if we are bearing fruit.

It is amazing how easily that we, as a church or as an individual, can get so caught up in the day-to-day that we lose sight of the goal, and forget our primary mission. It is also amazing—and especially important—to consider the affect that our day-to-day behavior has on the acceptance of the gospel, as we will see in this lesson.

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 and answer the following:

1. Compare 1 Thessalonians 1:3 with 1 Corinthians 13:13. What do you see as common between the two? Would they apply today as they did then?
 - a. ANSWER: Comparing 1 Thessalonians 1:3 with 1 Corinthians 13:13, we immediately see the connection: faith, hope and love—the greatest of which is love. Paul's point in 1 Thessalonians 1:3 is that our work is accomplished by faith; and it is a work we do in love, inspired by the hope of heaven, our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. How did the gospel message come to Thessalonica? (In 1 Thessalonians 1:5, we are told that it came in three forms. Can you name them?)
 - a. ANSWER: Paul is telling the Thessalonians that the Gospel came to them not by man's efforts, but by God's will through the Holy Spirit who empowered Paul to bring the message of good news to them. (The verse references the gospel coming in three ways: in man's words, in power, and in the Holy Spirit.)
3. In spreading the gospel, what effect did Paul's, Silvanus', and Timothy's behavior have on the credibility of their message? What does this show us about our own behavior, and the success we will have spreading the gospel and witnessing to folks?
 - a. ANSWER: Paul reminds his readers that he, Silvanus and Timothy, "lived among you for your benefit." The result was that "you yourselves became imitators of us and of the Lord..." This demonstrates to us that our behavior, in good times and in bad, speaks volumes to those whom we may be trying to reach. It also demonstrates that if we a life pleasing to God, then we will produce good fruit just as these men did.
4. What are the signs described in 1 Thessalonians 1:6, 7, and 8, which of these indicate that true conversions occurred at Thessalonica?
 - a. ANSWER 1: They, the believers in Thessalonica, became imitators of Paul, Silvanus and Timothy for the Lord, in spite of severe persecution.
 - b. ANSWER 2: They then became examples to "...all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia."
 - c. ANSWER 3: Finally, "...the word of the Lord rang out from [them]..." as they began to proclaim the gospel everywhere they went; and those they witnessed to became witnesses themselves, and evidence of their belief in Jesus as the Messiah.
5. Will the acceptance of Christ and the gospel message result in changed behavior today, as it did then—or are the times different now?
 - a. ANSWER: The times are really no different with respect to the acceptance of Christ and the gospel message, whether now or back then. People are lost and need to hear the Gospel proclaimed. The pattern we see in these verses should also be the pattern demonstrated in our lives, from the time we first heard the gospel and believed until today. Is it true in your life? Do you see this pattern in the lives of other believers?
6. Did Paul have proof that his work in Thessalonica had been successful? (see 1 Thessalonians 1:9)
 - a. ANSWER: Absolutely! The testimony of those whom the Thessalonians were now witnessing to had reached Paul and represented proof that his work in Thessalonica had not been in vain.
7. The church at Thessalonica had done two things as a result of their conversion. One of these things is listed in 1 Thessalonians 1:9; the other is listed in verse 10. What were they?
 - a. ANSWER: The two things that the church in Thessalonica had done were: (1) to turn to God and away from the idols that they were serving, and (2) to patiently wait on the return of Jesus.

8. Should we, as the church and as individuals, be doing the same two things today? If so, then how?

- a. ANSWER: Clearly we should be doing the same today as well. The world we live in is a difficult place with all of the worldly distractions, compromises, and the total lack of a moral compass. We, as Christ-following believers, have difficult choices to make in how we live—recognizing the idols that so easily slip into our lives, and the many obstacles Satan throws in our path as we try to live a life pleasing to God. We are also faced with the second challenge, waiting on the Lord to return. Today, as never before, many Antichrists abound. Conspiracy theories and untold numbers of end-time prophecy predictions seem to press on us from every side. Just as in the days of Paul at Thessalonica, we must hold true to our faith in the Gospel and to the knowledge that, in God’s good and perfect time, his son Jesus will return.
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Have a great week everyone!

In Christ,

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