

Ready for Christ's Return | Part 1

Lesson 2

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

September 10, 2023

Christians with the Right Stuff

INTRODUCTION

During Paul's second missionary journey, he was compelled to leave Thessalonica (Acts 17:10), and he abandoned work still in its infancy. As teacher of the Word, he knew his instruction was incomplete. The remembrance of this shortcoming prompted Paul to send Timothy to Thessalonica so that he might "strengthen and encourage" the new believers. (1 Thessalonians 3:2)

During Timothy's absence, Paul left Athens and took his mission to Corinth where Timothy later joined him with "good news" about the Thessalonians' "faith and love" and their "standing firm in the Lord." (1 Thessalonians 3:6, 8)

Is this not the report a teacher hopes to hear? Imagine the sheer joy and relief felt by Paul knowing that his converts had prevailed in holding onto the truth of the gospel. This positive announcement, which God graciously assigned to Timothy, inspired Paul to pour out his heart most abundantly in 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10, as we will see in this lesson.

Memory verse: "We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Thessalonians 1:3

Pray, and read 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

OBSERVATION: What does the passage say?

1. What three attributes does Paul recognize in the Thessalonians that contribute to the church's ability to spread the gospel? (1 Thessalonians 1:3)
2. How does the gospel enter the lives of the Thessalonians? (1 Thessalonians 1:4-5)
3. What is the condition of the Thessalonians when they first receive the gospel message? (1 Thessalonians 1:6)
4. How far does the example of the Thessalonians reach? (1 Thessalonians 1:7-8)
5. What is Paul's reason (in this passage) for awaiting Christ's return? (1 Thessalonians 1:10)

APPLICATION: How do the passages apply to your life?

1. Are “faith, hope, and love” simply words we read in the same paragraph where “church” is mentioned, or is there evidence that these attributes are at work? What evidence?
2. Give an example of a 21st century church being a model to which other churches aspire. Why do you think it’s a good model?
3. Are there idols we can give up, as the Thessalonians did, in order to enrich our faith? Name one or two, in general, and one or two you, specifically, can give up.