

A Good Example

1 Thessalonians 1

The apostle Paul founded the church in Thessalonica during his second missionary journey. Unfortunately, he was forced to leave town because of those who threatened him (Acts 17:1-10). In his absence, these same people sought to tarnish Paul's reputation by telling lies about him. Desperate for an update, Paul sent Timothy to see how the believers in Thessalonica were bearing up under the trials and persecution. Timothy returned to Paul with a report of their steadfast faith and some questions they hoped to have answered. Paul will address those questions in this letter to the church in Thessalonica.

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:1-2.

1. Read the following verses and record what you learn about Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy.

Silvanus (Silas)	
1 Peter 5:12	
Acts 15:32	
Acts 16:16-40	
Timothy	
1 Timothy 1:2	
1 Timothy 5:23	
2 Timothy 1:5	
1 Corinthians 4:17	

2. Read the following verses and record what you learn about partnering with good and faithful people.

Psalms 133:1	
Proverbs 27:9	
Ecclesiastes 4:9-10	
Romans 1:11-12	

3. **THINK:** Consider the people you spend the most time with, the ones you are closest to, and the ones you call when you are hurting. Describe their influence on you.

Grace - the favor of God or of Christ, to which all blessings, especially spiritual, are due

Peace - the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is

4. **THINK:** Why must grace always come before peace both in our relationship with God and our relationships with others?

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:2-5.

5. What two things did Paul and his companions always do when it came to the believers in Thessalonica?

6. Read the following verses and record why we should **always** give thanks to God.

Psalm 106:1	
Romans 8:28	
1 Thessalonians 5:18	
James 1:17	

7. Read the following verses and record what is prayed for in each.

Luke 22:32	
John 17:17	
2 Corinthians 13:7	
Ephesians 3:14-19	

8. When you think about the dedication of Paul to pray for others and consider the types of prayer modeled for us in the Word, what changes are you inspired to make in your personal prayer life?

9. When Paul thought about the believers in Thessalonica, what three things came to his mind? (1 Thess. 1:3)

10. Look closely at verse three. What produced their good works? What fueled their labor, and what was their source of patience?

11. Take a moment to consider your own walk with Christ. In what ways can you see these producing-qualities in your own life?

Works of **faith**: _____

Labors of **love**: _____

Patience of hope in Jesus: _____

12. In what three ways had the Gospel come to the believers in Thessalonica? (v. 5)

Assurance – most certain confidence; abundance

Some take the word power to mean miracles. I extend the word to apply to the spiritual power of doctrine... It is the living voice of God, inseparable from its effect, as compared with the empty and lifeless eloquence of men.

- John Calvin

-

13. According to John 16:8 and John 16:13, what role does the Holy Spirit play in the Gospel?

The believers in Thessalonica had a brief encounter with Paul, but the power of his message had a lasting and obvious effect. Their faith was alive and produced good works among them. Their love was evident in the way they labored for the benefit of one another, and the hope they found in Jesus manifested in an enduring patience.

14. How have you been stirred up by the actions of Paul, Silas, Timothy, and the believers in Thessalonica?

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:6-10.

15. How did the believers in Thessalonica become followers of the Lord? (v. 6)

Having Received – to receive favorably, give ear to, embrace, make one's own, approve, not to reject

Affliction – oppression, affliction, tribulation, distress, straits

Joy – joy wrought by the Holy Spirit

It is important to understand that these were not people who were going through a difficult time and found hope in the Gospel to carry on. They were people who, by accepting the Gospel, would bring affliction upon themselves and not just some affliction but “much” affliction.

16. Think back to what you learned about Silas in Acts 16. How did Paul and Silas demonstrate the joy of the Holy Spirit when their dedication to the Gospel brought affliction their way?

17. What happened when the believers in Thessalonica faced affliction as a result of receiving the Gospel with the joy of the Holy Spirit? (v. 7-8)

18. What happened in the case of Paul and Silas? (Acts 16:31-33)

19. What two things went out from Thessalonica? (v. 8a/d)

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is most effectively spread when the Word of the Lord is coupled with life-changing faith, which results in obedience to His Word.

20. Describe what happens when someone is born again. Then explain how this relates to the Word of the Lord sounding forth and their faith toward God going out from those in Thessalonica. (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

21. What was being said about the believers in Thessalonica in the regions Paul visited? Circle the words that show action. (v. 9)

Note that two parts are required. First, we must turn away from our idols (fleshly desires), and secondly, we must serve and obey the living and true God. You cannot have one without the other.

22. How are we to deal with our idols according to Deuteronomy 12:3?

23. What idols remain in your life? Pray and ask the Lord to show you. What steps will you take to destroy them?

Serve – to obey one’s commands and render to him the services due

24. Read the following verses and record what you learn about serving the Lord.

Matthew 20:26-28	
Luke 4:8	
John 13:12-17	
2 Corinthians 9:12-13	

25. In addition to serving the Lord, what else were these believers doing? (1 Thessalonians 1:10)

Wait – to wait for one, to await one whose coming is known or foreseen with the added notion of patience and trust

26. If you knew Jesus would return tomorrow, how would you live today? What would you want to be doing when He returned?

This is how we should serve Him every day – eagerly going about His business, given in service to Him, and eagerly waiting for His return!

27. According to Acts 17:31, what has Jesus' being raised from the dead given us assurance of?

28. As believers, what can we be assured of when Jesus returns? (1 Thess. 1:10)

Wrath – anger exhibited in punishment; the day on which the wrath of God will be made manifest in the punishment of the wicked

He came to purchase salvation, and will, when he comes again, bring salvation with Him, full and final deliverance from sin, and death, and hell, from that wrath which is yet to come upon unbelievers...

- Matthew Henry

29. Record what you have learned about God (The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) in this week's study.

30. Record any positive examples or calls to action you want to apply in your own life. Take it a step further and consider how you will apply each one.

A Closer Look at The Word of the Lord Sounding Forth

1 Thessalonians 1:8

For from you **the word of the Lord has sounded forth**, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. **Your faith toward God has gone out**, so that we do not need to say anything.

The phrase *sounded forth* means *to sound as a trumpet*. The phrase *gone out* is equivalent to saying *to be proclaimed*.

31. Consider the above definitions. Describe what the *Word of the Lord sounding as a trumpet* would “sound” like in your life.

32. Describe how you could *proclaim your faith*.

33. As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have been given the responsibility of sharing the message of salvation. Read Mark 16:15. What is the command given by Jesus?

34. We are all called to sound forth the Gospel. How are you *sounding forth the Gospel in your part of the world*? If you aren’t, how could you be?

35. To share the Gospel and our faith is an outpouring of the Word of God in our hearts. Read Romans 1:16. What are we not to be? Why?

36. Have you ever been ashamed or embarrassed of your faith? If so, how did it/does it hinder you from proclaiming your faith?

37. Look up the following verses. What are we to be doing to sound forth the Word of God?

Isaiah 12:4

1 Peter 3:15

2 Thessalonians 2:14-15

38. Read Matthew 5:16. What are we to do? Why?

For our light to shine, the Word of God must be hidden in our hearts. We must know it, believe it, and live by it. And when we do, God's Word will sound forth, and He will be glorified! What an amazing privilege we have to preach the gospel by living it out loud.

39. Read John 15:4-8. Replace the word **abide** with spend time, dwell, and/or remain. What must you do in order to let your light shine, proclaim your faith, and sound forth the Word of God?

Today, commit to living out loud who you are in Christ Jesus!!