

# 1 THESSALONIANS

## 1:6-10

Letter	Date of Writing	Place of Writing
1st Thessalonians	54 A.D.	Corinth

We saw in **Session 4** that the church in Thessalonica was a model church. They were a church driven by their work of faith, they labored in love in sharing their faith, and they were patient in hope. Today we will see how the church put all of these things into action. Paul uses this theme of faith, hope, and love several years later when he writes to the Corinthian church (see 1 Corinthians 13:13).

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### Verse 6 –

The Thessalonians were **followers** of Paul, Silas, and Timothy (their teachers), and **of the Lord**. By being **followers** of the three men, it means they imitated them by believing the same as they did. The Greek word for followers is μιμητής | mimetes, we get our word mimic. To become a follower of Paul, Silas and Timothy meant to believe exactly as they did. The Thessalonians heard the men reason from the Scriptures, and they received it. That means they *took it in* hand. How does one become a follower of the Lord? It is by **having received the word**. We can believe in no other way except through the Word.

*“So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.”* Romans 10:17

Without the Word of God being preached, no one could believe. Which is why that same Romans passage says,

*“How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.”*  
Romans 10:15

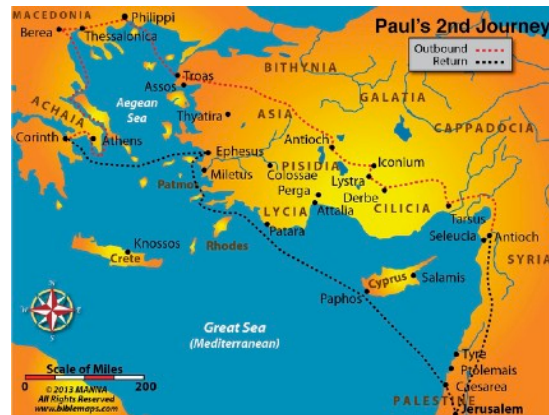
Paul always brought good news to a city by *reasoning and persuading using the Scriptures* (Acts 17:2; 18:4). Christians need to know the word of God so others can hear it and **receive** it. In chapter two we will see that the church didn't receive the word of God as the word of men, but they believed it as *truth from God* (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

And notice they **received the word in much affliction**. That word affliction means persecution and distress; they received the word even though they were under pressure to not believe. Some who believed the word in Thessalonica were assaulted, accused of treason against Caesar, and forced to pay money for their safety (Acts 17:5-9). Nonetheless, many continued to follow the Lord, and right along *with* their affliction was **joy of the Holy Spirit**. It wasn't affliction one day and joy the next. In a literal sense, this means they had joy while they were suffering. Wow! That kind of joy can only come by the power of the Holy Spirit through the power of the word of God.

### Verse 7 -

It is one thing to have faith, but what do you do with it once you have it? This church began to work. Their work proceeded from their faith! They were **examples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia**. They put their faith into action and began sharing it with others all around their region. That was their *work of faith* (vs. 3).

The word **examples** is from the Greek, **τύπος** [*tupos*] which we get the word type. Maybe you have seen a typewriter? They are not used much any more, but when you typed a page and depressed the key on the typewriter, you would get an image on a piece of paper. That image was caused by the striking of the metal key to the ink ribbon and transferred onto the paper. That's what this word *tupos* means. It means to strike a blow, or to print; to make an impression. They were example makers, a church that made an impression.



### Verse 8 -

They **sounded out the word of the Lord**. Sometimes this word **sounded out** is used of the *roaring of the sea*. When you are at the seashore, the sound of the waves never stops. If you fall asleep on the shore, when you wake up you remember immediately where you are because of the roaring of the sea. This church did this **not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place**. Anywhere and everywhere they went, they spoke the word of the Lord and that was their *labor of love* for the lost. Their **faith toward God** was noticed and it **spread abroad**. When we have a true message to tell, we spread it around as quickly as possible.

**So that we need not to speak anything**. Paul is using hyperbole here, but his point is that the Thessalonians were doing such a great job spreading the good news of salvation by grace through faith, they were doing all the work for everyone else!

### Verse 9 -

**For they themselves declare concerning us.** The ones who had heard the sounding out of the Thessalonians were declaring something themselves. **What manner of impact we had to you**, these believers from all over the region were relating back to Paul, Silas, and Timothy the impact they men had upon the church.

One of the most amazing things to those who listened to the Thessalonians was **how they turned from idols to serve the living and true God.** False gods, and images of idols were big business in the first century (Acts 19:23-27). Turning from idols put these believers in great danger. When someone comes in and messes with an economic system it can be deadly. We see that happen with drug cartels in Mexico. When a politician tries to clean up the corruption, that politician does not have long to live in this life.

These Thessalonian believers were disrupting the world with the message **servicing the true and living God** by grace through faith.

#### Verse 10 -

Not only was this church turning from idols and serving God, they had patient hope as they **waited for God's Son from heaven.** They knew that Jesus was going to return and that is where they placed their hope. Paul had undoubtedly spoken of the return of Jesus Christ and the Rapture of the church while he was with them, and they had believed him and were patiently waiting for the Lord's return.

He makes sure they know **God's Son** is the one whom **He raised from the dead**, and then he names him, **even Jesus.** There are many who worship a false Jesus, but we serve and wait for the one Son of God who was crucified, risen, and coming again, Jesus of Nazareth.

What has Jesus done for us? His return at the Rapture will prove that He has **delivered us from the wrath to come.** What is this wrath we are already delivered from? It is the *great day of his wrath*, mentioned in Revelation 6:17, *in which no one will be able to stand.* We call this the Great Tribulation. Believers in Jesus Christ are already delivered from that wrath.

Our deliverance was made sure the moment we believed, and it will be made manifest at the Rapture of the church which Paul will describe in greater detail later in our 1st Thessalonian study!