

1 Thessalonians

Week 2 A Model Church

September 20 2023



Last week we read that Paul and his companions thanked God for the church in Thessalonica because of their work produced by faith, their labor prompted by love and their endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. A Reminder of God’s past working 1:4-6

What stands out to you in these verses?

Paul writes that they are dearly loved by God and chosen by Him. The idea that God chooses us to believe in Him has been the subject of controversy for centuries– but it need not be– it is stated many

places in the scriptures, yet the Word of God also states that we must receive Christ as well. To become saved, one must “welcome the message”. (vs. 6) One must believe, confess and repent. (Rom. 10:9-13). There is a mystery to all of this that cannot be communicated adequately in human speech or grasped by human minds. What we do know is “All who call on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Along with this mystery is the mystery of God’s working. There are times when God’s working is readily evident and powerful and times when it is not. We read in verse 5 that they knew God was at work in the peoples hearts because of the power and conviction their ministry experienced while they were there. The Holy Spirit’s powerful working is expressed differently in certain circumstances. Even Jesus experienced this phenomena. (Mark 6:1-6). Paul Alludes to this in His letter to Timothy. (2 Timothy 4:1-3) Of What significance are these verses?

James 5:16. \_\_\_\_\_

May we never forget that we have a message, a Gospel to tell or “good news”. Gospel is from the GREEK *Euangelion*, it is where we get our word. *Evangelical*. To be an evangelical biblically means to bring “the glad tidings of Salvation through Christ.” (Vines Expository Dictionary of NT Words).

In America, how has the Word evangelical been understood or misunderstood? \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Models and Imitators. 1:6-8** While they were in Thessalonica, Paul and His companions modeled how to live in the midst of suffering. They were joyful in spite of the pressure they were under. They pressed on together. *Model: A figure formed by a blow or impression. A model for imitation.* As a result, the church there had gained a reputation for their faith, but also became a conduit for the Gospel.

**3. The Witness of the Church in Thessalonica: 1: 9-10** Turn from Idols to Serve the living and true God.

Their expectation, their patience was found in waiting for Jesus to come back– Their resource was not going to come from idols made of wood and stone, (Greek, Romans and Egyptian Gods) but rather from the risen Lord. Their endurance was inspired by their hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. What Idols do Americans need to turn from? \_\_\_\_\_