

Discussion Questions

Date: August 29th, 2026

Preacher: Josh Ratliff

Sermon Outline

Talking Points

Greeting and Gratitude | 1 Thess. 1:1-3

Paul, Silas, and Timothy Greet a Church "In God" (1:1)

- The Gospel transforms and troubles. (1:1; Acts 17:1-9)
- A local church is in union with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (1:1)
- **Question for Adults:** How have you experienced the body of Christ helping you draw closer to God?
- **Question for Kids:** Who is in your family? Who is in your family of God? How can you pray for them?

* Share about a time you received good news that instantly raised your spirits. (Proverbs 25:25)

* What is interesting to you about the diverse group of people who were the founders of the Thessalonian church (Jews, Gentile God-fearers, prominent women)?

* The message of Jesus created riots and trouble for the Thessalonian church. Has the Gospel of Jesus ever caused tension or similar trouble in your own life?

* How would you simply explain the difference between attending church and being an actual part of the local body? What are some dangers that can come from not being a part of the local body?

Thanksgiving for a Faithful Church (1:2-3)

- Prayer is an essential part of the ministry to others. (v. 2)
- The faith, love, and hope God gives to the body brings about good works. (v. 3)
- **Question for Kids:** God's grace is SUPERNatural and gives us power. Have you asked Him for His grace to work in you?
- **Question for Adults:** Which of these three gifts from God are you struggling most to receive today—faith, love, or hope?

* Prayer is an essential part of the ministry to others. How much of your prayer life incorporates praying for others within the body? Why do you think this is considered essential?

* Why is it important to see that faith, love, and hope are gifts that flow from God's grace rather than things we do to earn His favor? Why do you think we are unable to receive these on our own strength?

* Which of the 3 gifts mentioned in the passage (Faith, love, hope) are you most struggling to receive and live out on a daily basis?

Bottom Line: A local church starts in the grace of God and is given His power to do good works.

Rather than striving for these gifts out of a works mentality, what is one way you can better posture yourself this week to receive God's grace and be empowered to do good works for His glory?

Understanding Scripture

1. Read the passage aloud.

- Question: How would the original audience have understood this passage?
- Question: What was God's desire for them?

2. Reread key verse(s) aloud.

- Question: What does this teach us about the human soul, desires, or behavior?
- Question: What does this teach us about the nature, desires, or behavior of God?

3. Ask if anything is difficult to understand in the passage, or simply point it out yourself.

- Back up from the confusing verse and reread the whole section slowly—highlight the author's flow of thought.
- Ask everyone, "What are some possible interpretations?" Encourage curiosity!
- If needed, provide clarification, but admit if you don't have a satisfactory explanation, and volunteer to research answers. Share your findings over text or at the next meeting.

4. Summarize the passage in 1-3 sentences to refocus the group ("Okay, so far we've seen in Amos...")

- Question: What does this say about our relationship with God and/or each other?
- Question: How do the teachings, actions, or person of Jesus shed light on this passage?

Prayer Requests

