

I Thessalonians 1 – 5 November 2023

“Becoming Examples Of Faith, Love & Hope”

Introduction

*Paul went to Thessalonica on 2nd Missionary Trip w/ Silas & Timothy

*Just after Philippi (jailor) & before Berea (noble)

*Then they went on to Athens (Unknown God)

*He was there between 3 weeks & 3 months at most

*Let's Read Act 17:1-10 for the background

*They left in a hurry – would have been unsettled

*It's amazing what the Lord can do in a life in a very short period of time!

*At moment of conversion they began to experience faith, love & hope from their walk w/ Jesus

*Read I Cor 13:13 – “Now abides” – this should be the experience for us all

Today, we'll see 3 immediate results of walking in the faith, love & hope of Jesus Christ

#1 – There's equality & unity in Christ (Vs 1-4)

Read Vs 1

1. Paul was thrust out of Thessalonica, then Silas & Tim later – Paul was waiting in Corith for them to come, and then he wrote this letter
 - a. Joining all their names shows unity & humility
 - i. Thessalonians would see they all agreed on this message
 - ii. Paul doesn't rise above them b/c he's an apostle (Read I Pet 5:2-3)
 - b. Two dangers in church relationships
 - i. A pastor who exalts himself above others
 - ii. A person who exalts himself to Pastor/Teacher who is not called to it
 - iii. There should be an equality of relationship while each fulfills the role they're called to
2. "Church" – Church means 'the called-out ones'
 - a. It's God's design for His people to experience a move from one location to another
 - i. At conversion we've spiritually moved from hell to heaven

- ii. Throughout life we mentally move from sinful habits to God-honoring ones
 - iii. Then at death we physically move from earth to the very presence of God!
 - iv. We're called the "church in God the Father & in the Lord Jesus Christ"! Praise God
3. "Grace & Peace..." – Paul typical greeting
 - a. The wonderful combination of the Gk & Hb
 - b. The joyous gift that brings peace
 - c. Can't know peace of God w/o grace of God
 4. Notice union of the Father & the Savior here

Read Vs 2-3

1. To 'make mention' is the same as 'remember'
 - a. Prayer doesn't have to be every detail of one's life, but a simple bring them before God
 - b. Notice Paul's prayer is of thanksgiving, not just petitions –Be joyful for what God has done
2. There's always something to find fault w/, but notice Paul is thankful – hard to falsely find fault when you're praying for someone
3. These are pretty new converts that are already deeply involved w/ a full life devoted to God

4. Three things Paul is thankful for
 - a. A ‘growing *faith*’ – They’re working at becoming even more faithful and trusting
 - b. They’re going thru ‘pain to *love* others’
 - c. They’re patience & won’t give up on the *hope* of Jesus’ soon return for them
5. Faith, hope & love abides, but greatest is love
 - a. Why? B/c the two will end, but love won’t!
6. See, these things are done ‘in the sight of God’
 - a. Have you accepted that God sees your evil and it grieves Him?
 - b. Have you accepted that God sees your good and will reward you?

Read Vs 4

1. These things of verse 3 are what gives Paul the knowledge they are chosen of God for salvation!
 - a. Faith without works is dead...being a lie
 - b. The Thessalonians works of faith, love & hope prove that they belong to God Almighty!
 - i. Children of God are all equally loved!

#2 – There's power to live in Christ (Vs 5-6)

Read Vs 5

1. When Paul spoke the Word to them, something additional happened, by the Holy Spirit!
 - a. We can all speak with power when we're walking in the Holy Spirit
 - b. Read Luke 24:49 – Power comes from H.S.
 - c. Read I Cor 2:4-5 – Anything I can talk you into, another can talk you out of – we need to be convinced of God
2. Paul spoke the Gospel to them with 'much assurance' or strong conviction

Read Vs 6

1. 'You followed us & God' – Read I Cor 11:1
 - a. Some say 'Don't follow me, follow God' to take away their guilty conscience of living in sin
 - b. We should all be striving to be imitators of God worthy to be imitated
2. Specifically, they already experience what Paul & Jesus have – that of affliction & yet joy!
 - a. Thru troubles there's joy b/c we see the end
 - b. Read II Cor 4:16-18

#3 – There's natural multiplication in Christ (Vs 7-10)

Read Vs 7

1. B/c they followed Paul as he followed the Lord, now there are others following their example
 - a. Read II Tim 2:2 – One person to one person
 - b. Healthy sheep reproduce!
 - c. Who's your parent in the faith? How many children do you have in the faith?

Read Vs 8 (*Faith*)

1. Something spread like fire, but what was it?
 - a. Word of God AND their faith (or lifestyle)
 - b. Timeless truths in a modern application
2. Even today the fire can light & spread in a matter of just weeks or months

Read Vs 9 (*Love*)

1. People everywhere talk of how they turned from false beliefs and loved Paul's Gospel
2. Shows that many Thessalonians were Gentiles

3. Word of God was going out and being accepted
b/c people saw the impact on the Thessalonians
 - a. This's what it is to 'apply the Word of God'

Read Vs 10 (Hope)

1. Our resurrection not only delivers us to eternal life, but also from the wrath to come
 - a. The wrath of God is coming on the children of disobedience (Read Eph 5:6 & Col 3:6)
 - b. The wrath will begin during the 7-year Tribulation (Read Luk 21:23 & 36, Rev 6:16)
 - c. We're not appointed to wrath b/c we've obtained salvation thru Jesus shed blood (Read Jon 3:36, Rom 5:9 & I Thes 5:9)
 - d. Wrath of God was poured on Christ for us
2. Our living hope was born at the resurrection of Jesus from the dead
 - a. Read I Pet 1:3 – Living hope that we'll be resurrected just as Jesus was

Conclusion

So, there's an excitement in the air at Thessalonica! The Word of God is being taught & believed so the hope is spreading!

1. **Are you experiencing the equality & unity of the body of Christ?**
 - a. We're all brothers & sisters
2. **Are you living in the power of Christ by the Holy Spirit?**
 - a. Ask God to do a special work in your heart
3. **Are you seeing the natural multiplication of Christ's life in others?**
 - a. Christianity isn't a factory but a garden
 - b. Abide in the Vine (Jesus) & bear much fruit

Equality, power & multiplication are the natural results of living for Jesus

Therefore, we become examples of Christ by our faith, love and hope to spread the Gospel to others!!!