

I Thessalonians 1:6-10

Chapter 1 – Hope that Inspires

Verse 6

You also became imitators of us – The word for imitator is *mimetes* from which we get our English word mimic. It is used five other times in the New Testament. Note 2:14 of this letter. Also 1 Corinthians 4:16, 11:1, Ephesians 5:1, and Hebrews 6:12.

And of the Lord – Paul only desired that they imitate him to the degree that he imitated the Lord. Ultimately we are to look to Jesus and imitate Him. The truth is that those who look up to us will imitate us. What kind of example do we present?

Having received the word in much tribulation – Because they had received the truth of the gospel they, like Paul, had suffered persecution from the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles. In this sense they were true imitators of Paul and the Lord.

That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death. Phil. 4:10

With the joy of the Holy Spirit – The Holy Spirit gives us joy in the midst of tribulations (*Romans 5:3-5*).

The fruit of the Spirit is:

Love, Joy, Peace

Patience, Kindness, Goodness

Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control

Verse 7

So that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia – The word for example is *typos* from which we get our English word type. It is sometimes translated *pattern* or *model*.

...in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, so that you would follow our example. 2 Thess. 3:9

Verse 8

For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you – The word for *sounded forth* is only used here in the New Testament. From it we derive our word *echo*. The idea is that the word of God goes forth from them like the sound of a trumpet or of thunder that reverberates with an echo.

Not only...but in every place your faith toward God has gone forth – Thessalonica was a great commercial and political center for proclaiming the news of salvation.

So that we have no need to say anything – Their effective witness was such that Paul no longer needed to do pioneer evangelism in that area. They had a hope that inspired them to be imitators of Paul in his evangelistic zeal!

Verse 9

For they themselves report – The people of Macedonia and Achaia and others who had heard the gospel through the Thessalonians' ministry.

About:

What kind of reception we had...

How you turned to God from idols...

To serve a living and true God.

Verse 10

And to wait for His Son from heaven whom He raised from the dead – Jesus is resurrected and seated at the right hand of God the Father in heaven (Acts 2:32-36). Stephen, right before he was stoned to death, saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God (Acts 7:54-56). The apostles had witnessed the ascension of the Lord and had heard the angelic promise that Jesus would come again the same way (Acts 1:6-11). Our expectancy of Christ's return should motivate us to live a holy life.

... We know that when He appears, we shall be like him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.
1 John 3:2-3

That is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come – Paul will speak specifically about our deliverance from the wrath to come in 4:13-5:11. Because of that context we understand this wrath to be the specific outpouring of judgment during the tribulation period. Part of our hope as believers is knowing that the Lord will come for us before the outpouring of His wrath. We believe that a pre-tribulational rapture is the best understanding of this deliverance.

The return of Christ for us gives us hope that inspires!