

# I Thessalonians 1:1-5

## Chapter 1 – Hope that Inspires

### Verse 1

*Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy* – Paul’s co-missionaries (Acts 15:40, 16:1, 17:14).

*To the church* – The Greek word is *ekklesia* which means an assembly. It became associated with the assembly of believers called out for Jesus Christ.

*In God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ* – Paul immediately recognizes Jesus as equal with God.

*The Lord Jesus Christ:*

*Lord* – The word is *kurios* and is often used in the Septuagint for God (note Psalm 32:2 quoted in Romans 4:8).

*Jesus* – The personal name of the Man of Galilee. The name means “*Savior*”.

*Christ* – The Anointed One, the Messiah.

*Grace to you and peace* – Paul uses this greeting in all of his letters. It is a snapshot of his theology. We must understand the *grace* of God before we can experience the *peace* of God.

*Grace* – Romans 3:24, 5:15-17, Ephesians 1:7, 2:8-9 etc.

*Peace: With God* – Romans 5:1. *Of God* – Philippians 4:6-7.

### Verse 2

*We give thanks to God always for all of you making mention of you in our prayers* –

*Always* – Paul often uses this word in relation to prayer and thanksgiving. Note 5:16.

### Verse 3

*Constantly bearing in mind* – This word is only used four times in the N.T. Each time it is used by Paul and is connected to prayer (Romans 1:9, 1 Thess. 2:13, 5:17).

*Work of faith* = Work characterized by faith or the activity that faith inspires. The text literally reads, “*of you, the work, the faith*”.

*Labor of love* = The labor that love prompts or inspires. *Labor* = hard work, toil. *Love* = *agape*, sacrificial love.

*Steadfastness of hope* = Endurance that is inspired by hope. *Steadfastness* means ‘to remain under a load’.

*In our Lord Jesus Christ* – Jesus is the object of our hope and inspiration!

*In the presence of our God and Father* - This expression is used by Paul to the Thessalonians in both a future and present sense. Note 2:19, 3:9 and 3:13.

### Verse 4

*Knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you - Beloved by God* – Only here in the N.T. in this form but similar in 2 Thess. 2:13 and Jude 1.

*His choice of you* – The word is *eklogay* which we derive along with the companion words *eklegein* (to choose) and *eklektos* (chosen) the doctrine of election.

*Election* – Election or God’s choice in the Bible is always for a purpose or mission.

“*Chosen or elect*, are used of God’s selection of men or agencies for special missions or attainments; but neither here nor elsewhere in the N. T. is there any warrant for the revolting doctrine that God has predestined a definite number of mankind to eternal life, and the rest to eternal destruction.”<sup>1</sup>

Marvin R. Vincent

## Verse 5

*For* – *For* can mean the cause or reason of their choice or simply the circumstances of their choice. Verses 5-7 detail the fruits of their service or choice.

*Our gospel* – Paul preached a clear message of grace everywhere. The gospel he preached was received directly from Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:11-12) and confirmed by the other apostles in Acts 15.

*Not only...but also* – There is a sharp contrast between “*word only*” and “*power*”. The gospel is the *power of God for salvation* (Romans 1:16).

*And in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction* – The indwelling Spirit gave them full assurance of their life in Christ. Note the three other uses of this word for full assurance, Colossians 2:2, Hebrews 6:11, and 10:22.

*Just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake* – The lives of Paul, Silas, and Timothy backed up their message. We may teach with our words but people will not listen unless we also teach with our lives. James teaches the same truth in James 1:19-27. If we want to be effective servants of Jesus Christ we must practice what we preach!

---

<sup>1</sup> Vincent, M. R. (1887). *Word studies in the New Testament* (Vol. 4, p. 16). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.