

Here Paul speaks of his fond memory of the Thessalonian believers' "work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 3).

INTRODUCTION (OBSERVATION):

1. Remember that the epistles were real letters to real people dealing with real problems. What can we learn about the church in Thessalonica from their back-story? See Luke's account of the planting of the Thessalonian church (**Acts 17:1-9**).
2. To get a feel for the letter as a whole, scan through the entire letter to find examples of these themes:
 - Paul's warm **affection** for the believers in Thessalonica
 - Common knowledge Paul **shared** with them (clauses beginning "we know" and "you know")
 - References to the **Second Coming** of Christ

DISCUSSION (INTERPRETATION):

1. What do those three key phrases mean: **work of faith, labor of love, steadfastness of hope**? Use commentaries and/or paraphrases to examine these key ideas from other angles.
2. How does Paul know that God had chosen the believers in Thessalonica? What does this suggest about the **order** of these two crucial events in our salvation? (Which comes first? Which is cause and which is effect?)
 - Our regeneration (being brought from death to life)
 - Our faith (trusting in Christ for our salvation)

We have not finished reflecting on Scripture until we begin to employ first-person pronouns. Here we begin to consider how we must respond to what God has said in His Word.

- [illegible]