



Study of: 1 Thessalonians

THEME: THE IMPACT OF BEING A GOOD EXAMPLE

By: Bishop Eddie Gross

Chapter 1 Overview:

This chapter begins with Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy greeting the Thessalonian church with grace and peace from God. They express gratitude for the believers' faith, love, and hope, noting their genuine reception of the gospel through the Spirit's power. The Thessalonians are praised for becoming role models by turning from idolatry to serve the true God and eagerly awaiting Christ's return. *Their faith has inspired many, spreading the message throughout the region and beyond.*

Chapter 1 Objectives:

1. How did the Thessalonians demonstrate faith despite much affliction?
2. What is the difference between our work of faith vs our works to prove our faith?
3. How can our personal spiritual transformation impact the wider community?

Their Works

1 Thessalonians 1:1-4 *"Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace [a]from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, 3 remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father, 4 knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God."*

- a. **"Work of faith"** - There is a difference between "work" born out of true faith and work that tries to prove faith
 - i. **John 6:29** *"Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.'"*
- b. **"Labor of love"** - When conditions are difficult, what keeps us faithful is NOT the love of the work but our love for Christ
 - i. **Romans 16:3-4** *"3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles."*
- c. **"Patience of hope"** - Patience must be rooted in truth as an anchor to the soul
 - i. AMP *"unwavering hope in [the return of] our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah)"*

Q. How did the Thessalonians demonstrate faith despite much affliction?

Their Example

1 Thessalonians 1:6-8 *“6 And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, 7 so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. 8 For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.”*

- AMP “ And you [set yourselves to] become imitators of us and [through us] of the Lord Himself, for you welcomed our message in [spite of] much persecution, with joy [inspired] by the Holy Spirit;”
- How we witness matters. Can you witness in the wilderness despite the affliction?
- “With the joy of the Holy Spirit” - only the Holy Spirit can bring us joy in the midst of afflictions
- “You have become examples[witness] in all Macedonia, Achaia[uh·kai·uh]
- “Your faith toward God “has gone out”
 - Thessalonica was a port city on the Egnatia Via [Egnatian Way] - a Roman highway used to move trade and military forces

Q. What is the difference between our work of faith vs our works to prove our faith? Which will endure?

Their Impact

1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 *“9 For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.”*

- “For they themselves” - referring to the region of Macedonia and Achaia - declare the impact of Paul’s ministry upon these saints
- “How you turned from idols to serve the true and living God” - this is one of the best examples of bearing fruit for the kingdom by LIVING YOUR testimony!
- **John 15:5** *“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”*
- The truth of salvation: “and to wait for His Son [they believed that Jesus was indeed the Son of God] from heaven [they believed that Jesus ascended on high] who He raised from the dead [they believed Jesus was resurrected from the grave] even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come [they believed Jesus is coming back]

Q. How can our personal spiritual transformation impact the wider community?

Bonus Question:

Q. How does Christ’s resurrection/return help us to endure persecution?