

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF 1<sup>st</sup> THESSALONIANS**

We begin a new study of the Book of 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians with a **six-point** Introduction.

### **1. Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians in 51 AD during an 18-month ministry in Corinth. (Acts 18:11).**

Paul wrote to a newly formed Church, consisting of a few Jews, but mostly Gentile converts (1 Thess.1:9-10).

### **2. While Paul and Silas were on Paul's Second Missionary Trip (Acts 15:36-18:22), Paul received the Call to Macedonia in Acts 16:6-10.**

They worked their way to the seaport city of Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-10) where Paul and Silas began preaching a gospel of grace salvation in the local synagogues; but were forced to leave after three Sabbaths of successful evangelism of (Acts 17:1-2).

(Acts 17:3-4) "Explaining and giving evidence (Scriptures) that Christ had to suffer (His death on the cross) and rise again from the dead (burial and resurrection on the third day), and saying, 'This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ.' And some of them (Jews) were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with a large number of the God fearing (positive volition at God-consciousness) Greeks and a number of the leading women."

### **3. Within three Sabbaths (three weeks), they were forced to leave the city because of mob persecution (Acts 17:5-10).**

A famous quote came from the officials blaming the mob persecution on Paul and Silas - "**These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.**" (Acts 17:6) (KJB)

Actually, the gospel of grace salvation 'turns the world right side up, making the believer Righteous in God's sight.

(2 Cor.5:21) "He made Him who knew no sin to become on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

**Doctrinal Point:** Apostate political and religious leaders are afraid of having men's hearts changed by the gospel of grace salvation (Luke 8:26-39) (Legion demoniac).

### **4. Paul and Silas fled to Berea and evangelized it - until force to leave it as well. (Acts 17:11-15)**

Paul left Silas and Timothy at Berea and travelled onto Athens (Acts 17:16-33) encountering those who rejected the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He then left for Corinth (Acts 18).

- Silas and Timothy rejoined Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:5)
- Timothy was sent back to oversee the Macedonia ministries.
- Paul ministered in Ephesus (Acts 19:22) (1 Thess.3:1-5)

(1 Thess.3:2) "And we sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to **strengthen and encourage you as to your faith.**" (1 Thess.4:1-8) (Rom.10:17).

5. **1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians are known by Bible students for their Eschatology.**

**For example**, every chapter of 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians ends with a message of Eschatology.

- (1 Thess.1:9-10)
- (1 Thess.2:19-20)
- (1 Thess.3:12-13)
- (1 Thess.4:13-18)
- (1 Thess.5:23-24)

One of the most quoted passages on the **Rapture of the Church** comes from (1 Thess.4:13-18).

Paul used Eschatology to assure believers that their future was secured in the hands of God (John 10:28-30).

6. **In closing, let's examine (1 Thess.1:1-4) by Paul's use of four participles working off a main verb.**

- (1 Thess.1:2) “We **give thanks** (eucharisteo/ p.a.ind.1pl) [**main verb**] to God always for you.”
- (1 Thess.1:2) (We give thanks) “**making** (poieo/ **p.m.ptc.nplm**) mention of you in our prayers,”
- (1 Thess.1:3) (We give thanks) “constantly **bearing in mind** (mnemoneuo/ **p.a.ptc.nplm**) [memory -recall] ( John 14:26) you're **the work of the faith** and **the labor of the love** and **the steadfastness of the hope** in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father,”
  - Note 3 things in memory recall (2 Tim.3:16-17) (1 Cor.13:13; 5:8) (Rom.5:1-5) and (Col.1:4-5).
    - The Faith (the work)
    - The Love (the labor)
    - The Hope (the steadfastness/ patience)
- (1 Thess.1:4) (We give thanks) “knowing (oida/ **perf.a.ptc.nplm**), **brethren**.
- (1 Thess.1:4) (We give thanks) “**beloved** (agapao/ perf.p.ptc.vplm) **by God**, His **choice** (ten ekloge) [**election**] of you.”
  - Note 3 of the 20 Status Privileges in the package of **50 Things**.