

Strengthened by God's Word

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

"Turning to God"– June 5, 2022



Introduction

How would you respond to this statement: "The Christian life is easy - it's smooth sailing."?

For anyone who has faithfully followed Jesus for any time - that statement seems silly. There is an element of struggle in the Christian life. We are at odds with our own sinful nature, the world and the devil. We cannot be misled to believe that the Christian life is easy. It is in direct contrast to our own sinful nature and the views of the world.

As we look back on our journey, we see that God has followed us with goodness and mercy. ([Psalm 23](#)) We need assurance that our faith is genuine and that God is with us.

Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

Sermon Outline

1. Clearly chosen by God Vs. 1-4
2. Fully convinced of the Gospel Vs. 5-10

Read & Discuss

1) Read 1:1-4

The church there was an intentional gathering of people called out by God to live for Jesus. It included Jews and Gentiles as well as people from different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds. Paul referred to them as brothers and sisters.

Paul gave thanks for the church in Thessalonica because they exhibited faith, love and hope. This is the total human response to what God had done, is doing and will do. Their faith was a reliance on Christ as Savior and Lord. That defines the Christian. This belief leads to works. They showed love by serving Christ and had a confident hope in the return of Jesus.

Are there times when you struggle to have faith, serve with love and hope with expectation? Do you rejoice when you see even small evidences of these qualities in your life? Is there someone you can encourage this week by pointing out these evidences of grace in their life? How and where can you show your love for Christ by serving?

There is nothing in us to make us appealing to God. We should humbly and joyfully worship God for His extravagant mercy on our souls. If there is a discomfort within you about not having these qualities of the Spirit, you can thank God that He hasn't given up on you. There is time for you to come to Him with a sincere and contrite heart. He will give you a new life.

Additional Reading: James 2; John 14; Ephesians 2

2) Read 1:5-10

The Thessalonians were an example of faith. They received the word in faith, never lost their eagerness for the truth and imitated worthy leaders in the faith. The new Christian needs the local church to grow. Every believer needs spiritual encouragement to obey God's word, but especially those who are new in the faith. Are you in a discipleship relationship or in a small group? What is keeping you from that?

The Thessalonians faced a lot of affliction and persecution with joy. They were content in Christ. We can have a joy in the brokenness of life because they point us to our need of Christ. How do you face affliction and trials in life? Ask God to help you set your hope on Christ alone. ([Romans 15:13](#))

The Thessalonians were strong in their evangelism. The Gospel had gone out from their church not only to the city, but to the surrounding region. For evangelism, we can learn, pray, give and go. Consider how you might participate in sharing the Gospel with others. Is there someone with whom you can share the gospel this week?

The Thessalonians had an expectancy – a hope because of Jesus. Before Paul came to the Thessalonians with the Gospel, they were a people without hope. They were spiritually dead. BUT when they trusted - they had a living hope because of a living God who raised Jesus from the dead. While we wait, we busy ourselves by serving Him, grow in godliness, and have comfort in sorrow.

Be encouraged today! He has graciously called us out of darkness into His glorious light. Live as an example to others, be zealous in your evangelism, live with expectant hope.

Additional Reading: Psalm 115

Prayer of Response

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to confess? From what do I need to repent?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to com.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

Next week's sermon text: we turn to Genesis 12:10-20 "No Need to Fear"
