

## 'A GREAT CHURCH' Sermon Series

SS1 Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2017

### 1 Thessalonians Chapter 1

The first chapter of St Paul's first Letter to the Thessalonians is **a chapter to warm the heart!** It's a basic introduction to Christianity.

**IT STARTS** with 'God the Father' who gives 'grace & peace'. HE is the initiator of our relationship with him. Because He loves us, and has chosen us, He starts it all off by sending his Son to bless us.

**THEN there is** Paul and his team, Silas & Timothy, who do their part. Which is more than just preaching a message. *'The gospel came to you NOT SIMPLY with words BUT ALSO with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction'* v5.

The Christian faith is NEVER just words.

But is also NEVER just good works.

Its truest form is loving service springing out of a deep faith. Hence we worship on a Sunday and run a Foodbank and Debt Centre and Job Club and Release Group and get involved in MENCAP and serve in the Prison as well as many other acts of service on all the other days.

We act with the help of the Holy Spirit out of deep conviction, believing we are called to live in this way for our Lord.

**THEN there are the Thessalonians.** They are a great church! St Paul thanks God in v3 for *'their love, their endurance and their hope'* all inspired by their love for the Lord Jesus Christ. A new life they found when, v9, they turned from falsehood to serve the True and Living God.

#### **And WHY are they such a great church?**

Because,

FIRST, they imitated the example of faith which came to them in St Paul  
SECOND, they became A MODEL for others to imitate not only in Thessalonica where they lived but also in neighbouring Macedonia and Achaia.

We are an Apostolic Church. Jesus chose the Apostles. They laid the foundation of the church. We copy them and others copy us and the faith is passed on from one generation to the next.

1 Corinthians 11 v1 *"Imitate me, as I also, imitate Christ"*

#### **And HOW can the faith be passed on TO YOU?**

<b>Consider:</b>	The example of the Thessalonians
<b>Change Course:</b>	From the false values of our secular society and follow Jesus Christ, the true and living God.
<b>Commit:</b>	To living a life of faith, hope and love

## **1 THESSALONIANS 1 (v1-10) NIV**

Paul, Silas (Silvanus) and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you.

### **Thanksgiving for the Thessalonians' Faith**

<sup>2</sup> We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. <sup>3</sup> We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup> For we know, brothers and sisters<sup>[b]</sup> loved by God, that he has chosen you, <sup>5</sup> because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.

<sup>6</sup> You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.

<sup>7</sup> And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. <sup>8</sup> The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it, <sup>9</sup> for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, <sup>10</sup> and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

#### **Footnote:**

[1 Thessalonians 1:4](#) The Greek word for *brothers and sisters* (*adelphoi*) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God's family; also in 2:1, 9, 14, 17; 3:7; 4:1, 10, 13; 5:1, 4, 12, 14, 25, 27.