

High Peaks Bible Fellowship

Being Thankful for Growth in the Gospel (1 Thessalonians [1:1-5](#))

Paul's arrival in Thessalonica

- Paul left Philippi under difficult circumstances (see Acts [17](#)).
- Paul had faced two main types of persecution:
 1. The Galatian persecution = religious opposition from the Jews.
 2. The Philippian persecution = economic opposition from commercial forces.
- Official government opposition was not involved in Paul's early persecutions. In fact, in another place Paul taught that Christians were to be model citizens (see Rom [13:1-7](#)).
- The most common type of persecution Paul would face was opposition from the Jews.

Paul's departure from Thessalonica

- Paul leaves Thessalonica because of Jewish opposition (see Acts [17:10](#)).
- Paul leads many to Christ in Berea, probably because the Bereans stuck to what the Scriptures actually said concerning the Messiah.
- Jewish opposition from Thessalonica spreads to Berea.
- Paul is escorted to Athens, while Silas and Timothy remained there (Acts [17:14](#)).

Paul in Athens and Corinth

- Some think Paul sent Silas to Philippi, while Timothy remained in Thessalonica.
- In Athens, Paul talked to the Jews in the synogogue, the people in the marketplace, and the philosophers in the Areopagus.
- Paul traveled to Corinth and met Priscilla & Aquilla.
- Later, Silas and Timothy met Paul in Corinth (Acts [18:5](#)).



Paul received news and wrote his first letter to the Thessalonians

- Paul was in Corinth as he wrote 1 Thessalonians.
- Timothy brought Paul good news of the Thessalonians' progress in the gospel.
- Paul's purposes for writing this letter:
 1. Paul wanted to encourage the believers.
 2. Paul dealt with specific issues of concern in the church.

Paul's Opening Address (1 Thess. [1:1](#))

- Paul's affectionate relationship to the Thessalonians.
- The organization and spiritual situation in Thessalonica.

- Paul's doctrine of the deity of Jesus Christ.
- Paul's normal greeting: "Grace and Peace."

Paul Expressed His Thankfulness (1 Thess. [1:2-3](#))

- His constant thankfulness was expressed "whenever Paul was at his prayers."
- He "encircled all of them" in prayer.
- Paul kept in his conscious mind at least three specific things about the Thessalonians as he prayed for them.
 1. Their actions that were inspired by their faith in Christ.
 2. Their painful toil and exertion that was prompted by sacrificial love.
 3. Their endurance under suffering which was motivated by their hope of Christ's coming (see 1 Thess [1:10](#)) and His bringing them into the very presence of God.

Paul Knows They Are God's Elect (1 Thess. [1:4-5](#))

- "Since we know by observation" -- a causal participle
Paul uses a strong contrast to say:
 1. God set His love upon them (compare Eph. [1:5](#))
 2. God chose them to belong to Him (compare Eph. [1:4](#))
- *FOR* ... here is additional evidence for what Paul has just said:
 1. The gospel message does not consist of mere words or of eloquent speech that informs or entertains.
 2. The gospel message does involve the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to understand and respond to the truth of what Christ has accomplished on our behalf (see 1 Cor. [2:4-5](#)).
- This resulted in "full conviction" -- which describes the nature and effect that saving faith has in the life of a believer.

Points of Application:

- We, too, should thank God for what He has done for us in loving us, choosing us, and in accomplishing our salvation.
- In order to pray continually and specifically like Paul did, we might want to maintain a prayer list.

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Our primary purpose is to uphold the truths of the Word of God.

I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. (1 Timothy 3:15)

Our primary responsibility is to equip the saints for the work of ministry.

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-12)