

1 Thessalonians Introduction

First and Second Thessalonians were the first two books of Paul's 14 books.

The Apostle Paul wrote them FROM the City of Corinth on his second missionary journey, about 20 years after the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The little letters are short, personal, and very subject oriented as the Apostle is answering questions brought to him from the church at Thessalonica by his personal assistant and protégé, Timothy.

First Thessalonians is the 52nd book in the English translation. The KJV has five chapters, 89 verses and 1837 words. Remember that Paul did not write the letter in chapters. The books of the Bible were divided into chapters and verses in the 13th century and we know the bible in no other fashion unless you have studied it in Greek, Hebrew or Aramaic.

In my opinion, the key verses in First Thessalonians are 4:16-18:

1Thessalonians 4:16-18 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. **17** Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. **18** Therefore comfort one another with these words.

THE RAPTURE

We refer to this blessed hope as the rapture of the Church. The word Rapture does not appear in the Greek manuscripts, So it is not in the bible, so to speak....

The Latin [Vulgate](#) translates the Greek words: "caught up" as rapiumer. **Sound familiar?** Bible commentators such as John Gill, schooled in Latin and Greek began to use the word "Rapture" in their commentaries. And those of us who are looking forward to this blessed event like to call it the rapture.

DON'T LIKE THE WORD? OK. Call it whatever you like. We are STILL looking forward to the Catching up, being caught up, the celestial gathering unto Jesus....

THE CITY OF THESSALONICA







The city itself was built on the ruins of an ancient city named "Therme." Named so because of the natural hot springs which still exist there to this day.

It was renamed Thessalonica in 315 B.C. by the King of Macedonia, Cassander, in honor of his wife. She, BTW was the Sister of Alexander the Great.

Like the city of Jerusalem, Thessalonica was conquered and RE-conquered by the Romans, the Goths, The Normans, The Turks,

and others. The City is SO well placed in the central part of Greece the even in WW1, We used it as an airbase.

Thessalonica has a natural harbor that also makes it a valued to conquer, so if any of you are planning in the future to rule the world, definitely plan on conquering Thessalonica! Everybody else has.

THE PROBLEMS AT THESSALONICA

1. Like almost everywhere Paul went, the enemies of the gospel showed up too - And they had attacked Paul's character.
 - a. "He is in it for the money!" they said.
 - b. Paul answers this concern in **V1:5**:
 - c. " For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake."
 - d. Paul took nothing from the Thessalonians. He earned his living in the tent making business, and twice while in Thessalonica received a love offering from the suffering church at Philippi.

2. Paul had been accused of using flattery to fool the Jewish converts. He answers these charges in **2:5**:
 - a. For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness—God *is* witness.
 - b. The power of the gospel has always been the word of God, NOT the words of men.

3. Paul had been accused of abandoning the fledgling church in its time of need.
 - a. He answers this charge in **2:17-18**
 - b. " But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire. **18** Therefore

we wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but Satan hindered us."

4. The Thessalonians had received the hope of Jesus' soon return with extreme and inappropriate behavior.
 - a. Some of them had quit their jobs to wait for the Rapture and with their idle time had become problematic to the Church.
 - b. Paul tells them to go back to work in **4:9-12**
 - c. " But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; **10** and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more; **11** that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, **12** that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and *that* you may lack nothing. "
 - d. He would tell them again in his second letter: **2 Thessalonians 3:10** "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."

The other problem he dealt with we have already talked about and that is the issue of resurrection and rapture.

God bless the Thessalonians, some of their folks had died, and they worried about those already dead missing the glorious day of the Lord's return. The Apostle puts their minds at ease by reminding them that on that day, the dead in Christ shall rise first, AND THEN we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them (the dead and now resurrected) in the clouds... And thus shall we ever be with the Lord...

4:18 - Therefore, Comfort one another with these words.....

CCSV, Be comforted. Jesus is returning! He will catch us up! And forever, everlastingly... eternally... perpetually... ceaselessly... without end... we will live with Him forever more.

CHAPTER 1

1 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord (Title) JESUS (Name) Christ. (Messiah)

- Paul DOES NOT have to defend his Apostleship with the Thessalonians.
- He wishes them Grace and peace. Why Grace... and then peace?

THE THESSALONIANS' FAITH AND EXAMPLE

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers,

- What a good Pastor was the Apostle Paul...
- His Churches and his team were well prayed for...
- CCSV, lets stuff that little wood box back there with prayer requests!

3 remembering without ceasing your work of faith,

- Listen, Salvation IS by faith... BUT... With works there is no faith because true faith ALWAYS causes works.

...labor of love, (**Love IS the best motivator**)

...and patience of hope (Waiting) in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father,

- Even in Paul's day they were waiting for the return of Jesus...
- Why... do you suppose God is waiting to send His Son back? Waiting for the last one to hear, perhaps? Waiting for our loved ones?

4 knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God.

- **CEV** - My dear friends, God loves you, and we know he has chosen you to be his people. **(Don't you love being chosen?)**
- **Chuck Smith** – How can you KNOW if He chose you? Accept Him as your Savior and you will know that He chose you! Reject Him and we will ALL know that He didn't choose you.

5 For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in **(and by)** the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

- With salvation come the presence of the Holy Spirit and with the presence of the Holy Spirit comes POWER!
 - Some say:" I want more power!"
 - I suggest we first desire more love... That is where real power is.

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.

- Like many of the churches the Apostle Paul started and supported – the Thessalonians suffered for their faith.
- BUT... Through their suffering they never lost their joy. Keeping their joy was such a testimony and a blessing to others!
- Those of you who have suffered and who are suffering now with such sweet joy are an incredible blessing to us, your church family! Thank you!

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.

- One of the results of joy is that it spreads... You cannot stop it. Joyful and thankful people attract joy and thanksgiving! The opposite is true of grumpy people, right? One of the vendors we used to finish our floors was SO grumpy that we found an alternate place to buy our floor sealer. We NOW buy it from Dan Skelly!

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.

COURSON - the idea of waiting does not infer apathy. In the Greek language, the word is used to describe what a mother does when she is anticipating the birth of her baby. She readies the nursery and eagerly prepares for his arrival.

So, too, we should say, "Jesus is coming. I must make sure my family and friends are ready."

Revelation 6-19 describes a time called the Tribulation, when God pours His wrath on a Christ-rejecting, sinful world. Scorpions are released. Hundred-pound hailstones come crashing down. Water turns to blood. Islands disappear. There is starvation, plagues, war, and famine. It's a hellish time, causing the people to cry, "Who shall save us from the day of the wrath of the Lamb?" ([Rev 6:16-17](#)).

Let me highly encourage you to miss that.

Become a Christian today. Believe on Him whom the Father has sent, and, like the Thessalonians, you'll find yourself turning from the idols of our present day, laboring under the light burden of love, and waiting for the Son with joyful hope.