

FIRST THESSALONIANS

INTRODUCTION

4 December 2023

The importance of 1 Thessalonians:

- It is the New Testament book that is not disputed by the bible critics.
- It is the first and oldest New Testament book, written approx. 47-54 A.D.
- Peter and John had no objections to what Paul preached about Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:11-2:10).
- It can be used to confirm the authenticity of all the other New Testament books.
 - It is not merely a product of oral tradition passed down from person to person.
- Peter called Paul's writings "scripture" (2 Pet. 3:16).

THE FOUNDING OF THE CHURCH IN THESSALONICA

Acts 16:9-10 The Holy Spirit directed Paul through a vision to go to Macedonia. Thessalonica is in Macedonia.

Acts 17:1-2 Paul reached Thessalonica and preached in the synagogue. Paul preached wherever lost people were found.

- This was his manner. It resulted in souls saved, but it also often brought him much suffering and persecution.
- Paul reasoned with people out of the scripture. The scriptures were his authority, not his opinion.

Acts 17:3-4 Paul opened the scriptures to the Thessalonians and preached the gospel out of the Old Testament scriptures. The New Testament wasn't written yet.

- Some of the people believed. The believers wanted to spend time with the preachers.
- Besides those in the synagogue, many Greeks and chief women were saved.

Acts 17:5 **"Jews which believed not, moved with envy."** Envy often moves unbelievers to persecute or challenge God's servants.

- Aaron and Miriam challenged Moses' authority (Numbers 12:1-15).
- Joseph's brothers sold him to slavery (Genesis 37:4, 23-28).
- The Scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day wanted Him dead (Luke 22:2, John 5:18, 7:1, Matthew 27:18, Mark 15:10).

"...took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort." It is often the religious people in town who hire or influence people to scare, intimidate, warn, or persecute God's faithful servants. They **"set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason."**

Acts 17:6 Paul and his company had a reputation of having **"turned the world upside down."**

- *"The men that have moved the world have been men the world could not move."*
 - Martin Luther was one such man.

Acts 17:7-13 **"And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea..."**

- Paul went to Thessalonica in obedience to Jesus' command to **"Teach all nations"** (Mat. 28:19) and go into **"all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"** (Mk. 16:15).
- Paul left Thessalonica in obedience to Jesus' command **"When they persecute you in this city FLEE ye into another"** (Mt. 10:23).
- The Christian is commanded to preach the gospel, not change the world, fix politics, etc. (See 2 Timothy 2:4 where the affairs of this life are described as an entanglement).
- The Bereans were more noble and readily received the word and believed (vs11). They searched the scriptures daily (see John 5:39), resulting in faith.

- The unbelieving Thessalonians went to Berea to stir up the people (vs 13).
 - Paul writes to new believers in Thessalonica who are surrounded by people who hate the gospel with a vengeance.
 - All 5 chapters of 1 Thessalonians are about the return of Jesus Christ. This is the perfect message for a group of persecuted Christians.