**The First Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians**

**1 Thessalonians Chapter 1**

OPENING GREETING (1:1-10)  
Salutation

1Paul, and Silvanus,[[1]](#footnote-16006) and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:[[2]](#footnote-31711) Grace to you and peace.

Prayer

2We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly remembering *you* in our prayers, 3remembering before our God and Father your work motivated by trust, and labor prompted by love, and endurance based on hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Commending the Thessalonians’ Faith and Example

4For we know, brothers and sisters who are loved by God, that you were chosen, 5because our good news did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the holy spirit, and with much assurance. You know the kind of people we were among you for your sake. 6And you became imitators of us and of the Lord when you received the word with joy from the holy spirit, in *spite of* much affliction. 7As a result, you became an example to all those who believe in Macedonia and in Achaia. 8For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but your trust toward God has gone out into every place, so that we do not need to say anything, 9because they themselves are reporting about us, how we *conducted ourselves when we* came to you,[[3]](#footnote-21915) and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God 10and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised out from the dead—Jesus—the one who rescues us from the wrath to come.

**1 Thessalonians Chapter 2**

PAUL REMINDS THE THESSALONIANS (2:1-19)  
Paul’s Conduct

1For you yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming[[4]](#footnote-32492) to you was not in vain. 2On the contrary, after having suffered and having been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold because of our *trust in* God[[5]](#footnote-26474) to speak to you the good news of God in spite of much opposition. 3For our appeal did not come from error or from impure motives, nor *was it made* in deceit, 4but since we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the good news, therefore we speak it, not to please people, but *to please* God, who is testing our hearts.

5For we never used flattering speech, as you know, nor had greed as a motive (God is *our* witness), 6nor were we seeking glory from people, neither from you nor from others, although we could have made demands as apostles of Christ,[[6]](#footnote-23624) 7instead, we were *like* infants *when we were* among you. We were like a nursing mother tenderly caring for her own children, 8having such great affection for you that we were pleased to share with you not only the good news of God but also our own souls, because you had become deeply loved by us. 9For you remember, brothers and sisters, our labor and struggles; working night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the good news of God. 10You are witnesses, and God *also*, of how purely and righteously and blamelessly we behaved toward you who believe. 11As you know, we *treated* each one of you as a father *treats* his own children, 12encouraging you and comforting you and urging you so that you walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

Thessalonians’ Reception to the Word of God

13And we also constantly thank God for this: that when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it truly is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe. 14For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of the churches of God in Judea that are in Christ Jesus, because you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews, 15who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets and drove us out and do not please God and are hostile to all people 16by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they can be saved. As a result, they are continuing to pile up their sins, but the wrath *of God* has come upon them until the end.

Paul’s Desire to Visit

17But we, brothers and sisters, after being orphaned from you for a period of time (in person,[[7]](#footnote-23507) not in heart), were all the more eager to see your face—we greatly desired it.[[8]](#footnote-15223) 18For we wanted to come to you (even I, Paul, *attempted to* again and again), but the Adversary[[9]](#footnote-32226) prevented us. 19For who is our hope or joy or crown of boasting in the presence of our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? 20For you are our glory and joy.

**1 Thessalonians Chapter 3**

THE REPORT OF TIMOTHY (3:1-13)  
Paul Sent Timothy

1Therefore, when we could bear it no longer, we thought it best to stay behind in Athens by ourselves, 2and we sent Timothy, our brother and fellow worker for God in *spreading* the good news of Christ,[[10]](#footnote-16867) to strengthen and encourage you concerning your trust, 3so that no one is shaken by these afflictions, because you know that we are destined for this. 4For even when we were with you, we kept telling you in advance that we were going to suffer affliction, and as you know, it came to pass. 5For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent *Timothy* to learn about your trust, for I was afraid that somehow the Tempter had tempted you and our labor would have been in vain.

Timothy’s Encouraging Report

6But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has brought us good news about your trust and love, and that you always remember us with affection, longing to see us, just as we also *long to see* you. 7Because of this, brothers and sisters, in all our distress and affliction we have been encouraged about you because of your trust. 8For now we *really* live, since you are standing firm in the Lord. 9For how can we give thanks to God for you in return for all of our joy and rejoicing[[11]](#footnote-23817) before our God because of you? 10Night and day we keep praying most earnestly for *an opportunity* to see your face and to supply what is lacking in your trust.

Prayer for the Thessalonians

11Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus guide our way to you, 12and may the Lord cause you to increase and overflow in love for one another and for all people, just as we also do for you, 13so that your hearts will be strengthened *in order to be* blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his holy ones.

**1 Thessalonians Chapter 4**

LIVING HOLY LIVES (4:1-12)  
Walking in Holiness

1Furthermore then, brothers and sisters, we ask and encourage you in the Lord Jesus, that just as you learned from us how you must walk and please God—indeed, you are *already* walking in this way—that you would do so even more. 2For you know what commands we gave you by *the authority of* the Lord Jesus. 3For this is the will of God—for you to be holy: *that is*, that you abstain from sexual immorality; 4that each one of you know how to control his own vessel in holiness and honor, 5not in lustful passion like the Gentiles who do not know God; 6*and* that no one overstep proper boundaries and take advantage of his brother or sister in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger of all these *offenses*, just as we told you before and solemnly warned you. 7For God did not call us to be impure, but *to live* in holiness. 8Therefore, the one who rejects *these commands* does not reject a human being but God, who gives his holy spirit to you.

Walking in Love and Behaving Properly

9Now concerning affection for *God’s* family, you do not need *anyone* to write to you because you yourselves are taught by God to love one another. 10For indeed, that is what you are doing for all the brothers and sisters in the whole *region* of Macedonia. And we encourage you, brothers and sisters, to do so even more, 11and to make it your aim to lead a peaceable life,[[12]](#footnote-25822) and to attend to your own business, and to work with your hands, just as we commanded you, 12so that you walk properly toward outsiders, and so that you do not need anything.

The Hope and Comfort of Christ’s Return

13Now, we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers and sisters, concerning those who are asleep, so that you do not grieve like the rest *of humankind,* who have no hope. 14For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised, so also *we believe* *that* through Jesus, God will bring *to life* those who have fallen asleep *so that they will be* with him.[[13]](#footnote-28050) 15For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a loud command, with the voice of a ruling angel, and with *the sound of* the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ[[14]](#footnote-14402) will rise first. 17Then we who are alive, who are left, will be suddenly caught up together with them in the clouds, for a meeting with the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. 18So then, comfort one another with these words.

**1 Thessalonians Chapter 5**

THE DAY OF THE LORD (5:1-11)  
Be Children of Light

1Now concerning the times and dates, brothers and sisters, you do not need anything to be written to you 2because you yourselves know very well that the Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3When they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then disaster will suddenly come upon them like labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and they will surely not escape. 4But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness that the Day would surprise you like a thief, 5because you are all children of light and children of the day. We are not of the night, nor of the darkness. 6So then, let us not be asleep like the rest *of humankind*, but let us be awake and clearheaded. 7For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night.

Faith, Love, and Hope

8But since we are of the day, let us be clearheaded, putting on a breastplate of trust and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. 9For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10who died in our place so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with him. 11Therefore encourage one another and each one of you build up the other one, just as you are already doing.

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS (5:12-22)  
Honor Church Leaders

12Now, brothers and sisters, we request that you respect those who labor among you and are leading[[15]](#footnote-16013) you in the Lord and are admonishing[[16]](#footnote-15971) you, 13and to hold them in very high regard with love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.

Exhortations

14Now we urge you, brothers and sisters, admonish[[17]](#footnote-24134) the undisciplined, comfort the discouraged, help the weak, be patient with everyone. 15See to it that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always diligently pursue what is good for one another and for all people.

16Rejoice always; 17never stop praying; 18in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.

19Do not quench[[18]](#footnote-29061) the spirit. 20Do not treat prophecies with contempt, 21but test everything *and* hold on firmly to what is good. 22Stay away from every kind of evil.

FINAL REMARKS (5:23-28)  
Prayer

23Now may the God of peace himself make you completely holy, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Farewell Greetings

25Brothers and sisters, pray for us. 26Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. 27I put you under oath before the Lord that this letter be read to all the brothers and sisters. 28The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ[[19]](#footnote-19398) be with you all.

1. Or “Silas” [↑](#footnote-ref-16006)
2. Lit. “the Anointed One” [↑](#footnote-ref-31711)
3. Or “how we were welcomed among you” [↑](#footnote-ref-21915)
4. Lit. “entrance” [↑](#footnote-ref-32492)
5. Lit. “we were bold in our God” [↑](#footnote-ref-26474)
6. Lit. “the Anointed One” [↑](#footnote-ref-23624)
7. Lit. “face” [↑](#footnote-ref-23507)
8. Lit. “with great desire” [↑](#footnote-ref-15223)
9. “Adversary” is the translation of the Greek *satanas*. [↑](#footnote-ref-32226)
10. Lit. “the Anointed One” [↑](#footnote-ref-16867)
11. Lit. “the joy with which we rejoice” [↑](#footnote-ref-23817)
12. Or “quiet life.” [↑](#footnote-ref-25822)
13. Or “so also *we believe that* through Jesus, God will bring *to life*, in addition to him, those who have fallen asleep.” [↑](#footnote-ref-28050)
14. Lit. “the Anointed One” [↑](#footnote-ref-14402)
15. Or “caring for” [↑](#footnote-ref-16013)
16. Or “counseling” [↑](#footnote-ref-15971)
17. Or “counsel” [↑](#footnote-ref-24134)
18. Or “suppress” [↑](#footnote-ref-29061)
19. Lit. “the Anointed One” [↑](#footnote-ref-19398)