

We will now begin the first lecture on 1 Thessalonians. /The apostle Paul recorded 1 Thessalonians. /He wrote this in Corinth. /He wrote this in AD 52.

/The region of Thessalonica is Thessaloniki, or Salonika. /This city continues to be an important city from the Hellenistic era up until today in the region of Macedonia. /However, there was a Macedonian king named Cassander around 315 BC.

/He was a general of Alexander the Great's army. /Cassander advanced the city of Thessalonica. /Then he named Thessalonica after the name of his wife. /This city is a very important city.

/Macedonia was a city with a large population. /Hence, it was a strategic location of commerce and transportation. /It was also a wealthy city. /Many Greeks, Romans, and Jews lived in the area.

/The church at Thessalonica was established in the region of Thessalonica. /Paul arrived here during his second missionary journey. /Paul arrived with Silas and Timothy in Thessalonica. /Acts 17:1-4. /Acts 16:3, 12. /Philippians 2:22.

/Upon his arrival, Paul first went to the Jewish synagogue and preached the gospel there. /Paul shared the gospel there for about three weeks. /However, the unbelieving Jews started a riot and persecuted Paul. /Hence, Paul was forced to seek shelter in the city of Berea.

/We will now begin the first lecture on 1 Thessalonians. /The title of chapter 1 is "Hope for Jesus' Second Coming." /Let's look at the main points.

/First, greeting and blessings. /Verse 1. /Second, /prayer of thanksgiving. /Verses 2-4. /Third, an example of an evangelist. /Fourth, an example of those who receive God's word. /Fifth, an example of a believer.

/Read verse 1. /Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you.

/Here, "Silas" is also known as "Silvanus" in Greek. /Acts 16:9. /1 Peter 5:12. /Timothy is Paul's son in faith. /Timothy was a worker of God who helped Paul. /1 Corinthians 4:17. /1 Timothy 1:2.

/"Grace" here refers to all the gifts we received from God regarding redemption. /"Peace" is the peace that comes from God as a result of receiving grace. /Peace that comes from God is different from peace that comes from the world. /God's peace is the peace of forgiveness, /peace in spirit, /and eternal peace.

/Verse 2. /We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers.

/The apostle Paul prayed whenever he thought of the church at Thessalonica. /Paul gave

thanks and prayed for the members of the church. /Paul prayed with special concern for the believers.

/Verse 3. /We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

/The church at Thessalonica was a church with works of faith, labor of love, and hope. /It was a truly good church with faith, hope, and love. /It was a truly good church that set an example for other churches.

/Works follow faith. /Faith without deeds is dead faith. /James 2:26. /James 2:17. /What is faith? /Faith is the act of trusting God and his word in our hearts. /Then it is to obey God's word with our bodies. /James 2:22.

/Trusting God's word in our hearts is half of what it means to have faith, /and obeying with our bodies is the other half. Then together, it becomes complete faith. /We must have faith with works. /We must have living faith.

/We must have faith that has life. /Matthew 17:20. /Faith is might. /Philippians 4:13. /Faith is described in more detail in Hebrews chapter 11. /Noah had faith.

/Noah obeyed God's command and built an ark. /The flood did not come right when Noah started building the ark. /However, Noah believed that a flood would come in the future, and he diligently built the ark.

/Then when the time came, he completed the ark and went inside. /Then the flood came. /Hence, Noah and his family were all saved. /There were works of faith in our forefathers of faith.

/We must have faith that has life and works. /Romans 4:19-21. /Second, labor of love. /Love requires labor. /Love requires sacrifice. /There cannot be true love without labor.

/Parents labor for their children because of their love for them. /Pastors labor for the members of their churches because they love them. /Colossians 1:24. /We have been born again through God's word and the Holy Spirit.

/Hence, our spirits came alive. /The essence of our born again spirits is love. /Thus, we love God and love our neighbors like ourselves.

/Jesus first loved us. /1 John 3:16. /Romans 5:8. /John 15:13. /1 Corinthians 13:13. /Love is sacrifice. /Then what is the greatest sacrifice? /We can sacrifice our money and our time.

/However, the greatest sacrifice is to lay one's life down for another. /Thus, Jesus loved us by laying down His life for us. /We must labor for the church. /We must labor to help

other believers.

/Third, endurance inspired by hope. /True hope requires endurance. /Hope is like an anchor for our souls. /Hebrews 6:19. /There is endurance when there is hope, and hope will be achieved.

/Our hope will be fulfilled when we endure. /Moses rejected the authority given to him as the princess' son. /Moses looked upon God who gives us rewards. /Hebrews 11:24, 25. /Romans 12:12.

/We must look upon the prize and endure. /We must look upon hope in heaven. /Hebrews 12:2. /Psalm 40:1. /We must look upon the Lord and endure through our sufferings. /Then hope will be achieved.

/Farmers must endure. /Then they can later reap what they sow. /Students must endure so that they can enter good schools. /We must go forward with hope. /Then hope will be achieved in us.

/Verse 4. /For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you,

/We believers received God's love. /We have been chosen by God. /Romans 8:29-30. /Acts 13:48. /How can we know whether we have been chosen or not?

/Those who believe that Jesus is Christ are those who have been chosen. /1 John 5:1. /God chose us before he created the universe. /God made us the subject of his love. /Thus, God saved us and poured out his unending love upon us.

/Verse 5. /because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.

/Paul went to Thessalonica and preached the gospel. /Paul preached with five things when he evangelized. /First, he preached with words. /We must first evangelize with words. /Romans 10:14. /Romans 10:17. /2 Timothy 4:2. /Romans 1:16.

/We must pray for the others when we evangelize. /Next, we must share the gospel to them with words. /We must not close our mouths and stand still. /We must open our mouths and share the gospel with them.

/"Believe in Jesus." /"Jesus is our Savior." /"Believe in Jesus and receive salvation." /We must share the gospel with our lips. /Then, people will hear the gospel with their ears, and believe in Jesus and receive salvation. /The gospel itself has power. /Romans 1:16.

/Second, Paul preached the gospel with power. /The kingdom of God is not in words, but in power. /1 Corinthians 4:20. /The gospel itself has power, /and there is power in evangelists.

/God's power will be revealed when we diligently evangelize. /Christ's power will be revealed when we participate in the sufferings of Christ. /Philippians 3:10. /In this way, we must pray a lot in order to evangelize with power. /We must rely on God's power.

/Third, Paul preached with the Holy Spirit. /Paul preached the gospel with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. /We must not walk on our own. /We must follow the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

/In Acts chapters 8 and 16, the evangelists followed the guidance of the Holy Spirit. /Then the Holy Spirit saves those who receive the gospel. /When we evangelize with the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit will allow them to receive Jesus.

/Fourth, Paul preached with deep conviction. /When we evangelize, we must do so with deep conviction of the truth. /We must have confidence in the truth that we understood.

/If those who evangelize do not have confidence, those who listen will not believe. /We must not merely pass on knowledge. /We must first enter the world of truth, /taste the truth, /and fully understand the truth, /and then preach the gospel.

/For example, one must see a tiger with his own eyes to testify about the tiger. /One person saw a drawing of a tiger on paper and a calendar, and began to talk about tigers.

/The person who testifies about tigers based on the drawing on the calendar will not testify well. /However, the person who sees a tiger with his own eyes will have power when he testifies about tigers. /When we preach the gospel, we must listen, understand, and see before we evangelize.

/Fifth, Paul preached with character. /It says, "You know how we lived among you for your sake." /This means that Paul preached with good character. /Thus, we must shape ourselves first and then preach the gospel. /Acts 26:25.

/Evangelists must show good character and be an example to others, and be respected by others. /When evangelists are respected, believers will follow them, /and they will obey God's word.

/When we build churches, we must do so with these five things. /We must evangelize to unbelievers with these five things as well.

/Verse 6. /You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.

/The believers at Thessalonica received the gospel that Paul shared with them. /What was the heart of the church at Thessalonica like when they received the gospel? /They received the gospel with joy in spite of severe suffering. /It is easy for us to become dispirited in times of suffering.

/People reject the gospel in times of suffering. /However, the believers at Thessalonica received the gospel with joy given by the Holy Spirit in spite of severe suffering. /They made God's word their life. /They made God's word their strength.

/Think about it. /At the time, there were barely anyone who believed in Jesus in Thessalonica. /Paul just started to preach the gospel. /Everyone around him were unbelievers. /Everyone around him worshiped idols.

/Those who chose to believe in Jesus in the midst of all that would receive great hardships and persecutions. /There are cases for you in which you are the only one in your family and at work who believe in Jesus. /There are some who are the only ones who believe in Jesus in their neighborhoods.

/Then how great would persecutions be? /The church at Thessalonica was in a situation like this. /However, they still received the gospel with joy in the midst of their suffering. /Then they modeled themselves after Paul and Jesus.

/Verse 7. /And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.

/The believers at Thessalonica became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. /Macedonia refers to the northern region of Greece. /The churches of Thessalonica and Philippi were located there. /This was near the region of the church at Thessalonica.

/The church at Thessalonica became a model to all the churches near the area. /Achaia was located in the region of Corinth. /It is the southern region of Greece. /News of the faith of the church at Thessalonica in the south spread to these areas

/The believers at Corinth thought, "The faith of the believers at Thessalonica is great!" /Our faith must be well-spoken of.

/Verse 8. /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,

/News about this church spread. /News about the church spread not only to close locations, but to far places as well. /We must display the fragrance of Christ. /2 Corinthians 2:14.

/We must spread the fragrance of Jesus. /News about our personal faith must be good news. /Good news about the churches you attend must spread far. /Our churches must be beautiful examples.

/Verse 9. /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,

/Paul and those who accompanied him went and evangelized in Thessalonica. /How did they evangelize? /Paul and Silas evangelized in Thessalonica for three weeks. /Acts 17:1-19. /Opposing powers rose up in the area.

/Thus, the opposers attempted to kill Paul and Silas. /Hence, Paul and Silas had to run away. /In this way, they shared the gospel in the midst of suffering. /However, Paul was not discouraged.

/Paul relied in the power of God, /and he preached with the power of God. /Thus, the number of those who believed in Jesus grew in the church at Thessalonica. /Then the believers at Thessalonica threw out their idols.

/The people served many idols in the past. /What are idols today? /Money is an idol. /Authority is an idol. /Work and studies are idols. /Nations are idols, /and pleasures are idols.

/Then the greatest idol is the self. /However, the believers at Thessalonica immediately threw out the idols they served in the past. /Then they completely returned to God, who is true and alive. /Our God is a living God.

/Our God is a true God. /All idol in the world are lies. /Idols are lies. /Idols cannot give us life and salvation. /The believers at Thessalonica worshiped idols in the past.

/Now, they completely returned to the true God. /Then they served God alone. /Our God alone is the true God. /God is our source of life.

/Idols are nothing. /1 Corinthians 8:4. /We too are believers of Jesus. /We threw away our idols. /However, we must get rid of the idols that still remain in our hearts. /We must only serve the true God.

/Verse 10. /and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead-- Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

/The believers at Thessalonica had faith in waiting for the return of Jesus. /Each chapter in the books of 1 and 2 Thessalonians speaks of the return of Jesus. /This shows how much the believers at Thessalonica waited for the Second Coming of Jesus.

/Jesus will surely come again. /Jesus will return on the clouds. /Acts 1:11. /Here it says, "his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead."

/The believers at Thessalonica believed in God's power to raise the dead to life. /They believed in God's power to raise the dead to life. /They also believed that Jesus would come again on the clouds.

/We must wait for the Second Coming of Jesus. /Matthew 25:1-13. /We must prepare for

the Lord's return like the five wise virgins. /Then we must receive Jesus with joy when He returns in His glory.

/The apostle John also told us to wait and prepare for Jesus' return. /Revelation 22:20. /Jesus promised that He would return when He ascended into heaven. /Therefore, we must believe that Jesus will surely return.

/When Jesus returns, the dead believers will come back to life. /The spirits of those in heaven would come together with the flesh of the dead that have been buried in the ground, and they will be transformed into spiritual bodies. /This means that our spirits and physical bodies would come together to become resurrected bodies.

/If Jesus returns while we are alive, we will immediately be transformed into spiritual bodies like that of Jesus. /We must wait and prepare for Jesus' Second Coming.

/Here we will conclude the first lecture on 1 Thessalonians. /Thank you.