

Introduction to 1 Thessalonians

1 Thessalonians 1:1-3

Introduction

I The Background

- A. The date: Approximately 51 A.D. - Acts 17
- B. The occasion and purpose:
 - 1. To defend Paul's ministry, their conversion (1:1-3:2)
 - 2. To encourage the new converts in their trials (3:3-13)
 - 3. To give instruction concerning godly living (4:1-12)
 - 4. To give assurance regarding Christ's return (4:13-5:28)
- C. The overall theme and key verse:
 - 1. Overall theme: "The Lord's return"
 - 2. Key verse: 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

II The Author

- A. The human authors:
 - 1. Paul = *Saul* (Hebrew) *Paul* (Latin)
 - a. His pre-conversion life:
 - 1. He was a Roman citizen/devout Jew - Acts 22:3
 - 2. He was a Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin
 - 3. He was a persecutor of saints - Acts 8:3; 9:1-2
 - b. His post-conversion life: - Acts 9:1-19; 22:1-29
 - 1. He was a herald of Christ - Eph 3:7-11
 - 2. He was an apostle/church planter - 1 Tim 2:7
 - 3. He was author of at least 13 NT books
 - 2. Silas = *Silas* (Aramaic) *Silvanus* (Latin)
 - 3. Timothy = "Dear to God"
- B. The divine author: God
 - 1. It is God-breathed - 2 Tim 3:16-17
 - 2. It is Jesus Christ-embodied - Jn 1:1
 - 3. It is Spirit-inspired - 2 Pet 1:20-21

III The Recipients

- A. The primary recipients: The Thessalonian church
 - 1. Their geographical position
 - a. The city of Thessalonica

- b. The church of Thessalonica
 - 2. Their spiritual position
 - a. In God the Father
 - b. In the Lord Jesus Christ - Gen 7:16; Eph 1:13-14
- B. The secondary recipients: The "catholic" church

IV The Greeting

- A. The opening salutation:
 - 1. *Grace* = "God's divine favor in spite of demerit"
 - 2. *Peace* = "Man's release from enmity with God"
- B. The opening exhortation:
 - 1. They always giving thanks for them - 2 Tim 1:3
 - 2. They made mention on them in their prayers
 - 3. They continually remembered before God:
 - a. Their work produced by faith - 2 Thess 1:11
 - b. Their labor prompted by love - Jn 14:21; 21:16
 - c. Their endurance inspired by hope - Heb 12:1

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Take some time this week to consider the following:

1. Who is the greatest source of encouragement in your life?
2. The apostle Paul included Silas and Timothy in the introduction of his letter. What impact do you think that may have had on his disciples? Why did he do it? What can you learn from it?
3. Explain in your own words the meaning of *Grace* and *Peace* and how the two are interrelated in the Christian life.
4. In Thess 1:2-3 Paul's thoughts of the Thessalonians prompted 3 activities in his life. What were they? Are these activities a normal part of your life/relationships? Why or why not?
5. What can you do this week to evidence a life that is marked by 1) Work produced by faith, 2) Labor prompted by love and 3) Endurance inspired by hope?
6. Take a moment to thank God for the supernatural peace that you have as a result of His grace poured out in Jesus Christ.

BOB HALLMAN - THE EPIC LIFE

Copyright, Bob Hallman, 1996-2021, All Rights Reserved.