

PAUL'S LETTERS  
TO  
THESSALONICA

**By Frank Jamerson**

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*Spiritual "equipment" for the contest of life.*

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## Lesson 1 Introduction

1. Establishment of the church in Thessalonica. See Acts 17:1-10.
  - a. Paul preached three Sabbath days in the synagogue and then was received by Jason (he probably lived and taught in his house).
  - b. The large number of disciples (Acts 17:4), the fact that he was sent support from Philippi (Philippians 4:16), and that he worked to support himself part of the time (1 Thessalonians 2:9), indicate a lengthy stay there. Some think he stayed about eight months.
  - c. The teaching:
    - 1) That the Messiah of the Scripture must die and rise again, Acts 17:3. This was not the message the Jews expected. They were looking for an earthly king.
    - 2) Jesus is the Messiah of Old Testament Scripture.
  - d. The results: Some believed and some did not, verses 4, 5.
2. Date of writing:
  - a. Evidence from secular sources indicates that Paul was in Corinth early in A.D. 50. Not long after this, Silas and Timothy returned from Macedonia with the report which resulted in the first letter to the Thessalonians. See Acts 18:5; 1 Thessalonians 3:1-6.
  - b. The first letter was probably written from Corinth about 53 A.D. and the second letter followed a few months later.
3. Paul may have visited Thessalonica on the third journey (Acts 20:1, 2), and after his first imprisonment in Rome, 1 Timothy 1:3.
4. Some general information about the two epistles:
  - a. About one in every eight verses in 1 Thessalonians refers to the Lord's coming. See 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:1-4, 23.
  - b. About three out of every eight verses in 2 Thessalonians refers to the Lord's coming. See 1:6-10; 2:1-12; 3:5.
  - c. First and second Thessalonians are the only letters thought to have been written on the second journey of Paul.
  - d. What each chapter tells us about the Lord's coming:
    - 1) 1 Thessalonians:
      - a) We wait for His coming, 1:10.
      - b) The souls won will be our crown, 2:19, 20.
      - c) Christ desires to establish us as holy before the Father, 3:13.
      - d) The dead will be raised before the living are caught up; all the

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saved will be caught up together, 4:13-17.

- e) Christ will come as a thief, but the child of God should be found blameless, 5:1-4, 23.

### 2) 2 Thessalonians:

- a) It will be a time of reward and retribution, 1:7-9.
- b) A falling away would come first, 2:1-3.
- c) With a heart of love, we should wait for Him, 3:5.

### A. Greeting, 1:1.

- 1. To the church composed of Thessalonians, Romans 16:4; 1 Corinthians 16:1; Galatians 1:22; Revelation 1:4.
- 2. It was in the Father the Lord Jesus Christ. It was related to the Father (of God) and the Son (of Christ), Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 10:32; Colossians 1:13.

### B. Paul gave thanks, 1:2-4.

- 1. For their work of faith. (“Here the initial act of faith at conversion; turning to God, verse 9” W.E. Vine). See also Galatians 5:6; James 2:26.
- 2. Their labor of love. (“Fatiguing toil, intense labor, united with trouble” Vine.) Love leads us to attempt labor from which we would ordinarily shrink in dismay. “Love leads us to do good without having any feeling of superiority because we have done it, or resentment because it has been imposed upon us” (Thinking Through Thessalonians, Wilbur Fields, p. 32).
- 3. Their patience of hope. (Steadfastness, endurance, constancy is produced by hope.) See Hebrews 6:18, 19; Romans 8:24; 1 Peter 1:13; 1 John 3:3.

## STUDY QUESTIONS:

- 1. Where was Thessalonica?
- 2. What was the basic message of Paul to the Jews?
- 3. What two results followed his preaching?

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4. What is the probable date of these books?
  
5. How long do we know Paul was in Thessalonica? How long is it supposed that he was there and why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Of whom was the church composed?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. To whom did it belong, or to whom was it related?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. What three things did Paul remember about them?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What does hope produce?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. What does each chapter in Thessalonians tell us about the Lord's coming?