

New Testament Survey

Class 18: 1 Thessalonians

Author and Date:

- Paul the apostle, along with Silvanus/Silas and Timothy
- Circa 50 AD, probably from Corinth where Paul spent a year and half (Acts 18:1-17, esp. v. 11) shortly after leaving Thessalonica

Planting of the church in Thessalonica

- Paul and his coworkers spent only three or four weeks in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9) on Paul's second missionary journey.
- The mission in Thessalonica was cut short by violent opposition. The opposition in Thessalonica was so strong that opponents from that city followed Paul to Berea, 50 miles to the west, to break up meetings there as well (Acts 17:13)!

Main Purposes of 1 Thessalonians

1. Encouragement to a persecuted, young church
2. Answering accusations regarding Paul's motives (e.g., 2:3-12) and travel plans (2:17-3:11)
3. Instruction about living as Christians, especially sexual purity (4:1-8) and work ethic (4:11-12)
4. Clarification regarding Christ's return and what will happen to Christians who have already died (4:13-5:11)

21-Jan-24	1 Thessalonians
28-Jan-24	2 Thessalonians
4-Feb-24	Intro to the Pastoral Epistles
11-Feb-24	1 Timothy
18-Feb-24	2 Timothy
25-Feb-24	Titus

Outline of 1 Thessalonians

Greeting and Thanksgiving (1:1-10)

Instructions on Christian Living (4:1-12)

An Explanation of Paul, Silas, and Timothy's Motives—Pleasing God, Love for Christians—as Seen in the Thessalonians Own Experience (2:1-16)

Teaching about the Return of Christ (4:13-5:11)

- Note: “meet” in 4:17 (Gk: ἀπάντησω) is not the common word for “meeting” and occurs only two other times in the NT (Mat 25:6; Acts 28:15)

An Explanation of Paul's Inability to Visit and Decision to Send Coworkers Instead (2:17-3:5)

Final Exhortations and Farewell (5:12-28)

Joyful Response to the Thessalonian Church's Steadfastness; Paul's Desire to Visit Again (3:6-13)