

“You Became A Great Examples”
1 Thessalonians 1:6-10
6/22/25
Message 2

Introduction

- Title Of The Message: “You Became Examples”

- **Illustration**

- **A Perfect Church?**

- I know you have heard...
 - *“If you ever find a perfect church, please don’t join it, if you do it will not be perfect anymore”.*
 - That is so true!!!

- **Having said that - The church in Thessalonica was pretty good!**

- This church was “Good Example”
 - Paul was JOYFUL & THANKFUL on how they RESPONDED to God’s Word (1:2; 2:13; 3:9; 5:18)
 - Not perfect, but they had something that we all need, and that is...
 - They had a HUNGER for God’s Word!
 - They Wanted to be FAITHFUL to God’s Word!
 - They Were Waiting For Jesus to come back!

- **Running Start – Review**

- **1st Beginning**

- **Church Started on Paul's 2nd Missionary Journey (Acts 16-17)**

- Paul was only there for 3 weeks – (Some say a few more)

- **Paul Left in Hurry = Persecution**

- SO - He sent Timothy and Silas back to minister to them and report back
- When They reported back to Paul
 - The church was thriving
 - Although they had a few questions and Issues that needed to help

- **So - Paul Wrote From Corinth - Around the year 50-52 AD (48AD)**

- Paul sits down and pens a letter to the church he knew only briefly, but loved ever so deeply
- 1 Thessalonians or Galatians were the FIRST N.T. books to be written

- **2nd Reason For Writing Them**

- **1st To ASSURE this young church of his Love & Concern**

- Left in hurry – Make they know how much I care
- Paul was being slandered – Set the record straight (see Next Week)

- **2nd ENCOURAGE them to Live Holy Lives / Plus Correction**

- We will see as we move through

- **3rd GROUNDED In Doctrine – Christ's Return**

- We talk about the confusion today
- Gave a list of what the world would look like

- **3rd Review Verses 1-5**

1 Thessalonians 1:1–5 (NKJV)

1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers,

3 remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father,

4 knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God.

5 For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

- **Church**

- Greek: Ekklēsia
- Means: Called OUT Ones

- **Grace to you and peace**

- Always in that Order
- Can't Have Peace with God Until you have GRACE

- **Paul Gave Thanks – Prays**

- He was so encouraged to see the church doing well

- **Thankful - 3 Things Mentioned**

- Work Of Faith
- Labor Of Love
- Patience of Hope
- **Salvation**
 - Chosen but have a Choice
 - POWER in the Gospel – Not in man
 - Much Assurance
- **Reassured Them of his character**
 - People attempted to rip apart Paul

• **Now This Morning 4 Great Ways the Thessalonians Became A Great Example**

- In Their Decision To Follow The Lord v. 6
- In Their Display Of Character vv. 6b-8
- In Their Decision To Turn To God / From Idolatry v. 9
- In Their Desire To See Jesus v. 10

In Their Decision To Follow The Lord v. 6

• **First: You became followers of us and of the Lord v. 6a**

1 Thessalonians 1:6 (NKJV)

6 And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit,

- **1st The Word - Followers**
 - Greek: Mimetes (“mimic”) – an imitator
 - Means: "imitators." / “mimics”

○ **2nd Became followers of us and of the Lord**

- Imitate Paul (Others) as they follow Christ

1 Corinthians 11:1 (NKJV)

1 Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.

- Paul was an Example to the believers
 - How To Love Jesus
 - How To be Obedient to Jesus
 - How To Serve Jesus
 - How To live for Jesus – Sold Out - A Disciple
 - So Follow his Example

○ **3rd Application**

- **As a New Believer**

- It is Good to find a person (Same Sex) and follow them
- Someone you see that is On Fire for Jesus
- Someone you can relate with – (Mentor)
- But ONLY follow them as they Follow Jesus

- **As a Mature Believe**

- Still good to look at others they have been walking with Jesus longer and glean from them
- But ONLY follow them as they Follow Jesus

- **In Ministry**

- Still good to look at others they have been walking with Jesus longer and glean from them
- But ONLY follow them as they Follow Jesus
- **If Someone is Following YOU**
 - Take it Seriously – HUMBLE
 - Whether we like it or not, folks do follow “us and the Lord.”
 - This is why we need to live godly, faithful lives

In Their Display Of Character vv. 6b-8

- **First: Having received the word in much affliction v. 6b**

1 Thessalonians 1:6 (NKJV)

6 And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit,

- **1st Much Affliction**

- **Count ON IT - Affliction**

- No Doubt
 - In turning from idols to serve God...
 - These believers angered their friends and relatives
- This led to persecution.
 - They were going through much pain.
 - They were ostracized at their work
 - Driven out of their homes

- Arrested and put into prison for their new-found faith
- This is why they thought the Day of The Lord was already here – Because of the suffering

▪ **Jesus Promised His Disciples...**

- 1st They would be Hopeful and Filled with Joy
- 2nd They Could be Completely Fearless
- 3rd They would be in Constant Trouble
- We must take our joy from Jesus!!! / NO Complaining!!!

○ **2nd With joy Of The holy Spirit**

- **HOW - We are NOT ALONE in the affliction – The HS is with us**
 - So rise up and keep moving forward

• **Second: Being Examples v. 7**

1 Thessalonians 1:7 (NKJV)

7 so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe.

○ **1st So that you Became Examples**

- **First, Paul was an example to the Thessalonian Christians.**
 - Then they became examples to others.
 - This is exactly how the work of God should happen.
- **The Christians in Macedonia and Achaia needed examples**

- And the Thessalonians supplied that need.
- This was true even though they had only been followers of Jesus a short time.

• **Third: From you the word of the Lord has sounded forth v. 8**

1 Thessalonians 1:8 (NKJV)

8 For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.

- **1st Sounded Fourth**
 - “Sounded Forth”
 - Means: A loud ringing sound, as of a trumpet blast, or thunder
 - The good work the Lord did among the Thessalonians became known all over the region, and everyone talked about the changes.
 - Literally, a trumpet blast had carried the news of their amazing faith. “...not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place.”
- **2nd Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything:**
 - Your faith toward God has gone out
 - So that we do not need to say anything
 - Their lives said it all!
 - They were being a witness for Jesus to both their friends, and throughout the surrounding regions.
- **3rd Application**

- How about our Faith – IS it GOING OUT – Sounding of a Trumpet

In Their Decision to Turn To God / From Idolatry v. 9

- ***First: How you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God v. 9***

1 Thessalonians 1:9 (NKJV)

9 For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,

○ **1st Turn TO then FROM**

- **They TURNED to God – That Resulted in TURNING FROM Idols**

- REPENTANCE
- A Change of HEART
- Always in that Order

○ Come to God

- Turn from Idols

○ Remember this order when struggling with SIN

- Go to God – don't just focus on your sins – Focus on what God has done for you!

- **Their Reception of the Word & God was shown as TRUE**

- Because they did something with the Word of God
 - Faith in God must change you / their faith did!!!
 - Faith is not merely belief; it is something that changes you.

- Faith makes you turn from what is WRONG to what is RIGHT.
- Faith will turn you from the worship of idols to Worship God
- If nothing has changed in your life –
 - One has to questions if there was ever a real conversion

• **Second: Application - Idols**

- **1st Mankind will Worship Something...**
 - **God has made every human a worshipper**
 - Everybody worships somebody - or something...
 - **Paul tells us in Romans 1**
 - The tendency of Man is to make gods in his own image.
 - In Times Past
 - The world was saturated with idols and images
 - Man created these pagan gods they essentially reflected sinful man's desires and dreams
 - They were an exaggeration of both the best and worst of humanity
 - A prideful world rejected the true God
 - Worshipped themselves - by customizing gods after their own image
- **2nd Idol Worship is Evil**

- **When God gave us His Top 10 List, His number one concern was...**
 - “You shall have no other gods before Me.”
- **Later, when God judged the Hebrews it was because of their idolatry...**

1 Kings 16:13 (NKJV)

13 for all the sins of Baasha and the sins of Elah his son, by which they had sinned and by which they had made Israel sin, in provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their idols.

Ezekiel 20:16 (NKJV)

16 because they despised My judgments and did not walk in My statutes, but profaned My Sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols.

- **NOT just O.T. Warning...**
 - 1 Corinthians 10:14 warns, “My beloved, flee from idolatry.”
 - 1 John 5:21, “Little children, keep yourselves from idols.”
 - God has always despised idolatry!
- **3rd We Make The Mistake – Thinking Idols are just in the PAST**
 - **Watch and old movie**
 - See idol worship and think I am so glad that is not with us today!
 - Isn’t idolatry an ancient problem?
 - I don’t have any shrines or statues
 - **That’s actually a huge mistake to think so**
 - Even in modern times idols abound!!!

- Let's look at past idols to New Idols
- **4th Comparison Past Idols = Current Idols**
 - **Greek Mythology which was prevalent during this time**
 - Consider for a minute some of the Popular Greek and Roman gods
 - And how they still have a place in our culture today.
 - **ZUES**
 - Chief of the gods / Proverbial playboy
 - Zeus Had his way sexually with many goddesses and women – fathered a multitude of Children
 - Today:
 - He is the epitome of the playboy mentality
 - Hugh Hefner – was a Man who lived for the sexual conquest
 - That mentality is prevalent in our Culture that promotes sex as the end all
 - **APPOLLO:**
 - Greek god who personified youthful masculinity – known as the god of music
 - Today: A Celebration of Youthful Strength - Rock Stars?
 - **APHRODITE**
 - Greek goddess of beauty and sexual love

- Today: Cosmo – Shape – Sex is everywhere

- **EROS**

- Greek god of love & pleasure
- Today: Well just look around – again sex is everywhere
 - This produces the god of molech / abortion
 - **HR 271 – Show Pic**

- **NIKE**

- Greek god of victory and competition
- Today:
 - Sports and our obsession with entertainment
 - Not just professional sports but youth

- **DUONYSOS**

- Greek god of wine and intoxication and pleasure
- Today:
 - TV commercials make it seem like it is impossible to watch a sporting event without alcohol
 - Drunkenness and Sport watching go hand in hand
 - POT – Legal – Just stay stoned so we can control you
 - FYI new studies coming out – medical effects – warning

- **MERCURY**

- Roman god of Commerce
- Today
 - The god of the stock market and the business world
- Now all of the god's and goddesses have one thing in Common
 - The Promotion of SELF
 - Self-gratification above all other pursuits
- **5th We probably live in history's most idolatrous time.**
 - **Religious Idols**
 - Hinduism:
 - 33 koti - it refers to 33 types or classes of deities
 - Buddha
 - There're also people throughout the Far East who worship a chubby little image called the Buddha.
 - Every year thousands of Buddhists flock to Sri Lanka to pay homage to the Buddha's tooth – it's on display in the Temple of the Tooth.
 - Catholics
 - Idolatry also exists among the disciples of Rome.
 - There are Catholics who bow before statues of the Virgin.
 - They direct their prayers to icons and relics, believing them to hold supernatural power

- New Age
 - New Age patrons wear their crystals, and sleep under pyramids, trusting inanimate objects to infuse them with spiritual life and energy and healing
- “Christianity”
 - Be careful of making a god of your own making
 - Yes - Even in Christian churches
 - If you focus on one of God’s qualities over another
 - Example –
 - God is Love but leave out God is Holy
- **Wordily Idols**
 - *DL Moody once said, “You don’t have to go to heathen lands today to find false gods. America is full of them. Whatever you love more than God is your idol.”*
 - *Billy Graham said, “Whatever you love most, be it sports, pleasure, business, or God – that is your god.”*
- POSSESSIONS
 - We might call them TOYS
 - We have to be careful...material possessions have a way of possessing us.
 - Possessions are okay so long as we possess them
- PEOPLE

- Human relationships can take precedent over our relationship with God.
- When a friend, or spouse, grows more important to us than God they are an idol
- When you look to another human being to meet needs in your life only God can fill - you're gonna be disappointed
- I hope no one in our life is as important to us as Jesus
- No one will ever love you the way He loves you.

- POPULARITY

- Selfish Ambition
- The LUST for Fame
- People's Approval – Above God's Approval
- Esteem in the eyes of others
- Some folks live for the cheers of the crowd.
- They've idolized popularity.

- POSITION

- The businessman lives for achievement.
- Life for him is the next rung on the ladder.

- A PHILOSOPHY

- Ideology, or movement, or cause?
- It can be a noble, worthwhile cause

- We're all prone to idolatry.

- We have to be careful

In Their Desire to See Jesus v. 10

• First: Wait For His Son v. 10a

1 Thessalonians 1:10 (NKJV)

10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead,
even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

○ **1st To Wait**

- The theme of the Thessalonians –
 - Second Coming
- They are waiting for Jesus' return

○ **2nd Application**

- **Are we Waiting – Looking – Expectantly**
 - To eagerly await His return is to live in the right way
 - Jesus explicitly told his disciples he would return
 - This is a repeated theme in the New Testament.
- **To not be looking for His return**

2 Peter 3:3–9 (NKJV)

3 *knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts,*

4 *and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."*

5 *For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water,*

6 *by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water.*

7 *But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*

8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

- We don't want to be in this category

- **Second: Who Delivers Us from The Wrath to Come v. 10b**

- **1st Delivers us from the wrath to come v. 10b**

1 Thessalonians 1:10 (NKJV)

10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

1 Thessalonians 1:10 (CSB)

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

1 Thessalonians 1:10 (NASB95)

10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

- **Now the Question – What does it mean From the Wrath To Come?**

- The Word - FROM
 - Greek: **apó**
 - Meaning: Out Of
- The Word WRATH
 - Greek: **orgé**
 - Meaning: Wrath - Anger – Judgment
- Paul make similar statements

- (1 Thessalonians 5:9–10 / 2 Thessalonians 1:5–10)
- Different Thoughts
 - Wrath = Hell
 - Wrath = Tribulations
- Not a Greek Scholar
 - But I have read that it the structure of the sentence in Greek and in the context of the whole book
 - That it pointing to Tribulation –
 - We are saved From Hell but also from the Tribulation
- Pre-Trib Rapture
 - We will go into depth in chapter 4

Closing

• **A Church (Christian) That has Truly Turned TO GOD will...**

- 1st Turn from Idols
- 2nd Have a work of faith
- 3rd Have a Labor of love –
- 4th Have a Patience of Hope
- 5th Be an Example of endurance when under affliction with joy
- 6th They are waiting for Jesus' return
 - If we are Truly living in the expectation of seeing Jesus Christ at any time

- We Will be a vibrant and victorious group of people
- Soul-Winning (1 Thes. 2:19–20)
- Stable Christian (1 Thes. 3:11–13)
- Comfort in sorrow (1 Thes. 4:13–18)
- Be a great encouragement for godly living (1 Thes. 5:23–24)