

1 Thessalonians chapter 1

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Jesus' wrath

If Jesus was loving and merciful, why does he say that he wants to "deliver us from the one who is to wrath"? This seems to be in stark contrast to the image we often hear of "Jesus is love." This means that Jesus is the one who came down from heaven and saved us from God's future wrath. "The wrath to come" does not come from Jesus' emotions, but from God's righteous judgment on sin. God's wrath against sin (Romans 1:18, Revelation 6:17) is not an impulsive emotion, but God's absolute justice response to sin. God's love and righteousness go hand in hand. If God does not judge evil, He is not a perfectly righteous God. Jesus did not come to be angry with us, but to save us from wrath. On the cross, Jesus suffered for us the judgment that was ours (Isaiah 53:5, Romans 5:9). So Jesus saved us from the wrath of the future, and he is our savior, not the object of our judgment. Jesus' return does represent "the day of wrath" (cf. Revelation 19, Matthew 25:31-46). For believers, Jesus is the Savior and Bridegroom, and we are hopeful to "wait for His coming" (1 Thessalonians 1:10). Therefore, it is not said that Jesus would be angry with believers, but that Jesus blocked the wrath that should have befallen sinners for us and brought us into eternal peace.

1 Thessalonians chapter 1

Because He is the Savior, so that we do not fall into judgment The first chapter of 1 Thessalonians is the opening of Paul's letter to the Thessalonian church, where Paul, Silas, and Timothy greet the Thessalonian church. This epistle was written around 50-51 AD and is one of the earliest letters in the New Testament. Thessalonica was an important city in Macedonia, and the church was founded by Paul during his second missionary journey. Paul thanked God for the Thessalonians for their steadfastness in faith, love, and hope. Their "works of faith, loving labors, and endurance of hope" became the hallmarks of church life. Paul mentions that God chose them, and that the gospel was preached among them through the Holy Spirit and power.

Believers accept the gospel with joy in the midst of tribulation and become an example of Paul and Christ. The faith of the Thessalonian church became an example for Macedonia and Achaia. They rejected idols and turned to the true God, waiting for Jesus' return, showing sincere repentance and steadfastness in their hope for the last days. Paul emphasizes the power of the gospel, the example of believers, and the hope of Christ's return. Paul encourages the church to hold on to the faith in the midst of tribulation and praises them for their faithfulness to the gospel.

We pray

Dear Heavenly Father,

You are a loving and merciful God, yet also perfectly holy and just. We worship You for Your righteousness, and we thank You for opening the way of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Lord, we lift up the people of this world to You. We pray that You would stir every heart, that more people would come to know the truth and turn away from sin. Your wrath is not a sign of cruelty, but of holy justice against sin. And yet, You do not desire that anyone should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

We pray, Lord, that through the power of the cross and the love of Jesus, many would repent and believe. May they put their faith in Christ and be saved from the judgment to come.

Send Your Holy Spirit to open their eyes, soften their hearts, and draw them to Yourself. Let people from every nation, tribe, and tongue come to know Your grace, and be rescued from the coming wrath.

Lord, use us as Your messengers. Help us to share the gospel with love and truth, so that others may come out of darkness into Your marvelous light.

We ask all this in the mighty name of Jesus Christ, our Savior,
Amen.

1 Thessalonians 1

Amplified Bible

Thanksgiving for These Believers

1 Paul, Silvanus (Silas), and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace [inner calm and spiritual well-being from God].

² We give thanks to God always for all of you, *continually* mentioning you in our prayers; ³ recalling unceasingly before our God and Father your work energized by faith, and

your service motivated by love and unwavering hope in [the return of] our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴ [a] Brothers and sisters beloved by God, we know that He has chosen you; ⁵ for our good news [regarding salvation] came to you not only in word, but also in [its inherent] power and in the Holy Spirit and with great conviction [on our part]. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your benefit. ⁶ You became imitators of us and [through us] of the Lord, after you welcomed our message in [a time of] great trouble with the joy supplied by the Holy Spirit; ⁷ so that you became an example to all the believers in [b] Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸ For the word of the Lord has resounded from you *and* has echoed [like thunder], not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place [the news of] your [great] faith in God has spread, so that we never need to say anything about it. ⁹ For they themselves report about us, *telling* what kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to [look forward and confidently] wait for [the coming of] His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead—Jesus, who [personally] rescues us from the coming wrath [and draws us to Himself, granting us all the privileges and rewards of a new life with Him].

1 Thessalonians 1: Detailed Explanation

Verse 1: Greeting

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

- **Authorship:** Paul includes **Silvanus (Silas)** and **Timothy**, showing a team-oriented ministry.
- **Location:** The letter is addressed to believers in **Thessalonica**, a major city in Macedonia.
- **Identity of the Church:** “In God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” — emphasizing their new identity as belonging to the true and living God.
- **Greeting:** “Grace and peace” combines both Greek and Jewish greetings, showing the unity of the gospel.

Verses 2–3: Thanksgiving for the Church

“We give thanks to God always for all of you... remembering before our God and Father your work of faith, labor of love, and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- **Prayerful Gratitude:** Paul expresses constant thanksgiving, reflecting a deep pastoral love.
- **Faith, Love, and Hope:** A classic Pauline triad:
 - **Work of faith** – faith producing action
 - **Labor of love** – sacrificial service driven by love

- **Steadfastness of hope** – endurance rooted in the return of Christ
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Verse 4: God's Election

“For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you,”

- **God's Sovereign Grace:** Paul affirms that their salvation is not accidental; they are **“chosen” by God.**
 - **Assurance:** This encourages believers to know their faith is not in vain, but rooted in God's eternal plan.
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Verse 5: Power of the Gospel

“...our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.”

- The **gospel is not merely information**, but divine transformation.
 - The Holy Spirit worked through the preaching, producing deep conviction and lasting change in their lives.
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Verse 6: Imitation and Joy in Affliction

“You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit.”

- Despite **persecution**, they welcomed the gospel with **joy** — a clear mark of true conversion.
 - They **imitated Paul and Jesus:** accepting suffering, yet remaining faithful.
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Verse 7: Becoming Examples

“So that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.”

- Their **faithful response** made them a model church in the wider region.
 - Their witness had **regional influence**, even as a young church.
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Verse 8: Proclaiming the Gospel

“For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you... but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere...”

- They were **not passive receivers** but active **evangelists**, spreading the Word far and wide.
 - Their reputation for genuine faith was known “everywhere” — showing gospel transformation has wide-reaching power.
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Verse 9: Repentance and True Conversion

“You turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,”

- A classic definition of conversion:
 - **Turning from idols** (repentance)
 - **Turning to God** (faith)
 - **Serving Him** (obedience)
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Verse 10: Hope in Jesus’ Return

“And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.”

- Early Christians lived with a **future expectation** — the **return of Christ**.
 - Jesus is presented as:
 - **The resurrected One**
 - **The returning King**
 - **The Savior from God’s future wrath** (judgment)
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✚ Theological Influence of 1 Thessalonians 1

1. Triad of Christian Virtues

- Faith, love, and hope are not abstract, but **visible through action**. This forms a key **model of Christian living**.

2. Doctrine of Election

- God’s choice of the believers encourages assurance and humility — salvation is **by grace**, not human effort.

3. The Power of the Holy Spirit

- The gospel’s effectiveness lies not just in persuasive words but in **Spirit-empowered transformation**. This has shaped evangelical emphasis on **Spirit-filled preaching**.

4. Joy Amid Persecution

- Christian maturity is shown by **joy in affliction** — a theme repeated throughout the New Testament.

5. Missional Church Identity

- Even as a young church, the Thessalonians were **missionally active**, spreading the Word. This affirms the New Testament view of every church as a **sending community**.

6. Biblical Model of Conversion

- True conversion is **turning from sin/idolatry to serve the living God**. This becomes a framework for gospel calls in the rest of Paul’s writings.

7. Eschatological (End-Time) Focus

- Early Christians lived with an active hope in Christ’s return and deliverance from judgment — shaping **Christian ethics, urgency, and hope**.

✔ Summary:

Theme	Message
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Identity	Believers are chosen by God and belong to Christ.
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Character	Their lives show faith, love, and hope in action.
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Witness	Their testimony spread far beyond their city.
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Suffering	True joy is possible even under persecution.
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Salvation	Jesus saves us from coming wrath through His death and resurrection.
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Expectation	Christians live in eager hope of Jesus’ return.
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