

Coming of the Lord

1Thessalonians 1:1-8

Paul's second missionary journey w/ Silvanus – Silas as they passed thru Troas a vision appeared to Paul, '*a man of Macedonia stood & cried out come over here and help us*' Acts 16:9 They went thru Philippi (*ministered*) went on thru Amphipolis & Apollonia & came to Thessalonica Acts 17:1-9

A seaport city, capital of Roman province Macedonia. Population 200K, Jews believing God of Israel, also Gentiles who rejected pagan idols, now *God-fearers* & a number of leading women.

Thessalonica modern Saloniki *picture* situated at the NW corner of Aegean Sea facing the harbor situated on a rich & well watered plain. Great northern Military highway from Rome to the East w/in sight of Mt Olympus, home of the Greek gods. Leading city of Macedonia in Paul's day.

Paul established the church about 51 AD along w/ two of his companions Silas & young Timothy. He was there for only three Sabbath in the Synagogue yet believed longer w/in the city, *gospel to Jews first*, but apostle to the Gentiles. Acts 17:1-9. Many saved & jealous Jewish mob complained he upsetting city '*turning the world upside down 17:6* and riot broke out, host Jason roughed up put in custody & let go w/ pledge and promise Paul depart. They left for Berea 50 miles away. Angry Jews chased Paul down in Berea so he left for Athens 200 miles while Silas & Timothy stayed behind in Berea.

Paul alone in pagan city of Athens & needing his companions sent for Silas & Timothy. Paul concerned for new church plant in Thessalonica sent Timothy to check on them. He and Silas left for Corinth later Timothy joined them w/ report. Church is doing good but struggling w/ issues of Lords return, those who died miss His coming? Key teaching of Paul.

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So he wrote to explain issues dealing w/ the coming the Lord for believers who died & those alive. He also deals w/ coming of anti-Christ in 2nd letter. It was about 1 year after church started that Paul writes to clarify his teaching on Lords coming. Exemplary church ex to others not said of any other, but don't rest on past glories, accomplishments but *excel still more*

Paul ends each chap w/ a reference to Lord's return. He's concern that they grow in faith, not getting discouraged & fall away because of persecution & false brethren coming into the church w/ false teaching.

Why so focused on Christ return 1Jn 3:3...have this hope purifies...holy life, separated life

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

Paul's classic greeting: Who it's from, who it to, God's presence, salutation. *Grace*-God's favor & fortune given freely. *Peace*-well being in spite of circumstances Hebrew *Shalom*

Three Sabbaths in synagogue Acts 17:2 3 weeks in Thes? Longer in city 2:9 *working night/day; Phil 4:16 they sent gift more than once* Silvanus Acts 15:40 *Paul chose Silas* retrace 1st miss & beyond Tim joins in Lystra 16:3.

2 We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers; 3 constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love & steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father,

How often do we look around at congregation and say like Paul I always give God thanks for you? It is a discipline, develop a habit of it, train the mind to do it, in prayer. Not long but often, regularly mentioning-atmosphere

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Constantly – mindful of **work of faith**-things do for Lord ‘not weary in well doing...’ **Labor of love** – burden for things of Lord and others. Steadfast in hope – waiting and looking for the Lords return...Maranatha! Titus 2:13

4 knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you; 5 for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

Knowing, security of believer—assurance of salvation...confidence in fact God **choosing** us. *Jn 15:16 “You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask of the Father in My name, He may give to you.*

Unique one of a kind and **beloved**. Not looking at others as Peter ‘*what about him*’ We can feel better or worse looking at others but God’s choice of you brings boldness & freedom in spirit...Election & foreknowledge *Rm 8:28,29 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren ‘*

Gospel – good news came w/ power, impact, conviction, touching deepest part vs words touch only mind & emotions. *John 6:63, “the words that I have spoken to you are spirit & life, Full conviction* honest assessment of life **1Cor 15:1-**

6 You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit, 7 so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. 8 For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything.

Became imitators-**mimic** of us & Lord – caught and taught. Paul said follow me as I follow Christ. God’s spiritual DNA is in us like seed bares after it’s kine. In much tribulation—makes strong trees strengthened by wind.

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Tribulation lit to strike a blow, make imprint—mint coins, press seal in clay or wax. CC distinctive, principles are transferable, personality is not but unique. Truth thru personality. **2Cor 4:7** *7But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves; Flavor of vessel distracts from what's in it.*

Became examples Macedonia in north & Achaia south two provinces. Good witness in hands of God powerful tool for gospel & bad witness in hands of Satan a powerful tool against gospel. Thessalonians influence for Christ felt in all parts of Greece for those who visited & those who went out.

Effect of gospel thru your life *'sounded'* reverberated, megaphone, echoed in home town & every town...Constant & consistent witness. *We have no need to say anything*...no apologies for bad behavior, no excuses for actions, no defenses of lifestyle..But reality of power of what word does was seen in you to all everywhere. **Pete Hegseth Sec of defense**

9 For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, 10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.

Those who visited and those who went out from you all unanimous in report about your faith & Christian witness. *Reception*...hostile, saying they impostors...to contrary ...look at changed lives and effect Paul' preaching & ministry had...deceiver not so ...from idol to serve living & true God.