

Fact Sheet for **“God’s choice of You”**  
**1 Thessalonians 1:1-10**

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ESV <sup>1</sup> ¶ Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

<sup>2</sup> ¶ We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, <sup>3</sup> remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup> For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, <sup>5</sup> because our gospel came to you not only in word, 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.

<sup>6</sup> And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, <sup>7</sup> so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.

<sup>8</sup> For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything.

<sup>9</sup> For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, <sup>10</sup> and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

We have read chapter 1 of 1 Thessalonians. Now, without looking, how much of it can you remember? What did Paul say? These words seem to slip right by us so easily. They will take on more depth once we look a little into Paul’s interaction with the Thessalonians before he wrote this letter. Paul was on his 2<sup>nd</sup> missionary journey. We find this record in Acts 17.

Thessalonica was the chief seaport of the Roman province of Macedonia. Also the Egnatian Way, the main Roman road from Rome to the Orient, passed through the city. Estimates put its population in NT times at near 200,000. Thessalonica had received the status of a free city from Anthony and Octavian, who was later called Caesar Augustus. No Roman troops were garrisoned there and the citizens were allowed to govern themselves.

*Read Acts 17:1-9.*

The ESV term “devout Greeks” in verse 4 is translated in the NASB “God-fearing Greeks.” “God-fearing” is a religious technical term applied to Gentiles who accepted

Judaism's belief in one God and attended the synagogue but did not become Jewish proselytes.

In verse 10 Luke records that the brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. Paul was in Berea just a short time before the same Jews from Thessalonica found out Paul was again proclaiming the word of God. So they came there as well, agitating and stirring up the crowds (Acts 17:10-14). Immediately the brethren sent Paul to Athens, where he continued to share Christ (Acts 17:15-34). While in Athens Paul sent Timothy back to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 3:1-3a). Paul then soon went from Athens to Corinth (Acts 18:1) and while there Silas and Timothy also came to Corinth from Macedonia. (Acts 18:5)

Here is the point. The church in Thessalonica began with Paul's ministry, but he had spent *only three weeks* with them. And Timothy had spent only a short time with them. But look at the effect the Gospel had in their lives.

*Read 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10 again, then read Romans 1:16.*

It was because of their response to the Gospel that Paul knew that God had chosen them for salvation.

When someone becomes a Christian God produces changes in their lives! What do you think Paul would have said if the Thessalonians had mouthed the right words in receiving Christ, but there was no change in their lives? Would Paul have said, "We know that God has chosen you because you prayed the sinner's prayer"?

One of the things that come along with being a pastor is when people outside the church request that you officiate at a funeral or memorial service, or at the graveside. Many of those requests are for people who had no visible Christian faith for most of their lives, but amazingly enough were reported to have prayed the sinner's prayer sometime when they were a very young child.

What are some of the changes God makes in our lives when we become Christians?

The Holy Spirit indwells us. – 1 Cor. 6:19; 12:13; Eph. 1:13-14

Through the Holy Spirit we are given a new ability to understand and resonate with God's Word. – 1 Cor. 2:11-14

We are freed from slavery to sin. – Romans 6:6

The Holy Spirit will produce changes in our lives! Could the Apostle Paul, if he were here today, say of you, "I know God has chosen you"? What about those you care deeply about?

*Read 1 Thess. 1:2-10 a third time. Where do you stand?*