1Thess #1

Introduction to Thessalonians and a reminder of your Election.

Please keep my brother In Christ Jason in prayer he is doing better.

Paul wrote this epistle on his second missionary journey.

This is addressed to a group of Believers who lived in the city of Thessalonica, the capital of the Roman province of Macedonia, the northern part of the Greek state.

It was famous for its wealth and its great sea port; it was a popular city with nearly 200 thousand people living in and around that region.

The Apostle Paul had really only spent about a month with the Bels at Thessalonica.

He then made his way down in the southern region of Greece and Timothy was not far behind Paul also teaching BD as a follow up. Then Paul heard of the problems which were brought to him by Timothy.

Timothy had gone back to Thessalonica to follow-up teaching and see what was happening there.

In a few short weeks of preaching and teaching from the Apostle Paul, a good number of Thessalonians came to accept Christ as savior. Then he began to teach them deeper doctrine and in a relatively short time he was able to teach them a few solid principles of mystery doctrine.

Then as was the Apostles custom, they would establish a church and move onward leaving men they trusted to come in to do follow-up preaching.

Timothy came into Thessalonica as a pastor-teacher and doing a follow up.

Timothy caught up to the Apostle Paul with some interesting reports.

/Timothy came to the Apostle Paul with negative reports. Reports related to several Bels who were stagnant and even some who had sold their businesses because they were certain the rapture was about to occur. Others began to claim perhaps it had already happened and they began to panic. Others were making claims to have special gifts and therefore they would be chosen over other Bels.\

The result of the confusion and negative report from Timothy was the writing of the five chapters which make-up 1st Thessalonians.

This is very similar to large portions of Christianity today. Many in Evangelical movements and some others are wrapped up into denominational groups that date back hundreds or even a thousand years.

Today in Christianity the confusion about the Rapture and Tribulation is really sparking off across social media platforms and pulpits all over the world.

This again usually happens to Bels who do not fully understand dispensations.

This epistle is characterized generally in four ways. First of all, it is what is called an eschatological epistle.

/Eschatology refers to the theology of future events. Almost every chapter in 1Thessalonians has some reference to the future, either the second advent or in some cases the Rapture of the Church. The second unusual circumstance about this epistle is the lack of any depth of OT quotes. Leading many scholars to believe it was completely, a Gentile congregation.\

The third thing which is most unusual about the letter is the fact that it is short and yet it covers a tremendous amount of Bible doctrine.

There are vast amounts of principles, core doctrines – covering the Holy Spirit, the doctrine of election, highlights of the Trinity, touching on the second advent, right into the final judgement.

Also, this was a display of the oral teaching powers and authority of the Apostles before - or as, the completed canon of scripture was in its final working stages.

It touches into aspects of mystery doctrine that clarify dispensations as well.

/The Pauline Epistles have large, sweeping principles teaching the depth of Soteriology (salvation) and our unique union with Christ, and Christology. Yet there are also just as many, if not more doctrinal principles touching deep into Eschatology. Both letters to Thessalonica, also both to Timothy, some portions of the letters to the Corinthians all point to end time or future events.\

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

“Paul.” The word in the Greek means “little". POW-LESS – is taken from a Latin root word meaning small or little.

Timothy and Silas or Silvanus were known to travel with Paul often and both were being groomed to be pastor teachers and leaders.

[1Th 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/1/2/s_1112002) We always give thanks to God for all of you, making mention *of you* in our prayers;

[1Th 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/1/3/s_1112003) constantly keeping in mind your work of faith and labor of love and perseverance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father,

[1Th 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/1/4/s_1112004) knowing, brothers *and sisters,* beloved by God, *His* choice of you;

The Apostle Paul is probably writing this from Corinth. Which is over 300 miles away.

The Apostle Paul does as he normally does even when he needs to reprimand Bels – he always begins with a grateful heart and a kind word to greet fellow Bels.

[/1Th 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/1/5/s_1112005) 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 sakes.

The Apostle Paul is emphasizing the two power options and that which he has taught and his men whom he entrusted also taught – was from GOD.\

[1Th 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/1/6/s_1112006) You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word during great affliction with the joy of the Holy Spirit,

[1Th 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/1/7/s_1112007) so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.

Look what The Apostle Paul mentions related to election.

/[1Th 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/1/4/s_1112004) knowing, brothers *and sisters,* beloved by God, ***His* choice** (*eklogē*) **of you;**

One chosen or set apart, elected.\

ECK-LA-GAY – means a divine choice, a selection from God.

This relates to the divine decree of eternity past and this is also a root of intense debate.

Many Bels think they have no choice in predestination and election, which really go hand in hand.

There is a whole set of theological principles related to Limited Atonement verses Unlimited Atonement.

The belief that GOD chose some in eternity past and others were neglected by GOD is false.

The bottom line is either the cross resolved the sin issue for the whole world or it didn’t.

God is not selective - HE is generous, filled with mercy and grace and therefore free will plays a key role.

The one principle to remember is - it is all related to our union with TLJC.

/Isa 42:1 Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; **My chosen one** *in whom* My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon
Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations.

The humanity of Christ was the only person elected by God the Father from eternity past. HIS predestination and election (humanity), were chosen directly by God the Father in eternity past.\

Understand this - Once we are born again we share in the destiny and election of Christ.

The overall view of election and predestination can be seen on two levels. Or at least this is how I teach it;

First is that God elected and predestined every human being to have free will. Within that decree of free will, HE set forth the judicial process of the person and work of TLJC to save us. The supernatural union we can share in with TLJC is a part of election and predestination for all mankind.

 REPEAT

/Jhn 3:16 “For **God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son**, so that **everyone who believes in Him** will not perish, but have eternal life.

God’s original plan from eternity past elected and predestined all humanity for an opportunity to have eternal life – therefore becoming elected/predestined in UNION with Christ.\

Election & predestination are related with the union we receive at the moment of salvation.

Jump over to 1Peter chapter one RF.

The teaching or belief that God predestined and elected some while neglecting or allowing others to perish in the lake of fire is opposed to God’s grace, mercy and forgiveness.

It also stands in stark contrast to God’s justice and righteousness.

/2Pet 3:9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, **not willing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance.**

Rom 10:13 for “**EVERYONE** WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.” \

Anyone who calls upon the name of TLJC recognizing HE is the only savior will be saved!

/2Tim 1:8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel **according to the power of God**, 9 who **saved us and called us** with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which **was granted to us in Christ Jesus from all eternity**,

God’s grace plan from eternity past is completely dependent upon Christ.\

The plan hinges on TLJC and once we are in union with HIM we share in everything.

Within that plan for fallen man is a trigger mechanism called free will.

Look what the Apostle Peter says;

/1Pet 1:2 **according to the foreknowledge**(*prognosis*)**of God the Father**, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

Knowledge in advance. Predestination. \

When people teach election and predestination as something that God did in eternity past and that it represents HIS sovereign will, that is correct. Yet they also teach some got chosen and are predestined for heaven and others will perish, that goes against the nature of God.

Many of you know that the core beliefs of Calvinism point to this approach to predestination & election.

This is what I teach because it is what the Bible teaches; when you take in the full concept of free will - beginning right in the garden with the original man and woman it points to mankind having to make a decision for or against GOD.

 REPEAT

That is the trigger mechanism on our side of the agreement.

Satan and his army all had a choice to make as well – free will is displayed even through the rebellion of angels.

God chose the elected ONE- Jesus Christ, and HE was predestined for victory and yes that was all done in eternity past. (Divine Decree)

Part of that decision from the divine decree, is that whosever believes upon TLJC, will forever share in HIS glory and victory. (covenant)

God’s foreknowledge is related to seeing down the corridor of time on every decision ever made – it is not removing your free will from the equation.

Accepting TLJC is a free will decision.

The cross means nothing if mankind has no free will.

/1[Pe 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1pe/1/3/s_1152003) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to **His great mercy has caused us to be born again** to a living hope **through the resurrection of Jesus Christ** from the dead,

CHRIST IS THE ELECTED ONE! the predestined one. The great mercy of God is related to the fact that everyone was elected or predestined for the opportunity.\

It is only through the resurrection of TLJC that all of us reap that benefit of eternal security and within that is our resurrected life along-side of TLJC.

/The Bel shares this election, this destiny by choosing for Christ, by faith. Faith is the principle set up in the Word of God. Faith is non-meritorious because the merit is always in the object of faith. In salvation, faith is directed all at Jesus Christ. Faith always has a target!\

This type of lesson forces a Bel to come to a conclusion on election and predestination.

The principle of grace and of the free will of man is set forth in scripture after scripture.

The character of God (His fairness, His righteousness, His perfection, His justice) is set forth in scripture after scripture.

/Psa 145:17 **The LORD is righteous in all His ways**, And kind in all His works. 18 **The LORD is near to all who call** (*qārā'*)**on Him**, To all who call on Him in truth.

This Hebrew verb points to a direct call to God. A cry, specific for salvation to God.\

CAR-AHH- is used as a cry out loud or a serious acknowledgment of God.

To call upon HIM in truth means accurate BD.

/Psa 18:30 As for God, **His way is blameless**; The word of the LORD is refined; He is a shield **to all**who take refuge in Him.

Anyone can take refuge in the LORD. It is not a plan designed for a select group, that would be unjust.\

The plan of God from eternity past for angels and mankind, was to be free creatures who could choose for or against the plan of GOD.

It is obvious as you study your Bible from Genesis into Revelation that GOD has no desire for a slave race of robots who are destined to follow HIM. Any relationship that is void of freedom, especially free will is not a relationship of grace, mercy and love.

/Deu 32:4 “The Rock! His work is perfect,
For all **His ways are just**; A God of
faithfulness and **without injustice**,
Righteous and just is He.

To create a race of beings who were born helpless & hopeless under Divine authority, with no chance or choice for salvation is the definition of injustice and cruelty.\

Jesus Christ came and preached of HIS love for all of mankind, HE died for the sins of the world and promised a return for HIS bride. This is the most intense and intimate love relationship and love story ever written.

Either HE is a liar and phony or HE is the exact loving Lord & Savior He proclaimed Himself to be. The choice is yours.

/2Chro 19:7 “Now then, let the fear of the LORD be upon you; be careful about what you do, **for the LORD our God will have no part in injustice or partiality**, or in the taking of a bribe.”

It is apparently clear God will not stand for injustice or partiality – it is against HIS divine nature.\

Go back into 1Thessolionas chapter one.

/Psa 89:14 **Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne**; Mercy and truth go before You.

Rom 3:26 for the demonstration, *that is,* of His righteousness at the present time, so that **He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.\**

HE can only set you apart and considered you justified if you believe upon TLJC – the onus is on YOU!

What do you believe? – Why are people told to believe – why is faith alone in Christ alone the only avenue into heaven if free will doesn’t matter?

[/1Th 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/1/8/s_1112008) For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place *the news of* **your faith toward God has gone out**, so that we have no need to say anything.

True faith is contagious and as it goes outward it ignites the free will of others to take notice and make the eternal decision.\

What use would evangelism truly have if free will had little or no power in this temporal life?

Your lifestyle and love for the LORD is sometimes the most effective tool for evangelism that you have in your Christian toolbox!

When people see how the Lord has touched your life and the changes in your lifestyle. Or how you handle adversity compared to where you were 5 or 10 years ago, speaks volumes about the power of Christ.

[/1Th 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/1/9/s_1112009) For they themselves report about us as to the kind of reception we had with you, and **how you turned to God from idols**to serve a living and true God,

The Bels in Thessalonica were entrenched with Greek philosophy and false gods (fallen angels/Nephilim).\

Yet they took the good news of TLJC and accepted with their own volition.

The Apostle Paul is elated that a group of Greeks who worshipped false idols their whole life, were now born again and saved.

They received quite a lot of BD at first, but now they had gone in a different direction and this is the reason for the letter.

[/1Th 1:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/1/10/s_1112010) 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 Apostle Paul is preparing them for some corrective teaching.\