



Thessalonians: The Model Church
1 Thessalonians 1:1-3
From Sermon 9.12.21

Read *1 Thessalonians 1:1-3*

Review from Sunday's sermon: The Holy Spirit has Paul open this letter by commending the Thessalonians and acknowledging the evidence of their election and salvation. Scripture sections like this one should cause us to evaluate—individually and corporately—if the biblical evidence of genuine conversion is evident. Real faith always produces God-ordained works, ministry, & service.

1. On Sunday, Charley mentioned a fear of “Spiritual Psychosis” in the Church. Discuss what that means and give your thoughts on the concern. Like the mentally ill in delusions of being someone famous, many sitting in Church (or stay-at-home Christians who don't think they need church) fully believing they are something they are not. They are fully banking their eternity on the wrong things. There is no evidence or proof of a new nature and conversion.

1. What are some things on which people base the authenticity of their salvation? Various possible answers. But, include: Past experience/emotional time of worship. Heritage/family connection to church, baptism, or beliefs. Denomination membership/association. A tragic belief that God just wants sincerity and effort. There are scales in heaven. Just be good, nice, and don't do the biggies.

2. However, genuine election leading to conversion is evidenced by Change. List some of those changes. New Desires, priorities, & conduct. Accurate view of sin and unworthiness. Joy not based on circumstances. Also, the fruit of the Spirit. See Galatians 5:19-24.

3. To be clear, the Bible teaches we are saved by grace. After the Holy Spirit resurrects the elect spiritually, they are bestowed a God-given faith. But, that faith is never alone—it is a working faith that serves and seeks to please the One who saved. See *Ephesians 2:8-10*

3a. How do we know a mere intellectual knowledge of the Bible and a belief that Jesus is real is not enough for salvation? Even the devil and the demons know the Bible and believe in Jesus. There theology is better, even, than ours. But, they are not saved. Are not trusting in the Word or Savior and have no faith.

4. What were the three components of evidence, listed by Paul, in 1 Thessalonians 1?

I. Work of Faith—See *James 2:14-19*

II. Labor of Love—*Matthew 22:36-40*

Who you love and don't love—See *Luke 6:32-33*

How you love and don't love

III. Steadfastness of Hope

4a. Where did the Thessalonians place their hope that made it unmovable? In Christ and the promise of His return.

Study Guide Homework/Questions

From “Drawing Near” (page 5): If you were to write a letter to your church family, what God-honoring traits and practices would you praise? Various Personal Answers