



1 Thessalonians 1:4-10
From Sermon 9.26.21

Read *1 Thessalonians 1:4-10*

Review from Sunday's sermon: Having concluded his greeting, Paul now focuses on the reason for his joy in this little church = the evidence of their salvation. In doing so, we observe the internal workings of any genuine church. Jesus is the head. The Elders are to teach and govern. The deacons are to lead the ministries. The members are to follow, serve, give, and love. With each doing their part, the Word of God will spill over into the community and culture surrounding the church.

1. In theology, what is election? God's sovereign choosing those to whom He will reveal Himself and offer/grant salvation thru the Gospel.

Read *Ephesians 1:3-13* [Connection of election with predestination]

1a. Why is this such a controversial doctrine? Various answers. But, include: 1.) A misunderstanding of what election is. 2.) Not knowing what you believe and the history your church. 3.) A human view of justice & love. Note: Historically, all sides believed in election*. The scriptures are clear. The debate between Calvinists/Reformed and Arminians is: on what basis does God elect. Arminianism = God's foreknowledge of how that person will respond. Reformed: Based solely on His sovereign choice/reason. No one can respond positively, unless God first regenerates them and grants faith.
[*Pelagian]

2. What does election set in motion? Discuss each. See also *Romans 8:29-30*

- Power of the Holy Spirit
- Regeneration (New birth)
- Imputed Faith
- Hearing/grasping the Gospel
- Effectual Calling to Grace
- Conviction/Repentance/Radical Change

3. From Study Guide Question 3, page 9: What were some of the radical changes Paul found obvious in the Thessalonian Church? Copying the life & worship pattern of Paul who copied Jesus, Joy in Tribulation, Examples to all in Behavior/Conduct, Proclaiming the Gospel, Possessing Truth, & An Eagerness for Christ's Return.

4. How do we maintain an eagerness for Christ's return, without letting it paralyze us? Various personal and possible answers. But, we maintain a balance. We routinely keep in mind that we are not home yet. But, we still have a mission and ministry here on earth. We cannot focus so much on one that we neglect the other. See also *2 Timothy 4:8* & *Philippians 1:21-24*

Study Guide Homework: Question 9 (page 11)

Why is Paul's statement that the Thessalonians had "turned to God from idols" a great picture of what salvation entails? Can you give some specific examples? Turned = repentance, radical change, & acceptance of biblical truth.

Follow Up: Is an idol just a carved image of a false god? No. We can/do make anything an idol, even otherwise good things. Whatever gets our best has become our god...namely self.