

# Introduction to 1 Thessalonians

## I. The Writer

We see from 1 Thessalonians 1:1 and 2:18 that the writer was Paul the Apostle. This epistle was probably written in A.D. 51 from Corinth during Paul's year and half ministry there. We also see from the first verse that Silvanus (Silas) and Timotheus (Timothy) were with Paul when he wrote it. This coincides with the book of Acts because we see that Silas was with Paul on this missionary Journey (Acts 15:22, 40; 16:19, 25, 27; 17:4, 10) as well as was Timothy for a portion of it (Acts 17:14-15; 18:4).

1 Thessalonians is one of the first epistles Paul wrote. Not much has been uncovered archaeologically at the location of Thessalonica because of the modern city that sits on top of it. In 1962, an old bus station was demolished and when the area was excavated a 1st or 2nd century A.D. forum was uncovered. Among other things, an inscription (30 B.C. to A.D. 143) was found on the Vardar gate bearing the word "politarches," the word Luke used in reference to the officials of the city before whom Jason was brought by the mob (Acts 17:6).

Paul visited Thessalonica for three weeks after he left Philippi. He preached in the synagogue and reasoned out of the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. There was mixed success at Thessalonica for Paul but the opposition eventually made it wise to leave. Paul visited Berea, Athens and then Corinth at which he writes this epistle.

## II. The Purpose of Writing

Paul wrote to Thessalonica to exhort, remind, and encourage them.

Exhort—2:3; 4:1; 5:14

Remind—1:3; 2:9

Encourage—1:2; 3:7; 4:9, 18; 5:2, 11, 27

## III. The Theme

The theme of 1 Thessalonians is second coming of Christ (1:3, 10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:1-11, 23).

## IV. The Outline

There are five chapters in the first epistle to the Thessalonians that are divided into two sections:

**I. Personal Relations to the Thessalonians (chapters 1-3)**

**II. Practical Instructions in Doctrine and Life (chapters 4-5)**