1 THESSALONIANS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
1 THESSALONIANS

One of the three contenders in the New Testament for the first book to be written.

- 1 Thessalonians
- Galatians
- James

Opinions of scholars and historians vary…
4/5 B.C. Birth of Jesus Christ

Jesus' Life on Earth

Jesus' Ministry

John the Baptist's Ministry

30 AD Crucifixion/Resurrection of Christ

33 AD Conversion of Saul of Tarsus

38 AD Cornelius Converted by Peter

38-49 AD Paul's 1st Missionary Journey

49 AD Jerusalem Counsel – Acts 15

50-54 AD Paul's 2nd Missionary Journey

54-58 AD Paul's 3rd Missionary Journey

58-68 AD Paul's 4th Missionary Journey & Martyrdom

70 AD Destruction of Temple in Jerusalem

PENTACOST

Stoning of Stephen

33 AD Conversion of Saul of Tarsus

48-49 AD Paul's 1st Missionary Journey

49 AD Jerusalem Counsel – Acts 15

50-54 AD Paul's 2nd Missionary Journey

54-58 AD Paul's 3rd Missionary Journey

58-68 AD Paul's 4th Missionary Journey & Martyrdom

70 AD Destruction of Temple in Jerusalem

Gospel of John

1 John, 2 John, 3 John

Revelation

57 AD 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians

58 AD Romans

62 AD Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians, Hebrews

69 AD 2 Timothy, Titus

2 Timothy

67 AD 1 Timothy

68 AD 1 Timothy

2 Peter

53 AD 2 Thessalonians

55 AD 2 Thessalonians

56 AD Acts

59 AD New Testament

48-49 AD Paul's 1st Missionary Journey

49 AD Jerusalem Counsel – Acts 15

50-54 AD Paul's 2nd Missionary Journey

54-58 AD Paul's 3rd Missionary Journey

58-68 AD Paul's 4th Missionary Journey & Martyrdom

70 AD Destruction of Temple in Jerusalem

Gospel of John

1 John, 2 John, 3 John

Revelation
The Author: **Paul**

**Acts 13:9 (KJV)**

9 Then Saul, (who also *is called* Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,

There is no indication that Saul ever changed his name to Paul. Just as Silas is called Silvanus, and Timothy is called Timotheus, Saul is also called Paul.

Speculations are rampant about why Saul may have started going by “Paul.”

- Insignificant interchangeable name
- Influenced by Sergius Paulus (Acts 13:7)
- As Paul grew in humility, he chose the Greek rendering of his name because of the meaning
- Chose the Greek name since he is the apostle to the Gentiles
- Others?

**Saul** (Hebrew) – “asked”

**Paul** (Greek) – “little, or small”

- Converted in Acts 9
- 10 years elapses before 1st Mission
- Apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13)
- Receives Revelation from Jesus Christ
  - Galatians 1
  - Ephesians 3
The Spread of Christianity in the Roman World

The New Moody Atlas of the Bible: Map 116
THE APOSTLE PAUL’S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

ACTS 13-15

Paul

Barnabas

John Mark

13:13 Returns to Jerusalem
Acts 13:1-13 (KJV)

1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

5 And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister.

13 Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.
Acts 15:36-41 (KJV)

36 And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.

37 And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark.

38 But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.

39 And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus;

40 And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.

41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.
Barnabas
John Mark
Silas
Timothy

15:36-39 Barnabas and Mark separate from Paul and sail to Cyprus

16:1-3 Paul has Timothy join him

Silas and Timothy stay in Berea and Meet Paul in Corinth Later
Acts 17:1-4 (KJV)

1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: [Rom. 1:16 – “to the Jew first”]

2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, [Old Testament]

3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.
Acts 17:5-9 (KJV)

5 But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;

7 Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus.

8 And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9 And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go.

PERSECUTION:
• Either official and/or violent
• Legal pressure
• Social pressure
• Economic pressure
• Violence
…designed to force a Christian to stop practicing biblical Christianity.

We should not place simple ridicule in this category, nor should we have a persecution complex when none is taking place, especially when compared to those who are currently suffering.

1 Timothy 2:1-8
Acts 17:10-14 (KJV)

10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

12 Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people.

14 And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still.
The Church of the Thessalonians

FOR THE LAST TIME...
WE LOVE THE SCRIPTURES.
WE READ THE SCRIPTURES EVERYDAY.
NOW WILL YOU SEE US AS NOBLE PEOPLE?

The Church at Berea

THE FEW.
THE PROUD.
THE NOBLE.
Acts 17:15 (KJV)
15 And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed.

Acts 17:16-34 – Paul in Athens
Acts 18:1 (KJV)

1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth;

Now at Corinth, Paul writes 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, some believe within just weeks of each other. He only spend 3 weeks with them, and it is approximately 9 months later. According to 1 Thess. 2:18, Paul wanted to return to the Thessalonians twice but was hindered by Satan.

Many Christians today discourage study of prophecy as a matter of “meat” left only to those who have many years of spiritual maturity. Many also discourage a focus on the subject claiming its lack of practical impact.

However, Paul sees fit to start off these new believers deep into matters of the 2nd Coming, Tribulation, and AntiChrist. These writings are reinforcements of what was already covered in the initial 3 weeks. Also, references to the 2nd coming of Christ constitute the most frequent reason for consecrated living (practical) – ie: Titus 2:13; 1 John 3:3; 1 Cor. 15:58, and all of 1 Thessalonians.

1 & 2 Thessalonians are the most eschatological epistles in the New Testament. This is how Paul starts off these New Christians as well as the New Testament.
1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 (KJV)

1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.
Thessalonica, now Salonica, on the bay of the same name, has always been one of the busiest ports of the Aegean. It was the chief city of a division of Macedonia, and is said to have had a population of 200,000 at the beginning of our era. Much smaller now, the city has always had a large proportion of Jews among its inhabitants. (Companion Bible)

Paul wasn’t aimlessly taking the Gospel to “wherever”! He was strategically selecting high-value targets the same way a military commander would do. Since vast numbers of people would pass through Thessalonica on their way to other places in Macedonia and to other sea-bound destinations, Paul understood that building a strong work in Thessalonica would be key to winning many of those passing through, and ultimately evangelizing the surrounding areas and remote locations.
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