



*Lesson 1 (1 Thess. 1:1–10)*

“OUR GOSPEL CAME  
TO YOU . . .”

DAY ONE—A GOSPEL LETTER

On this first day, let us begin by noting that we are reading an epistle, a letter sent from the apostle Paul to the young Thessalonian church that he had planted through his preaching of the gospel in their city, as we shall read. Paul (now in Corinth) has just received a good report from Timothy, whom he sent to see how the Thessalonians were doing (1 Thess. 3:6). The apostle Paul rejoices to hear of their perseverance in the faith and desires to guide them into a clearer understanding of that faith.

Paul opens with a customary salutation (1 Thess. 1:1), acknowledging the presence and greetings (and probably secretarial help) of his companions Silvanus (Latin for “Silas”) and Timothy, both of whom had been to Thessalonica as well.

1. In 1 Thessalonians 1:1, notice *in whom* Paul understands the church to exist. How do Paul’s words of greeting confirm from the start just who is this Jesus that Paul

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has preached to the Thessalonians? *Note: The word “Christ” means literally “anointed one” or “Messiah.”*

2. It will be helpful, initially, to read through 1 Thessalonians as a letter should be read: from beginning to end. Do a rather quick first read, straight through the five chapters of this epistle. When you have taken it in as a whole, jot down themes and observations that stand out to you on this first reading. As you begin to grasp the shape of the letter, you may want to consult the suggested outline in the back of this study.

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## DAY TWO—STARTING WITH THE GOSPEL

On first reading, one large theme that emerges is the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ—the *day of the Lord*. Paul often mentions that day throughout the letter and focuses on it in 1 Thessalonians 4 and 5. But that day is the culmination of the gospel story, and Paul starts not there but back at the beginning: with the planting of the gospel in the hearts of these new believers.

1. First, list all the various factors involved in the Thessalonians’ initial receiving of the gospel (1 Thess. 1:4–6).















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3. This opening passage offers just the first in many examples of Paul as a man of prayer. Look back through 1 Thessalonians 1, asking what prayers might grow in you as you read these verses. What prayers does this first chapter stimulate in your mind and heart? Write down your own prayer or prayers based on this passage.

*Notes for Lesson 1*

