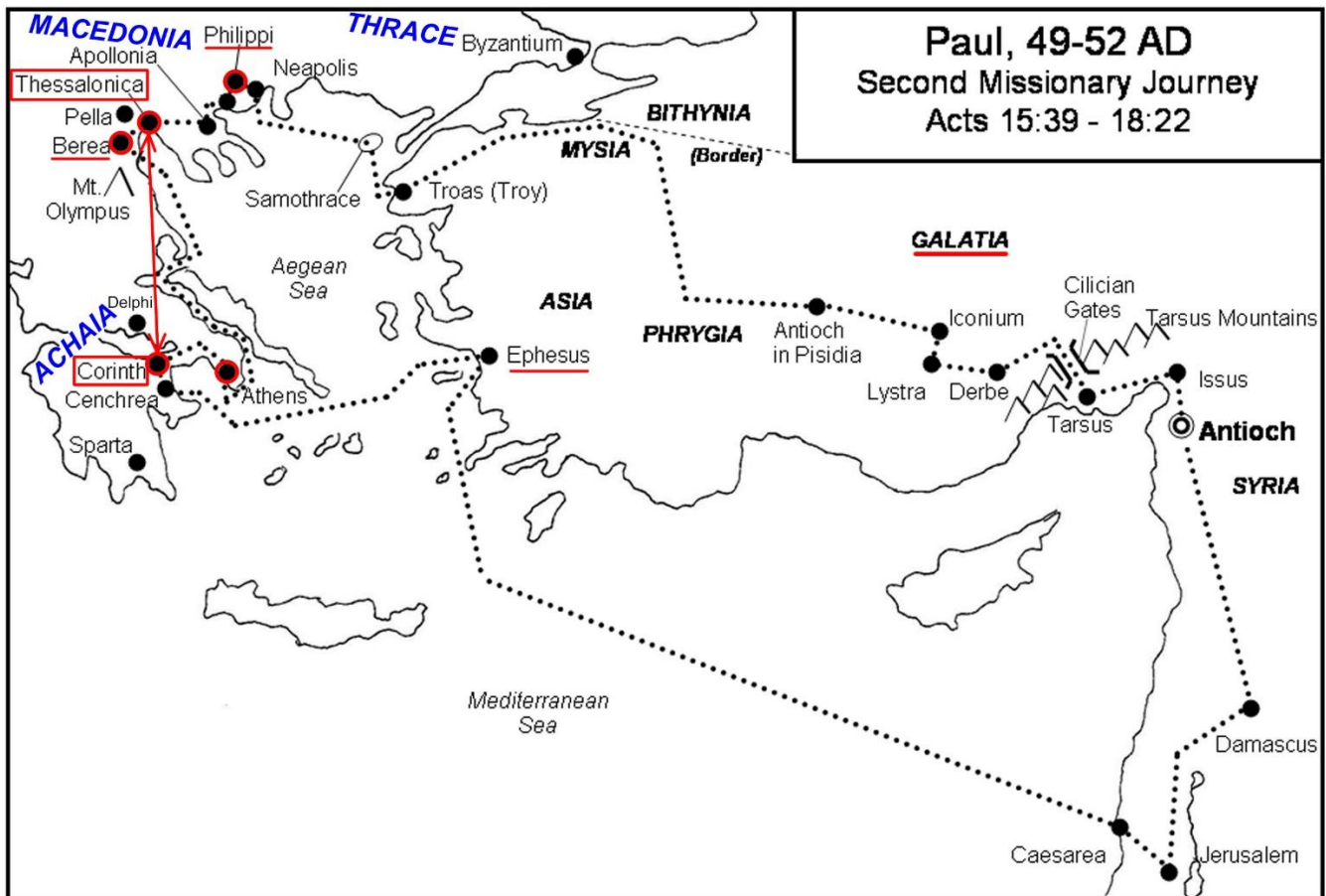


First Thessalonians



A Sample of the Synagogues where Paul Preached the Gospel

In Damascus

"At once he (Paul) began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God."
 Acts 9:20

In Antioch, Pisidian

"As Paul and Barnabas were leaving the synagogue, the people invited them to speak further about these things on the next Sabbath." Acts 13:43

In Iconium

"At Iconium Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue." Acts 14:1

In Thessalonica

"As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead." Acts 17:2

In Berea

"On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue." Acts 17:10

In Athens

"So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews." Acts 17:17

In Corinth

"Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue." Acts 18:4

In Ephesus

"He himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews." Acts 18:19

In Ephesus

"Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God." Acts 19:8

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| 50 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Troas (ancient Troy), Paul sees a vision of a Macedonian man. Paul goes to Macedonia. Paul in prison in Philippi. (Acts 16:11-40) Paul preaches in Thessalonica, starts a church and a riot. (Acts 17:1-9) Paul goes to Berea but flees to Athens. (Acts 17:10-15) Paul arrives in Athens alone, preaches in the streets, is invited to present at the Areopagus in Athens. (Acts 17:19) In the fall, Paul goes to Corinth alone without money and gets a job. (Acts 18:1-4) | Matthew writes his gospel of Matthew | <p>Rome adopts the 7 day work week and names the days after the 7 known planets</p> <p>Rome founds the city of Londinium (or, London) in Britain</p> |
| 51 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Silas and Timothy bring an offering and a letter from Macedonia. (Acts 18:5) Paul responds to Thessalonians with a letter, <i>First Thessalonians</i>. Paul stays in Corinth, starts Corinthian church, appears before Gallio. (Acts 18:12) | Paul writes First Thessalonians from Corinth | Gallio is proconsul of Achaia 51-52 |
| 52 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul writes <i>Second Thessalonians</i> in response to questions from Thessalonica. Paul leaves Corinth in the spring and sails for Ephesus. Paul reasons in the synagogue and left Aquila and Priscilla in Ephesus (Acts 18:19) Paul sails to Jerusalem, greets the church there and returns to Antioch. Syria | Paul writes Second Thessalonians from Corinth | |
| 53 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul spends time in Antioch. Paul begins third missionary journey traveling through Galatia and Phrygia. In Ephesus, Aquila and Priscilla explain the gospel to Apollos. (Acts 18:24-26) Apollos goes to Corinth. (Acts 18:27) Paul arrives in Ephesus. Paul stays in Ephesus for three years. Paul teaches daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus for two years. (Acts 19:9) | | |
| 54 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul is in Ephesus all year. Paul sends Timothy into Macedonia. (Acts 19:22) | | Nero, age 16, is emperor |

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| 55 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul writes his first of four letters to the Corinthians (not <i>1 Corinthians</i>) mentioned in 1 Co.5:9. In this letter Paul instructs them to collect money for the Jerusalem saints (1 Cor.16:1). An offering for the Jerusalem believers begins to be collected. In a year, Paul will refer to this offering in his letter <i>Second Corinthians</i>. (2 Co.8:10) A delegation from the Corinthian church arrives in Ephesus with problems and questions. Paul writes <i>First Corinthians</i> in Ephesus and sends it to Corinth. (This is his second of four letters to Corinth) Paul follows this letter with a quick visit directly across the Aegean Sea from Ephesus to Corinth and back. (2 Cor. 2:1) This would have been his second visit to Corinth. (2 Cor.12:14; 13:1,2) Paul writes a third letter to Corinth from Ephesus (which we do not have) (2 Cor.2:3,4; 7:8,9,12). Titus carries this letter and stays to fix the church. (2 Cor.7:15,13,14) | Paul writes First Corinthians from Ephesus | |
| 56 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the fall Paul leaves Ephesus for Corinth and goes through Troas and into Macedonia. While Paul is traveling through Macedonia he meets Titus who has left Corinth to return to Ephesus. (2 Cor.7:5,6) In Macedonia Paul writes his fourth letter to the Corinthians known as <i>Second Corinthians</i>. (2 Co.2:13;7:5) Titus and Luke are sent back to Corinth with the letter <i>Second Corinthians</i>. (2 Cor.8:17,18) Paul follows them into Corinth to spend the winter in Corinth. | Paul writes Second Corinthians from Macedonia | |
| 57 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the spring, Paul writes to the Roman Church from Corinth. and sends the letter of <i>Romans</i> with a delegation of people led by Phoebe to Rome. (Rom.16:1) Paul plans to sail to Syria from Cenchrea but the Jews planned to kill him so he went by land up through Macedonia and down past Ephesus. (Acts 20:3-6) Paul arrives in Jerusalem. (Acts 21:17) Paul is arrested at the temple. (Acts 21:27) Paul is placed in prison in Jerusalem at Fort Antonia (21:37;22:24) and appears before the Sanhedrin. (22:30) Jews plan to kill Paul so Paul is transferred to Caesarea. (Acts 23:23) Paul is in prison in Caesarea for two years. (Acts 24:27) Paul appears before Felix. (Acts 24) | Paul writes Romans from Corinth | |

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| 58 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul in prison in Caesarea | | |
| 59 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul in prison in Caesarea Paul appears before Festus and King Herod Agrippa II. (Acts 25,26) Paul appeals to Caesar in Rome (25:11) so Paul is sent to Rome by Festus (25:12) and Agrippa. (26:32) In an attempt to beat the coming winter a ship of prisoners leaves for Rome. (Acts 27) Paul advises the commanding centurion, Julius, to harbor at Fair Havens on Crete but they decided to go onto Phoenix. The ship is blown off course out into the Mediterranean Sea and wrecks near Malta. (Acts 27:9-28:10) | | |
| 60 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul arrives in Rome and is allowed to live by himself with a Roman soldier to guard him. (Acts 28:16) | Paul writes Ephesians from Roman imprisonment | |
| 61 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul continues in Rome under house arrest. | Paul writes Philippians from Roman imprisonment | |
| 62 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul continues in Rome under house arrest. Peter comes to Rome and writes <i>First Peter</i>. Paul is released from Roman imprisonment. Paul either leaves for Spain or first visits Philippi and Corinth along with other churches in Achaia and Macedonia. Paul writes Timothy a letter. Timothy is in Ephesus and Paul may have written it from Macedonia. Paul leaves for Spain. | Paul writes Colossians and Philemon from Roman imprisonment Peter writes First Peter from Rome Paul writes First Timothy from Macedonia | |

FULL VERSE BY VERSE TEACHING through the whole book of FIRST THESSALONIANS with

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https://www.generationword.com/audio_series/first-thessalonians.html

Purpose:

1. Defend Paul's integrity
2. Encourage Endurance vs. persecution
3. Identify and encourage holy living
4. Christ's return (a source of encouragement)

History

325 BC - Thessalonica was founded in 315 BC by Alexander the Great's general Cassander, one of the four winds of Daniel 11:4, *"After he has arisen, his empire will be broken up and parceled out toward the four winds of heaven. It will not go to his descendants, nor will it have the power he exercised, because his empire will be uprooted and given to others."*

167 BC – Rome captured Thessalonica and made it the capital of the four districts they created.

146 BC – The four districts became one province and Thessalonica was named the capital

42 BC – Thessalonica sided with Octavian & Marc Antony vs. Brutus & Crassus (assassins of Julius Caesar). Thessalonica was made a free city which meant:

- a. Rule their own local affairs
- b. Mint their own coins
- c. No military occupation in the city
- d. Fewer taxes

Details

Population 100,000

Natural harbor was the best in the Aegean world

Via Egnatia met a junction here which made Thessalonica a major center for trade, commerce and passing Roman military expeditions.

Local political structure

Thessalonica was a free city that was allowed to keep the democratic system in place (unlike other Macedonian cities).

Low Level Government: Public business was handled by an assembly of citizens. This is seen in Acts 17:5 where Paul and Silas were brought by Jews to be judged by an assembly of the Gentile citizens.

Upper Level Government: The City Council consisted of 5-6 local "politarchs" (translated NIV as "city officials"). This is seen in Acts 17:6-8 where the Jews used disreputable men to get Jason in front of the "politarchs."

"Politarchai" inscriptions refer 28 times to a unique political office mentioned by Luke 2 times in Acts 17:6 and 17:8. This unique word used by Luke was criticized by scholars, until 28 inscriptions from the ancient Thessalonica supported Luke's contemporary use of the word.

Religion

1:9 says the Thessalonians "turned to God from idols." There were many mystery religions from Greece and Egypt in Thessalonica.

Although Paul addresses several topics in this book, each chapter ends with a reference to the return of Jesus Christ.

In chapter one Paul recounts the start of the Thessalonian church and the conversion of new believers. By the power of the Spirit these people grew and became examples throughout Macedonia and Achaia. Their growth had turned into spiritual production and the advancement of the gospel.

In chapter two Paul begins by discussing his pure motivation for ministry. He claims he was not in doctrinal error, motivated by impure motives, pleasing men, using flattery to gain power, or driven by greed. He proves this by reminding the Thessalonians that he and his ministry team had both day time and night time jobs to support themselves.

In chapter three, Paul discusses why he left in such a hurry from Thessalonica (Acts 17) and why he had not been back to visit. Paul wants to visit and to finish his work there. Timothy has just come to Paul in Corinth with a letter and a good report from Thessalonica. Paul is greatly encouraged.

In chapter four Paul answers the Thessalonians' questions that were in the letter that Timothy had brought along. Paul gives instructions on how to live the Christian life and then goes into great detail concerning eschatology and the dead in Christ. Paul explains how the dead in Christ will return with the Lord and believers on the earth will be changed to meet the Lord in the air. This is called "caught up" in the NIV from *harpadzo* in the Greek.

Chapter Five, Paul continues his discussion of eschatology which includes an encouragement to stay in the light and stay awake spiritually. Paul closes the letter with final instructions which include a warning not to treat prophecies with contempt but to test everything.

Each of the Five Chapters ends with a reference to the Return of Christ:

1. **"How you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come."**
2. **"For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy."**
3. **"That he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints."**
4. **"Through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord."**
5. **"Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."**

Chapter 1:

- Macedonia and Achaia
- 2 Corinthians 8:1-2 – Extreme Poverty possibly persecution and isolation:
“We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, 2 for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. 3 For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, 4 begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints— 5 and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.”

Chapter 2:

- Before Paul arrived in Thessalonica he was “shamefully treated at Philippi (2:1)
- Paul (and, his team) worked jobs night and day for money and personal needs (2:9)
- Paul (and, his team) lived as examples and encouraged them to live worthy of God (2:12)
- The WORD OF GOD was working because it changed their lives
- Thessalonian churches suffered from their countrymen as Judean churches suffered from Jews (2:14).
- The Jews had:
 - Killed Jesus
 - Killed prophets
 - Drove apostles (Paul and members of his team) out
 - Displeased God
 - Opposed Mankind by hindering the Gospel presentation
 - The Gospel was how the Jews were to bless all the nations or the world.
 - Now, since Jews rejected the Gospel themselves, they were opposing all mankind by opposing the means of mankind’s salvation
- Jews were facing wrath (either currently or in the future prophetically in 70 AD/end times or ultimately since they sealed their fate by hardening their hearts).
 - Wrath was eschatological in 1:10 and 5:9

Chapter 3:

- Paul had been left alone in Athens so team could return and assist Thessalonian’s growth (3:1)
- Paul sent Timothy to strengthen Thessalonians in their affliction (persecution by countrymen)
- Timothy had returned to Corinth to report to Paul concerning the Thessalonians growth (3:6)

Chapter 4:

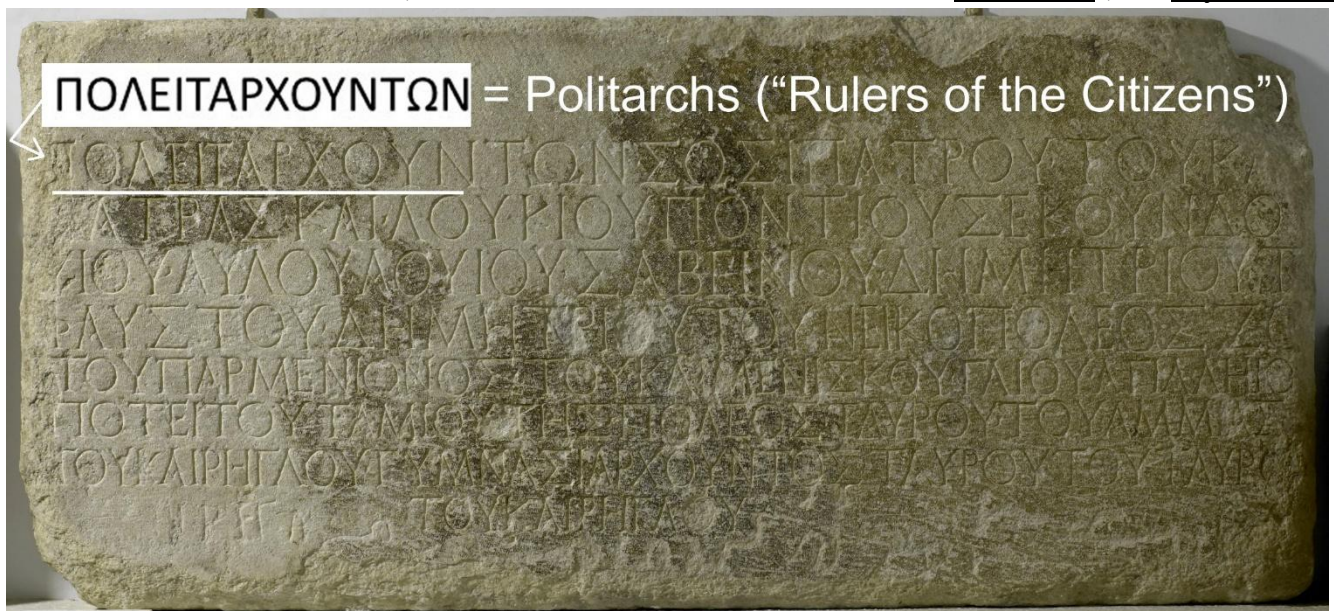
- The will of God is => YOUR SANCTIFICATION!
 - Morality (4:3-8)
 - Brotherly love (4:9)
 - Lifestyle (“live”) as instructed (4:11) is:
 - Live “quietly”
 - “Mind your own affairs”
 - “work with your hands”
 - Walk properly before outsiders (these would be their countrymen)
 - Be dependent on no one! (4:12)
- Concern and information about “those asleep” (dead)

Chapter 5:

- Here the Armor of God used as an illustration in 50 AD. This Armor of God illustration is a more developed presentation in letter to Ephesians ten years later in 60 AD (Ephesians 5:8-9)
- Instruction to:
 - “Admonish the idle”
 - “Encourage the fainthearted”
 - “Help the weak”
 - “Be patient with all” (5:14)
- This is the Will of God (5:16)
 - Rejoice Always
 - Pray without Ceasing
 - Thanks in all circumstances
- Spirit? Do not quench.
- Prophecy? Do not despise prophecy, BUT do TEST IT! (5:19-20)
- Now: Sanctify you
- Future: At the coming of the Lord (Day of the Lord) Spirit, Soul and Body will be sanctified!

Acts 17-18 (Acts 17:1-34 and 18:1-22)

- 18 months stay in Corinth (fall of 50 AD-spring of 52 AD, something like Sept 50-March 52 AD)
- In Thessalonica in Acts 17:6, 8 the Jews take Jason in front of the “***Politarchs***”, or “***city officials***”



This inscription from 125 AD lists six ***Politarchs*** (“Rulers of the Citizens”) among other officials.

Acts 17:6, 8 uses “city officials” 2x to translate the Greek word ***politarchs***

More than 60 inscriptions that mention “***politarchs***” have been found.

45 of the inscriptions are from the Macedonian area of Greece.

About 30 of the inscriptions that use “***politarchs***” were found in Thessalonica.