

A Tour Through the Divine Library
(1 Thessalonians)

Background: see Acts 17:1-15

I. General Introduction to 1 Thessalonians

-Title and Recipients: “First to the Thessalonians” (1:1)

-Author and Date: the apostle Paul (1:1; 2:18), Silvanus (Silas; 1:1), and Timothy (1:1); written from Corinth ~AD 51 (Acts 18:5, 12-17)

-Occasion and Purpose: encourage the Thessalonians in godly Christian living (4:1-12; 5:12-22); clear up confusion about the return of Christ (4:13-5:11)

-Structure:

- I. Reflection (chs. 1-3)
 - A. Commendation of the Church (1:1-10)
 - B. Ministry to the Church (2:1-16)
 - C. Concern for the Church (2:17-3:13)
- II. Instruction (chs. 4, 5)
 - A. Christian Growth (4:1-12)
 - B. Return of Christ (4:13-5:11)
 - C. Christian Living (5:12-28)

II. General Overview of 1 Thessalonians

-Reflection: on their graces (1:3-6), their testimony (1:7-10), Paul’s ministry (2:1-14); Paul’s concern (2:17-3:13)

-Instruction: Christian growth (sexual purity, 4:3-5; love, 4:9, 19; quiet, industrious life, 4:11); return of Christ (death of believers before Christ’s return, 4:13-18; readiness of believers before Christ’s return, 5:1-11); Christian living (5:12-28)

III. Prominent Themes in 1 Thessalonians

-Christian Ministry (1:2, 5, 9; 2:5, 6, 8-13, 19; 3:8; 5:12, 13, 25); Christian Suffering / Persecution (1:6, 7; 2:2, 14; 3:2-4, 7; 1 Pet. 4:12, 13); Christian Sanctification / Holiness (3:13; 4:3, 4, 7; 5:23); Return of Christ (Matt. 24:29-31; 25:31; 1 Thess. 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Pet. 3:3, 4, 9, 10, 12; Rev. 1:7)

IV. Christ in 1 Thessalonians

-When Christ returns, He will deliver (1:10; 5:4-11), reward (2:19), perfect (3:13), resurrect (4:13-18) and sanctify (5:23) all who trust in Him.

V. Practical Lessons in 1 Thessalonians

1) Suffering and Persecution

2) Sanctification and Holiness

3) The Return of Christ

4) Biblical Conversion