

Series: The Coming of the Lord; *Sermon:* **An Exemplary Church**
delivered by Dr. Josh Moody, senior pastor, on February 28, 2021

Bible text explored: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace.

²We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. ⁹For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. [ESV]

Review and application:

1. Pastor Moody chose to preach from Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians now because it sends an encouraging message to a church that had experienced "much affliction." What current afflictions do you find discouraging?
What afflictions had the Thessalonica church suffered? (See *Acts 17:1-9*.)
2. In Paul's continual praying for the Thessalonian church (*verses 2-3*), he mentioned three characteristics of theirs for which he was grateful. What demonstrated the genuineness of their faith and love?
What made their hope enduring?
3. What about the source of the power demonstrated (*verses 4-5a*) assured the leaders that their converts were chosen by God?
How did the converts enduring full conviction boost the leaders' confidence?
4. D. L. Moody's illustration of the doorway to God's kingdom clarifies what it means to be chosen. Over the entering side of the door is posted the words of *Matthew 11:28*. What does that say about the moral responsibility of the seeker?
Looking back after passing through the doorway, the words of *Ephesians 1:4* are posted. How—to those who have already believed—does this affirm God's sovereignty?
5. What (*verse 5b*) did the members of the church in Thessalonica know about their leaders by seeing . . .
. . . how they lived *among* them?
. . . how they labored *for* them?

6. How (*verses 6-7*) did what the leaders and followers knew about each other make them a positive *example*?
What impressed those who witnessed their example?
7. What (*verses 8-10*) was the brand that “sounded forth” from the Thessalonian church?
How effectively is the “Jesus brand” ringing out from our congregation . . .
 . . . locally?
 . . . in Chicago and its suburbs?
 . . . globally?
8. What kind of “waiting for [God’s] Son from heaven” did the Thessalonian believers demonstrate? Did it go beyond expectant yearning to an active involvement in moving His kingdom toward a grand finale?