

## **Pastor Nelson- The Coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ**

1 Thessalonians 1

How the church was founded

Some characteristics that are highlighted in this passage, have been neglected in the modern church (like kindness and healthy relationships.)

Thessalonika was the capital of Macedonia, and it was located along a major route called the Ignatia Way, crossing from East to West, so it became the center of politics and commerce.

The population at this time was 200,000, and Paul tended to go to large cities, preach, establish a church and leave, allowing the church to extend to smaller cities and so on.

In Acts 17, Paul arrives in Thessalonika (17:1- 6) after leaving Philippi. The Jews were proclaiming God, and when Paul arrived he told them that their Scriptures pointed to Jesus, which angered the Jews, who asked Paul to leave, and he did, but he left Timothy, Silas and some others.

Despite only being there for 3 weeks, he made inroads and left people to continue the work, and they reunited in Athens, presumably months later (because of the distance and the work ahead of his team.) The team's update prompted Paul to write Thessalonians, in order to reassure them of his love, ground them in sound doctrine and encourage them to live holy lives.

Among the parallels between Paul's letter and our church, Pastor wants to reiterate that he loves us, and he wants to prove it with ACTIONS. Verse 3: Faith complements works, love goes with labor, and hope depends on patience. Leave behind the things that displease God.

Serve without seeking recognition, motivated only by love. Hope anchors your life to wait for what is yet to come (like Job in the midst of his trials.) we can't just get caught up in a moment of faith and despair when your answer doesn't come.

A nascent church needs people praying for it, like Paul experiencing labor pains (Galatians) for the people. The Thessalonians were a small church with powerful presence. Likewise, our church has benefitted from a litany of leaders, because no one person possesses all the spiritual gifts.