

Recap of 12/8/19 (1 Thessalonians 1:1-3):

1. 1 Thessalonians (and 2 Thessalonians for that matter) emphasizes the practical effect that the Second Coming should have upon our lives, as believers in Jesus Christ. Wiersbe point out that: “Every chapter in 1 Thessalonians ends with a reference to the return of Jesus Christ, and that truth is applied to daily living. An eager looking for His return is evidence of salvation (1:9-10), a motivation for soul winning (2:17-20), and an encouragement for holy living (3:11-13). This truth is a comfort in sorrow (4:18) and a stimulus to have more confidence in the Lord (5:P23-24).”
2. The church was established by Paul and his party in approximately 51 A.D. on his Second Missionary Journey, the story is told in the Book of Acts 16:6ff. Paul is called in a dream to Macedonia (Eastern Europe) by God. He first establishes a church in Philippi and after conflict, beating, and imprisonment; he is released and goes to Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-10) where he establishes a church. Thessalonica was a major seaport city on the Egnatian Way giving it access to both Rome and the Orient. It was populated by Jews, Greeks, Romans, and those from the Orient. He stayed somewhere between 3 weeks and several months. He is forced to leave Thessalonica after a short ministry there. He eventually sends Timothy to Thessalonica to see how they are faring. Timothy’s good report prompts Paul to write the First Letter to the Thessalonians.
3. “The church at Thessalonica was in many ways a model church. Paul commends the believers in several areas.... But in the midst of his commendation, Paul offers a word of caution: Abounding in the work of the Lord is only one step removed from abandoning the work of the Lord through complacency.” (The Daily Walk Bible)
4. Though Paul was only in Thessalonica a short time, his time there is significant because: “...it seems that Paul fed these believers a rich diet of doctrinal instruction in a fairly brief period of time” (Constable). Richards enumerates some of the doctrines Paul taught them: the authority of Scripture, the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the doctrine of sanctification, prayer, the rapture and Second Coming, the theology of work, the wrath of God the rescue of believers, the doctrine of election.