**Week of Nov 10, 2019**

**1 Thessalonians 1:2-10**

**Key Verse:** “6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: 7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.”

(1 Thessalonians 1:6-7)

**2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; 3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; 4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. 5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. 6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: 7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. 8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not\* to speak anything. 9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; 10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.**

**Understanding the Scriptures**

The city of Thessalonica was founded in 375 BC at the head of the Thermaic Gulf on the Aegean Sea. Thessalonica was a military and commercial port that became the capital of the Macedonia province in 146 BC. It was the largest city of the Roman province of Macedonia. Thessalonica was allowed self-rule and exempt from most restrictions placed by Rome on other cities in the empire.

First Thessalonica is a pastoral letter of encouragement and exhortation to the church. It reflects the warm and affectionate relationship that Paul had with the Christians in Thessalonica. The letter is a direct contrast to the letter that Paul wrote to the Corinthian church last week. Remember that in last week’s lesson, Paul warned the Corinthian church of harsh consequences that would be applied if he discovered continued disobedience.

In his letter to the Thessalonian church, Paul praised the young Christians for their faithful work, loving deeds, and anticipation of the Lord’s return. Paul could tell by the way the people were living that the Good News message of Jesus Christ was operating in their lives with power. The Thessalonian believers were allowing the Holy Spirit to lead and guide them. The Holy Spirit gave the believers assurance that the Gospel that Paul preached and the life that he lived before them were true. Thessalonians accepted the Gospel message with joy. Even during times of persecution many Thessalonian believers maintain their allegiance to Jesus Christ.

The Thessalonian believers played an important role in spreading the Gospel. Christians in Greece and from other nations followed the Thessalonians’ example and talked about their faith in God. Everywhere Paul went he encountered people wo had been influenced the Thessalonians’ witness to turn from idols and follow the true God. Paul reminded the Thessalonian believers that Jesus would return, jut as he promised. Paul wrote to encourage believers to endure persecution to the end, knowing that God would give them an eternal reward. A Christian’s perspective of life remains incomplete without the hope of a heaven.

