

I THESSALONIANS 1:4-10

Review your memory verses, I Thessalonians 1:2-4. Do this either by saying them to someone or by writing them out without referring to the text.

1. Was there a time last week where you remembered your memory verse and it helped you have a right action or attitude? Explain.

Memorize I Thessalonians 1:6. Yes ___! Said to _____.

Read I Thessalonians Chapter 1.

2. From verse 4 what does Paul know about the believers who make up the church at Thessalonica?
3. Notice from the passage (I Thessalonians 1) that what Paul knows is based on real observations rather than warm, fuzzy feelings.
 - a. What about the way the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ was *presented* to them led Paul to conclude they were chosen by God?
 - b. What about the way they *received* the Word led Paul to conclude they were chosen by God?
4. Is it possible to know that *you* are loved and chosen by God? What evidence of this truth can you expect in your life?

5. Read verse 6 carefully. From this verse we know for certain one specific way they became imitators of Paul and Jesus. What is it?

6. From Acts 17:1-9 what difficult situation were these believers in?

7. What about the message Paul preached (Acts 17:3) would inspire joy in enduring their suffering?

8. Now, let's bring these principles down to our time and space. What situation are you in right now that produces suffering? NOTE: Elizabeth Elliott defines suffering as having what you don't want or wanting what you don't have.

9. Because God loves you, He desires for you to walk in His joy even in the midst of suffering. What facts have you seen in Acts 17:1-9 and I Thessalonians 1 that encourage that response? NOTE: This does not mean we won't grieve or feel loss. Jesus wept and struggled, and Paul tells us to weep with those who weep. Those who follow Jesus are not called to be Eeyores, nor are they called to be stoics or Pollyannas.

10. a. As you look around at life--yours or others'--and see suffering, does that mean that you or they are "out of God's will" or not loved by Him or even not one of His own? From these two passages how do you know your conclusion is true?

- b. Sometimes as we consider our sufferings—past, present or future—we “inadvertently push God to the margins.” What are some ways to keep our focus on Him? For instance, think of Paul’s example in Acts 16:22-25.
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- 11. In what ways are we to imitate others, and ourselves be models to others? Does it have to do with hair lengths, styles of dress, vacation preferences and tastes in music? The answer is in the I Thessalonians 1 passage.
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- 12. Verses 9 and 10 give an admirable description of a true conversion. What elements are included? That is, what one thing *did* they do and what two things are they *doing*?
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- 13. An idol can be described as a phantom without substance. How would that be contrasted to the description given of God in verse 9?
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- 14. a. As you look around you, what are some “idols” people depend on for happiness and security and give their all to today?
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- b. What one or two of the above tend to draw your attention and allegiance away from God?
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- c. What can you do to reverse the process?

d. What results will you see?

15. How is God's power an integral part of the truths taught in this passage? Why is this relevant to you?

You may want to sing this hymn in class to close.

GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS

Words: Thomas O. Chisholm

Music: William M. Runyan

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
there is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;
as Thou hast been Thou forever will be.

*Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!*

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon and stars in their courses above
join with all nature in manifold witness
to Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth
Thy own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

Carolyn Roper (original 1982; revised 1996 and 2013)