

THE CHURCH AT THESSALONICA: AN EXAMPLE TO US

Introduction

- 1) **Acts 17:11** – Bereans “more fair-minded” than those in Thessalonica
 - a) Does this cause us to think less of the brethren in Thessalonica? If so, we misunderstand the context (vv. 1-12)
 - 2) It is the unbelieving Jews of Thessalonica that are denounced as less fair-minded, not those who are converted to Christ (v. 4).
 - 3) The **church at Thessalonica** would develop into an exemplary congregation (1 Thess. 1:1-10)
 - 4) A study of this church’s example would be helpful to all of us
- I) **Three Major Characteristics of the Church at Thessalonica** (1:3)
- A) *Work of Faith* —————
 - B) *Labor of Love* ————— **Faith, Hope, Love** (1 Cor. 13:13; 1 Thess. 5:8; Gal. 5:5-6; Col. 1:4-5)
 - C) *Patience of Hope* —————
 - D) In our Lord Jesus Christ in sight of our God and Father
 - 1) Made possible by their election in Christ (v. 4); God shows the way and if a man obeys, he becomes one of those elected [chosen] to salvation [open to *all* men]

II) **Work of Faith**

- A) Faith is manifested by works (Jas. 2:20-24)
- B) Works of faith:
 - 1) Received the word (1:5-6; 2:13; Jn. 6:28-29, 44-45; Jas. 1:21)
 - 2) Turned to God from idols (1:9; Acts 3:19; cf. Acts 19:18-19)
 - 3) Served the living and true God (1:9; worthy walk – 2:12; 4:1; Matt. 4:10; Rom. 12:1-2)
- C) How we please God today → receive the word, turn to God from error, and serve God

III) **Labor of Love**

- A) Love for God and man is manifested in doing good (Jn. 14:15; 1 Jn. 3:17-18)
- B) Labors of love:
 - 1) Sounded forth the word (1:7-8; 1 Tim. 3:15)
 - 2) Love one another (3:12; 4:9-10)
 - 3) Edify, exhort, warn, comfort, uphold, pursue what is good, etc. (5:12-22)

IV) **Patience of Hope**

- A) Hope is manifested in patience [endurance] (Jas. 1:2-4; 5:10-11; Gal. 6:9)
- B) Patience of Hope:
 - 1) Waiting for Jesus to return (1:10; 4:14-16; Heb. 9:28)
 - 2) Joy (1:6b; Jude 24)
 - 3) Comfort (4:17-18)
 - 4) Confidence (5:5-11)

Conclusion

What an example to us today! Do we demonstrate *works of faith – labors of love – patience of hope*? Are we serving today and preparing for the return of the Master (1 Thess. 5:23-24)?