

The Pillars of the Model Church (1 Thessalonians 1: 1 - 5)

The Big Picture:

Paul, Silas and Timothy are great examples of **concerned and committed leaders** of the early church. They have learned the secret of developing an eternal perspective in the middle of earthly trials and problems (1 Thess 1:1). Likewise, the **passionate believers** in the church of Thessalonica were known for their works produced by faith, their labor prompted by love and their endurance inspired by hope in the Lord in response to **the gospel** (1 Thess 1:2-3).

As the apostle Paul said in:

Romans 1: 16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile."

God enabled the apostles and the **new believers** in Thessalonica to overcome all obstacles in the face of danger to make sure that **the gospel- the message that builds the church** be made known. God in His sovereignty wanted these believers to experience His love that He blessed Paul, Silas and Timothy to overcome all trials and obstacles to reach them (1 Thess 1:4-5). They shared and taught the Word of God, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, declared Jesus the Son of God. They proclaimed Christ's sacrifice and suffering and urged their listeners to receive Him by faith. And the church grew and prospered and became a model to all believers and their faith in God has become known everywhere! (vv 7-8)

Questions for Discussion:

1. Based on the passage today, what do you think are the pillars of the model church?
2. What role does our respect for our leaders of the church play in the growth and orderliness of the church?
3. What would you say are the characteristics of a strong, spiritually successful church?
4. How does our church measure up to the church at Thessalonica in terms of enthusiasm about the gospel?
5. In what ways do you find the Word of God relevant to the things you face in your day to day life?

