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| **1 Thessalonians: Encouragement for a Life of Steadfast Faith**  Week No. 3 – Chapter 1:1-5 |  |

1. Read (See "Short Guide for Bible Study" handout)
2. Recognize and Research (See "Short Guide for Bible Study" handout)
3. Relate and Reflect
   1. Paul starts this letter giving thanks to God for the Thessalonians. Is this a trend in his other epistles? What was Paul’s purpose of describing his prayers of thanksgiving to God? How do Paul's prayers of thanksgiving display his theology of God's interaction with the Church?
   2. Paul praises God for the Thessalonian's work of faith. Where else in Scripture is work associated with faith. (Hint: James is the go-to book for this topic, but don't leave out other writings of Paul)
   3. Paul also praises God for the Thessalonian's labor of "agape" love. Where else in this letter does Paul mention their love? How should love be displayed in the Church, and why?
   4. What is the basis of the Thessalonian's steadfast hope? In other words, what are they hoping will happen? What is the hope of a Christian based on this letter and other passages?
   5. How is God's love connected with His election of "His people." What do other passages in the OT and NT say about the relationship of God's love and the elect?
   6. What are some theological themes in these first five verses? In other words, what do we learn about God?
   7. It was the gospel that changed the Thessalonians. What is the Gospel? Write down below a definition of the gospel in one or two paragraphs.
4. Respond –– what personal applications can we derive from these first five verses of 1 Thessalonians?
   1. Develop a teaching outline based on the main point that is derived from the structure of the text. Your outline should bridge the gap from "Then and There" to the "Here and Now." Develop this outline as something you would teach in Sunday school or a Bible study.

Warren Wiersbe provides the following helpful advice on forming the proposition:

1. "It should be biblical, a timeless truth that is worth preaching about.
2. It should be important and relevant to the needs of the congregation.
3. It should be definite and clear, uncluttered by abstract language or literary embellishments. [Simplify your proposition.]
4. It should be accurate and honest and not promise more than the preacher can produce. You don't lay a foundation for a skyscraper and then build a chicken coop on it.
5. It should be interesting so that the listener is encouraged to want to listen to the development of the theme in the sermon.
6. It should usually be stated in the present tense, what God does for us today and not what he did for Moses centuries ago. 'Jesus helped Peter when he was sinking' is a valid statement; but for a sermon thesis, it would better be stated, 'In the storms of your life, your Savior is present to help you.'"[[1]](#footnote-1)

1. Warren Wiersbe and David Wiersbe, *The Elements of Preaching* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1986), 26-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)