

**1 Thessalonians 1:1-7**

English Standard Version (ESV)

1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,  
 2 To the church of the Thessalonians in God the  
 3 Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:  
 4 Grace to you and peace.  
 5 <sup>2</sup>We give thanks to God always for all of you,  
 6 constantly mentioning you in our prayers,  
 7 <sup>3</sup>remembering before our God and Father your  
 8 work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of  
 9 hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>For we know,  
 10 brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you,  
 11 <sup>5</sup>because our gospel came to you not only in word,  
 12 but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with  
 13 full conviction. You know what kind of men we  
 14 proved to be among you for your sake. <sup>6</sup>**And you**  
 15 **became imitators of us and of the Lord**, for you  
 16 received the word in much affliction, with the joy  
 17 of the Holy Spirit, <sup>7</sup>**so that you became an**  
 18 **example to all the believers** in Macedonia and in  
 19 Achaia.

*What does Paul say about being imitators and examples? Consider these questions in light of Restoration's mission "to make joyful, passionate disciples."*

Who are people you have imitated in the past? (Imitation can be intentionally conscious, or just picking things up unconsciously.)

Are there people you have imitated without knowing them personally (characters from history, authors whose books you have read, etc.)?

What characteristics in your life do you see as reflections of that imitation?

Who are people you see as models of joy and passion in their Christian life?

What areas of spiritual formation do you desire to grow in, and who might you look to as models to imitate?

What areas in your life have been examples to others?

What qualities would you like to develop to be able to pass on to others?

How does joy show itself in your life? What might others learn from that?

What are you passionate about that you would like to see reproduced in others?

Who are people who you might be an example to in helping them in their spiritual formation?

How do the ideas of imitation and example affect your understanding of the mission to make joyful, passionate disciples?



**Additional questions for thought and discussion:**

- How does Paul describe his prayers for these people? What would your prayers look like based on that model?
- In verse 4 Paul affirms that “we know...God has chosen you.” How would that be different to the people than “we know you have believed”? How might the idea that God has chosen the other believers around you affect your thinking about them?
- What is the evidence that enabled Paul’s confidence in the genuineness of their faith?
- What is the process of imitation and example that Paul describes? How could that affect your understanding of Jesus’ command to “make disciples”? Who are you imitating? Who are you an example to?
- What were other people seeing in the lives of the Thessalonians and reporting back to Paul (v.9-10)? What things in your life might attract that kind of notice?

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## Inductive Bible Study

(A few general ideas)

- What would be a good “headline” for the passage?

### Interpretation

(What does it mean?)

What questions come to mind about the facts that would help you *interpret* the meaning?

- How would the original readers have understood the passage?
- What is the main emphasis?
- Why does the writer use repetition, or contrast, or unusual words?
- What does the grammar or structure of the passage reveal about the writer’s thought pattern?
- Is there a logical sequence in the passage?
- How are different ideas in the passage connected?
- Are there any new ideas or concepts presented?
- Are there difficulties in the passage?

### Observation

(What does it say?)

What facts do you *observe* about the passage that help bring out the writer’s thought process?

- Who are the people involved?
- What action takes place?
- What type of literature is it (poetry, history, didactic, etc.)?
- What details are included or left out?
- Are any unusual words used?
- Is there symbolic language?
- What is the grammar of the passage (pronouns, prepositions, verb tenses)?
- Are words or ideas repeated?
- Any comparisons or contrasts?
- Any cause and effect?
- Are there indications of purpose (“in order that...”)?
- Are there conclusions (“Therefore...”)?
- Are there explanations?
- Does the passage logically break into sections?
- How would you summarize the passage?

### Application

(What does it mean for me?)

What is the impact on your life? What *application* does the Holy Spirit want to show you?

- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a promise to be thankful for?
- Is there an attribute of God to worship?
- Is there an example to follow?

**Read nothing into the Scriptures, but draw everything from them, and suffer nothing to remain hidden that is really in them.**  
**J.A. Bengel (1687-1752)**