



Week #2 Group Guide:

...To Pray With

1 Thessalonians 1:2-10

Leader Notes:

- This week highlights six marks of a model church in Thessalonica **and** calls us to join together in prayer over them.
- Layered in the call to prayer: help your group to see that prayer is not just asking but abiding — listening, speaking, worshiping, and conversing with God as Friend.

Opening Questions:

- Read the following quote. How does it sit with you? Is it true? How would you explain your prayer life?

“Prayerlessness is my declaration of independence from God...I am fiercely independent and know what it is to go on autopilot.”

Daniel Henderson,
<https://www.strategicrenewal.com/our-declaration-of-dependence/>

- Many think of prayer as only asking God for things. Based on Sunday’s message, how is prayer more than that?
- How does “Scripture-fed, Spirit-led, and worship-based prayer” change the way we approach God?
- In your own experience, what helps you move prayer from a “duty” to a “delight”?

Bible & Context: (refer to study notes on back)

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 1:2–10.
2. (1:2-3) What is the “work” that is produced by faith, and “labor” that is prompted by love? How might they be visible in everyday life today?
3. (1:4-5) What does it mean that the gospel came “with power and the Holy Spirit”? What do you suppose this means for us today? (cf. 1 Corinthians)
4. (1:5-6) How do we learn from leaders worth imitating today? Who has modeled Christ for you?
5. (1:6-7) What does it mean to experience joy even in hardship? How might that surprise others around us?
6. (1:8-9) What would it look like for our church’s witness to “echo out” in our community?
7. (1:9-10) How does actively waiting for Christ’s return shape how we live now?

Study Notes: Six Marks of a Model Church (1 Thess. 1:2–10)

1. A Church Marked by Faith, Love, and Hope (vv. 2–3)

- Greek: *ergon* = work, visible deeds of faith; *kopos* = labor, exhausting service of love; *hypomonē* = endurance, steadfast hope.
- Cultural: Turning from idols meant rejecting trade guild rituals and civic festivals; love meant caring for believers cut off from family and society; hope fueled them through persecution.
- Modern Parallel: Faith refusing compromise at work; love serving beyond convenience; hope enduring through sickness or hardship.

2. A Church Flowing with Gospel Power (vv. 4–5)

- Greek: *eklogē* = chosen by God; *dynamis* = Spirit-empowered transformation.
- Cultural: Thessalonians admired polished orators. Paul says: the gospel isn't rhetoric, but Spirit-powered change.
- Modern Parallel: Testimonies of lives changed by Jesus speak louder than slick presentations.

3. A Church with Leaders Worth Imitating (vv. 5b–6)

- Greek: *mimētai* = imitators, apprentices learning from example.
- Cultural: Discipleship was imitation of a teacher's life. Paul modeled Christ; the Thessalonians imitated him.
- Modern Parallel: Young believers watching mentors, parents, pastors live faithfully. Discipleship is caught, not just taught.

4. A Church Joyful in Affliction (vv. 6–7)

- Greek: *thlipsis* = pressure, persecution; *chara* = Spirit-given joy in hardship.
- Cultural: They were accused of treason ("another king, Jesus," Acts 17:7). To rejoice in suffering shocked the culture.
- Modern Parallel: Joyful endurance today may look like persecuted believers singing in house churches, or Christians living with hope despite ridicule or hardship.

5. A Church with a Resounding Witness (vv. 8–9)

- Greek: *exēcheō* = to echo, ring out; *douleuein* = serve with full devotion.
- Cultural: Their faith spread across trade routes; outsiders noticed their break from idols.
- Modern Parallel: A church known for serving the poor, reconciling divisions, and transformed lives — not self-promotion.

6. A Church Living in the Hope of Christ's Return (vv. 9–10)

- Greek: *anamenō* = active waiting; *orgē* = God's judgment.
- Cultural: Thessalonica paraded for emperors; Christians awaited Jesus instead.
- Modern Parallel: Living with eternal perspective — resisting anxiety, investing in holiness, serving with urgency.



Six Prayers for Pathway Church

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 (NIV)

Paul, Silas and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you.

² *We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers.* ³ *We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.* ⁴ *For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you,* ⁵ *because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.* ⁶ *You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.* ⁷ *And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.* ⁸ *The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it,* ⁹ *for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,* ¹⁰ *and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.*

“Lord, transform us into...

A Church Marked by Faith, Love, and Hope (1 Thess. 1:2-3)

Lord, grow in us a faith that works, a love that labors, and a hope that endures, so that our lives shine as evidence of Your gospel in a weary and skeptical world.

A Church Flowing with Gospel Power (1 Thess. 1:4-5)

Father, let Your gospel move in power among us — not just in words, but through the Spirit's power, changing lives, deepening conviction, and confirming that we are Your beloved people.

A Church with Leaders Worthy of Imitating (1 Thess. 1:5b-6)

Jesus, raise up leaders in our church (staff and volunteers) whose lives are worth imitating. Protect us from the evil one and give us the humility to follow faithful examples as together we follow You.

A Church Joyful in Affliction (1 Thess. 1:6-7)

Holy Spirit, teach us joy in the midst of trials, so that our witness shines brighter than our suffering and others see Christ alive in us.

A Church with a Resounding Witness (1 Thess. 1:8-9)

God, may our faith resound like an echo across our community, and into our world, as many see in us a people turned from idols to serve You, the living and true God.

A Church Living in the Hope of Christ's Return (1 Thess. 1:9-10)

Lord Jesus, keep us waiting with eager hearts for Your return, living each day with courage, holiness, hope in the deliverance You have promised, and passion to see the lost saved.