

**Series: The Model Church**

**Title: A Strong Church**

**Text:** (1 Thes 1:1-4) \*3

Author: Paul - Written: AD 50-52

Paul wrote the Letter while in Corinth

Written to: The Church at Thessalonica

Purpose of the Letter: To encourage the church to Stand Fast Against Persecution

Paul Encourages the Church by doing 4 things:

1. He Commends their Faith, Love, & Hope: (1:3-12)
2. He Answers the Malicious Charges/Rumors (2:1-6)
3. He Encourages them to stand fast in persecution & to live Holy lives (1 Thes 3:1-4:12)
4. He Reinforces the great hope of the Lord's Return & the resurrection of the saints. (1 Thes 4:13-)

Every Chapter has a reference to Christ's Return:  
(1:10) (2:19)(3:13)(4:13-18)(5:23)

Every Chapter has a Great Evangelistic emphasis  
(1:8-10; 2:12-13; 3:12-13; 4:1-12; 5:1,6)

Special Features of the city of Thessalonica:

Capitol of Macedonia.

Founded by Cassandra.

Top military officer of Alexander the Great.

***The City was loyal to Rome, thus was a free city.***

It had its own local Government and Laws.

Population was 200K with a Natural Harbor.  
The Main Street of the City, was on the Roman Road,  
The Ignation Way, stretched from Adriatic sea to the Middle East.

Thessalonica was anAwesome place for a Church:  
Because of its commercial center, the gospel was bound to spread far and wide from here.

The 2nd big city of Europe to be evangelized on Paul's 2nd Missionary Journey (Acts 17).

Preached Only 3 weeks in the synagogue before being rejected: (Acts 17:2)

Paul went to preaching in homes & wherever he could He had so much of an impact, the Jews chased him out of the city, to Berea.

The Church ...

1. Was Well organized church (1 Thes 5:12)  
Church was Predominately Gentiles.

Suffered Persecution (1 Thes 2:14)

Possibly the 1st of the letters written by Paul  
Proclaims Christ as Lord. (23 Times)

Personally Encourage those facing Persecution: (1:6)

Warn Believer of Dangers of Sexual Impurity: (4:1-6)

Charge Believers w/practical rules of Behavior (5:12-

Church did not support Paul \$\$, Tent-maker

Received support from the Church @ (Phill 4:16)

**I. Church @ Thessalonica was a Model Church:**

**B/C it was A Strong Church: (1:1-4)**

*What does a Strong church Look Like?*

IS FBCK found in this picture?

**Theme Vs 3: *Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;***

**A. Strong Church with Faithful Ministers:** (Vs 1)

*Paul, and Silvanus, & Timotheus* support/encourage...

An Exhortation from 3 ministers.

All 3 worked to found this church, (Acts 17) & continued to minister to it through visits & letters.

Paul visited 2nd time on his 3rd Journey (Acts 20:1-2)  
Timothy had visited this church to help them through a tough time of the church. (1 Thes 3:1-6)

All 3 ministers wrote the church twice: (I&2 Thes)  
Paul acknowledged Timothy/Silas as equal with him:

***FBCK is a church that is equally blessed with Faithful Ministers to love and Encourage it.***

(Pastor Billy Shepherd, our founding missionary)

(Clyde Duncan, Our most Sr. Tenured Pastor)

(Dean Smith: Our 1st Missionary Sent from FBCK)

Other Missionaries & Pastors who regularly send their love, encouragement, and prayers for us.

Church of the Thessalonica enjoyed this just as we do.

**B. Strong Church of The “Church of the People”:**

(Vs 1) *unto the church of the Thessalonians*

Not the ‘Church at Thessalonica’

The Church was the people.

Not addressed to a Leader or group of leaders.

Every believer was equally important to God.

FBCK is such a church also.

FBCK is a local, visible, called out, baptized believers

Every Member of FBCK is important & Necessary.

This is YOUR Church: Explain it.

Things that will weaken Any/Our church:

Building the church upon a few faithful leaders.

Ignoring/neglecting the needs of some of the members

Explain the Battle Front vs. In the Rear with the Gear.

A Model Church challenges Everyone to get on the Front Line of ministry!

**C. Strong Church founded In God & In the Lord:**

(Vs 1) *in God the Father & in the Lord Jesus Christ:*

Strong Church is Founded on Christ.

Strong Church is Following Christ’s Example.

A Church, that is not founded upon the Lord Jesus Christ is NOT a True Church.

No Matter what it calls itself.

It is a man created entity, assembly, & Worship.

(1 Cor 3:10-11) Jesus is the only Foundation & Head.

Strong Church Worships the Father through Faith by obedience.

*Is FBCK a Strong Church like this?*

*It is Only following Christ as closely as each of are.*

*It is only as obedient as each of us are.*

**D. A Strong Church Possesses God's Supreme gifts**  
**Grace & Peace** (Vs 1) *Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Grace** = Undeserved favor and Blessings of God's

*Is FBCK a Gracious Church?*

Are we experiencing the unmerited Favor of God?

Are we, as Individuals experiencing God's unmerited favor?

**Peace**=Bound, joined together&Secure in God's Love  
To know that God will Guide/Provide/Empower/bless.  
Peace only comes from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

A strong church, Experiences the Peace of God as they walk daily by the Grace of God.

(Eph 2:13-14) *But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both*

*one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;*

God places His hand of Blessing on this kind of church

*Is the FBCK that kind of Church?*

*Are we bound together b/c of our daily walk?*

*Is there division in our hearts 1 to another?*

For those who do not trust Christ, where do they attempt to find their Peace?

How can FBCK improve our grasp of Grace & Peace?  
By Loving each other by faith!

**E. A Strong Church is Stirred to Prayer:** (Vs 2) *We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;*

This is a crucial Trait in a strong church.

*"God runs the world through those who pray."*

God has ordained prayer as the Way in which He blesses and moves on behalf of His people.

(Matt 21:22) *And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.*

(John 15:7) *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*

Why has God chosen Prayer to be the channel through which He acts toward man?

Because sharing and talking together is how all persons Communicate & Fellowship.

*We are NOT a Religion of RULES, we are in a Relationship with a Real Person!*

God wants to Fellowship and Commune with US!

***FBCK is only as Strong as our prayer life.***

***Do you pray for this Church?***

***Do You pray for the preaching & teaching?***

This is how everyone can affect the spiritual results.

Paul always gave Thanks for the church of Thessalonic and its prayers for him.

Its Talked about here, but is it practiced at FBCK!  
Many times I feel so helpless.

I Wish I could physically pick people up and Carry them across the finish line of life.

Prayer is asking God to do, w/ I cannot do for others.  
We foolishly think we can do God's work w/o Him.

The secret is Asking God to do, w/ only God can do.

**F. Strong Church is Stirred Up to Work:** (Vs 3)  
*Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and*

*labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;*

1. Faith Stirs a Church to Work:

The stronger the belief in Christ, the more they are stirred to serve God. (1 Jn 5:4-5)

2. Love Stirs the Church to Labor:

Labor~Toil - Love prompts us to Labor.

Knowing how our sins were taken upon Christ.  
Knowing how we have fallen short of God's glory.

We are Stirred by the love of Christ to service Him.

(2 Cor 5:14-15) *For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.*

3. Hope in the Lord Jesus Christ Stirs the Church to Endure in it's Labor: (Vs 3)

***Patience*** = Endurance

The Church is stirred on to Persevere during times of distress because of our Hope in Christ.

(1 Thes 1:6-9) His Love for Christ, & concern for the Lost stirs him to serve & share the gospel with others.

*What stirs you to serve in this church?  
Is Faith, Love, & Patience evident in FBCK?  
How can these things be cultivated in FBCK?*

**G. Strong Church is chosen by God:** (Vs 4)  
*Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.*

***Election*** = Church has been Selected/Chosen By God.

1. Believers are Chosen to be His beloved people.  
God has called believers out of this World.  
Called to turn away from the old life of sin & Death.  
Called to be separated unto New life of Righteousness

*(Eph 1:4) According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,*

2. Believers are Chosen to be beloved brethren  
Called to respect one another.  
Called to count one another as precious.

*(John 13:34-35) A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

2 Strong Lessons:  
Proof that a church is truly elected/chosen by God...  
When the Members acts like the beloved people of God, & treat each other as Beloved Brothers.

By being Critical & Divisive, Prideful & Arrogant, Angry & Hurtful, Envious & Prejudice, Superior & Super Spiritual, ruins the church's testimony.

***All who accept Jesus Christ is chosen by God.  
Has your heart been pierced by the love of the Lord Jesus Christ?***

***How meaningful is God's Election to you?  
Has anything happened to you this week that has caused you to value your election & Calling from God?***

**What Does a Strong Church Look Like?**

WE Find it in (1 Thes 1:1-4).  
Faithful Ministers  
A Church of the People  
A Church Founded on Jesus.  
A Church possessing Grace & Peace  
A Church that Prays  
A Church that Serves  
This is a Church that is Chosen By God.

Is the FBCK found in this Picture?