

# Exemplary Faith

## 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Paul writes to the young church of Thessalonica, celebrating their commitment and allegiance to following Jesus in the midst of persecution and encouraging them to endure. Through this letter, we can be both encouraged and challenged, leaning into what Paul has to say about the characteristics of the Church and how we are to live within the culture that surrounds us.

## Application

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1. We are to live as a community that is empowered by God's Spirit. Informational truth in itself will not change your life but the Spirit will. What does it mean to be empowered by the Spirit? How do we sometimes rely on informational truth alone?
2. Joy in suffering is from the Spirit. Is the joy you experience because of the ease of your life circumstances, or is it because of the Spirit working in you even through hard circumstances? How do we express joy in suffering if we don't really suffer?
3. God's Word emanates out from the Thessalonian church to everyone around them. How is your living an example or not an example of God's Word to others? How might you be experiencing the rejection and opposition that comes with obeying God's Word?
4. What are some practical characteristics of a community that lives with a future hope? How does this relate to a life of repentance?
5. What we love the most is where we find our hearts, identity, and allegiance. What were you thinking when Robby asked, "What is it that you love the most and would you give it up for Christ?"? When are you most susceptible to losing sight of your future hope?

## Key Points

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- We are to live as a community that demonstrates faith, love, and hope; that is, work driven by faith, a labor of love, and steadfastness of hope.
- If we do not have the power and the conviction of the Holy Spirit, then we are not God's people.
- God's Word must be at the center of our lives as we understand, apply, and obey the Scripture.
- The result of living empowered by the Spirit is the gospel being evident in our lives as an example to others.