

Summer 2017 – 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 2 Peter, Jude
One Group Lesson – 2017.06.11

1 Thessalonians 1

- Compare Paul's introduction to this letter with some of the other letters he has written (Ephesians, for example). What is similar and what is different? Do you think the differences are intentional, and if so, why? Why would the way Paul presents himself to the Thessalonians make a difference in the tone and tenor of the letter?
- Scholars tell us that you can discover a lot about the content of one of Paul's letters as a whole by just reading the opening thanksgiving. If that is true, what might we expect to find in this letter?
- Can you think of someone you know (or are aware of) that would fit the description Paul gives in 1 Thessalonians 1.3? How does knowing this person prompt your own thanksgivings?
- In what ways have you seen the gospel "come in power," not just words? Given our current culture, which often seems to view faith as a you can "take it or leave it" proposition, how do you think a gospel that is demonstrated in power impacts an unbelieving world? How do we show the power of God more, not just talk about the gospel in words?
- How comfortable are you in asking someone to imitate your faith? If you are not comfortable, do you think you should be at a place where you can be an example, or do you consider this only for those who are "super Christians?" Why do you think this? If you are comfortable, how did you get to this place? What encouragement can you give those of us who struggle with this?
- How does suffering affect our ability to receive the message of Christ?
- What idols have you given up to follow God? What idols do you continue to have to give up, since they at times seem so easy to pick back up?