

*“Displaying His Grace Through Earthen Vessels”*

*1 Thess. 1:1-10 (vv. 4-10)*

*The Sufficiency of His Grace for the Sustaining of His Suffering People*

Paul is on his second missionary journey. Silas and Timothy accompany him. After traveling to Athens, he sends Timothy to find out the condition of the church in Thessalonica. When Timothy returned, his report solicited Paul’s commendation of the Thessalonian believer.

It is against this backdrop that the epistle to the Thessalonians was written. Chapter one falls in the broader division of personal matters and contains the section dealing with Paul's commendation of the Thessalonian believer.

The overriding theme of chapter one is the missionary’s thankfulness for the believer.

I. The manner of the message: with power (v.5)

Paul uses a strong contrasting conjunction to show the power of the preached Word.

II. The duplicating of a disciple: with design (v.6a)

III. The pattern in their persecution: with joy (vv.6b, 7)

How could they have joy in the midst of their hardship?  
God is in control!

Through this veil of tears, I give you thanks.  
In the bearing of this burden, I give you thanks.  
In the midst of my tragedy, I give you thanks.  
In the loss of my job, I give you thanks.  
In the death of my loved one, I give you thanks.  
Through clenched teeth, I give you thanks.  
With my broken heart, I give you thanks.  
On my bloodied knees, I give you thanks.  
In my isolation, rejection, and loneliness, I -- give -- you -- thanks.

IV. The furthering of their faith: with zeal (v.8)