

BRIDE**SPIRITUALLY RESPONSIVE**

1 Thessalonians 1:1 – 10

Pastor Daniel Hahn

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MESSAGE NOTES

I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. For He has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of His righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns His head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
— Isaiah 61:10

This is what the Lord says: "I remember the devotion of your youth, how as a bride you loved Me and followed Me through the wilderness ... — Jeremiah 2:2

The bride belongs to the bridegroom. — John 3:29

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the Word, and to present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. — Ephesians 5:25 – 27

*Let us rejoice and be glad and give Him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.)
— Revelation 19:7 – 8*

... Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb. — Revelation 21:9

Some background on this letter:

What? A letter to encourage the growing community of believers at Thessalonica (and us!)

Who? Paul, the Jewish Pharisee and persecutor of Christians who was radically transformed by Christ

When? About A.D. 51

Why? Well, as Acts 17:1 – 10 explains, there was this riot ...

Where? Because of a riot, Paul is now in Corinth and he's writing back to his friends in Thessalonica

A spiritually responsive gathering of God's people is a place alive with grace and joy.

1. They changed their priorities as a result of the Truth they learned (1:3 – 5).
2. They lived genuinely God honoring, joy-filled lives, even when that entailed suffering (1:5 – 6).

Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching. — Hebrews 10:23 – 25

3. They carried forward the message of Christ everywhere they went (1:7 – 10).

*The first Christians were walking torches who weren't afraid to share their faith, spread their news, praise their Lord, and set the world on fire. They'd discovered a secret that had turned them inside out. Gone were their inhibitions, failures, sins, and temporal concerns. The risen Christ was living within them, walking among them, and working through them. They were filled with the Spirit, and they shared the Word with boldness, though it sometimes brought the lash down on their backs and the government down on their heads. They didn't expect to be here long, so they made the most of every opportunity. — David Jeremiah, *Turning Points with God**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What was one part of this weekend's message that stuck with you?
- In 1 Thessalonians 1:3, Paul is recalling what these believers in Thessalonica were like. What prompted their work? What caused them to labor and strive even in tough conditions? What gave them endurance?
- How do you see these same traits at work in God's people today?
- How did Paul communicate the Gospel (v. 4 – 5)? In what way is Paul a model to us in this?
- The Gospel had changed Paul's own life. How was it changing the Thessalonians in v.6?
- What did the Thessalonians do with their new found faith in Christ (v. 7 – 8)?
- How would you describe the reputation that was spreading about this church?
- How do you think people view churches in general or our church in particular?
- What kinds of things could each of us do to create a desire for God and a receptivity to the Gospel in our community?
- How would you like to put some aspect of this into practice this week?