



Sun 21st February 2021: *Faith Under Pressure: Intro to 1 Thessalonians*

This week we launched into our new series in 1 Thessalonians. Ian shared some reasons as to why we expect this to be so good for us:

- *The Lord has led us here*
- *Current relevance* - a church thriving in difficulty and separation, Jesus' 2nd coming,
Priority of prayer, etc.
- *This will transform us as disciples* and help us fulfil our purpose

1) What are you looking forward to and hoping to get out of this series?

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Receiving God's love:

v4-6 show how through the Holy Spirit we can receive the message of God's love with *deep conviction* and *joy*.

- 1) Can you give an example of how the Holy Spirit has given you deep conviction about something? (Note - this could be something positive, e.g. we are chosen, or something negative that the Spirit wants us to change).
- 2) Talk together about your own experiences of receiving Holy Spirit joy in the midst of suffering.

Responding to God's love:

The Thessalonian church responded to the good news of Jesus by working hard (v3), valuing godly mentors (v5) and with true repentance (v9).

- 3) What is God saying to you about these things and what are you going to do about this?

Displaying God's love:

Notice the flow of 'the message' in v6-8. They received the message (v6), responded to the message (v7) and displayed the message (v8).

Ian talked about increasing our Gospel 'R number' and increasingly passing on the message of Jesus. That we ensure we are not a community living in a bubble and socially distanced from the world, but that we would be church among the people (see v5).

- 4) How do you feel personally provoked by this and is what action can you take?

As we set out together in 1 Thessalonians:

- 1) Ask the Holy Spirit to work deeply; 2) Read 1 Thessalonians; 3) Find a study buddy/group.