

An Influential Church

1 Thess. 1:1-10

Introduction:

- A. Any good church (especially its leadership) wants to:
 - 1. Keep its own house in order.
 - 2. Extend its influence as far as possible.
- B. “The church of the Thessalonians” was an influential church. (vs. 7,8)
 - 1. In its home province—Macedonia (Berea, Philippi)
 - 2. In its neighboring province—Achaia (Athens, Corinth).
 - 3. “In every place”—Only Lord knew full extent of her influence.
- C. “The church of the Thessalonians”, like any influential church, was made up of influential members

Discussion:

I. They Were A *Converted* Membership.

- A. Who had received apostolic word as God's word. (2:13).
 - 1. Respect its accuracy. (cf. Acts 27:21-25).
 - 2. Respect its authority. (cf. 1 Cor. 14:37; Phil. 4:9).
- B. Who left world behind. (1:9-10; Cf. 1 Pet. 4:1-5).
- C. Who stood under pressure of opposition and persecution. (1:6; 2:14-16; 3:1-6).
- D. Whose faith was well-known. (1:8).
 - 1. Didn't have to guess where they stood on vital questions.
 - 2. Didn't have to fear “private position” differed from “public position”.
- E. Who received, practiced and supported true gospel preaching. (2:1-13).
 - 1. Bold (v. 2), yet gentle (v. 7,8).
 - 2. Controversial (v.2), but true (v. 13).
 - 3. God-pleasing rather than men pleasing. (vv. 4-6).
 - 4. Cause serving not self-serving. (v. 5,9).
 - 5. Revealing rather than concealing unpleasant truth. (vv. 2-5)
- F. Who lived in joyful hope. (1:6,10; 4:13; 5:10).

II. They were A *Converting* Membership.

- A. Who “sounded out the word” and reinforced it by example. (1:7,8).
 - 1. We must sound it out to the lost in the world. (Mark 16:15,16).
 - 2. We must sound it out to the lost in the church. (Jas. 5:19,20).
- B. Who try to keep each other converted. (5:11).

Conclusion:

- A. It is not our aim to make this church a popular church.
 - 1. With the world or community at large.
 - 2. With the “brotherhood”.
- B. It is our aim to make this church an influential church for good.
 - 1. By making it a converted church.
 - 2. By making it a converting church.
- C. It is not our aim to be a “thermometer” but a “thermostat” — In the world or the brotherhood.