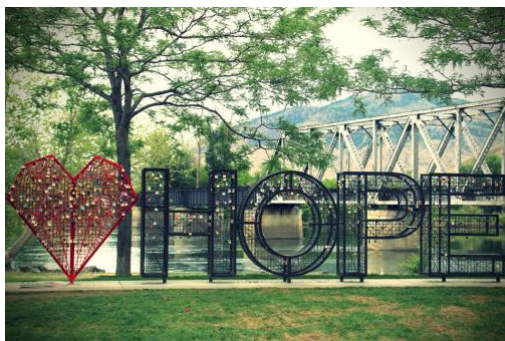


## Faith, Love and Hope in a World Turned Upside Down

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10



**Background: Faith, love and hope in a world turned upside down.** “The best-laid plans of mice and men go oft awry.” Our carefully-made plans have been turned upside down by a tiny virus. Events have moved at a dizzying pace: now that we are confined to home, the cancelation of the King City and Liberia trips last week seems mild! We are adjusting to this new norm and finding silver linings. The apostle Paul knew what it was to have plans overturned. We start a new series in 1 Thessalonians, the first letter that Paul wrote to a specific church. He did so after his plans were thwarted at every turn, yet he starts the letter with effusive thanksgiving. What silver lining did he see?

### Sermon Text: 1 Thess 1:1-10 (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> Paul, Silas and Timothy,

*To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:  
Grace and peace to you.*

<sup>2</sup> We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. <sup>3</sup> We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup> For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, <sup>5</sup> because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. <sup>6</sup> You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. <sup>7</sup> And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. <sup>8</sup> The Lord’s message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it, <sup>9</sup> for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, <sup>10</sup> and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath. (NIV)

## Discussion Questions

### 1. Preparation

- a. As you reflect on the sermon, what stands out to you most?
- b. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- c. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?

### 2. Sermon questions (pick 3)

- a. James led us in the great hymn "It is Well." Is it well with your soul right now? Why or why not?
- b. What "silver linings" have you found in this current situation?
- c. Bernard mentioned that we are loved and chosen/called by God. Do you feel loved and chosen/called by God? Why or why not? Moving forward, how does being loved and chosen/called by God affect how you live?
- d. Hope is a precious commodity when in circumstances like ours (as with the Thessalonians in the 1<sup>st</sup> century). If someone were to ask you "to give the reason for the hope that you have" (1 Pet 3:15), what would you say?
- e. In our present circumstances, name specific, practical ways for you to "imitate Christ" (verse 6) this week.