



# 1 THESSALONIANS: Trio

*Ever wondered if you're really a Christian? Wanted help with godliness when it comes to sex? Worried about death? If you have, Paul's letter to this church will thrill you!*

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## Three keys

### Read 1 Thessalonians 1 v 1-3

- ❓ *What is Paul thanking God for when he remembers these Christians (v 3)?*

You can't see faith, love or hope.

- ❓ *But what are the outward signs of each aspect of this trio (v 3)?*

## ⬆️ Pray

Stop now and thank God for a Christian who springs to mind when you think of faith-fuelled works of godliness, loving acts of tiring labour, and hope-filled endurance through hard times.

## How he knows

### Read 1 Thessalonians 1 v 4-9a

- ❓ *What does Paul say he knows God has done for the readers of this letter (v 5)?*
- ❓ *How does he know this?*
- v 5a
  - v 6
  - v 6b

How can you know you're a Christian, not just someone who understands Christianity? Paul gives us five indicators:

1. Your faith makes a difference to how you live your life (v 3).
2. Because you have experienced Christ's love for you, and appreciated what it cost him, you are willing to labour for others at cost to yourself (v 3).

3. You have experienced deep conviction upon hearing the gospel message—there have been times when the gospel has impacted you deep down, as you've been convinced of your sinfulness and thrilled by the cross. To put it another way, the Spirit has gone to work in you (v 5).

4. You have committed to seeking to live like Jesus, and sought out wiser Christians to help you see what this means (v 6).

5. You have welcomed the gospel and clung onto the gospel in times of suffering—it has been where you look for hope and so your faith has proved enduring (v 3, 6). When life has been hardest, you've not relied on yourself, or gritted your teeth, or given up—you've kept trusting Jesus and finding joy in the tears.

## ⬇️ Apply

Time for a spiritual health-check, using these indicators. Remember, Paul isn't saying that the Thessalonians do these things perfectly, all the time. He is saying this typifies them. It is their general attitude and approach.

- ❓ *How are you doing on these indicators?*

If you know you're naturally quite hard on yourself, it would be wise to ask a Christian friend you trust to help you answer. And if you are concerned you're not a Christian, then Paul will show you in verses 9-10 how to truly come to know Jesus...