

# Identifying the Elect, Part 1

*John MacArthur*

## I. Introduction.

- A. Text: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-2.
- B. The Thessalonian church was a church that brought Paul joy.
- C. Paul is encouraged that the Thessalonians are truly the elect. (Deuteronomy 7:7-8, Matthew 24, Luke 18:7, Romans 8:33, Colossians 3:12, 2 Timothy 2:10)
- D. We are Christians because of God's loving choice. (John 15; 17:9; Acts 13:46)
- E. Belief is a result of sovereign choice. (Romans 9, 1 Corinthians 1:9, 2 Thessalonians 2:13, 2 Timothy 1:9, Revelation 13)
- F. Some churches do not reflect the positive report that the Thessalonians did. (Revelation 2, Matthew 13)
- G. The Thessalonians showed many signs of the elect.

## II. Background on Thessalonica. (Acts 17:6)

- A. It was a thriving sea port that became famous for vice.
- B. It was a wicked city. Murder and abortion was common.
- C. Paul evangelized the city for three Sabbaths in the synagogue, but he worked there longer. (1 Thessalonians 2:9)
- D. The Jews became jealous and caused an uproar.
- E. Timothy's report causes Paul to send the letter.

## III. Paul and the Thessalonians shared a vital union to Christ--they were "in Christ."

## IV. Paul wishes more grace and peace for the church beyond the beginning of salvation.

- A. We have grace for our sin.
- B. We have peace for our guilt.

## V. Paul gives thanks for the church in his prayers because they were elect.

**Application Questions:**

1. What does it mean to be elect? Explain.

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2. What courage can we take for evangelism in knowing the kind of culture Paul had to deal with in witnessing to the Thessalonians?

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3. What does it mean to be "in Christ?" Explain.

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