

**A God-Centered Church**  
**1 Thessalonians 1:1-10**

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1. Today I want to share with you the marks of effective Christianity.
  2. Because churches are made of people and people have personalities, individual churches have personalities, too. If you were to take a few weeks and visit various churches in our community, chances are you would find them centered on many different issues.
  3. As we look through the pages of the NT, we find a surprisingly explicit example of a God-centered church in the city of Thessalonica.
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- I. **A God-Centered Church Is Focused On God. 1 Thessalonians 1:1 “To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:”**
    - A. Though the Apostle Paul is the writer, he also lists Silas and Timothy.
    - B. Many churches are filled with people who claim the name of Christ.
      1. **Matthew 7:22-23**
  
  - II. **A God-Centered Church Is Focused On Sacrificial Service. 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 “We thank God for all of you in our prayers.”**
    - A. Paul thanked God for the Thessalonian believers and prayed for them.
      1. **1 Thessalonians 1:3**
    - B. Notice the triad of virtues: **Faith, Love, and Hope.**
    - C. We can see this same character being lived out in the church today.
  
  - III. **A God-Centered Church Is Focused On The Word. 1 Thessalonians 1:5, “Our Gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep convictions.”**
    - A. The Apostle Paul gives us four descriptions of the power of the Gospel.
      1. Power, Spiritual, Conviction, and Incarnational.
    - B. Each of these statements hold true today.
  
  - IV. **A God-Centered Church Perseveres Under Pressure. 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7 “You became imitators of us and the Lord; in spite of severe suffering,”**
    - A. These believers received the “word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Spirit.”
    - B. They became "**models to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.**"
  
  - V. **A God-Centered Church Is A Positive Influence. 1 Thessalonians 1:8 “The Lord’s message rang out from you.”**
    - A. No one had to ask Paul about the church in Thessalonica.
    - B. Different churches are known for different things.
  
  - VI. **A God-Centered Church Is Focused On The Future. 1 Thessalonians 1:10 “Wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead - Jesus.”**
    - A. A God-centered church has its eyes on heaven, looking for the return of Jesus Christ.
      1. **Colossians 3:1-3**
    - B. Some churches would be disappointed if Christ returned today. **Revelation 22:20**