

Materials I Need:









Legend:


-  = Option 1, Appropriate for 1st – 2nd Grade
 = Option 2, Appropriate for 3rd – 6th Grade


Memory Work:


“And we also thank God continually because, when you received the Word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the Word of God, which is at work in you who believe.” 1 Thessalonians 2:13

 Hook:

- Perseverance (Activity/Discussion).** ,  Bring in some photos or pictures from the newspaper or magazines showing people in difficult situations who continue to persevere and complete their goal. You will be able to find some of these photos in outdoor magazines (hiking, climbing, dog sled races, etc.). Ask the students if they know what it means to persevere and if they have ever had to do this. You might take this activity one step further by bringing in, or setting up, several activities that require the students to stick with it, even though it is difficult. These might be games, puzzles, or activities which may cause some frustration, but give the student the opportunity to keep trying. This morning, as the study of Paul's letter to the believers in Thessalonica is begun, they will learn how he was encouraging the Thessalonians to remain strong in their faith and persevere among great persecution.
- Paul Writes to the Church at Thessalonica (Coloring Page/Discussion).** ,  Have the students color 1TH01.GF1, and attach the scroll letter from Paul by pasting it next to the church. Tell the students that this will be the focus for this morning—Paul's letter to the believers in Thessalonica. Ask them what they think Paul might write to them. How do they think they delivered the mail in those days, and how long would it take for a letter to arrive? How much do they think a stamp cost back then? Have they ever received a letter? Have they ever written an encouraging letter to someone far away?
- Be a Copycat (Game).** ,  See if the students can imitate the teacher's exact motions. Start out simply and get more and more complicated. This morning's Bible Adventure will challenge them to imitate a very special Teacher. This special Person can only be imitated by those who love Him and desire to copy everything He does.
- Genuineness (Object Lesson/Activity).** ,  Bring in several sets of objects. These should include one genuine article and one fake (i.e., a real dollar bill/fake bill, a real lemon/plastic lemon, a real diamond ring/cubic zirconium ring, a real baby/baby doll). Hold up each set one at a time. Call upon a student to pick out the genuine item. Ask how he or she could tell the genuine item from the fake. Ask how the items were similar and what the telltale signs of the fake were. Ask the students to listen to today's Bible Adventure to hear what the Bible says about the signs of a genuine Christian.

 **Missionaries (Visitor Presentation).** 🍌, 🦋 Ask a missionary to give his or her testimony (in less than five minutes) when they turned to God, tell about the missionary work (especially perseverance in difficulties, obstacles), and how God spread His message through the changed lives of those who responded to the Gospel message.


 **Making Change (Activity/Worksheet).** 🍌, 🦋 Duplex copy **1TH01.GF2 Pgs. 1 & 2** for the students and ask them to complete it. (You may want to have extra pages for students who really want to try to get all 293 combinations.) It may seem fun at first, but how easily do they give up when it gets difficult? Tell the students that, in today's Bible Adventure, they will hear that as Christians we are to persevere—continue to do the right thing, even when it gets difficult to do what God asks of us.


 **Tell Your Testimony (Discussion).** 🍌, 🦋 Tell the students that, in today's lesson, they are going to look at what genuine salvation looked like in the lives of the Thessalonians. Paul rejoiced that they “turned to God from idols.” How did you become a Christian? You or a short-term missionary guest could come in and give his or her testimony. There are simple parts that reveal how God saved your life. 1. What was your life like before you trusted Christ? 2. How did you become a Christian? 3. What has your life been like since you have become a Christian? Share this with the students in three to five minutes. Be careful to be age-appropriate as you share.




Book:

Presentation Ideas –

 **Paul Writes a Letter (Skit).** 🍌, 🦋 Enter the Apostle Paul. He talks about how he and Silas left the city of Thessalonica previously, because they were about to be arrested for preaching the Gospel. Paul then remembers how he sent his young disciple, Timothy, to check on the new church which was started in Thessalonica. (Timothy can either come and see Paul to give him the encouraging news, or Paul can continue to remember when he received this news from Timothy.) Explain to the students that persecution was great for the new believers who lived there, both from the jealous Jews, as well as the Gentiles. Timothy's report makes Paul very happy. Immediately Paul sits down to write a letter to those in Thessalonica. (This would serve as a great introduction to your Bible Adventure presentation this morning. You could have the entire Bible Adventure told by Paul firsthand, and not even stop the skit.)

 **Paul's Letters to the Thessalonians (Map/Discussion).** 🍌, 🦋 Explain to the students that it is helpful to trace the locations of Paul and his companions that relate to the Thessalonian letters. Use **1TH01.GF3** to discuss with the students the geographical background to Paul's Thessalonian letters, written from Corinth on his second missionary journey.

 **Paul Preaches in the Jewish Synagogues (Illustration/Coloring Page).** 🍌, 🦋 **1TH01.GF4.**

 **Christians Meet in Homes (Illustration/Coloring Page).** 🍌, 🦋 **1TH01.GF5.**

Bible Adventure for K – 2nd Grades –

The Apostle Paul was a missionary who gave his life to starting new churches everywhere he went. He was always doing the work of Christ, telling people how they could become Christians and showing new Christians how to live a life that was pleasing to God. Paul helped these new Christians start a church in their own city so that they could spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to their friends and neighbors. Sometimes Paul was able to stay with them a long time to train the new Christians in all the truths of God. Other times, he could only stay a short while and had to follow up with these new churches through letters or by sending other godly men to help them along.

Often Paul had to move on and minister elsewhere because he was forced to leave a city entirely and was not allowed to come back. This is what happened to Paul after he had spent a short time in the city of Thessalonica starting a new church. The first thing Paul always did when he came to a new city was to go to the Jewish synagogue and preach to his fellow Jews. Some would believe in the truth Paul preached about Jesus Christ but many would not. The unbelieving Jews would force Paul out of the synagogue. After three weeks of teaching in the Thessalonica synagogue, the unbelieving Jews did exactly that.

There were some Jews who believed the truth Paul was preaching but most of the new Christians in Thessalonica were Gentiles (non-Jews) who had heard about Jesus and turned their backs on their idol worship. The new church would meet in people's homes to encourage one another, learn about God from Paul's teaching, pray, and take communion together to remember and worship the Lord.

The unbelieving Jews in Thessalonica became jealous of the large number of people that began to follow the teachings of Paul. They wanted to arrest Paul on the charges that he was breaking the law by proclaiming that Jesus Christ was king instead of the Roman king, Caesar. Paul and his partner, Silas, discovered this and left the city. Paul sent his young disciple, Timothy, to check on the new church in Thessalonica to see how they were doing. They were undergoing persecution by the jealous Jews and others and Paul wanted to make sure that they were not giving up on their faith.

The report Timothy brought back made Paul very happy. The Thessalonians were trusting God even in hard times, and they were growing in their faith and love for one another. Immediately, Paul sat down and wrote a letter to his dear friends to encourage them in their good faith so that they might continue to walk with God and become more and more like Him.

Paul shared with the Thessalonians how he continually thanked God for them and prayed for them. He assured them that they had been chosen by God to become His children. How did Paul know that? Because of the way they received the good news about Jesus Christ! Clearly, the Holy Spirit used the teachings of Paul to work in their lives. They gave up their idol worship and other sinful ways and began a new life in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit produced His fruit in their lives and they were able to have joy (even when they were being persecuted!), faith in God, love for one another and the hope that Christ would one day come again. When Paul and Silas were with them, the Thessalonians saw their godly lives and began to imitate them. Soon the news of the changed lives of the Thessalonians had spread all over the area. What a wonderful testimony to the life-changing power of God's Word!

What about you? Can others talk about a change in your life because you are a Christian? To be a genuine Christian means you have found a new life in Jesus Christ. You tell God that you know you are sinful and can never be good enough to live with Him in heaven. Then you put your trust in Jesus who took the punishment for your sins on the cross. God promises to send the Holy Spirit to live within you and through His power you will be able to live a life that is pleasing and honoring to God. Be like the Thessalonians! Live lives that are so full of the fruit of the Holy Spirit that others will hear about it and want to be a Christian, too!

Bible Adventure for 3^d – 6th Grades -

What's the best way to tell something genuine from a fake version of it? People who are paid to do this for a living, like art experts or U.S. Treasury workers who look for fake money, will tell you that the best way to tell if something is fake is to take a long, hard look at the genuine article. Only by studying something genuine, what it looks and feels like, can we ever hope to spot an imitation.

Did you know that God is very concerned about fakes, too? All through the Bible, you can find verses about how God is pleased with things that are genuine, sincere and true. You can also find verses that tell how God hates things that are false. A very important thing God wants us to make sure of is how true and genuine our salvation is. In 2 Corinthians 13:5a, the apostle Paul wrote, "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves." This means that we should look at our salvation closely, to make sure it is the real thing.

In another of Paul's letters to the new Christian churches, he talks about genuine salvation, too. The first letter to the Thessalonians is that letter. The believers in that church were very near and dear to Paul's heart. Let's take a quick look back through history to see why.

Paul went to a lot of cities and at each one he would tell whomever would listen about Jesus Christ. Those who became believers he would continue to teach. He would help them set up their own church

so that they could continue to grow and reach others for Christ after he had gone. Sometimes Paul was able to stay in a town a long time to train the new Christians in the truths of God. Other times he could only stay a short while. Then he would teach the new believers through his letters, or send one of his helpers, like Silas or Timothy, to teach the new church.

Sometimes people were not friendly to Paul or his message. This is what happened to Paul after he had spent a short time in Thessalonica setting up a church. As he always did when he came to a new city, Paul went to the synagogue and shared the Gospel with his fellow Jews. Some believed the truth Paul preached, but others did not. These others became angry with Paul and forced him out of the synagogue. This didn't stop Paul. He and the Jews who had put their faith in Christ, and many Gentile Christians, began to meet in people's homes. They learned about God's truth from Paul, prayed, ate together, and worshiped the Lord together.

The Jews who had refused to believe Paul's message became even angrier as they saw how many people were following Paul. They made so much trouble for one of Paul's friends that Paul and Silas left Thessalonica. Paul then went to Berea and from there to Athens. All the time Paul traveled he never forgot those new believers in Thessalonica. After a while he sent Timothy back there to see how they were doing. Meanwhile, Paul journeyed on to Corinth, where he eventually met with Timothy again. When he heard Timothy's report, Paul was very glad to hear that the Thessalonians were doing well, in spite of being persecuted by the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles in that city. Immediately, Paul sat down to write his friends a letter to encourage them.

Paul began his letter by thanking God for the faithfulness of the Thessalonian believers. He told them that he, Silas, and Timothy often prayed for them, remembering their hard work in serving God and each other. The fact that they had continued to do this proved to Paul that they had experienced genuine salvation. They had changed hearts filled with faith, hope, and love. The Thessalonians were following the example Paul, Silas, and Timothy had shown while they were there, becoming more like Christ every day. They were a changed people, and it was obvious to everyone around them. Even when others persecuted them for being Christians, they had joy. They were looking ahead to the same thing we do today as Christians—the coming of our glorious King, Jesus Christ. Nothing and nobody can take that hope away from us. That's how we can have joy in difficult times, and that's why we should never become angry or totally discouraged with what life brings our way. The hope of Christ's coming so filled the hearts of the Thessalonians that they wanted to share the Good News about Jesus with everyone. Their faith was so strong that people all through the region were hearing about Christ. Everyone in the Christian world knew about the faith of the Thessalonians, who became examples to all who believed. In all these places Paul wrote, "The Word of the Lord has sounded forth from you." God was getting glory because people were hearing about God and responding to Him in faith. They were all talking about how the Thessalonians had turned away from idols to serve the true and living God. What a change—from worshiping statues made of metal or wood to worshiping the God of the universe. No wonder their lives were changed!

In the book of Galatians, we learn that when people are truly saved, the Holy Spirit comes to live in them. As the Spirit takes control, they will become different people than they were before they were saved. They will begin to have new attitudes and new actions, like Christ. The Bible calls these "the fruit of the Spirit." If you are a genuine believer, you and others will be able to see this fruit in your life. This is how Paul knew that the Thessalonians were genuine believers and not make-believers. When Paul preached God's Word to them, they received it with joy. They kept their joy even when unbelievers were unkind to them. They eagerly shared the Good News about Jesus with anyone who would listen. Others could see the change in them as they turned from idols and held on to the living God. They looked forward to Christ's return. These attitudes and actions were the fruit of the Holy Spirit, something that only He can produce.

The Bible teaches that genuine salvation makes the believer a new person. Someone might be able to fake it for a time, but if they are not truly saved it will eventually become obvious that their salvation is a fake, too. Only by walking in the Spirit, being controlled by Him, do we have the power to live a life pleasing to God.

Looking at the Thessalonians gives us a good idea of what genuine salvation looks like. It should make it easier for you to spot a fake, maybe even in your own life. Genuine salvation always brings a big change—a heart that wants to please God more than anything else in this life.

Aim Questions:

1. **What was Paul's ministry?** *He was an apostle who proclaimed the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles, and disciplined people in God's truth in order to establish local churches.*
2. **How would Paul start his ministry in a new town?** *He went to the Jewish synagogue to teach the Gospel of Christ from the Scripture.*
3. **Why were Paul and his missionary partners, Silas and Timothy, forced to leave Thessalonica?** *Others were jealous of their following and accused them of proclaiming a different king.*
4. **What did Paul ask Timothy to do?** *Return to the church in Thessalonica and follow up on their well being.*
5. **How did Paul respond to Timothy's report of the Thessalonians?** *He was glad and immediately wrote them a letter of encouragement and exhortation.*
6. **What is genuine salvation?** *True redemption and new life in Jesus Christ, God's way to eternal life.*
7. **What does genuine salvation look like?** *Sincere faith, hope and love, evidenced by the fruit of the Holy Spirit.*



Look:



Faith, Hope, and Love (Activity Stations). 🍌, 🦋 These virtues should be found in every true believer. These qualities, which Paul is thanking God for in the lives of the Thessalonian believers, are present in the hearts of those who are genuine believers and manifested in their lives. Set up three stations for the students to rotate to after a short period of time. At each station, introduce them to the word and what it means. Give examples and ask them if they have ever done something because of these qualities being present in their lives. This is a big concept for the younger ones, so break it down into very simple terms. **FAITH:** Have they ever trusted someone or something even though they could not know for sure how it was going to turn out? Faith and trust is that which we do without being able to physically see the end result. When we put our faith in Christ, we surrender all to Him. Faith produces works. **HOPE:** Hope is like anticipation. It's the feeling that you are looking forward to something so wonderful that you can't wait for it to happen. For children, this is something they can understand. It is the promise of something yet to come. Christians have eternal hope. This hope produces endurance and perseverance. **LOVE:** Love labors for whom we love. When we love Christ, we will labor for Him. This means loving and caring for others, some of whom may not be lovable. When we have the Holy Spirit within us we will have the power to love as Christ does. As the students progress to each station, they obtain a heart that represents that virtue. At the last station they may choose to complete the craft idea listed below, or simply attach them to a piece of yarn for a necklace.



Changed Hearts Filled with Faith, Hope, and Love (Craft). 🍌, 🦋 Have the students follow the instructions on **1TH01.GF6** to complete this craft. These qualities should be evident in a believer's life—past, present, and future. Faith: Believing the Gospel (past), Love: Loving Christ now (present), and Hope: Looking forward to His return (future).



Who Knows You're a Christian? (Discussion). 🍌, 🦋 Read the passage and talk about the parts of chapter 1 where Paul was complimenting the Thessalonian believers on their boldness in being witnesses to everyone around them. Everyone knew about the faith of the Thessalonians. Can this be said of us? This may be painful for us to hear, but a healthy challenge. What do we do to demonstrate to those around us that we are children of God? You may also use this as an opportunity to allow the students to share ways in which they have been persecuted for their faith.



Read a Letter From a Missionary (Activity). 🍌, 🦋 Cut several 1" x 11" strips of paper and give each student one strip and a pen or pencil. Read aloud a letter from one of our missionaries. Ask the students to write down several examples of how God has blessed these missionaries, how they have persevered, and/or what struggles they are currently facing. These strips of paper can be used as a reminder to the students of what to pray for as you lead the students in prayer for these missionaries. Discuss why we should thank God for and pray for fellow believers.

- Foxe's Book of Martyrs (Activity).** 🦋 Read an excerpt or two from this book that talks about the tremendous persecution of believers. A copy is available in the church library. These are wonderful examples of faith, hope and love which produced enduring perseverance during difficult times.
 - Turning to God (Worksheet).** 🦋 Discuss with the students how conversion is the human side of salvation. God must regenerate us and help us to have faith. Conversion is the mental and spiritual experience of being saved. Tell the students that on this worksheet are a number of aspects of conversion. All of these must be true if we are to say that we are Christians, **1TH01 GF7**.
 - Missionaries in Training (Guest Speaker).** 🦋, 🦋 If you know someone going on a short term missions trip, invite them to class to share what they are going to do. Ask them why they want to go and what they hope to see God do. Pray with them as a class.
 - Aim Questions (Worksheet).** 🦋 Have the students answer the Aim Questions about today's Bible Adventure, **1TH01.GF8**.
 - Passage Review Questions (Worksheet).** 🦋, 🦋 This booklet contains many questions from the Scripture passage covered in today's lesson. Students may work on them in class and complete them during the week at home, **1TH01.GF9**.
 - 1 Thessalonians 2:13 (Memory Verse Song).** 🦋 Words and music for today's memory verse are available upon request from Children's Ministry.
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Took:

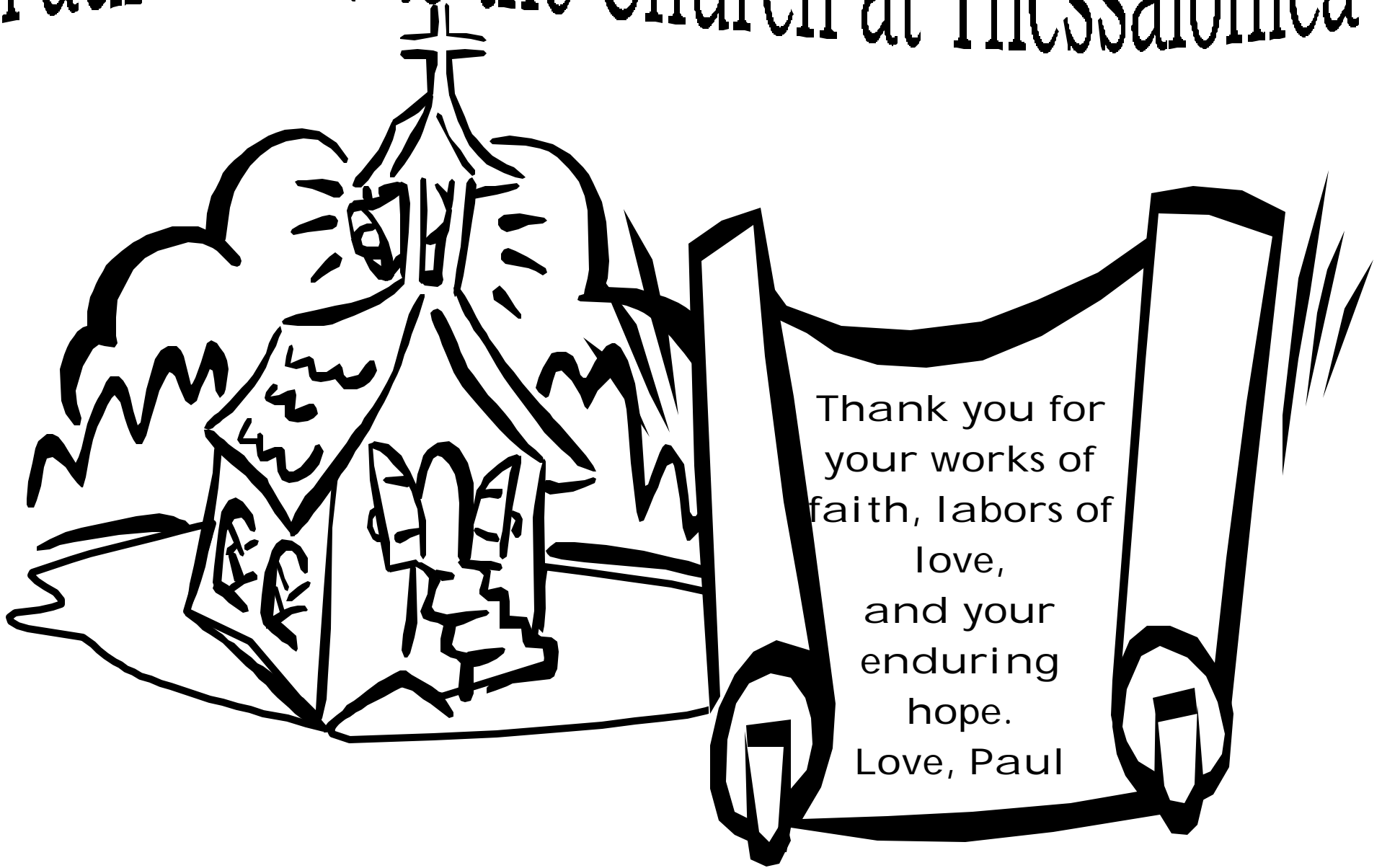
- Let the Message Ring Out! (Take-Home Activity).** 🦋, 🦋 Discuss with the students how, just like the true believers of Thessalonica, we, too, are called to let the message ring out (1 Thessalonians 1:8). We should be telling others of the great things God has done in our lives. Copy **1TH01.GF10** onto cardstock and cut apart. Have the students take the card home and pray each day of the week for two or three people whom they might have the opportunity to tell about Jesus.
- Am I Genuine or Imitation? (Discussion).** 🦋 Genuine salvation demonstrates a sincere faith, hope and love in a believer's life. Challenge the students to search their hearts this coming week to determine if they are genuine believers. If so, their lives should be yielding the fruit of the Spirit. Has there been a "before and after" for them? Do they exhibit a changed heart in their attitudes and actions? Encourage them to keep a small journal this week as they wrestle through this. Spend some time following up with your students next week during the HOOK time.
- Missionary Letter (Activity).** 🦋, 🦋 Give the students a sheet of paper. Ask them to write a letter to the missionary they heard about in class today. Ask them to encourage the missionary to persevere in the work God has called him or her to do. Let them decorate the letters as time allows. Have a pre-addressed manila envelope ready for the students to put their letters in when they have finished them.
- Missionary Prayer Cards (Take-Home Sheet).** 🦋, 🦋 Duplex copy **1TH01.GF11 Pgs. 1 & 2** onto cardstock. Ask them to make a commitment to pray for the missionary each day this week. Just as the missionary perseveres in his or her work for the Lord, challenge the students to persevere in their prayer for the missionary through the whole summer.



To God from Idols (Craft) 🧩 Each student will need:
1TH01.GF12 copied onto white paper
1 paper plate
1 empty spool of thread
1 chenille wire
2 craft sticks
glue
scissors

Paul commended the Thessalonians for their faith in God. He was encouraged that they followed God and no longer worshiped idols. Money, friends, and toys can often be idols for children. Have the students follow the directions on **1TH01.GF12** and use this craft as a take-home to demonstrate what it looks like to turn to God from idols.

Paul Writes to the Church at Thessalonica



Paul's Letters to the Thessalonians

(Second Missionary Journey)



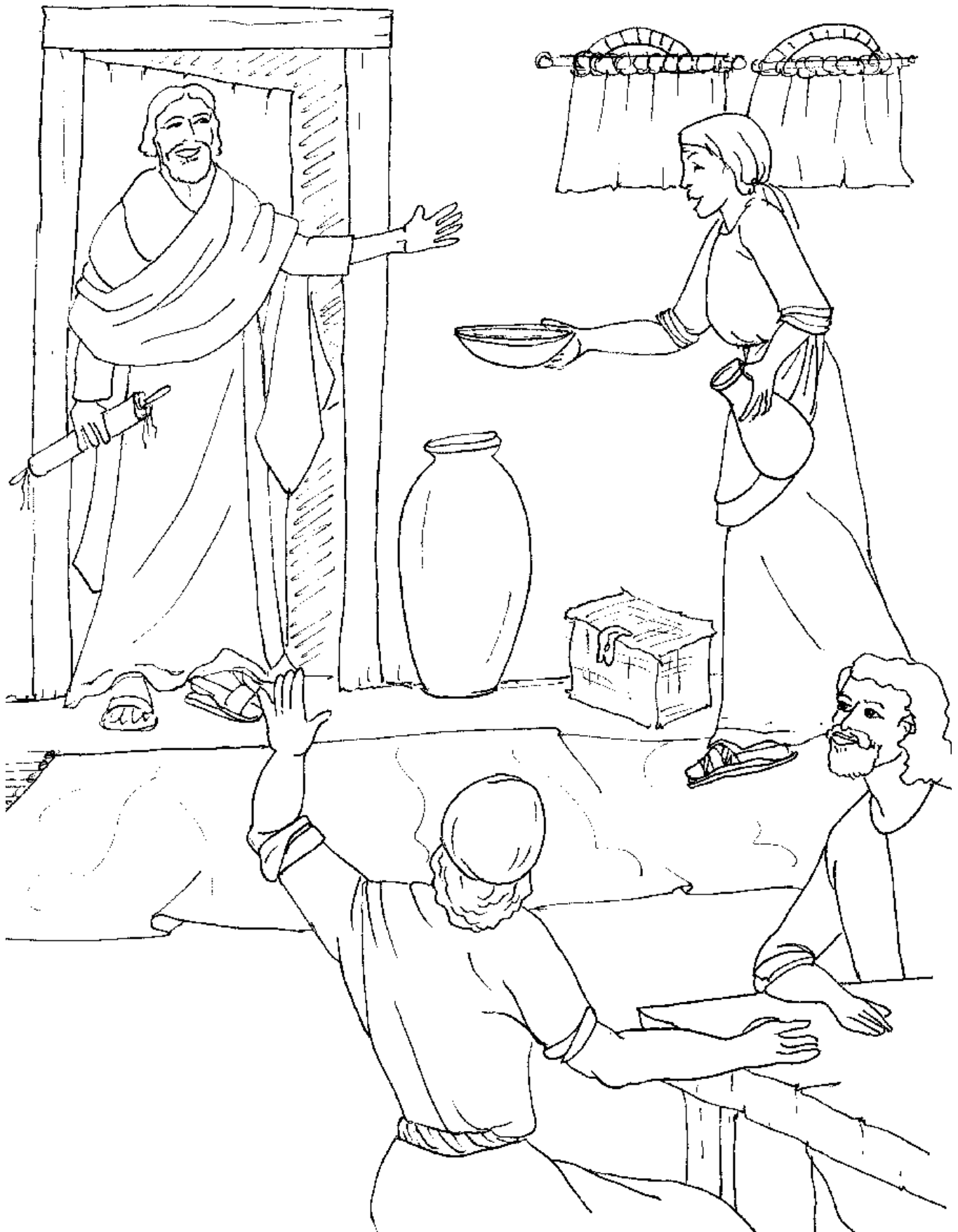
It is helpful to trace the locations of Paul and his companions that relate to the Thessalonian letters. His route is as follows:

1. Paul and Silas are sent from Thessalonica to Berea because of riotous Jews.
2. Paul flees to Athens from Berean persecution, leaving Silas and Timothy behind.
3. Paul sends for Silas and Timothy to join him in Athens.
4. Timothy meets with Paul at Athens and is sent back to Thessalonica.
5. Paul travels to Corinth.
6. Silas and Timothy meet Paul at Corinth.
7. Paul writes his first letter to the Thessalonians from Corinth and sends it to the church in Thessalonica.
8. About six months later (A.D. 51-52), he sent his second letter to the church in Thessalonica.

Paul Preaches in the Jewish Synagogues



Christians Meet in Homes



Changed Hearts



*Becoming more like Christ
every day*

Faith

Faith

Faith

Faith

Faith

Faith

Faith

Faith

Hope

Hope

Hope

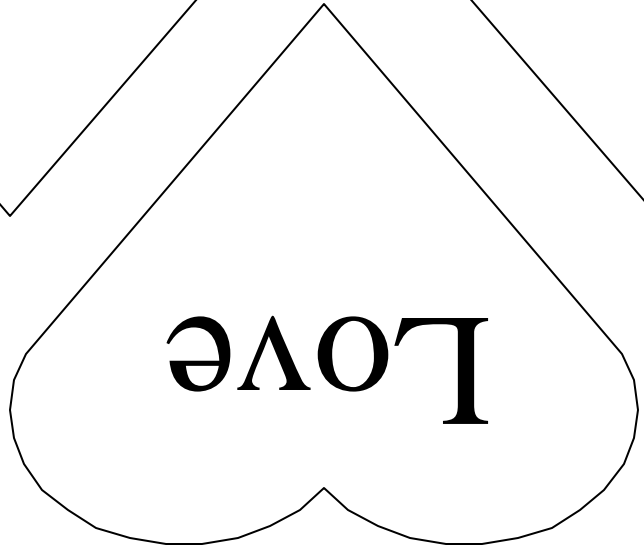
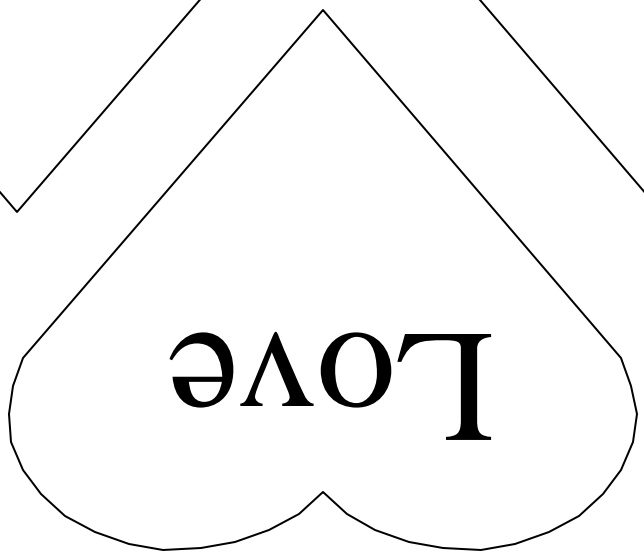
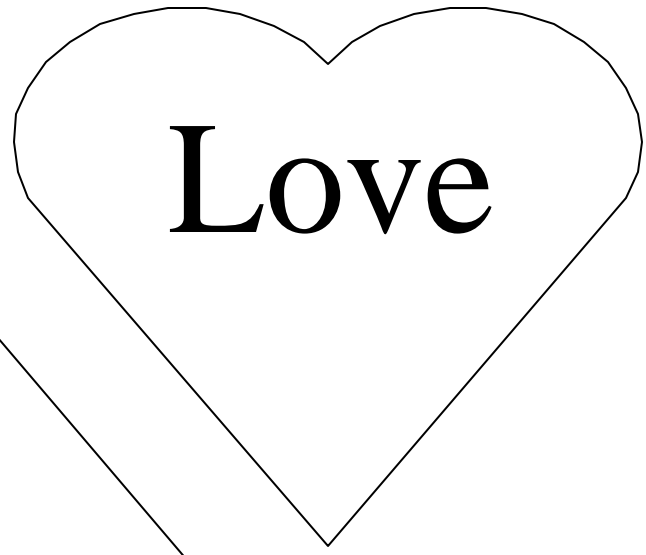
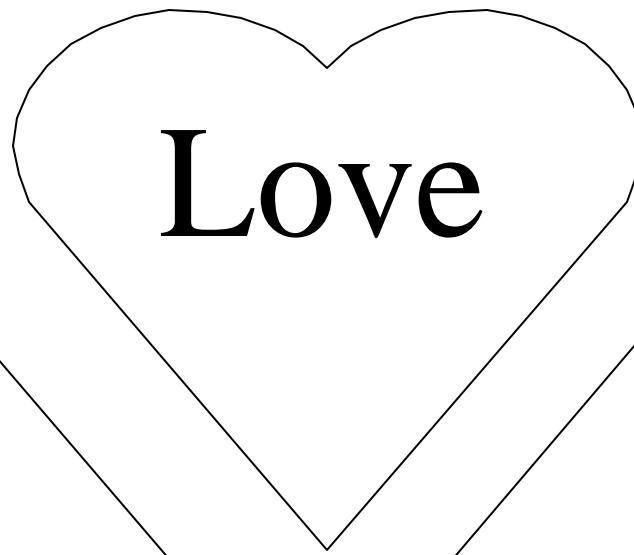
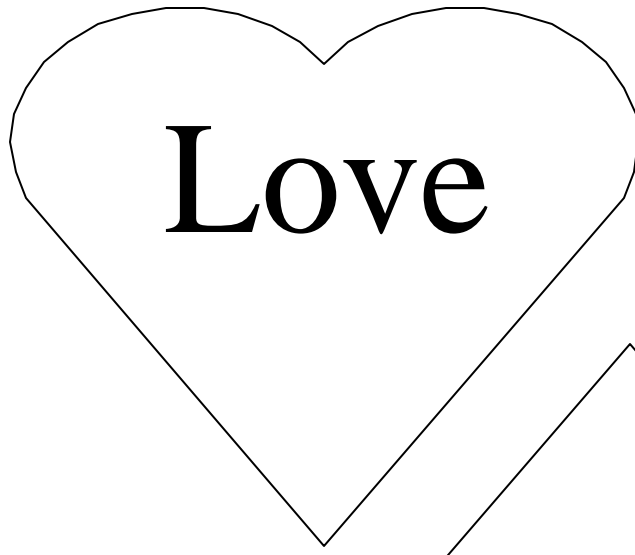
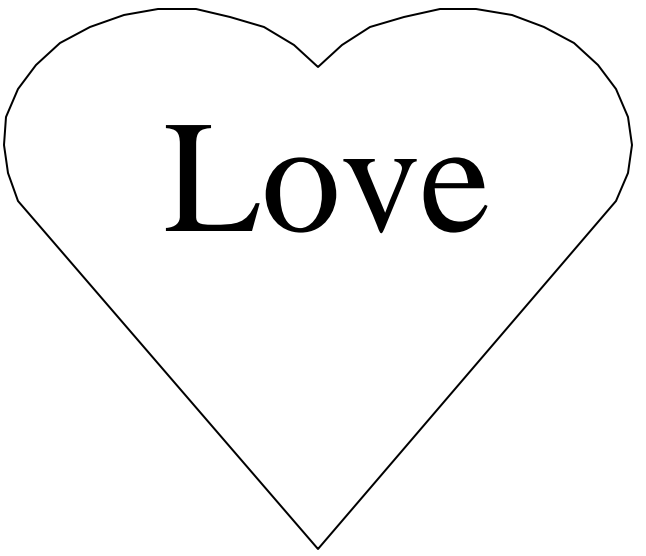
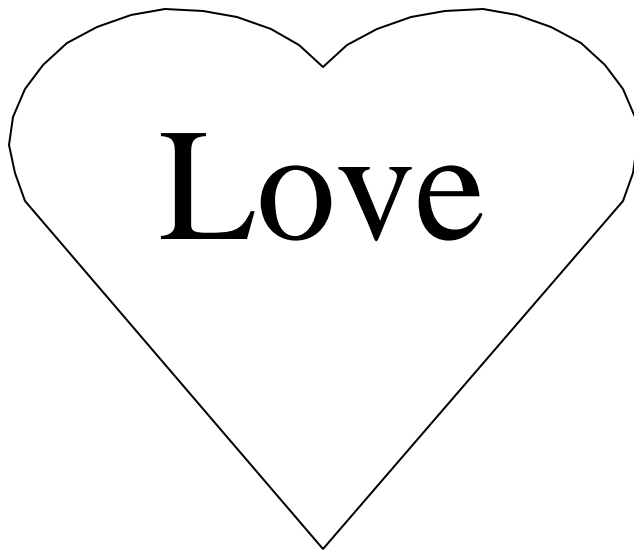
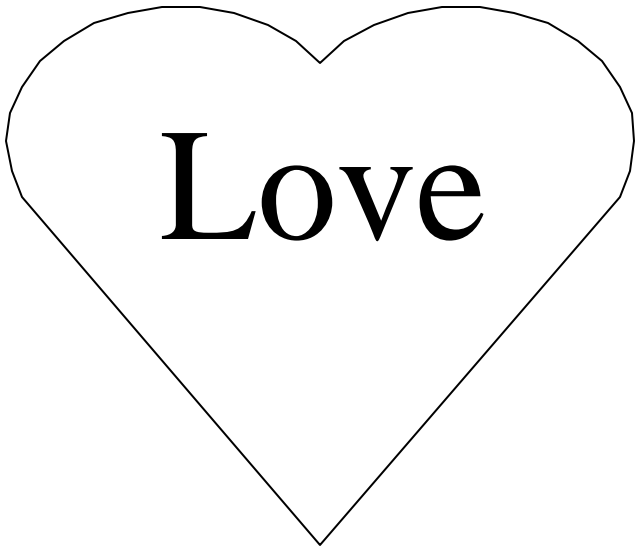
Hope

Hope

Hope

Hope

Hope



Changed Hearts

Faith

Love

Hope

Instructions:

Cut out the three hearts (faith, hope, and love) and tape a piece of drinking straw to the back of each one. Vary the lengths of the straws so that each heart stands out at a different dimension from the background page to the other hearts. Use a small dab of glue stick to set each straw (attached to the heart) in place.

Once tacked in place, squirt a small amount of liquid white glue at the base of the the straw and let dry. You may want to mount the background page on a piece of construction paper before you start to give the completed craft more rigidity over all.

*Becoming more like Christ
every day*

Turning to God



What does it look like when someone becomes a Christian? The process of becoming a Christian is what is called conversion. What does it mean to be converted? Let's look at the Scripture and see what it means. Read the following verses and answer the questions.

1. What does it mean to be converted? The word conversion comes from the word "turn." Read the following passages and find what people turned from or to.

Acts 3:26

Acts 9:35

Acts 14:15

1 Thessalonians 1:9

2. What kind of attitude do we find in conversion?
Joel 2:12-14

3. What does it look like practically when a person is converted? Read the passages and write down what characterizes a converted person.
Deuteronomy 10: 16-21

4. Look at each of these parts. Are you converted? Have you turned from anything? What heart attitudes did you have when you were converted? What fruit in your life shows that you are converted?



Aim Questions

Answer the following questions about today's Bible Adventure.

1. What was Paul's ministry?
2. How would Paul start his ministry in a new town?
3. Why were Paul and his missionary partners, Silas and Timothy, forced to leave Thessalonica?
4. What did Paul ask Timothy to do?
5. How did Paul respond to Timothy's report of the Thessalonians?
6. What is genuine salvation?
7. What does genuine salvation look like?

If you have the genuine salvation that Paul spoke about, you will demonstrate sincere faith, hope, love and joy.

You will produce the good fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Pray this week for God to show you your own heart.

Talk with your parents or church leaders about your salvation.

1 Thessalonians Chapter 1

And we also thank God continually because, when you received the Word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the Word of God, which is at work in you who believe.

Passage Review Questions

1 Thessalonians Chapter 1

To whom was this letter addressed? (1:1)

Who was with Paul as he was writing to the Thessalonian church? (1:1)

What were three characteristics of the Thessalonian church? (1:3)

Who was the inspiration behind these three characteristics? (1:3)

Did Paul think the people at Thessalonica were believers? (1:4)

What gave power to the words that Paul shared with the unbelievers in

Thessalonica? (1:4)

Who started the Thessalonian church? (1:5)

Who did the people in Thessalonica become imitators of? (1:6)

What was happening to the Thessalonian Church for Paul to encourage them to have great joy? (1:6)

What two places were the first ones to be impacted by the Thessalonian's faith? (1:7)

What happened as a result of the Thessalonians living out their faith? (1:8)

What did the Thessalonians turn from to turn to the living and true God? (1:9)

Who were the Thessalonians waiting on to return from heaven? (1:10)

From what was Jesus going to rescue them? (1:10)