

October 25, 2015
Thank You Notes: Part I
Thank God for Always Batting a Thousand (Perfection)
I Thessalonians 1
Shay Robbins

1. After greeting the church at Thessalonica, Paul tells the believers there that he always thanks God for them. He mentions and alludes to eight reasons Paul gives (Shay used the NASB). Using any version, read the ten verses of chapter one and list the reasons Shay put up on the screen and any others you might see.

(Your work of faith

-labor of love

-steadfastness of hope in Jesus

-His choice of you

-gospel came in word and power of the Holy Spirit in full conviction

-you became imitators of us and of the Lord

-you received the word in much tribulation with Joy of the Holy Spirit so that you became an example to every place your faith toward God has gone forth

-you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God

Others?)

2. Sometimes, as scripture warns, we might think too highly of ourselves. Pride and arrogance are antithetical to the cross. On the other hand, building each other up is very biblical and the Thessalonians must have been happy and encouraged to read the beginning (first chapter) of this letter.

*What is a personal quality or act Paul might thank God for in your life?

*What on the list in Thessalonians 1 do you most identify with?

3. Using the eighth point, “turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God,” Shay reminded us of the Ten Commandments, and focused on the first two. It has been said that if we keep the first two, the others will fall into place.

*What are the first two commandments? **(You shall have no other gods before me; You shall not worship idols.)**

*Why do you think ancient people worshipped idols?

*When Moses was gone on the mountain for so long to get the Law from the Lord, why do you think God’s people, recently rescued from Egypt, built a golden calf? What did their worship look like? (Exodus 32:1-8)

*Is the word “idol” used differently today than it was in the Old and New Testaments?

4. What are the “surface idols” Shay listed? **(Image, work, helping, materialism, a specific person.)** In what way could these five things be idols in our lives?

5. Shay listed and described the following four “source idols.” Comfort, Approval, Control, Power. (The development of the material follows the questions if you want to spend more time on it.)

*Which of the four do you most identify with?

*Does this idol or tendency affect your worship of the “living and true God”?

(Comfort: Life only has meaning, I only have worth if I have a particular quality of life, experience and pleasure.

- A. They seek: ease, comfort, lack of stress, privacy and freedom
- B. The price they are willing to pay: Reduced productivity
- C. Their greatest nightmare: stress and demands
- D. Their problem emotion: Boredom

Approval: Life only has meaning, I only have worth when I am loved by _____.

- A. They seek: approval, affirmation, acceptance, belonging
- B. The price they are willing to pay: independence
- C. Their greatest nightmare: Rejection
- D. Their problem emotion: Cowardice

Control: Life only has meaning, I only have worth if I have control over my life.

- A. They seek: control, self discipline, standards, certainty
- B. The price they are willing to pay: loneliness and spontaneity
- C. Their greatest nightmare: Uncertainty
- D. Their problem emotion: worry and anxiety

Power: Life only has meaning, I only have worth if I have power and control over others.

- A. They seek: success, winning, influence
- B. The price they are willing to pay: carry the burden of responsibility
- C. Their greatest nightmare: humiliation and inadequacy
- D. Their problem emotion: anger)

6. Thoughts on Worship:

*What do you think it means to worship God?

*How did the followers in the New Testament worship?

*What motivates you most to worship?

*What is a time, or what are some times, when you felt like you experienced especially meaningful worship?