**I Thessalonians 1:1-4**

**Is the Church Essential?**

**Paul’s Greeting to the church tells us what makes it so special.**

**1a-**

**1b- “ekklesia”**

**Matt. 16:18-**

**I Tim. 3:15-**

**Vs1-4 Beg us to ask, What is unique about the “church?”**

**Vs 1-4 answer, Union of the church to God AND Christ AND one another.** The church, the bride of Christ is the chosen **recipient** of salvation, the chosen **means** of sanctification for believers (through the proclaiming of the WORD, one anothering and biblical leadership) and the chosen **voice** of gospel proclamation to a lost world.

1. **The church is the chosen recipient of God’s salvation.**
   1. **The church of Thessalonians is both IN GOD the Father AND the Lord Jesus Christ.** Key word of vs1b \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
   2. **Eph. 1:4, 2:1-10**
   3. **I John 5:19-20**
   4. **Titus 3:3-7**
   5. **How did the church get to such a place of intimacy with the Father and Christ? Vs4-** 
      1. **The church is established \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**
      2. **Matt. 19:26**
      3. **Eph. 1:4-5**
      4. **Titus 3:4**
      5. **John 1:12-13**
2. **The church, being found *IN* GOD THE FATHER and the LORD JESUS CHRIST, is God’s chosen means for sanctification in the life of the believer.** 
   1. **Heb. 10:14**
   2. **Notice the Sanctification \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**
   3. **Vs1- the church is IN God and Christ**
   4. **Vs2-3-**
   5. **Vs4- the church is lovingly chosen by God**
3. **POA/Application:**

* Is your view of the church GOD’S view of the church?
* Have you considered that you commitment to and priority of the local church is a powerful element of your witness? For unbelievers should see you as attached to a greater body!
* **Prov. 18:1**- Are you a lone ranger believer? Those who resist commitment to a local church are proud and resistant to God’s authority. They rage against all sound counsel.
* How does your calendar/service reflect God’s view of the church? Does your life reflect the biblical truth that the **CHURCH** is front and center?
* A good litmus test is what will I choose over church? What does that reveal about my priorities? What do these priorities teach my children? What do these priorities profess to lost family members and a lost world?