<u>The First-Century Church</u>

"The Church in Thessalonica -- Persuaded but Confused"

<u>Introduction</u>:

    1. The New Testament contains a tremendous amount of information [positive and negative] that was written "about" as well as "to" various congregations in the first century.

    2. By examining this information we can learn the Lord's will for His church today.

    3. This lesson is a study of the church in Thessalonica.

        a. We read "about" the establishment of this congregation in Acts 17:1-10.

        b. The apostle Paul wrote 2 letters "to" this congregation [1 and 2 Thessalonians].

        c. We are especially concerned with 2 characteristics of this church's members -- they were "persuaded," but they were also "confused."

<u>Discussion</u>:

I.   PAUL ESTABLISHED THE CHURCH IN THESSALONICA (Acts 17:1-10)

  A. A synagogue was located in Thessalonica (vs.1).

  B. Paul reasoned from the Scriptures in the synagogue to show that Jesus is Christ (vs.2-3).

  C. The people in Thessalonica who became Christians showed that they were fully persuaded:

    1. when they were converted (vs.4)

    2. by withstanding persecution from unbelieving Jews (vs.5-10, 13).

II.   LATER, PAUL WROTE 2 LETTERS TO THE CHURCH IN THESSALONICA

  A. The members of this congregation were persuaded.

    1. Paul commended them for:

        a. their faithful service (1 Thessalonians 1:1-3, 8)

        b. their reception of God's Word (1 Thessalonians 2:13)

        c. enduring persecution (1 Thessalonians 2:14-16)

        d. their faith and love (1 Thessalonians 3:1-6; 4:9-10a; 2 Thessalonians 1:3-4).

    2. Paul encouraged them to remain persuaded (2 Thessalonians 2:15).

  B. The members of this congregation were also confused.

    1. Paul corrected them for their confusion concerning the responsibilities to work.

        a. 1 Thessalonians 4:10b-12

        b. 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12

    2. Paul addressed their confusion concerning the time of the Lord's return.

        a. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4

        b. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5

    3. Paul dealt with their confusion concerning the resurrection (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).