

What is Faith?
1 Thessalonians 1:8–10



1ST
THESSALONIANS

THEREFORE, COMFORT ONE
ANOTHER WITH THESE WORDS



MACEDONIA

THRACE

BITHYNIA AND PONTUS

MARMARA SEA

ASIA

AEGEAN SEA

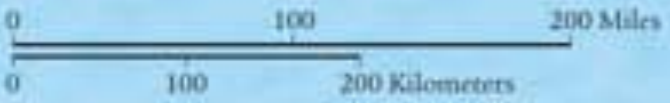
ACHAIA

CARIA

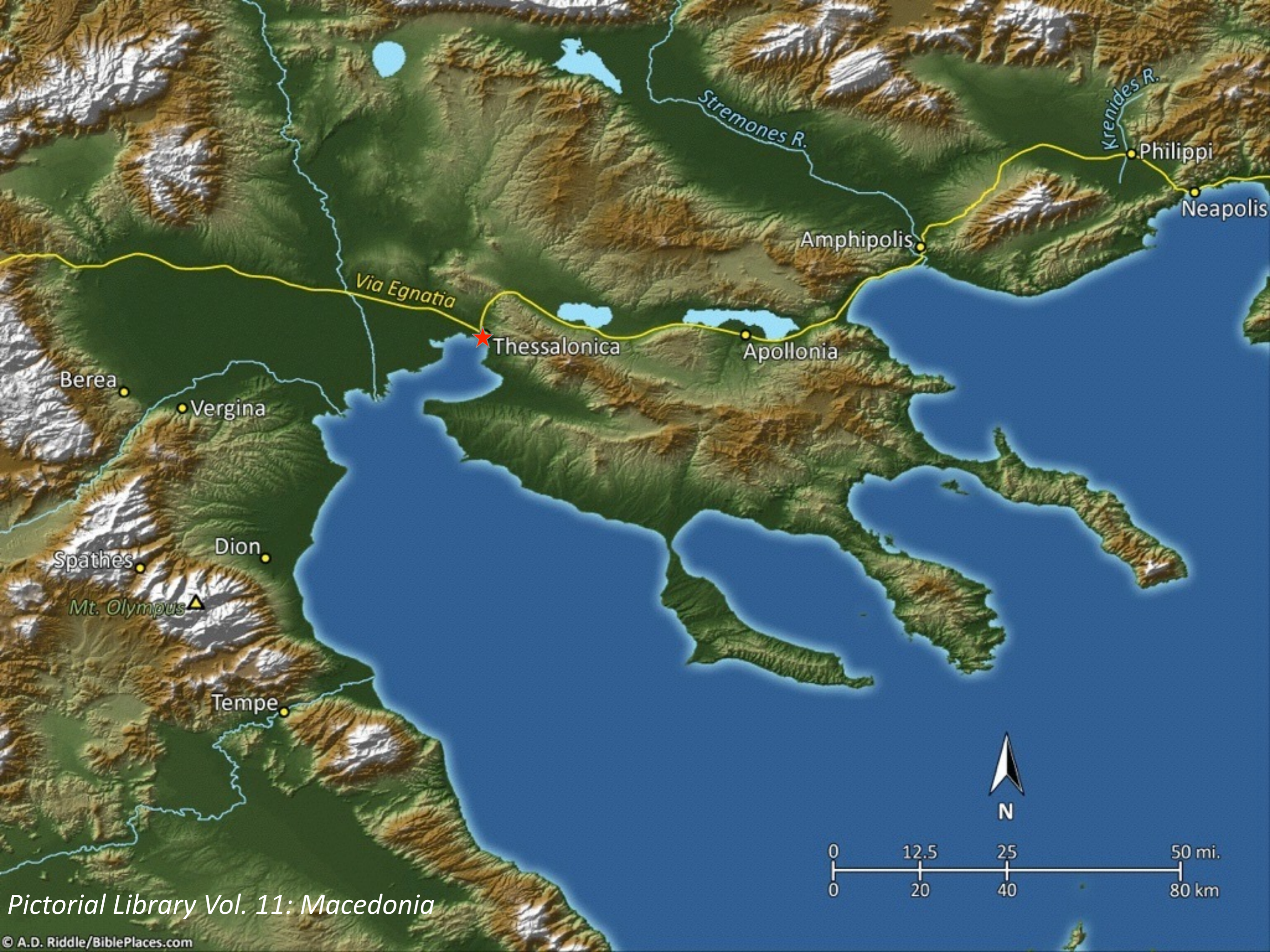
LYCIA

PAMPHYLIA

MEDITERRANEAN SEA



PAUL'S FIRST AND SECOND



1 Thess. 1:6, “You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation [*thlipsis*] with the joy of the Holy Spirit,

1 Thess. 1:7, “so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.”

1 Thess. 1:8, “For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.”

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**gen 2nd person pl pronoun,
from you (pl) as the source**

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**gen 2nd person pl pronoun,
“from you” (pl) as the
source**

ἐξηχέω *exēcheō*

**perf mid indic 3
sing**

**“to sound out;
to sound forth
like a trumpet, to
reverberate like
an echo.”**



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MEDITERRANEAN SEA

0 100 200 Miles
0 100 200 Kilometers

PAUL'S FIRST AND SECOND

FAITH: What is it?

1. Introductory issues?

Kinds of faith? Supernatural vs. natural faith?

Saving faith vs. non-saving faith?

Head faith vs. heart faith?

Gen. 6:5, “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

Deut. 15:9, “Beware lest there be a wicked thought in your heart, saying, ‘The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand,’ and your eye be evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing, and he cry out to the LORD against you, and it become sin among you.’ ”

Psa. 15:2, “He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart;”

Psa. 49:3, “My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart shall give understanding.”

Acts 8:22, “Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.”

FAITH: What is it?

Psa. 73:21,

**“Thus my heart was grieved,
And I was vexed in my mind.”**

Heart = mind

FAITH: What is it?

2. Different kinds of faith in the Scripture are related to the different objects of faith.

Rom. 1:17, “For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’ ”

FAITH: What is it?

3. Faith is a mental activity triggered by volition. As such faith cannot be emotion because emotion cannot respond to a command.

Acts 16:31, “*Believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.”

Believe is an aorist active imperative.

FAITH: What is it?

4. Faith is always directed toward an object which can be expressed in a proposition. A proposition is the verbal expression of a thought which can be verified or falsified. Therefore faith is not a function of emotion but of reason. You believe with your mind only.

Example of a proposition: The sky is blue.

FAITH: What is it?

Notitia

Assensus

Fiducia

Understanding

Assent, agreement

Belief

5. Therefore we do not believe directly in a person, or come to salvation through a relationship with Jesus, but first believe the propositions in Scripture that inform us about Jesus and His saving work on the cross.

This means faith is rational, not irrational. Though what is believed may be irrational or rational, faith itself is not.

6. Therefore, faith is an activity of the mentality of the soul which is the affirmation and agreement that something is true.

7. Faith has no merit in itself—all the merit lies in the object of faith.

Ex.: It doesn't matter how much faith I have (or how sincere I am) that I have \$1,000 in my checking account. If I have only \$1, I'm in trouble.

8. Faith as an intellectual activity excludes emotion.

The Basis of Knowledge

| | SYSTEM | STARTING POINT | METHOD |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--|--|
| Autonomous Systems | RATIONALISM | Innate ideas; Faith in human ability | Independent use of logic & reason |
| | EMPIRICISM | Sense perceptions; External experience; Scientific method; Faith in human ability | Independent use of logic & reason |
| | MYSTICISM | Inner, private experience; Intuition; Faith in human ability | Independent; Nonlogical; Nonrational; Nonverifiable |
| Divine Viewpoint | REVELATION | Objective; Revelation of God | Dependent use of logic and reason |

9. Faith is not something we do, but it is the channel by which we appropriate what God has done for us.

Eph. 2:8–9,

“... saved by grace *through* faith.”

10. In Scripture faith is divided into two types:

Faith directed to the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross for justification salvation.

Faith directed to the promises and statements of Scripture for spiritual growth and the spiritual life.

**I know not why God's wondrous grace
To me He hath made known,
Nor why, unworthy, Christ in love
Redeemed me for His own.**

Refrain:

**But "I know Whom I have believed,
And am persuaded that He is able
To keep that which I've committed
Unto Him against that day."**

**I know not how this saving faith
To me He did impart,
Nor how believing in His Word
Wrought peace within my heart.**