**Ice Breaker:** What’s an evidence of God’s grace you’ve seen this week?

**Ice Breaker:** What’s a difficult season in your life where you saw God grow your faith?

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. **Context:** Review and remind yourselves of the context in which the gospel came to Thessalonica (see Acts 17:1-10 & 1 Thess. 1:1-10). Review also the key themes of his first letter. What afflictions might the church be facing? (see 2 Thess. 2:1-3a)
2. Paul begins his second letter in a similar way as he does in the first letter to the Thessalonians with a greeting and thanksgiving. What does Paul give thanks for and who does he thank?
3. Why is it significant that Paul gives God the praise for the faith of the church in Thessalonica? What can happen when we forget that our faith is a gift from God and not from ourselves? (see Eph. 2:8)
4. How does knowing that our faith is a gift from God encourage us when we are battling doubts and face trials of various kinds?
5. In verse 4, how does Paul respond when he hears the Thessalonians faith and love is growing even in affliction? What does it look like to have a holy boast about what God is doing in the lives of others?
6. Consider the last time you participated in holy “gossip” about what God is doing. Why is negative, defaming speech so much easier to participate in than speech that builds up?
7. How have you seen God grow your faith or the faith of others through the trials of this past year? How does God use trials to grow our faith? (see I Peter 1:3-7)
8. Jesus said that those who follow him should expect to be persecuted (John 15:20). What should our response be when we feel persecuted? What is a wrong response in the face of persecution?
9. Following Paul’s example, take some time to thank God for the work he is doing in your life and the life of those in your Small Group and beyond. Make sure you begin with, “I want to thank God for...”
10. Consider praying for our missionaries and for Christians around the world who are being persecuted for following Jesus.