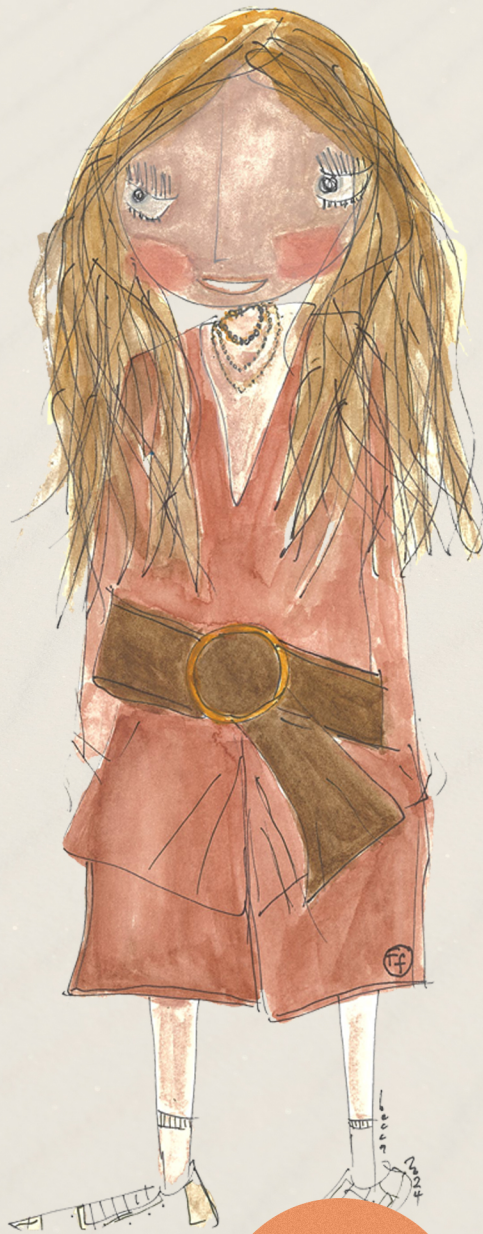


FRESH FAITH

1 & 2 THESSALONIANS

Women's Bible Study



WORKBOOK

this book belongs to :



Fresh Faith

1ST & 2ND THESSALONIANS

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GETTING STARTED

Learning how to study the Bible for ourselves is one of the most important skills we can acquire as Christians. This proficiency assists us in developing as true disciples of Christ, equipping us for life. Knowing and understanding God's Word and intentionally putting it into action gives us the ability to walk daily in Fresh Faith according to His will.

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

John 14:26

Here is what you will need:

- Prayer: Pray before each lesson. Ask God to reveal His truth through His Word and ask for His help in understanding and applying it to your life.
- The Bible:
 - New King James Version (NKJV)
 - Alternatives:
 - New Living Translation (NLT)
 - New American Standard Bible (NASB)
 - English Standard Version (ESV)
- Available Resources:
 - blueletterbible.org
 - preceptaustin.org
- Teachings:
 - www.youtube.com/reliancechurch "Fresh Faith"

WHAT TO EXPECT

The questions in this study are designed to aid you in learning how to study the Bible on your own. The questions are generally centered around observing, interpreting, and applying the Scriptures and will not cover every theme, truth, or subject in each chapter. Our prayer is the Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth and take you where He chooses. Our hope is that this study creates a hunger and thirst for God's Word that will inspire you to dig deeper.

Note: All scripture references are in the NKJV unless otherwise indicated.

1ST THESSALONIANS

INTRODUCTION TO 1ST THESSALONIANS

Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians A.D. 49-51 from Corinth near the end of his second missionary journey. Paul and his companions had established the church in Thessalonica but were forced to leave by opponents of the gospel. Later, Paul sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to check on the church there, and Timothy's report led Paul to write this letter.

Paul has received a report from Timothy about the Thessalonian church. Paul writes to them to restore their hope, which has been tested by unexpected deaths in the church. He reassures them that both the dead and the living believers will be safe at the second coming. In addition, Paul wants (1) to stress the authenticity of himself, Silas, and Timothy as preachers of the gospel; (2) to teach them that persecution is normal for Christians; and (3) to challenge them to take responsibility for earning their own living.

The main theme is Jesus' second coming. When he returns, the dead who have believed in Christ will rise and will join the living to meet the Lord in the air. Unbelievers will experience God's wrath, while believers will inherit salvation. In preparation for that great day, Christians are called to be holy and blameless. God, who is faithful, will produce in them the holiness he requires.

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1 Thessalonians 1

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, ³remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father, ⁴knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God. ⁵For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. ⁶And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. ⁸For 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. ⁹For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *even* Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

First Thessalonians Chapter 1

Paul's epistle to the Thessalonians resonates with gratitude and commendation for their newfound steadfast faith, love, and hope in Christ. The Thessalonian believers' embrace of the gospel stands as a testament to the transformative work of God's Word and power of the Holy Spirit moving in their lives.

Chapter one provides us a glimpse into the remarkable faith and perseverance of the Thessalonian believers amidst great persecution. Through Paul's letter, we witness the life-changing power of the gospel in their lives and the enduring impact of their witness.

Day 1: Prayerfully and carefully read 1 Thessalonians 1.

1. In your own words, how would you describe this chapter to someone else?

2. List any major themes, words, phrases, or verses that stand out to you and explain why.

3. Read Acts 17:1-9. Paul's ministry in Thessalonica was not a long one, "for three Sabbaths". But Paul's "explaining and demonstrating" the gospel left behind a thriving church. In verse 3, what three pieces of evidence do we see as a direct result of their genuine conversion?

4. Personal: What do faith, love, and hope produce in our walk as believers? Think about a recent experience where you demonstrated faith, love, or hope. How did it impact your actions and interactions with others?

"And now abide faith, hope, and love, these three; but the greatest is love."

1 Corinthians 13:13



Day 2: Reread 1 Thessalonians 1:4-6.

“just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love”

Ephesians 1:4

1. In verse 5 we see the Holy Spirit play a key role in the lives of the Thessalonians. Read John 16:13-15. How do you see this confirmed in the words of Jesus?

2. The gospel came to them through the ministry of Paul, and the Holy Spirit used the Word in great power (v.6). The Thessalonians responded by receiving both the message and the messenger. What did they face now because of their belief in Christ?

3. Read Romans 5:1-5. What Christ-like character do you see being produced when you go through difficult circumstances? Why does our hope never disappoint?

4. Using your resources (pg. 2) define the word *followers* (v.6).

5. Personal: Consider the idea of being an imitator of Christ. What specific area in your life do you find it most challenging to imitate Christ? What steps can you take to grow in conformity to His likeness?

6. The Thessalonian believers became imitators of the Apostle Paul and the Lord despite facing persecution. How can we maintain our faithfulness and imitation of Christ in the face of opposition?

“Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.”

1 Corinthians 11:1

Day 3: Reread 1 Thessalonians 1:7-8.

1. Using your resources (pg. 2), define the word *example* (v.7). What stands out to you? How has your faith marked the way you live?

2. Wherever Paul went, the people told him about the faith of the Thessalonian believers. It is our responsibility and privilege to share the message of salvation to a lost world. Look up the following verses and share how they confirm this calling to all believers.

- Matthew 28:18-20

- Acts 1:8

- 1 Peter 3:15-16

3. The faith of the Thessalonians has gone forth everywhere. Think about the impact of your faith on those around you. How are you currently sharing your faith with others? How might you more effectively communicate the gospel message in your sphere of influence?

4. Using your resources (pg. 2), define *sounded forth* (v.8). What do you see that expresses the passionate hearts of the Thessalonians to share Christ with all whom they encountered?

Day 4: Reread 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10.

1. Who did the Thessalonians turn to when they turned away from idols (v. 9)? What was the immediate result of their turning?

2. What do these verses tell us about the dangers of idols in our lives?

1. Isaiah 45:16 & 20

2. 1 Corinthians 10:7-11

3. Revelation 9:20-21

3. What idols might be present in your life today, and how can you actively take steps to turn away from them?

4. Using your resources (pg. 2), define the word *wait* (v.10). How does the definition describe the manner in which we should be waiting for Christ's return?

5. How does the anticipation of Christ's coming influence the way you live each day and the priorities you set?

"And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming."

1 John 2:28

1 Thessalonians 2

For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain. ² But even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict. ³ For our exhortation *did* not *come* from error or uncleanness, nor *was it* in deceit. ⁴ But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts. ⁵ For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness—God *is* witness. ⁶ Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. ⁷ But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children. ⁸ So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. ⁹ For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. ¹⁰ You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; ¹¹ as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and [□]charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, ¹² that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. ¹³ For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed *it* not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe. ¹⁴ For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they *did* from the Judeans, ¹⁵ who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, ¹⁶ forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up *the measure of* their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost. ¹⁷ But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire. ¹⁸ Therefore we wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but Satan hindered us. ¹⁹ For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Is it* not

even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? ²⁰ For you are our glory and joy.

**First Thessalonians
Chapter 2**

Day 1: Prayerfully and carefully read 1 Thessalonians 2.

1. In your own words, how would you describe this chapter to someone else?

2. List any major themes, words, phrases, or verses that stand out to you and explain why.

Day 2: Reread 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12.

1. In verse 1 Paul says, “our coming to you was not in vain.” What do the following passages say about laboring in the work of the Lord?

- Psalm 127:1

- Luke 10:2

- 1 Corinthians 15:10

- 1 Corinthians 15:58

2. Using your resources (pg. 2), define *approved* (v.4). What were Paul and his co-laborers approved by God to do?

3. Paul addresses how, “devoutly and justly and blamelessly” he behaved himself among the Thessalonian believers (v.10). Note what he did and did not do that proved his integrity in the following verses:

- Verse 5: _____
- Verse 6: _____
- Verse 7: _____
- Verse 8: _____
- Verse 9: _____

4. How did Paul spiritually father this church (v.11)? What did he hope would be the outcome of their labor (v.12)? Do you hope for the same outcome for yourself and others?

Day 3: Reread 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16.

1. Why was Paul thanking God “without ceasing” (v.13)?

2. Read Luke 8:4-8, 11-15. Which *ground* describes the Thessalonians and how they received the Word of God? Take time for some honest self-examination. Which *ground* describes you in this season?

3. Using your resources (pg. 2), define *imitators* (v.14). Why are they to be imitators of the churches in Judea?

“Paul comforted the Thessalonians by assuring them that God would indeed take care of their persecutors. When Christians forget this, they often disgrace and curse themselves by returning persecution for persecution towards others.”

David Guzik

4. In light of the persecution the Thessalonian and Judean believers experienced, what does Jesus teach His followers to do in Matthew 5:43-46? How did Christ exemplify this teaching in His earthly ministry, and how can you follow His example today?

“Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance *is* Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord.”

Romans 12:19

Day 4: Reread 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20.

1. Paul states that Satan “hindered” him (v.18) from returning to the Thessalonians to comfort them in person, which led him to begin writing letters to the churches. These letters are now known as the epistles (1 Thessalonians is believed to be his first letter). What are other instances in scripture where what was meant for evil “God meant it for good” (Genesis 50:20)?

“If you are now opposed and you can trace that opposition distinctly to Satan, congratulate yourself upon it: do not sit down and fret. Why, it is a great thing that a poor creature like you can actually vex the great prince of darkness and win his hate. [...] Stand out against him, because you have now an opportunity of making a greater gain than you could have had had he been quiet. You could never have had a victory over him if you had not engaged in conflict with him.”

C.H. Spurgeon

2. Like Paul, we experience spiritual warfare and hindrances daily in our walk with Jesus. What comfort does Romans 8:31-39 give for us in all seasons of life?

3. Using your resources (pg. 2), define *crown* (v.19). What is Paul's "hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing" and "glory" (vv.19-20)? Challenge: What are the 4 other crowns found in scripture?

4. Personal: Who in your life will you rejoice to see join you in the presence of Christ at His coming? Who are you still praying for to join this *great multitude*? See Revelation 7:9-12 for a glimpse of what our glorious future will look like.

1 Thessalonians 3

Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone, ² and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith, ³ that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this. ⁴ For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know. ⁵ For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain. ⁶ But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always have good remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us, as we also *to see you*— ⁷ therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you by your faith. ⁸ For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord. ⁹ For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sake before our God, ¹⁰ night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith? ¹¹ Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you. ¹² And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we *do* to you, ¹³ so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

**First Thessalonians
Chapter 3**

Day 1: Prayerfully and carefully read 1 Thessalonians 3.

1. In your own words, how would you describe this chapter to someone else?

2. List any major themes, words, phrases, or verses that stand out to you and explain why.

Day 2: Reread 1 Thessalonians 3:1-5.

“Paul had just explained his desire to see them but how Satan had thwarted him... 1 Thessalonians 2:17-18. And what was the result of Satan's impeding Paul's personal return to Thessalonica? There were actually two results, one the letter we are reading today and second the sending and maturing of Timothy as a disciple maker in the lineage of his spiritual father Paul.”

Precept Austin

1. Look up the following verses and record what you learn about Timothy.

- Acts 16:1

- Romans 16:21

- 1 Corinthians 4:17

- 1 Corinthians 16:10

- Philippians 1:1

- 1 Timothy 1:2

2. Paul fathered Timothy in the faith and has accounted him as a “...brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ...” (v.2). Do you have a *Paul* in your life today? Do you have a *Timothy* in your life today?

“Discipleship isn’t a program or an event; it’s a way of life. It’s not for a limited time, but for our whole life. Discipleship isn’t for beginners alone; it’s for all believers for every day of their life. Discipleship isn’t just one of the things the church does; it is what the church does.”

Bill Hull

3. What was Timothy sent to do? Using your resources (pg.2), define *establish* and *encourage* (v.2).

4. Read verse 3 in the NLT. What are we “destined for”? Read John 16:33. What hope do we have in our appointed troubles?

5. Define *tempter* in verse 5. Who is the *tempter*?

6. Read James 1:13-16. What is God not able to do and why? What tempts us in verse 14? Explain the progression that you see in verse 15. What is the final warning in verse 16?

7. Personal: Can you identify any area in your life presently where you see this progression taking place? Now that you've identified it, what actions can you take?

Day 3: Reread 1 Thessalonians 3:6-10.

1. What “good news” did Timothy bring back to Paul (v.6)?

2. How did the “good news” of their faith and love affect Paul (v.7)?

3. Read verse 8 in the NLT. Read Philemon 1:4-7. What correlations do you see between these verses?

“Never is the servant of God so full of delight as when he sees that the Holy Spirit is visiting his hearers, making them to know the Lord, and confirming them in that heavenly knowledge...”

C.H. Spurgeon

Paul is elated to learn that the Thessalonians have remembered him. He mentions twice in verse 6 and verse 10 how they desire to see each other.

4. Why do you think it is essential for the church to remember one another? Who has the Lord reminded you of lately? Reach out to them and pray over them.

5. What was Paul praying for night and day (v.10)? Read verse 10 in the NLT. What is Paul hoping to do when he visits the Thessalonian church?

Day 4: Reread 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13.

1. Who is Paul seeking to direct his way in verse 11? Read Proverbs 16:9. What does this verse tell us about making plans?

2. In verse 12, why would Paul pray specifically that “the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all...”? Look up the verses below and record what you find.

- Psalms 103:8-9
- John 13:14-15
- Romans 5:8
- Ephesians 3:17-19
- Philippians 1:9-11

3. Using your resources (pg. 2), define *holiness* (v.13). In light of eternity and the soon coming of Christ, what practical ways can we respond to God as He establishes our hearts blameless in holiness?

“Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;”

2 Peter 3:14

1 Thessalonians 4

Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God; ² for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus. ³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, ⁵ not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶ that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord *is* the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. ⁷ For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. ⁸ Therefore he who rejects *this* does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit. ⁹ But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; ¹⁰ and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more; ¹¹ that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, ¹² that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and *that* you may lack nothing. ¹³ But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**First Thessalonians
Chapter 4**

Day 1: Prayerfully and carefully read 1 Thessalonians 4.

1. In your own words, how would you describe this chapter to someone else?

2. List any major themes, words, phrases, or verses that stand out to you and explain why.

Day 2: Reread 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8.

Paul begins chapter four by making a plea for the believer’s purity and brotherly love. Then, he shares about the hope and comfort we have as we wait for the Lord who will descend from Heaven with a shout!

1. As Paul transitions to wrap up this letter, what does he *urge* and *exhort* the Thessalonian believers to do (vv. 1-2)? What does he commend them for?

2. Using your resources (pg. 2), define the word *abound* (v.1). Then, comment on what you think Paul meant when he said, “that you should abound more and more?” What conclusions can you make from this statement and how does this speak to you personally?

3. Paul mentions a specific doctrine, what is it (v.3)? If we are to be Holy (set-apart), what does Paul warn us to stay away from? After your own study, share your thoughts on what this doctrine means to every believer.

4. Using a dictionary, define *commandment* and *suggestion*. Is there a difference between a commandment and a suggestion? If so, what is the difference and how do you apply this to your daily living?

5. Paul was dealing with a sexually driven culture. As the church, we are to be set-apart by the Word of God. With that in mind, who does Paul say we reject when we behave in this unholy manner (v. 8)?

6. In his Blue Letter Bible commentary, David Guzik points out 4 reasons for sexual purity in the life of the believer, what are they?

“Paul made it very clear what the will of God was for the Christian. The idea behind sanctification is to be set apart, and God wants us set apart from a godless culture and its sexual immorality. If our sexual behavior is no different than the Gentiles who do not know God, then we are not sanctified — set apart — in the way God wants us to be.”

David Guzik

Day 3: Reread 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12.

1. Paul commends them once again. What does he commend them for this time? Read 1 John 4:7-11. Why is loving one another so important to God? Find additional scriptures to support your answer.

2. Additionally, in verse 11, Paul lists 3 things they should aspire to (other translations use *make it your goal, study to, make it your ambition*). What are they? Why would Paul “command” these things to be lived out amongst a community of believers and the unchurched? See verse 12. Do you think these *commands* are prescriptive or descriptive?

3. Personal: What does it mean to you personally, to live a quiet life, mind your own business, and work with your own hands? What is the benefit to those around us when we live in this manner?

4. In verse 12, when Paul states, “that you may lack nothing,” what does he mean? Will we get everything we want?

Day 4: Reread 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

1. Paul changes subjects rather abruptly, what topic does he move to? What reasons does Paul give for wanting them to understand? Use the NLT for clarity.

2. Using your resources (pg. 2), define the word *ignorant* (v.13).

3. What promise does Paul make (v.14)?

4. Paul reveals 3 ways the Lord will descend from Heaven, what are they (v.16)?

“The ancient Greek word for shout here is the same word used for the commands that a ship captain makes to his rowers, or a commander speaking to his soldiers. “Always there is the ring of authority and the note of urgency.”

Morris

Reliance Church holds a *pre-tribulation* position on the rapture of the Church.

Excerpt from Blue Letter Bible commentary: Many — though certainly not all — Christians believe the Bible teaches that there will be an important seven-year period of history before the Battle of Armageddon and triumphant return of Jesus. The debate about this catching away centers on where it fits in with this final seven-year period, popularly known as the Great Tribulation, with reference to Matthew 24:21.

- **The pre-tribulation rapture position** believes believers are caught up before this final seven-year period.
- **The mid-tribulation rapture position** believes believers are caught up in the midst of this final seven-year period.
- **The pre-wrath rapture position** believes believers are caught up at some time in the second half of this final seven-year period.
- **The post-tribulation rapture position** believes believers are caught up at the end of this final seven-year period.

The adherents of these different positions each believe their position is Biblical, and these differences of understanding should not make dividing lines of Christian fellowship. Nevertheless, this author's opinion is that the pre-tribulation rapture position is Biblically correct. Even other references to the return of Jesus within 1-2

Thessalonians support this understanding:

1 Thessalonians 1:10 shows believers waiting for the return of Jesus. The clear implication is that they had hope of His imminent return, not the expectation of an imminent great tribulation.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 assures us that those believers who died would share equally with the living in the events of the rapture and the resurrection, answering their fear that somehow the dead in Christ were at a disadvantage. But if Paul believed Christians would go through the great tribulation, he would count the dead in Christ as more fortunate than those living Christians who might very well have to endure the great

tribulation. It would have been logical for Paul to comfort the Thessalonians with the idea that the dead in Jesus were better off because they won't have to experience the Great Tribulation.

2 Thessalonians 1:3-10 comforts Christians enduring hardship, promising them a coming rest, while their persecutors will face certain judgment. But if Paul knew that the church was destined to pass through the Great Tribulation, it would have been more appropriate for him to warn these Christians about worse trials and suffering ahead, rather than hold the promise of a coming rest.

1 Thessalonians 5

But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. ² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. ³ For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. ⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵ You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. ⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. ⁸ But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. ¹¹ Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing. ¹² And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, ¹³ and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves. ¹⁴ Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. ¹⁵ See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all. ¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies. ²¹ Test all things; hold fast what is good. ²² Abstain from every form of evil. ²³ Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ He who calls you *is* faithful, who also will do *it*. ²⁵ Brethren, pray for us. ²⁶ Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss. ²⁷ I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren. ²⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

First Thessalonians Chapter 5

In chapter five the Apostle Paul continues his discourse on eschatology by describing the coming “day of the Lord” (v. 2). In anticipation of this day, believers are to “watch and be sober” (v. 6) as “sons of light” (v. 5) who are destined for salvation not wrath. Paul requests the readers to deal with integrity towards one another and to continue growing spiritually.

Day 1: Prayerfully and carefully read 1 Thessalonians 5.

1. In your own words, how would you describe this chapter to someone else?

2. List any major themes, words, phrases, or verses that stand out to you and explain why.

Reread 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2.

3. What event is Paul referring to when he mentions “the day of the Lord” (v. 2)? Read 2 Peter 3:10.

4. In Matthew 24:3-12 and 21-24 what are some signs that this *day* is near?

5. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:3, Acts 1:7 and Mark 13:32. Will anyone be able to predict when this will take place? Who knows for sure?

“This day will be unexpected, but God wants His people to be prepared for the unexpected.”

David Guzik

Day 2: Reread 1 Thessalonians 5:4-11.

1. What reasons does Paul state that informs us that the Thessalonian believers will be prepared for “this Day” and not be caught unaware (vv. 4-5)? Paul also gives them directions, what are they (vv. 6-10)?

2. What armor of God will enable believers to stay sober? In Ephesians 6:14 we are to put on the breastplate of righteousness. How does faith relate to righteousness?

3. Using your resources (pg. 2), define *sober* (v. 8). How are you preparing for His coming? How are you being watchful and sober?

4. In verse 11 we are admonished to encourage and build up one another. How do the following verses support this text?

- Romans 15:2
- Galatians 6:2
- Philippians 2:4
- Hebrews 10:24

5. What has someone done for you that has been an encouragement? How has it affected your life?

Day 3: Reread 1 Thessalonians 5:12-15.

1. What are we told to do for those who are over us in the Lord (vv. 12-13)?

2. What additional advice is given in Hebrews 13:7 & 17?

“Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the world and doctrine. For the scripture says, ‘You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,’ and, ‘The laborer is worthy of his wages.’”

1 Timothy 5:17-18

3. Challenge: Using your resources (pg. 2), what does it mean when we are told to “not muzzle an ox”?

4. Using your resources (pg. 2), define the word *exhort* (v. 14).

5. What are the exhortations in 1 Thessalonians 5:14-15? How can you practically apply each one?

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Day 4: Reread 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24.

1. We are told to rejoice in verse 16. Read 2 Corinthians 6:10. If true rejoicing is not based on circumstances or emotions, what is it based on?

2. We are told in verses 17-18 to “pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” What do these two verses mean to you and how do you incorporate them in your life?

3. Read Philippians 4:4-7. How do these verses relate with the ones you just read in 1 Thessalonians? What is the promise given if we rejoice, pray, and give thanks?

4. Reread 1 Thessalonians 5:19-24. How do we quench the Spirit? Now read Ephesians 4:30-31. How do we grieve the Spirit? For clarity, define *quench* and *grieve*.

5. In your own words, why is it important to “test all things” (vv. 19-22)?

6. Using your resources (pg. 2), define *sanctify* (v. 23). What do these verses say about sanctification?

- John 17:17

- Romans 6:19, 22

- 1 Corinthians 6:11

- Hebrews 10:10

**1 Thessalonians 5
Notes**

2nd THESSALONIANS

INTRODUCTION TO 2ND THESSALONIANS

Shortly after writing 1 Thessalonians, the apostle Paul received a report that the Thessalonian church had accepted the strange claim that “the day of the Lord has come”. Paul sent them a second letter in A.D. 49–51. He was probably in Corinth at the time.

Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians (1) to reassure those terrified that the day of the Lord had already come; (2) to strengthen the Thessalonians in the face of continuing persecution; and (3) to deal with the problem of some of the church members refusing to earn their own living.

Paul assumes that the Thessalonian church knew that the second coming of Jesus Christ would occur at the same time as the coming of the “day of the Lord.” Yet the Thessalonians may simply have fallen victim to a belief that the day of the Lord had already come. The persecution they were undergoing may have fueled their confusion about the end times.

In contrast to the warm emotional tone of 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians includes some blunt commands as Paul addresses bad behavior and bad thinking. Further, this letter is noteworthy for Paul’s tough-mindedness in predicting judgment on the ungodly and in rebuking church members who behave and think incorrectly. Still, there is a regular swing back and forth between reproof and warm encouragement.

The letter’s main theme is Jesus’ second coming. Jesus’ return will be preceded by an “apostasy” (or rebellion) and by the appearance of the “man of lawlessness,” the Antichrist. When Jesus comes, he will defeat this rebellious world ruler. He will bring justice to oppressed Christians and wrath to unbelievers.

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2 Thessalonians 1

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: ² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ³ We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, ⁴ so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, ⁵ *which is* manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer; ⁶ since *it is* a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, ⁷ and to *give* you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, ⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, ¹⁰ when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed. ¹¹ Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *His* goodness and the work of faith with power, ¹² that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Second Thessalonians
Chapter 1**

Day 1: Prayerfully and carefully read 2 Thessalonians 1.

1. In your own words, how would you describe this chapter to someone else?

2. List any major themes, words, phrases, or verses that stand out to you and explain why.

Day 2: Reread 2 Thessalonians 1:1-5.

1. In verses 1-2, we read that Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy co-authored this epistle to the church in Thessalonica. Who is Silvanus? Using your resources (pg. 2) and other methods of research, share what you learn about this man.

2. What observations do the authors make about the members of this church (v. 3)? Why is this so impressive (v. 4)?

3. How will God use the persecution they face (v. 5)?

4. Exhibiting *endurance* and *faithfulness* is so important as followers of Christ, both individually, and collectively as the body of Christ. Why is this so important? Why is it even more important amid hardships, trials, and sufferings (v.5)? Why is this still significant today?

Day 3: Reread 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9.

1. In verse 5 of our text, we are reminded that God will use persecution to show His justice and to make us worthy of His kingdom. In verse 6, what does God tell us He will do to those who persecute us? What does it mean when the text states, “It is a righteous thing” (NKJV) or “in His justice” (NLT)?

2. Look up Romans 12:19. How does this verse correlate with our text today? After your own study, explain the distinctions between *justice* and *vengeance*?

“Vengeance looks a lot like justice, but it is driven by hate. They both start in the same place – an injustice occurs. However, one response is done in the spirit of love, the other a spirit of hate. It’s not our job to bring vengeance or justice...we are simply to obey Jesus (in the a spirit of love).”

David Eubanks – Free Burma Rangers

3. Personal: Reflect on a time when you have wanted to take revenge or see justice served in a particular situation? What lessons did you learn in this season? Is there a situation in which you are dealing with these feelings today? What can you do?

4. What is promised to those who have suffered persecution on behalf of Christ's kingdom (vv. 7-9)? Why do these verses provoke an urgency for sharing our faith with those far from God?

Day 4: Reread 2 Thessalonians 1:10-12.

1. According to verse 10, why will we be able to glorify the Lord at His coming? Using your resources (pg. 2), define the word *believed*.

2. How do the following verses confirm our assurance of salvation? Does this mean we can live any way we want? After some prayer, personal study, and reflection, describe what it means to you to *work from salvation* compared to *working for salvation*? Does this bring you peace?

- Malachi 3:17
- John 1:12
- John 10:27-29
- 2 Timothy 1:12,18
- 2 Timothy 4:8
- 1 John 5:11-13

3. Challenge: Read Matthew 7:22-23. After some personal study, who should be fearful when reading these verses, and why?

4. Read 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 in the NLT. In your own words what are the authors saying? The authors provide some direction for us, a prescription of sorts. What essentials are listed? What is the overall direction prescribed and how can you put it into practice to produce a godly life?

2 Thessalonians 2

Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, ² not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. ³ Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, ⁴ who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. ⁵ Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ⁶ And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. ⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way. ⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. ⁹ The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. ¹³ But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, ¹⁴ to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵ Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle. ¹⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, ¹⁷ comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.

**Second Thessalonians
Chapter 2**

Day 1: Prayerfully and carefully read 2 Thessalonians 2.

1. In your own words, how would you describe this chapter to someone else?

2. List any major themes, words, phrases, or verses in this chapter that stand out to you and explain why.

Day 2: Reread 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4.

The occasion of Paul's writings to the Thessalonians was to correct some of the errors concerning the end times that the believers had heard from false teachers. Among the falsehoods was that "the day of the Lord has already come" (2 Thessalonians 2:2). The Christians in Thessalonica were afraid that Jesus had already come, they had missed the rapture, and they were now in the tribulation.

1. Using your resources (pg 2), define the word *shaken* (v.2).

2. In verses 2-3, Paul gives warnings, what are they? Why are they important for us today?

3. Continuing in verse 3. Paul reveals 2 signs that must take place before the coming of the Lord, what are they? Using your resources (pg.2), define *falling away*.

4. Look up the following verses and note how they relate to the *falling away*.

- 1 Timothy 4:1-3
- 2 Timothy 3:1-5
- 2 Timothy 4:3

The Bible indicates that there will be a *great apostasy* during the end times. The *great apostasy* is mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:3. The NKJV calls it the “falling away”, while the NIV and ESV call it “the rebellion”. That is what an apostasy is: a rebellion, an abandonment of the truth. The end times will include a wholesale rejection of God’s revelation, a further “falling away” of an already fallen world. Apostasy, from the Greek word *apostasias*, means “a defiance of an established system or authority; a rebellion; an abandonment or breach of faith.”

5. Who is the *son of perdition* (v.3) according to verse 4?

Day 3: Reread 2 Thessalonians 2:5-12.

1. After some personal study and using your resources (pg.2), explain what “the mystery of lawlessness” is in 2 Thessalonians 2:5-10. Also read 1 John 4:2-3.

2. In verses 6-7 Paul explains that there is a type of restraining occurring. What is being restrained (v.6) and who is doing the restraining (v.7)?

3. The responsibility of receiving or rejecting the “love of the truth” is each person’s choice (v.10). Personal: How are you responding to those who are living in deception?

4. In verse 11 Paul states, “and for this reason God will send them strong delusion”. What reasons does Paul give (vv.9-12)? Also read Romans 1:18-25.

Day 4: Reread 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17.

1. Read verses 13-14 in the NLT. According to these verses, how does a person experience salvation?

2. As a result, what do we now get to share in?

3. Paul encourages the brethren to stand fast (v.15). Look up Colossians 3:1-2 and Ephesians 6:10-14. List what enables us to stand firm in our faith.

4. Personal: Is something going on in your life where you need to hold fast to what you have learned from Jesus and His Word?

2 Thessalonians 2
Notes

2 Thessalonians 3

Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run *swiftly* and be glorified, just as *it is* with you, ² and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith. ³ But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard *you* from the evil one. ⁴ And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, both that you do and will do the things we command you. ⁵ Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ. ⁶ But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; ⁸ nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, ⁹ not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us. ¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. ¹¹ For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. ¹² Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread. ¹³ But *as for* you, brethren, do not grow weary *in* doing good. ¹⁴ And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. ¹⁵ Yet do not count *him* as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother. ¹⁶ Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord *be* with you all. ¹⁷ The salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is a sign in every epistle; so I write. ¹⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

**Second Thessalonians
Chapter 3**

Day 1: Prayerfully and carefully read 2 Thessalonians 3.

1. In your own words, how would you describe this chapter to someone else?

2. List any major themes, words, phrases, or verses in this chapter that stand out to you and explain why.

Day 2: Reread 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5.

In chapter 2, the Apostle Paul, along with Timothy and Silas, expounded on the events prior to Christ's second coming. He brought clarity to the events and warned the Thessalonian believers to be wary of those who share false visions and revelations. He encouraged them to stand strong and to keep a steadfast grip on the teachings and traditions they had learned. This church belonged to God, and Paul wanted to keep it that way! Here in chapter 3 Paul ends his letter pleading for prayer. He understands that if God's work is to move forward it would be the result of the power of the Holy Spirit and our partnership in the gospel through prayer.

1. Paul asks for prayer for three great concerns of his, what are they (vv.1-2)? If Paul's prayers are answered, what would be the outcome?

2. Look up the following verses on prayer and note what stands out to you.

- Matthew 6:5-8

- Romans 8:26

- Philippians 4:6-7

- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

3. After some personal study, in your own words, share what you think each of the following terms mean.

- Intercessory Prayer (Phil 1:3-7)
- Supplications (Gen 18:23-33)
- Prayers of Thanksgiving (Col 1:3-4)
- Corporate prayer (1 Tim 1:8)
- Confessional Prayer (1 John 1:9)
- Adoration (Psalm 18:1-3)
- Praise (Psalm 150)
- Prayer of Repentance (Psalm 51:1-4)
- Petitions (John 17:15-17)
- Praying in Tongues (1 Cor 14:2)
- Prayer of Consecration (Exo 29:1-9)
- Prayer of Faith (James 5:13-15)
- Prayer of Worship (Daniel 6:10)

4. Each week, on Day 5, we have been practicing written prayer. What has it meant to you personally to practice prayer in this way?

Day 3: Reread 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15.

1. Once again, Paul commands the believers “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
What does he command them to do (v.6)?

2. Define the following words from verse 6 and note what they mean in context.

- Disorderly

- Tradition

3. In verses 7-9, Paul shares 2 ways in which they had been examples to the believers.
What were these instances?

4. Paul notes behavior that is described as *walking disorderly*. What were the disorderly doing (v.11)? Why is this significant for our lives? In verse 12, Paul gives instruction for these people. What antidote does he prescribe?

5. Paul makes it clear that we are not to keep company with brothers and sisters who *walk disorderly*. What does he say regarding this (v.14)? Why would Paul want us to treat our fellow brothers and sisters this way? He gives further instruction in verse 15. What is it and why do you think he added this qualifier?

Day 4: Reread 2 Thessalonians 3:16-18.

Paul says farewell by bestowing the grace and peace of the Lord Jesus Christ to all whom he loved deeply.

1. Paul ends his letter with a benediction. A doxology is an expression of praise to God, what is a benediction?

2. From personal study, where are some other examples of benedictions in the Bible?
Challenge: Find some less common examples.

3. This week, write out a doxology to our Lord or a benediction over someone you know.

Day 5: Take a few minutes to think about one thing that's on your mind right now. Write it out in the form of a prayer below.
