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## *I & II Thessalonians*

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# I THESSALONIANS

The church at Thessalonica was founded by the apostle Paul during his second missionary journey. (Read Acts 17:1-9.) The first epistle to the Thessalonians was written by Paul from the city of Corinth about one year later, with the second epistle following not long after.

Paul wrote I Thessalonians to encourage, commend and instruct. The theme running throughout this book is the certain return of the Lord and the obligations we have in this present world before His return. The church is now awaiting to be **caught up** to heaven in the Rapture. At the actual return or second coming of Christ, we will **descend** with the Lord from heaven. This will take place at the end of the Great Tribulation and will usher in 1,000 years of peace on earth--the Millennium.

The remaining instruction from both epistles is directed at clearing up various misconceptions of the Thessalonians. Some of the Thessalonians had quit their jobs and were becoming a burden to other people. In both letters, Paul declares the responsibility of each one to provide for his own. Other problems required instruction in holy, separated living. Also, controversy and questions prevailed as to when the resurrection of the dead would occur; some thought that the dead had missed the Kingdom of God. God used all these misconceptions and questions to bring forth the important teachings in these epistles.

## INTRODUCTION

### CHAPTER ONE - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Chapter 1 is filled with commendation. Before Paul instructs and exhorts in the chapters to follow, he first encourages the Thessalonians; he lets them know that they are a dynamic church. As you study this chapter notice their outstanding qualities.

Although verse 1 states nothing about the physical position of the Thessalonian church, it does their **spiritual position**.

1. Where is the church of Thessalonica? v. 1 which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ:

The most important quality of a dynamic church is that it operates within the will of God and under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

2. The Thessalonians had three particular characteristics. What were they? v. 3  
work of faith, and labour of love,  
and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

3. The gospel came to the Thessalonians not in word only, but also in but also in power,  
and in the and in the Holy Ghost,  
and in much and in much assurance. v. 5
4. Who were the Thessalonians following? v. 6 ye became followers of us, and of the Lord
5. How was the word received? v. 6 received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.
6. Who looked at the Thessalonians as examples? v. 7 ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

This statement is the greatest commendation of all. Others were looking at the Thessalonians as an example of a righteous and powerful church. They were so widely known for their faith to God that Paul needed not to speak anything concerning them. (v. 8)

7. Verse nine states that the Thessalonians turned from idols to serve the living and true  
God.
8. From what has Jesus delivered us? v. 10 which delivered us from the wrath to come.

## CHAPTER TWO - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Chapters 2 and 3 show **how** this Thessalonian church became so dynamic. Unceasing prayer, sacrifice and labor can be found behind every powerful church. The Thessalonian church was built on such a foundation. Paul speaks of laboring night and day in verse 9, and he mentions unceasing prayer in Chapter 1, verses 2 and 3. In verse 7, Paul reveals his sacrificial love for the Thessalonians as he likens his ministry to "a nurse cherishing her children."

1. Verse 1 says that Paul's visit to the Thessalonians was not in that it was not in vain
2. How had Paul been treated at Philippi? v. 2 had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated

Verse 2 reveals the opposition Paul faced everywhere he ministered. Commitment brings persecution. A man or woman who is wholly dedicated to the Lord will face much contention and be shamefully treated at times. Verse 4 reveals why we continue on in spite of opposition.

3. Who did Paul desire to please when he preached the gospel? v. 4 not as pleasing men, but God

Each of us has been entrusted with the gospel. Our responsibility is to share it. Yet, we often "water it down" to make it pleasing to men. Our testimony should be straightforward and true, seeking only to please God.

4. Besides the gospel, what was Paul willing to impart to the Thessalonians? v. 8 not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls,
5. To care for his own needs and as well as ministering to the Thessalonians, Paul labored our labour and travail: for labouring night and day v.9

6. How did Paul behave himself among the Thessalonians? v. 10 holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves
7. In what manner did Paul exhort and comfort this church? v. 11 as a father doth his children
8. What are we called to? v. 12 walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.
9. How did the Thessalonians receive Paul's ministry of the Word of God? v.13 ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.
10. Who persecuted the Thessalonians? v. 14 ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen

The Jews were the persecutors of the early church. Years of rejecting their own prophets finally led to the ultimate rejection of the greatest Prophet of all, the Lord Jesus Christ. That God's own chosen people should so fiercely reject their Messiah is a great tragedy.

11. What five things are said about the Jews in verse 15?

Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

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12. What has come upon the Jews for their rebellion? v. 16 for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.
13. Paul was taken from the Thessalonians in presence, but not in not in heart v. 17
14. Who hindered Paul from going to Thessalonica? v. 18 but Satan hindered us.
15. What is Paul's hope, joy or crown of rejoicing? v. 19 Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

### CHAPTER THREE - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Paul was extremely concerned about the Thessalonian believers. From the beginning of this epistle, the Holy Spirit has painted for us a vivid picture of the heart of Paul toward his spiritual children. Read again Chapter 2, verses 7-9 and 11.

Paul said Satan had hindered him from coming to minister again in Thessalonica. In Chapter 3, verse 1 Paul reveals that he could finally wait no longer for some word from his "children." Even though he apparently needed Timothy's assistance at Athens, he was willing to labor alone just so he could send Timothy to Thessalonica.

1. What two things was Timotheus (Timothy) sent to do? v. 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Paul did not seek sympathy for his trials and afflictions but rather sought to express the right attitude in the face of adversity.

2. Verse 3 says that no man should be \_\_\_\_\_ moved \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ by these afflictions

3. What had Paul previously told the Thessalonians? v. 4 \_\_\_\_\_ before that we should suffer tribulation;

4. What was Paul anxious to find out? v. 5 \_\_\_\_\_ I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

Rumors had been circulating in the Thessalonian church that Paul's reason for not returning to visit was because he didn't really care about them. Nothing could have been further from the truth! In spite of all the rumors the church stood firm, and Timothy returned to Paul with a good report.

5. Timothy returned with good tidings concerning what two things? v. 6 \_\_\_\_\_  
of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What was Paul comforted by? v. 7 \_\_\_\_\_ we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:

7. What was Paul praying for night and day? v. 10 \_\_\_\_\_ that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

Paul was not suggesting that they lacked faith for salvation. He was referring to the faith needed for a daily victorious walk with the Lord.

8. Toward whom were the Thessalonians to abound in love? v. 12 \_\_\_\_\_ one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:

9. How can God establish our hearts? v. 13 \_\_\_\_\_ unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

## CHAPTER FOUR - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Having thoroughly established a loving and committed relationship with his "children," Paul now ministers on a very practical level. He wants each member of the body to be able to stand blameless before the Lord at His return for the church.

1. The Thessalonians received from Paul how they ought to \_\_\_\_\_ walk \_\_\_\_\_ and to please God -- that we may abound more and more \_\_\_\_\_ v.1

2. What is the will of God? v. 3 \_\_\_\_\_ even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

3. From what did Paul exhort them to abstain? v. 3 \_\_\_\_\_ from fornication:

4. In what way were the Thessalonians "to possess their vessel" (manage their body)? \_\_\_\_\_  
his vessel in sanctification and honour; 5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. About what did Paul forewarn the Thessalonians? v. 6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such
6. God has not called us unto God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto but unto holiness. v.7

Verse 8 says if anyone despises this requirement of holiness and sanctification, they are rejecting God Himself.

7. What has God given us? v. 8 unto us his holy Spirit.
8. What were the Thessalonians taught by God? v. 9 for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

Our carnal nature does not have the capacity to love as God does. When His Spirit is within us, God Himself teaches us to love one another.

9. What three things were the Thessalonians instructed to study? v. 11 to be quiet,  
and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands,
10. For what two reasons were they to do these things? v. 12  
That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

In verses 11 and 12, Paul was dealing with the brethren who had quit their jobs in order to wait for the Lord's return. These unemployed Thessalonians were depending upon their brothers and sisters in the Lord to support them and their families. This behavior was not only a bad testimony to others, but also an unnecessary burden for their fellow Christians.

This teaching is also necessary for today. An extreme disrespect for hard work and responsibility has swept across our nation and has even affected the church. We must learn and teach that "working with our hands" is not only pleasing to God, but is commanded by Him.

11. What does II Thessalonians 3:10 say about someone who will not work? \_\_\_\_\_  
The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.

Read Ephesians 6:5-8. These scriptures show that through being good "servants of **masters**" (or employees), we can also be "servants of **Christ**" (v. 6) and can lay up treasure in heaven (v. 8). "Working with our hands" does not need to be a distraction, but rather can be a channel through which we serve the Lord!

Verses 13 through 18 concern the return of Christ for His bride--the Rapture of the church. Paul writes to clear up some misconceptions about Christians who die before the Rapture. These verses give positive assurance concerning those who are "asleep in the Lord."

12. This positive assurance alleviates all sorrow for believers. Who are the ones who will sorrow?  
v.13 that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

13. Who shall rise first? vv. 15,16 \_\_\_\_\_ and the dead in Christ shall rise first: \_\_\_\_\_
14. When the Lord descends from heaven the following three things will occur: v. 16 \_\_\_\_\_  
with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: \_\_\_\_\_
15. How long will we be with the Lord? v. 17 \_\_\_\_\_ and so shall we ever be with the Lord. \_\_\_\_\_

Truly we can comfort one another with these words! As we watch ungodliness take over this world, we can look forward to the "Good Thief" coming in the "night" to take His precious bride! However, along with such a great promise comes the great responsibility to prepare ourselves.

## CHAPTER FIVE - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

In Chapter 5, Paul continues to instruct the Thessalonians concerning the Lord's return for His church. He also includes practical teachings in which he admonishes their attitudes toward church leadership and one another.

1. How will the day of the Lord come? v. 2 \_\_\_\_\_ as a thief in the night. \_\_\_\_\_
2. What will happen while everyone is saying "peace and safety"? v. 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. \_\_\_\_\_
3. For what reason will the day of the Lord **not** overtake believers as a thief in the night? vv. 4,5  
are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day \_\_\_\_\_
4. In verse 6 Paul says that we should not sleep, but that we should \_\_\_\_\_ but let us watch  
and be \_\_\_\_\_ and be sober. \_\_\_\_\_
5. According to verse 7, what two pieces of armor are we exhorted to put on? v. 8 \_\_\_\_\_  
putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. \_\_\_\_\_
6. To what have we been appointed? v. 9 \_\_\_\_\_ not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, \_\_\_\_\_
7. Why did Jesus die for us? v. 10 \_\_\_\_\_ that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. \_\_\_\_\_
8. What kind of attitude were the Thessalonians instructed to have towards their leaders? v. 13  
to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. \_\_\_\_\_

Verses 14 and 15 give an example of practical Christianity. Christianity is not words that we say . . . it is the life that we live. \_\_\_\_\_ warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. 15 See that none render evil for evil unto any man;

Verses 16-22 contain some excellent "short but to-the-point" exhortations.

9. What are we told to do in verse 16? \_\_\_\_\_ Rejoice evermore. \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you think this rejoicing includes both times of blessing and of affliction? yes

11. For which things should we thank the Lord? v. 18 In every thing give thanks:

Verse 20 teaches us to never despise the Word of God. Sometimes the truth hurts, but we must love the truth and hold fast that which is good.

12. According to verse 22, should we abstain from something that may look evil to others, even if it is not evil? yes.. all appearance of evil.

13. What did Paul pray would be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ? v. 23  
your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless

When we are saved, we stand completely righteous and blameless before God, inwardly. However, a progressive sanctification must take place outwardly. Paul was praying that their **whole** man would be blameless at the return of Christ for His church.

14. Who should read this epistle? v. 27 be read unto all the holy brethren.

## II THESSALONIANS

II Thessalonians was written a few months after I Thessalonians. Paul was still in Corinth when he received a report of the church at Thessalonica. He felt compelled to write and give further instruction. He reinforced some of the truths brought out in I Thessalonians and went into further depth about the Rapture of the church. Someone had written a letter to the church saying that they were living in the Great Tribulation and had signed Paul's name to this letter! (II Thessalonians 2:2) Paul clearly instructs the Thessalonians about the Great Tribulation and the return of the Lord.

### CHAPTER ONE - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

As in the first epistle, Paul begins this letter with a commendation. He also encourages them to stand strong in the midst of the trials that are coming upon them.

1. What is our only source of grace and true peace? v. 2 God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Why was Paul bound to thank God always for the brethren at Thessalonica? v. 3 because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;
3. What is the manifest token of the righteous judgment of God? v. 5 that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:
4. Who will recompense tribulation to those who trouble us? v. 6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;
5. Who will the Lord Jesus take vengeance upon at His return? v. 8 taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:
6. How will these ones be punished? v. 9 shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;
7. In whom shall the Lord Jesus be glorified? v. 10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe
8. What did Paul pray for the Lord to fulfill in the Thessalonians? v. 11 that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power:

## CHAPTER TWO - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Because of the persecution that had come upon the Thessalonians, many of them believed they were in the Great Tribulation--the Day of the Lord. As an example of this persecution, believers were required to bow down before a statue of Caesar which had been erected in the market place; their refusal to do so cost them their lives. These times were very trying for the Thessalonian church. Therefore, in Chapter 2 Paul explains the details concerning the Antichrist and his appearing. This chapter is one of the most informative in the Bible concerning the events of the latter days.

1. What were the Thessalonians not to be shaken or troubled about? v. 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us,

2. What two things must happen before that day comes? v. 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

The "man of sin" and "son of perdition" is the Antichrist.

3. To what degree will the Antichrist exalt himself? v. 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God,

4. Who does Antichrist show himself to be? v. 4 \_\_\_\_\_ shewing himself that he is God.

The prefix "anti" means "against or opposed to" Christ.

Verses 7 and 8 contain a vivid picture of the Holy Spirit at work. The presence of the Holy Spirit on earth constitutes the only restraint against a flood of iniquity and the revelation of Antichrist. At the Rapture of the church, the Holy Spirit will be taken out of the way; He will no longer restrain the powers of sin. Then the Antichrist shall be revealed.

5. How will the Lord consume and destroy the Antichrist? v. 8 \_\_\_\_\_  
with the spirit of his mouth,

This event will occur at the end of the Tribulation, at the second coming of the Lord, when He shall return to the earth with His saints. (Revelation 19:11-21)

6. What are some of the works of the Antichrist? vv. 9,10 \_\_\_\_\_ whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish;

7. Why will the unrighteous be so easily deceived? v. 10 \_\_\_\_\_  
because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

8. Who will send these ones strong delusion? v. 11 \_\_\_\_\_ this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

When God sees hearts that are "bent on sin," He allows them to plunge into the darkness they desire. (Read John 3:19.)

9. Verse 12 says that the ungodly take pleasure in \_\_\_\_\_ but had pleasure in unrighteousness.
10. Through what two means does God bring us into salvation? v. 13 \_\_\_\_\_  
 through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:
11. What are we called to obtain or possess? v. 14 \_\_\_\_\_ to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.
12. How are we told to stand in verse 15? \_\_\_\_\_ stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.
- Paul did not want the Thessalonians to be moved by every wind of doctrine. He desired that they take what they had learned and stand upon it, so as not to be moved by liars or deceivers who spread heresies.
13. What has the Lord Jesus Christ and God given us? v. 16 \_\_\_\_\_  
 hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,
14. What two things should we be established in? v. 17 \_\_\_\_\_  
 , and stablish you in every good word and work.

### CHAPTER THREE - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

In this chapter, Paul gives the Thessalonians final words of encouragement and instruction.

1. What two things does Paul ask the Thessalonians to pray for? vv. 1,2  
 \_\_\_\_\_, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:  
 — 2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men
2. In what does Paul express complete confidence? v. 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.
3. From whom should the Thessalonians withdraw themselves? v. 6 \_\_\_\_\_  
 ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

In verses 7-12, Paul uses the example of his own conduct to exhort the Thessalonians to work. When Paul had previously visited Thessalonica, he had the scriptural right as a minister of the gospel to receive financial support from the congregation. However, he chose to forego this right, preferring instead to work diligently "with his own hands." He wanted to set an example for all believers.

4. What did Paul command in verse 10? \_\_\_\_\_ that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

5. What command does Paul give to those who are not working? v. 12 \_\_\_\_\_  
that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

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6. What should the Thessalonians do if a man refuses to obey the commands given by Paul? v. 14  
have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

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Paul originally dealt with this problem of disobedience in I Thessalonians. Now several months later, many of the Thessalonians were still not obeying his words. Paul did not want this irresponsible attitude spreading throughout the church.

7. When and how does the Lord of peace give us peace? v. 16 \_\_\_\_\_ always by all means.

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We trust that in your study of the epistles to the Thessalonians it is apparent that Christians can have joy and victory even in the midst of tribulation, and this victory and joy comes through the hope which each Christian has--the hope of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

We encourage you to continue your study of the Word of God through these Bible studies. May you always strive to be prepared for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, through your study and obedience to His word.

I have answered all questions to the best of my ability.

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Date \_\_\_\_\_ 3/26/2017