



# **The First Epistle To The Thessalonians**



**A Study Guide With Introductory Comments,  
Summaries, Outlines, And Review Questions**

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# The First Epistle To The Thessalonians

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This study guide was developed in preparation for teaching adult Bible classes.

- ◆ The objectives for each section are usually things I plan to emphasize during the class.
- ◆ I have found that summarizing and outlining helps me to better understand the Word of God. It is a practice I highly recommend to others.
- ◆ I generally delete the answers to the review questions before printing the material and giving it to the students. But that you might know what answers were intended by the questions, I have included them in these guides.

This material is from **ExecutableOutlines.com**, a web site containing sermon outlines and Bible studies by Mark A. Copeland. Visit the web site to browse or download additional material for church or personal use.

The outlines were developed in the course of my ministry as a preacher of the gospel. Feel free to use them as they are, or adapt them to suit your own personal style. To God be the glory!

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# The First Epistle To The Thessalonians

## Introduction

### AUTHOR

The apostle **Paul**, joined in his salutation by **Silvanus** and **Timothy (1:1)**, and with specific mention of his name again later in the epistle (**2:18**). Early sources in church history that attribute this letter to Paul include: Clement of Alexandria (200 A.D.), Tertullian (200 A.D.), and Irenaeus (200 A.D.).

### THE CITY OF THESSALONICA

It was the capital and largest city of the Roman province of Macedonia. Located on the Egnatian Way, a major road from Rome to the eastern provinces, the city served as center of trade and commerce. Today, it is known as Thessaloniki, or Salonica.

### THE CHURCH AT THESSALONICA

The establishment of the church is recorded in **Ac 17:1-9**. On his second missionary journey, Paul and his companions (Silas and Timothy) had just left Philippi and passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia to arrive at Thessalonica. As was his custom, Paul immediately located the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews for three Sabbaths concerning Jesus Christ. While some of them were persuaded, including a great number of devout Greeks and leading women, the unbelieving Jews became jealous and created an uproar in the city. Therefore it became necessary to send Paul and Silas away secretly by night to Berea.

Despite such ominous beginnings, a strong church was established in Thessalonica (cf. **1:2-10**). Mostly Gentile (cf. **1:9**), its members included Jason (**Ac 17:9**), Aristarchus, and Secundus (**Ac 20:4**).

### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

First Thessalonians is considered one of Paul's earliest epistles, if not the first. From the letter itself (**3:1-6**), and the record of Paul's travels in Acts (**Ac 17:10-18:11**), it appears that Paul wrote this letter soon after arriving in **Corinth** on his second journey. This would put it somewhere around **52 A.D.**

### PURPOSE OF THE EPISTLE

The abrupt departure from Thessalonica so soon after the beginning of the church naturally left Paul anxious about the condition of the brethren. When Timothy joined Paul at Athens (cf. **Ac 17:14-16**), his concern prompted Paul to send Timothy at once back to Thessalonica to encourage and ground the new disciples in the faith, and to learn how they were enduring persecution (cf. **3:1-5**).

When Timothy returned to Paul in Corinth (cf. **Ac 18:5**), the news was mostly encouraging (cf. **3:6-7**).

Despite persecution they had remained strong (**2:13-16**), and even proved themselves to be an example to others (**1:6-8**). Yet, as with any young church, they needed further instruction concerning holy living (cf. **4:1-12**). They also needed to be reassured that their loved ones who died in Christ would not miss out on the blessings involving the coming of our Lord (cf. **4:13-18**). Therefore we can summarize by saying that Paul's purpose in writing was:

- ♦ To praise them for their steadfastness under persecution
- ♦ To instruct them concerning holy living
- ♦ To correct any misunderstanding, especially about the second coming of Christ

## **THEME OF THE EPISTLE**

This book is unique in that every chapter ends with a reference to the second coming of Christ (**1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:23**). With his emphasis on steadfastness and holy living, an appropriate theme might be:

### **HOLINESS IN VIEW OF THE COMING OF CHRIST**

## **KEY VERSES: 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13**

*"And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, 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."*

## **OUTLINE**

### **INTRODUCTION (1:1-4)**

1. Salutation (**1:1**)
2. Thanksgiving for their faith, hope, and love (**1:2-4**)

### **I. PERSONAL REFLECTIONS (1:5-3:13)**

#### **A. REGARDING THEIR CONDITION (1:5-10)**

1. Their reception of the gospel (**1:5-7**)
2. Their reputation in every place (**1:8-10**)

#### **B. REGARDING HIS CONDUCT (2:1-12)**

1. The manner of his preaching (**2:1-8**)
2. The manner of his life (**2:9-12**)

#### **C. REGARDING HIS CONCERN (2:13-3:13)**

1. For their faithfulness (**2:13-3:10**)
2. For their continued growth (**3:11-13**)

## **II. APOSTOLIC INSTRUCTIONS (4:1-5:28)**

### **A. WALK IN HOLINESS (4:1-8)**

1. To please God (**4:1-2**)
2. To abstain from sexual immorality (**4:3-8**)

### **B. WALK IN LOVE (4:9-10)**

1. As they are taught by God to love one another (**4:9**)
2. To increase more and more (**4:10**)

### **C. WALK IN DILIGENCE (4:11-12)**

1. To work with their hands (**4:11**)
2. To walk properly toward those who are outside (**4:12**)

### **D. WALK IN HOPE (4:13-18)**

1. With no sorrow concerning those who have died (**4:13-14**)
2. For we will be rejoined with them when Christ returns (**4:15-18**)

### **E. WALK IN LIGHT (5:1-11)**

1. For the Day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night (**5:1-4**)
2. For we are sons of light and sons of the day (**5:5-8**)
3. For God has appointed us to salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ (**5:9-11**)

### **F. WALK IN OBEDIENCE (5:12-22)**

1. With respect toward those over us (**5:12-13**)
2. With concern for one another (**5:14-15**)
3. With joy, prayer and thanksgiving (**5:16-18**)
4. Don't quench the Spirit or despise prophecies, but don't be gullible either (**5:19-22**)

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS (5:23-28)**

1. A prayer for their sanctification and preservation (**5:23-24**)
2. A request for prayer in his behalf (**5:25**)
3. A charge to greet one another with a holy kiss, and to read the epistle to others (**5:26-27**)
4. A benediction of grace from the Lord Jesus Christ (**5:28**)

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE INTRODUCTION**

- 1) **On which missionary journey was the church at Thessalonica established?**  
- Paul's second missionary journey
- 2) **Where can we read about the establishment of the church at Thessalonica?**  
- Ac 17:1-9

- 3) How long did Paul preach in the Jewish synagogue before trouble arose? (Ac 17:2)**
  - Three Sabbaths
- 4) Where did Paul go after leaving Thessalonica? (Ac 17:10)**
  - Berea
- 5) Why did Paul have to leave so soon again and go on to Athens? (Ac 17:13-15)**
  - The Jews from Thessalonica followed him there and stirred up more trouble
- 6) While at Athens, whom did Paul send back to Thessalonica? (1 Th 3:1-2)**
  - Timothy
- 7) When Paul left Athens, where did he go? Who arrived later? (Ac 18:1,5)**
  - Corinth
  - Silas and Timothy
- 8) From where and when did Paul write 1st Thessalonians?**
  - From Corinth, sometime around 52 A.D.
- 9) Why did Paul write this letter (see Purpose Of The Epistle)?**
  - To praise them for their steadfastness under persecution
  - To correct any misunderstanding, especially about the second coming of Christ
- 10) What has been suggested as the theme of this epistle?**
  - Holiness in view of the coming of Christ
- 11) What are the key verses of this epistle?**
  - 1 Th 3:12-13
- 12) According to the outline above, what are the two main sections of this epistle?**
  - Personal reflections
  - Apostolic instructions

# The First Epistle To The Thessalonians

## Chapter One

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To understand how the virtues of faith, hope, and love should express themselves
- 2) To notice the potential a new congregation has for spreading the good news of the gospel of Christ, and being a positive example to all believers

### SUMMARY

Joined by Silvanus and Timothy who had been with him when the gospel was first preached in Thessalonica, Paul offers his salutation along with a petition for grace and peace. He follows with an expression of thanksgiving for their work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope, knowing their election by God (1-4).

His assurance of their election is bolstered by the manner in which they received the gospel. It had come to them not only in word, but in power, in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance. Having imitated Paul and the Lord by receiving the word in much affliction and joy, they in turn had become examples to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. From them the word had sounded forth in every place, and the news of their own faith toward God had so spread that Paul did not need to tell others about them. Indeed, others were telling Paul of the Thessalonians' conversion from idols to serve the true God, and how they were waiting for the resurrected Jesus to return from heaven who would deliver them from the wrath to come (5-10).

### OUTLINE

#### I. INTRODUCTION (1-4)

##### A. SALUTATION (1)

1. From Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy (1a)
2. To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (1b)
3. Grace and peace from God and Jesus (1c)

##### B. THANKSGIVING (2-4)

1. Offered to God in their behalf, making mention of them in his prayers (2)
2. Mindful always of their:
  - a. Work of faith
  - b. Labor of love
  - c. Patience of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ  
...in the sight of our God and Father (3)
4. Knowing their election by God (4)

## **II. REFLECTIONS REGARDING THEIR CONDITION (1:5-10)**

### **A. THEIR RECEPTION OF THE GOSPEL (5-7)**

1. The gospel came to them not only in word, but...
  - a. In power
  - b. In the Holy Spirit
  - c. In much assurance...for they knew what kind of men Paul and his companions had been for their sakes while with them (5)
2. They had become followers of Paul and of the Lord, having received the word...
  - a. In much affliction (6a)
  - b. With joy of the Holy Spirit (6b)
3. They had become examples to the believers in Macedonia and Achaia (7)

### **B. THEIR REPUTATION IN EVERY PLACE (8-10)**

1. From them the word of the Lord sounded forth in Macedonia, Achaia, and beyond (8a)
2. Their faith toward God had gone out, so Paul did not need to say anything (8b)
3. Others were telling Paul...
  - a. What manner of entry Paul had to them (9a)
  - b. How they had turned from idols to serve the living and true God (9b)
  - c. How they were waiting for the resurrected Jesus to return from heaven, who delivers from the wrath to come (10)

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

### **1) What are the main points of this chapter?**

- Introduction (1-4)
- Reflections regarding their condition (5-10)

### **2) Who joined Paul in the salutation of this epistle? (1)**

- Silvanus and Timothy

### **3) How did Paul address the church? (1)**

- The church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ

### **4) What three things was Paul especially thankful for regarding the Thessalonians? (3)**

- Their work of faith
- Their labor of love
- The patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ

### **5) What did Paul know concerning the Thessalonians? (4)**

- Their election by God

### **6) How had the gospel come to the Thessalonians? (5)**

- In Word, in power, in the Holy Spirit, in much assurance

**7) How had they become followers of Paul and the Lord? (6)**

- By receiving the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit

**8) For whom had they become examples? (7)**

- All the believers in Macedonia and Achaia

**9) What two things had sounded forth, or gone out, from the Thessalonians? (8)**

- The word of the Lord

- Their faith toward God

**10) What two things describe the manner in which they received Paul? (9-10)**

- Their turning from idols to serve the living and true God

- Their waiting for Jesus from heaven

# The First Epistle To The Thessalonians

## Chapter Two

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To glean from Paul's example how preachers should conduct themselves among brethren with whom they labor
- 2) To appreciate how the thought of seeing each other at the coming of Jesus should affect our attitude towards one another

### SUMMARY

Having reflected upon their reception of the gospel, Paul now reflects upon his own conduct while with them. He describes the manner of his preaching as one that was free of guile, deceit, flattery, and covetousness. Seeking not the glory of men, but of God, he spoke with boldness despite conflict, and was gentle among them as a nursing mother would be with her own children (1-8). His manner of life was sacrificial, working hard not to be a burden to them, behaving devoutly, justly, and blamelessly while among them. As a father does his own children, he exhorted, comforted and charged them to walk in a way worthy of God who was calling them into His own kingdom and glory (9-12).

Paul then begins to reflect upon the concern that he has for their condition. Thankful for their reception of his gospel as the word of God and not of men, he writes how they had imitated the churches in Judea in receiving the word among much persecution by their own countrymen (13-16). Even though it has only been a short time since he has seen them, he has desired to come to them time and again, but Satan had hindered him. His longing to see them is due to his view of them as his hope, joy and crown of rejoicing in the presence of Jesus when He comes again (17-20).

### OUTLINE

#### I. REFLECTIONS REGARDING HIS CONDUCT (1-12)

##### A. THE MANNER OF HIS PREACHING (1-8)

1. Not in vain, but with boldness in the midst of abuse (1-2)
2. Not in deceit, impurity, or guile, but as pleasing God (3-4)
3. Not with flattery, covetousness, nor seeking glory from men by making demands as apostles of Christ (5-6)
4. As a nursing mother, with gentleness and affection he imparted not only the gospel but his own life as well (7-8)

##### B. THE MANNER OF HIS LIFE (9-12)

1. Worked night and day, so as not to be burden while preaching the gospel (9)
2. Behaved in a devout, just, and blameless manner (10)

3. As a father would his own children, he exhorted and comforted them, encouraging them to walk worthy of God who calls them into His kingdom (11-12)

## **II. REFLECTIONS REGARDING HIS CONCERN (13-20)**

### **A. THANKFUL FOR THEIR RECEPTION OF THE WORD (13-16)**

1. They received his message as it was in truth, the word of God which works effectively in those who believe (13)
2. They became imitators of the churches in Judea (14-16)
  - a. Suffering persecution from their own countrymen (14a)
  - b. Just as those in Judea received from the Jews (14b)
    - 1) Who killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets (15a)
    - 2) Who persecuted the apostles, forbidding them to speak to the Gentiles (15b-16a)
    - 3) Who are piling up their sins, and upon whom wrath has come (17)

### **B. CONCERNED FOR THEIR WELFARE (17-20)**

1. He is eager to see them again (17)
2. He had wanted to come to them, but Satan hindered him (18)
3. Because they are his hope, joy, and crown of rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming (19-20)

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

### **1) What are the main points of this chapter?**

- Reflections regarding his conduct (1-12)
- Reflections regarding his concern (12-20)

### **2) What had Paul endured prior to coming to Thessalonica? What was his attitude when he arrived? (2)**

- Suffered spiteful treatment at Philippi (cf. Ac 16:16-40)
- Bold in his God to speak the gospel of God

### **3) What did NOT characterize his conduct while at Thessalonica? (3-6)**

- Deceit
- Flattering words
- Uncleaness
- A cloak for covetousness
- Guile
- Seeking glory from men
- Pleasing men

### **4) What figure does Paul use to describe his treatment of them? (7)**

- As a nursing mother cherishes her own children

### **5) What did Paul impart to them along with the gospel of God? (8)**

- His own life

- 6) What DID characterize his conduct while at Thessalonica? (9-10)**
  - Laboring night and day so as not to be a burden
  - Devout, just, and blameless
  
- 7) What figure does Paul use to describe the manner in which he exhorted them? (11)**
  - As father does his own children
  
- 8) How did Paul want them to walk? (12)**
  - Worthy of God who calls them into His own kingdom and glory
  
- 9) How had the Thessalonians received the word of God which they heard from Paul? (13)**
  - They welcomed it not as the word of men, but as the word of God
  
- 10) What is said about the Word of God and those who believe it? (13)**
  - It effectively works in those who believe
  
- 11) Who had the Thessalonians imitated in how they received the gospel? In what way? (14)**
  - The churches of God in Judea
  - Suffering from their own countrymen
  
- 12) What had the Jews done? (14-16)**
  - Killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets
  - Persecuted the apostles, forbidding them to offer salvation to the Gentiles
  
- 13) Who had hindered Paul from coming back to Thessalonica? (18)**
  - Satan
  
- 14) How did Paul view the Thessalonians? (19-20)**
  - His hope, joy, and crown of rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming
  - His glory and joy

# The First Epistle To The Thessalonians

## Chapter Three

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To see the very real danger of being tempted, and the need to stand fast in the Lord
- 2) To appreciate how our own steadfastness can be a source of joy and strength to those who taught us in the faith
- 3) To understand the need to increase and abound in love, in order to establish our hearts blameless before God when Christ returns

### SUMMARY

As Paul expresses his concern for their faithfulness, he explains why Timothy had been sent to them while he himself remained in Athens. Fearful that their afflictions might have given Satan an opportunity to tempt them and render his labors with them in vain, Timothy was sent to establish and encourage them in their faith (1-5).

Timothy brought back good news to Paul concerning the church at Thessalonica, telling him of their faith and love, their fond memories of Paul, and their desire to see him again. This greatly comforted Paul who was suffering his own afflictions, and he is overwhelmed with thankfulness and joy. Praying night and day that he might see them again and perfect what is lacking in their faith, he offers a prayer that God and Jesus might direct his way to them. He also prays that the Lord will help them to increase and abound in love to one another and to all, and to establish their hearts blameless in holiness before God at the coming of Christ with all His saints (6-13).

### OUTLINE

#### I. PAUL'S CONCERN FOR THEIR FAITHFULNESS (1-10)

##### A. TIMOTHY'S MISSION (1-5)

1. When he could endure it no longer, Paul remained in Athens alone (1)
2. He sent Timothy...
  - a. To establish and encourage them in the faith (2)
  - b. That they not be shaken by their afflictions (3a)
    - 1) To which they had been appointed (3b)
    - 2) As Paul told them before (4)
  - c. To know of their faith...
    - 1) Whether they had been tempted (5a)
    - 2) Whether his labor might be in vain (5b)

## **B. TIMOTHY'S REPORT (6-10)**

1. Timothy's return brought good news...
  - a. Of their faith and love (6a)
  - b. Of their fond memories of Paul (6b)
  - c. Of their desire to see him, just as he desires to see them (6c)
2. Such news brought comfort to Paul in his affliction (7-8)
  - a. He was comforted, knowing of their faith (7)
  - b. He felt alive, knowing of their steadfastness in the Lord (8)
3. He is thankful beyond words (9-10)
  - a. Thankful to God for them, for the joy they bring to him (9)
  - b. Praying night and day that he may soon see them and perfect what is lacking in their faith (10)

## **II. PAUL'S CONCERN FOR THEIR CONTINUED GROWTH (11-13)**

### **A. HIS PRAYER FOR HIMSELF (11)**

1. A request made to both God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ (11a)
2. That he may come to the Thessalonians again (11b)

### **B. HIS PRAYER FOR THEM (12-13)**

1. That the Lord make them increase and abound in love...
  - a. To one another and to all (12a)
  - b. Just as Paul does toward them (12b)
2. So that the Lord might establish their hearts blameless in holiness...
  - a. Before our God and Father (13a)
  - b. At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints (13b)

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

### **1) What are the main points of this chapter?**

- Paul's concern for their faithfulness (1-10)
- Paul's concern for their continued growth (11-13)

### **2) Where did Paul stay when he sent Timothy back to Thessalonica? (1)**

- Athens

### **3) Why did Paul send Timothy? (2)**

- To establish them and encourage them in their faith

### **4) What was Paul fearful of that might have shaken their faith? (3)**

- Their afflictions

### **5) What two reasons are given for Paul sending Timothy to learn of their faith? (5)**

- Lest by some means the tempter had tempted them
- Lest Paul's labor might have been in vain

**6) What good news had Timothy brought back to Paul? (6)**

- Of their faith and love
- Of their fond memories of Paul
- Of their desire to see him again

**7) How did this news affect Paul? (7-9)**

- Brought him comfort in his affliction and distress
- Made him feel alive
- Overwhelmed him with thankfulness and joy

**8) For what did Paul pray night and day? (10)**

- To see their face and perfect what was lacking in their faith

**9) For what did Paul pray concerning himself? (11)**

- That God and Jesus direct his way to the Thessalonians

**10) For what did Paul pray concerning the Thessalonians? (12-13)**

- That they increase and abound in love toward one another and to all
- That their hearts be established blameless in holiness before God at the coming of Christ with all His saints

# The First Epistle To The Thessalonians

## Chapter Four

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To understand how the Christian should increase more and more in such matters as obedience, holiness, love, and diligence
- 2) To appreciate the precious hope and comfort we have for those who have died in Christ

### SUMMARY

With this chapter Paul begins a series of apostolic instructions related to the Christian's walk in holiness, especially in view of the coming of Christ. Urging them to abound more and more so that they might please God, he first focuses on their sanctification and the need to abstain from sexual immorality (1-8). He then urges them to increase more and more in brotherly love, even though they had been taught by God to love another and did so toward all the brethren throughout Macedonia (9-10). That they might walk properly toward outsiders, he urges them to lead quiet lives, mind their own business, and to work with their own hands (11-12).

Paul then addresses the matter of those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. He did not want the Thessalonians to sorrow over them as others who have no hope. For just as God raised Jesus from the dead, even so He would bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus (13-14). This leads to a description of the Lord's coming, especially as it relates to how those who are alive and remain until His coming will in no way precede those who have died. Indeed, when the Lord comes from heaven, the dead in Christ will rise first, and we who are alive and remain will at that time be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air, to be with Him forever. Christians should therefore comfort one another with these words (15-18).

### OUTLINE

#### I. WALK IN HOLINESS (1-8)

##### A. TO PLEASE GOD (1-2)

1. An exhortation in the Lord Jesus to abound more and more (1)
2. According to the commandments Paul gave them through the Lord Jesus (2)

##### B. TO ABSTAIN FROM SEXUAL IMMORALITY (3-8)

1. For this is the will of God, their sanctification (3)
2. That each one know how to possess his own vessel (4-5)
  - a. In sanctification and honor (4)
  - b. Not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God (5)
3. That no one take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter (6)

- a. Because the Lord is the avenger of such things (**6a**)
- b. As Paul forewarned and testified (**6b**)
4. For God called us in holiness, not to uncleanness (**7**)
5. To reject this is to reject God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit (**8**)

## **II. WALK IN LOVE (9-10)**

### **A. AS TAUGHT BY GOD (9)**

1. Concerning brotherly love, Paul really did not need to write anything (**9a**)
2. For they were taught by God to love one another (**9b**)

### **B. TO INCREASE MORE AND MORE (10)**

1. Indeed, their love was manifest toward all the brethren throughout Macedonia (**10a**)
2. Yet Paul urges them to increase in their love even more (**10b**)

## **III. WALK IN DILIGENCE (11-12)**

### **A. TO WORK WITH THEIR HANDS (11)**

1. They should aspire to lead quiet lives, to mind their own business (**11a**)
2. Working with their own hands, as Paul commanded them (**11b**)

### **B. TO WALK PROPERLY TOWARD OUTSIDERS (12)**

1. Conducting themselves properly toward those outside (**12a**)
2. So that they may lack nothing (**12b**)

## **IV. WALK IN HOPE (13-18)**

### **A. WITH NO SORROW CONCERNING THOSE WHO HAVE DIED (13-14)**

1. Paul does not want them to be ignorant (**13**)
  - a. Concerning those who have fallen asleep (**13a**)
  - b. Lest they sorrow as others who have no hope (**13b**)
2. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus (**14**)

### **B. FOR WE SHALL BE REJOINED WITH THEM WHEN CHRIST RETURNS (15-18)**

1. Those who are alive when Christ comes will not precede those who are asleep (**15**)
  - a. The Lord Himself will descend from heaven (**16**)
    - 1) With a shout
    - 2) With the voice of an archangel
    - 3) With the trumpet of God
  - b. And the dead in Christ will rise first (**16b**)
2. Then we who are alive and remain... (**17**)
  - a. Shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord (**17a**)
  - b. And thus we shall always be with the Lord (**17b**)
3. Therefore comfort one another with these words (**18**)

## REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER

- 1) **What are the main points of this chapter?**
  - Walk in holiness (1-8)
  - Walk in love (9-10)
  - Walk in diligence (11-12)
  - Walk in hope (13-18)
  
- 2) **What did Paul urge and exhort them in the Lord Jesus to do? (1)**
  - To abound more and more
  
- 3) **What is the will of God regarding our sanctification? (3)**
  - To abstain from sexual immorality
  
- 4) **What should each person do regarding "his own vessel"? (4-5)**
  - Possess it in sanctification and honor
  - Not in passion of lust, like Gentiles who do not know God
  
- 5) **Why should we be careful not to defraud our brother in this matter? (6-7)**
  - Because the Lord is the avenger of all such things
  - For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness
  
- 6) **If we reject Paul's warning, who is it we are really rejecting? (8)**
  - God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit
  
- 7) **Why did Paul not need to write to the Thessalonians about brotherly love? Yet what does he urge them? (9-10)**
  - Because they were taught by God to love one another
  - Because they showed love toward all the brethren throughout Macedonia
  - To increase more and more
  
- 8) **What three things does Paul encourage them to do in order to walk properly toward outsiders and be lacking in nothing? (11-12)**
  - Aspire to lead quiet lives
  - Mind their own business
  - Work with their own hands
  
- 9) **Why did Paul not want them to be ignorant concerning those who have fallen asleep? (13)**
  - Lest they sorrow as those who have no hope
  
- 10) **Who will God bring with Jesus? (14)**
  - Those who sleep in Jesus
  
- 11) **What is said of those who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord? (15)**
  - They will by no means precede those who are asleep

**12) List the order of events that will occur when Jesus comes again (16-17)**

- The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God
- The dead in Christ will rise first
- We who are alive shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air
- Thus we shall always be with the Lord

**13) In view of these coming events, what we should we do? (18)**

- Comfort one another with these words

# The First Epistle To The Thessalonians

## Chapter Five

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To note the unexpected nature of the coming of the Lord, and how we should prepare for that event
- 2) To see what our responsibilities are toward those who are over us in the Lord, and what responsibilities we have to one another
- 3) To appreciate what the will of God is for us as it relates to joy, thanksgiving, and prayer

### SUMMARY

Continuing his apostolic instructions, Paul knows he does not need to write to the Thessalonians concerning the timing of the Lord's coming, for they know full well that He will come as a thief in the night and with sudden destruction catch many people unexpectedly (1-3). Such should not be the case for Christians, however, for they are "sons of light" and "sons of the day"; therefore they should watch and be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and having as a helmet the hope of their salvation (4-8). Knowing that God has appointed them to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ, they know that whether dead or alive they will live with Christ. Through such hope they should therefore comfort and edify one another, just as they were doing (9-11).

A series of exhortations follows. First, to recognize and esteem those who labor among them and are over them in the Lord, and to be at peace among themselves (12-13). Then, exhortations related to our concern for one another, along with a call to rejoice always, to pray without ceasing, to give thanks in everything, to quench not the Spirit nor despise prophecies, yet testing all things, holding fast to what is good and abstaining from all that is evil (14-22).

Paul concludes his epistle with a prayer for their sanctification as it relates to the coming of Christ, a reminder of the faithfulness of God, a plea for prayer in his behalf, and final instructions concerning greeting one another and having the epistle read to all the brethren. He signs off with a prayer for grace from the Lord Jesus in their behalf (23-28).

### OUTLINE

#### I. WALK IN LIGHT (1-11)

##### A. FOR THE DAY OF THE LORD WILL COME AS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT (1-4)

1. Concerning times and seasons, Paul did not need to write to them (1)
2. They understood that the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night (2)
3. It will come unexpectedly upon many, and such will not escape (3)
4. But they are not in darkness, so that day would overtake them as a thief (4)

**B. FOR WE ARE TO BE SONS OF LIGHT AND SONS OF THE DAY (5-8)**

1. We are not to be of the night or of darkness (5)
2. Therefore we must watch and be sober, unlike those who sleep and get drunk (6-7)
3. Those of the day are to be sober, and properly attired by putting on... (8)
  - a. The breastplate of faith and love
  - b. The hope of salvation as a helmet

**C. FOR GOD HAS APPOINTED US TO SALVATION (9-11)**

1. He did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ (9)
2. Who died for us, that whether dead or alive, we should live together with Him (10)
3. Therefore we need to comfort and edify one another (11)

**II. WALK IN OBEDIENCE (12-22)**

**A. WITH RESPECT TOWARD THOSE OVER US (12-13)**

1. To recognize those...
  - a. Who labor among us (12c)
  - b. Who are over us in the Lord (12b)
  - c. Who admonish us (12c)
2. To esteem them highly in love for their work's sake (13a)
3. To be at peace among ourselves (13b)

**B. WITH CONCERN FOR ONE ANOTHER (14-15)**

1. Exhorted to...
  - a. Warn those who are unruly (14a)
  - b. Comfort the fainthearted (14b)
  - c. Uphold the weak (14c)
  - d. Be patient with all (14d)
2. To render not evil for evil to anyone (15a)
3. To always pursue what is good for yourselves and for all (15c)

**C. WITH JOY, PRAYER AND THANKSGIVING (16-18)**

1. Rejoicing always (16)
2. Praying without ceasing (17)
3. Giving thanks in everything (18a)  
-- Which is God's will for us in Christ Jesus (18b)

**D. NOT QUENCHING THE SPIRIT, BUT STILL TESTING ALL THINGS (19-22)**

1. They were not to quench the Spirit, nor despise prophecies (19-20)
2. Yet they were to test all things; holding fast to that which is good, and abstaining from all forms of evil (21-22)

**III. CONCLUDING REMARKS (23-28)**

**A. A PRAYER FOR THEM (23-24)**

1. That the God of peace sanctify them completely (23a)
2. That their whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (23b)
3. Reminding them that the One who calls them is faithful, who will also do it (24)

**B. A REQUEST FOR PRAYER IN HIS BEHALF (25)**

**C. FINAL CHARGES (26-27)**

1. To greet all the brethren with a holy kiss (26)
2. That this epistle be read to all the brethren (27)

**D. FINAL BENEDICTION OF GRACE FROM THE LORD JESUS (28)**

**REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

**1) What are the main points of this chapter?**

- Walk in light (1-11)
- Walk in obedience (12-22)
- Concluding remarks (23-28)

**2) Concerning what did Paul feel no need to write to the Thessalonians? (1)**

- Times and seasons related to the coming of the Lord

**3) What did they already know? (2)**

- That the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night

**4) What will people be saying when the Lord comes? (3)**

- "Peace and safety!"

**5) What will come upon them when the Lord comes? Will they escape? (3)**

- Sudden destruction
- No

**6) Why will the Day of the Lord not overtake Christians as a thief? (4-5)**

- They are not in darkness
- They are sons of light and sons of the day

**7) What is our responsibility as "sons of light" and "sons of the day"? (6)**

- To watch and be sober

**8) What are we to put on? (8)**

- The breastplate of faith and love
- The hope of salvation as a helmet

**9) To what has God appointed us? (9)**

- To obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ

**10) Why did Jesus die for us? (10)**

- That whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him

**11) What is our responsibility to one another in view of such things? (11)**

- To comfort each other and edify one another

**12) What is our responsibility to those who labor among us and are over us in the Lord? (12-13)**

- To recognize them
- To esteem them highly in love for their work's sake
- To be at peace among ourselves

**13) What six charges did Paul give concerning those around us? (14-15)**

- Warn those who are unruly
- Comfort the fainthearted
- Uphold the weak
- Be patient with all
- See no one renders evil for evil to anyone
- Always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all

**14) What three things does Paul say is the will of God for us in Christ Jesus? (16-18)**

- Rejoice always
- Pray without ceasing
- In everything give thanks

**15) What five admonitions does Paul give related to the Spirit and prophecies? (19-22)**

- Do not quench the Spirit
- Do not despise prophecies
- Test all things
- Hold fast what is good
- Abstain from every form of evil

**16) For what two things does Paul pray in behalf of the Thessalonians? (23)**

- May the God of peace Himself sanctify them completely
- May their whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of the Lord

**17) What assurance is there that God will do this? (24)**

- The God who calls them is faithful (dependable, trustworthy)

**18) What two final admonitions does Paul give the Thessalonians? (26-27)**

- Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss
- To have this epistle read to all the brethren

**19) What is Paul's final benediction? (28)**

- The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.