

Bible Study – Outline

I Thessalonians

Hope of the Believer

Author Paul
Date Written Approx. 51 AD – most likely the first of Paul’s letters
Audience: The Church at Thessalonica founded by Paul (see Acts 17)

Major Theme(s)

Hope
The return of Jesus Christ
A message for today
Being Prepared

Key People

Paul, Timothy, Silas

I Thessalonians

Paul’s relationship with the Thessalonian Christians	1-3
Paul affirms the Thessalonians for their growth	1
How the Thessalonian Church was founded	2:1-16
How Timothy strengthened the church	2:17-3:10
Paul’s desire to visit the Thessalonians	3:11-13
Practical Instruction and Eternal Hope	4-5
Instructions for growth	4:1-12
The dead in Christ will be raised	4:13-18
The coming Day of the Lord	5:1-11
Instructions for righteous living	5:12-22
Conclusion	5:23-28

Key Scriptures

I Thess. 1:2-3

²We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers.³We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

I Thess. 1:9-10

⁹for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

I Thess. 2:9-12

⁹ Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. ¹⁰ You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. ¹¹ For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, ¹² encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

I Thess. 4:1

As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more.

I Thess. 4:3-8

³ It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, ⁵ not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God; ⁶ and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister. The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before. ⁷ For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. ⁸ Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

I Thess. 4:11-12

¹¹ and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, ¹² so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

I Thess. 4:13-14

¹³ Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. ¹⁴ For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

I Thess. 4:15-18

¹⁵ According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

I Thess. 5:1-2

Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, ² for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

I Thess. 5:3-4

³ While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

⁴ But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief.

I Thess. 5:8-11

⁸ But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. ⁹ For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁰ He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

I Thess. 5:19

Do not quench the Spirit.

The Events of Christ's Return

1. Christ will return visibly with a loud command
2. There will be an unmistakable cry from an angel
3. There will be a trumpet fanfare
4. Those who are dead, and believers, will rise first
5. Those who are alive, and believers, will rise to meet Christ.

How we can encourage others.

- 5:11 Build each other up
- 5:13 Live in peace
- 5:14 Encourage the disheartened
- 5:14 Help the weak
- 5:14 Be patient
- 5:15 Resist revenge
- 5:16 Be joyful
- 5:17 Pray continually
- 5:18 Give thanks
- 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit
- 5:22 Reject evil
- 5:23 Count on God's help

Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the attributes of the Thessalonians regarding their faith and character?
2. The Thessalonians lived to please God. How can we do the same in today's society and culture that is focused on self?
3. What happens when the Lord returns?
4. When will the Lord return – on what date?
5. How can we prepare for the return of Jesus Christ?
6. Thessalonians is a letter of hope? How would you describe your level of hope at this time?

Resources Used

Adventuring Through the Bible by Ray Stedman
Life Application Bible (NIV) - Zondervan and Tyndale House.
www.biblestudytools.com