

Bible Study Notes and Questions on 1&2 Thessalonians

1Thessalonians

Overview: Paul sent this letter and another letter a few months later to strengthen the believers in Thessalonica whilst Paul was in Corinth (**Acts 18:1-12**) in about **50-51AD** not long after the church had been established there. These letters had been written after Timothy's return from a visit to Thessalonica. They could be the first two letters of the New Testament.

Paul had commended the response of the Thessalonian believers to the gospel leading to their faithfulness in serving the living and true God having turned away from idolatry.

Paul, Timothy and Silas had laboured night and day in Thessalonica for three weeks to a month before having to leave the city because their lives were in danger from hostile Jews to the gospel (**Acts 17:1-10; 1Thess 2:14-17**). However, there was a church established there that continued to grow.

Timothy had been sent to Thessalonica because of Paul's deep desire to know how the brethren were progressing. Paul was much encouraged and comforted to hear that the church was growing through suffering and affliction. He had been continually in prayer for them to grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ especially in Holiness (**1Thess 3:11-13; 4:1-7, 10**).

Paul did stress the second coming of Jesus Christ (**1Thess 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:9-10, 23**) to reassure brethren that the dead in Christ will not miss out when the Lord Jesus Christ comes to catch up the church to be with him forever. In closing the letter, Paul gave a number of exhortations to believers to be watchful and alert, respectful of godly leaders and to do what is good in preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ.

Please note that Thessalonica was a very important city in Macedonia, North Greece situated on the north side of the Aegean Sea, with the main Roman road, the Ignatian Way, from Rome to Asia passing through Thessalonica. It was a wealthy city being a financial centre and a place for business. It was strategically important for Paul and team to preach the gospel there and to see it passed on throughout the region. Paul arrived there in about **49-50 AD**.

Questions

Chapter 1

Q.1) How did Paul greet the Thessalonian believers in this letter? See **1:1** and compare with **Numbers 6:24-26**.

Q.2) Show the progress of the church in Thessalonica in view of what is written in **1:2-3,6-8**.

Q.3) How had the gospel been preached to the Thessalonians? See **1:5; 2:13**.

Q.4) What was known of the religion many of the believers had followed before they were converted?

Q.5) Show the transformation in the lives of the Thessalonian believers as seen in **1:9-10**.

Chapter 2

Q.1) How did Paul and his team labour so faithfully to bring the gospel to the Thessalonians and to encourage them in spiritual growth?

Q.2) Show the courage of Paul and team to preach the gospel. See **2:2,4**.

Q.3) How do we know that Paul and his team behaved righteously to bring God's word? Read **2:3,5-6,9-12**. See also **2Thessalonians 2:8; Acts 18:3; Philippians 4:16**.

Q.4) How did the unbelieving Jews respond to the preaching of the gospel? See **2:14-16; Acts 17:5-9,13**.

Q.5) Show Paul's desire to see the believers in Thessalonica. Why was Paul unable to return to them? See **2:17-20**.

Questions continued

Chapter 3

Q.1) Show how Paul was deeply concerned for the welfare of the believers in Thessalonica. See **3:1-5**.

Q.2) What kind of report did Timothy bring to Paul on the progress of the Thessalonian church? See **3:6-10**.

Q.3) Read carefully **3:10-13**. In what way do you think Paul had prayed for the Thessalonian believers? See also **Matthew 5:43-48** and **2Peter 3:18**.

Chapter 4

Q.1) Study carefully **4:1-8** and show how Paul has emphasised purity of life.

Q.2) Show the evidence of brotherly love amongst the Thessalonian believers. See **4:9-10**.

Q.3) What attitude should we take towards any work we carry out as shown in **4:11-12**?

Q.4) What was the purpose in Paul teaching about the resurrection in **4:13-18**?

Chapter 5

Q.1) What is understood by the Day of the Lord? See **5:1-4,9** and also **Isaiah 13:6-13; Joel 1:15; 2:1-11; 3:14-16; Amos 5:18-20; Zephaniah 1:14-18; 2:1-3; 2Peter 3:10; Revelation 6:12-17**.

Q.2) How should we live as children of the light and of the day? See **5:1-2, 4-6, 8, 10-11; 2Peter 3:11-14,18**.

Q.3) What will happen to people who choose to reject God? See **5:3-7, 9**.

Q.4) Read carefully **5:11-22**. What kind of conduct should be seen in the life of the local church?

Q.5) What was Paul's prayer for the believers in Thessalonica in **5:23-24**? See also **3:13**.

Q.6) Read carefully the three requests in **5:25-27** and the benediction in **5:28**. Why are they so important?

Miscellaneous Questions on 1Thessalonians

Q.1) What was known of Thessalonica as a city in Greece in Paul's time? Read through this letter and see also **Acts 17:1-9,13**.

Q.2) Show the progress of this church in Thessalonica at the time Paul sent this letter to the Thessalonian believers. Read **1:3,8; 3:2,5-7,10,12-13; 4:9-10; 5:8** and also **Acts 17:1-9,13**.

Q.3) Show the evidence of suffering, opposition and affliction experienced by the church in Thessalonica. See **1:6; 2:14-16; 3:3-4** and also **Acts 17:5-9,13**.

Q.4) Read carefully **Chapters 2 & 3**. Can you see the accusations made against Paul's ministry? Show the ways Paul revealed that none of these accusations against him and his team were true.

Q.5) Show how this letter has given us encouragement (NIV Bible) or comfort (KJV Bible). Read **1:11; 3:2,7; 4:18; 5:11,14**.

Q.6) Show the evidence of Paul being a man of prayer. See **1:2; 3:11-13; 5:17,23,25,28**. What did Paul specifically pray for the church in Thessalonica?

Q.7) What did Paul teach in this letter on the second coming of Jesus Christ? See **1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:9,23**.

Q.8) What are we told in this letter on how to grow spiritually? Read carefully **Chapters 4 & 5**.

2Thessalonians

Overview: Paul commended the church in Thessalonica for growing in the faith and in patience in the midst of much persecution and tribulation. Paul stressed the second coming of Jesus Christ showing what events will precede Jesus's return and some detail of the second coming itself (**1:7-10**). He gave the Thessalonian believers great hope in their trials.

In the second chapter Paul dealt with some confusion the Thessalonians had over the second coming of Jesus Christ. He shows in some detail the apocalyptic events to take place revealing the man of sin to come. There will be an apostasy first and then the man of sin will appear. When Jesus returns to earth physically, he will destroy him totally (**2:8**).

In the final chapter the main issue Paul emphasised was to work in what the Lord had chosen us to do. There was no room for laziness amongst the Thessalonian believers. Paul made that very clear if anyone did not work he should not eat. Such disorderly behaviour was not acceptable. A believer should be ready at any time should it be that Jesus returns for his church. Paul had brought comfort in chapter one, caution in chapter two and a command in chapter three.

Questions

Chapter 1

Q.1) Show the evidence of spiritual growth in the church from what was written in **1:3-6**.

Q.2) How did the believers in Thessalonica respond to suffering? Read **1:4-6**.

Q.3) What was revealed regarding the second coming of Jesus Christ in **1:7-10**? Can you see the difference from what is written in **1Thessalonians 4:13-18**?

Q.4) How did Paul pray for the Thessalonian believers in **1:11-12**?

Chapter 2

Q.1) Why was there some unrest amongst the brethren in Thessalonica in view of what was written in **2:1-3**?

Q.2) What do we know of the future events that Paul has shown in **2:2-12**?

Q.3) What was known of the man of sin in **2:3-12**? Read also **Daniel 7:19-26; 8:23-25; 9:24-27; 11:36-45; Matthew 24:15-16; Mark 13:14; 1John 2:22-23; 4:3-4; Revelation 13:1-18**.

Q.4) What will happen to those people who reject the truth? See **2:10-12**.

Q.5) Show the assurance and comfort Paul gave the Thessalonian believers in **2:13-17**.

Chapter 3

Q.1) What was Paul's prayer request for the Thessalonian believers in **3:1-2**?

Q.2) How did Paul pray for the Thessalonian believers? See **3:3-5,16**.

Q.3) What did Paul stress to the believers about carrying on daily work? How important is it for a Christian to work? Did Paul and team show by example that they worked to earn a living? See **3:6-15** and **1Thessalonians 2:9**.

Q.4) Why did Paul instruct the believers to deal severely with the "disorderly" brethren? Read **3:6-15**.

Q.5) How significant are the final greetings of Paul in **3:16-18** to conclude this letter? Compare **3:17** with **1Corinthians 16:21***; **Galatians 6:11-18***; **Colossians 4:18***; **Philemon 19***.

*Paul may well have dictated his letters to a professional scribe but endorsed the letter by writing the final greetings himself. The reason being proof that Paul had produced these letters as in **1Corinthians, Galatians, Colossians** and **2Thessalonians**.

Miscellaneous Questions on 2Thessalonians

Q.1) What has been revealed of the second coming of Jesus Christ in this letter?

Read **1:7-12; 2:1-8; 3:5.**

Q.2) What was the purpose of Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians? It is helpful to read **1:7-10; 2:1-12; 3:6-15.**

Q.3) Show that Paul was a man of prayer. See **1:3,11-12; 2:13,16-17; 3:1,5,16,18.**

What did Paul pray specifically for the Thessalonian believers?

Q.4) Show the evidence of persecution continuing on the church in Thessalonica.

See **1:4-7; 2:2.**

Q.5) What does this letter teach us as believers in how to live according to God's will?

Bibliography

The resource list available will help to find out more about the Thessalonian letters. Please note that the author does not necessarily agree with the views held by the writers below.

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