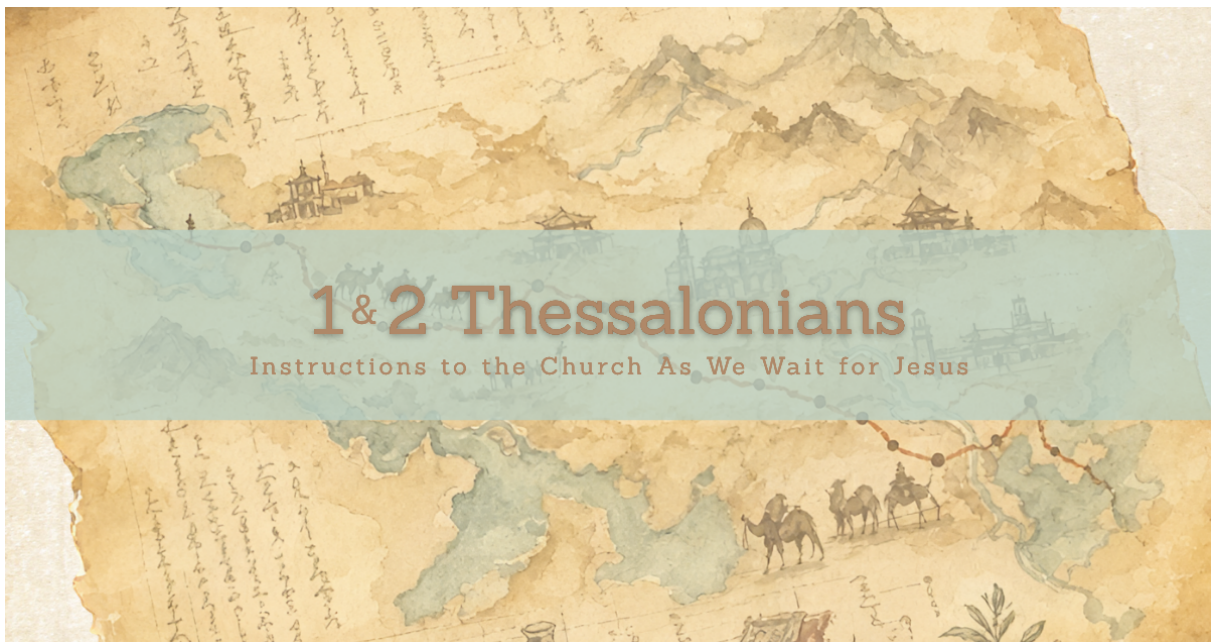




A STUDY OF 1 & 2 Thessalonians

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Introduction

I see parallels between the church in Thessalonica to today's church, especially the American church. These parallels are in all of the New Testament letters, but there is something timely about these two in particular.

- We are waiting on Jesus to return
- Thessalonica was a port city importing/exporting culture. We live in a "port" world that exchanges cultures easily—at a click of a button.
- The end time harvest will produce many baby communities of believers like the Thessalonians — Fatherly heart for new believers and the truth
- Being aware of the times we live, increased lawlessness, and how we stand firm
- Hope of the glory in Jesus Christ

Overview

- Instructions to the church as we wait on Jesus
- Descriptions of a thriving church
 - *Just as you are doing, that you do so more and more*
- Descriptions of godly leadership, apostle's conduct
 - Fatherly, dear love that Paul and his companions had
- Hope we have as believers
 - We are children of the day, and Christ will be glorified in us
- Apostolic prayers we can echo

Objectives for Each Week

- Understand the Thessalonian church and parallels for today
- Application of the passage
- The gospel in the passage
- Prayers from the passage (apostolic prayers)

Week One

1 Thessalonians 1:1 - 2:16

Description of Thessalonians

1 Thessalonians 1:2-10

Take note of the sincerity in these new believers and of Paul's love for them

- vs 1:3 Work of faith and labor of love
- vs 1:3 Steadfastness of hope in the Lord, Jesus
- vs 1:5 They are chosen (think divine appointment or seen by God) because the gospel came in word and power, and in the Holy Spirit—with full conviction
- vs 1:6 Imitators of the apostles and of the Lord, *specifically* for receiving the word with the joy of the Holy Spirit, despite affliction
- vs 1:7 Became an example to other believers in Macedonia and Achaia and, from there, the word of the Lord sounded forth to the whole world (port city)
- vs 1:9 Turned to God from idols so that they could serve the living and true God
- vs 1:10 Waiting for Jesus' coming

Description of the conduct of Paul, Timothy, and Silas

vs 2:1-12

Remember, one of the characteristics of the Thessalonians is that they imitated the apostles and the Lord. So, in a way, we are getting a deeper look into the group of believers.

- vs 2:1 They knew their work was not in vain
- vs 2:2 They had boldness in God to declare the gospel—even in the midst of conflict
- vs 2:4 They were there to please God and not man—no error, no deception. Entrusted with the gospel
- vs 2:5 They did not use flattery, nor were they greedy

- vs 2:6 They were not seeking glory, nor were they demanding
- vs 2:7 They were gentle like a nursing mother with her young
- vs 8 They were affectionate toward the Thessalonians—ready to share the gospel and themselves (vs. *you had become very dear to us*)

Keep Going

- vs 2:9 The apostles were not a burden, but worked while ministering
- vs 2:10 Their conduct was holy, righteous, and blameless
- vs 2:11 They were like a father with his children while they exhorted and encouraged the Thessalonians. Specifically, they charged the church *to walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into his own kingdom and glory* (vs 2:12)

Application

As you read through the descriptions above, list a few of them that stand out to you or that you want to grow

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you about these things
2. Search the Bible for those qualities, turn the verses into prayers. This is one way to hide the word of God in your heart (Psalm 119)
3. Take practical steps toward aligning with what God's word says.

Gospel Takeaways

- vs 1:4 The gospel is for everyone, but often times there is a window of opportunity with individuals or a group of people.
- vs 1:5 The gospel goes out and is received in word and power, and the holy spirit—with full of conviction
- vs 2:2 The sharing of gospel is a bold venture, especially in opposition
- vs 2:4 We are entrusted with the gospel. If you are a believer, you are now minister of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5)
- vs 2:9 The gospel of God is not a money maker. Beware of slothful ministry and/or wrong motivations

- vs 2:13 The gospel is to be received as the word of God, not as the word of men. We have to believe that it is at work
- vs 2:14-16 The gospel will be hindered to thwart or delay salvation. Expect obstacles

Prayers from the Passage

These are prayers the apostles prayed over the churches. If we are imitating them as they imitated Christ, then we will be people of prayer. These prayers are not off limits to us, they are examples for us. We can pray them for ourselves, for our families, for those we are discipling, and for the church at large. Like the apostles, however, we do so in love and blamelessness—no judgement, no ulterior motives.

- vs 1:2 We give thanks constantly for our brothers and sisters in Christ and for what God is doing in and through them
- vs 1:2-8 We intercede. The description of the Thessalonians (see above), in context, is Paul remembering them before God. He is accounting for them before the Father. This is a form of intercession. Intercession stands between two things and pulls them together
- vs 2:13 We pray for people to receive the gospel and the word of God and that it will be at work in them
- vs 2:16 We pray for salvations
- vs 2:19 We rejoice in the success of the disciples/church before the Lord. People maturing in Christ is a joyful thing!
- vs 2:7 & 11 We pray for love and hearts that would nurture, encourage, and charge others



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