

BIBLE STUDY OUTLINES
"1 Thessalonians"

"For ye are our glory and our joy"
(1 Thessalonians 2:20)

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I THESSALONIANS
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I THESSALONIANS
The Greeting
(1:1)

- I. IDENTIFICATION (1:1a-c)
 - A. Paul (1a)
 - B. Silvanus (1b)
 - C. Timothy (1c)

- II. DESTINATION (1:1d-e)
 - A. The place: "Thessalonica" (1d)
 - B. The people: "The church . . . in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1e)

- III. SALUTATION (1:1f-g)
 - A. The blessings: "Grace to you and peace" (1f)
 - B. The bestowers: "From God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1g; KJV)

I THESSALONIANS
Gratitude for the Thessalonians
(1:2-4)

I. HIS PRAYER (1:2)

- A. Paul mentioned the Thessalonians frequently in his prayers (2b).
- B. As he prayed about them, he prayed with thanksgiving (2a).

II. THEIR PAST (1:3-4)

- A. Three great words are used to described their past (3a-c).
 - 1. Faith--Theirs had been a "work of faith" (3a).
 - 2. Love--Theirs had been a "labor of love" (3b).
 - 3. Hope--They had been characterized by a patient hope (3c).
- B. Their motivation and spirituality are shown by the phrase "before our God and Father" (3d).
- C. Two terms are used to show their relationship to Paul and to God (4a-b).
 - 1. "Brethren" (4a)
 - 2. "Beloved of God" (4b)
- D. Paul said he knows of their "election" (4c).

I THESSALONIANS
How They Heard
(1:5-6)

- I. THE COMING OF THE WORD (1:5)
- A. A description of the preaching (5a-d)
 - 1. It is described negatively: "Our gospel came not unto you in word only" (5a).
 - 2. It is described positively (5b-d)
 - a. "In power" (5b)
 - b. "In the Holy Spirit" (5c)
 - c. "In much assurance" (5d)
 - B. A description of the preachers: "Even as ye know what manner of men we showed ourselves toward you for your sake" (5e).

- II. THE CONVERSION OF THE THESSALONIANS (1:6)
- A. The response (6a-b)
 - 1. "Ye became imitators of us" (6a)
 - 2. "Ye became imitators . . . of the Lord" (6b)
 - B. The resistance: "Having received the word in much affliction" (6c)
 - C. The result: "With joy of the Holy Spirit" (6d)

I THESSALONIANS
Examples to Others
(1:7-10)

- I. THE EFFECTIVE EXAMPLE (1:7-8)
 - A. The extent of it: "Ye became an ensample to all that believe in Macedonia and in Achaia" (7, 8b).
 - B. The quality of it: "From you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord" (8a).

- II. THE COMPLETE CHANGE (1:9)
 - A. Others were reporting what success Paul and company had had as they preached to the Thessalonians (9a).
 - B. The Thessalonians had so completely changed that they had turned from idols to the living God (9b).

- III. THE HEAVENLY HOPE (1:10)
 - A. The Thessalonians were waiting for God's Son from heaven (10a).
 - B. Two characteristics of Jesus are given (10b-c).
 - 1. "Whom he raised from the dead" (10b)
 - 2. "Who delivereth us from the wrath to come" (10c)

I THESSALONIANS
How Paul Preached to the Thessalonians
(2:1-8)

I. PAUL'S PERSECUTIONS (2:1-2)

- A. He affirms that his preaching among the Thessalonians was not "in vain" (1).
- B. His persecution at Philippi (2a-b)
 - 1. He suffered (2a).
 - 2. He was treated shamefully (2b).
- C. His persecution at Thessalonica (2c-d)
 - 1. Paul was bold in preaching (2c).
 - 2. This preaching was "in much conflict" (2d).

II. PAUL'S PIETY (2:3-4)

- A. Paul's character and sincerity are negatively described (3, 4b).
 - 1. "Not of error" (3a)
 - 2. "Nor of uncleanness" (3b)
 - 3. "Nor in guile" (3c)
 - 4. "Not as pleasing men" (4b)
- B. Paul's character and sincerity are positively described (4a, 4c).
 - 1. "Even as we have been approved of God to be intrusted with the gospel, so we speak" (4a)
 - 2. "As pleasing . . . God who proveth our hearts" (4c)

III. PAUL'S PROCEDURE (2:5-8)

- A. Paul's procedure is negatively stated (5-6).
 - 1. No "words of flattery" (5a)
 - 2. No "cloak of covetousness" (5b)
 - 3. No seeking human glory (6a)
 - 4. No claiming our "authority as apostles of Christ" (6b)
- B. Paul's procedure is positively stated (7-8).
 - 1. We were "gentle in the midst of you" (7a).
 - 2. "As when a nurse cherisheth her own children" (7b)
 - 3. We were "affectionately desirous of you" (8a).
 - a. We were well pleased to impart unto you the gospel (8b).
 - b. We would have imparted to you "our own souls" (8c).
 - c. "Because ye were become very dear to us" (8d)

I THESSALONIANS
Manner and Motives
(2:9-12)

- I. A REFUSAL TO BURDEN (2:9)
 - A. Paul experienced "labor and travail" that he might not have to burden the Thessalonians (9a).
 - B. He worked "night and day" (9b).
 - C. He preached the gospel of God unto them (9c).

- II. A REFLECTION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (2:10)
 - A. Two witnesses could testify about Paul's spirit and conduct (10a-b).
 - 1. The Thessalonians (10a)
 - 2. God (10b)
 - B. Three words are used to describe his spirit and conduct (10c-e).
 - 1. Holily (10c)
 - 2. Righteously (10d)
 - 3. Unblameably (10e)
 - C. This spirit and conduct were manifested toward those who believe (10f).

- III. A REMINDER OF ENCOURAGEMENT (2:11-12)
 - A. A reminder of his gentleness (11a-b).
 - 1. This was how he dealt with each one of them (11a).
 - 2. "As a father with his own children" (11b)
 - B. A reminder of his guidance (11c-e).
 - 1. "Exhorting you" (11c)
 - 2. "Encouraging you" (11d)
 - 3. "Testifying" (11e)
 - C. A reminder of his goals (12a-b).
 - 1. "To the end that ye should walk worthily of God" (12a)
 - 2. "Who calleth you in his own kingdom and glory" (12b)

I THESSALONIANS
How to Receive the Word
(2:13-16)

I. THE RECEPTION OF THE WORD (2:13)

- A. Paul was grateful for the way they had received the word of God (13a).
- B. Their reception of the word is viewed negatively: "Ye accepted it not as the word of men" (13b).
- C. Their reception of the word is viewed positively (13c-d).
 - 1. "Ye accepted it . . . as it is in truth, the word of God" (13c)
 - 2. "Which also worketh in you that believe" (13d)

II. THE REBELLION AGAINST THE WORD (2:14-16)

- A. Like the churches of Judea, the Thessalonians were persecuted by the Jews when they received the word (14).
- B. How had these Jews treated Jesus and the prophets? (15a)
They had "both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets" (15a).
- C. How had these Jews treated Paul?
 - 1. "Who drove out us, and please not God, and are contrary to all men" (15b)
 - 2. "Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved" (16a)
- D. How does Paul view these persecutors?
 - 1. "To fill up their sins always" (16b)
 - 2. "But the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost" (16c)

I THESSALONIANS
An Absence and an Aspiration
(2:17-20)

- I. A DESIROUS HEART (2:17)
A. Paul had been separated from the Thessalonians (17a).
B. Though separated in body, he was present in spirit (17b).
C. He was endeavoring earnestly to come to them (17c).
- II. A DEVILISH HINDERANCE (2:18)
A. Paul had attempted many times to come to them (18a).
B. However, he had been hindered by the Devil (18b).
- III. A DELIGHTFUL HOPE (2:19-20)
A. Paul's question: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying?" (19a)
B. Paul's answer: "Are not even ye, before our Lord Jesus at his coming?" (19b) "For ye are our glory and our joy" (20).

I THESSALONIANS
Sorrow and Sunshine
(3:1-8)

I. THE RESTLESSNESS (3:1-5)

- A. Paul's concern (1-2a, 5)
 - 1. Paul was afraid that the Thessalonians had been overcome by trials and this motivated him to send Timothy to them (5).
 - 2. Paul sent Timothy from Athens to Thessalonica (1).
 - 3. A twofold description of Timothy is given (2a-b).
 - a. "Our brother" (2a)
 - b. "God's minister in the gospel of Christ" (2b)
- B. Timothy's commission (2c-4)
 - 1. Concerning the faith (2c-d)
 - a. "To establish you" (2c)
 - b. "To comfort you" (2d)
 - 2. Concerning the persecutions (3-4)
 - a. Their controllability: "That no man be moved by the afflictions" (3a)
 - b. Their inevitability (3b-4)
 - (1) They were predicted: "We told you beforehand that we are to suffer affliction" (4)
 - (2) They are our appointment: "For yourselves know that hereunto we are appointed" (3b)

II. THE REPORT (3:6)

- A. Timothy brought good news about their "faith and love" (6a).
- B. He also brought the news of their fond remembrance of Paul (6b).

III. THE RELIEF (3:7-8)

- A. In the midst of his trials and tribulations (distress and affliction), Paul found comfort "through their faith" (7).
- B. Their faithfulness brought life to Paul (8).

I THESSALONIANS
A Prayful Longing
(3:9-13)

- I. THE GRATITUDE HE FELT (3:9-10)
 - A. Paul was grateful for the joy the Thessalonians had brought by their faithfulness to the Lord (9).
 - B. He was longing to see them that he might assist them in their growth in Christ (10).

- II. THE GUIDANCE HE SOUGHT (3:11)
 - A. Paul expressed his desire for the Lord to direct him to the Thessalonians (11).
 - B. Paul recognized the power behind providence (11).
 - 1. "Our God and Father" (11a)
 - 2. "Our Lord Jesus" (11b)

- III. THE GOAL HE MENTIONED (3:12-13)
 - A. His request: "The Lord make you to increase and abound" (12a)
 - 1. "In love toward one another" (12b)
 - 2. "In love . . . toward all men" (12c)
 - 3. "Even as we also do toward you" (12d)
 - B. His reason: "To the end" (13a)
 - 1. "He may establish your hearts" (13b)
 - 2. "Unblameable" (13c)
 - 3. "In holiness" (13d)
 - 4. "Before our God and Father" (13e)
 - 5. "At the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints" (13f)

I THESSALONIANS
Keeping Our Vessels Clean
(4:1-8)

- I. A COMMAND TO ABOUND (4:1)
- A. Paul reminds them of his former instructions (1a).
 - B. They are urged to abound "more and more" in this kind of living (1b).
- II. A COMMAND TO ABSTAIN (4:2-8)
- A. Paul gave them a charge through the Lord Jesus (2).
 - B. This charge was to abstain from fornication (3c).
 - C. Why is fornication wrong?
 - 1. It is a violation of the "will of God" (3a, 6a, 6c).
 - 2. It is a violation of the call to sanctification (3b, 7).
 - 3. It is a violation of the way of honor (4b).
 - 4. It is a violation of the principle of discipline (5).
 - 5. It is a violation of our responsibility to others (6b).
 - D. Any who reject this message concerning fornication reject the Holy Spirit who gave the message (8).

I THESSALONIANS
How Christians Behave
(4:9-12)

- I. TOWARD CHRISTIANS: LOVE (4:9-10)
 - A. The Thessalonians knew about God's command for His children to love one another (9).
 - B. They had been fulfilling God's command toward all the brethren in Macedonia (10a).
Paul urges them to increase in this love (10b).

- II. TOWARD WORK: INDIVIDUALITY (4:11)
 - A. He is instructing them to mind their own business (11).
 - B. Three commands are given (11).
 - 1. "Study to be quiet" (11a)
 - 2. "Do your own business" (11b)
 - 3. "Work with your hands" (11c)

- III. TOWARD UNBELIEVERS: EXAMPLES (4:12)
 - A. The above instructions are given for the reasons now stated (12).
 - B. Two reasons are given (12).
 - 1. "That ye may walk becomingly toward them that are without" (12a)
 - 2. That ye "may have need of nothing" (12b)

I THESSALONIANS
The Comfort of Christ's Coming
(4:13-18)

- I. THE BEWILDERING CONFUSION (4:13-15)
 - A. Paul does not want the Thessalonians to be confused about those who had fallen asleep in Jesus (13a).
 - B. He wanted them to be comforted by the Christian hope (13b).
 - C. The resurrection is the basis for this hope (14).
 - D. Those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will not miss out on anything when Jesus returns (15).

- II. THE GLORIOUS COMING (4:16-17)
 - A. The coming of Jesus will be accompanied by three sounds (16a-c).
 - 1. "With a shout" (16a)
 - 2. "With the voice of the archangel" (16b)
 - 3. "With the trump of God" (16c)
 - B. The coming will affect two groups of people (16d, 17a).
 - 1. "And the dead in Christ shall rise first" (16d)
 - 2. "We that are alive . . . shall together with them be caught up in the clouds" (17a)
 - C. The coming will accomplish two purposes (17b-c).
 - 1. "To meet the Lord in the air" (17b)
 - 2. "So shall we ever be with the Lord" (17c)

- III. THE WONDERFUL COMFORT (4:18)
 - A. The recipients: "Comfort one another" (18a)
 - B. The basis: "With these words" (18b)

I THESSALONIANS
Three Descriptions
(5:1-10)

- I. A DESCRIPTION OF THE END: SUDDENNESS (5:1-2)**
- A. The Thessalonians were already knowledgeable about the second coming of Jesus (1).
 - B. A description of His coming is given (2-3).
 - 1. The truth is illustrated: "As a thief in the night" (2)
 - 2. The truth is illustrated again: "As travail upon a woman with child" (3b)
 - a. The false peace: "When they are saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (3a)
 - b. The final perdition: "And they shall in no wise escape" (3c)
- II. A DESCRIPTION OF THE SAINTS: SOBERNESS (5:5a-b, 6, 8, 9b)**
- A. His analysis of the saints (5a-b, 9b)
 - 1. They are children of light (5a).
 - 2. They are children of day (5b).
 - 3. They are appointed to obtain salvation (9b).
 - B. His admonitions to the saints (6, 8)
 - 1. "Let us not sleep" (6a)
 - 2. "Let us watch and be sober" (6b)
 - 3. "Let us . . . put on the breastplate of faith and love" (8a)
 - 4. "For a helmet, the hope of salvation" (8b)
- III. A DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD: SLEEPINESS (5:4a, 7, 9a)**
- A. Its picture (4a, 7)
 - 1. They are in darkness (4a).
 - 2. They are children of the night (7a).
 - 3. They are drunken (7b).
 - B. Its perdition: They have been appointed unto wrath (9a).

I THESSALONIANS
Congregational Responsibilities
(5:11-13)

- I. A RESPONSIBILITY TO THE SHEPHERDS (5:12-13a)
 - A. The brethren are earnestly entreated (12a).
 - B. A threefold description of elders is given (12b-d).
 - 1. "Who labor among you" (12b)
 - 2. "Who are over you in the Lord" (12c)
 - 3. "Who admonish you" (12d)
 - C. The saints are given two responsibilities toward the shepherds (12b, 13a).
 - 1. "Know them that labor among you" (12b)
 - 2. "Esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake" (13a)

- II. A RESPONSIBILITY TO THE SAINTS (5:11, 13b)
 - A. Saints are to "exhort" each other (11a).
 - B. They are to "build each other up" (11b).
 - C. They are to live in peace with each other (13b).

I THESSALONIANS
Admonitions Concerning Special People
(5:14-15)

I. A SPECIFIC ADMONITION (5:14)

- A. This is termed an exhortation (14a).
- B. Three groups are mentioned (14b-d).
 - 1. The wicked: "Admonish the disorderly" (14b)
 - 2. The weak: "Encourage the fainthearted, support the weak" (14c)
 - 3. The world: "Be longsuffering toward all" (14d)

II. A GENERAL ADMONITION (5:15)

- A. "See that none render unto any one evil for evil" (15a)
- B. "But always follow after that which is good, one toward another, and toward all" (15b)

I THESSALONIANS
Attitudes
(5:16-22)

- I. ATTITUDES TO ACQUIRE (5:16-18, 22)
- A. Joyfulness: "Rejoice always" (16)
 - B. Prayerfulness: "Pray without ceasing" (17)
 - C. Thankfulness: "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward" (18)
 - D. Truthfulness: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (21)
 - E. Carefulness: "Abstain from every form of evil" (22)
- II. ATTITUDES TO AVOID (5:19-20)
- A. A quenching spirit: "Quench not the Spirit" (19)
 - B. A despising spirit: "Despise not prophesyings" (20)

I THESSALONIANS
Closing Words
(5:23-24)

- I. THE SANCTIFICATION (5:23a-b)
 - A. Paul describes God as the "God of peace" (23a).
 - B. He calls upon God to sanctify them completely (23b).

- II. THE PRESERVATION (5:23c-f)
 - A. The threefold make-up of man is recognized (23c-e).
 - 1. Spirit (23c)
 - 2. Soul (23d)
 - 3. Body (23e)
 - B. Paul wishes that they will be preserved blameless until the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (23f).

- III. THE CHARACTERIZATION (5:24)
 - A. Paul describes God as "faithful" (24a).
 - B. He will fulfill the need (24b).

I THESSALONIANS
More Closing Words
(5:25-28)

- I. THE SOLICITATION (5:25)
 - A. Paul addresses his audience as "brethren" (25a).
 - B. He solicits their prayers (25b).

- II. THE SALUTATION (5:26, 28)
 - A. All the brethren are to be saluted (26a).
 - B. They are to be saluted with a holy kiss (26b).
 - C. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you" (28).

- III. THE SPECIFICATION (5:27)
 - A. The Thessalonians are given a command before the Lord (27a)
 - B. The command is to read the epistle to all the brethren (27b)