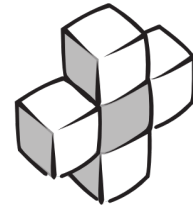




**SMACC**

*Making Disciples of Jesus Christ*



# **Bible Study Series:**

# **1 Thessalonians**



**Our Mission:**

*To glorify God together in response to his grace  
by making disciples of Jesus Christ*

## **About These Studies**

These studies were written by various SMACC leaders for use among young working adults and university students. You are most welcome to use and adapt these studies for your own context. Where you do so please provide the following acknowledgment.

*These studies are adapted from St Mary's Anglican Cathedral. Used with permission. Other Bible studies like these are available at: <https://stmaryscathedral.org.my/bible-studies/>*

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### **Thinking it Through**

9. According to 1 Thessalonians 1, what are the marks of a genuine believer?

### **Application**

10. This passage makes it clear that God's gospel can change lives. What things ought you to change, so you can better imitate the example set by the Thessalonians?

11. As you look to the Thessalonians' example, what will it look like for you to persevere through affliction with joy?

12. What idols in your life do you need to continue to turn away from and trust Jesus instead?

### **Prayer**

- If you are waiting for the return of Jesus and deliverance from the wrath to come, thank God that he has chosen you.
- Thank God for people you know who have been worthy of imitation. If they are still alive, pray that they may continue in God's grace until the end.
- Ask God to help you better imitate the example of the Thessalonians.
- Pray that your Christian life will be characterized by turning, serving and waiting. Pray for those whose turning to God has resulted in them suffering.



### **Thinking it Through**

8. According to 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12, what are the marks of a genuine Christian ministry?

### **Application**

9. How does your ministry compare to Paul's? How could you be more like him?

10. How can you be "living a life worthy of the gospel"?

### **Prayer**

- Thank God for Paul's example of 'worthy walking'.
- Pray for gospel preachers you know, that they will not speak from error or impurity or an attempt to deceive, but will speak to please God, who tests their hearts.
- Pray that God will increase your desire and affection for those he has called you to love and minister to.
- Pray that God would help you to walk in a manner worthy of the kingdom and glory into which you are called.

## **Study 3: “The Word At Work” (1 Thessalonians 2:13-16)**

### **Getting Started**

1. When was the last time you saw God at work in someone’s life? What did it look like?

### **Context**

2. *Look back over 1 Thessalonians 1:3-10.* How had the Thessalonians responded to the gospel?

### **Digging In**

3. What does Paul constantly thank God for? Why does he thank God for that?
4. How does Paul know that they received his gospel as the word of God (v14)?
5. How could Paul be certain that the word of God was really at work among the Thessalonians?
6. What implications might v13 have for how God is at work today?
7. Why is Paul so negative about “the Jews”?
8. How is it that the persecutors of the Jews can be said to “oppose all mankind”?

### **Thinking it Through**

9. What two responses do people have to the word of God? What are the consequences of each response?

### **Application**

10. How can we ensure that we continue to recognize the word of God for what it really is and respond appropriately?

11. In what ways could we enable opportunity for the word of God to be at work in our lives and the lives of others?

12. When we suffer for being Christian, how ought that encourage us?

13. How does God's judgement comfort us when we suffer?

### **Prayer**

- Thank God that he is at work in our lives through his powerful word.
- Pray that you would have opportunities to help this word be at work in the lives of others.
- Pray for those who have borne this price for believing the gospel. Pray that they might stand firm in Christ, and not seek revenge for wrongdoing.



## **Study 4: “The Heart of a Disciple-Maker” (1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:5)**

### **Getting Started**

1. *How do you keep in touch with those whom you are close to? (friends, parents, relatives), especially those that you are physically separated from?*

### **Context**

2. *Look back at 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12 and 2:13-16. How would you summarise what Paul has been writing about in these two sections in a few short sentences?*

<b>Verses</b>	<b>Summary</b>
<b>2:1-12</b>	
<b>2:13-16</b>	

### **Digging In**

*Read 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20*

3. *Let us look at v 17-18. What has happened between Paul and the Thessalonians (cf. Acts 17:1-2; 6-10 and 15-16)? Examine the words that Paul uses to describe this situation.*
4. *How would you describe his relationship with the Thessalonians (cf. 2:7,8 and 11)?*
5. *Why do you think Paul goes to such length to explain his deep longing for them and his efforts to visit?*
6. *Why do you think Paul highlights the Thessalonians as his hope, joy and crown (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Timothy 4:8, 1 Peter 5:4) in verses 19-20?*

*Refer to the following passages (Galatians 2:2, Phil 4:1, Phil 2:16, 2 Cor 1:14) and his expectations for these churches.*

*Read 1 Thessalonians 3:1-5*

7. Why was Paul so eager to send Timothy to the Thessalonians (v1-3)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Was it a surprise that the Thessalonians were undergoing these trials (v4-5)? Why or why not?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Discuss Satan's role in both 1 Thessalonians 2:18 & 3:4-5. What does that mean for us as Christians today?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. Summarise Paul's ultimate concern for the Thessalonians in this section.

**Application**

11. What is our view of persecution in our own lives as Christians? How can we use it as a means of strengthening our faith?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
12. Look at Paul's heart for the Thessalonians. How do we express the same toward others especially for those who are new believers? Are we as concerned for the growth and faith of our circle of influences?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
13. Paul describes the Thessalonians as his glory and joy in verses 19 and 20. What would we consider as our glory and joy in our own lives? What would we hope for as our reward at the second coming of Christ?



8. In your own words, how would you sum up the meaning of the passage?

9. Do you often long to see other brothers/sisters in Christ as Paul did? Why is that so?

**Application**

10. How does this passage challenge your understanding on the role of a leader?

11. Is there any attitude that you need to change in order to be a better leader?

## Study 6: “Walking With God” (1 Thessalonians 4:1-12)

### Getting Started

1. Have you gone out of your way to show care for someone who is dear to you? Have you loved your ordinary friends the same way too? Please share with the group.

### Digging In

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

2. Summarize the main points of verses 1-12 in the table below.

Verses	Main points	Cf.
1-8	_____ from _____	4:3b
9-12	_____ in _____	3:12

3. What does Paul want us & the Thessalonians to understand about God? What is He like?
4. In verse 1, what does Paul mean; to “walk” and to “please” God? Please explain your thoughts.

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

5. How do we “walk” and “please” God?
  - a. What does Paul mean by “*your sanctification*” in verse 3?
  - b. What does “*control his own body*” mean in verse 4?

- c. Why is it the will of God for us to abstain from sexual immorality nor giving in to the lust of the Gentiles stated in verse 5? *(Read also; Rom.1:21-28; Eph.4:17-24; Ps.81-12-13 for help)*
  
- d. In verse 6, what did Paul mean by “no one wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger”? *(Read also; Heb.13:4; 2 Cor.5:9-10 for help)*
  
- e. List the consequences for failure to adhere to God’s command in verse 6-8?

Verse	Consequences

*Read 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12*

- 6. What do holy living & sexual purity have to do with loving one another in verses 9-10? *(refer chapter.3:12-13 for more help)* Please elaborate your thoughts.
  
- 7. What is the connection between verses 11-12 to the matter discussed in verses 9-10?  
 What does Paul want the Thessalonians to understand and change from the behavior of some?

**Application**

- 8. Today, what can we do to pursue holy living daily in practical terms?
  - a. How do we strive to maintain sexual purity?

b. Do we have any past failures to learn from?

c. In what ways do you need to grow in holiness in thoughts, words, and actions?

9. How can we spur one another in our small groups and the church at large today, with the same level of fervency and impact as Paul did in his days?

## **Study 7: “Hope in the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)**

### **Getting Started**

1. What would you say to your Christian brothers and sisters whose loved ones have recently passed away?

### **Digging In**

*Read 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18*

2. What was Paul’s concern for the Thessalonians in v13? How should they grieve for their brothers who are ‘asleep’?
3. What is the “hope” that Paul mentioned in v13 and how is this hope fulfilled in those who have fallen asleep? (see v14)
4. What did Paul say to those who are alive and to those who are dead in Christ in v16-17?
5. In v15, why did God say that those who are alive and left until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who have fallen asleep?
6. What did Paul ask them to do in v18? What are “these words”?

### **Application**

7. How does today’s passage affect our response when we deal with the passing of our loved ones who are believers in Christ?



8. What can we look forward to in our mourning for the dead in Christ?

9. How does today's passage motivate us to share about Christ to our unbelieving family and friends?

## **Study 8: “A Hope That Endures” (1 Thessalonians 5:1-11)**

### **Getting Started**

1. How often do you think of the hope you have in Christ? (i.e., heaven) When do you think about that hope? If you barely think about them, how come?

### **Digging In**

*Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11*

2. Why does Paul need not write to them about the end times (i.e., coming of the Lord)?
3. How does Paul describe that day?
4. Despite knowing very well about the fact they know well in what manner the end will come, why do you think Paul writes to describe the end times again?
5. In light of the coming day, what does Paul reminds the Thessalonians of?
6. Why do you think it is important that Paul reminds them of their identity?
7. How should the Thessalonians wait for the coming of Jesus?

8. Is Paul implying that they need to perform 'works' in order to keep their salvation in v8? If yes, why, if no, why not?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. As a community, how should the Thessalonians relate to one another in light of the reality of Christ's coming? Why do you think it is important?

**Application**

10. Are you ready for the return of Jesus? In what area of life are you a spiritual sleepwalker who has been intoxicated by the world?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. How does the passage point us back to the gospel?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
12. How will your awareness of what awaits for unbelievers you know and love motivate you to share the gospel with them?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
13. In what ways are you presently seeking to encourage and build up your fellow believers? How can you be more intentional to spur other believers in pointing them back to the gospel?

# Study 9: “Creating a Healthy Christian Community”

## (1 Thessalonians 5:12-28)

### Getting started

1. Think back to a time when you were part of a healthy church (assuming that you were part of one), what would you say were the characteristics of this church?

### Context

We have seen from the first 11 verses of this chapter that the Day of the Lord will come unannounced and with it, there will be judgment and wrath on all the nations. As Christians, we rest on the blessed hope that we will not face the wrath but will be delivered, as we have seen in the preceding chapter.

However, in as much as it comforts us, it also challenges us to live accordingly as people of the light we are also called to live soberly and alertly as people of the day. In that vein, let us now look into the second half of chapter 5 where Paul leaves his closing instructions to the Thessalonians.

### Digging In

*Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28*

2. Let us examine these verses and try to sub-divide them according to their structure in the passage.

Verses	Brief Summary

3. Verses 12-13 seem to highlight a particular group of individuals. What do you think of the following?
  - a. Their identity
  - b. Their responsibilities
  - c. How are the people meant to regard them and why?

4. The subsequent verses 14-15 draw attention to another set of individuals. Who were they and what was expected from them?
  
5. *Read verses 16-18.*
  - a. Who are the contents of these verses being directed at?
  
  
  - b. What do the verses say and thus imply?
  
6. *Read through verses 19-22.* What are the commands that Paul gives in these verses and what do they imply about congregational health?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What is Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians in v23-24? What encouragement can we derive from these two verses here as Christians (cf. Philippians 1:6)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. How does Paul conclude the letter in v25-28?

**Application**

9. Reflecting upon the starter question earlier, how can we as a community of faith reflect upon relationship and treatment:
  - a) our leaders

b) members of our church

10. As we reflect upon these final instructions for the Thessalonians, how can we practically live out these principles:

a) rejoicing always, praying continually & giving thanks in all circumstances as God's will for our lives?

b) holding on to what is good and rejecting evil?

c) holy living as we await the coming of our Lord?