

THESSALONIANS

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Life Group Study Guide | Holy Cross Church

WEEK OF SEPT 30 - OCT 4

OVERVIEW

So far, we have seen what we could call an obsession of Paul with a life that is lived towards one aim—pleasing God. Some Christians may not delight in giving God their lives because, while they have believed the gospel, they have not grown much in their relationship with God. Such believing sometimes view their Christian life as mere duty and obligation. Christians sometimes have difficulty making the transition from thinking of their faith as a duty demanded by a divine heavenly Master to a relationship of love encouraged by a divine Father. Paul rejoices to see in these Christians a desire to please God and now he tells them the necessary element that fans the flame of zealous desire to please God with our whole lives. The answer is found in our short passage this week.

READ

Read through the text for this study, 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16

STUDY & APPLY

1. Paul provides the necessary element that fans the flame of desire to please God with our lives. What essential element does God use to bring about his transformation in the lives of his people?
2. In reference to the Word of God, Paul has uttermost in mind the word of the gospel, but included in his thinking would be the apostolic tradition about Jesus being formed at the time. What is the difference between receiving the word of the gospel as *the word of man*, versus *the word of God*? What difference would it make in our lives?
3. If someone cut off 1 Thessalonians at verse 13 of chapter 2, we would have the sense that everything was beautiful and perfect in the young church. However, things are not usually like that in the church today. What proof is given in verse 14 that the readers truly accepted God's Word and that God was at work in them through his Word?
4. A sign that the Word of God is operating in churches and individuals is the word of God is received and proclaimed despite persecution and opposition to it. Where do you see the American church today faithful in this area? Where do you see the church unfaithful in this?

5. Verse 14 mentions two different groups who encounter suffering. The first group are Christians who suffer by persecution for standing up for God's truth. The second group are the unbelievers who suffer under God's wrath. We are often uncomfortable discussing God's wrath. How do different people in the church today respond to the idea of God's wrath? Why was God's wrath poured out in our passage?

6. Let's remember that Paul opposed God's Word and persecuted Christians before he came face-to-face with Jesus, the one true Savior. How does this good news give us hope for salvation? How do we live in hope of this promise?

PRAY

Spend a few minutes to pray that we would view our suffering in light of God's redemptive plans and to live our lives by faith in the promises of God—that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.