

# THESSALONIANS

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Life Group Study Guide | Holy Cross Church

**WEEK OF OCT 28 - Nov 1**

### OVERVIEW

This week we come to the closing charge from Paul to the church he planted and loved. As Paul closes his letter he is concerned to leave these Christians with a picture of the gospel-centered church. We could say that Paul has been doing this in his entire letter in various ways. He has described earlier a life pleasing to God, then he reminds us that we must encounter our trials and suffering with hope as we wait for Jesus' return. But now Paul turns his attention particularly to life within the church.

Bible teacher John Stott describes this section "How to be a gospel church". The passage offers an array of practical, yet profound exhortation for the church today.

### READ

Read through the text for this study, 1 Thessalonians 5:9-28

### STUDY & APPLY

1. What role does the whole community play in bringing believers to a point of gospel maturity? Think of examples from the passage for both the leaders (pastors, elders, deacons) and the congregation.
2. Describe a time when your Christian community affected an aspect of your behavior or attitudes, causing you to more faithfully live in step with the gospel?
3. The essence of gospel "peace" is the ceasing of our striving to prove ourselves to God, to prove our worth, and to pay our debt that we owe to God for our sin. We have peace with God not through our performance or record but on God's love for us in Jesus Christ. How does this view of gospel peace empower us to "Be at peace" with others in our christian community as Paul tells in vs. 13?
4. **Quote from the sermon:** *"We cannot truly know what it means to be the people of God outside of the community of God. The Bible knows no identity for the people of God in isolation."* Personal forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God is part of God's work of salvation, but not the whole story. God is preparing his new people for a new heaven and a new earth. His goal is to restore all of creation where his redeemed people dwell in perfect peace with one another and with their Creator, forever. The church today is an imperfect impression of the future perfect community of God's people. How does this affect your view of, and involvement with, the church today?

5. In what ways does the reminder of God's faithfulness in vs. 24 act an encouragement to you when your personal experiences in the church do not match the Bible's explanation of the Christian church?
  
6. In what specific ways can your Life Group you are a part of encourage each other to live out vs. 12-22?

**PRAY**

Take some time now to ask for the Lord's blessing and help as you conclude this study. Take a moment also to look back on key lessons the Lord may be teaching you and pray together as a group for the growth of these things.