

Enduring Hope in Jesus' Coming 1 Thessalonians 1

****Before you start, please spend time in prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you dig deeply in the passage. You **may not get some of the questions which is just fine**. Also, feel free to ask your own questions. Sometimes, we need to live with "I don't know" and move on. Being in a group of other believers, can help in the process. After the group study, find a trusted commentary and/or a trusted pastor to listen (John MacArthur and Alistair Begg, etc.) to the sermons on the passage. However, do what you can first and trust the Lord to guide you in the process.*

Ice breaker: What is the nicest thing someone could say to you? What would give you the best "good feeling" about a comment someone would say about you? How easy is it for you to compliment or encourage someone? OR What family traits (habits, looks, etc.) do you and your siblings share?

Questions: **Ob**= observation questions **Int**- interpretive questions **App** = application questions
(sometimes application questions can be very personal, so share only as you feel comfortable)

****Review from the last lesson who were the Thessalonians and what the Christians were experiencing during this time. It is important to know the audience/the people who were reading this letter.**

Now we need to know the writers of this letter. Also review Acts 16-17

V1. Int- Who is Paul?(lots of course...Acts 9:1-30) Who is Silvanus? (Acts 15:36-40) Who is Timothy?(Acts 16:1-5).

Ob- What do you notice about how Paul starts this letter compared to his other letters? Look at the headings of his letters and what is missing from 1 Thessalonians?

Int-Who is Paul specifically writing to? What do you notice about he addresses God and Jesus? (maybe notice throughout the book how Paul uses God, Christ/Lord and Holy Spirit)

App-What is godly grace and peace? - Amp Bible says peace is: inner calm and spiritual well-being from God. What can we say today to our fellow believers? Does grace need to come before peace? What do we want to share with them when we say this? How can we say this to our nonbelieving friends that would make sense to them?

V2. Ob- Who is Paul giving thanks to? Read through the three prayers Paul offers in this letter (1:2-3, 3:11-13, 5:23-24). What do you notice in these prayers?

App- Who do you thank God for? Who do you pray for constantly? Does it sometimes become weary for you to do so? Why should we never stop praying for those around us?

V3. Ob- List the three things Paul is remembering before God of these believers. Read two more translations to see other ways it is worded.

a.

b.

c.

Int- a. How would you describe works of faith? James 2:14-26. What are examples in scripture for this? Where do these works come from? Ephesians 2:8-10

App- How can this be misapplied or misunderstood? What works do you feel God is calling you to do? Can it change throughout the “seasons” of your life?

b. Int- Who are we to love? 2 Thess. 1:3,4; Col. 1:4 What is the difference between labor and work. Is there a cost to this kind of love? What was the cost for the Thessalonians?

App- How can/do we show that love? To other believers? To unbelievers?

c. Int- Where does our hope lie? What are other words for steadfastness? (Theme for September is Persevere)

App- Which of these three do you find the easiest? The most difficult?

EXTRA STUDY: (If you have time or are interested) Where else in the Bible do we hear these three words together? (you can do a word search individually or together and see what scripture helps you understand these words)_

V4-5. Ob- What three evidences/assurances does Paul have that these people are loved by God and chosen? (also go back to verse 3)

How do we know we are loved by God?

God's love is not his sparing us suffering and death. His love is mainly his showing us and giving us himself in his glory. God loves us mainly by giving us himself and all that he is for us in Jesus. Jesus loves us mainly by giving us himself and all that God is for us in him. That's mainly the way he loves us. He loves us other ways, but *mainly* everything is moving toward that. You are loved by Jesus when Jesus gives you Jesus and all that God is for you in Jesus. So please, do not measure God's love for you by how much health, wealth, and comfort he brings into your life. John Piper.

Int and App- What does it mean to be chosen by God? John 15:16(See the link on election on the bottom of the lesson.) How does that affect you in your understanding and joy as a believer?

Int and App- What is the Gospel? 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. gotquestions.org/gospel-message

App- Where and when did you first hear the gospel in word (Romans 10:13-17)? When did you know God was calling you to saving faith? ***(perhaps this is a good question for two people to pair up and share their faith story for a few minutes)***

Ob- Where does the power of the gospel come from? What does "conviction" mean and what are other translations of this word? (Romans 10:14-15, John 3:5-8) gotquestions.org/what-does-the-Holy-Spirit-do

Int- What does Paul mean the “kind of men we proved to be”? See 2 Thess 3:7 and also the background information from lesson 1.

App- Who is watching you in your faith journey? What example are you giving to others?
How can we show the world/ unbelievers that we have the joy of the Lord and are true believers?

V6. Int- What do we know of the affliction the Thessalonians were experiencing? Review from the background information. (Acts 17:5-10)

Int- What did Christ say about persecution? Matt 5:12 App- What comfort/joy do we get from these times of persecution and affliction? **Romans 5:35-39 Acts 13:52** “That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead” (Philippians 3:10-11).

App- What do you think about when you hear/read of persecutions of believers around the world or of missionary stories of Christians dying for their faith? What would you say to those who believe in the “prosperity gospel”? Do we handle persecution or trial with joy? **James 1:2-3** <https://www.vomcanada.com>

V6 Ob- What does imitate mean? Int- What does it mean to imitate someone?

Ob- In what way were they imitating Christ What is the role of the Holy Spirit? Again James 1:2-4

Int-How do we know how to imitate Christ? 1 Peter 2:21 To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. gotquestions.org/more-like-Christ

V7 Ob- What was the purpose of their suffering? (so that=why or purpose) Go to the map in your first lesson and see where these places are?

V8-Ob- What is the “word of the Lord”? What are other words or descriptions of “sounded forth”
(the expression **“Not only.... but...”**=the first is good **BUT** the second part is better)

Int- How do you see this as evidence of the Thessalonians’ faith?

App- What kind of witness does our church have with the world?

App- They are very new believers? What can we do to encourage/help new believers as they start their faith journey?

V9- Ob- Who are the “they”?

What was the message that the Thessalonians were sharing?

a.

b.

Int- What would be another word for “turned” from? What “idols” could the Jewish converts have turned from? Imagine this totally pagan culture, and these Christians leaving idols. What would that have meant for them? See Acts 19:21-34

App- What have you turned from? How have you changed since coming and growing in Christ? How might others see a change in you?

Ob- What replaced the idols?

Int- What is an Idol- "Anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God and anything you seek to give you what only God can give." Tim Keller
It can be: comfort, family, relationships, appearance, how you keep your house, food, health, etc.

V10- Ob- They turned from idols to do what? (v 9 b) and to do what? (v 10a)
(It had been about 20 years since Jesus had ascended into heaven) What are their three verbs in 9-10?

Int- Why was it so hard for them to wait? What was Jesus going to do? Go back to verse 3- where was their hope? Paul obviously made plain to them about the "wrath of God" ... Romans 5:9

App- Are you actively waiting? What does that look like?

John Stott: They were turning, serving and waiting!! How are we doing in these areas? +

**Jesus is coming again? The hope of the gospel.... More to come
Isaiah 40:31**

What is the doctrine of election? <https://www.gotquestions.org/doctrine-of-election.html>

What are the essentials of the gospel? <https://www.gotquestions.org/gospel-message.html>

What is repentance and is it necessary for Salvation? <https://www.gotquestions.org/repentance.html>

What is conversion? <https://www.gotquestions.org/faith-conversion.html>

What does the Bible say about waiting? <https://www.gotquestions.org/Bible-waiting.html>