

FIRST AND SECOND THESSALONIANS

By Bill Hall

LESSON#1: THE BEGINNING OF THE THESSALONIAN CHURCH

Answer the following questions from the book of Acts:

1. What event caused Paul to choose Silas as his companion on the second journey according to Acts 15:36-40?
2. Who joined them at Lystra, according to Acts 16:1-3?
3. What led Paul and his company to go into Macedonia, according to Acts 16:8-10?
4. **Research Question:** Name two cities of Macedonia.
5. What was the result of Paul's preaching in Thessalonica, according to Acts 17:1-4?
6. What happened to Jason while Paul was there, according to Acts 17:5-9?
7. What immediately took place with Paul and Silas, according to Acts 17:10?
8. **Thought Question:** What accusation could have been made against Paul after leaving under these circumstances?
9. What do we learn from First Thessalonians 3:1-8 concerning Paul's actions when he was in Athens?

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10. Consider Acts 18:1-5. Where was Paul when Silas and Timothy (Timotheus) came from Macedonia?

When Silas and Timothy joined Paul, Timothy gave his report concerning the Thessalonians. Paul at this point (around 51 or 52 A.D.) wrote his first letter to the Thessalonians. As we read and study the letter we will be able to reconstruct the contents of Timothy's report.

LESSON #2: PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH IN THESSALONICA

Answer the following questions from First Thessalonians, chapter 1:

1. What two men joined Paul in his greeting?

What is another name for "Sylvanus"?

2. **Research Question:** In verse 2, Paul states that he makes mention of the Thessalonian Christians in his prayers. Search the scriptures for others whom Paul prayed for on a regular basis. Give scripture references.
3. As stated in verse 3, how had the Thessalonians demonstrated their faith?
Their love?
Their hope?
4. With what three things had Paul preached the gospel in Thessalonica, according to verse 5?
5. In what had the Thessalonians received the word? verse 6
6. What good things are said of them in verses 7-8?
7. **Thought Question:** List some ways this church can be sounding out the word.
8. **Thought Question:** What would we expect today of a church left by its teacher only a few weeks after its beginning?
9. These people had turned from idols in order to do what two things, according to verses 9-10?

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10. What two things are said of Jesus in verse 10?

11. Write a brief statement of your opinion of this church as it is pictured in this chapter

LESSON #3: PAUL'S WORK AT THESSALONICA

Answer the following questions from First Thessalonians 2:1-16:

1. What had Paul experienced in Philippi before coming to Thessalonica, according to verse 2?
2. **Research Question:** After reading Acts 16:12-40, state what Paul and Silas had suffered in Philippi.

What good thing had resulted from their suffering?
3. Consider verses 3-6. List the things that Paul said were not characteristic of his teaching.
4. Consider verses 7 and 11. To what two things did Paul compare his spirit toward the Thessalonians?
5. What two things was Paul willing to impart to these people, according to verse 8?
6. What had Paul and his companions done so that they would not be chargeable (a burden) to them, according to verse 9?
7. **Research Question:** Read verses 1-12. How many times did Paul state that the Thessalonians were already aware of what he was writing?

What are some of the expressions used to indicate this?
8. **Review Question:** Think back over the introductory material of lesson #1. Why would Paul emphasize the courage, faithfulness, and love with which he had preached in Thessalonica?
9. How had the Thessalonians received the word, according to verse 13?

What was the result?

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10. In what way was the Thessalonian church similar to the churches of Judea, according to verse 14?

11. List some of the sins of the Jews for which they would be punished as given in verses 15-16?

LESSON #4: PAUL'S CONCERN FOR THE CHURCH

Answer the following questions from First Thessalonians 2:17 - 3:13:

1. Why did Paul say he had not returned to Thessalonica, according to 2:17-18?
2. **Research Question:** Can you think of other occasions in the scriptures when Satan is blamed for personal setbacks and misfortunes?

Can God use Satan's work for His own purposes?
3. What did Paul say of the Thessalonian Christians in 2:19-20?
4. In what way had Paul shown his concern for them, according to 3:1-2?
5. Read Acts 17:16. What were the conditions in Athens at the time?
6. What had Paul already told the Thessalonians, according to verses 3-4?
7. **Thought Question:** What can we learn from this as we deal with new converts?
8. What was Timothy's report concerning them?
9. How had Paul reacted to the report?
10. **Thought Question:** This was "really living" to Paul. What kind of life is "really living" to most people?
11. List four things for which Paul prayed, according to 3:10-13.
12. How often and how fervently did he pray this, according to verse 10?

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13. We have now studied three chapters in First Thessalonians. What one thing is mentioned at the end of all three chapters?

14. Briefly summarize Paul's feelings for the Thessalonians as pictured in chapters 2 and 3.

LESSON #5: PURITY OF LIFE MUST BE MAINTAINED

Answer the following questions from First Thessalonians 4:1-12:

1. What two things had the Thessalonian Christians learned from Paul, according to verse 1?
2. Where did these commandments originate, according to verse 2?
3. **Research Question:** Can you find other scriptures that state that what the apostles taught was truly the teaching of Jesus Christ?
4. What do you think Paul is referring to by the word "vessel" in verse 4?
5. How is one to possess his own vessel, according to verses 3-5?
6. Give two reasons why one should not defraud his brother in this matter, according to verses 6, 7.

Thought Question: In what matter?

7. **Thought Question:** Does the fact that two adults "consent" mean that no one is hurt by sexual immorality?

Suppose the woman's husband never knows or doesn't care, does this free the one who commits adultery with her from guilt?

Discuss this.

8. If one despises (rejects) this teaching, whom is he truly despising (rejecting)?
9. In what does Paul want the Thessalonians to increase more and more, according to verses 9-10?

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10. What three things were the Thessalonians to aspire (study) to do, according to verse 119

11. What two things would be accomplished by their doing these things, according to verse 12?

12. In summarizing, list practical lessons to be learned from these 12 verses.

**LESSON #6: CORRECTING MISUNDERSTANDINGS
CONCERNING THE SECOND COMING**

Answer the following questions from First Thessalonians 4:13 – 5:11:

1. Is Paul saying in verse 13 that Christians should not sorrow when loved ones die?

What is he saying?

2. What word is used in verse 13 to describe the dead?

Thought Question: Does this mean that the dead are unconscious?

Explain.

3. What belief shared by all Christians gives hope of a resurrection of the dead, according to verse 14?

4. Compare translations. Instead of "prevent" (King James) in verse 15, what do you find in other translations?

What is verse 15 telling us?

5. From verses 16-17, list events as they will occur when Christ comes.

6. What is said of the wicked dead in these verses?

When will they be raised according to John 5:28-29?

7. **Thought Question:** Look back over verses 13-18 What misunderstanding would you say the Thessalonians had concerning the second coming?

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8. To what two things does Paul compare the suddenness of the Lord's coming in 5:1-3?
9. What are the characteristics of those who are of the night?

Of those who are of the day, according to verses 4-8?

10. Is the sleeping of verse 10 the same as that of verse 6?

Explain.

11. What assurance is given in verse 10?

12. **Thought Question:** When one considers the teaching of this lesson, he would assume that people everywhere would be devoting their lives to preparation for the Lord's return. Why is it otherwise?

LESSON #7: FINAL ADMONITIONS

Answer the following questions from First Thessalonians 5:12-28:

1. What people are referred to in verses 12-13?

What are to be our actions toward them, according to these same verses?

2. The King James Version in verse 14 refers to "the unruly", the "feeble-minded", and "the weak". What terms are used for these in other translations?
3. What is to be our action toward "all men" according to verse 14?
4. **Thought Question:** One of the most difficult responsibilities we have as Christians is not to render evil for evil, as taught in verse 15. What are some qualities we can develop to help us in this?

Can you think of Bible characters who excelled in this.

5. Consider verses 16-18. What have we learned about the Thessalonian Christians that would make it difficult for them to rejoice?

What two exercises are commanded in verses 17, 18 that would help them to rejoice?

6. Consider verses 22-23. What is the standard by which one proves (carefully examines) all things?

What are to be one's actions once he has done this?

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7. To what degree were these people to be sanctified, according to verse 23?

8. What two exhortations are given in verses 25, 26?

9. To whom was this letter to be read, according to verse 27?

10. **Soul Searcher:** Which of the exhortations found in this passage do YOU need to work on most? (You may wish to use the back of this page for your answer)

**LESSON #8: GOD'S FINAL RECOMPENSE
TO THE OBEDIENT AND THE DISOBEDIENT**

Answer the following questions from Second Thessalonians, chapter 1:

1. It is generally agreed that the second letter to the Thessalonians was written soon after the first. Read the entire second letter. What evidence do you see to support this belief?
2. For what two things did Paul give thanks in verse 3?
3. **Review Question:** Consider I Thessalonians 3:9-13. For what had Paul been praying?
4. In what had the Thessalonians shown patience and faith, according to verse 4?
5. Consider verses 5-7. With what will God recompense (repay) those who troubled the Thessalonians?

With what will he recompense (repay) those who are troubled?

6. What do you think the word "righteous" means in verse 6?
7. What facts about the second coming do verses 7 and 8 add to what was foretold in I Thessalonians, chapter 4?
8. Upon what two classes of people will vengeance be taken, according to verse 8?

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9. Describe the punishment to be suffered, according to verse 9.
10. What will be the actions of the saints, according to verse 10?
11. Briefly summarize Paul's prayer recorded in verses 11-12.

LESSON #9: APOSTASY PREDICTED

Answer the following questions from Second Thessalonians 2:1-12:

1. Compare translations. Instead of the word "by" (King James) in verse 1, what do you find in other translations?
2. What misconception did the Thessalonians have concerning the "day of Christ"?

From what three sources could this misconception have possibly arisen, according to verse 2?

3. What two things were to occur before that day, according to verse 3?
4. **Thought Question:** It is commonly believed that the **apostles** themselves were deceived in looking for an immediate return of the Lord and taught this in the scriptures. What would you say to someone who expressed this opinion?
5. **Thought Question:** List good things that would grow out of one's looking for an immediate return of the Lord.

List some bad things.

6. Describe the man of sin as he is pictured in verse 4.

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7. Why had he not already been revealed, according to verses 6-7?

8. In what form was the iniquity at the time Paul wrote, according to verse 7?

How long would the lawless one (wicked) continue, according to verse 8?

9. What would be characteristic of his working, according to verses 9-10?

10. Consider verses 10-12. Those who would be deceived would be those who _____, who do not love _____, who do not believe _____, but who have pleasure in _____.

11. What does God send to such people?

Thought Question: What are some ways he might do this?

LESSON #10: THE CHOSEN ONES OF GOD

Introduction: Paul in this epistle had just spoken of certain ones who would be deceived by the man of sin and would be sent a strong delusion. Paul now expresses strong confidence that the Thessalonians are not the kind of people he has described.

Answer the following questions from Second Thessalonians 2:13 - 3:5:

1. For what did Paul give thanks in verse 13?
2. Verses 10-12 give a description of "those who perish".

What are the reasons these perish according to these verses?

3. In contrast to these, verses 13-14 give a description of those "chosen for salvation." These are sanctified by _____, maintain a belief in _____, and are called by _____.
4. **Thought Question:** John 17:17 says that one is sanctified by the truth, God's word, while II Thessalonians 2.13 says that one is sanctified by the Spirit. Are these statements contradictory?

Explain.

5. **Research Question:** There is a common belief that for one to become a Christian, he must receive some supernatural call (hear a still small voice or have an unusual experience of grace), while verse 14 says that one is called "by our gospel". Find expressions in the scriptures that "call" all men to obedience and salvation.

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6. Define the word "traditions".

What traditions were the Thessalonians to hold, according to verse 15?

7. **Thought Question:** Are there traditions that we ought not to hold?

Explain.

8. Summarize Paul's prayer recorded in verses 16-17.

9. For what two things did Paul ask the Thessalonians to pray, according to 3:1-2?

10. What confidence did he express in the Thessalonians in verses 3-4?

LESSON #11: WARNING AGAINST IDLENESS

Answer the following questions from Second Thessalonians 3:6-18:

1. Who is to be withdrawn from, according to verse 6?
2. In what way had Paul and his associates been an example to the Thessalonians, according to verses 7-9?
3. What had Paul commanded while he was with them, according to verse 10?
4. In what way were some of the Thessalonians walking disorderly, according to verse 11?
5. What did Paul command these to do in verse 12?
6. **Research Question:** Can you find other scriptures that teach the importance of working and providing for one's family?
7. **Thought Question:** What should be a Christian's first concern or concerns as he looks for employment?

What should not be his first concern?

8. What was to be done with anyone who would not obey Paul's epistles, according to verse 14?

Why?

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9. How should we treat the person otherwise, according to verse 15?

10. What was Paul's sign (token) in every epistle?

Think back to II Thessalonians 2:1,2. Why was it important that people look for this sign?

LESSON #12: REVIEW: THE THESSALONIANS AND US

A. The Thessalonians showed strength in the face of persecution.

1. What types of persecution do we face today?

2. What can we learn from the Thessalonians as we face these persecutions?

B. The Thessalonians were constantly growing in faith and love.

1. List some characteristics of people who have strong faith.

2. How is a strong faith developed, according to Romans 10:17 and John 20:30-31?

3. List some characteristics of people who have a strong love for their fellow Christians.

C. The Thessalonians had to rise above their worldly environment in order to serve Christ faithfully.

1. List worldly practices of our society that we must avoid.

2. Research Question: Can you find scriptures that teach that we are not to be like the world?

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D. The Thessalonians were very evangelistic.

1. What leads us to make a strong effort to convert our friends and relatives?
2. What is indicated if we are not doing so?

E. The Thessalonians needed to be more diligent in providing for their families.

1. What is said of those who will not work and provide for their families in II Thessalonians 3:10 and I Timothy 5:8?
2. List important steps young people can take to enable them one day to provide for a family.