

## Study 1 – Book of 1 & 2 Thessalonians - Introduction

This study for 1 & 2 Thessalonians outlines Paul's letters to a young/new, persecuted church. It breaks down the core themes of holiness, steadfast love, and the hope of Christ's return, organizing each chapter into actionable takeaways and discussion points.

### Context & Background

### Discussion Questions

- Who was the Author of the 1 & 2 Thessalonians in your opinion? Who was this letter written to?
- Where is Thessalonica? Who accompanied Paul at Thessalonica?
- What do we know about Thessalonica? What is the background and history there?
- What do we know of Paul's time ministering there? Who went with him?
- What is the main content and/or main themes of this epistle?
- What was the condition of the Thessalonian church?

You can read more about this entire account in Acts 17:1-10.

Let's also read 1 Thessalonians 1: and 2 Thessalonians 2:1

### Cross-References

Acts 17:1-10 – This passage tells us the background of Paul working in Thessalonica.

### Introduction:

- **Setting:** Written around AD 50–51 to the church in Thessalonica (a major Macedonian city).
- **Occasion:** Paul had to leave the city abruptly due to persecution (Acts 17). He wrote to encourage the new/established believers, address false teachings about the end times, and correct issues of idleness.

**Key Themes for this Epistles:** Standing firm in suffering, living a countercultural holy life, Steadfast love, and anticipating the glorious return of Jesus.

The ancient city of Thessalonica is the same city that is now called Thessaloniki. This is currently the second largest and second most important **cities in Greece**. It was founded roughly 300-400 years B.C. By the time of Paul's missionary journey, it was an important regional capital for the Roman province of **Macedonia**. The city was strategic because of its location at the intersection of two major Roman highways and its harbour, which was a busy port for shipping and trading.

Paul visited this city on his second missionary journey, **on which Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy accompanied him**. In the Acts account, we see that Paul may have been in this city as **short as three weeks since he is mentioned as teaching on the Sabbath three times**. Some of the Jews in the local synagogue, but even more Greeks and a number of the leading women, believed Paul's message and were converted.

## Study on the Book of 1 & 2 Thessalonians

The Jews were jealous and stirred up a mob, which rioted. Paul's host, Jason, was forcibly taken from his house along with some of the other brethren. Jason somehow made peace with them, and Paul and his companions were forced to leave the city, so he went to Berea. This was not enough for the Thessalonian Jews, who followed Paul to Berea and kept causing trouble until he was forced to leave that place as well.

Evidence suggests Paul wrote this letter from Corinth and based on an inscription showing that Gallio was consul at 51-52 A.D., this would date 1 Thessalonians as the earliest epistle.

### **1 Thessalonians 1:1 - Greeting (1)**

#### Verse by Verse Commentary

1. Paul mentioned Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy by name in his greeting because the Thessalonians would have been familiar with them. Both of these brothers accompanied Paul during his time of ministry in Thessalonica. Therefore, they certainly had friends there and wanted to pass their greetings on.
2. Timothy was sent back to the church there after Paul left, but before this book was written. See 1 Thessalonians 3:1-2.

#### **How did Paul start his letter to this Church or people in Thessalonica vs 1?**

3. Paul begins this letter, as usual, with a declaration of authorship, a clear recipient, an acknowledgment of his position as God's servant, and a blessing.

#### *In this study series, I am hoping we'll be looking at:*

#### **1 Thessalonians: Living in the Light of His Return**

- **Chapters 1-3: Paul's Encouragement & Affection**

- *Theme:* The power of the Gospel and thanksgiving for a growing church.
- *Study Questions:* How did the Thessalonians become a model to others? How can you maintain gratitude and faithful ministry when facing adversity?

- **Chapter 4: A Life Pleasing to God**

- *Theme:* Pursuing sexual purity, brotherly love, and the hope of the resurrection.
- *Study Questions:* What does a "quiet life" that earns the respect of outsiders look like today? How does the promise of Christ's return bring comfort regarding loved ones who have died?

- **Chapter 5: The Day of the Lord**

- *Theme:* Spiritual alertness, church relationships, and practical Christian living.
- *Study Questions:* What does it mean to be "children of light"? How can you apply the commands to "rejoice always" and "pray without ceasing" this week?

#### **2 Thessalonians: Standing Firm in Truth**

- **Chapter 1: The Promise of Final Justice**

- *Theme:* Steadfastness in persecution and the vindication of God's people.
- *Study Questions:* How does God's final justice comfort you when you suffer for your faith? What does a worthy life mean in this context?

- **Chapter 2: The Man of Lawlessness & Standing Firm**

- *Theme:* Avoiding deception regarding the end of the world.

### Study on the Book of 1 & 2 Thessalonians

- *Study Questions:* What specific "traditions" or truths did Paul tell the church to hold fast to? How can you guard your heart against deception in today's culture?
  
- **Chapter 3: Warning Against Idleness & Final Greetings**
- *Theme:* The importance of hard work and church discipline.
- *Study Questions:* Why is "idleness" and meddling in others' business spiritually dangerous? How can you pray for those who spread the Gospel effectively?