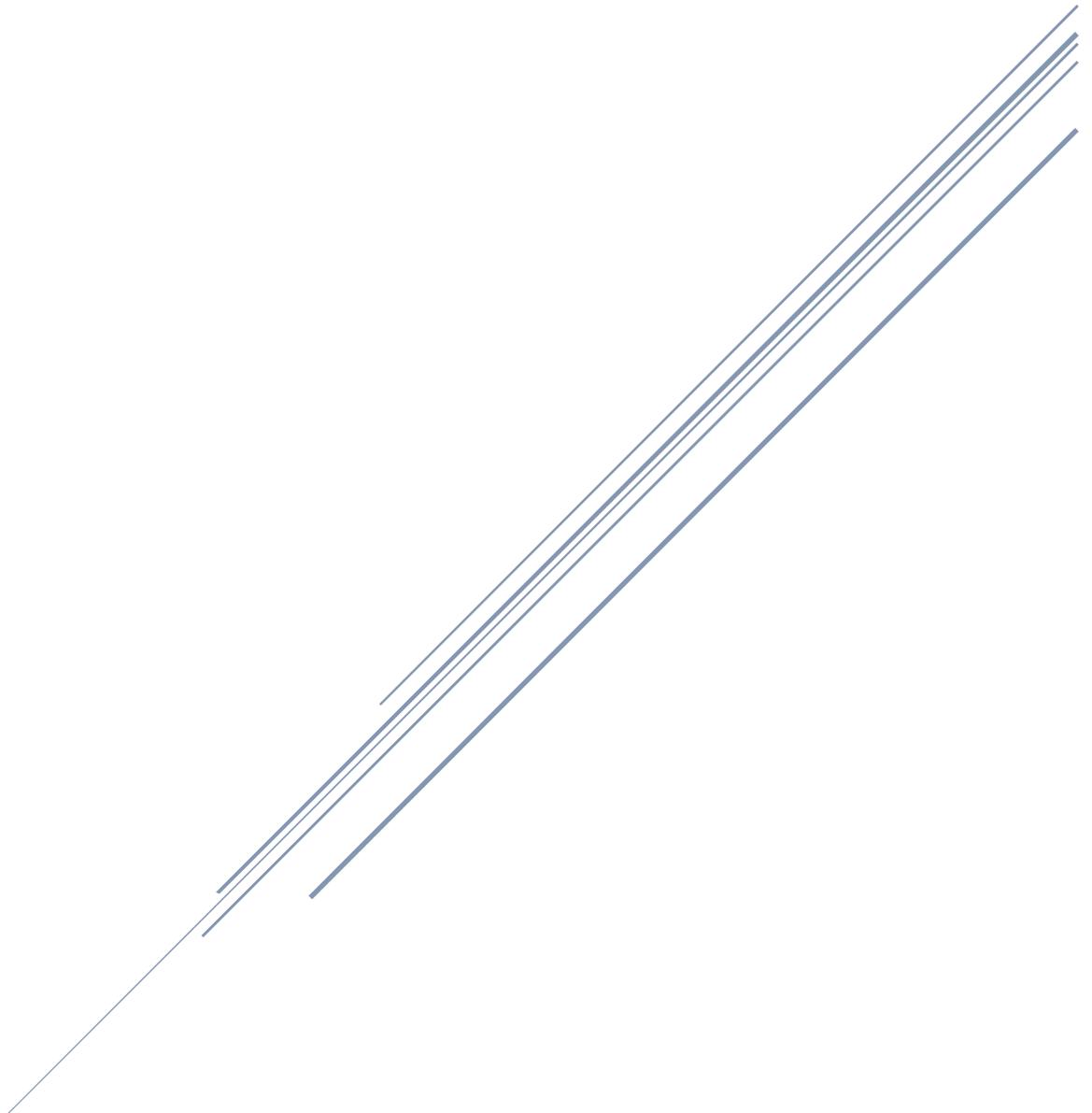


# 1 & 2 THESSALONIANS

*Faith, Love & Hope in the Gospel*

Study Guide & Outline



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## 1 & 2 Thessalonians at a Glance

### 1 & 2 Thessalonians Content: Jesus is Coming Back!

**Themes: Faith, Love, Hope & Joy Found in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ**

1-3 Reflecting back on what had transpired in Thessalonica (2 Th. 1)

4-5 Looking forward to what is yet to come both now & eternally (2 Th. 2-3))

**Authorship:** The Apostle Paul with Silas & Timothy at his side

**Background & Destination:** Written from Corinth shortly after their time in Thessalonica  
 Church established on Paul's 2nd missionary journey amongst persecution  
 No OT quotes, Church was mainly a mix of Gentiles, with some being Jewish  
 Thessalonica a busy city of +/- 200,000 (mainly Greeks) and the capital of the province  
 A chief strategic seaport city & overland route supporting commercialism & strong military  
 A free city under Rome, which allowed self-governing rule  
 Religion - idolatry, with Mount Olympus – the many sins accompanying idolatry

**Occasion and Date:** Paul was hindered from returning – he sends letter by Timothy  
 Paul had been there only a short time and was concerned for their welfare  
 Paul may have been hindered by a pledge, possibly to not house Paul (Acts 17:6-9)  
 Paul was in Thessalonica at least 3 weeks, but most likely longer (Phil 4:16)  
 Letter was a response from Timothy's report after Paul's quick departure  
 It was an infant church which Paul had established with his team  
 Paul commended them for their wide spread testimony of faith in Christ

**Contributions & Points:** One of Paul's earliest letters (AD 52, first if before Galatians)  
 Doctrine – The Triune God, Word of God, resurrection, holy living, Christ's return & gospel  
 Lord's return develops into a prominent subject in both letters  
 Paul does not call himself an Apostle, but his apostleship was not in question  
 Mentions Silas and Timothy as co-workers whom they knew  
 Writing is simple, basic, informal & personal – Paul treated them as beloved ones  
 Tone is gentle, affectionate, intimate & heart to heart – Paul treated them as equals  
 Discipleship living & teaching was imprinted and kept this young church strong

**Unique Facts:** Gives us a picture of an early thriving & growing NT church  
 The church seems to have a relatively small Jewish presence  
 Reveals the eternal hope in Christ – the Rapture & the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Christ  
 The mission team is seen as uniquely childlike, motherly & fatherly – lived life with them  
 Rapture presented as a comfort to the living, even regarding those who had already passed  
 Word "brethren" appears 26 times, indicating a close relationship with the church  
 Practical encouragements are the comfort and hope of Christ's return,  
 endurance in affliction, faithfulness and maturity in Christ

### 2 Thessalonians Additions:

**Themes: Their Present Suffering, The Tribulation, the Lord's Return & Living by faith**

Written a few weeks or months after 1st letter to clarify ongoing struggles of doctrine

A response from Timothy's report after returning from delivering the 1<sup>st</sup> letter

Paul commends them for persevering in the faith despite trials & tribulations

Lord's return is a prominent subject, and corrects ideas on the Lord's return

Assures that the Day of the Lord has not come & judgement on the lost is coming

Advises practical separation from troublesome brothers causing problems in the church

# 1 Thessalonians Study Guide & Outline

## Acts 16:22-17:10... The Founding of the church in Thessalonica

- 16:22-40... Persecuted & shamed while in Philippi, yet faithfully continued to preach the gospel
- 17:1-3... Went next to Thessalonica & preached the Gospel of Christ among the Jews & Gentiles
- 17:4... The Gospel caused a division among the Jews & Gentiles as some believed in Christ
- 17:5... The religious Jews stirred up even Gentiles and brought about great persecution
- 17:6-7... Jason becomes the target of persecution since Paul & Silas could not be found
- 17:8-9... The growing crowds and city authorities took the side of the Jewish antagonists
- Acts 18:5...** Silas & Timothy came with news from Philippi & Thessalonica
- Acts 18:9-11...** Paul, during his 18 months in Corinth wrote 1 & 2 Thessalonians

## 1 Thessalonians 1, Paul’s Heartfelt Greetings & Gospel Lived Truths (Paul the Pastor)

- 1-3. It was Paul, Silas & Timothy that had started this new church
  - Faith** – In Christ resulted in their salvation = new acts & deeds in their new faith
  - Love** – Coming from the Holy Spirit = toil & labor for each other in their new faith
  - Hope** – In the Lord Jesus Christ = cheerful & lasting endurance for their new faith

**Read & note** the contrasts of Paul’s greetings found in *Galatians 1:1* & *Philippians 1:1*...

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**Note:** Faith, Love, Hope & joy are foundational gospel themes/truths of this brotherly letter

4-5. Why was Paul confident they were chosen by God? \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** The TRINITY is immediately & clearly expressed in the above verses

What is evidence of their salvation in vs. 5? \_\_\_\_\_

6-8. What are the other evidences in these vss.? \_\_\_\_\_

Why is joy important to see in the new believer? \_\_\_\_\_

9-10. Paul’s recognition of their true Faith, Love & Hope found in the Gospel

- Work of Faith - \_\_\_\_\_
- Labor of Love - \_\_\_\_\_
- Hope in Christ - \_\_\_\_\_

**Cross-reference & discuss:** Romans 5:2 (Faith), Colossians 1:4 (Love), Galatians 5:5 (Hope) \_\_\_\_\_

What can distract us from living out these 3 great realities of salvation? \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** These truths will be further noted along with the truth of being rescued *from God's wrath*  
**Reflecting** on chapter 1, how do we know that Paul had a team spirit? \_\_\_\_\_

**Personally:** What can you apply to your life from this chapter? \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Thessalonians 2, Paul's Humble Reminders & Affirmations (Paul the Person)**

*1-12. Paul's character, living practices & example among the people*

- 1-2. His persistent preaching during severe persecution
- 3-6. His pure motives & God given approval of preaching among the people
- 7-9. His practice of humility & motherly care for his children
- 10-12. His pattern of mature fatherly care for his children

**Note:** *Paul's character & practices were often criticized & condemned by his enemies*

How was the team childlike? \_\_\_\_\_

How was the team like a nursing mother? \_\_\_\_\_

How was the team like a father? \_\_\_\_\_

What motivated Paul? \_\_\_\_\_

What did not motivate Paul? \_\_\_\_\_

**Read & discuss** the importance *2 Corinthians 1:12* for us today

*13-16. Paul's affirmation of their new faith & love which are in Christ Jesus*

- 13. They received God's word and salvation in Christ by faith
- 14. They followed the godly examples of gospel living in love
- 15-16. Paul recognizes the unbelieving Jewish & Gentile response to the gospel (Acts 18:4-6)

*17-20. Paul remembers his separation from them and desire to see them again*

What is meant by "You are our glory and joy." \_\_\_\_\_

### 1 Thessalonians 3, Paul’s Parental Care & Concern for His Children (Paul the Parent)

*1-5. Because of concern, Timothy was sent back to Thessalonica to pastor the church*

Key ideas? \_\_\_\_\_

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*6-10. Timothy returns with the news from the church which inspires this letter*

Key ideas? \_\_\_\_\_

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*11-13. Paul’s prayerful words of encouragement as he turns to other issues*

Key ideas? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Reflecting:** Put into your own words a brief summary of the message of the last two chapters. \_\_\_\_\_

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### 1 Thessalonians 4, Paul’s Pastoral Reminders of Living in Faith, Love & Hope (1:3)

*1-8. Our work of faith in devotion to Christ*

1-2. Walking in obedience & abounding in the faith

3-7. Living in sanctification, purity & honor among each other (1 Cor. 6:18; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5)

8. Respecting the Word of God & the Spirit’s work in ourselves

Growing in maturity for Christ: \_\_\_\_\_

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*9-12. Our labor of love for the people of God*

9-10. Growing & abounding in love among the believers

11-12. Aim at a quiet life & work hard as a testimony to the unbeliever

Growing in love for others: \_\_\_\_\_

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**13-18. Our hope in Christ and His coming for His own (Paul the Prophet)**

- 13-14. The glorious hope of those who have believed
- 15-17. The order of the events (Rapture) to take place for the church (bride of Christ)
  - 1. *The Lord’s strongly announced coming to us*
  - 2. *The sleeping saints rising to the clouds to meet Him*
  - 3. *The remaining saints rising to the clouds to meet Him*
  - 4. *Eternity with the Lord*
- 18. The comforting reality of the Lord receiving His bride

**Consider the words of Christ, reflecting a Jewish engagement & marriage...**

*Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. John 14:1-3*

**1 Thessalonians 5, Paul’s Parental & Pastoral Encouragement (Paul the Prophet)**

**1-10. The reality of living in the light of Jesus Christ & His return**

- 1-3. Events concerning the promise of Jesus’ 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming to the earth for judgment
- 4-7. Living as children of light & day, because we are awake & sober (Eph. 5:9; Col. 1:12)
- 8-11. Putting on faith, love & hope, because we live in & for Christ

**12-15. The recognition of the fruitful & the fruitless living among them**

- 12-13. Recognize the laborers among you
- 14. Be aware of the idlers and those in need among you (Expanded in 2 Thess.)
- 15. Live as servants for Christ, not as a vengeful

**Titus 3:8...** *“This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.”*

**2 Timothy 1:6-7...** *“For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.”*

How did Paul command respect for himself? \_\_\_\_\_

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**16-28. Paul’s final words of exhortation & encouragement**

Why memorize 1 Thess. 5:16-18? \_\_\_\_\_

What encourages you from this letter from Paul? \_\_\_\_\_

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**2 Thessalonians 1, Paul’s Heartfelt Greetings & Gospel Lived Truths (Pastor)**

*1-4. It was Paul, Silas & Timothy who continued to serve this growing church*

**Faith** – Continues to grow more & more in Christ during Paul’s absence

**Love** – Continues to increase among themselves along with their faith

**Perseverance** – **Hopeful** endurance was made stronger thru persecution & testing

**Note: Their faith, Love & Hopeful perseverance continued despite severe difficulties**

*5. Why did Paul think them worthy of God’s kingdom?* \_\_\_\_\_

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*6-10. Paul’s affirmation of God’s justice & retribution on their behalf*

When will all difficulties be settled? \_\_\_\_\_

Who will be punished? \_\_\_\_\_

What of those who believe? \_\_\_\_\_

*11-12. What were Paul’s desires for them?* \_\_\_\_\_

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**2 Thessalonians 2, Paul the Prophet Clarifies Christ’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming**

*1-4. The rising up of the anti-Christ precedes Christ’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming*

1-2. Don’t be led astray by wrong teachings regarding the Day of the Lord (The Day of the Lord corresponds to the future judgments as taught in Revelation 4-20)

3-4. The anti-Christ will oppose God and will set himself up as God Himself

*5-8. The revealing of the anti-Christ*

5-6. Paul reminds them of the one holding this evil back (Holy Spirit in the Church?)

7-8. Paul reminds them of the present evil at work & revealing of the evil one

*9-12. The results of the anti-Christ*

9-10. Satan’s great deceitfulness & wickedness toward the unbelievers

11-12. God’s powerful delusion (led away) & condemnation of these unbelievers

*The anti-Christ’s personality is?* \_\_\_\_\_

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*13-17. What are Paul’s words of encouragement to these doubtful suffering believers?* \_\_\_\_\_

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## 2 Thessalonians 3, Paul the Pastor Reminders of Living in Faith, Love & Hope

### 1-5. Living by faith in Christ among the evil people *of this world*

- 1-2. Pray for the gospel to grow and for protection from evil doers
- 3. Trust in and count on the faithfulness, power & protection of our God
- 4. Follow the counsel & wisdom of the Word of God and those **living it**
- 5. Continue to grow in our understanding of God’s love and Christ’s cheerful endurance

### 6-12. Living by faith in Christ among the idle & disruptive *in the church*

- 6. Avoid the lazy & idle talkers who cause disunity in the body
- 7-9. Remember Paul’s example of serving through labor & toil
- 10. Live according to Paul’s simple rule of conduct
- 11-12. Confront those among you who do not live out this principle (1 Th. 5:14)

**Note:** *There seemed to be those in the church that were teaching that they were already in the Great Tribulation because of the persecution they were enduring. And because they had this belief, they felt there was no need to labor, since Christ was soon to return.*

**Titus 2:11-15...** “For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.”

### 13-18. Paul’s last words to this special church

- 13. Persist in doing good among those in the church and outside the church
- 14-15. Recognize the brothers who ignore these biblical instructions & warn them

By what authority can Paul command these things? \_\_\_\_\_

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16-18. Paul’s last loving words to his children in the faith

### What can we personally take away from this study?

**Encouragements?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Challenges?** \_\_\_\_\_

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## The Catching Away of the Bride & 2nd Coming Contrasted

Rapture of the Bride                      2nd Coming of Christ

- Promised to the Church **Vs.** Promised to Israel
- Love for the Church (Bride) **Vs.** Justice for Israel (Wife)
- Salvation of the Church **Vs.** Destruction of the Lost
- No Condemnation **Vs.** Condemnation
- Comfort & Life **Vs.** Pain & Death
- Blessed Hope **Vs.** Fearful Dread
- Meet in the air **Vs.** Comes to Earth
- Bride Received **Vs.** World Judged

## The Revelation of Jesus Christ

### Chapters 1-3, The Introduction & Instructions to the Churches

*1:19, The Simple Outline of Revelation*

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### Chapters 4-18, The Tribulation Period (The Time of Jacob’s Trouble)

*4:1, The Hereafter (The churches are no the longer focus, but Israel & world judgement)*  
*7:4, The Israelite witnesses during the Tribulation*

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### Chapters 19, The Return of Christ to the Earth

*19:11-16, The Physical. Literal Return of Christ to the Earth*

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### Chapters 20-22, The Promised Kingdom of Israel, Judgements & New Heavens & Earth

*22:16, The Letter was a testament & validation for the early churches*

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