



WHILE WE WAIT

A Study of 1 & 2
Thessalonians



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WE WAIT



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Whether it's waiting for the red light to turn green, the warmer weather to appear, or the doctor to deliver those test results... let's be honest: **Waiting is hard. For everyone.**

In 1 & 2 Thessalonians, the author, Paul, is addressing a church community that was struggling to wait.

What were they waiting for? For Jesus to return and make everything right.

But since the day this letter was written almost 2,000 years ago, Jesus has not returned. So, the question still stands: How are we supposed to live while we wait?

As we journey through 1 & 2 Thessalonians together, we'll see the way God wants us to live while we wait:

- with increasing hope in the face of despair
- with endurance amid suffering
- with holiness despite relentless temptation
- with passionate purpose

So, read along with us for the next six weeks as we learn how to live **while we wait**.

- *Eagle Brook Church*

P.S. Before we start, scan the QR code to take a quick survey! We'd love to learn about where you are in your faith. We'll circle back at the end of the six weeks.



Week 1:

WHAT DO
YOU WANT
TO BE
KNOWN FOR?

What do you want
to be known for?

WE ARE NOT
TRYING TO PLEASE
PEOPLE BUT GOD,
WHO TESTS
OUR HEARTS.

1 THESSALONIANS 2:4

Reading Plan

- ☐ Day 1: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-3
- ☐ Day 2: 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5
- ☐ Day 3: 1 Thessalonians 1:6-10
- ☐ Day 4: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12
- ☐ Day 5: 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20
- ☐ Day 6: Read all of 1 Thessalonians 1 & 2



FOR REFLECTION:

In Acts 17, Paul and his companions—specifically, Silas—traveled to the city of Thessalonica and began what is largely considered to be the first Christian church. After preaching three weeks in a row about how Jesus is the Messiah they'd been waiting for, it says in Acts 17:4, "Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women."

The first church was made up of converted Jews, Greeks, and powerful women. What a beautiful thing: a group of people who believed that Jesus rose from the dead and accomplished what God had set out to accomplish from the beginning—final victory over sin and death.

But this first church caused a lot of suspicion with neighbors, friends, and family. In the Roman world, allegiance was supposed to be given to Caesar, not Jesus. If someone other than Caesar was considered king, aka the most important person in your life, that caused unrest among the people.

A mob ensued. People saw Paul as a threat and wanted to eliminate him. But Paul narrowly escaped during the quiet of the night. He had to leave the city and church he loved dearly.

Six months later, in approximately 50 or 51 AD, Paul penned the first letter to the church in Thessalonica.

He had heard that, despite the persecution and despite his absence, the church was thriving in the face of suffering. But they were longing for Jesus to return and make things right, especially for those who had already been martyred for their faith. Would Jesus come back today and raise them back to life? Would he return and bring justice to the world? Why wasn't he coming back...now?

Those are the questions Paul sought to answer in this first letter to the Thessalonians.

PAUL'S TRAVELS



Scholars estimate that Paul may have traveled over 10,000 miles based on his journey in Acts.



This is believed to be the actual road Paul traveled. Image captured in modern-day Turkey.

Week 2:

Make it your
ambition to
lead a quiet life.

1 Thessalonians 4:11

WHAT KIND
OF LIFE
SHOULD WE
LIVE?

What kind of
life should we live?



Reading Plan

- ☐ Day 1: 1 Thessalonians 3:1-5
- ☐ Day 2: 1 Thessalonians 3:6-10
- ☐ Day 3: 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13
- ☐ Day 4: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-2
- ☐ Day 5: 1 Thessalonians 4:3-12
- ☐ Day 6: Read all of 1 Thessalonians 3 & 4:1-12

WHILE WE WAIT



FOR REFLECTION:

While we wait—what kind of life are you living?

You may even wonder: What kind of life am I *supposed* to live?

An easy way to assess how you're doing is to reflect on whether your love for God and people is growing or not. It's that simple. The Christian life is summed up by love for God and for people.

Ask yourself: How's my love for people these days? Is it growing or decreasing? Why is that? Spend some time reflecting on how you're doing and ask God to fill you with his love.

Then ask: How's my love for God these days? Is it growing or decreasing? Why is that? Spend some time reflecting on how you're doing and ask God to help you love him more.

Week 3:

HOW SHOULD
WE GRIEVE?



WE BELIEVE
THAT JESUS **DIED**
AND **ROSE** AGAIN,
AND SO WE
BELIEVE THAT
GOD WILL
BRING WITH JESUS
THOSE WHO HAVE
FALLEN ASLEEP
IN HIM.

1 THESSALONIANS 4:14

Reading Plan

- ☐ Day 1: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-16
- ☐ Day 2: 1 Thessalonians 4:17-18
- ☐ Day 3: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3
- ☐ Day 4: 1 Thessalonians 5:4-6
- ☐ Day 5: 1 Thessalonians 5:7-11
- ☐ Day 6: Read all of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11

FOR REFLECTION:

Grief is hard. There's no way around it. Losing someone you love is as painful as it gets.

But grief experts will tell you: You can't avoid it. Grief will find its way back into your life eventually. So, let's dig into it.

—

Name someone in your life you miss and grieve for:

What did you love about that person?

How can you honor their life as you live?

Re-read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14. Do you believe that you'll see them again?

Grief is hard. But there's hope in Jesus' promise to reunite his people when he returns.

Week 4:



IS THIS
THE
END?



Is this the end?

ABOUT TIMES AND
DATES WE DO NOT
NEED TO WRITE TO
YOU, FOR YOU KNOW
VERY WELL THAT THE
DAY OF THE LORD
WILL COME LIKE A
THIEF IN THE NIGHT.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:1-2

Reading Plan

- ☐ Day 1: Re-read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11
- ☐ Day 2: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-15
- ☐ Day 3: 1 Thessalonians 5:16
- ☐ Day 4: 1 Thessalonians 5:17
- ☐ Day 5: 1 Thessalonians 5:18
- ☐ Day 6: Read all of 1 Thessalonians 5:1-18

FOR REFLECTION:

When is Jesus returning? When will the world end?

As much as every generation of scholars and prophets tries to predict, here's the real answer: We. Won't. Know. Exactly. When.

So next time someone tells you they know, they don't.

But here's what we do know:

- It will be obvious to believers.
- We don't need to be scared—we should be excited.
- For those who have faith in Christ, the return of Jesus will be better than any earthly day we could ever imagine.
- Remember: No one knows the exact date. Including you!

FOR REFLECTION:

Sometimes, our Bible reading consists of just one verse. It may take you two seconds to read, but if you allow it, the verse can speak to you all day. Read the verses on the next three pages every day this week, adding your response each day.



REASONS YOU CAN FEEL JOY:

Day 1:

Day 2:

Day 3:

Day 4:

Day 5:

Day 6:

Rejoice always.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16

THINGS YOU'RE PRAYING FOR:

Day 1:

Day 2:

Day 3:

Day 4:

Day 5:

Day 6:



Pray continually.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:17

*Give thanks in
all circumstances.*

1 THESSALONIANS 5:18



THINGS YOU'RE GRATEFUL FOR:

Day 1:

Day 2:

Day 3:

Day 4:

Day 5:

Day 6:

Week 5:



HOW SHOULD
WE DEAL WITH
PERSECUTION?

STAND FIRM AND HOLD FAST
TO THE TEACHINGS WE PASSED
ON TO YOU. 2 Thessalonians 2:15

MAY OUR LORD JESUS
CHRIST *HIMSELF* AND
GOD OUR FATHER, WHO
LOVED US AND BY HIS
GRACE GAVE US *ETERNAL*
ENCOURAGEMENT AND
GOOD HOPE, ENCOURAGE
YOUR *HEARTS* AND
STRENGTHEN YOU IN
EVERY GOOD DEED
AND WORD.

2 THESSALONIANS 2:16-17



Reading Plan

- ☐ Day 1: 1 Thessalonians 5:19-28
- ☐ Day 2: 2 Thessalonians 1:1-4
- ☐ Day 3: 2 Thessalonians 1:5-12
- ☐ Day 4: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12
- ☐ Day 5: 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17
- ☐ Day 6: Read all of 1 Thessalonians 5:19-28 through 2 Thessalonians 2:17



FOR REFLECTION:

2 Thessalonians was written after 1 Thessalonians (no surprise!) by Paul. Paul had heard that things were getting worse for the Thessalonian church. So, he wanted to write again for three reasons:

1. to remind them to maintain hope despite persecution
2. to clarify that Jesus had not already returned (but would, someday)
3. to encourage them not to remain idle while waiting for his return

This church was facing intense persecution. People were dying and being martyred for their faith. The church community was being harassed continually.

From the beginning, our faith in Christ was meant to be counter-cultural. While we wait for the world to be made right, we pursue lives of holiness. Although culture says to go ahead and believe whatever you want, Jesus says to put him first and live a holy life set apart according to God's commands. Although culture says you can sleep with whoever you want, Jesus says to save sex for the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman. Paul is urging believers to live a life of faithful obedience—full of love, joy, and peace—no matter what the world throws at us. By the way, he's also reminding people that we are not to live at war against the world or against culture. Instead, we are to be known as people who love others, work hard, and bless the least of these with the resources we've been given.

In culture, comfort is king. But we are not called to comfort. We are called to endure on behalf of Christ. As we persevere through hardships, we are joining with Jesus who suffered the ultimate punishment. When we suffer, we are uniquely participating in the mission of Jesus.

Ask yourself: What are some ways you can live sacrificially this week or respond to hatred with love and grace?

Week 6:

*HOW SHOULD
WE DEAL WITH
TOXIC PEOPLE?*

*Do not associate
with them, in order
that they may feel
ashamed.*

2 THESSALONIANS 3:14

Reading Plan

- ☐ Day 1: 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2
- ☐ Day 2: 2 Thessalonians 3:3-5
- ☐ Day 3: 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10
- ☐ Day 4: 2 Thessalonians 3:11-15
- ☐ Day 5: 2 Thessalonians 3:16-18
- ☐ Day 6: Read all of 1 & 2 Thessalonians



FOR REFLECTION:

While we are called to love all people, we are not called to let everyone have equal influence in our lives. In fact, there are people we are supposed to stay away from.

That doesn't mean we don't show love to those people, but it is up to us to filter how much they impact us. One way to do that is to grow your community with people who lead you to be more like Jesus. Consider volunteering at church, joining a group, or learning more about organizations we partner with through Make A Difference. These are great ways to meet other Christians!

The more you fill your bucket with godly voices, the less you'll need reassurance or connection from the people who bring you down.

YOU MADE IT. Over the last six weeks, we've journeyed with Paul through 1 & 2 Thessalonians. We hope you've learned something new, grown in your faith, and enjoyed finding a rhythm as you spent time with Jesus.

Maybe as a result of this study, you're feeling the nudge to put your faith in Jesus. Way to go! Begin by praying the prayer below—then we'd love to get you a few of our favorite tools to help you start your journey with God. Scan the QR code, and let's get started.



PRAYER

*Dear Jesus,
Waiting isn't easy. My life has not been perfect. I've tried other ways to make things right. And now I realize you are the only person that can truly restore what is wrong in my life. I confess my sin to you, and believe that you died on the cross for me, came back to life, and now offer a way forward while we wait. I want to follow you. In your name, amen.*



P.S. Take this quick survey to let us know what you enjoyed about this study and how it helped you grow in your faith! Scan here:



