

1 Thessalonians

Chapter 1

Verse 10

1. As they were serving, they were waiting. What were they waiting on? They were waiting on Jesus Christ. What were they waiting on Christ to do?
2. They were waiting on Jesus Christ to return from heaven in the clouds and to catch away all those who are in Christ. 4:16-17
 - The gospel had produced a different vision in these people. Before salvation, they were living a life of worldly paganism, waiting on wealth, fame, carnal pleasures. But now they were waiting on Jesus.
3. There are three facts contained in this little verse:
 - Christ is raised from the dead and has ascended to heaven.
 - Christ is returning for believers.
 - His return means a deliverance from the wrath to come.
4. The wrath to come is a reference to Daniel's Seventieth Week (**Daniel 9:24**). It is also called "*the time of Jacob's trouble* (**Jeremiah 30:7**).” Some know it as the Tribulation time period (**Deuteronomy 4:30; Matthew 24:29**).
 - It is a seven year time period in which the wrath of God will be poured out on Jews and Gentiles, having both rejected God's Son, Jesus Christ.
5. When will Christ return for the church, the body of Christ? Will it be before the seven-year Tribulation, sometime during the Tribulation, or at the end of the tribulation?
6. There is a lot of debate over this issue, but I believe the Bible teaches a Pretribulation Rapture of the body of Christ.
7. This verse provides two powerful reasons why.
 - First, the Rapture is obviously an imminent return.
 - In other words, it could happen at any moment. We are not waiting on certain prophetic signs to occur, we are waiting on Jesus. These believers were anticipating Christ's return, as was Paul. **Philippians 3:20**
 - If the Rapture was sometime during the Tribulation, then this would mean that certain prophetic events would have to happen before the Rapture could occur.
 - Second, the Rapture is a deliverance from the wrath to come.
 - There is a popular teaching today called the Pretribulation Rapture of the church. Simply put, Christ will return for the church after the seal judgments of Revelation, but before the vial judgments. They say that the seal judgments deal with man's wrath, but the vial judgments are God's wrath.
 - But it is interesting that the first four seal judgments all coincide with the wrath that God said He would pour out on Israel for disobedience.
Deuteronomy 28; Jeremiah 14:12, 16, 34:17; Ezekiel 14
8. This issue will be discussed more thoroughly later in the book of 1 Thessalonians.
9. As we serve the Lord, we serve Him in anticipation that this time of grace that we are living in could come to an end at any moment.

10. We must fervently serve the Lord (**Romans 12:11**) and redeem the time (**Ephesians 5:16**), all the while "*Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our savior Jesus Christ.*" **Titus 2:13**

1 Thessalonians

Chapter 2

Introduction:

1. In chapter one, we learned how that the gospel had come to these Thessalonians and how it had radically saved them and changed their lives.
2. But chapter two reveals to us how Paul ministered to these new converts **after** their salvation. We could say that this chapter contains Paul's discipleship ministry.
3. When a person gets saved, he is a babe in Christ. What characteristic is true of all babies? They need someone to care for their needs. If not, they don't stand a chance of survival. This, of course, is usually the parent that cares for the baby's needs.
4. All baby Christians need a spiritual parent who will come alongside them and care for them in their spiritual infancy. This is what Paul and Timothy had done for the Thessalonians. They cherished them as their own children. vs. 7, 11
5. This chapter is very insightful in helping the church to see why it is important to care for and teach new converts, as well as showing us how to accomplish this.

Verse 1

1. Paul reminds this church that when he came to Thessalonica, his visit to them was not "*in vain.*"
 - The word "vain" means "empty and worthless."
2. What does Paul mean when he says that his visit was not in vain? When you read this in light of verse two you get your answer.
3. Paul and his co-laborers did not come into town spouting a bunch of empty, worthless, religious rhetoric. They came in preaching and teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.
4. The gospel is the power of God. Any time you share the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit, it is never in vain.
5. Had Paul gone to Thessalonica to simply sightsee or have a little vacation, his visit could have been said to be in vain (spiritually empty and worthless), but he came preaching the gospel of Christ.

Verse 2

1. This verse gives us a glimpse into the total resolve of the apostle Paul. It reveals to us Paul's dedication and faithfulness to the gospel.
2. Before Paul came to Thessalonica, he had visited the city of Philippi. Paul says that they suffered and were "*shamefully entreated*" (to exercise violence, abuse).

- This certainly was true. If you read Acts 16, you will find that Paul was mocked (vs. 17-18), falsely accused (vs. 21), beaten (vs. 22), cast into jail (vs. 23), and then kicked out of town (vs. 39).
3. Did this make Paul a little "gun shy?" Did he get discouraged by this or blame God or doubt God's care?
 4. In this verse, Paul basically says, "Even though all those terrible things happened to us at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God."
 5. Paul arrived in Thessalonica, went right into the synagogue, and began teaching people about Christ once again. **Acts 17:1-3**
 6. What resolve! Paul would not be deterred. He was like a tenacious bulldog. No matter what circumstances life threw at him, he would not quit telling people about Jesus.
 7. In Thessalonica, he again shared the gospel, but once again it was with much contention. **Acts 17:5-10**
 8. Christian, you might as well accept the fact that when you boldly stand on the true gospel of Christ and refuse to water it down, there will be opposition.
 9. But it is the gospel that has the power to change lives. **1 Corinthians 1:18**

Verse 3

1. When Paul exhorted the Thessalonians to accept and believe the gospel, he reminded them of the manner in which he did it.
2. Paul notes three things that his exhortation was not.
 - It was not of deceit (in error, fraudulence).
 - Paul simply gave them the Word of God, not his self-conceived ideas and opinions.
 - It was not of uncleanness.
 - Paul's motives were clean and pure.
 - It was not done in guile (bait).
 - Paul didn't use the gospel as a decoy so he could get in their pocketbook or trick them out of something.
3. Paul's exhortation was in contrast to the false prophets that Peter describes in **2 Peter 2:3**, "*And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you...*"
4. Jeremiah declared that the prophets in his day committed adultery, walked in lies, and strengthened the hands of evildoers. **Jeremiah 23:14**
5. Paul had no thought of trying to use the Thessalonians for his own personal gain.

Verse 4

1. I love Paul's attitude towards the gospel of Christ. He said that it had been put in his trust. This carries the idea of taking something that is yours and committing it to another person's watch-care.
2. Paul preached the gospel according to the revelation of the mystery which had been kept secret since the world began. Many times Paul would call it "*my gospel.*" **Romans 16:25**

3. In due season, this special gospel message was committed to Paul from God and he was to preach to the Gentiles. **1 Corinthians 9:17; Galatians 2:7; 1 Timothy 1:11; Titus 1:3**
4. Paul was faithful in his stewardship of this gospel message and boldly proclaimed it, "...*not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.*" cf. **Galatians 1:10**
5. It is God which trieth (tests) men's hearts. Paul knew he would stand accountable to God one day for his stewardship of the gospel.
6. If you know Christ as your Savior, the gospel has been committed to your trust, too. What kind of steward have you been? **2 Timothy 2:2**

THE LAST DAYS

The Body of Christ (Church Age)

3. CHRIST RETURNS & SETS UP MILLENNIAL KINGDOM
REVELATION 19:11-21

- A PERIOD OF GRACE
- A SURPRISE INTERRUPTION IN THE PROPHETIC PROGRAM
- SAINTS LOOKING FOR RAPTURE, NOT LAST DAYS

Rapture

PSALM 2:1-3
MAN'S DECLARATION OF WAR ON GOD

PSALM 2:4-9
GOD'S COUNTER-DECLARATION OF WAR



Old Testament

Last Days

Tribulation

Millennium

1. PENTECOST (ACTS 2)
HOLY SPIRIT POURED OUT & KINGDOM OFFERED

LAST DAYS RESUMED

JOEL'S PROPHECY OF LAST DAYS (2:28-32)

1. HOLY SPIRIT POURED OUT
2. WONDERS IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH
3. CHRIST RETURNS AND SETS UP KINGDOM

ACTS 7
ISRAEL REJECTS KINGDOM & LAST DAYS ARE POSTPONED

2. WONDERS IN HEAVEN & IN EARTH
REVELATION 6:12-17