

I & II THESSALONIANS

PREPARING FOR THE SECOND COMING

MIKE MAZZALONGO

STUDENT WORKBOOK

bibleTalk^{TV}



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I & II Thessalonians

Preparing for the Second Coming

Mike Mazzalongo

No other book of the Bible gives a clearer sequence and detail of the events surrounding the glorious return of Jesus Christ than the two letters Paul writes to a young church at Thessalonica (Greece) who fear that they will be left behind when that great day comes.



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1. Introduction

This first lesson will review the history of the city of Thessalonica as well as the circumstances surrounding the writing of these two epistles (letters).

Intro – Matthew 24:42-44 _____

Background

A. The city

Thessalonica – Today _____

Thessalonica – Paul’s day _____

B. The church

Established 51 AD _____

1. The vision _____

2. Philippi _____

3. Thessalonica – Acts 17:1-10 _____

4. Corinth _____

The Letters to Thessalonica

Timothy's reports to Paul about the young church motivated Paul to write these letters.

Main Outline - I Thessalonians

1. Prayer - 1:1-10 _____

2. Defense - 2:1-3:13 _____

3. Exhortation - 4:1-12 _____

4. Teaching - 4:13-5:3 _____

5. Preparation - 5:4-28 _____

Purposes of letter

1. Express _____

2. Defend _____

3. Encouragement _____

4. Teaching:
A. _____

B. _____

Summary

Why study this epistle?

1. Portrait of _____

2. Gain _____

3. _____ ourselves.

Discussion Questions

1. Describe details of the city of Thessalonica.

2. Describe the church in Thessalonica in the period when Paul worked with them.

3. What was a major point of confusion among the young Christians that led Paul to write this first letter to the Thessalonians?

4. Describe some insights from the following key points from the book of I Thessalonians.

5. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

2. Genuine Conversion

In the opening section of his letter Paul, the Apostle, describes the attributes that reveal a genuine conversion to Christ. (I Thessalonians 1:1-10)

Intro – Review

Thessalonica _____

Paul’s Mission – 5/AD _____

Corinth _____

The letters _____

Salutation – 1:1

Verse 1- Paul / Sylvanus / Timothy _____

The “called out” _____

Grace _____

Peace _____

All the names are on equal footing:

God _____

Father _____

Lord _____

Jesus _____

Christ _____

Paul _____

Workers _____

Church _____

Thanksgiving - 1:2-10

Verse 2 _____

Verse 3-4 Paul mentions 4 things he is thankful for when he remembers them.

1. Their work of _____

2. Their labor of _____

3. Their steadiness in _____

4. Their genuineness of _____

He knew their conversion was genuine for the following reasons:

A. The Message _____ vs. 5a

B. The Messengers _____ vs. 5b

C. The Message _____ vs. 6

D. They became the _____ vs. 7-10

Summary

Paul is happy and thankful for two main reasons when he thinks of the Thessalonians.

1. He is sure of their _____

2. He rejoices over their _____

Practical Application

This opening passage gives us a process for normal individual and congregational development.

Step #1 - Conversion to _____

Step #2 - Imitation to _____

Step #3 - Example to _____

We should examine where we're at personally and congregationally in this process.

Discussion Questions

1. Summarize the environment and conditions that led Paul to write to the Thessalonians.

2. Review I Thessalonians 1:1 and answer the following questions:

What is significant about the order of names in this verse? _____

What is significant in Paul's use of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in the same sentence? _____

Describe the relationship between grace and peace as Paul uses them in the salutation of his letter. _____

3. Outline the phrases Paul uses to describe the Thessalonians from verse 1:2-4.

What is the likely effect on the young Christians?

4. Where did Paul state his message was from and why is it important that he express this to the young Christians?

5. How does I Thessalonians 1:7-10 apply to us?

6. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

3. True Ministers

In this lesson, Paul defends against attacks by the false teachers in the Thessalonian church by listing the credentials that identify true ministers of God's word in every age. (I Thessalonians 2:1-3:13)

Intro - Review previous lesson points:

Paul is writing to _____

He rejoices in memory of them for two main reasons:

- A. _____
- B. _____

In the next section he will defend his ministry among them. _____

Credentials of True Ministers - 2:1-3:13

1. True Ministers _____ 2:1-2

Paul's experiences show that he was a man who trusted God. _____

True leadership rests not only on speaking ability but it also depends on _____

2. True Ministers are _____ 2:3-12

Paul compares 2 sets of characteristics for judging ministers.

A. Worldly Characteristics - vs. 3-6

Error _____

Impurity _____

Deceit _____

Popularity _____

Flattery _____

False pretense _____

Personal glory _____

B. Spiritual Characteristics - vs. 7-12

Gentle _____

Self-sacrificing _____

Hard-working _____

Pure _____

Fervent _____

Paul reminds them of their experience with himself and his workers. _____

3. True Ministers _____ 2:13-16

We don't know how big the church in Thessalonica was. _____

True ministers don't blame the church. _____

4. True Ministers _____ 2:17-3:13

Note Paul's attitude toward the brethren:

He was _____

They were his _____

His emotional life _____

He prayed _____

He wanted only _____

For example, young missionary student _____

Summary

Paul defends his ministry among these brethren by describing the characteristics of a True Minister.

1. True Ministers _____

2. True Ministers _____

3. True Ministers _____

4. True Ministers _____

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss your understanding of what ministry is.

2. Discuss each of the characteristics provided by Paul of a true minister of God's word.

True ministers trust God

True ministers are sincere

True ministers get results

True ministers love the church

3. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

4. True Churches

After having laid out the necessary credentials for recognizing true ministers of the gospel, Paul does the same for true churches. (I Thessalonians 4:1-12)

Intro - Review

In today's section, Paul will explain some of the characteristics of the "true" church.

The True Church Continually Purifies Its Conduct - 4:1-2

The key word here is _____

Vs. 1-2 _____

Paul mentions three areas where this young church needed to purify their lives.

A. _____ Purity - vs. 3-8

Vs. 3 - Sanctification means to set something or someone apart for special use or service.

B. Integrity in _____

The pagan world of the 1st century was notable for two vices: sexual immorality and greed.

Vs. 7-8 – Paul explains why they need to purify themselves in these two areas.

1. They are _____

2. They will be _____

C. Purify your _____ vs. 9-12.

Some sins you can hide _____

Non-Christians are affected when they see Christians consciously living and pursuing purified lives. _____

Vs. 9-10 _____

Vs. 11 – He gives them 3 things essential for a balanced life:

1. Lead a _____ life. _____

2. Attend to your _____

3. Work with your _____

Vs. 12 – Here Paul explains why Christians should do these things: _____

Summary

The true church “purifies its life” by:

1. Maintaining _____

2. Being _____

3. Establishing _____

Discussion Questions

1. What comes to mind when you hear the expression, "true churches"?

2. Why would Paul focus on sexual and business integrity as he writes to the Thessalonians?

3. Summarize each of the following elements related to the church continually purifying its conduct (I Thessalonians 4:1-12).

Sexual purity _____

Integrity in business _____

Purity in our public witness _____

4. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

5. Preparing for the End

In this lesson, Paul outlines the actual order of events that will take place when Jesus returns. (I Thessalonians 4:13-5:3)

Intro - Review _____

1. Theme of this epistle - The _____ church

2. Marks of authenticity

A. Established by _____

B. Conduct was _____

C. Growing in _____

True churches grow in the knowledge of God's purpose and Paul now teaches them regarding God's purpose for the future time at the end of the world.

The Problem - I Thessalonians 4:13

They were worried. Why?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Special words:

- Uninformed _____
- Asleep _____

Three ways non-Christians react to death:

- A. Ignore it _____

- B. Deny it _____

- C. Fear it _____

Paul wanted them informed about death. _____

The Hope – vs. 14

Christians have hope because they have a historical precedent on which to base their hope.

- Acts 2:24 _____

- Paul reassures them _____

The Details – 4:15-5:3

Paul gives the details about the “end.” However, he doesn’t give details about:

Resurrection of _____ Matthew 25:31-32

Judgment of _____ John 5:28-29

What happens to _____ II Peter 3:10-12

What _____ is like. - II Thessalonians 1:9

This doesn't mean that these things are not _____

Paul gives details taught to him by Christ.

- vs. 15a _____

- vs. 15b _____

- vs. 16a _____

- vs. 16b _____

- vs. 16c _____

In a situation where many things will be happening simultaneously, Paul focuses on one thing.

- vs. 17a _____

- vs. 17b-18 _____

- ch. 5:1-3 _____

Summary

1. Paul is adding to their _____

2. Paul reassures their _____

3. He gives specific details of the end.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Our Hope

It could be in our lifetimes. If so: _____

Discussion Questions

1. Why were the early Christians confused on the issue of the returning of Jesus and how does this impact us today?

2. How should a Christian's view of death differ from the world's view?

3. Based on Paul's statement in I Thessalonians 4:1-4, describe the difference in how the world and Christians understand hope.

4. What does Paul say about events leading to the second coming of Christ?

5. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

WHAT IS THE 'RAPTURE'?

By William Pile

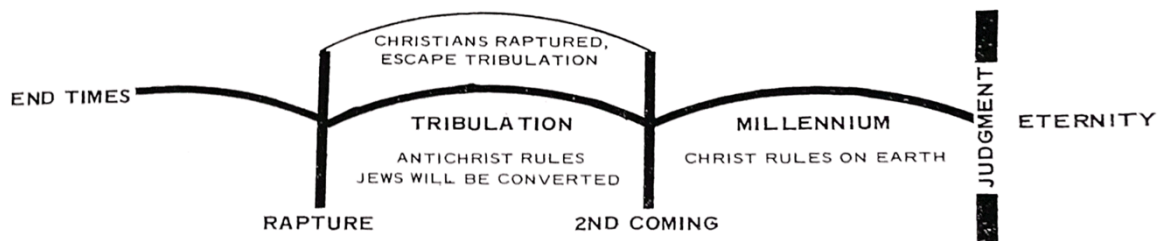
"Jim and I were stop-starting our way through afternoon expressway traffic when I pointed his attention to an antique car driving alongside us. He made no comment. I turned to get his attention. But no one was sitting in the driver's seat. Jim wasn't there! I grabbed the steering wheel and slid behind it in time to avoid collision. I was shaking with fear, so I took the first turnoff and parked."

With similar descriptions religious writers describe the "Rapture." But what are they talking about? Where can I read about it in the Bible?

Dr. Robert Strong has described the Rapture as: "the sudden and possible secret coming of Christ in the air to catch away from the earth the resurrected bodies of those who have died in the faith and with them the living saints." Rapture writers and teachers usually emphasize the secret and/or mysterious nature of the Rapture. That makes it an exciting subject, with plenty of room for speculation.

Rapture theories revolve around 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord."

The chart reproduced below pictures the Rapture doctrine as it is usually taught. Study it carefully.



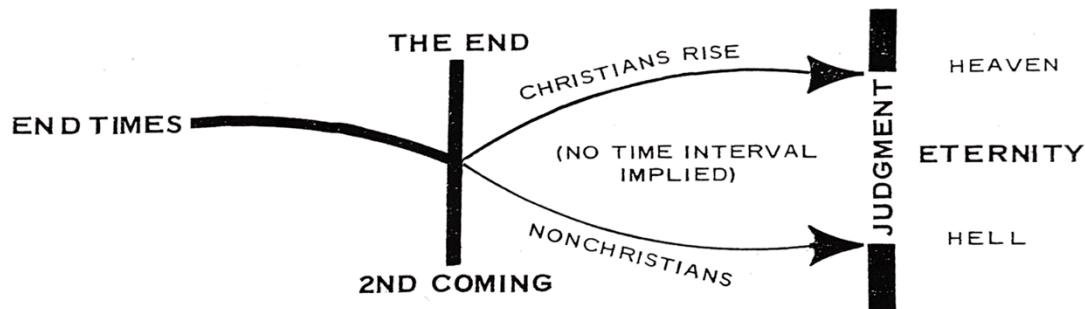
Yes, the Bible does teach that saints (both dead and living) will be caught up, translated, raptured if you please, at Christ's Second Coming. But there are two glaring errors in Rapture teaching as pictured above.

ERROR NUMBER ONE: THAT THE RAPTURE WILL BE SECRET. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, instead of hinting at a “secret rapture,” shouts the opposite! It will be noisy, with a shout, the voice of of the archangel and the trumpet of God piercing the air. Revelation 1:7 also has to be reckoned with. It says that “every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him.” The “two in the field, one taken and the other left” of Matthew 24:40-41 does not suggest anything secretive or mysterious, nor does the “theif in the night” concept of 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3, etc. These deal with the finality and suddenness of the seperation.

ERROR NUMBER TWO: THAT RAPTURE IS SEEPERATE FROM THE SECOND COMING.

A careful examination of the chart above reveals that it presents two resurrections and two Second Comings. From there on it gets complicated. When you look at these Bible passages regarding the Second Coming it is easy to see that the Rapture theories don’t fit: 1 Thessalonians 5:3 (it shows the Second Coming to be at a time of peace, not during the Tribulation); Matthew 5:13:24-30 (this parable places the seperation at the end of the world, not prior to it); John 5:28-29; 6:39-40,44,54 (these verses talk about one resurrection and one “last day” that turns out not to be the last day anyway).

A correct view of the sequence of events at the end of the world is represented in this chart:



What does all this mean? It lays to rest any hope you might have a “second chance.” Of course, you would get right with God if you saw loved ones mysteriously raptured. But that won’t happen. When Christians go to meet their Savior and pass through the Judgement with Him, non-Christians will be heading for their judgment too – only without Him, alone. That being the case, the time to get on Jesus’ side is NOW. Read hoe the people became Christians in the Bible times: Acts 2:36-42; Acts 8:9-13; Acts 10:44-48; Acts 16:13-15, 19-34; Acts 22:3-16.

IS JESUS COMING BACK TO REIGN 1,000 YEARS ON EARTH?

By William Pile

“AND I SAW AN ANGEL coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgement was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of these did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection.

Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of the Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years. And when the thousand years were completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog, Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” – Revelation 20:1-10

You have just read God’s account of the 1,000 year reign of Christ. Now read the sequence of events some Bible teachers see from this and other Bible passages:

1. Jesus will return to earth and end the Battle of Armageddon. He will arrive precisely on the Mount of Olives and the mount will split at the touch of his foot (Hal Lindsey, in The Late Great Planet Earth, p. 174, 175).
2. Unbelievers will be judged and damned. Believers will stay on the earth to take part in Jesus’ kingdom which will operate from Jerusalem for 1,000 years.
3. Righteousness will prevail during this period. War will cease, cities will be rebuilt, perfect weather will prevail, temperatures will moderate, the desert will become fertile (Gordon Lindsay, Present World Events in the Light of Prophecy, p. 112ff).

4. Rulership in God's kingdom will be given to Israel, with the world divided among the 12 tribes with the 12 apostles ruling over them. Earth will operate under perfect law, with a perfect economic system, no disease, no poverty (ibid, p. 116ff).
5. The temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem. Bible characters will be there and worship of God will center there (The Late Great Planet Earth, p. 54-57).
6. At the end of the 1,000 years all unbelievers will be revealed by their relationship to the briefly released Satan and will be judged and condemned to hell (ibid., p. 177,178).
7. New heavens and earth will be created and God's people will live in them forever with Christ (ibid., p. 178).

This is PREMILLENNIALISM, the theory that Jesus will return before the 1,000 year period (millennium) and reign during it on earth. E.I. Scofield, author of the Scofield Reference Bible, is probably responsible for the widespread acceptance of premillennialism, because it is taught in the footnotes of the Bible.

Boiled down, premillennialism rests on four points, each of which will not stand up to Biblical scrutiny. These four points are:

- Jesus Christ will establish His kingdom and rule personally for 1,000 years on David's throne which will be reestablished in Jerusalem.
- Jews will be restored to their original land and extend the rule of Christ throughout the earth.
- Gentiles will be part of the kingdom but in a subservient role to restored Israel.
- The kingdom of Christ will be political as well as religious. Aside from the obvious fact that Revelation 20 doesn't establish even one of these points, the points themselves are contrary to certain Bible teachings.
 - Jesus came to establish his kingdom in the first century. He spoke of the kingdom being "at hand" (Matthew 3:2); he promised Peter the "keys of the kingdom" (Matthew 16:28); a few hours before the church was established on Pentecost A.D. 30 the Apostles were inquiring about the establishing of the kingdom (Acts 1:6); Paul wrote a few years later that Christians were IN the kingdom (Colossians 1:13).
 - Restoration of Jews to their original land is nowhere promised in the Bible beyond the restoration enjoyed by a remnant after Babylonian captivity. World events notwithstanding, there is no Bible basis for modern-day Jews expecting to once again occupy the land originally given to Abraham and his seed.
 - Jew-Gentiles distinctions ended with baptism into Christ according to Galatians 3:27, 28. Besides, who are Israelites today in the New Testament sense? Read Romans 9:1-14.

- At his trial Jesus made it plain that His kingdom was spiritual only (John 18:36). His remaining work with the kingdom is to deliver it up to God (1 Corinthians 15:24).

Then what does Revelation 20:1-10 describe? The binding of Satan in verses 1-3 took place at the death of Christ when his power was destroyed technically. The 1,000 years is an indefinite period of time in keeping with 2 Peter 3:8. The loosing of Satan for a short period (v.3b, 7-9) suggests a brief return of his original power against God's saints. The 1,000 year reign (v.4) is an indefinite period enjoyed by people who died for Christ. They are "souls" not living people with bodies, who reign with Christ and whose martyr spirit influences living disciples. Other dead people (v.5) are non-Christians who do not enjoy this period of reigning with Christ before the resurrection. Verses 7-10 describe Satan's brief foray and final end.

Don't wait for Satan to be bound so right living will become easy. Satan has already been judged (John 16:11), disarmed (Colossians 2:15) and rendered powerless (Hebrews 2:14). It will never be easier to serve God than now! Turn your life over to Him like sinners did in the first century (Acts 2:36-45; Acts 8:35-39, etc.) and step into God's millennium.

THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON: WHEN? WHERE?

By William Pile

Would you be surprised to know that the Battle of Armageddon is mentioned only once in the Bible? That makes it an ideal subject for fanciful speculation.

That one mention is in Revelation 16. A review of the chapter reveals seven angels pouring out their seven bowls of God's wrath upon earth. In verses 12-16 the sixth bowl is discussed. It is in this section that the Battle of Armageddon is mentioned. The contents of the sixth bowl dried up the Euphrates River so kings from the east could assemble (v.12). Then something like frogs came out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet (v.13). These frog-like creatures were evil spirits which inhabited world rulers and caused them to gather "for the war of the great day of God": (v.16).

Study in a Bible Atlas reveals that Har-Megedon was the Hill of Megiddo of the Old Testament. It was located 10 miles southwest of Nazareth. Megiddo was a prominent battlefield throughout history.

Certain characteristics about the Revelation 16 account are obvious:

1. It is set amidst many figurative passages.
2. It contains several words which are obviously figurative (dragon, beast, bowl).
3. It is therefore possible that other words which appear to literal, could be figurative (Euphrates, Har-Megedon).

But no battle was ever fought in Revelation 16. Most commentators agree that the particulars of the battle itself are found in chapter 19:19-21. Those verses name the participants on the one side (followers of the beast and false prophet) and the other (the army of "Him who sat upon the horse," v.19). They also tell the outcome. The army of Christ won and the opponents were either cast alive into the lake of fire or were killed and their flesh was eaten by birds (v. 20b, 21).

- ❖ IS THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON A REAL WAR?
- ❖ IS IT YET TO BE FOUGHT?
- ❖ WHERE WILL IT BE FOUGHT?
- ❖ WHO WILL WIN?

These are the questions you are probably asking. There are two basic approaches to answers. One is speculative and exciting. The other is simple but very serious.

Those who believe there will be a literal battle fought at the traditional site of Megiddo generally agree that God and His people will fight on one side. But who will fight on the other side? B.W. Johnson, writing in the 19th century, saw the allied enemy as Russia (the dragon), the Roman Catholic Church (the beast), and Islam (the false prophet). Hal Lindsey, popular end times writer of this generation sees a more complicated alliance. He predicts that Russia will be defeated by Oriental powers in a battle fought in Israel. They will then challenge the Western powers (with the U.S. as a minor force) under a Roman dictator at Armageddon. At the climax of the battle, Jesus Christ will return and save us from self-extinction, so says Mr. Lindsey.

The figurative view attracts much less attention, but is much easier to understand and believe. It considers Armageddon to represent the spiritual battlefield on which Christ and Christians oppose spiritual enemies. Those enemies are usually recognized as Satan himself (the dragon), corrupt governments (the beast), and false religion (the false prophet). Christ and Christians will finally win this struggle.

What a soul-chilling battle this view suggests! On the other hand, to look for a literal alliance of nations gathering to fight a literal battle at a literal location may sidetrack you for the real battle you're fighting right now. "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against...the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6:12).

If you lose that battle a literal Battle of Armageddon won't matter anyway.

6. 8 Ways to Be Ready

In the final section of his letter to the Thessalonians Paul outlines eight ways to prepare for the sure return of Jesus Christ. (I Thessalonians 5:1-28)

Intro - The general theme of this epistle is the _____

- The true church has:
 1. True _____
 2. True _____
- The true church is:
 1. _____
 2. Growing in _____
- The true church is: _____

The object of the lesson is how to prepare for a _____ event.

8 Ways to be Ready - 5:4-22

1. _____ vs. 4-10
Vs. 6 _____
Vs. 7-8 _____
Vs. 9-10 _____
2. _____ vs. 11
 - Two key words that describe our ministry for one another.
 - _____
 - _____
 - We do this for each other. _____

3. _____ vs. 12-13a
- Paul refers to the work of leaders and the attitude the church should have toward them. _____

4. _____ vs. 13b-15

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

5. _____ vs. 16

- Not always easy, but possible when considering the _____ of Jesus.

6. _____ vs. 17-18

- Christians aren't always able to pray but they always have _____ to.

Why?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

7. _____ vs. 19-21

8. _____ vs. 22

- Notice that Paul says every form of evil. _____

Why do we Need to be Ready? - vs. 23-24

Why this Lesson? - vs. 25-28

Summary

- We all need to remember one important thing _____

- When Christians are discouraged, they need to realize _____

- Are you *ready*? _____

Discussion Questions

1. Summarize the teachings of Jesus from Matthew 24:34-25:30 and answer the following questions:

Who does the teachings of Jesus apply to?

Why is it important to be ready for the return of Jesus?

2. Summarize the 8 ways to be ready as listed in the text.

1. Watch Yourself

2. Build up the church

3. Respect Your Leaders

4. Be at peace with one another

5. Rejoice always

6. Pray always

7. Study God's word

8. Be pure

3. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

7. Intro to II Thessalonians

In his second letter to this church, Paul continues to encourage and praise them for their faithfulness and provides even more teaching about the second coming of Christ. (II Thessalonians 1:1-12)

Intro - Review

Thessalonian church established _____

Paul was _____

After receiving report from Timothy, Paul writes two letters.

In the first one he:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Paul says that the true church:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

Outline

Note that II Thessalonians is neatly divided into three sections. See outline on following page.

Encouragement - 1:1-12

A. Salutation - vs. 1-2 _____

B. Thanksgiving - vs. 3-4 _____

C. Righteous Judgment – vs. 5-10 _____

Paul comments on their suffering by telling them that:

1. They don't _____
2. God not only permits suffering, He also _____
3. God will also _____

Vs. 6 _____

Vs. 7 _____

Vs. 8-9 _____

Vs. 10 _____

D. Prayer – vs. 11-12 _____

- His prayer request is specific in that God **complete** the work begun in them. _____

- The work will be complete when Jesus returns. _____

Summary

II THESSALONIANS

OUTLINE OF EPISTLE

1. Encouragement – Chapter 1
 - A. Salutation - 1:1-2
 - B. Thanksgiving - 1:3-4
 - C. The Righteous Judgment of God - 1:5-10
 - D. Prayer - 1:11-12
2. Education – Chapter 2
 - A. Day of the Lord not already present - 2:1-2
 - B. Events to precede the day of the Lord - 2:3-12
 - Rebellion
 - Revelation of man of lawlessness
3. Exhortation – Chapter 3
 - A. Exhortation to pray for the writers - 3:2
 - B. Expression of confidence - 3:3-5
 - C. Exhortation concerning treatment of disorderly members - 3:6-15
 - D. Conclusion - 3:16-18

Discussion Questions

1. Summarize the environment of Thessalonica and why Paul is writing to the Christians there.

2. What is the significance of Paul referring to both God the Father and Jesus in his opening of II Thessalonians?

3. Read II Thessalonians 1:3-4.

What was Paul's impression of the Christians in Thessalonica and why?

4. Read II Thessalonians 1:5.

What encouragement does Paul offer the Thessalonians and how can that encourage us?

5. Read II Thessalonians 1:7. Why is Paul making the definitive statement about Jesus' return?

6. Summarize our current world environment and compare it to the environment of the Christians in Thessalonica.

7. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

8. Events Before the Last Day

Paul continues teaching this young church about the events that must occur before Jesus' second coming. (II Thessalonians 2:1-12)

Intro – Key ideas so far.

- Paul rejoices _____

- Paul teaches concerning Christ's return _____

Events Prior to the Second Coming

A. The DAY has not come – 2:1-2 _____

B. Language / Literary style _____

- APOCALYPTIC _____

- Apocalyptic style used by New Testament writers.
 - James – Matthew 24:1-34
 - Paul – II Thessalonians
 - John – Revelation

C. Symbols/Terms

1. Apostasy – vs. 3 _____

2. Man of Lawlessness / Son of Destruction – vs. 3 _____

3. Restraining Influence – vs. 6 _____

4. Mystery of Lawlessness – vs. 7 _____

5. Breath of His mouth – vs. 8 _____

6. Appearance of His coming – vs. 8 _____

7. Prophecy _____

 - We know the events and the sequence but not the **time**.

D. Sequence of Events

- Two major events **before** Christ returns.
 1. The Apostasy – vs. 3a _____

Acts 20:28-30 _____

II Timothy 4:3-4 _____

2. The Man of Lawlessness Revealed – vs. 3-7.

- What is he like?

Vs. 3 _____

Vs. 4 _____

Vs. 5-7 _____

What will the man of Lawlessness do? Vs. 9-12 _____

Summary

The day of the Lord has **not** come. _____

3 Practical lessons:

1. Bad teaching _____

2. Satan desires _____

3. We can be _____

Discussion Questions

1. What is meant by "apocalyptic" writing and why is it difficult to understand?

2. Discuss the following terms used in II Thessalonians 2:3-8.

Apostasy

Man of Lawlessness/Son of Destruction

Restraining Influence

Mystery of Lawlessness

Breath of his mouth

Appearance of His coming

Prophecy

3. From Acts 20:28-30, what does Paul say is the best response to the return of Christ and how does this relate to his warnings of a great apostasy?

4. What are characteristics of the man of lawlessness as discussed in II Thessalonians 2 and what will he seek to do, and what will happen to him?

5. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

9. Who is the Man of Lawlessness?

This lesson examines the various theories put forth to explain the identity of the "Man of Lawlessness" Paul refers to in this epistle. (II Thessalonians 2:1-10)

Intro

These letters contain two main ideas:

1. _____
2. _____

In his second letter Paul reassures them that two things must take place **before** the return of Christ.

- _____
- _____

Who is the Man of Lawlessness? – II Thessalonians 2:1-10

1. The _____

Problems with their theory: _____

2. _____

Problems with their theory: _____

Revelation 20:1-3 _____

3. The _____

Favorite theory of Evangelicals. _____

The reorganization of the New Testament church into Roman hierarchical system produced four major changes:

1. Separation of Clergy _____

2. Special authority _____

3. New roles _____

4. Changes to the scriptures _____

Other points that support the Papacy as the Man of Lawlessness _____

Problems with their theory _____

Many "Christian" groups have been part of a larger apostasy _____

4. A Principle

1. There has been a principle of evil working in the world since the church was established.

2. Every age produces a different version or face of this principle. _____

3. The Man of Lawlessness when revealed will pose a threat because his revealing will be accompanied by: _____

4. Revealed to whom? _____

5. What is the “restraining influence?” _____

6. The “principle of evil” theory works well because:
 1. _____

 2. _____

 3. _____

 4. _____

Summary

We in our day, need to do two things in response to the apostasy, principle of evil and eventual revealing of the Man of Lawlessness:

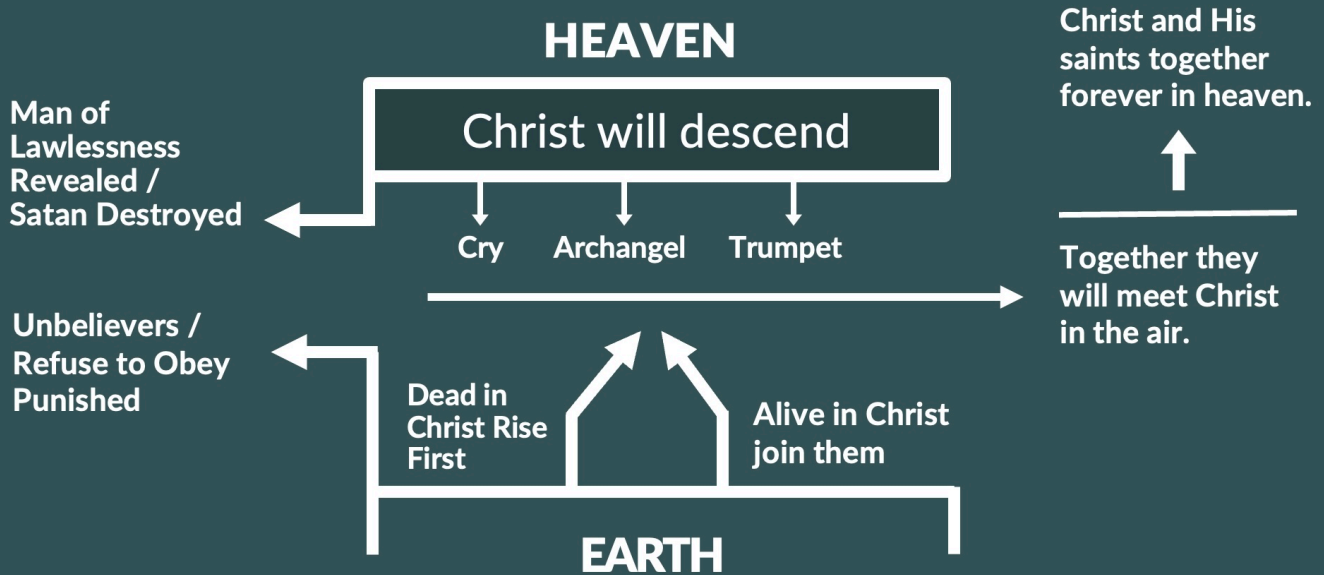
1. _____

2. _____

1,000 Year Reign



The Day of the Lord



Discussion Questions

1. Summarize the two primary reasons Paul is writing to the Thessalonians and what is the most important point he wants them to understand?

2. Summarize the following theories as to who the Man of Lawlessness was.

The Roman Empire

Satan

The Papacy (pope)

The principle of lawlessness

3. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

10. What is the Deluding Influence?

This lesson examines the nature of God's will and how it accommodates man's will in relation to his ability to choose or reject salvation.

Intro - Review _____

The Will of God - 2:11-12

God's will is expressed in various ways throughout the Bible.

A. God's direct will. _____

- Direct positive will _____

- Direct negative will _____

B. God's permissive will. _____

- Permissive positive will _____

- Permissive negative will _____

- God knows in advance what the result of His will (no matter how it is expressed) will be.

- God "sends" a delusion in the sense that He permits it to happen.

The Way of Truth - 2:13-17

Paul outlines why the Thessalonians should be thoughtful despite their sufferings.

1. They have been chosen for salvation - vs. 13 _____

2. Their salvation is sure - vs. 14 _____

Paul tells them how they are to respond to the attacks of others - vs. 15

Stand firm _____

Hold to traditions _____

Paul completes the passage with a blessing - vs. 16-17 _____

Will and Salvation

- This passage outlines 5 ways that God's direct positive will operates:

1. God _____ vs. 13

2. God _____ vs. 13

3. God _____ vs. 14

4. God _____ vs. 13

5. God _____ vs. 14

In all of these we see God's direct will operating and in doing so guarantees our salvation because:

- God always _____
- God never _____
- God continues _____
- God guarantees _____
- God has the power to _____

Man also operates his direct will in the process of salvation:

1. Man _____
2. Man _____ vs. 13
3. Man stands firm in _____

God will permit man to refuse salvation and suffer the consequences if man wills this.

Lessons

1. God wants to save us but do we always _____?

2. Don't _____ be _____

3. Comfort comes from _____ not _____

Discussion Questions

1. What two events does Paul state must occur before our Lord's return and why is he teaching this?

2. Explain the concept of "God's will."

3. Describe what Paul teaches as "the way of truth" (II Thessalonians 2:13-17).

4. Explain the elements listed in these verses that Paul points out and discuss what they mean to you as a child of God.

5. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

11. The Judgement Day

This lesson reviews Jesus' teaching about His return in Matthew 24-25 in order to complement the instructions that Paul provides the Thessalonians on this same subject.

Intro – Jesus demonstrates His royal position in many ways. _____

- He was rejected _____

- Upon leaving the temple, Jesus, the king, pronounces a king's judgment. _____

The King's Judgment – Matthew 24-25

Vs. 1-3 – The Apostles ask two questions:

1. _____
2. _____

Jesus answers by describing events in three specific views of history:

1. Panoramic View – vs. 4-14 _____

2. Telescopic to Jerusalem view – vs. 15-35 _____

3. Telescopic to 2nd coming view – vs. 16-44 _____

Review 3 historical views.

1. Panoramic View - Matthew 24:4-14

Vs. 4 _____

Vs. 5-8 _____

Vs. 9-12 _____

Vs. 13 _____

Vs. 14 _____

2. Telescopic to Jerusalem view - vs. 15-35

Vs. 19-21 _____

Vs. 22 _____

Vs. 23-26 _____

Vs. 27 _____

Vs. 28 _____

Vs. 29 _____

Vs. 29-31 _____

Vs. 32-35 _____

3. Telescopic to 2nd coming view – vs. 16-44

Vs. 37-39 _____

Vs. 40-41 _____

Vs. 42-44 _____

Exhortations to Vigilance – Matthew 24:45-25:30

After responding to the Apostles questions Jesus encourages them to be watchful by giving them three parables.

1.Parable of the evil slave – vs. 45-51 _____

2. Parable of the 10 virgins – vs. 25:1-13 _____

3. Parable of the Talents – vs. 14-30 _____

Judgment Scene – 25:31-46

Discussion Questions

1. From Matthew 24:1-3, what was the reason Jesus chose to teach about His return?

2. What two questions are asked in Matthew 24:1-3?

3. Summarize the three views taught in Matthew 4 regarding destruction of the Temple and the return of our Lord.

4. Summarize key elements of the period until the second coming (vs. 4-15).

5. What are the impacts our Lord describes regarding the destruction of Jerusalem (Vs. 15-35)?

6. Summarize Jesus' teachings on His return from vs. 36-44.

7. Summarize the parables Jesus teaches in Matthew 24:45-25:30.

8. Why should faithful Christians not fear the return of our Lord?

9. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

12. Be Ready

In the final lesson on this series Mike summarizes the Apostle Paul's arguments on being ready for Jesus' sure return. (II Thessalonians 3:1-18)

Intro – Review of what Paul has done so far.

- 1. Thanks _____
- 2. Defense _____
- 3. Taught _____
- 4. Encouraged _____

Exhortation #1 – Pray – 3:1-5

Paul asks them to pray for him _____

Vs. 1 _____

Vs. 2 _____

Vs. 3 _____

You can't save a person by just praying for him. _____

Vs. 4-5 _____

Stay Busy in Doing Good – vs. 6-15

Paul describes a problem they are having and how to deal with it. _____

Paul describes five things they should be doing:

A. Remain _____, vs. 6

B. Follow _____, vs. 7-9

C. Remember _____, vs. 10-12

D. Don't be _____, vs. 13

E. Discipline _____, vs. 14-15

Closing Remarks - vs. 16-18

Vs. 16 _____

Vs. 17 _____

Vs. 18 _____

Summary

This closing section sees Paul accomplishing three things with his reader:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Exhortation

Three things that we today need to be doing in order to prepare for the second coming of Christ.

1. Believe _____

People perish because _____

To believe the truth we must:

_____ Hebrews 11:6

_____ John 17:17; Romans 10:17

_____ Matthew 7:21

In order to continue believing we must:

_____ I Peter 2:2

_____ John 15:6-7

Believing the truth is a lifetime process. _____

2. Pray _____

Why pray?

_____ Matthew 26:36

_____ I Peter 5:8

_____ I Thessalonians 5:17

_____ James 5:16

3. Stay _____

The 3 D's of Laziness:

D _____

D _____

D _____

You're ready if: _____

How about you? Are you ready?

Discussion Questions

1. What are the major elements of Paul's letters to the Thessalonians?

2. What were the major elements Paul encouraged the Thessalonians to pray for and how do these apply to us? (II Thessalonians 3:1-5)

3. What is Paul's encouragement to the Christians from II Thessalonians 3:6-15?

4. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?

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