

Subject: *Know Your Bible – Part 24*

Scripture: *1 Thessalonians 1:1-10*

Time, Place, and Purpose of 1 and 2 Thessalonians

1. Paul wrote these epistles to the church in Thessalonica, a city in Macedonia (Greece). Paul identified himself as the writer (1 Thess. 1:1; 2:18). Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy are also mentioned in the introduction as Paul's companions.
2. The church was founded on Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 17:1-9). Paul first went into the Jewish synagogue and reasoned with them from the Scriptures for three consecutive Sabbaths. Paul's usual approach to Jews was to present the gospel through Scripture. On the other hand, his approach to Gentiles was to establish the existence and attributes of the one true God based upon God's witness in creation and providence.
3. These letters were written around 51-52 A.D. Since Galatians was probably written around 49-50 A.D., the letters to Thessalonica are among the earliest of Paul's letters.
4. Paul and the church faced opposition from the Jews. They were envious of Paul's new converts and caused an uproar in the city. They also followed Paul to Berea and caused trouble there (Acts 17:10-13).
5. Both letters to the Thessalonians contain important prophetic truth. These two letters, along with Christ's teaching in Matthew 24-25 and the Book of Revelation, comprise the three major prophetic texts of the New Testament. All five chapters in 1 Thessalonians refer to Christ's return (1 Thess. 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:1-11, 23).

Purpose of 1 Thessalonians

- A. To commend their faithfulness (1:2-10)
- B. To answer false allegations (2:1-12)
- C. To comfort persecuted believers (2:13-16)
- D. To express his joy in their faith (2:17—3:13)
- E. To remind them about moral purity (4:1-8)
- F. To correct their misunderstanding of prophetic events (4:13—5:11)
- G. To defuse tensions within the church (5:12-15)
- H. To exhort them in basic Christian living (5:16-22)

Outline of 1 Thessalonians

- I. Paul's Greeting and Thanksgiving for the Church (1:1-10)
 - A. The character of the church (1:2-3)
 - B. The example of the church (1:4-7)
 - C. The reputation of the church (1:8-10)

II. Paul's Relationship to the Church (2:1—3:13)

- A. Paul's conduct in the church (2:1-12)
- B. Paul's reception by the church (2:13-16)
- C. Paul's longing for the church (2:17-20)
- D. Paul's concern for the church (3:1-10)
- E. Paul's prayer for the church (3:11-13)

III. Paul's Instruction to the Church (4:1—5:22)

- A. Instruction on moral purity (4:1-8)
- B. Instruction on disciplined living (4:9-12)
- C. Instruction on death and the rapture (4:13-18)
- D. Instruction on holy living and the Day of the Lord (5:1-11)
- E. Instruction on church relationships (5:12-15)
- F. Instruction on basics of Christian living (5:16-22)

IV. Blessing and Conclusion (5:23-28)

Purpose of 2 Thessalonians

- A. To comfort those who were persecuted and needed to endure (1:3-12)
- B. To correct those who were deceived and confused (2:1-15)
- C. To confront those who were disobedient and undisciplined (3:6-15)

Outline of 2 Thessalonians

I. Paul's Encouragement in Persecution (1:1-12)

- A. Thanksgiving for their growth (1:1-4)
- B. Encouragement in their persecution (1:5-10)
- C. Prayer for God's blessing (1:11-12)

II. Paul's Explanation of the Day of the Lord (2:1-17)

- A. The falling away (apostasy) must first take place (2:1-3)
- B. The man of sin is revealed (2:4-5)
- C. The restrainer is taken out of the way (2:6-7)
- D. The lawless one will deceive many and be destroyed (2:8-12)
- E. The encouragement of believers to remain steadfast (2:13-17)

III. Paul's Exhortation to the Church (3:1-15)

- A. Pray for us (3:1-2)
- B. Wait patiently for Christ (3:3-5)
- C. Withdraw from the disorderly (3:6-15)

IV. Blessing and conclusion (3:16-18)

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1 and 2 Thessalonians

Time, Place, and Purpose of 1 and 2 Thessalonians

1. Paul wrote these epistles to the _____, a city in Macedonia (Greece). Paul identified himself as the writer (1 Thess. 1:1; 2:18).
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- E. To remind them about _____ (4:1-8)
- F. To correct their misunderstanding of _____ (4:13—5:11)
- G. To _____ within the church (5:12-15)
- H. To exhort them in _____ (5:16-22)

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