



Radical Word Bible Study Podcast

1 Thessalonians

Live Streamed on July 24, 2025



Pastor Rick Lancaster

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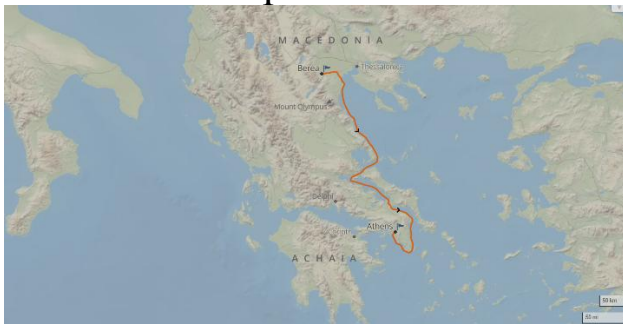
Opening Comments

- Welcome to episode 4 of the Radical Word Bible Study Podcast Live Stream.
- I am Rick Lancaster and we are coming to you live from our podcasting studio in Murrieta, California.
- You will notice we have made a few changes here and with the stream.
- We are still working on some things to improve the experience.
- Things will get smoother as I get more experience in the process, but I am happy with how it is going.
- One of the things we changed was to make the chat visible on all platforms.
- Now, if someone makes a comment on Facebook, viewers on Rumble and YouTube will be able to see it.
- And, if you would like to help us get these teaching out, please like, share, and subscribe.
- If you have any ideas about how we can dress up the studio, please do not hesitate to let me know.
- Today is Thursday, July 24, 2025.
- [coffee mug]
- Today is National Drive-thru Day.
- Let me know in the comments what your favorite drive-thru food is.
- Personally, I like Wendy's.
- Really anywhere you can get a big juicy burger.
- Also, on July 24, 1999, with the launch of NASA's orbiter Columbia, U.S. astronaut Eileen Collins became the first woman to command a space shuttle mission.
- On a more somber note, on July 14th, 75, the martyrdom of Apollinaris, bishop of Ravenna, said to have been a disciple of St. Peter.
- Also, on a sad note, Hulk Hogan passed away today – he was 71.

- He was one of those larger than life types of people – one of a kind.
- As a reminder, I will be responding to the chat live.
- If you have questions or comments, put them in the chat.
- If you do that, keep them brief, please.
- Okay, let's get into our study tonight.
- Let's open with a word of prayer.
- **Pray**

Teaching

- Turn to **1 Thessalonians 3**
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- -
- -
- Let's read verses 1 to 8 to remind us of where we are.
- **1 Thessalonians 3:1-8**
- Here is that map I wanted to show last week.



- **Map of Macedonia**
- Paul was concerned for the believers in Thessalonica.
- He was in the city for a very short time.
- He was there long enough for them to get saved, but not long enough for Paul to give everything he wanted to.
- He was a little concerned that the tempter, Satan, has robbed them of the good God had for them through the gospel.
- When he could stand not knowing their spiritual state any longer Paul sent Timothy to Thessalonica – 312 miles, probably on foot.
- Paul was encouraged by Timothy that they were doing okay.
- Paul and his companions were struggling through affliction and distress, but they were encouraged by the faith of these new believers.

- There is a supernatural bond between Christ-followers.
- If we are being faithful to seek God and allow the Holy Spirit to minister to us, we will be encouraged by the faith of other believers.
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- This is why we should share what God is doing in our lives with other believers.
- God uses what He is doing in you to bless others.
- Of course, we shouldn't be arrogant or boastful about, just humbly share what God has done.
- As good as the news was, Paul knew his work was not finished.
- **1 Thessalonians 3:9-10**
- Paul's response to the news was thankfulness and rejoicing.
- Paul didn't take credit for the work that God had done, but he rejoiced in it.
- Of course, Paul and his companions played a role in helping the Thessalonians meet their Savior, but the real spiritual work was God.
- He should always get the credit.
- And his great desire was that he could get back there to them
- To 'perfect what is lacking in your faith'
- 'perfect' = repair, or furnish completely.
- The same word used for fishermen repairing their nets.
- I like that as an illustration of faith.
- Before a fisherman goes fishing, he examines his net and repairs any damage he finds.
- He does that because he doesn't want to miss catching any fish.
- Your faith is a net that you use to catch/apprehend/appropriate God's promises.
- If there are holes in your faith, the promises of God will slip through, and you will miss them.
- As your faith grows, the holes, tears, and gaps in your net of faith are repaired.
- The Thessalonians were standing fast in their faith, but it was not complete faith.

- The same is true for all of us, our faith will not be complete until we see Jesus face-to-face.
- In the meantime, we need to be working on the net of our faith.
- Paul wants to go see the Thessalonians so that he can help them with that.
- We need other Christians that care enough about us that they will show us where the holes are in our faith.
- This is why community is so important.
- Online Bible studies have their place, but they do not replace in-person community with other believers.
- Paul is going to address some of the holes in their faith in chapters 4 and 5.
- In the meantime, Paul prayed for the Thessalonians and for his desire to go to them.
- Pray until something happens.
- You can tell how important something is to you based on how much you bring it before God in prayer.
- Paul ends this chapter with a prayer for himself and for the church
- **1 Thessalonians 3:11**
- First prays that Father and Jesus get him back to Thessalonica.
- Puts his destiny in God's hands – tells God specifically what he wants.
- The word translated 'direct' also means guide or lead.
- But then trusts God to direct his path. **Proverbs 3:5-6**
- **Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.**
- We sometimes make the mistake of trying to tell God how to answer our prayers.
- Turn to **Numbers 21 [Logos]**
- That is always a mistake because we are so limited in knowledge, wisdom, and the supernatural power of God.
- We will often give God a natural solution to our problem, but He might be planning on a supernatural answer to our prayer.
- Tell God, to the best of your ability, exactly what you need, desire, or want, but then leave it up to Him how to give it to you.
- God is infinitely creative.

- During the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land, they once again were not happy about their situation.
- **Numbers 21:4-5**
- Here they are in the wilderness with the visible presence of God in the pillar of fire and the cloud every day and night.
- God is providing them water out of the rock and bread rains down from heaven for them to eat every day.
- And so, they spoke against God and against Moses.
- God did not like that.
- **Numbers 21:6-7**
- They confess their sin before Moses and ask him to pray for them.
- They ask that God take away the serpents.
- An interesting thing to note here is that we are not told if God did take the serpents away.
- We can assume that He did, but it doesn't say that He did.
- But then He did do something that is unusual.
- **Numbers 21:8-9**
- Instead of just healing them, God told Moses to make an image of one of the serpents that bit them.
- Then they had to go outside of their tents and look up at the serpent on the pole to be healed.
- It was an act of faith; they had to believe it would heal them and then they had to act on that faith and go look at the serpent.
- Turn back to **1 Thessalonians 3**.
- There is great symbolism in that account.
- In a similar way to the Israelites having to believe and look, people must believe that Jesus died on the cross for their sins and repent and receive Him as their Savior.
- Paul wanted to get back to the Thessalonians, but He trusted God to make the arrangements.
- Don't limit God.
- Do what you can do and then let God do the rest.
- Paul then prays for the Thessalonians.
- **1 Thessalonians 3:12-13**

- One of the things that encouraged and comforted Paul was word of the Thessalonians faith and love.
- His prayer for them was that love would grow even more.
- One of the surest signs of a Christian is love for other Christians. **John 13:35**

By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

- The sign of a healthy Christian is a growing love.
- A love that expands to not just Christians, but ‘to all’.
- Paul doesn’t pray that they be delivered from their affliction.
- Knew God was doing something supernatural in them in their affliction.
- That doesn’t mean we can’t or shouldn’t pray for deliverance.
- Paul, who was well acquainted with suffering, wrote about it. **2**

Corinthians 4:17-18

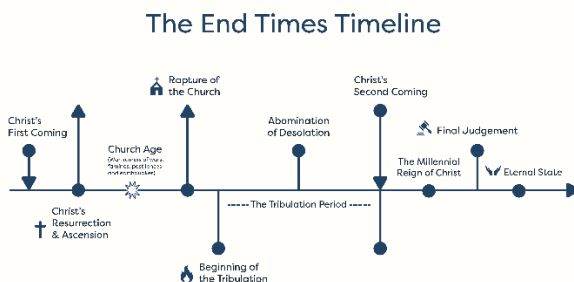
For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

- Every difficult thing that has come into my life was temporary.
- And the same is true with your life.
- Even chronic illness is temporary – right now Jesus is preparing a perfect body for you.
- And when Jesus comes back, which could be very soon, it all ends.
- Then there is just an ‘exceeding and eternal weight of glory’.
- It takes faith to experience the hope and joy that promises.
- And that faith is produced as we allow God’s love to flow through our lives in community with other Christians.
- If you want a faith that is unshakeable, get connected.
- In addition to growing love, Paul prays for growing holiness.
- Paul prays that God would establish their hearts.
- The word ‘establish’ means to strengthen or make more firm.
- But notice who it says is going to do it – God will!
- In our faith God does call us to play a role, but in the end, God is the one who does it inside us. **1 Timothy 4:7**

⁷ But reject profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness.

- Do your part and then trust God to do His.

- What Paul prays God would establish them to be blameless in holiness.
- To be blameless means they are not subject to blame.
- If we sin, which we will, we can be blamed before God for that sin.
- Thankfully, we have a way to deal with our sin. **1 John 1:9**
⁹**If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**
- If we sin, we can be blamed.
- If we confess our sin, God forgives us and cleanses us and we are once again blameless in that area.
- To be blameless in holiness means we have repented of all known sin and are not currently walking in sin.
- At no point does this mean we are perfect, just forgiven.
- Paul throws something in here that we don't want to miss.
- Paul believed Jesus was coming again.
- Paul is telling the Thessalonians that his desire is that they would be blameless in holiness when He shows up.
- Paul wants them to be blameless in holiness at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Paul is not referring to the Second Coming but to something that precedes the Second Coming.
- We are going to get into it in more detail in the next chapter but I thought I would show you this chart.
- **End Times Timeline Chart**



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- Paul uses the Greek word 'parousia' to describe an event he expected in the future.
- This word has the meaning of appearing.

- In the first chapter of Acts, the disciples watch Jesus ascend back to heaven. **Acts 1:9-11**

⁹ Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, ¹¹ who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”

- Jesus’ appearing will be different than His Second Coming.
- Jesus’ appearing is for the purpose of taking His church out of the world before God pours out His wrath in well-deserved judgment on this wicked, God-hating, Christ-rejecting world.
- We refer to that event as the Rapture of the church.
- We will unpack that a lot more once we get to the next chapter.
- What I would like you to notice here is Paul’s expectation.
- Paul wanted the Thessalonians to be blameless in holiness at Christ’s appearing.
- Paul expected them to see Christ’s appearing – the Rapture.
- Paul was expecting to see Christ’s appearing.
- Paul is describing the duality of a Christ-followers view of Christ’s appearing.
- Paul lived two-thousand years ago and expecting to see Christ’s appearing.
- Was he wrong, or was he confused, or misinformed.
- Paul didn’t know when Jesus would appear to take His church out of the world; no one does. **Matthew 24:36**

³⁶ But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

- All he knew was that it would be sudden and unexpected. **1**

Thessalonians 5:2

² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

- Since Jesus ascended back to heaven believers have lived expecting to see the appearing of Christ to take His church out of the world.
- But, it has been two-thousand years and He has not appeared yet.
- So we are to live with the duality of expecting to see Jesus appear and the reality that He may not return in my lifetime.

- God is faithful.
- We have been told Jesus is coming to get us and by faith we wait.
- The date of Christ's appearing has already been set by the Father in heaven.
- No one on earth knows when it is.
- Pray that God establish you blameless in holiness while you wait.
- Paul is writing to the young church he started.
- He sent his friend Timothy to check on them because he was worried about them.
- Timothy came back with word that even though they were going through some tough times, they were standing firm in their faith.
- He then told them that he was hoping to come visit them.
- While they had faith, it was not complete.
- Chapter 4 and 5 are very practical – how to live instructions.
- Will see they apply as much today as did 2,000 years ago.
- **1 Thessalonians 4:1-2**
- Paul starts by giving them a word of affirmation – you are doing good.
- Paul then tells them to keep at it.
- ‘abound more and more’ – don’t get comfortable where you are spiritually.
- It is not uncommon for people to reach a point in their faith where they stop working to grow further.

The law of diminishing marginal returns states that, after a specific threshold, each additional unit of input produces less additional output when other inputs remain fixed.

- In other words, there is a point where growing deeper in our faith doesn’t seem to be worth the effort to get there.
- There is a tendency toward laziness in many people.
- Just how holy does God want me to be? **1 Peter 1:15-16**
¹⁵ **but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,**
¹⁶ **because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”**
- We must never stop abound more and more in holiness.
- In much of Paul’s writings there is an emphasis on spiritual growth.
- ‘how you ought to walk’ – walk = manner of living.

- In the short time he was there he told how to live in a way that pleased God.
- Think about that for a second – you can live in a way that pleases God.
- This might be a hard concept for some to accept – pleasing God.
- This might be especially true if you grew up with someone who never seemed to be pleased with you.
- My understanding of Scripture is that we can live in a way that pleases God.
- This is not just for the super spiritual. **Hebrews 11:6**
⁶ But without faith *it is impossible to please Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him*.
- Another way of seeing this verse is that it is possible to please God by faith coming to Him and believing that He is and believing that He will reward us for our faith.
- When we walk in faith and obedience, we can believe that God is pleased with our life.
- One of the images I keep in my mind of God is Him smiling down on me.
- This motivates me to live a life that is worthy of that smile.
- Came in the form of the commandments he had received from Jesus.
- When Jesus walked on the earth, He instructed His disciples on how they were to live and interact with this world.
- One of the ways we grow in our faith is to learn and obey everything Jesus said.
- There are some who suggest that we should only focus on the gospels and the things Jesus said while He walked on this earth.
- There are a lot of problems with that but the main one is that it overlooks whose words the rest of the Bible are. **John 1:1-2**
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God.
- And then in verse 14 that Jesus is the Word.
- Which word? All of them!
- You cannot limit your exposure to the Word of God to the gospels or the New Testament, because Jesus spoke through the Holy Spirit to inspire the psalmist to write: **Psalms 119:160**

¹⁶⁰ **The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.**

- Jesus is the Word of God made manifest.
- If you study the gospels, you will note that Jesus quoted the Old Testament a lot.
- If Jesus thought the Old Testament was important, so should we.
- Spiritual growth in faith and obedience to God's commands and instructions is how we live a life that is pleasing to God.
- Paul continues with his instructions to the Thessalonians.
- **1 Thessalonians 4:3a**
- 'sanctification' is the word we use to describe the process of growing spiritually.

Sanctification: The process of being set apart for holy service to God.

- The root of sanctification is holiness – so our goal in this life is holiness.
- When we think about sanctification, we should see it three ways; past, present, and future.
- In the past, none of us was holy, far from it.
- But then through faith, we received Christ and experienced the complete forgiveness of sins.
- And not just that. **Colossians 2:13**

¹³ **And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses...**

- When we were saved, we were spiritually set apart as holy unto service for God.
- That is a one-time event.
- It doesn't need to be repeated.
- But that rarely changes us practically.
- Once saved, we must go through a process of being set apart practically unto God's service.
- That is the one we live out every day.
- In the future, we will be completed; completely perfected. **1**

Corinthians 15:50-53

⁵⁰ **Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.** ⁵¹ **Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—**⁵² **in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised**

incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

- Holiness is not some high and lofty thing that only the spiritual elite can accomplish on top of some barren mountain.
- It is to be the goal of every single Christian.
- Not a goal we will achieve overnight, it is lifelong goal, takes time.
- To help us along the way, we are given some things to do, and some to avoid.
- Paul starts here with one to avoid.
- **1 Thessalonians 4:3b-5**
- Sexual immorality was not the worst sin they could commit.
- It is just one that every person in Thessalonica could relate to.
- It is also one that we can relate to.
- We live in a time when our culture is striving to remove all restraints from sexual behavior.
- Every form of influence in the world, from television, movies, music, social media, and every other way the world communicates is competing with one another to be more perverse and sexual deviant than the next one.
- As bad as our culture is, the Greco-Roman culture was even worse – there were no restraints.
- The word Paul uses for sexual immorality has a word that gives us the word pornography.
- Whenever we talk about sex, we usually view it from the negative perspective.
- I want to pause for a moment and view sex from God's viewpoint.
- Physical intimacy is a gift from God and as such it is sacred and holy.
- But to be sacred and holy, must be done in accordance with God's design.
- Sex is holy or sacred only within the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman.
- This is the only context in which sex is holy or sacred.
- Anything outside of that is sexual immorality, sex before marriage, adultery, same-sex, even pornography are all perversions of God's design for sex.

- Within marriage, sex is a wonderful gift, that we are encouraged in the Bible to enjoy.
- Part of living in a way that is pleasing to God, abstain from sexual immorality.
- We do it when we ‘possess our own vessels’ = control ourselves.
- Our physical desires are natural, and we honor God when we control ourselves and satisfy those desires in the way He designed.
- In verse 5, tells us not to do it like the world does.
- Paul quotes OT **2 Corinthians 6:17**
Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.
- The sad truth is that most Christians are not different from the world that God says He will someday have to judge for its wickedness.
- We should be different people.
- I remember how some Christians responded when I said I wouldn’t let my daughter date – not safe – my job is to keep her pure until I hand her off to her husband on her wedding day.
- She has been married for over ten years to a good Christian man and has two beautiful children and they all love the Lord.
- We live in a time when men and women compare body counts, meaning how many people they have had sex with.
- In addition to online pornography, now there is OnlyFans, an online app that people pay to watch mostly women do sexually explicit things.
- This is the world our children and grandchildren are growing up in and will have to someday try to be holy in.
- We ought to be praying daily for them.
- Paul tells them not to be like the Gentiles, because they do not know God.
- We might wonder why people do the things they do.
- The fact is, without God, people will whatever their flesh leads them to do.
- As believers, the Holy Spirit convicts us evil.
- We may be tempted to do the wrong thing, but we know it is wrong and we can choose not to do it.

- We don't always do that, but we are able to.
 - Unbelievers are less able to do that.
 - They have a conscience, but it is not being directed by God.
 - That is why people can do the most heinous things and see no wrong in it.
 - When people do things we know are wrong, we must remind ourselves that without the influence of the Holy Spirit there is no limit to the evil people might do.
 - I had a conversation with a woman at the church on Sunday about the role of the Holy Spirit in the Tribulation period.
 - It was based on a verse out of Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians. **2 Thessalonians 2:7**
- ⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.**
- Some interpret this to mean that the Holy Spirit will be taken out of the world, but that is not what it says.
 - It says He will be taken out of the way – of what – lawlessness.
 - The Holy Spirit will still be present in the world, otherwise, no one could be saved during the Tribulation period.
 - During the time of the Tribulation, the Holy Spirit will be taken out of the way of lawlessness.
 - Lawlessness will run unhindered, and evil will be allowed to be expressed to its full extent.
 - One of the ways God will judge the world is to allow evil people be unrestrained in their evil to other people.
 - If you think it is bad now, it is nothing compared to what it will be then.
 - I'm glad I'm not going to be here when that happens.
 - This is one of the reasons I believe in a Pre-Tribulation Rapture.
 - The only way the Holy Spirit can be taken out of the way is to remove all true Christ-followers from the earth first.
 - Paul then puts this in context of the Christian community
 - **1 Thessalonians 4:6-7**
 - When we give in to our carnal desires, and commit sexual sin, it harms the Christian community.

- Especially if we do it with another believer.
- Paul says it is defrauding of a spiritual brother.
- Paul is putting the main responsibility on the man, but he is not acting alone.
- Sexual immorality should not be as common as it is in the church.
- Our church was started by a large church in the area.
- About a year after we left, it came out that our pastor had been involved in more than one more affair.
- Even after more than twenty years I still run into people occasionally who tell me how that damaged their faith.
- One of my favorite descriptions of the church is as the bride of Christ.
- We have all seen brides in their glorious wedding dresses.
- Kelly and I were married twice.
- The first time in 1981, while I was an unbeliever.
- I was first attracted to her because she was cute.
- When she walked down the aisle, she was beautiful.
- As we approached our 25th anniversary, we decided to get married again with a full wedding.
- She wore the same dress she wore 25 years earlier.
- When they opened the doors and she walked into the sanctuary I was stunned.
- She had never been more beautiful – she was glorious.
- If someone with greasy, grimy, filthy hands ran up to her and put his nasty hands on her, I would have been furious.
- That's what happens when someone like a pastor falls into sin, especially sexual sin – he is putting filthy hands on the glorious bride of Christ.
- I get it when the world does terrible things, they don't have God, they don't know God.
- But when a pastor or ministry leader does it, it makes me mad.
- And not just me, it bothers God too.
- The Lord will avenge the harm done to the church and those in the church.
- Paul knew the environment the Thessalonians were living in.

- Sexual immorality was common.
- Paul says, you have been warned – don't be like your culture.
- Called to holiness – pleasing God – choosing holiness in all areas.
- Then has a word for anyone who wants to argue about these things.
- **1 Thessalonians 4:8**
- As a pastor, it bothers me when people don't accept the things that I say to them on behalf of God.
- But then I remember this, their problem is not with me, it is with God.
- And if they are a Christian, God has given them the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit is holy, and lives in us. **1 Corinthians 3:16-17**
- ¹⁶ Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? ¹⁷ If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you are.
- He will not tolerate sin in us.
- A true Christian cannot sin freely and not feel the Holy Spirit convicting them of their sin.
- The Holy Spirit is continually drawing us nearer to God, doing the work of sanctification in us.
- Paul focused on sexual sin because it was so prevalent in their culture, but the same principles apply to all sin.
- Three quick things to help you live a life that is pleasing to God.
- First – **Know the Truth**
- The truth is what God says it is – it is God's Word.
- Jesus, who was the expression of God, said **John 17:17**
- **Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.**
- Your ability to please God is directly related to your knowledge and understanding of the Bible.
- Second – **Obey What You Know**
- As your knowledge of God and His Word grows, He expects you to obey what you know.
- And when you do, it pleases Him.
- Third and finally – **Love God and Others**
- Most sin is selfish and self-centered.
- It is about satisfying our own needs, wants, and desires.

- One of the things that I am learning more and more, if I will focus on meeting the needs, wants, and desires of others in a God-glorifying way – He will make sure I am taken care of.
- As my life becomes more pleasing to God, I am finding that I am more satisfied and fulfilled than I have ever been before.
- I am daily learning what Jesus meant **John 10:10**
I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.
- The abundant life comes as our life pleases God.
- Want an amazing life filled with the good things of God?
- Allow the Holy Spirit to change your life to make it more pleasing to God.
- True Christianity is not experienced living in a way that seeks to please me, but God and others.
- And if I do that God promises to take care of me.
- Paul then commends them for doing that.
- **1 Thessalonians 4:9-10**
- We prove we are Christians by loving. **Romans 5:5**
Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.
- Jesus also said this is how people would know that we are His followers. **John 13:34-35**
³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.
- The Thessalonians were doing that, Paul said do it more and more.
- We can never love too much.
- There is something there we should take note of.
- Paul wasn't the one who taught them to love one another.
- It was God, He taught them how to love.
- This is an important thing we need to understand.
- There are some things God wants us to learn through study or experience.
- And then there are some things He teaches us supernaturally.
- We shouldn't be lazy, do your part and try to learn as much as you can.
- Then you need to trust God for the things you are not able to learn.

- And trust God will give you what you need, though maybe not what you want to learn.
- Then tells them how they should live.
- **1 Thessalonians 4:11-12**
- ‘lead a quiet life’ – a quiet life is one that is free from disruption and commotion.
- What we see going on in some of the various ‘protests’, riots often is the exact opposite of living a quiet life.
- There may come times when we need to stand for what is right, but then we must do that the right way, in a way that glorifies God.
- ‘mind your own business’ – don’t be a busybody, Holy Spirit police.
- Paul would speak about this again in his second letter to the Thessalonians. **2 Thessalonians 3:10-12**

¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. ¹¹ For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. ¹² Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread.

- Peter goes so far to equate being a busybody with much more serious sins. **1 Peter 4:15**

¹⁵ But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people’s matters.

- Mind your own business is good advice for us all.
- Before we think about sticking our nose in other people’s business we need to ask God the Holy Spirit to tell me that is what He wants.
- Sometimes we see something in someone else’s life and think, as an act of love, that we need to do something.

- Jesus talked about something like that. **Matthew 7:3-5**

³ And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? ⁴ Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank *is* in your own eye? ⁵ Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

- Examine yourself and seek the Lord before you go sticking your nose in someone else’s business.
- ‘work with your own hands’ – provide for yourself and for your family – be dependent on no one but God.
- This one is controversial in our welfare-oriented society.

- There are millions of people in our country who have never worked.
- That is truly hard for me to imagine.
- Since I was a pre-teen, I have worked, starting with mowing lawns and delivering newspapers.
- In over fifty years, I have only been unemployed for only short periods of weeks while I looked for a job.
- The Thessalonians believed that Jesus was coming back soon.
- Some responded to that truth by quitting their jobs.
- They figured they could just sit around and wait for Jesus to show up.
- Another response is to live it up, borrow everything you can, leave debt, party till you drop – live like it is 1999.
- Paul says here, that is a terrible witness to ‘those who are outside’.
- Unbelievers are watching how we live, how we respond to difficult things in life, how we act when we prosper.
- They are watching.
- What should they be seeing?
- They should see Jesus in us, living a life of purity and glorifying God.
- Jesus may be coming back soon, but then again, He may not come in our lifetime.
- He should always be ready for His return, and at the same time living a life that pleases Him every day.
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- **July 24, 2025 ended here.**
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- **Plan on doing a deep dive into the Rapture.**
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- Paul then shifts gears and gets into what appears to be his main reason for writing
- **1 Thessalonians 4:13**
- ‘ignorant’ = uninformed – about one aspect of Christ’s return
- They believed that Jesus was coming soon – it is imminent

- The Thessalonians were waiting – and then someone in the church died, and another
- Paul uses the idiom or saying ‘fallen asleep’ = died
- Questions started coming up, what does Christ’s return mean for them
- Did they miss out on the blessing of His coming?
- What were they to think? How were they to act?
- ‘sorrow as though who have no hope’
- Paul divides the world into two groups – those with hope, and those without hope
- Not saying that we shouldn’t grieve for the passing of loved ones
- We just do it differently than those who have no hope
- Then tells them how they can know which group they are in
- 1 Thessalonians 4:14
- ‘if we believe that Jesus died and rose again’
- The people that have hope are those who believe that Jesus died for their sins and then rose again
- The resurrection of Jesus is our hope, makes the gospel good news
- Two of the things that resurrection proves
- First, that God the Father accepted Jesus sacrificial death as sufficient to satisfy the sin-debt of the whole world
- Second, it is proof that we also will be resurrected 1 Corinthians 15:20-23
- But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming.
- When Jesus comes He is not going to come alone
- Will bring everyone who has believed in Him
- 1 Thessalonians 4:15
- This is not Paul’s opinion of what is going to happen
- He got it directly from Jesus

- Notice also that Paul is living Jesus will return in his lifetime, ‘we who are alive’
- Paul then describes this upcoming event
- 1 Thessalonians 4:16
- ‘the dead in Christ will rise first’
- ‘in Christ’ = true Christians – received Jesus as Savior
- ‘rise first’ – what does that mean?
- Death occurs when the soul leaves the body
- Jesus, on the cross dismissed His spirit – died
- Body does but not the soul = eternal – what happens to the soul
- Not soul-sleep – goes to be with Jesus 2 Corinthians 5:8
- We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.
- When soul departs body, if in Christ, goes directly to Christ in heaven
- To live in heaven need a heavenly body, incorruptible, doesn’t get old or sick, doesn’t wear out
- Paul tells us in Thessalonians, dead in Christ get theirs first
- Then in a twinkling of an eye, uber-fast, millionth of a millisecond
- Then it is our turn
- 1 Thessalonians 4:17
- If we are alive when Jesus comes back for His church
- We ‘shall be caught up’ – ‘caught up’ we get word ‘rapture’
- The unbelieving world is not going to know what is going on
- In a moment, millions of true Christians will simply vanish from around the world
- Many who claim to be Christians but are not, will probably understand, but it will be too late
- Paul says when we are caught up, we will be caught together with the dead in Christ
- Promise of a wonderful reunion with our saved loved ones who go before us
- And then, for all the rest of eternity, we will never be separated from Jesus, God the Son, lover of our souls, or our loved ones
- Paul then exhorts the Thessalonians to use this information

- 1 Thessalonians 4:18
- Death is never easy, but as a pastor I have attended many funerals
- Have seen the difference the hope the resurrection brings
- Without Christ there is only despair, emptiness, hopelessness
- There is fear about the future, there is uncertainty about where the loved one is
- Attempted words of comfort are empty and devoid of power
- With Christ there is grief mixed the hopeful expectation of a future reunion
- There is joy in the knowledge of where our loved one is – with Jesus in heaven
- The comfort of others strengthens us, brings us peace, and even joy
- Paul believed that Jesus would come during his lifetime – He didn't
- Chuck Smith believed that Jesus would come back during his lifetime
- I believe Jesus will come back during my lifetime – I am waiting
- The question we all need to answer is, 'How do we wait for Jesus?'
- The Thessalonians thought Jesus was coming back, some sat around waiting for Him
- Paul said that wasn't how we are to wait
- Paul started this chapter telling them and us to live a life that pleases God
- A life that pleases God is one that knows Him, obeys Him, and loves Him and others
- Today, love more and more
- Then live a productive life – don't be dependent upon anyone but God
- Take care of your witness to those who are outside of the faith
- And then be looking forward to the coming of Jesus 2 Timothy 4:8
- Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.
- We all have goals and dreams, I want to see my children have children
- I want to take Kelly to Israel
- I want to teach through the whole Bible
- I want to see this church flourish and plant other churches

- Souls saved, marriages healed, families restored
- But more than all of that I want to see Jesus come to get me – and you
- We wait for Jesus by walking with Him today, by letting others see Him through our love for Him and for others
- I don't know when Jesus is coming back, no one on this earth does
- But I do know that even if He doesn't come back in my lifetime, I will be expecting Him to and looking forward to it until my very last breath
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- Paul has comforted them about the death of their saved loved ones
- They are with Him now, and when Jesus comes back, will bring them with Him
- Then tells them about what happens after the Rapture
- 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2
- Paul had taught them a lot in the short time he was with them
- They knew about 'the Day of the Lord'
- Both the Old and New Testaments tell us about this future event Isaiah 13:9
- Behold, the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He will destroy its sinners from it.
- It is so bad that God limits its time so that all life is not destroyed Matthew 24:21-22
- For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.
- 'Day of the Lord' – not a 24-hour day – period of time
- Begins after the Rapture and goes all the way through the Millennium
- And when it comes, the unbelieving world will be surprised
- 'thief in the night' – speaks of being surprised and unprepared
- 1 Thessalonians 5:3
- 'Peace and safety!' = false – come when they least expect it

- Destruction – not annihilation – ruin, loss, suffering = Tribulation
- Illustration of pregnant woman – once the labor starts, no stopping it
- A pregnant woman is a good illustration of the coming Day of the Lord
- You can tell a woman is pregnant, the signs of the Lord's coming are discernable, but we don't know exactly when
- 1 Thessalonians 5:4-5
- The world is divided into two realms – light and darkness
- The Kingdom of God is light 1 John 1:5
- This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.
- The Kingdom of God is where God is King
- Everything and everyone not under His authority is in the kingdom of darkness
- In this context darkness = moral and spiritual separation from God
- Bible says that is where we all were before Christ
- Something supernatural happens when someone is saved Colossians 1:13-14
- He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.
- If you are saved = son or daughter of God – in kingdom of light
- Not physically – but spiritually
- Not only that – Day won't overtake us = catch us
- Because Jesus will come and take us physically out of kingdom of darkness – live in eternal light
- This should have an effect upon the way we live this life
- 1 Thessalonians 5:6-7
- In the last chapter Paul used the word 'sleep' to refer to believers that had died
- Here he changes how he uses it
- Here the word 'sleep' = morally and spiritually indifferent
- Means – don't care about what God thinks is right or wrong
- Don't care what God thinks or wants

- If you are a son of the day or light – Jesus died for your sins – your sins are forgiven – eternity in heaven
- To be indifferent to the things of God is to despise the cross of Christ
- Should be watching and sober – attentive to the things of God and watching for the return of Christ
- 1 Thessalonians 5:8
- Paul uses one of his favorite illustrations – a soldier's uniform
- Two pieces – breastplate and helmet
- Breastplate protects vital organs, especially the heart
- Helmet protects the head
- Faith and love guard our hearts from the darkness around us
- Faith is knowing and depending upon God
- By loving God and others, my heart is protected from loving the things of this world
- And faith and love combine to produce hope
- Notice – ‘hope of salvation’ – not hope that we will be saved, but that we have been saved
- Salvation can be expressed in three tenses; past, present, and future
- Past – Christ, Lord and Savior – saved from penalty and guilt of sin
- Present – being saved from the power and pollution of sin by the Spirit of God
- Future – will be saved from the very presence of sin when God the Father welcomes me into His holy presence
- That is the hope of salvation that we have as Christians
- But that is not our only hope
- 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10
- Another name for the ‘Day of the Lord’ is the ‘Day of God’s Wrath’
- God’s wrath is reserved for those who reject His love and grace – Jesus
- As Christians, we are not ‘appointed to wrath’
- Doesn’t mean we won’t experience difficult times John 16:33
- These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

- As long as we are in this world – good times and bad times
- But before God's Wrath comes – Jesus comes for us
- As believers we should have no fear of future judgment
- Colossians 2:14 says all charges against us 'nailed to the cross of Christ'
- In verse 10 says whether we wake or sleep
- Some interpret to mean whether we are dead or alive when Jesus comes – based on 'sleep' in chapter 4
- But Paul uses term to mean 'morally & spiritually indifferent' in chapter 5 – believe that is better interpretation
- Means that whether we are living for Jesus with our whole being, or morally & spiritually indifferent, if you are a true Christian, you will go to be with Jesus forever
- Paul told them in verse 6 – watch and be sober
- Taking the return of Christ seriously, watching for it
- That we shouldn't be sleeping – not morally and spiritually indifferent
- Christians can be divided into two groups
- Those who are living this life watching and waiting for Christ to return
- The other group are sleepwalking through this life
- They have confessed Jesus as Lord and Savior and received forgiveness for their sins
- They have the Holy Spirit living inside them
- But there is little or no evidence of that in their life
- Someday, maybe very soon, Jesus is coming back
- What will your response be to His coming 1 John 2:28
- And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.
- Will you be ashamed of the life you are living when Jesus comes back?
- Are you spiritually sleepwalking through this life?
- Is there any evidence in your life that you care about the things of God?
- Well, I am here. Isn't that enough? No, not really!

- 1 Thessalonians 5:11
- Church life is all about giving and taking – comfort and edification
- Comfort = coming alongside to help or encourage
- Edify = to build up – to make stronger
- Back in verse 8 there are three areas that we should focus on; faith, love, and hope
- Paul says we need to put these three things on
- We can't do that in isolation – we are to help each other
- Someone who is sleepwalking is not going anywhere, is a danger to self and others
- If you want your life to matter, if you want it to be better, you need to wake up
- It begins by accepting this as truth, confessing it to God
- Then you must choose to do something
- Get involved – Bible Study, Service, activities & fellowships
- If Jesus died for your sins, he did, shouldn't you get yourself ready for His coming
- When is Jesus coming? Soon! Are you ready?
- If not, wake up, put on faith, love, and hope. Get connected to others to both give and receive comfort and edification
- Let none of us be ashamed when Jesus gets here
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- Paul is speaking to the young church that he started
- Was only able to stay there about three weeks
- As he comes to the end of this letter he gives them a series of short instructions on how they ought to behave toward each other
- 1 Thessalonians 5:12a
- 'brethren' – uses this word 27 times in 1 & 2 Thessalonians
- The church is not an organization, even though it is organized
- It is not a business, it is not a club, it is not an association
- The word that best describes what the church is supposed to be is 'family'

- When we were saved, we were made part of the family of God
Ephesians 1:3-6
- Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.
- That means we are all brothers and sisters in Christ
- Turn to a couple of people around you and tell them they are your brother or sister in Christ
- When Paul says ‘brethren’ referring to the whole church
- The church is a family made up of families
- God created the family, and established how it should function
- Created man to be the leader, woman, as his equal to stand beside him and help him, and children are to obey their father and mother
- The church also is God’s creation, established how it should function
- The elders are assigned to lead, the deacons and other ministers help them lead, and the people are to obey
- Paul gives us three functions of the leaders and two responses of the people
- 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13
- First function of the leader – Labor among you
- ‘labor’ = toil to the point of exhaustion – ministry is hard work
- Someone called to be a minister to the people of God works hard
- Second function – Are over you in the Lord
- Literally = ‘to take the lead’ – lead by example of life
- This does speak of authority, but a very special kind Mark 10:42-45
- Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. 44 And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave

of all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

- A true Christ-like leader is a servant before he is a leader
- ‘in the Lord’ is key – in His name and in His way
- Third function = Admonish you
- ‘admonish’ = ‘put in mind’ – warning and instruction
- A true Christian leader will warn of danger and sin, and instruct in the things of God
- Paul tells the church how they should respond to those leaders
- First response – Recognition
- ‘recognize’ = ‘know the worth of’ – it is a call to respect the men that are fulfilling the three functions of leaders in the church
- It implies that the church should accept them as leaders – which then implies that the leaders should be followed
- Second response – Esteem them very highly
- = ‘hold them in the highest regard’ value them, appreciate them
- With the main motivation being love – knowing you love me is worth a lot to me – causes me to feel appreciated
- The church is not just about the leaders giving to the congregation
- It goes both ways – that is life in the church
- And one of the fruit of this two-way church life = peace
- Paul now turn from the leaders to the whole church
- 1 Thessalonians 5:14a
- ‘brethren’ – who is he talking to? The whole church! That means you
- 1 Thessalonians 5:14-15
- Six quick things that the congregation is to do for one another
- First – Warn the unruly
- Unruly = disorderly = soldier who has stepped out of ranks
- These are the troublemakers
- Who should warn the troublemakers? The pastor? Nope! The church!
- Second – Comfort the Fainthearted
- ‘fainthearted’ = easily discouraged or frightened, the quitters
- Called to ‘comfort’ them = ‘speak tender words to’
- Who? Pastor? Nope! You!

- Third – Uphold the Weak
- While this may refer to the physically weak, probably referring to moral and spiritual weakness
- ‘uphold’ = to hold before – face-to-face – FIND VOLUNTEER
- Help him to walk a few steps – then can find his own way
- Fourth – Be patient with all
- ‘patient’ = put up with the weaknesses of others
- Who does ‘all’ include? Pretty much everyone
- Fifth – Do not retaliate
- When someone does something to us, we want to retaliate, get even, get justice, make things right
- After all, the Bible teaches, ‘An eye for an eye’, right? Yep
- If punishment is given – should fit the crime – to limit punishment
- But Jesus taught something radically different Matthew 5:38-39
- You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.
- Jesus would call us to forgive
- Who should do this, the pastor? You!
- Sixth – Pursue what is good
- Definition of Agape Love – unconditionally doing what is in the best interest of others
- Church life is not supposed to be a spectator sport – supposed to be interactive – dynamic
- We should do good for others not just when it is convenient
- It was inconvenient for that young man to interrupt our Bible Study
- But it was good for him to meet his Savior
- And it was good for us to be used by God in the miracle of his spiritual birth
- Most churches are not what they ought to be because the people don’t know what their role is
- Your role in this church is just as important as mine, maybe more
- The next three verses are usually taught from the perspective of an individual believer

- But in context they are given as part of the life of the church
- Next week I will share their individual applications
- We get three very quick statements, written in the imperative – commands = not optional in church life
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16
- When the church gathers, should be a time of rejoicing
- We should lift our voices in joyous praise
- That is why most of our songs are upbeat
- We have a lot to rejoice in – we are the children of Almighty God
- He saved us from sin and spiritual death
- He lives in us, helps us, guides us, protects us, teaches us
- Whether we come in burdened by life or overjoyed with life, we all can add our voices to the joy of the church
- Been said, not willing to join in the praises of the church, not ready for heaven, because that is the main occupation of heaven
- As a quick aside – who knows what the shortest verse of the Bible is? John 11:35
- Jesus wept.
- In the Greek, it is this verse – ‘Rejoice always’
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17
- When we gather as the church, prayer ought to be peppered throughout it
- Someone once described worship singing as ‘prayers set to music’
- We will talk about next week how on a personal level this is speaking of the attitude of the heart
- Paul is not saying that the whole service should be non-stop prayer
- What he is saying is that we ought to be aware of God’s presence throughout the whole service
- When we are praying, we are speaking to God
- When we are singing we are singing about and to God
- When we are giving, we are giving to God
- When we are listening to the teaching we are hearing from God
- All of this is because of Jesus, and for God
- Next Paul says our gatherings should reflect an attitude of gratitude

- 1 Thessalonians 5:18
- There are things that come into our lives that it is exceedingly difficult to be thankful for
- And in many cases we shouldn't be – like wickedness in the world
- But when we gather together, we have much to be thankful for
- We have a church family that loves us
- We have Christ who saves us – Spirit who comforts us – God who loves and adopted us
- These are commands, 'this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.'
- If you are going to go to a church, you should want it to be a good church – but is good, good enough?
- I don't want this to be a good church, I want it to be a great church
- Unfortunately, there is nothing I can do to make this a great church
- For a church to be truly great, not about the preacher, not about the building, not about how many people are coming, not about the events, ministries, or programs
- It is about the people – all of the people – it's about you
- Jesus died to create this church
- He sent the Holy Spirit to give it the power it needs to be great
- He gave it leaders to work hard, lead it, and teach in it
- But the only way any church can be truly great is when the 'brethren' respond
- This little church can be a great church
- What's in it for you – great churches help people to be great people enjoying great lives, to have great marriages and families
- We serve a great God, we are His sons and daughters and our destiny is greatness
- All you need to do to help this church become a great church is find out what the church is doing and start showing up
- And if we all do that, great things will happen – wouldn't that be great?
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- Paul has been telling this young church things they should keep in mind as they relate to God and to each other
- Just told them three things they ought to do
- **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**
- Now focuses on two they shouldn't do – first one
- **1 Thessalonians 5:19**
- The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- God the Father is seated on His throne in heaven
- Jesus is seated next to Him and intercedes for us before the throne of God night and day
- The Holy Spirit is in the world - Jesus told us about Him **John 16:7-8**
It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.
- In Acts 2 the Holy Spirit came just as Jesus promised
- Came upon the disciples – tongues of fire
- All of Jerusalem came to see what was going on – guys were on fire for Jesus
- When we receive Christ as our Savior, Spirit comes into our lives, lights a fire in our heart
- Supernatural things start happening
- But it often doesn't last. Why?
- Paul says here, 'Do not quench the Spirit'
- 'quench' = to put out a fire
- Paul doesn't say what they were doing that might be quenching the Spirit, but the next verse, might be a clue
- **1 Thessalonians 5:20**
- One of the ways you 'quench the Spirit' is to 'despise prophesy'
- A 'prophesy' is an inspired utterance
- When God wanted to speak to humans, He usually did it through another human
- God would inspire them, put His words into their minds
- The Old Testament prophet Jeremiah was a young man when God called him to be a prophet

- He was a little concerned about how he was going to do it **Jeremiah 1:9**

Then the LORD put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me: "Behold, I have put My words in your mouth."

- It shouldn't surprise us that God still wants to talk to humans
- God talks to humans in several ways
- The main way is through His Word **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

- 'given by inspiration of God' = compound Greek word – God+breathed
- 'breathed' – same root as 'spirit'
- If you don't esteem, value, take seriously, read, and obey Bible = despising prophecy = quenching the Spirit
- Another way God speaks is through people – especially preachers and teachers
- A preacher/teacher can despise prophecy by teaching man's opinion, rather than God's truths
- A person can despise prophecy by wanting to hear man's opinions
- It is one of the signs that we are to be watching for of the end-times **2 Timothy 4:3-4**

The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

- The truth is sometimes hard to hear, but when presented by a Spirit-filled teacher, it brings life
- You should pray that the person that stands up here is speaking through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit
- But they are not the only ones that God speaks through
- God can and does speak through anyone who has the Holy Spirit
- We despise prophecy when we refuse to listen to what God is saying through our brothers and sisters
- We can also despise prophecy when we refuse to share the things God inspires us to tell others

- There is rarely a day that goes by that I don't hear something from God through one of the people He has placed in my life
- I don't hear those things because I am super-spiritual
- I hear them because I believe God wants to speak to me, and I am listening
- We despise prophecy and quench the Spirit when we are not listening
- But we can't accept everything we hear
- **1 Thessalonians 5:21-22**
- Not everything that Christians say is inspired by the Spirit of God
- not even the most faithful Christian preacher/teachers should be trusted absolutely
- When someone speaks, as I do every Sunday as a representative of God
- I pray for God's inspiration, I try allow the Spirit to put these messages together
- I have people pray for me that the Holy Spirit does the speaking through me
- That doesn't mean that it always happens
- Paul says, 'Test all things' = 'inspired utterances'
- Judge what is being said as either good or evil, based on what?
- Not on your opinions or how it makes you feel – but with God's Word
- For my words to be considered inspired utterances – must line up with what God has already said in His Word
- If it is good – cling to it, hold fast, grab it and don't let it go
- If it is not good, it is evil - stay away from it, reject it
- Paul closes his letter with a blessing
- **1 Thessalonians 5:23-28**
- God's goal for your life is to make you whole
- For you to be totally whole, all parts of your life need to be aligned with God
- It is the Holy Spirit that does the work to accomplish this wholeness

Philippians 1:6

He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ.

- You can't do it yourself, the Holy Spirit must do it

- But you must let Him – and you can't quench Him
- You can't do the work of becoming whole, but you can block the work
- Jesus told the disciples that they were the light of the world
- All those that follow in their footsteps are also the light of the world
- We are light because the Spirit of God is burning within us
- It is up to us to keep that fire burning hot
- We do that by getting to know the Holy Spirit
- The Bible has a lot to say about Him and the things He does in the world and in the lives of God's people – read it
- Listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit – teachers, preachers, other Christians
- And then respond – this is where discipleship and small groups come in – can help us learn how to 'test all things'
- This world is cold and dark – and if you don't do something to keep the fire burning, you will end up at the same spiritual temperature as this world
- We have an enemy that wants us to be room-temperature **John 10:10a**
The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.
- If your life is just like the world, empty, pointless
- If we quench the Spirit – open the door for the thief
- He will take all he can, and kill or destroy everything else
- But that is not the kind of life that Jesus came to give you **John 10:10b**
I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.
- The abundant life is lived in Christ and through the Spirit
- Impossible without the Holy Spirit
- Which life would you rather live?
- Ask your spouse which life they want to live? Ask your kids?
- And the cool thing is that we can all live that abundant life
- The same Holy Spirit that is in me is in you
- He can take the weakest ember in the heart of a willing person, and fan to flames to life that brings light and heat to everyone around you
- It all begins when we choose to say yes to the Spirit
- Let's pray and do that right now

- **Pray**