

1st Thessalonians Review

Salutation and Greeting

- **Salutation [1:1a]**

Paul and Silvanus and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

- **Greeting [1:1b]**

Grace to you and peace.

Commendations and Explanations

- **Thanksgiving [1:2-10]**

We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention *of you* in our prayers; constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father, knowing full well, brethren beloved by God, *His* choice of you; for our gospel message did not come to you in speech only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. For you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, after receiving the word with the joy of the Holy Spirit in *the midst of* much tribulation, with the result that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, with the result that we have no need to say anything. For people in every place report back about how you welcomed us, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to expectantly wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *that is* Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.

Principles of 1st Thessalonians 1:2-10

- Thanksgiving is an integral part of a healthy prayer life [Dan 6:10; Eph 1:15-16; Phil 4:6; Col 4:2; 1 Tim 2:1-2; 2 Tim 1:3-4; Phlm 4-5].
- Believers should communicate with God in prayers throughout the day every day [1 Sam 12:23; Luke 18:1; Eph 6:18; Col 1:9-12; 1 Thess 5:17].

- Faith, hope, and love are central to the believer's walk [1 Cor 13:13].
- Apart from saving faith in Jesus Christ, all our works are wood, hay and stubble [Heb 6:1].
- Everything we do should be done as a function of our ongoing faith [2 Cor 8:7; 9:8].
- Faith is perfected through good works and is considered dead (dormant) when it does not produce any works [Jas 2:14-26].
- All that we do unto the Lord should also be done as a function of love [John 14:15; 15:10; Gal 5:6, 13; 1 John 5:3].
- The confident expectation (hope) that we have in the promises and faithfulness of God gives us the ability to patiently endure the trials which we encounter in this life [Rom 8:22-25; 15:4; 2 Cor 4:17-18; 2 Thess 1:3-4; Heb 6:16-20; Jas 1:2-4].
- God the Father will witness this living out of our faith, hope and love [Matt 6:1-21].
- Nothing is hidden from His sight [Psalm 33:13-15; Heb 4:13; Job 34:21; Jer 32:19].
- God, in His sovereignty, has chosen certain groups of people to be objects of His blessing.
 - Israel (the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) were chosen to be a nation unto God.
 - All believers from Pentecost to the Rapture were chosen to be part of the Body of Christ.
- The word of God carries with it the very power of God [Heb 4:12].
- This is also true of God's message to unbelievers (the gospel) [Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 1:18-24].
- God gave us His Son as a powerful example of how to live a holy life in this lost and dying world [John 13:15].
- He also gave us examples of those who are true disciples of Christ for us to follow [1 Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17; 4:9; 2 Thess 3:7-9].
- We can also show ourselves to be examples for others [1 Tim 4:12; Titus 2:7-8; 1 Pet 5:1-3].
- Our faith in God should not be hidden, but evident to all [Matt 5:14-16; Rom 1:8; 16:19].

- Our blessed hope is in the coming of our Savior from heaven to gather the Church to Himself [1 Cor 1:4-8; Phil 3:20-21].
- This event will precede the events of the Day of the Lord including the Tribulation.
- We will not personally experience the Mark of the Beast, the Abomination of Desolation, etc.
- **Reminders [2:1-16]**
 - How the Gospel was Delivered [2:1-12]

For you yourselves know, brethren, that our visit with you was not without purpose, but instead, after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the confidence in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition. For our appeal does not *come* from error or impure motives or by way of deceit; but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing people, but God who examines our hearts. For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed — God is witness — nor did we seek renown from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. But instead, we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing *mother* tenderly cares for her own children. Having such a loving affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us. For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, *how* working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and *so is* God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we proved to be toward you believers; just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father *would* his own children, so that you would walk in a manner worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

Summary of 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

- Apparently, the Jews in Thessalonica who rejected the gospel presented by Paul, Silvanus and Timothy (PST) made accusations against them claiming that their visit was for personal gain.

- Paul reminded the Thessalonians that they knew better based on personal experience.
- Even after suffering mistreatment while in Philippi, PST boldly proclaimed the gospel in Thessalonica even though they faced opposition there.
- This is an example of having a heart to share the gospel and trusting God to take care of whatever circumstances we may face [Phil 4:11-13].
- That sharing of the gospel had borne fruit as was evidenced by the many Thessalonians who had placed their faith in Jesus Christ [2 Thess 1:10].
- PST had had been entrusted with the true gospel of God and that is exactly what they proclaimed, seeking to please God, not people [Gal 1:10].
- People observe our external behavior, but God examines the thoughts and intentions of our hearts [Psa 139:1-2a; Heb 4:12; Rev 2:23].
- God was witness to the purity of the intentions of PST – they did not come with a pretext for greed, nor did they try to flatter like salesmen.
- While in Thessalonica, PST had come to love the Thessalonian believers very dearly.
- This love had motivated PST to share not only the word of God with them, but also their very lives.
- They toiled day and night so they would not be a burden to the Thessalonians [2 Thess 3:7-10].
- PST had ministered to the Thessalonian believers collectively and individually [1 Thess 5:14].
- Having led the Thessalonians to faith in Christ, PST were their spiritual fathers [1 Cor 4:17].
- Their loving, fatherly care was meant to lead the Thessalonian believers to walk worthy [Eph 4:1-6].
- How the Gospel was Received [2:13-16]
 For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted *it* not *as* the word of men, but *for* what it truly is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe. For you, brethren, proved to be imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you also endured the same

sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they *did* from the Jews, who put both the Lord Jesus and the prophets to death, and drove us out. They are not pleasing to God and are hostile to all people, hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved; with the result that they continually build up their sins to the fullest. And wrath has come upon them at last.

Summary of 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16

- When the Thessalonians heard the message delivered by Paul, Silvanus and Timothy (PST), they knew it was divine inspired [2 Tim 3:16-17].
- The gospel message of salvation by grace through faith [Eph 2:8-9] is not a message man is capable of inventing, nor would he if, somehow, he could.
- PST gave formal instruction while in Thessalonica and the Thessalonians, after hearing the word of God, accepted it as an act of faith [Heb 4:2].
- When the word of God is united with faith, it has an inherent power to transform us [Rom 12:2] from within our souls [Heb 4:12].
- For the word of God to be fully effective in our lives, we need to hear it [Matt 4:9], believe it, and apply it to our lives [Deut 5:1; 31:12; Luke 11:28].
- When we see this in others and how the word of God impacts their lives, we should imitate their behavior [1 Cor 11:1-2; Phil 3:17].
- The Thessalonians had imitated the believers in the Judean churches and Paul told them that those Judean believers had suffered persecution.
- The persecution of the Judean Christians had been at the hand of the Jews – unbelieving Jews who had put the Lord Jesus to death [Luke 24:20].
- Unbelieving Jews also put the O.T. prophets to death [Acts 7:52; Matt 5:11-12; Heb 11:32-38].
- Unbelieving Jews also persecuted and driven PST out of Thessalonica [Acts 17:6-10].
- Such unbelieving Jews are not pleasing to God and are hostile to people and the gospel.
- Throughout his evangelistic efforts, unbelieving Jews hindered Paul and his companions from sharing the gospel with the Gentiles [Ac 13:45-50].

- So, from killing the prophets and Jesus Christ to hindering the messengers of the gospel, the sins of unbelieving Jews had built up to the fullest.
 - When their sins had reached their fullness [Gen 15:16], God began pouring out his wrath upon the Jews.
 - This wrath would lead to the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and will eventually come to full fruition during the Tribulation.
- **Concerns [2:17-3:13]**
 - Paul's Plans [2:17-20]

But we, brethren, after being separated from you for a short amount of time — in person, not in spirit — were especially eager with great longing to see your face. For we really wanted to come to you — I, Paul, more than once — and yet Satan thwarted us. For who is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? For you are our glory and joy.

Summary of 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20

- When Paul, Silvanus and Timothy (PST) were separated from the Thessalonians, it felt as though they had been torn away from family (orphaned).
- They had great love for the believers in Thessalonica and did not want to leave them vulnerable as infants in Christ [Eph 4:14].
- Though they were physically separated from the Thessalonians, PST were still with them in spirit – in their thoughts, prayers, etc. [Col 2:5]
- PST were longing for fellowship with the believers in Thessalonica and really wanted to go see them, in spite of the obvious dangers.
- Paul himself had tried multiple times to figure out a way to get to Thessalonica, but each time PST had been prevented from doing so.
- PST wanted to go to teach the Thessalonians more about the Bible, so clearly God would not have thwarted them.
- So, who had thwarted them? Satan.
- The dangers in Thessalonica were indeed from people, but Satan motivated their efforts.

- As Calvin wrote, “Whenever the ungodly cause us trouble, they are fighting under the banner of Satan, and are his instruments for harassing us.”
- Paul cared deeply about the Thessalonians and called them his hope, joy and crown of rejoicing.
 - Hope: He wanted to see their growth in the faith as a parent lives to see his child grow up to maturity.
 - Joy: Thinking about what they had already become and what they would be brought him great joy.
 - Crown: These believers would be a crown (reward) for Paul at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
- Paul had brought the gospel to the Thessalonians, so their faith would be his glory [Rom 15:17-21].
- Timothy’s Visit [3:1-5]

Therefore when we could endure it no longer, we thought it best to be left behind at Athens by ourselves, and we dispatched Timothy, our brother and God’s fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you as to your faith, so that no one would be unsettled by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we have been appointed for this affliction. For indeed when we were with you, we *kept* telling you in advance that we were going to suffer affliction; and it came to pass just as we were telling you, as you know. For this reason, when I could endure *it* no longer, I also dispatched Timothy to find out about your walk of faith, for fear that the tempter might have tempted you, and our toil would be without result.

Summary of 1 Thessalonians 3:1-5

- Paul cared deeply about the believers in Thessalonica and eagerly wanted to know how they were holding up spiritually.
- Pastors should likewise care for the flock of God allotted to their care with the same sense of eagerness [1 Pet 5:1-3; Acts 20:28].
- While in Athens, Paul and Sylvanus dispatched Timothy to return to Thessalonica to encourage them in their faith and check on their wellbeing.

- Paul trusted Timothy to properly evaluate the situation in Thessalonica because he knew Timothy's servant heart [Phil 2:19-21].
- Paul was concerned that the Thessalonians might get knocked off their proper spiritual course.
- Because of our fallen estate, people are inherently unstable, easily deceived and tossed here and there by every wind of doctrine [Eph 4:14].
- Timothy encouraged the Thessalonians from the Scriptures because true spiritual strength comes from knowing biblical principles and trusting the promises in the word of God [Rom 4:20-21].
- This also produces stability in the life of the believer [Col 2:5; Eph 4:15-16].
- Believers that are true followers of Christ will face persecution [2 Tim 3:12].
- The Thessalonians were facing persecution from their own countrymen [1 Thess 2:14].
- Paul and his companions also faced persecution in their ministry [1 Thess 3:3-4].
- Paul was concerned that Satan would deceive the Thessalonians into thinking they were doing something wrong because they faced persecution, and their spiritual leaders also faced persecution.
- Paul knew that Satan might use this to tempt them into wondering away from the faith.
- If Satan was successful in doing so, the work that Paul, Silvanus and Timothy had done in edifying those believers would not have produced the desired result.
- The Thessalonians would not lose their salvation, but they would not be producing spiritual fruit.
- Timothy's Report [3:6-10]

But now that Timothy has returned to us from you, and has brought us good news of your walk of faith and love, and that you always think kindly of us, longing to see us just as we also long to see you, for this reason, brethren, in all our distress and affliction we were comforted about you through your walk of faith; for now we are really alive, since you stand firm in the Lord. For what gratitude can we render to God for you in return for all the joy with

which we rejoice in the presence of our God because of you, as we night and day keep praying very intensely that we may see your face, and may complete what is lacking in the content of your faith?

Summary of 1 Thessalonians 3:6-10

- PST had been deeply concerned about the believers in Thessalonica, but even more so was their joy at finding out how well they were doing spiritually [3 John 4].
- Timothy reported that their faith was strong and bearing fruit in the sphere of love [Gal 5:22-23].
- The love the Thessalonians had toward one another [2 Thess 1:3] and toward PST was evidence that they were growing spiritually.
- Paul knew the importance of growing in the faith in order to be spiritually stable [Eph 4:14-15], able to discern between good and evil [Heb 5:12-6:2].
- The Thessalonians' love for PST was expressed in their longing to see them, and that love was mutual as PST longed to see the Thessalonians as well.
- We alone are responsible for our walk of faith, but God made us part of a body of believers who help us to grow in our faith [Col 2:19; Eph 4:16].
- We gain spiritual refreshment and spiritual vigor from seeing other believers stand firm in the Lord [1 Cor 16:17-18; 2 Cor 7:13; Phlm 7, 20].
- When we receive the spiritual blessings of comfort, joy, refreshment, etc. from the Lord, there is nothing we can do to repay Him [Psalm 116:12].
- PST were continually praying [1 Thess 5:16-18; Eph 6:18-20; Col 4:2] that they might be able to see the Thessalonians in person [Phil 1:3-8].
- They wanted to see the Thessalonians, but also desired to build them up in areas where they were lacking in their faith [Col 1:28; Eph 4:11-13].
- There is no spiritual perfection on this earth – all believers have room for spiritual growth.
- While we may be strong in certain areas of doctrine, we are weak in other areas of the faith.
- Spiritually mature believers will recognize this in their own spiritual walk of faith [Phil 3:12-15].

- Believers who lack the humility to recognize this are in danger of being tripped up [1 Cor 10:12].
- Such believers can easily drift away from their solid grounding in the word [2 Pet 3:17-18].
- Therefore, we must develop the mindset of humility which was in Christ Jesus Himself [Phil 2:3-8].
- Paul's Petition [3:11-13]
 Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you; and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also *do* for you; so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness in the presence of our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

Summary of 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13

- Jesus Christ made it clear that He and the Father are One [John 10:30].
- Paul confirms that in his petition that the Father and the Son direct PST to the Thessalonians.
- Paul knew that his desire to be with the believers in Thessalonica would happen only by God's will.
- Paul also asked that the Lord would cause the Thessalonians to increase in their capacity to love to the point of abundance [2 Thess 1:3].
- This capacity for selfless, integrity love comes through the full knowledge of God and discernment which comes through spiritual growth [Phil 1:9-10].
- Their love was to be for one another and for all people [Matt 5:44-48; Gal 6:10].
- Paul exemplified Christ's love in his love for the Thessalonians [John 15:12].
- As God causes us to grow spiritually, our hearts are strengthened [2 Thess 2:16-17; 1 Pet 5:10].
- We are not sinless, but we can be blameless if we allow God to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness [1 John 1:9].

- As such, we can be found holy and blameless in the Day of Christ [1 Cor 1:4-9; 1 Th 5:23-24; Eph 5:25-27; Phil 2:14-16; Col 1:21-23; 2 Pet 3:13-14].

Instructions and Exhortations

• Christian Living [4:1-12]

- General Conduct [4:1-2]

In addition, then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us *instruction* as to how you ought to behave and please God (just as you actually do behave), that you excel even more. For you know what type of instructions we gave you by *the authority of* the Lord Jesus.

Summary of 1 Thessalonians 4:1-2

- We should never stagnate as Christians, but press on toward excellence [Phil 3:12-14; 1 Th 4:9-12].
- The process for progressive sanctification is...
 - Humbly receive the word implanted [Jas 1:21].
 - Allow the word to renew our minds [Rom 12:2].
 - Apply biblical principles by faith [Jas 1:22-25].
- Positionally, we do not need to progress in sanctification because we were completely sanctified the moment we believed in Jesus [1 Cor 6:11].
- Much of the instruction we receive from the word teaches us how to behave [2 Cor 5:7; Gal 5:16; Col 4:5; Eph 4:17; 5:8, 15; 1 John 1:7; 2:6].
- Understanding God's grace should motivate us to behave in a way that is pleasing to Him [Eph 4:1-3; Col 1:9-12; 1 Th 2:10-12; 2 Cor 5:9].
- We show our love for the Lord when we obey the commandments we have learned from the Scriptures [John 14:15; 15:14; 1 John 5:3].
- Sexual Purity [4:3-8]

For this is the will of God, your sanctification; *in particular*, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to gain control of his own body in sanctification and honor, not in intense lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; *and* that no man overstep proper bounds and take

advantage of his brother in the matter because the Lord is *the agent of punishment* in all these things, just as we also warned you beforehand and solemnly declared the truth to you. For God has not called us for the purpose of immorality, but in *the sphere of* sanctification. Consequently, he who rejects *this* is not rejecting human authority but God who also gives His Holy Spirit to you.

Summary of 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

- We should desire to do God's will [1 Pet 4:1-2].
- Consequently, we should pay attention when Scripture explicitly spells out the will of God [1 Th 5:16-18; 1 Pet 2:13-15; 4:19].
- Born-again believers must be taught to do the will of God [Psalm 143:10; Rom 12:2].
- The moment we place our faith in Jesus Christ, we are sanctified positionally [Heb 10:10-14].
- Accordingly, it is God's will for His children to live sanctified lives [1 Pet 1:14-16; 2 Cor 7:1; 1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 2:21-22; 1 Thess 5:23].
- Therefore, sexual sins are to be avoided [1 Cor 6:18].
- Instead of succumbing to our lusts, we should pursue that which is godly [1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 2:22].
- When we were unbelievers, we had plenty of time to engage in the things of the flesh [1 Pet 4:3].
- As believers, we can be a witness to unbelievers if we abstain from fleshly lusts [1 Pet 2:11-12].
- Our body is an earthen vessel [2 Cor 4:7] that is a temple of the Holy Spirit and should be used for God's glory, not for sinful lusts [1 Cor 6:19-20].
- Therefore, we should present ourselves (our bodies) as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God [Rom 12:1].
- If we choose to engage in sexual sins, others may suffer from our poor choices and the Lord will judge such behavior [Ro 12:19; Heb 10:30-31].
- PST had warned the Thessalonians about these issues by teaching them the truth about the importance of sanctification [1 Thess 2:10-12].
- We have been invited to live a life of holiness by God who is infinitely holy [1 Pet 1:14-16].

- This instruction regarding sanctification does not come from men, but from God [2 Tim 3:16-17].
- Therefore, those who reject this teaching are not rejecting men, but God Himself [Luke 10:16].
- In order to enable us to live this life of sanctification, God has given us His Holy Spirit [Rom 5:3-5; 2 Cor 1:21-22; Gal 4:6; 1 John 3:24].
- We avail ourselves of that enablement when we are filled with the Spirit [Eph 5:18] and not grieving or quenching the Spirit [Eph 4:30; 1 Thess 5:19].
- Brotherly Love [4:9-12]
 Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for *anyone* to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; for indeed you are demonstrating it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we exhort you, brethren, to excel even more, and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and take care of your own concerns and work with your hands, just as we instructed you, so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.

Summary of 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

- As believers, we should love our brothers and sisters in Christ [Rom 12:10; 1 Pet 2:17].
- We are taught by God to love the brethren as Christ loves us [John 13:34-35; 1 John 2:27].
- As we mature in our faith, this love grows beyond compatibility-based love [John 21:15-17].
- The love that God develops in us does not come from the energy of the flesh – it is the fruit of the Spirit [Gal 5:22-23].
- No matter how deep our love of the brethren might become, we should continue to strive to grow in love [Phil 3:12-14].
- We should make it our ambition to...
 - lead a quiet life [Prov 17:14; 20:3; 1 Tim 2:1-2].
 - mind our own business [1 Tim 5:13; 1 Pet 4:15].
 - work with our hands [Eph 4:28; 2 Thess 3:10-12].
- In this way, we will be a positive witness to unbelievers [Col 4:5-6].

- We will also not be an unnecessary burden upon our local church family [1 Th 2:9; 2 Th 3:7-9].
- We know that when we experience need in this life, God is the one who supplies [Phil 4:19].
- However, there will be times when He uses other Christians to do so [2 Cor 8:13-15; 9:12; 11:9].

- **The Blessed Hope [4:13-18]**

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who have died, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in the same way, those who have died in Jesus, God will bring back with Him. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are spiritually alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have died. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the sounding of the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are spiritually alive and remain will be snatched up with them all at once in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Summary of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

- The pastor's responsibility to the flock is to make sure they are not uninformed about God's truth [Rom 11:25; 1 Cor 10:1-4; 12:1].
- Paul had taught the Thessalonians about the Rapture of the Church, but he wanted to make sure that they were not uninformed about what would happen to believers who had already died.
- When we die physically, our soul and spirit depart from the body and go to be at home with the Lord [2 Cor 5:6-8].
- But, as believers, we have a promise from God that we will one day receive a new body – a dwelling from heaven [2 Cor 5:1-5].
- Our current body is a soulish, earthly, perishable body, but our new body will be a spiritual, heavenly, imperishable body [1 Cor 15:35-49].
- When Jesus Christ comes to get His Church, He will bring with Him the souls and spirits of all the believers who have died in Him so they can be clothed in their new bodies.

- Those believers will receive their new bodies here on this earth as they “rise from the grave”.
 - After this, the believers who remain on the earth will receive their new body [1 Cor 15:50-51].
 - All of this will take place in the time it takes to blink an eye [1 Cor 15:52-53].
 - Once all these believers who make up the Church have received their new bodies, they are taken up as one group to meet Jesus Christ in the air.
 - From there, Jesus will take the entire Church to their new heavenly homes which He has prepared for them [John 14:2-4].
- **The Day of the Lord [5:1-11]**
 - Coming Suddenly [5:1-3]

Now on the topic of the times and the ages, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then ruin will come upon them suddenly just as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

Summary of 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3

- After discussing the Rapture of the Church, Paul moves on to what follows in God’s timeline – the Day of the Lord [Isa 13:6-11; Joel 2:1-11; Oba 15].
- The Day of the Lord is a period of 1007 years...
 - It begins with the 7-year Tribulation period.
 - It also encompasses the 1000-year Kingdom.
- As we have seen, the Day of the Lord is foretold in the O.T. whereas the Church (and Rapture) was a mystery until revealed in the N.T. [Eph 3:8-10].
- Paul reminded the Thessalonians that they had already received instruction regarding the events and circumstances surrounding the DOTL.

- Although the Tribulation officially begins with the signing of the covenant between Israel and the Antichrist, it begins with a period of peace.
- While the people are reveling in their perceived peace and safety, the events of the Tribulation suddenly begin to unfold [Rev 6:1-4...].
- These people will be like the unsuspecting victims of a thief because, when they least expect it, the judgment of the Tribulation will befall them.
- Like the actions of the thief, the Day of the Lord is a hostile event, whereas the Rapture is a blessed event when Christ comes for His Church.
- Although they may try, no one will be able to escape the events that unfold in the Tribulation [Rev 9:6].
- However, God will seal 144,000 Jewish evangelists [Rev 7:4-8] to prevent them from dying during the Tribulation [Rev 14:1-5].
- The true destruction (ruin) that the unbelievers will experience during the Tribulation is that everything they thought was worth living for is gone.
- This shows the utter folly of living for the things of the world as opposed to living for Christ [Col 3:1-2; 2 Cor 4:17-18; Jas 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17].
- The Hope of Salvation [5:4-11]

But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would catch you off guard like a thief; for you are all sons of Light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; consequently, let us not sleep as others do, but instead let us be alert and disciplined. For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since we are sons of day, let us be disciplined, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. Because God did not appoint us for wrath, but instead for acquiring deliverance through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. Therefore comfort one another and build each other up, just as you are already doing.

- Summary of 1 Thessalonians 5:4-11
 - As believers, we have gone from darkness to Light in the Lord [Acts 26:18; Eph 5:8].
 - As such, we ought not be blind to the details God has given regarding the future of His A to Ω plan.
 - While in Thessalonica, Paul had taught the Thessalonians about the day of the Lord.
 - In this letter, Paul taught the Thessalonians about the coming Rapture of the Church.
 - He also explained that Jesus would deliver them from the wrath to come [1 Th 1:10].
 - Therefore, they should understand that they will not be here for the wrath of the day of the Lord.
 - As a result, they should not be concerned about being caught off guard by the day of the Lord.
 - However, untaught/undisciplined believers may be ignorant of the end times events.
 - Such believers can be misled to believe they should fear the mark of the beast, etc.
 - As believers, we can avoid such irrational fear by abiding in faith, love, and hope [1 Cor 13:13].
 - Faith – Trusting God’s promises [Rom 4:19-22].
 - Love – Loving His appearing [2 Tim 4:8].
 - Hope – The Blessed Hope [Titus 2:11-13].
 - Those of us who know that we will be delivered from the wrath to come should share this teaching with other believers, so we can comfort their fears [1 Thess 4:18; Heb 10:23-25] and build them up in their faith [Rom 14:19; 15:2; Eph 4:11-16].
- **Conduct in the Church [5:12-15]**
 - Conduct Toward Leaders [5:12-13]

But we request of you, brethren, that you respect those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction and admonishment, and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.

Summary of 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

- Apparently, there were some insubordinate believers in Thessalonica [1 Thess 5:14].
- The leadership in the church at Thessalonica was newly established, but that should not matter.
- Paul kindly asked the Thessalonians to show respect and appreciation for their spiritual leaders.
- Paul would later impart this same principle to his spiritual kindred Timothy [1 Tim 5:17].
- For a local church to function properly, the authority of its leaders must be recognized.
- Those spiritual leaders must teach the word of God and admonish the congregation when necessary.
- Spiritual leadership requires very hard work, accomplished by the grace of God [1 Cor 15:10].
- The respect for and esteem of spiritual leadership is based upon this work, done as unto the Lord.
- This excludes personality cults that are attracted to the person rather than focusing on the work.
- The congregation's high esteem for the leadership of the church is a function of ἀγάπη love.
- When believers love and respect their spiritual leaders, their work becomes joyful [Heb 13:17].
- This results in harmony within the congregation [Mark 9:50; Rom 14:19; 2 Cor 13:11].
- If the spiritual leadership of a local church is not doing the Lord's work...
 - The congregation may approach the leaders of the church and express their concerns.
 - If the leadership is unrepentant, the believers in that local church should consider leaving.

- Conduct Toward Others [5:14-15]

We exhort you, brethren, instruct and admonish the disobedient, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone. See to it that no one repays another with evil for evil, but instead always pursue that which is good for one another and for all people.

Summary of 1 Thessalonians 5:14-15

- There is no such thing as a perfect church – every local church has its flaws.
- Within a local church, you will find all sorts of people in every possible spiritual condition.
- We can either be a hindrance or a help to our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- As believers, we are called to...
 - Instruct and admonish the disobedient [Col 1:28].
 - Encourage the fainthearted [2 Tim 1:7].
 - Help the spiritually weak [Rom 14:1; 15:1-2].
 - Be patient with everyone [2 Tim 2:24-26].
- If, instead, we try to repay evil for evil we get in the way of God's righteous judgment [Rom 12:17-19].
- Instead, we should pursue godliness [1 Tim 6:11] and that which is good for other believers and for all people [Gal 6:10].

- **Holy Living [5:16-24]**

- Personal Living [5:16-22]

Rejoice always; pray constantly; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Holy Spirit; do not despise the delivered word of God. But examine everything *carefully*; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every kind of evil.

Summary of 1 Thessalonians 5:16-22

- As believers, we can rejoice in...
 - The presence of God [Psalm 16:11]
 - The God of our salvation [Hab 3:18]
 - The Holy Spirit [Rom 14:16-17]

- The Lord [Phil 4:4]
- Answered prayers [John 16:24]
- The hope of the glory of God [Rom 5:1-2]
- The growth that comes through trials [Jas 1:2-3]
- Participating in Christ's suffering [1 Pet 4:12-13]
- Being worthy to suffer for Christ [Acts 5:41]
- The promise of our resurrection body [1 Pet 1:3-7]
- As believers, we should pray at all times throughout the day [Luke 18:1; Acts 6:4; Rom 12:10-13; Eph 6:18; Col 4:2].
- As believers, we should give thanks in every circumstance of life, whether good or bad [Eph 5:18-21; Col 3:17].
- In doing these things we are accomplishing the will of God [Mark 3:35; Rom 12:1-2; 2 Cor 7:9-10; Eph 6:5-6; 1 Thess 4:3; 1 Pet 2:15].
- We are able to do this when we walk by means of the Spirit [Gal 5:16], but not when we submit to sin and quench the Holy Spirit within us [Rom 6:16].
- We should never despise the teaching of God's word, but must always carefully examine what is being taught to see if it is true [Acts 17:11].
- If the teaching we receive is in accordance with God's word, we should hold fast to that teaching which is spiritually profitable for us [2 Tim 3:16-17].
- In contrast, we should stay as far away as possible from every kind of evil [Acts 15:19-20; 1 Pet 2:11].
- This includes false teaching that can lead us astray from God's truth [1 Tim 1:3-4; 6:3-5; 2 Pet 2:1].
- Therefore, we must test the spirits to see if they are from God [1 John 4:1-3].
- Divine Enablement [5:23-24]
 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you in every way; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved unblemished, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.

Summary of 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

- God is the God of peace [Heb 13:20-21]...
 - We have peace with Him (reconciliation) through our Savior, Jesus Christ [Rom 5:1].
 - We can experience peace (tranquility) in our souls as a fruit of the Spirit [Gal 5:22-23] which helps us make thoughtful decisions [Col 3:15].
- As part of His ongoing work in us [Rom 5:10; Heb 7:25], God brings about our sanctification [Ph 1:6].
- Believers have a living body, soul and spirit...
 - Body and soul [Ps 31:9; Micah 6:7; Matt 10:28].
 - Body and spirit [Jas 2:26; 1 Cor 7:34; 2 Cor 7:1].
 - Soul and spirit [Job 7:11; Isa 26:9; Heb 4:12].
- As with our justification, our sanctification has three phases...
 - Positional [1 Cor 1:30-31; 6:11; Heb 10:10; 13:12].
 - Progressive [Jn 17:17-19; 2 Co 3:18; Titus 2:11-14].
 - Permanent [Eph 5:25-27; 1 Pet 1:3-5].
- In permanent sanctification, we will sin no more.
- God is faithful [Lam 3:22-23; 1 Cor 1:9; 2 Tim 2:13] and He will bring about our sanctification, providing the perfect outcome for every test and temptation we may face in this life [1 Cor 10:13].
- God does not cease His work in us who believe, but continues to work in our lives [Ph 2:12-13].
- Our initial salvation is by grace through faith [Eph 2:8-9] and all that we accomplish in this life after salvation is by grace through faith [1 Cor 15:10].
- Those who think that they accomplish anything meaningful (including sanctification) through the energy of the flesh are foolish [Gal 3:1-5].

Conclusion

• **Personal Appeals [5:25-27]**

Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss. I strongly appeal to you by the Lord to have this letter read to all the brethren.

Summary of 1st Thessalonians 5:25-27

- In his conclusion to this letter, Paul requests prayer from the Thessalonians.
 - Paul understood that he needed them to pray that God would make his ministry effective [2 Cor 3:5; Eph 6:18-19; 2 Thess 3:1].
 - He would also have wanted them to pray for God to open doors for ministry [Col 4:2-4].
 - Paul also encourages the Thessalonians to express brotherly love to one another through a “holy kiss”.
 - That was an acceptable form of greeting in their culture and involved a kiss on the cheek.
 - Today’s equivalent would be to share a handshake (or a hug where appropriate) among the brethren.
 - Lastly, Paul makes a strong appeal to the leaders of the church in Thessalonica to read this letter out loud in the hearing of the entire church.
 - Paul knew the importance of having the Scriptures read before the congregation [Neh 8:5-8].
 - This letter would also have been copied and sent to other churches for them to read [Col 4:16].
- **Benediction [5:28]**
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.