

Welcome to Ready and Faithful,

We are blessed that you have joined us this year to study the Word of God and grow in your relationship with the Lord! This year we will study through 5 books of the Bible, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, all written by Paul the Apostle. Each of these books is exhortative, challenging and instructional in their own way. This year we have chosen the title "Ready and Faithful" because 1 and 2 Thessalonians exhort us to be ready for the return of Jesus and 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus exhort us to remain faithful and never, ever give up!

As we study this year, our prayer is that you will not only be equipped and ready for Jesus' return, but that you also would occupy while you wait. Warren Weirsbé calls this "staying power" ...the ability to understand the ministry of the local church and stick with it until Jesus comes! We are never to give up, but always to be looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. This year we will look at two pastors who wanted to give up, but Paul exhorts them to continue ministering, and continue looking for the Return of Jesus! This is what gets us through the difficult days, knowing that Jesus will be returning for His Bride. Our responsibility is to be ready and faithful until He returns!
"Looking for the blessed hope, and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." Titus 2:13
Looking forward to a fruitful year!

*Love,
Michelle*

LESSON	ASSIGNMENT	DATES Fridays (top dates) Mondays (bottom dates)
1	1 Thessalonians - Overview (Do lesson 1 before you come)	9/16/16 9/19/16
2	1 Thessalonians 1 Footsteps of Paul trip - Guest Speaker	9/23/16 9/26/16
3	1 Thessalonians 2 Footsteps of Paul trip - Guest Speaker	9/30/16 10/3/16
No Lesson - Group Meets in Homes	KOINONIA	10/7/16 10/10/16
4	1 Thessalonians 3	10/14/16 10/17/16
5	1 Thessalonians 4	10/21/16 10/24/16
OFF - NO LESSON	OFF - NO MEETING	10/26/16 10/31/16
6	1 Thessalonians 5	11/4/16 11/7/16
7	1 Thessalonians 5 (ending) & 2 Thessalonians Overview	11/11/16 11/14/16
8	2 Thessalonians 1	11/18/16 11/21/16
OFF - NO LESSON	THANKSGIVING	11/25/16 11/28/16
9	2 Thessalonians 2	12/2/16 12/5/16
OFF - NO MEETING	WOMENS CHRISTMAS DINNER	12/9/16
OFF - NO MEETINGS	CHRISTMAS & NEW YEARS	12/11/16 THROUGH 1/1/16
10	2 Thessalonians 3	1/6/17 1/9/17
11	1 Timothy - Overview	1/13/17 1/16/17
12	1 Timothy 1	1/20/17 1/23/17
13	1 Timothy 2: 1-10	1/27/17 1/30/17
14	1 Timothy 2: 11-15 & 1 Timothy 3	2/3/17 2/6/17
No Lesson - Group Meets in Homes	KOINONIA	2/10/17 2/13/17

LESSON	ASSIGNMENT	DATES Fridays (top dates) Mondays (bottom dates)
15	1 Timothy 4: 1-10	2/17/17 2/20/17
16	1 Timothy 4: 11-16 & 1 Timothy 5	2/24/17 2/27/17
17	1 Timothy 6	3/3/17 3/6/17
18	2 Timothy - Overview & Chapter 1	3/10/17 3/13/17
OFF - NO LESSON	LADIES RETREAT	3/17/17 3/20/17
19	2 Timothy 2	3/24/17 3/27/17
20	2 Timothy 3	3/31/17 4/3/17
21	2 Timothy 4	4/7/17 4/10/17
OFF - NO LESSONS	EASTER WEEKS (2)	4/14/17 4/24/17
22	Titus Over view and Chapter 1 ISRAEL TRIP - GUEST SPEAKER	4/28/17 5/1/17
23	Titus 2 ISRAEL TRIP - GUEST SPEAKER	5/5/17 5/8/17
24	Titus 3 - End of study	5/12/17 5/15/17

***** NOTE: CALENDAR IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE :)**
"Blessed are the flexible"

Practical helps for your bible study year:

Personal "be" attitudes:

- ~ Be determined - Examine your daily schedule then set aside a consistent time and place to do your study.
- ~ Be prepared - Gather the materials you'll need: the Bible (we use NKJV), your workbook and a pen. Try to get your answers from the bible before going to a commentary. Sometimes another version, NLT, or ESV can help.
- ~ Be inspired - Begin each day with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to be your teacher and to illuminate your mind.
- ~ Be complete - Read the suggested Bible passages and finish the homework each day. You will get out of this study what you put into it.
- ~ Be persistent - Answer the questions as fully as possible. If you are unable to answer a question, move forward to the next one, or ask your leader for insight.
- ~ Be consistent - Don't get discouraged. If you miss a day, you can catch up the next. At the same time, remember there is grace here, life gets busy sometimes, so do what you can, and come to the group time anyway! You will be blessed!
- ~ Be honest - When answering questions, allow the Lord to search your heart and transform your life.
- ~ Be blessed - Enjoy your daily study time as He speaks to you through His Word.

Small group "be" attitudes:

- ~ Be prayerful - Pray before you begin your time together. Your leader will always begin with prayer.
- ~ Be biblical - Keep all answers in line with God's Word: avoid personal opinions.
- ~ Be confidential - Keep all sharing in your small group confidential.
- ~ Be respectful - Listen without interrupting. Keep comments on track and to the point, so that all can share. *It is our policy that literature, handouts, business cards, tracts, invites to home parties are not allowed.* Do not use your group as a platform for politics or solicitations, or personal business of any kind.
- ~ Be discreet - In some cases, you do not need to share more than is absolutely necessary. Some details about personal issues do not need to be made known.
- ~ Be kind - Reply to the comments of others lovingly and courteously.
- ~ Be mindful - Remember your group members in prayer throughout the week.

Ready and Faithful

1 Thessalonians Overview

LESSON 1

Welcome to our study of the Triple T's! We hope that you are as excited as we are to begin our 24-week study of 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus. It is impossible to study these books of the Bible without being challenged in our Christian walk. With this challenge comes growth, which is the purpose and goal of this study. Our desire is that we develop a deeper and more intimate relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May we accept the challenges that the Holy Spirit will bring our way and make the needed changes in our lives. May God richly bless you as you study His Word!

First Day

Before we begin our study of 1 Thessalonians, let me explain a bit about the format of our **"Reasons to Rejoice"** Bible Study. Each lesson has a 5-day homework plan to help you discipline yourself each week. Take your time. Don't rush through. Meditate and ponder each Scripture, allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to your heart personally. Do the same with the application questions. Don't just try to get an answer down on paper, allow the question to penetrate your heart. You don't want to miss anything the Lord has for you! You will also be given a memory verse each week. Bible memorization is very important! It teaches us to hide God's Word in our heart (Psalm 119:11). Be as diligent as possible memorizing the verse, asking the Holy Spirit to show **YOU** how it applies to **YOU**!

As we study God's Word, it is important to read it like a detective. We don't want to just "breeze" through the text just to get through it. If we truly want God's Word to affect how we live daily, we need to know and understand what it says. The better we understand how to study His Word, the better we can apply it.

The first step of Inductive Study is called **"Observation."** This is discovering what the author is saying. It begins with reading through your text, noting all the facts, and asking yourself, **"What does the text say?"** John Wycliffe said, "It shall greatly help you to understand Scripture if you mark not only what is spoken of or written, but of whom, with what words, at what time, where, to what intent, with what circumstances, considering what goes before and what follows." This is done by asking lots of questions (which I like to do!). Who are the main characters? What are the main events? What is happening? Who is speaking? Where was this written? Why was this written? How was it done? Ask yourself any questions you can possibly think of. Also look for repeated words and phrases, what things are alike or different, any problems or solutions presented, are there any commands or promises given, etc. It's helpful to know why the author was writing, and whom he was writing to. Each week you will be asked to read the entire chapter, taking note of the facts you find. It's best to have a pencil handy to jot down all your observations.

After you observe the text, you need to ask yourself **"What does the text mean?"** This step is called **"Interpretation."** This is the time to define any words that were unfamiliar to you, look for answers to your questions, cross-reference, do word studies, use your concordance and your dictionary. You may use commentaries at this time, but only **AFTER** you have studied on your own! You must understand the context clearly, for the interpretation may be found within that context. It's important to study by paragraph before by verse, to keep the context in check.

The last step is called "**Application.**" This asks the question, "**What does this mean to me?**" Application is the goal of any study, but you need a good observation and interpretation before you find a correct application! You may ask yourself "Are there any new truths I need to understand? Are there any changes in my life **I** need to make? Is there any encouragement? Any Rebuke? Am **I** obeying His Word?" We need to spend time on this section, asking the Holy Spirit to search our hearts. **James 1:22** tells us to "be doers of the Word, and not hearers only." God called us to be "conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8:29), and obeying God's Word is crucial to that process.

The "**Reasons to Rejoice**" lessons are simply tools to help you in your study. They are geared to help you walk through the steps of Inductive Study by encouraging you to ask yourself questions, define terms, discover meanings and definitions of phrases and words, read verses in context, and help you "dig" for those hidden treasures! Please dig deeper if you'd like! You may come across an issue that you would like to study in more depth. Please do! You will get from this study what you put into it. Also, we may not be calling the steps by these specific names, but we are hopefully guiding you towards the same goal.

Last, but not least ... there are three keys to studying your Bible. The first is always to begin with **prayer**, asking the Holy Spirit to be our teacher and guide us through our study (John 14:26, 16:13). The next is to have a **hunger** and **desire** for God's Word. This is why our theme Scripture for "Reasons to Rejoice" is Jeremiah 15:16, "Your Words were found, and **I** ate them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." His Word causes us to grow! The final key is **commitment**. It is easy to be distracted and get busy with many other things. Studying His Word must be a commitment to us, or we will never do it. The enemy will always try to distract you! Stick to it! Hebrews 11:6 says, "... He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."

There are some tools that are very helpful as you study. A secular dictionary and a Bible dictionary are essential. A Bible Encyclopedia and a Strong's Concordance are great. Commentaries are good, but remember to always use them after you have done your own study. We want to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to us first, before we read someone else's opinions.

This study uses the New King James, but reading other translations adds color and insight.

Wow! That was a mouthful! Are you ready to begin our study of the 3 T's? There is no written homework today. We just wanted you to get ready for the weeks ahead so that you would know what to expect. Spend some time today in prayer, asking the Lord to prepare your heart, give you a desire for His Word, and help you make a commitment to study.

May I leave you with one last exhortation? As you study each week, look for specific "Reasons to Rejoice" in the text that you are studying. God wants us to walk in joy, and we so easily find ourselves "joyless." God has given us so many reasons to rejoice! Let's rejoice and be glad, shall we?

Memory Verse of the Week: *"For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Hebrews 4:12*

Second Day,

Review your memory verse. This is an important one for us to know!

It is thought by many that 1 Thessalonians was perhaps the first epistle that Paul wrote (some believe it was Galatians). This book was written so long ago, but it so relevant to us today! That's what is amazing about God ... He is so perfect! Let's begin today by looking at the author. It's important to know who wrote this book, and why.

The Author

1 Thessalonians was written by our dear friend and apostle Paul. This letter is thought to be written somewhere between 48 AD and 53 AD, about 20 years after the resurrection of Christ. Paul was born around the same time of Christ and was converted on the Road to Damascus (Acts 9:119) in about AD 33. Approximately 15 years after his conversion, Paul left on his first missionary journey (AD 46-48) with Barnabas and Mark (Acts 13-14). Acts 14:26-28 tells us that when the trip was finished, they returned to Antioch and reported all that God had done with them, and how the door of faith had been opened to the Gentiles.

Soon after, Paul embarked on his second missionary trip with the purpose of visiting the churches that had been established on his first journey. Paul wanted to check on them and make sure they were standing strong in the faith (Acts 15:36). After a disagreement with Barnabas over whether or not to take Mark with them on their journey, they parted ways. Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus, while Paul took Silas and set sail, beginning in Syria and Cilicia (Acts 15:36-41).

A young man named Timothy joined Paul's team in Derbe. They continued through the region of Lystra and Iconia, strengthening the churches in the faith (Acts 16:1-5).

1. Read the following Scriptures to get some background on Saul/Paul. Write a brief character sketch of Paul, before and after conversion. Acts 7:58-59, 8:1-4, 9:1-31, 22:2-21.

The City of Thessalonica

There is much to say about the city of Thessalonica, which is called Thessaloniki today. It was the capital and largest city in Macedonia in the first century. Its geographic location made it an extremely important city. Located on the banks of the Thermaic Gulf near the NW corner of the Aegean Sea, it was a main seaport and a successful shipping and navel center. It was a busy place, a hubbub of activity! The Egnitian Way ran through the center of the city. This was the main Roman Road that ran from Rome to the Orient. **It** was the most widely used trade and military route between Rome and Asia Minor. (Certain sections of this paved highway still exist today. **I** saw it!)

The city of Thessalonica was founded in 315 BC by a Greek general by the name of Cassander, who served under Alexander the Great. He was married to Alexander's half sister, and named this new city after his wife, Thanica. This city was built atop the ancient city of Therma, which was named after the hot springs in the area.

Under the Romans, Thessalonica was made the capital in 148 BC and became a free city" in 42 BC because they helped the Romans defeat Brutus and Cassius. They were given the privilege of appointing their own government officials, as well as ruling themselves.

At the time of Paul, Thessalonica had a population of about 200,000 people. The population consisted mainly of Greeks, but had many Jewish sections. It was certainly a land of plenty, rich with fertile valleys, flourishing rivers, and great farmland. The busy streets were filled with Jewish merchants, sailors, Roman officials, and visitors from all parts of the world! It was called "Macedonia's most popular town and the metropolis of the entire province" by Greek geographers. It was into this hustle and bustle town that Paul and his team stepped!

Let's go back in time and see what Paul's first experience in Thessalonica was like!

2. Read Acts 16:1-10 and answer the following questions:
 - a. Where had Paul intended to go?
 - b. Why was he stopped?
 - c. Where did he go instead, and why?
3. Read Acts 16:16-34. What else happened in Philippi?
4. Paul now enters the city of Thessalonica. Read Acts 17:1-9. What did Paul immediately do?
5. Explain Paul's method of preaching. (vs 2)
6. What three points did Paul point out to them in verse 3?
7. Describe how the people responded according to verse 4.

The term "devout Greeks" in verse 4 refers to the Gentiles who were fed up with the pagan idolatry that was common to their culture. They admired the Jews for their passion for God and their monotheistic idea, but at the same time detested all the ritual cleansings, circumcision, and other "legalistic" practices that the Jewish religion demanded. To them, what Paul was preaching sounded great! They could worship the one and only God, without all the "stuff" that the Jews tagged on.

The Gospel message drew Greeks, Jews, and women together. One Gospel ... One body!

8. How did the "jealous Jews" respond? What accusation did they bring against them? (vs 7)
9. How does the text indicate that these new converts to Christianity "banded" together?

We don't know much about this man Jason, except that he was unjustly accused of insurrection. He obviously was a friend of Paul's, probably one of his first converts.

10. Paul and the team were accused of "turning the world upside down" in verse 6. What does that mean? What does that say about them?
11. How can **we** turn our world "upside down" for Christ? (Give some practical examples.)
12. What example can you take from these men? Could you be accused of turning your world "upside down"? Do people in your world know that you're a Christian?

We'll end our lesson here today. I pray that we -- like Paul, Silas, and Timothy -- get so excited about the Lord that we shake things up! Is there anything more exciting than Jesus?

Third Day,

Review your memory verse. How does this verse minister to you?

1. Let's continue reading in Acts 17:10-17. After leaving Thessalonica, where did Paul, Silas and Timothy go?
2. Describe the people in this city.
3. What example can we take from the Bereans?
4. Was there fruit in Berea?
5. What (or who) followed them?

Silas and Timothy remained in Berea for a time, while Paul went on to Athens. He later called for them to come to him, but 1 Thessalonians 3:1-2 tells us that he also sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to check on the church. Paul probably felt that he had to depart from them before he was ready, and needed to make sure they were hanging on! Paul went on to Corinth where he stayed for about 18 months. It was from here that Paul penned this letter to the Thessalonians after Timothy returned with a report about them. Paul is worried about this new church. He knew that persecution was facing them, and he feared they might fall. I'm sure Paul had many questions running through his mind. "Did he give them all the tools of the faith they needed? Did he encourage them enough? Did they know how to stand against the enemy?" Paul was excited when Timothy brought back glowing reports of their faith! He was proud of them!

How long was Paul in Thessalonica? Scholars disagree. Acts 17:2 tells us that he preached in the synagogue for three Sabbaths, but does this mean he was only there for a total of three weeks? We know that Paul was there long enough to receive two offerings from his church in Philippi (Philippians 4:16) and that he worked as a tentmaker while he was there (1 Thes. 2:9, 2 Thes. 3:6-15). No one knows for sure exactly the length of his stay, but all agree that Paul didn't stay there long.

This letter is Paul's response to the report that Timothy brought back from Thessalonica. In this letter we catch a vision of Paul's "Pastor's heart." Paul shares his love, concern, and admiration for the Thessalonians very openly and honestly. Paul uses no Old Testament quotes, for he's writing mainly to Gentiles. Only one doctrine, the return of Jesus Christ, is actually addressed and emphasized (although many are referred to). We clearly see his heart of love and hear his exhortations for continued faithfulness.

As we now begin reading 1 Thessalonians, imagine that you are living at the time it was written. Imagine hearing these words read aloud in the church, knowing that they come from the apostle Paul himself. Listen to his heart. See his vision. And most importantly, open your heart to the Holy Spirit and allow Him to teach you great and wonderful things! Be a Berean, and receive God's Word "with all readiness ..."

We need to begin our study by reading the book straight through. This gives us a great overview of what's happening, a bird's eye view, so to speak. We want to understand the whole flow of the letter before we begin breaking it down by paragraphs, verses, and words. This way the whole intent of the letter and context in which it was written is understood. It also enables us to get a better picture of the heart of the writer, as well as his style. Always keep a pencil and paper handy while you read, jotting down any important facts, interesting thoughts, or questions you may have. Don't attempt to answer the questions the first time you read it, just write them down.

Read 1 Thessalonians through in one sitting. Next, read it out loud, like it was a letter to your church, without stopping at the chapter breaks.

6. How would you describe Paul's style of writing?
7. How did Paul feel about the Thessalonians? How can you tell?
8. If you could rename this book, what would you title it?

Paul's letter to the Thessalonians seems to be much more practical and personal than doctrinal. This letter shows us a different side of Paul, as compared to some of his other writings. C.F. Hogg and W.E. Vine say this in **The Epistles to the Thessalonians**:

"The style of a letter depends largely on the occasion that calls it forth. Like the Galatians, for example, is full of force, argument and feeling. In parts of the Corinthian Epistles, Paul waxes warm, becomes almost compassionate, denouncing his enemies and yearning over his children. In Romans he is all logic, though he soars at times, as in chapter 8. In Ephesians and Colossians he is carried along by the very majesty and glory of his exalted theme, though he is nowhere more simply practical in any of his writings. But in this Epistle he is fervent, simple, natural, just talking to his beloved children in the Lord."

9. What is your first impression of the Book?

Fourth Day

Study your memory verse. Can you repeat it to someone today?

Today we will continue looking at the overall picture of 1 Thessalonians. Begin your study with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to give you understanding and wisdom in His Word.

1. What do you think is the main theme of this book?
2. The doctrine of the return of Christ is woven through the entire book. Write the reference to His Second Coming from each chapter.

Chapter 1:

Chapter 2:

Chapter 3:

Chapter 4:

Chapter 5:

3. Summarize the main thought of each chapter by giving a title to each.

Chapter 1:

Chapter 2:

Chapter 3:

Chapter 4:

Chapter 5:

4. As you read, did you find any repeated words, thoughts, phrases, or ideas?
5. What would you pick for the main or key verse(s) of the entire book?
6. The letter seems to be divided into two main sections, chapters 1-3, and 4-5. How are the two sections different?
7. What do you think is the purpose of Paul's letter to the Thessalonians?

Tomorrow we will finish our overview of 1 Thessalonians. I hope that this introduction has made you even more excited to jump in and start digging deeper! It sure has that effect on me! God bless you, ladies!

Fifth Day

Write out your memory verse. How did this verse come alive to you this week?

Paul seems to have had a dual purpose for writing this letter to his friends in Thessalonica. He obviously wanted to encourage them in their faith, encouraged by their faithfulness. Charles Erdman calls 1 & 2 Thessalonians "monuments to his friendship and affection."

Paul also seems to be addressing some accusations that have been made against him. Most scholars do not believe that he is answering a specific letter, but more likely an oral report brought back by Timothy. It seems that the Jewish opponents of the faith had perhaps attacked Paul's motives, as well as the sincerity and authority of his ministry, with the purpose of discrediting the Gospel. As you read, it's as if he is answering some of those accusations, putting his friends at ease and encouraging them in his love and sincerity.

1. Listed below are some of the apparent accusations that Paul is answering. From the given verse, explain Paul's answer to each false claim.
 - a. By what power and authority did Paul come to the Thessalonians, according to chapter 1?
 - b. Paul's motives were questioned. What does 2:1-12 tell us about the nature and character of his ministry? (motives, sincerity, etc.)
 - c. Who were the "real" opponents of the Gospel? (2:13-16)
 - d. Paul was accused of deserting them. How does he answer that, according to 2:17 through 3:10?

Beginning in chapter 4, Paul seems to answer some questions they had concerning certain doctrines and Christian living. He began his Epistle very personally, but now moves into more practical suggestions for holy living. Charles Swindoll says, "in chapters 1-3, Paul **looks back**. Thumbing through his mental photo album, he traces the history of his visit to Thessalonica and encourages the believers in how much they have grown.

In chapters 4-5 he **looks forward**. He exhorts his readers to grow even more in certain areas and addresses some of their questions."

2. What does Paul say about temptations and impurity? (4:1-8)

It appears that some of the brethren in Thessalonica were confused about how they should live while waiting for Christ's return. Some were fervently anticipating it to a point of wanting to put all work aside, while many were apathetic. (Sound familiar?)

3. What does Paul say about their work ethic while they are waiting for the return of Christ? (4:9-12)

4. In chapter 4:13-18, Paul seems to be answering some questions concerning those who have died. It seems that the Thessalonians were worried about those who may die before Christ returns, wondering if they will get to share in the glory of His Second Coming. (A very good question, wouldn't you say?) What will happen to those beloved brothers and sisters in the faith? How does Paul answer them?

5. It seems there were some questions regarding how to treat those in the church who were in authority. Read 5:12-14 for Paul's exhortation.

We are reminded over and over in this letter that our hope is in Christ! He is coming back for us, and that truth is what we hold on to! To again quote Charles Swindoll, (whom I love), **"Christ's return was a future reality to help them handle their present problems!"** Without this hope, what are we living for?

6. How does this hope encourage you today? Do you have any "present problems that seem to be pressing in"? Meditate on this hope today. As you do, those problems will fade into the distance as His glory overshadows them! The problems may still exist, but we can face them with renewed hope and strength to continue on!

7. From studying this week, what did you learn about Paul's:

a. Faith

b. Heart

c. Prayers

d. Love

8. What immediate application do you see for your life from this book? What example would you like to take from Paul?

In this corrupt and dying world ... we need hope. I believe that's exactly why the Lord has directed us to study this book at this time. He definitely wants to remind us that all is not lost, and all is not hopeless. 1 Peter 1:3-4 says,

*"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again
to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ
from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled
and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you."*

May this hope carry you through your day. May this hope carry you through your life! That is a huge, wonderful, gigantic **"Reason to Rejoice!"** See you next week!

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Ready and Faithful

1 Thessalonians 1

LESSON 2

I pray that you got a good "feel" for 1 Thessalonians from our lesson last week. Now we are going to look at chapter 1 a little closer. (Make sure you begin each lesson with prayer!) Even though this chapter only contains ten verses, it has a lot to say! Keep a pencil handy for note taking. Let's get started!

First Day

1. Let's begin our lesson by reading 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10. This is your time to observe the facts. Write down any facts you find, repeated words or phrases, or interesting points. Ask yourself the detective questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? Take your time. This part is fun!

First Century letters had a very different style than letters today. Instead of looking at the end of the letter to find out who wrote it, they usually began with the name of the writer, then named whom they were writing to. A personal greeting usually followed.

2. It is commonly believed that Paul is the writer of this letter. (Also read 2:18, 3:5, and 5:27) Why do you think Paul includes the names of the other two men?
3. Read Paul's greeting again in verse 1. Then read Romans 1:1, 1 Corinthians 1:1, Galatians 1:1, Ephesians 1:1, Philippians 1:1, and Colossians 1:1. How did Paul introduce himself in the other letters? Why do you think he is more informal in 1 Thessalonians?

The Jews would typically give their child a Jewish and a Gentile name. The name Paul meant "little." This was Paul's Roman surname, most likely given at birth. Saul was his Jewish name, which meant **"asked of God"**.

Paul went by the name of Saul until Acts 13:9. This is significant because when his ministry was mainly to the Jews, he went by Saul. When his ministry turned to the Gentiles, then his Gentile name began to be used.

Though Paul is the writer of this letter, the other two men were with Paul during his brief time in Thessalonica, helping him establish the church. There is no doubt that they shared Paul's love for the people in Thessalonica. Paul sends love and greetings from them too. Paul uses the name Silvanus. He is also referred to by his Greek name "Silas." Notice that Paul and Peter, both being Jews, call him Silvanus, while Dr. Luke, the Gentile writer of Acts, calls him Silas.

4. Look up the following Scriptures. What do they tell us about Paul's companions? List the facts you find.

A. Silvanus: Acts 15:22-40, 16:25-40, 2 Corinthians 1:19, 1 Peter 5:12

B. Timothy: 1 Timothy 1:2, 18, 2 Timothy 1:1-5, 2 Timothy 3:15, Acts 16:1-5, Acts 17:14, 1 Corinthians 4:17, 2 Corinthians 1:19, Acts 19:22, Acts 20:1-5, Philippians 2:22

5. From what you read about Timothy, why do you think he was so dear to Paul?

6. Whom was this letter addressed to?

The word "church" is from the Greek word "ecclesia," which means "called out ones." This is commonly used in regard to believers who have been "called out of darkness into this marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9) Paul seems to be also speaking to the specific congregation of believers that had been formed in Thessalonica.

7. How does he greet them in verse 1?

8. Before you read any further, what do you know about **"grace and peace"**? How would you define these terms?

Paul is known for coining the phrase "**grace and peace.**" Grace has been called the "watchword" of Paul. He uses it twice as often as do all the other New Testament writers combined. He uses "**grace**" 100 times in his 13 epistles and "**peace**" more than 40 times.

Grace has been defined as "God's unmerited favor towards man, in providing the free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ."

Peace "**with**" God is "harmony between man and God made possible through the death of Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1-2). When you accept Jesus Christ, you become reconciled with Him (Romans 5:9-11), meaning you have made your "peace." The peace "**of**" God has been defined as "the abiding portion of all who trust in the loving Father and seek to walk in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ." (John 14:27)

9. What do you think is the significance of Paul saying grace before peace?

We will continue looking at "**grace and peace**" tomorrow. Spend some time today thanking God for His free gift of salvation, which we don't deserve. We will talk more about that tomorrow, too!

Memory Verse of the Week: "For our Gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake." 1 Thessalonians 1:5

Second Day

Review your memory verse. Spend some time meditating on it today!

Today we will continue where we left off. (We didn't get too far, did we?)

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 again.

We know that we can't have real peace until we have experienced God's grace through the free gift of salvation. This is the most important truth in all of Scripture, so we will take some time making sure we understand it.

2. Look up the following Scriptures on grace, summarizing them in your own words.

a. *Ephesians 2:8-10*

b. *Romans 3:21-24*

c. *John 1:14-18*

d. 2 Corinthians 12:9

e. 1 Timothy 1:12-16

3. As believers, we are to:

_____ in grace (2 Peter 3:18)

_____ in grace (2 Timothy 2:1)

_____ in grace (Romans 5:2)

Because of grace, we have access to the Father through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8). We are forgiven of our sins because of His grace (Ephesians 1:7). We are justified (made "just as if we've never sinned") because of His grace (Romans 3:24). We are called by grace (Galatians 1:15), and we are given consolation and hope by grace (2 Thessalonians 2:16). We are given grace, grace, and more grace!

4. Is it possible to take advantage or abuse God's grace? How? (Romans 6:1-2)

Before you can have the peace **"of"** God, you must make your peace **"with"** God by receiving the free gift of salvation. This is done by first admitting that you're a sinner. **Romans 3:23** tells us that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." We all have sinned, yet "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (**Romans 5:8**). **Do you believe that you are a sinner?**

Paul tells us that if we "confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in our heart that God has raised Him from the dead, we will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation" (**Romans 10:9-10**). When we ask for forgiveness, He promises us that "He will cleanse us and forgive us from all unrighteousness" (**1 John 1:9**). Salvation is available to those who believe that Jesus Christ is Lord (**Romans 10:13**)! We must believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sins, that He was buried, and that He rose again on the third day (**1 Corinthians 15:3-4**). That is the Gospel of Grace! Salvation is only possible because of the shed blood of Christ (**Hebrews 2:9, 9:22**).

Jesus, who was sinless, took on the sins of the entire world. He became sin for us (**2 Corinthians 5:21**). Jesus bridged the gap between a holy and perfect God and sinful man. He became the mediator (**1 Timothy 2: 5-6**).

I know a lot of information and Scripture was thrown out to you in the above paragraph. I encourage you to look up the Scriptures, especially if you have any questions at all. Like I said before, there is nothing more important to understand!

Have you made your peace with God? Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior? If you

would like to do that, your group leader would love to pray with you! By doing this, you become "born-again" (John 3:3) and are now a "child of God" (Galatians 3:26)! When we accept Jesus Christ, we are promised eternal life (John 3:15)! And God keeps His promises! If you have already done this, briefly write a short testimony of your conversion. Spend some time praising and thanking Him for your salvation!

5. What do these verses tell us about peace? John 14:27, Galatians 5:22, and Philippians 4:6-7.

6. Do you have the peace of God in your heart today? Are you resting in Him, or are you restless for some reason? Is there something you are anxious about? If so, what should you do?

We'll end here today. "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit!" (Romans 15:13)

Third Day

Fill in the blanks of your memory verse: "For our _____ did not come to you in _____ only, but also in _____ and in the _____ and in much assurance, as you _____ what kind of _____ we were among you for your sake." _____

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10. (You can probably quote it by now!)
2. Why do you think it is significant that Paul ties the Father and Jesus together in verse 3?

Paul was a prayer warrior. He spent much of his time praying for his friends. He told us in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 to "pray without ceasing" and he was obviously a man who practiced what he preached!

3. As he prays for them, what three things does he commend them for?

4. How diligent are you to pray for your friends and family? How about your church leaders? Your government leaders? The unsaved? How does Paul's example speak to your heart? Make a prayer list and decide to pray more diligently!

This is the first time Paul introduces the famous triad of "faith, hope and love" which he later writes about often. These virtues were very evident in the lives of the Thessalonians. Paul saw in them the spiritual realities that were connected with these virtues. He saw them lived out. Charles Erdman makes a great observation: "Faith rests on the past, love acts out in the present, and hope looks to the future. The work of faith is the work which faith accomplishes in our own life. A labor of love is the effort which love prompts for the benefit of others, and the patience of hope is the endurance which hope inspires that centers on Christ!"

The work of faith can mean the faith required for our salvation, but more likely means the works that are accompanied by our faith. Faith always produces action. The fact that the Thessalonians turned from pagan gods is an example of work produced by faith.

5. What is the relationship between faith and works? Read James 2:14-26, 2 Thessalonians 1:11, and Ephesians 2:10.

6. Do you have an "active" faith? Was there any "work produced by faith" in your life this week?

The word "labor" is from the Greek word "kopos" meaning laborious toil born for the sake of others, fatiguing work, or being willing to exert oneself for others. This is born and motivated by love ... unconditional and self-sacrificing. Part of the Thessalonians' labor of love is seen by their passion for spreading the Gospel to others.

7. What are some practical ways that we can "labor in love"?

8. Do you "labor in love" for others? Do you die to self and put the needs of your husband, family, and others first? Think about it...

Paul commended them for their "patience of hope" in the Lord. The word patience is "hupomone" and refers to an "active endurance" rather than a passive waiting. It is "heroic perseverance." This endurance is inspired by our hope in Christ. The Thessalonians were actively waiting for the return of Christ!

9. What does it mean to "hope in Christ"? How does this enable us to endure? How should this hope affect how we respond to difficulties?

Paul calls them "beloved brethren" in verse 4. This was an endearing Jewish term for a Gentile. Jews usually used this phrase when speaking about great men, like Moses or Solomon. Paul chooses this term to further encourage his Gentile friends!

10. Why was Paul so sure that the Thessalonians were "elect" or chosen? How did he know?

God's "election" is sometimes difficult to understand. The official definition is "that sovereign act of God in grace whereby He chose in Christ Jesus for salvation all those whom He foreknew." Scripture teaches that God chose His kids before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4). We know our salvation begins with God, because John 15:16 tells us that "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." God's love existed in the past and continues on to the present. God's plan of salvation was born in His heart from before the beginning of time.

On the other hand, we also know that man is personally responsible for his decision to believe and trust in Jesus Christ. (John 3, Romans 5) It is a hard doctrine to understand, but we know that Scripture teaches that they are both true! Paul didn't use this term to confuse or discourage them but to encourage their hearts! (How do you know if you're one of the "elect"? If you desire to respond to His invitation, then you are!)

Paul saw so much evidence in their lives, he had no doubt that they were born again. The fruit that he saw was definitely not a work of the flesh, but of the Holy Spirit! Their election was demonstrated by their actions.

11. Is there fruit in your life? If Paul was writing to you, would he be able to commend you in the same way he did the Thessalonians?

There was a lot to think about this week, wasn't there? I know I am convicted. I pray that the conviction of the Holy Spirit and our love for God motivates us to action! Let's remember to rejoice in our election, shall we?

Fourth Day

Review your verse again.

1. Let's read 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10. How were the Thessalonians proofs of the power of the Gospel?
2. What is the "Gospel," which means "Good News"? Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-4. Why does Paul call it "our" Gospel?

There are many "gospels" going around today. The only gospel that is true is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. God is very jealous over this message, and declares "accursed" anybody who preaches another "gospel" (Galatians 1:6-9). No one should add to it, take anything away from it, or pervert it. God is concerned that we preach the right message. Warren Wiersbe so perfectly states, *"When we change the message of God, we change the God of the message."*

3. What other "gospels" are going around today (i.e., the gospel of success)? What ways have you seen others pervert the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Why is knowing the Word of God so important in regard to preaching and recognizing the truth?

According to 1 Thessalonians 1:6, they welcomed the Gospel with joy, even in the midst of persecution. As they accepted Christ, they were most certainly persecuted by the unbelieving, pagan worshipping, Gentiles, as well as the never-ending idolatry that was so prevalent in Thessalonica. This joy was only possible through the power of the Holy Spirit!

4. How do you receive God's Word when you're in the middle of a trial? Do you welcome it, allowing it to encourage you and strengthen you? Or do you doubt His Word because you can't understand why things are happening in your life?

5. In what ways were the Thessalonians "examples"?

Verse 7 tells us that they were examples in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia. These two provinces made up all of Greece at the time! Their example was far-reaching! Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11:1, "Imitate me, as I also imitate Christ." They patterned their lives after Paul who was patterning his life after Christ!

The phrase "sounded forth" in verse 8 "commonly refers to the sounding of a herald's trumpet." (W E. Vine) The Thessalonians were blasting forth, amplifying, or echoing the message of the Gospel. They were like human "speakers."

Paul had just arrived in Corinth when he wrote this letter. There he met Priscilla and Aquilla, who had just come from Rome (Acts 18:1-2). It is thought that maybe they told Paul that they heard about the Thessalonian church, even as far as Rome. I wonder...

6. The Thessalonians' lives and words rang out loud and clear. You know the question ... What's ringing out, or sounding forth, from your life? Describe the sound that you think your life is making. (Be creative.)

7. Our lives should be examples also. In what ways can we be examples to:

a. our kids-

b. our husbands-

c. our co-workers-

d. our neighbors-

8. Why is it so important for Christians to also be good examples to unbelievers?

Tomorrow we will finish with the last two verses. Isn't it amazing that God chose us to be the messengers of the Gospel? We are "stewards" of the Gospel (1 Corinthians 4:1) and "ambassadors" for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20). We have the privilege of carrying His message to the world. As stewards, let's be found faithful!

Fifth Day

Okay, let's see if you got it. Write your verse by memory. (No peeking!)

1. Let's finish up reading 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10.
2. True conversion always causes change. How did the Thessalonians change?
3. What three words from these verses sum up what we are called to do as Christians?
4. The Gentiles in Thessalonica worshipped man-made idols. We don't see many little statues any more. What things can be idols for us today?
5. Look up the definition of "idol" in your dictionary. Do you have any "idols" in your life? Read 1 John 5:21. Ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart on this issue.

It's easy for other "things" to become more important than God. We don't realize it at first, but often we can tell when it's happening by how much time is given over to something, or how much importance we place on something else. Sports, money, possessions, our homes or our careers can take first place in our life. It is even possible to put serving our family before serving God. Good things can be an idol, depending on the position they have in our heart. The Thessalonians made a definite change from their ways. They "turned." We can too.

6. Paul uses the phrase "living and true God" in verse 9. How is this a major contrast to what they were serving?
7. What were the Thessalonians waiting for? What were they doing in the meantime?

*Are you waiting expectantly for Christ's return?
He can come back for His church at any time.
Are you ready?*

8. What will the believers be saved from?

We will talk more about God's wrath and Christ's return in the upcoming lessons. For now, let's rejoice that we will be saved from His wrath by His return! Do note that this is not speaking about eternal judgment, but the wrath that will come upon the world. And what we're waiting for is actually a person, not an event. Jesus is the center of that hope!

9. What does it mean to wait "in expectation"?

10. Are you serving the true and living God while you wait? What does "serving God" mean to you? Use Scripture for your answers, if possible.

We see the work of the Trinity here in chapter 1. The "Trinity" is the truth that there is only one God, but in the unity of the Godhead there are three eternal and coequal Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Paul believed that this was an important truth for the early church to know and understand.

11. From chapter 1, what specific work of each Person of the Trinity is mentioned? (Remember that "God" usually refers to the Father, and "Lord" usually refers to Jesus.)

a. The Father

b. The Son

c. The Holy Spirit

H.A. Ironside says that the words "serve" and "wait" cover the whole Christian life. Christ's coming for His bride is still our hope today. But before we can wait, we must "turn from" idols. I have to quote W.E. Vines, referring to the Thessalonians turning from their idols ... "the order is significant; the motive in this conversion was not that they were repelled by the grossness of their idols, but that they were attracted by the character of God." I pray that this would be our motivation to turn, serve, and wait! See you next week!

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Ready and Faithful

1 Thessalonians 2

LESSON 3

In chapter one of 1 Thessalonians, Paul commended the believers for their spiritual growth that was evident to all. Here in chapter two, Paul opens his heart to them by explaining the motives for his mission and ministry in Thessalonica. Paul seems to be defending himself against some personal criticism and accusations from his enemies. The wording Paul uses seems to imply that he was charged with having selfish motives for his work in Thessalonica. Notice that in chapter one Paul mainly talks about the Thessalonians and the main person discussed in chapter two is Paul himself.

As you read through this chapter, remember to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the motives of your own heart as you minister to others. If we are accused of selfishness and greed, would we be blameless?

First Day

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-20. Observe the chapter as a whole, then divide the chapter into four sections and list the facts you find. Give each section a title and list any repeated words or phrases.

Section 1: Verses 1-6

Section 2: Verses 7-12

Section 3: Verses 13-16

Section 4: Verses 17-20

2. What would you say is the main thought of this chapter? The key verse?
3. What types of opposition did Paul come against?

4. How would you describe the tone of this chapter? (Does Paul seem angry? Bitter? Loving?)
5. Why do you think Paul often says “as you know”?
6. Are there any words or phrases that you don’t understand?

We'll end here for today. It's amazing to see God's will accomplished despite human and satanic opposition. How encouraging that should be to us when we encounter opposition as we seek to do His will. Our God reigns! What a "Reason to Rejoice!"

Memory Verse of the Week: “... that you would have a walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.” 1 Thessalonians 2:12

Second Day

Review your memory verse. Think about this ... what is a walk worthy of Him?

Chapter two is said to be a great manual for pastors. It is a rich description of what Christian ministry is supposed to be all about!

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-6 and answer the following questions.
2. Why did Paul say that his work in Thessalonica was not in vain? (1 Thess. 1:4-10) Vain means "empty, void of reality and power," or “not a failure”.
3. How was Paul treated in Philippi? Review Acts 16:12-40 and briefly describe his experience there. What kind of opposition did he encounter?

The word "conflict" or "contention" in verse 2 comes from the Greek word "agon" which was used to describe the rigors of athletic contests in the sports arenas. It is also translated as fight (1 Timothy 6:12 and 2 Timothy 4:7), and race (Hebrews 12:1). The English word "agony" is derived from this word. This description paints a good picture of the intensity of the persecution that Paul faced in Philippi.

Paul said that they "waxed bold in our God" as they spoke the Gospel. Paul was not being vain or prideful Paul lets us know that his source of courage was "in God." That boldness is proof of God's grace!

4. What accusations does Paul seem to be answering?
5. How did Paul defend his motives for preaching?
6. How did Paul refer to himself in verse 6?

Paul is basically calling the Thessalonian believers as witnesses of his innocence. They knew him. They knew his heart. Paul felt that the facts of his life were common knowledge. He was not one of the typical traveling preachers of the time, who often was out to take advantage of the people and steal their money. His actions and lifestyle proved his innocence! There was no evidence for any of their accusations.

Paul had an unselfish love for God and the Thessalonians. His love was free from flattering words, self-glory, and covetousness.

Flattering words are a description of slick eloquence. It is the use of acceptable speech with the purpose of lulling someone into a sense of security so that one may obtain one's own ends. It is like our word cajolery.

7. Are you ever guilty of using flattering words (according to the definition above) as you minister, or serve others? Do you ever have an agenda for what you're doing? What about at home?

A "cloak of covetousness" refers to the wearing of a mask to cover greed. It means to hide one's motives to secure personal profit. It doesn't only mean seeking money, but seeking to have more of anything.

8. Check your heart on this one too. Do you ever wear a cloak of covetousness? Do you hide your true motives when you want something? Give examples of how it is possible to do this today.

I think we all know what it means to seek glory for yourself. It is looking for satisfaction and praise from men for your accomplishments. Paul was accused of trying to seek glory for himself and from men.

9. Why do you think Paul was accused of this? How could preaching the Gospel bring glory to him?
10. When you “do” things, whom are you trying to please? Why is it so wrong to try to please men rather than God? (Read Galatians 1:10)

Paul said that he was "approved by God" and "entrusted with the Gospel." He did not choose this ministry; it had been "given" to him. He speaks of it as a "stewardship entrusted" to him in 1 Corinthians 9:17, 1 Timothy 1:11, and Titus 1:3. The verb "approved" means first to test and then to approve as a result of that test. The tense that the word is used in also implies that the approval continues. Paul sees himself as being tried out by God and then trusted for service! (Tyndale) In verse 4, Paul says that God tests our hearts. Here he is saying that our motives must be completely sincere, because it is God who knows and sees all. In verse 5, Paul calls God Himself to the witness stand in his defense, because God did know the sincerity of his heart.

11. Read the following Scriptures. What character trait do you see in Paul as one who had been "entrusted" with the Gospel? 1 Corinthians 7:25, Acts 26:22, 20:24, and 2 Timothy 4:7.
12. If you know the Lord, you also have been "entrusted" with the Gospel. Are you faithful to it? Are you trustworthy and honest? Are you committed to sharing it with others?

That's it for today. I like what William Barclay says about Paul regarding the phrase Paul uses, "our Gospel", Paul did not say, "I" bring you the Gospel, but "our" Gospel comes to you. He is a man who was lost in his message." **How about you? Are you lost in the message?**

Third Day

Review your memory verse. Have you been "called into His Kingdom"?

Paul knew that his labor was not in vain. His work did not fail. He saw a change in the Thessalonians, which assured him that his ministry had not been an aimless pursuit. Yesterday we looked at what Paul's motives were **not**. Now let's take a look at what his motives **were**! How did he treat the Thessalonians?

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12. How does Paul describe his ministry to them? What metaphors did he use?
2. How does a nursing mother cherish her young? What point was Paul trying to make?

The word "cherish" means "to warm." This word is used to describe a bird that covers her young with her feathers (Deuteronomy 22:6). It is only used one other time in The New Testament, when describing the love that the Lord has for His church (Ephesians 5:29).

3. What do we learn about Paul's love for them by his example of a father to his children?
4. What was Paul happy to do for the Thessalonians, according to verse 8?
5. What does the phrase "Gospel of God" mean to you?
6. What do you think Paul meant when he said they imparted "their own life"? Read 2 Corinthians 12:15, Philippians 2:17, Colossians 1:24-25, and 2 Timothy 2:10.
7. What can we learn from Paul's example of giving himself for others?
8. What "work" is Paul referring to in verse 9? Read Acts 18:3.
9. Paul had every right to receive an offering of money for his labor in the Gospel, but he did not. (Luke 10:7, 1 Timothy 5:18) Why didn't he?

10. How does Paul describe their behavior while in Thessalonica? What was their purpose there?
11. What do you think it means to have a walk "worthy of God"? Use other Scriptures to answer, if possible. (This verse implies a continual walk.)
12. Look up the following Scriptures. How are we supposed to walk?

Romans 6:4

Romans 13:13-14

2 Corinthians 5:7

Ephesians 5:2

Galatians 5:16

The Kingdom in verse 12 can refer to a present aspect of the Kingdom (Romans 14:17, 1 Corinthians 4:20, Colossians 1:13), as well as a future aspect of the Kingdom (Matthew 25:34, Acts 14:22). Because Paul links "kingdom" and "glory" together here, he probably is referring to the future aspect of the Kingdom of God. F.F. Bruce said, "by faith, the Thessalonians had already entered the Kingdom of God, but the revelation of its full glory belonged to a day yet future; they were, however, heirs of that glory, and must live accordingly."

13. Are you walking worthy? Have you been walking devoutly, justly, and blamelessly? Are there any changes that need to be made?

Paul loved these people so much. He obviously had their best interests at heart. I pray that we love people with the same intensity, the same heart, and the same sincerity.

Fourth Day

What's your memory verse?

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16. What was the Thessalonians' reaction to the Gospel message?

Paul uses two different words for receive in verse 13. The first means to "hear with the ear" while the second means to "hear with the heart." The Thessalonians welcomed the word so readily because it was the Word of God! They didn't just hear it, they received it by faith and were ready to apply it to their lives. Paul commends them for responding to their faith with obedience. They became doers of the word, and not hearers only (James 1:19-25).

2. How does the Word of God effectively work in us? (verse 13)
3. The Word of God is life to us. What do these Scriptures say about God's Word? Matthew 4:4, Psalm 119:103-105, 1 Peter 2:2, Psalm 119:133, John 8:31-32. Do you know any other Scriptures concerning His Word?
4. If you believe all the above Scriptures, have you chosen to let His Word rule and govern your life?

In verses 14-16, Paul encourages them that they have become "fellow-sufferers" with other believers. They have imitated the churches in Judea in the sense that they have shared in similar suffering and showed the same courage and patience. To what extent the churches in Judea or Thessalonica suffered, we are not sure. In Acts 17:5, the Jews had stirred up even the Gentiles to attack Paul and his team.

Tyndale makes a good point: *"The conduct of the Jews has always been consistent; they have been hostile to the purposes of God. Paul says that they killed the Lord Jesus. In an important sense, of course, it was the Romans who actually killed Jesus, but Paul's point is that it was at the instigation of the Jews (John 18:18-31, 35, 19:10-15). Nor did this activity begin with Jesus, for they also killed the prophets. Nor did it finish here, for they also drove them out. There is consistent opposition to God's way and God's people. Thus they displease God and are hostile to all men, opposing the Gospel which would bring blessings to all."*

5. What does the word "saved" mean in verse 16?
6. How do you think the Jews were "filling up the measure of their sins"?

The Jews not only didn't receive the Gospel, they worked hard to keep it from being preached, especially to the Gentiles. They continued in stubborn unbelief like their forefathers. They continued to "fill up their sins." The inevitable consequence was God's future wrath. "To the uttermost" refers to the prophecy in Deuteronomy 28:15-68, although God will not make a full end of Israel (Jeremiah 30:4-11), though still heavier sorrows await the nation before final deliverance comes (Matthew 24:15-28). (W.E. Vine, 1 & 2 Thessalonians.)

7. Why didn't the Jews want the Gentiles to hear the Gospel and get saved?

It is amazing to think of how strong the Thessalonians were standing during their time of persecution, which was thought to be very heavy. I wonder how we would fair if we were living there at the time...

8. How do you handle persecution? Do you panic? Doubt? Get angry? Can others still see God's Word working effectively in you as you go through trials? Are you in one right now?

As we study God's Word, He gives us peace, comfort, strength, and everything else we need in this life. His Word lives and abides forever (1 Peter 1:23). May our faith be proven by our obedience to His Word. And may our conduct be honorable so that others around us may see the Lord, like was seen in the Thessalonians!

Fifth Day

Write your verse by memory. Did God use this verse in your life this week?

Paul wanted to return to see his friends in Thessalonica, but he was not able to. He says he was "torn away" from them in verse 17; which literally means "having been orphaned." It is interesting that he uses this word after he uses the analogy of a mother and a father. He felt like he was being "torn away" from them!

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20. Who else opposed and hindered Paul's work? How do you think he did it? Do we know exactly?

The word "hindered" means literally "cut into" and was used by the Greeks to refer to a road that was cut up in order to make it impassable. The enemy somehow made the road to Thessalonica impassable to Paul.

Although Satan seems to have blocked Paul's plans, who was really victorious, according to verses 19-20?

Although Paul was no longer with them physically, his heart was certainly there! The crown that Paul refers to in verse 19 is the laurel wreath, or the festive garland given to the winner at the games. Paul is expressing the confidence he has in them by calling them his "hope." Paul was expressing outwardly the joy that he was feeling inwardly. The Thessalonians were Paul's pride and joy, if you will. They are his glory (vs 20) because he was able to honor them before other people, and joy because he experienced such delight in them! They would be his "victory crown" at the Second Coming!

2. They won't be ashamed at the coming of the Lord. How should the reality of His coming motivate us to "walk worthy"? (Read Romans 14:10-12, 1 Corinthians 4:1-5, 2 Corinthians 5:9-10).
3. Have you been a "spiritual" mother or father to anyone, coming alongside them to exhort, comfort, or cherish? What are some practical ways to do that? Have you affected anyone's life in the way that Paul affected the Thessalonians?
4. Has anyone been a "spiritual" mom or dad to you? Take some time and drop them a note of thanks, letting them know they are appreciated.
5. We see the opposition that Paul faced was allowed by God. Why? Write your thoughts.
6. We began this chapter with Paul saying that his labor was not in vain. Read 1 Corinthians 15:58. How does this verse encourage you as you serve Him?
7. What spoke to your heart the most from this chapter?
8. Did God show you any changes that need to be made in your life as a result?

This chapter is a great model for ministry. We should be constantly checking our motives as we serve Him: Are we sincere? Are we honest? Are we wearing a cloak of covetousness? Do we use flattering words? May we be willing to say with David, "Search me, O God, and know my heart, and see if there be any wicked way in me" (Psalm 139:23-24). Let's walk worthy, ladies!

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Ready and Faithful

1 Thessalonians 3 **LESSON 4**

This week we will continue looking at Paul's "Pastor's" heart for the Thessalonians. We also meet a new character by the name of Timothy, who happens to be one of my favorite people in the Bible. I believe that Timothy was one of Paul's favorite people too! That in itself makes me want to get to know him better. Remember to pray before you begin, asking the Holy Spirit to give you understanding of His Word and knowledge to know how to apply it to your life. In Psalm 119:129, David said "Your testimonies are wonderful, therefore my soul keeps them. The entrance of Your Word gives light; it gives understanding to the simple." I am very simple ... I need help!

First Day

Let's begin today by reading Chapter 3. When this book was written, there were no chapter or verse breaks. This seems to be a strange place to break because it begins with the word "therefore," which ties the two thoughts together. To see what the "therefore" is "there for," let's begin reading chapter 2:17-20.

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:13. Observe and list the facts that you find. What is this section of Scripture saying?
2. How does "therefore" tie the two chapters together?
3. According to this chapter, what was Paul's purpose in sending Timothy?
4. Why do you think Paul gives Timothy such a good introduction?
5. What repeated words, thoughts, or phrases do you find?

6. What does Paul say to the Thessalonians about trials?

7. What does Paul say about their faith?

8. How can you tell Paul loved these people?

9. In this chapter do you find any:

a. Encouragement?

b. Challenges?

c. Warnings?

10. What immediate application do you find in this chapter?

We'll stop here for now. Only 13 verses, but great stuff! Tomorrow we will spend a little time getting to know Timothy. Until then, what reason do you have to rejoice today? Can you spend some time simply rejoicing in the God of your salvation? (Habakkuk 3:18)

***Memory Verse of the Week: "And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints."
1 Thessalonians 3:12-13***

Second Day

What's your memory verse? Do you pray like that for your family and friends?

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 3:1-5. What would you title this section?

Remember from the introduction that Paul went from Philippi to Thessalonica, and then on to Berea. Some jealous Jews followed them to Berea and caused a stir. For this reason, Paul was sent to Athens, leaving Timothy and Silas behind (Acts 17:14-15). While Paul was alone in Athens, he sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to be with the church. Sending Timothy away must have been a sacrifice for Paul, knowing that he would have to face ministry in Athens all alone. The city of Athens was full of paganism and idolatry. An ancient Greek writer once said, "in Athens it is easier to find a god than a man." The fact that he even sent Timothy is another proof of how much Paul loved the Thessalonians. He was willing to face the fear of the unknown as he walked alone through the streets of Athens.

The word "**left**" in verse one literally means "**abandonment**" and implies a feeling of desolation.

2. Paul says he "couldn't endure" being away from the Thessalonians. What other kinds of "things" had Paul endured in his life? Read 2 Corinthians 11:23-33 for your answer.

3. What does this tell you about Paul's love for people?

4. How do you feel about people? Would you rather avoid them, or do you love them as Paul did?

5. Who is this man Timothy? Read the following Scriptures and list the facts you find about him. What facts are of most interest to you? Acts 16:1-3, 2 Timothy 1:5, 2 Timothy 3:15, Philippians 2:19-24, 1 Timothy 1:2, 18, and 1 Corinthians 4:17.

Timothy was not Paul's birth son, but he considered him his "son in the faith." He was extremely close to him, being a faithful and devoted minister and friend. No wonder Paul loved him so much! I like what Warren Wiersbe says about young Timothy. . .

He was a believer ("our brother")

He was a minister (Greek word for servant)

He was a good team member ("fellow worker")

He was like-minded with Paul (Philippians 2:20)

6. According to 2 Timothy 1:5, who passed on a spiritual legacy to Timothy?

7. Why do you think the Holy Spirit led Paul to mention these two ladies?

We don't know anything else about these two women except for the fact that they passed their faith down to their children. They must have been great examples and lived out their beliefs because Paul makes sure he names them specifically. They would go down in history as a mom and a grandmother that obeyed God's Word and trained their kids in the ways of the Lord. Paul doesn't mention any other "good" thing they did for their kids; like how well they were provided for, or how many opportunities they were offered. They were honored simply because they loved God and taught their children to love Him too!

8. What example can you take from these ladies? If God was to pick out something that has characterized your life, would it be how well you've trained your children to love Him? What kind of spiritual legacy are you leaving?

9. Do you have any "sons or daughters" in the faith? Have you come alongside any younger Christians to show them the ropes, so to speak? Are you willing to pour your life into theirs, like Paul did?

Timothy was sent to "establish and encourage" them. The word "establish" means to strengthen, support, or make firm. He was to comfort, strengthen, and encourage the believers in their faith. This word "**encourage**" means to "call to the side of " It gives us the picture of one person standing alongside someone else to put courage into them. He was there to help them face the battles that were ahead. He was not there merely to "check" on them or inspect the church, but to offer help.

10. How can we help to “establish and encourage” those in our household?

Tomorrow we'll spend some more time in verses 1-5. Paul reminds us how we are supposed to view the trials that face us daily. He has a good perspective on things, doesn't he? Lord, give me that perspective!

Third Day

Review your memory verse. Are you increasing in love to one another?

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 3:1-5 again. To what does Paul say we are appointed? What do you think he means? How likely are the chances that we will experience trials?
2. Why are trials necessary in the lives of believers? Read the following Scriptures. What do they say about the purpose of trials?

Psalm 119:67, 71, 75

Romans 5:3-5

1 Peter 1:6-9

James 1:2-4

Psalm 66:10-12

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

3. Which one of these Scriptures encourages you the most today? Why?
4. How does 1 Corinthians 10:13 encourage you?
5. Read Matthew 5:11-12. What does Jesus promise us?

6. What did Jesus say in John 16:33? Also read 1 John 5:4-5. How do these verses encourage you and give you hope?
7. Why do you think it is so important for new believers to understand that they will face trials and hardship? How should this truth affect you? How does it?
8. Are you going through a trial right now? What's happening to your faith? Is it wavering, or is the trial producing patience, as well as strengthening your faith?

F.F. Bruce said this about trials and afflictions: *"It is taken for granted throughout the New Testament that affliction is the normal lot of Christians; it is, in fact, an evidence of the genuineness of their faith and an earnest of their part in the coming glory. (Acts 14:22, Romans 8:17, 2 Timothy 2:12). What had been an acute problem to faith in the Old Testament times -- the suffering of the righteous -- had come to be recognized as an essential element in God's purpose for His people. Since their Lord Himself had suffered, they need expect nothing else."*

9. Let's read one more Scripture on trials: 1 Peter 4:12-19. What does this say about suffering for the sake of Christ? What does verse 19 tell us to do?

We know that the "tempter" in 1 Thess. 3:5 is the devil, or Satan. Satan is the Hebrew word meaning accuser or adversary. He is definitely a real being. Paul does not speak figuratively of him. He is also referred to as the god of this age (2 Corinthians 4:4), prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2), ruler of darkness (Ephesians 6:12), murderer (John 8:44), serpent (Genesis 3:4), and the wicked one (Matthew 13:19).

10. According to 1 Peter 5:8 and Revelation 12:9, what is his purpose?

11. Read Matthew 4:1-11. Jesus was also tempted by Satan. How did He handle it?

12. Why do you think God allowed the devil to have so much power?

13. In what area of your life does the "tempter" tempt you most? What should you do?

Although the devil has a lot of power, it's nothing compared to the power we have through Jesus Christ! 1 John 4:4 says "Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world." Jesus has overcome the world, and that makes us "overcomers" because we believe in Him (1 John 5:4-5). We are more than conquerors in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:35-37)! We don't have to be afraid of the enemy. 2 Corinthians 2:11 tells us not to be ignorant of his tactics so we won't be caught by surprise. We can't underestimate him, nor should we attribute more power to him than he has. He is the enemy that will be thrown into the lake of fire in the end, while we live for eternity with the Lord in glory (Revelation 20:10)! We don't need to be afraid. Like Paul said to the Thessalonians, "Don't be shaken!"

The wording Paul uses in 1 Thess. 3:5 implies that he believed the devil had been tempting the Thessalonians, but he didn't believe they had fallen. He wasn't insinuating that he had labored, or toiled in vain.

This ends our discussion for today. If there are hardships in your life right now that are trying your faith, I pray that you will do as Peter suggests in 1 Peter 4:19, and "commit your soul to Him." He will not only get you through it, but you can be victorious through faith in His name! What a "Reason to Rejoice!"

Fourth Day

Have you memorized your verse?

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 3:6-10. What report did Timothy bring back?
2. How did it encourage Paul? Why? What did it remind him of?
3. How does hearing about the faith of others encourage you? Why, then, is it so important for us to share with others what God is doing in our life?

Paul said that Timothy brought "good news." This is the only place in the New Testament where this phrase is used for anything other than the Gospel. Masson says, *"Paul never speaks of faith without thinking of Christ; thus the good news of the faith and love of the converts is not unlike the good news of Christ."*

4. We know that Paul wanted to see the Thessalonians again. Were they anxious to see him, or do you think they believed the accusations against him?
5. What did Paul say about his own situation at the time of his writing?
6. What was Paul's strong exhortation to them in verse 8? Explain what he meant in your own words.
7. In whose strength were they to stand?

Paul felt that he had a lot at stake in them. Their stand was a living testimony for Christ. Verse 8 is translated by Findlay, "You must show that my misgivings were needless; you will go on to justify my confidence." Paul needed this encouragement. In a sense, his peace of mind was depending on their steadfastness. He was in Athens alone and had been facing many difficulties as he preached the Gospel. Remember that he had been put in jail in Philippi and forced to leave Thessalonica. The jealous Thessalonian Jews had forced him out of Berea also. Things weren't going that great in Athens. Charles Erdman calls it his "Corinthian crisis." Paul describes his situation using the word "affliction" which means "choking," "pressing care," and "distress," or a "crushing kind of trouble." The news of their faith increased Paul's strength to continue his battle! He says, "Now we live." Paul was contrasting his feelings of apprehension with the comfort he now felt by Timothy's good news.

8. Paul almost can't express how thankful he is. What were Paul's prayer requests in verse 9-10?
9. Who does Paul give thanks to for the courage and steadfastness of the Thessalonians, as well as the success of his ministry?

Paul is a great example of an evangelist. He doesn't just come in, preach, and leave. He carries the believers around with him in his heart, praying for them, longing for them, encouraging them. He opens his heart wide to the people he ministers to. Paul prays that God would "perfect" what was lacking in their faith. This word doesn't mean sinless or flawless. W.E. Vine says it means "to supply what is necessary," or to "fit a thing for its full and proper use, supplying what is needed." This most likely refers to doctrine, rather than their confidence in God. Paul wanted them to be equipped with everything they needed!

10. Do you pray consistently for the people you minister to? Do you allow yourself to become vulnerable enough to fully open your heart to them?
11. Are you "standing fast in the Lord"? How does your steadfastness affect those around you? Is anyone counting on you as an example? (Husband, kids, neighbors, etc.)

I pray that we will "**stand fast**" today. Think about what that means. Ask God to show you if you're "sitting down" in any areas of your life. God bless you, sisters!

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory. Did you apply it this week?

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13. What does Paul pray for himself in verse 11?

Verse 11 shows us that Paul believed in the equality of the Father and the Son. He viewed Christ as God. Notice in his prayer that Paul's doesn't demand that God bring him back to the Thessalonians. He acknowledges that his return to Thessalonica was in God's hands, according to His will.

2. What does Paul pray for his friends in verse 12-13?
3. As their faith increases, their love for others will also grow. Who does Paul want them to love?

Paul wants them to "agape" others. This is the type of love that God has for the world, or His attitude toward the human race (John 3:16). It was an exercise of divine will and deliberate choice. We are called to show this love to others. God's agape love is not an impulse based upon our feelings, but a choice. It is how we choose to respond and behave toward others. It is not dependent on how others love us. It is a kind of love that God pours in our hearts for others. Paul not only wanted the Thessalonians to love each other, but those who were persecuting them as well. Only the Lord can do that through us.

4. What do you think it means for our hearts to be "blameless in holiness"?

As our love for others grows, our hearts are established "blameless in holiness." By definition, our "holiness" is our state of separation from evil and our being separated unto God. Moral purity should be a result of this state of our heart. Erdman says, "One who loves cannot fail to be holy, for love is the fulfilling of the law." The final test of this will be at the coming of Jesus Christ. We will all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, where we will give account for our actions (1 Corinthians 4:1-5, 2 Corinthians 5:10). "Blameless" means a whole-hearted, unmixed devotion to loving God and doing His will in all things. Although this is Paul's prayer, and our goal, we will never attain perfection until we are with Christ. But it is our pursuit!

5. Is walking "blameless in holiness" one of your goals as a Christian?

6. How do we grow in "faith and love"?

7. Is there someone whom God has called you to "agape"? Ask the Lord to fill you with His love for them.

8. What is the most significant spiritual truth you learned from this chapter?

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Ready and Faithful

1 Thessalonians 4 **LESSON 5**

As we have previously mentioned, the Second Coming of Christ is mentioned in every chapter of 1 Thessalonians. In chapter one, Paul commends the Thessalonians for turning from idols to serve the living and true God, while waiting for His Son (1:9-10). They were living in constant expectation of Christ returning for His church. In chapter two, Paul tells us that the Thessalonian believers would be included in Paul's crown of rejoicing when he stands before the judgment seat of Christ. Last week, in chapter three, Paul encourages them to increase and abound in love so that God would "establish their hearts blameless in holiness" when He comes again. Now, in chapter four, Paul will take some time to explain a little more about what will happen to the believers who die before Christ returns.

The last three chapters have been very personal, straight from Paul's heart. Now he begins to advise them in practical, everyday Christian living. He desires for them to grow, so he gives them some exhortations and warnings on how that growth can be accomplished in their lives. Let's pray for the Holy Spirit to speak to our hearts in the area of Christian practical living.

First Day

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-18. Then go back and read 1-12 again. Paul begins this section with the word "finally," which introduces a transition to other subjects. What does this text say? (1-12) Observe the facts. Ask yourself: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?
2. Are there any repeated thoughts, words, or phrases?
3. What would you say is the main thought of verses 1-12? The key verse?
4. What warnings does Paul give?
5. What general encouragement do you find in this section?
6. Does Paul's tone seem "fatherly" to you?

7. What do you think is Paul's purpose in writing this section?
8. Does Paul say that walking in holiness is an option for a Christian?

The Thessalonians were living in a society that was extremely immoral. It is said that fornication was the cardinal sin of the ancient world. Tyndale said, "A marked feature of life in the first-century Roman Empire, and specifically in Greece, was sexual laxity." People did not see fornication as a sin. Ritual fornication played a huge part in the heathen religious worship practices, as well as in every level of society. A Greek writer from long ago named Demosthenes, writes this: *"We keep prostitutes for pleasure; we keep mistresses for day-to-day needs of the body; we keep wives for the begetting of children and for the faithful guardianship of our homes."* At the time of Paul's writing, there was no shame in extra-marital relationships. (Yuck!)

Knowing a little bit about their society at the time helps us understand why Paul felt he needed to deal with certain issues, namely sanctification.

These new believers had to unlearn everything they had been taught in their culture. Their new "Christian convictions" needed to be defined by the Word of God. As Christians, we can never decide our standards or convictions based upon what is right in our society. It is God who defines truth, not this world.

We all grow up in this world. We all were taught and exposed to different attitudes and practices from the society we live in. We all have the choice to make our standard the Word of God, or what is "acceptable" in the world. How high are your standards? How strong are your convictions?

9. What ideas or practices were difficult for you to change after you accepted Christ? What are some of the attitudes or ideas that you were raised with that you now have found contradictory to God's Word? (Can you share? If not, just think about it ...)

We're done for today. I pray that we will abound more and more too!

I want to grow, don't you? I am so thankful for what God has done in my life these past 20 years and how much He has "grown me" up! But, boy, do I have a long way to go! Take a minute and thank Him for saving your soul and the growth that you have experienced in Him!

Memory Verse of the Week: "For the Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thessalonians 4:16

Second Day

Practice your memory verse. It's an exciting one, isn't it?

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8. What does the word "ought" mean?

"Walk" is a Hebrew expression referring to one's conduct of life.

2. How does Paul tell them to walk?
3. According to verse 1, what should be the major motive of everything we do in our Christian life?

In verse 2, Paul says that he was not there to give them any new commandments. This word "commandment" is a military term that refers to orders handed down from superior officers. Paul says it was God who passed the orders down. He's reminding them what God expects and encourages them to obey those "orders."

4. According to verse 3, what do we KNOW God's will is for us?

Sanctification is a very important doctrine in the Bible. The root of the term is a word meaning "holy" which is an attribute of God. How can we, sinful man, be made "holy" or be "sanctified"? Irving Jensen gives a great definition of this term:

- *Sanctification is both separation from evil and consecration unto righteousness.*
- *Sometimes the word sanctification (or holiness) in the Bible is used positionally; that is, God sees the Christian as holy because He sees him in Christ. (1 Cor. 1:30, Hebrews 10:14)*
- *Sometimes the word is used experientially, when referring to the ever-progressing growth of the Christian in righteousness (1 Thess. 4:7, Hebrews 12:14)*
- *Sometimes the doctrine of sanctification appears in the Bible as referring to the ultimate and complete work of God, when He glorifies the believer in the sinless state at the coming of Christ (1 John 3:2). This is how the word holiness is used in 1 Thessalonians 3:13.*

5. How can a Christian “grow in holiness”? Are you? How can you tell?

6. Why is sexual immorality so wrong? What are we supposed to do with our bodies?
Read Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 6:12-20, and 2 Corinthians 4:7-10.

"There is no form of sin so certain to be followed by pain and by penalty in time or eternity, as impurity." (Ralph Erdman)

7. Write your comments on the above quote.

8. Besides fornication and sexual immorality, what other things can be considered impure?

Verse 4 uses the word "vessel." Some scholars believe that this is referring to a man's wife because she is called a vessel in 1 Peter 3:7, and Paul is commenting on how he should treat her. Most believe that Paul is referring to controlling one's body because he was addressing all the believers (Romans 6:13, 1 Corinthians 9:27).

Verse 6 tells us that when sexual sin is committed, you have committed a covetous sin against your fellow Christian. Our sin always affects others. It is impossible to sin like this without injuring others by our unholy deeds. And God always knows what's up. Paul says in Galatians 6:7, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap."

9. Read 2 Timothy 2:20-23. What kind of vessel are you? How are you possessing it? Are you fleeing any impurities? Are you pursuing holiness?

10. Verse 7 tells us that God "calls" us to holiness. How is this a sobering statement?

Paul reminds us that it is God that makes these rules, not man. And it is the purpose of the Spirit of God to sanctify us and produce holiness. We are given the Holy Spirit for power to live as God has called us to.

11. Go before the Lord and ask Him to reveal any areas in your life where you need to "grow in holiness." This is between you and the Lord, but you may share if you desire.

"For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your Spirit, which are God's." 1 Corinthians 6:20

Third Day

Review your memory verse.

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 again. Concentrate on verses 9-12.

From yesterday's lesson, we know that God calls us to walk in purity and holiness. In this section, he tells us that we are also called to walk in love. Love was, and should be today, the mark of a Christian.

2. Were the Thessalonians a good example of love? (1 Thess. 1:3, 3:6)
3. Can we ever "arrive" in our show of love towards others?

In verse 9, Paul says that they are "God-taught" people. It seemed almost unnecessary to talk about love to them because God Himself would speak to their hearts, directing them into the love of God. Love is evidence of the new nature we receive when we accept Christ (1 John 2:20, 27 and 2 Thess. 3:5).

4. How does God use circumstances or people to make our love increase?
5. "The more we live like God, the more we'll love others." What do you think about this quote? What does it mean? (John 15:12-13, 1 John 4:7-8)
6. Is your life characterized by love? Do you love others as Christ loves you? Is there someone in your life who is difficult to love? What should you do?

Loving others is not an option for the Christian (1 John 4:20-21). We not only should love others with God's "agape" love, but with "Philadelphia," or brotherly love. In the Old Testament, this word described the mutual love of children of the same father. In the New Testament, this word describes the love that unites Christians to one another. As Christians, we are all part of a new family, and we love the same Father!

7. How do "holiness" and "love" go together? (Can you be holy without loving others?)

In verses 11-12, Paul seems to be addressing the issue of how to live while waiting for Christ's return. It is thought that many of the Christians were so excited about His coming that they quit their jobs, becoming dependent on others. The issue of making a living had been forgotten.

8. How does Paul answer this question?

The word "study" or "aspire" in verse 11 means to "earnestly endeavor, " or to "strive restlessly after."

9. How do we "strive restlessly" after a quiet life? (1 Timothy 2:2) What is Paul talking about?

10. How can idleness cause people to meddle in the business of others? (2 Thess. 3:10-11, 1 Timothy 5:13)

Paul was a good example of working hard. Idleness and neglecting responsibility is not a good thing. William Barclay said this: *"The thought that Christ will someday come, that life as we know it will end, is not a reason for stopping work; it is a reason for working harder and more faithfully. It is not hysterical and useless waiting, but quiet and useful work which will be a man's passport to the Kingdom. "*

11. What else does Paul say about our "time"? Read Ephesians 5:15-17. Are you doing this?

Paul reminds them that their work habits should be a witness to others. "Outsiders" (vs 12) should see our diligence. We don't want to bring dishonor to God by our example. Let me give you one more quote by Barclay: "A tree is known by its fruits, and a religion is known by the kind of men it produces. The only way to demonstrate that Christianity is the best of all faiths is to show that it produces the best of all men. When we Christians show that our Christianity makes us better workmen, truer friends, kinder men and women, then we are really preaching." (1 Timothy 3:7, Colossians 4:5-6)

Paul didn't want them to depend on others for their support. He told them to "work with their hands" and "lack nothing. "

12. How is your work ethic? Are you idle? Do you work hard? Does the way you handle your responsibilities bring honor and glory to God?

We'll end here for today. Wow ... powerful stuff! Paul's going for it! I pray that we all have "ears to hear" what the Spirit is saying to us.

Fourth Day

Fill in the blanks ... "For the _____ Himself will _____ from _____ with a _____ with the voice of an _____ and with the _____ of God. And the _____ in _____ shall rise first. 1 Thess 4: _____"

Now Paul answers their questions concerning those who die before Christ returns! Exciting news ahead!

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. What facts do you find?

Paul tells them not to be ignorant concerning this issue. Paul uses this phrasing to suggest the coming topic was extremely important.

2. Why was it so important for them to understand this? (vs 13)

Even though the Thessalonians were looking forward to the coming of Christ, they were concerned about their friends and loved ones that had already died. What would happen to them? Would they see the Lord?

Would they be able to share the glory that was coming? As you read this section, remember that Paul's main point in writing these words was to bring them comfort and encouragement, not to confuse them.

This is the first time specific details of the rapture were given. When we read this section, we find Paul's words raise many other questions in our minds. Let's look at these facts first.

3. Read verse 13. Is Paul saying not to grieve over death at all? (Refer to Jesus' grief over Lazarus in John 11.) How is our grief over a believer different than an unbeliever?

Some say that Paul is saying that Christians sorrow, but to a lesser degree. I don't agree. Leon Morris says, "Paul's contrast is not between one degree of sorrow and another, but between Christian hope and pagan despair." Pagan literature from that time revealed the hopelessness they saw in death. We also see their despair by the inscriptions they put on their tombs. We grieve over the loss of our loved ones, but we have hope that we will be reunited with them.

When Christians die, it is referred to as "falling asleep." Their spirit goes to be with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8) but their bodies are asleep, waiting to be resurrected. It's important to note that the Word says Jesus "died" not fell asleep. Leon Morris says again, *"Christ endured the full horror of that death that is the wages of sin and thus transformed death for His followers into sleep."* To a believer, death is simply falling asleep in our Father's arms and waking up in a new place. Sleep is refreshing, and restful. Sleep implies "Awakening and dawn." (Erdman)

4. Are the living believers at an advantage? Do they get to see Jesus first?
5. What three sounds will accompany His return? Why is this significant?
6. What is the key point in verse 16?
7. According to verse 17, is our reunion with the Lord temporary or permanent?

Whether Jesus will speak with an "archangel-type voice" or an archangel is really present is unknown. The only archangel mentioned by name in Scripture is Michael (Jude 9), but that doesn't necessarily mean that it's referring to him. Trumpets were a very common sound at the time. Trumpets were often used as warnings, signs of assembling, or calling armies together.

The word "caught up" in verse 17 literally means "seize up suddenly." It comes from the Latin word "raptō" and from it we get our English word "rapture." This is the term used to describe the time when Christ "catches up" His people to be with Him. Kenneth Wuest gives several meanings for this word: "to catch away speedily," "to seize by force," "to claim for one's self" (viewing the rapture from Christ's point of view), "to move to a new place" and to "rescue from danger."

We will "meet" Him in the air. This phrase is a technical term used for the official welcome of a newly arrived dignitary. We will be definitely meeting the most important dignitary in the world!

8. John Stott sums up this passage with four key words: "The Return, the Resurrection, the Rapture, and the Reunion." How do these four words summarize the Second Coming? Explain them in your own words.

9. How fast does the rapture take place? Read 1 Corinthians 5:51-52.

10. Why do you think Paul doesn't bring up other details concerning judgment--how we will be translated, or what our bodies will look like--in this section?

11. How does the rapture event encourage you?

Paul is not teaching that he believes he will be alive when Christ returns. Paul clearly did not know when Jesus was coming back. He was not laying down a time-line, or setting dates. He didn't "teach" that it would be while he was alive, but he "hoped" it would be!

That's it for today. Paul tells them that they will always be with the Lord. These words brought comfort to their heart. Do they comfort yours?

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory. How did it encourage you this week?

Yesterday we read that Christ will return at any moment, raise the bodies of believers who have died, rapture the living believers, and reunite the living and the dead with Himself! Isn't that exciting? We have such a hope for the future. This life isn't all we have.

The doctrine of the resurrection seemed foolish to the Greeks. The Greek culture believed that matter was base and the soul was divine. They couldn't believe that our bodies could be resurrected because they were corrupt and disgusting. They knew that after a while, our dead bodies would just decay and become part of the earth. It seemed that even some of the new believers in Corinth believed in Jesus' Resurrection, but not that the believers would have a bodily resurrection. Paul wrote to the Corinthians to answer some of these questions in 1 Corinthians 15.

1. Read 1 Corinthians 15 on the topic of the Resurrection. What do you learn in this chapter about:
 - The fact of the Resurrection (vs 1-11)
 - The importance of the Resurrection (vs 12-19)
 - The order of resurrection (vs 20-28)
 - The bodies of the resurrected dead (vs 35-50)
 - The bodies of the translated living (vs 51-58)
2. What do you think our glorified, or spiritual bodies, will look like?

When Christ comes back for us at the rapture, this is called the "first resurrection." At that time we will be given our new, glorified bodies. We will also appear before the "Judgment Seat of Christ" (Romans 14:10, 2 Cor. 5:10). This is also called the "Bema Seat" Judgment. This is for believers only, and it is for the judging and rewarding of works (1 Corinthians 3:8-15). This is not the "White Throne Judgment" (Revelation 20:11-15) which is for unbelievers after both the tribulation period and the thousand-year Kingdom. This is where the unbeliever's judgment is determined.

Will we recognize our friends when we are reunited with them? Most believe that we can. Moses and Elijah were recognized when they appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-5). Won't it be exciting?

The view of the Second Coming of Christ that has been described in this lesson is called the "Pre-Tribulation" view. This view holds that the church will be raptured before the Tribulation Period described in Revelation 4 through 18. We believe that His church will be saved from the "wrath to come" as Noah was saved from the flood! This view also holds that at the rapture, the Lord does not come to the earth but we meet in the air and return to Heaven immediately.

Those who hold the "Post-Tribulation" view believe that the rapture occurs after the Tribulation and that the believers will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, but they will immediately accompany Him to the earth. They believe that believers will suffer through the

Great Tribulation. (Both views believe in the return of Christ, and one's view on this should not cause division.) There are also those who believe that the rapture will occur in the middle of the seven-year Tribulation Period. (We encourage you to study this topic more in depth on your own.)

Those of us, who are "Pre-Tribbers," as they are often called, believe in the "Imminent" return of Christ, which means that He can come at any moment. Nothing else in the prophetic sense has to happen before Christ returns. Maranatha ... Lord, come quickly!

3. What difference does it make in your life that Christ is definitely coming back for you?

4. How does the encouragement of this section of 1 Thessalonians assure you that the power of God will never be defeated?

5. Look back on this week's lesson. What specifically ministered to you from?

First Day

Second Day

Third Day

Fourth Day

Fifth Day

6. This chapter is considered very "practical." How did you apply it "practically" this week?

How exciting it is to know that death is not good-bye for believers! We will reunite with our loved ones and have the biggest, coolest reunion party ever! Even better than that, we will be with the Lord Himself ... forever! We can live "in" Christ, and we die "in" Christ. What a "Reason to Rejoice!"

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Ready and Faithful

1 Thessalonians Chapter 5

LESSON 6

In last week's lesson, Paul gave the Thessalonians one practical suggestion on spiritual growth. I pray that we took them to heart! He also encouraged us with some facts concerning Christ's Second Coming. This week we will begin with Paul's description of the "Day of the Lord." This is the last chapter of 1 Thessalonians -- can you believe it? Continue to pray that the Holy Spirit will give you knowledge of His Word and the wisdom to apply it.

First Day

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-28 through a few times. This chapter can be broken down into three sections. Before you look ahead to see how we've broken it down, how would you do it?
2. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11. Observe and record the facts. What is Paul saying?
3. Write a sentence that summarizes the main thought or idea of this section. What would you title it?
4. Read verses 12-22. What facts do you find? Write a sentence that summarizes this section also.
5. Read verses 23-28. What is the main point of this section? Can you title this one too?

6. Are there any words or phrases that are unfamiliar to you? Write them down and try to look them up.
7. What immediate application do you see for yourself today?

Let's end here. By now you have a great overview of this chapter. Tomorrow we'll study more about the "Day of the Lord." See you then!

Memory Verse of the Week: *"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.*

Second Day

Start memorizing your verse. I'm already convicted. How about you?

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11. Consider what Paul just said in chapter 4. What question does Paul seem like he's answering now?

The word **time** in verse one denotes chronological time. The word **seasons** is used of the right time for a thing. In this section, these words have to do with the events happening on the earth.

2. Why do you think Paul didn't need to explain?
3. Notice the change of pronouns in this section. Where do they change? To whom is he speaking each time?

What is the **"day of the Lord"**? Does it refer to a 24-hour period? Although it does mean that sometimes (Genesis 2:3), it can also mean a specific time during which God accomplishes some special purpose. One technical definition is this: *"The day of the Lord is a future period of time in which God will be at work in world affairs more directly and dramatically than He has been since the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ."* (Thomas L. Constable)

"The day of the Lord" is a span of time that begins with the rapture of the church and includes the Great Tribulation and the personal reign of Jesus Christ during the millennium. Another term used for this period of time is "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jeremiah 30:7). In the Old Testament, this phrase often refers to the judgment of the nations, and it seems the New Testament emphasizes the judgment of the individual.

4. Read the following Scriptures that describe the "day of the Lord." Write the facts you find in each.
 - a. Amos 5:18-20
 - b. Zephaniah 1:14-18
 - c. Joel 2:1-3
 - d. Isaiah 2:12-21
5. Why do you think Paul says that day comes as a "thief in the night"? What point is he trying to make?
6. Why does Paul compare the beginning of the Tribulation with a "pregnant woman with labor pains"? How would you describe labor pains?
7. Will this be a surprise to unbelievers? What will be happening in the world at the time?

"Sudden destruction" does not talk about annihilation, but "utter and hopeless ruin" and the "loss of all that gives worth to existence." "Peace" means absence of alarm, and "safety" refers to blind security. At the very moment the world feels secure, this destruction will hit.

8. Will the unbelievers be able to escape this?
9. Paul reminds them that no one can predict when these events will happen. Why does everyone want to know "when"?
10. Notice that Paul is speaking to "they" when he says it shall come as a "thief in the night." Why shouldn't believers be taken by surprise? Read Jesus' words in Matthew 24:36-44.

Paul didn't feel like he had to say much to them concerning the day of the Lord. He must have already taught these truths to them. They still seemed to be curious about when it would all take place. Paul tells them that it is unpredictable, yet inevitable. Listen to this quote by Leith Samuel:

**"If there is one thing certain about the timing of the Lord's return it is this,
that we cannot be certain of the timing."**

11. If you knew for sure that the Lord was coming back for you tomorrow, what would you change in your life today? (Why not make that change?)
12. If none of these things will happen until we are "snatched away," why is it so important for us to know and understand all this?

I hope that we will not be taken by surprise. I pray that we all will be waiting and watching for His soon return. Even though we don't know the day or the hour, we can be ready. Are you?

Third Day

Study your memory verse. Are you rejoicing today?

Today we will look at the same 11 verses, concentrating on verses 4-11. Paul goes from using "they" to "you" in verse 4. He is now talking to the believers.

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:4-11. What does Paul tell them in verse 5?
2. Contrast living "in darkness" to living "in the light." What characteristics do you find in each? Use this text, along with Colossians 1:13-14, 1 Peter 2:9-10, Ephesians 5:8-20, and any others you find.

The phrase "sons of" means to be "characterized by that particular thing" (like "sons of strength, sons of thunder," etc.). "Sons of light" would mean, "people characterized by light." Paul uses sleeping and drunkenness as a contrast to watchful and sober.

3. Light is a distinguishing characteristic of believers. Are you a "son of light"? Is your life characterized by light, or is there too much darkness?

Paul said to watch and be sober. **Watch** refers to mental alertness, and Jesus uses this word also in Matthew 24:42-43, 25:13, and Mark 13:34-37. **Sober** has a moral emphasis, condemning all kinds of excess. It means to show self-control and be balanced in all areas of your life. **Sleep** in verse 6 refers to spiritual lethargy, insensibility, or callous indifference. This causes conformity to the world.

4. In what ways are Christians today guilty of "sleeping"? What are some reasons for spiritual laziness? What does Paul say in Romans 13:11?

5. Describe what it means to live a "Life of Watchfulness."

6. Are you "sleeping" in any area of your life? Which phrase would best describe your life: "Spiritually indifferent" or a "Life of Watchfulness"?

Paul tells us in verse 7 that sleeping and getting drunk at night are natural human experiences. He then contrasts that with what should be normal experiences for the children of the day. He says to be sober and get suited up like a soldier preparing for battle. We are to be ready for spiritual conflict. Paul often uses spiritual armor as an illustration (Romans 13:12-13, 2 Corinthians 6:7, 10:4, Ephesians 6:13-17). Here he describes the famous triad of faith, hope, and love as armor that protects us in this world. This should be the ordinary "apparel" for a Christian.

7. How do we practically "put on" this armor?

8. Why do you think Paul put the emphasis on "hope"? How does it act as a helmet and protect our mind?

9. What else are we supposed to "put on"? Read Ephesians 4:24 and Colossians 3:9-14.

10. Do you clothe yourself with faith, hope, and love each day? Do you protect your heart and mind? How?

Paul says that we have been appointed to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ (vs 9). Here he places the initiative and responsibility on God for our salvation. Salvation is a gift from God (Ephesians 2:8). Even though human responsibility is involved, our salvation begins with Him.

In verse 10, Paul says that Jesus "died for us." Specifically for us. It's important to notice that it doesn't say Jesus was killed, but that He died for us. He willingly went to the cross for our sin.

11. What exciting promise and comfort do we find in verse 10? What two commands in verse 11?

We find comfort in knowing that we are going to live forever with Jesus, no matter what! Paul saved the best for last by sharing this truth. Paul commends them for the great job they're doing of building each other up.

12. What do you think it means to "build each other up"? How can we use the truths found in this chapter to encourage and "build up" our brothers and sisters in the Lord? Give some practical ways to do this.

This ends our first section. Knowing we will be with the Lord forever is a major **"Reason to Rejoice!"** Spend some time today thanking Him for appointing you to salvation!

Fourth Day

Review your memory verse. Have you been praying without ceasing?

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-18. Paul now lays out some principles on holy and acceptable living before God. (This is gonna be good!) Why do you think Paul's statements are so abrupt?

Paul begins by exhorting the Thessalonians to listen to the rulers of the church, who were probably appointed by Paul (Acts 14:23). Most commentators believe that Paul is bringing this up because the elders most likely had already admonished those Christians who had stopped working because of their belief of the Second Coming. The Thessalonians seemed to disregard the rebuke, possibly because the leaders were converted about the same time as they were. (The word admonish is used only by Paul and is a word designed "to correct while not provoking or embittering.") We will discuss the qualifications for a leader later in the study of Timothy and Titus.

2. How did Paul say to treat "those who are over you in the Lord"? Why? How do we do this? (Share Scriptures if possible.) How would doing this bring peace?

The word "**recognize**" or "**know**" in verse 12 means to "acknowledge, appreciate, and value." "**Esteem**" means to hold them in high regard. We are to not only respect, honor, and refrain from criticizing our leaders, but we are to share in their labor (vs 14-22).

3. How do you treat those in leadership over you? Do you value them? Does that mean you always have to agree with them? How should you handle disagreement?

4. What's the difference between respecting and honoring the leaders, and idolizing them?

5. What four exhortations does Paul give in verse 14?

The word "**unruly**" is better translated as idle. It is a military word that referred to a soldier who was out of step. It means "that which is out of order." This is probably referring to the ones who had stopped working or were unwilling to submit to the elders of the church. For whatever reason they were "out of order".

6. How can we "warn the idle" in love? Why is it important to be "in order"?

The word "**fainthearted**" or "**feble-minded**" refers to those who had lost courage, or those who were falling away under the pressures of persecution, etc. They were despondent, lacking energy and boldness.

W. E. Vines gives some causes from this text that produces faintness of heart: "Sensitivity to criticism (2:3-6), dread of persecution (3:3), a sense of failure to follow the Lord (1:6), and apprehensiveness concerning the future (4:13).

The "**weak**" refers to those who were spiritually and morally weak, who were having trouble standing against temptation. We are supposed to "uphold" or "help" them. This word means to hold on to something or cleave to a person.

7. Do you know anyone who is fainthearted right now? What are some ways you can encourage them?

8. How can we "hold on" to the weak? Give some practical suggestions.

9. Is God calling you to "uphold" someone specific in your life? Will you obey?
10. How does Paul's exhortation to "be patient with all" tie in with the other three exhortations? Why is it so important to be patient? (1 Corinthians 13:4, Galatians 5:22).
11. Are you the one who is idle, fainthearted, or weak? Have you become rebellious? Lost courage? Yielded to temptation? Ask the Lord for help. He's there for you. Can you share your burden with a friend so they might help you too?
12. Why is it important for all the body of Christ to heed these exhortations, not only the leaders?
13. Do you have any shortcomings in your personality or your spiritual walk? Do you desire others to be patient with you?
14. Do you need to show more patience at home? At work? At school? Examine your heart. How does God want to work in this area of your life? How can patience be a witness for Christ?

We'll end here today. Wow! Talk about convicting! God wants the body of Christ to be united, and this will never happen until we decide to live a life of obedience by being patient, comforting each other, encouraging each other, and upholding each other. We are called to love one another. Offer courage to one another. Warn one another. Are you doing your part?

Fifth Day

Write out your verse from memory. How did it speak to your heart?

1. Let's finish 1 Thessalonians 5:12-18. Beginning in verse 15, list the exhortations Paul gives to the Thessalonians.
2. Why is seeking revenge so wrong? Contrast this with patience.
3. Are we supposed to seek good only for ourselves? Was Paul including those who were persecuting them in this list of people to be kind to?
4. Paul gives three standing orders for the Christian church in verses 16-18. These orders are to be in force at all times, no matter what the situation or circumstance. What are they?
5. How is it possible to rejoice no matter what the circumstance? How do rejoicing, unceasing prayer, and thankfulness work together?
6. Can you find other Scriptures on joy? Which one specifically ministers to you? (One of my personal favorites is Nehemiah 8:10)

George Muller said, "I never allow myself to begin the day without facing before God anything that has left me unhappy or distressed, because I want to be before Him always in the spirit of joyfulness."

7. Is your life characterized by joy? What about today?

8. What do you think it means to "pray without ceasing"?

Concerning prayer, Charles Ryrie says this: "The Greek word used in 5:13 was used in Paul's day to describe the lingering persistency of a hacking cough. Just as a person with a hacking cough is not always audibly coughing, though the tendency is always there, so the Christian who prays without ceasing is not always praying audibly and yet prayer is always the attitude of his heart and life."

9. Write your thoughts on the above statement.

10. Is there anything that we are not supposed to pray about?

11. What "things" are we supposed to be thankful for? How do Romans 5:3-5 and 8:28 relate to this?

12. Read Luke 17:11-19. What do we learn about being thankful? Do you think you would be the "one" or one of the "nine"?

13. Why is being thankful so important to the Lord?

We don't always know God's will for us, but we do know this. It is His will for us to rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in everything.

14. Are you falling short in any of the above areas? What changes do you need to make?

Next week we will finish up 1 Thessalonians chapter 5 with Paul giving us a few more exhortations and a very important conclusion. I pray that this week you were excited about His Second Coming, challenged to be watchful and sober, and exhorted in your daily attitude and Christian walk. Did you grow this week? I know I did! God bless you, ladies!

**"We cannot always be uttering words of prayer,
but we can be in the attitude of prayer continuously;
that is, we can always be in the spirit of dependence on God."**

James Montgomery

**"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,
and into His courts with praise.
Be thankful to Him and bless His name.
For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting,
And His truth endures to all generations."**

Psalm 100:4-5

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Ready and Faithful

1 Thessalonians 5 (ending) & 2 Thessalonians Overview **LESSON 7**

Hello, ladies! This week we will finish studying 1 Thessalonians chapter 5 and begin 2 Thessalonians. Paul continues to give us more commands and exhortations for our spiritual walk and ends with a beautiful conclusion. We see once again the balance of Paul's practical and spiritual advice. The Holy Spirit not only tells us what to do, but teaches us practical ways to do it. I pray that God would speak to your heart this week in a powerful way, and may you obey His Word immediately and completely! (Don't worry... I'm praying for myself too!)

First Day

We ended our lesson last week in verse 18, but let's read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-28 to put things back into context.

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-28. Read verses 19-28 again. What facts do you find? How would you title verses 19-22? Verses 23-28?
2. Remember that Paul had been giving them some instructions for holy living. What five commands does Paul give in verses 19-22?
3. What is Paul's main point?
4. What do you think Paul means to "quench not the Spirit"? (Can you give Scriptures to support your answer?)

The word "quench" is used of putting out a fire (Mark 9:48, Hebrews 11:34) and is used in relation to the Spirit (Matthew 3:11, Acts 2:3). Paul uses it in the present tense, meaning, "stop quenching the Spirit" or "stop doing something you are doing." Some commentators believe that Paul is using this in the general sense; meaning to stop doing specific activities that would hinder the Holy Spirit. It can also refer to the failure to respond to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, neglecting to use the spiritual gifts, or anything else that represses the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Other scholars believe that Paul was being even more specific in his exhortations, especially because he is so specific in verse 20. While the believers in Corinth were prone to abusing the spiritual gifts within the church setting (1 Corinthians 14), the Thessalonians were doing the opposite. . The Corinthians' use of the gifts was causing confusion and disorder. The believers in Thessalonica were so determined that the gifts not be abused that they ended up looking down on any manifestation of the Spirit.

W.E. Vine says this, "The peace, order, and edification of the saints were evidence of the ministry of the Spirit among them (1 Corinthians 14:26, 32, 33, 40), but if, through the ignorance of His ways, or through failure to recognize, or refusal to submit to them, the Spirit was quenched, these happy results would be absent. For there was always the danger that the impulses of the flesh might usurp the place of energy of the Spirit in the assembly, and the endeavor to restrain this evil by natural means would have the effect of hindering His ministry also. Apparently then, this injunction was intended to warn believers against the substitution of a mechanical order for the restraints of the Spirit."

5. In the general sense, how can we "quench the Spirit" in our everyday life? (Read Ephesians 4:30.)

6. How do Paul's statements in verse 21 bring a balance to what Paul is saying in verses 19-20?

The word "despise" in verse 20 means "contempt" or "to make absolutely nothing of". If Paul was referring to the use of the gifts, he exhorts them to listen to prophecy. Prophecy was usually "forth-telling" (thus saith the Lord), but sometimes included foretelling the future as well. The gift of prophecy was the ability to receive and communicate direct revelations from God (1 Corinthians 13:8).

7. Although Paul didn't want the Thessalonians to reduce the prophecies to nothing, what was his caution to them?

8. How do we "test all things"? (1 John 4:1-3) What are we to use as our test?

9. Explain verse 22 in your words. Why does it matter what the appearance of something is, if you know your heart is pure in its motives?
10. Name some things that may be fine to do, but can give an appearance of evil.
11. Is there anything that you do or are involved in that may give the appearance of some kind of evil? Are you willing to stop it so as to not stumble anyone in your family, or a weaker brother or sister in the Lord?

Paul really had a handle on this "balance" thing, didn't he? Listen to prophecy, but don't just accept anything without making sure it lines up with the Word of God. If not, reject it as false. Tyndale says that "test all things" means "avoid gullibility." We are all responsible to form judgments on spiritual things. Spiritual perception often depends upon the walk of the believer. We are blessed to have the Scriptures, which are the sole and sufficient standard by which everything can be tested. We need to be like the Bereans and search the Scriptures to find the truth (Acts 17:11). We need to avoid anything that looks like sin, because we want to walk in the light, and not the darkness!

Let's stop here for today. We got through four whole verses--wow! Even though we looked at only four, they were very powerful. I pray that we would not grieve the Holy Spirit, but allow Him free reign in our life. I also pray that we look at every activity we do, and make sure it doesn't appear to be evil.

Memory Verse of the Week: *"Test all things, hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil." 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22*

Second Day

What's your memory verse? This is an easy one to say, yet a hard thing to do!

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:23-28. How would you describe this conclusion?
2. Paul refers to God as the "God of peace," as he does in other writings (Romans 15:33, 2 Corinthians 13:11, 2 Thessalonians 3:16). How else is God described in these verses?

- a. The God of _____ (Acts 7:2)
- b. The God of _____ (Romans 15:5)
- c. The God of _____ (Romans 15:13)
- d. The God of _____ (2 Corinthians 1:3)
- e. The God of _____ (2 Corinthians 13:11)
- f. The God of _____ (1 Peter 5:10)

3. Which of these verses specifically ministers to your heart today? Why?

4. Rewrite Paul's prayer in verse 23 in your own words.

5. Who does Paul say is responsible for sanctifying us completely and preserving us?

6. What assurance and comfort do you find in verse 24?

7. What request do you see in verse 25?

8. What greeting do you find in verse 26?

The holy kiss in verse 26 was a custom of the Orient at the time. It is much like greeting someone with a handshake. Usually men kissed men and women kissed women.

9. What charge do you find in verse 27? Why does Paul instruct them to do this?

Paul wants them to understand the continuous and complete realization of their calling. Some think that in verse 23, Paul is trying to prove the threefold nature of man, called **trichotomy** (body, soul, and spirit). It seems more likely that Paul is simply praying that their entire being would be found without blame. Every aspect of one's life, self, motive, and conduct should be sanctified. He can pray this with certainty because God is faithful (vs 24).

Paul has been instructing these believers in regard to living a sanctified life. Looking back on the last five chapters, we see a lot of advice on how to be holy. Now he ends this book by saying that it is God's job to keep us sanctified. What is he talking about?

Sanctify means to "set apart, to separate from that which is evil." We are sanctified, or set apart, for God because of the blood of Jesus (Hebrews 10:14). He is our sanctification. We are also called to be sanctified or to set ourselves apart from things that are unholy (1 Thess. 4:3).

10. We "keep" ourselves, yet God is the one who "keeps" us. What does this say about man's responsibility and God's sovereignty? What is our role and what is God's?

11. How does Paul end this letter?

12. In this chapter, what does Paul say about the return of Christ?

Tomorrow we will recap 1 Thessalonians. What a great book! I pray that you've been filled with hope as we focused on His Second Coming. I Rejoice!

Third Day

Memorize your verse. Are you testing all things?

1. Answer the following questions concerning the book of 1 Thessalonians: (You may have to look back over your lessons)

What did you learn about:

a. God?

b. Yourself?

c. God's faithfulness?

d. God's love?

e. Hope?

f. Trials?

2. What was your favorite chapter in this book? Why?

3. Have there been any changes in your life as a result of studying 1 Thessalonians?

Tomorrow we will begin reading 2 Thessalonians, but for now, let's take some time and thank Him for His wonderful Word that teaches us, guides us, and gives us life! His Word is my "**Reason to Rejoice!**"

Fourth and Fifth Day

Write out your verse from memory. Did you apply this verse this week?

We will be taking the next two days to do our overview of 2 Thessalonians. We will begin by reading 2 Thessalonians through in one sitting. This will give us a good overall picture of the book. Keep a pen nearby to jot down any thoughts or questions you may have.

This book was written only a few months after 1 Thessalonians. It is believed that whoever took Paul's first letter back to Thessalonica once again brought back his observations, both good and bad. Paul also wrote this letter from Athens in response to this second report.

1. Summarize the main point or thought of each chapter by giving a title to each:

Chapter 1:

Chapter 2:

Chapter 3:

2. Do you find any repeated thoughts, words, or ideas?
3. Does Paul ever identify himself as the writer?
4. What would you choose for the main or key verse in the book? Why?
5. How does this book begin? How does it end?

6. Upon the first reading, what similarities do you see between 1 & 2 Thessalonians?
7. What differences?
8. How do they appear to be related?
9. Does Paul's style of writing seem the same in both books? Describe Paul's tone, if this letter was to have a voice.
10. What seems to be Paul's purpose for writing this book?

Both 1 & 2 Thessalonians deal with the Lord's return, but from a different view. Irving Jensen points out that in 1 Thessalonians, the first phase, or the rapture, is the main subject. In 2 Thessalonians, attention is focused on the second phase, or the Day of the Lord. Although both letters contain commendations of the believers in Thessalonica, in 2 Thessalonians, Paul seems to want to give them some doctrinal and practical correction as well.

Like mentioned earlier, another report was brought back to Paul concerning the faith and conduct of the Thessalonians. Although their faith is commended once again, one negative report was that for some reason the Christians believed that the "Day of the Lord" had already come.

Many had quit their jobs and become idle busybodies, like Paul warned them against in his first letter. The persecution they were experiencing made them believe that the end was near.

R. H. Walker, in "The Second Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians," describes this second epistle as "a second prescription for the same case, made after discovering that some certain stubborn symptoms had not yielded to the first treatment." Somehow the Thessalonians had gotten a hold of some bad doctrine and misinformation. Paul, with his mother's heart, father's heart, and pastor's heart, wanted again to "perfect what was lacking in their faith." (1 Thessalonians 3:10)

Next week we will jump into chapter I. I pray that the study of 1 Thessalonians gave you many **"Reasons to Rejoice!"** The hope we have in Christ was something that so touched my heart. What an encouragement that brings us! No matter what is happening in our life, we can find hope in the Lord. Even though our trials are inevitable, they are not eternal! Yahoo!

"Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 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."

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

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Ready and Faithful

2 Thessalonians 1

LESSON 8

Are you ready to jump into 2 Thessalonians? I sure am! May God continue to speak to our hearts on being ready at any moment to be with Him.

The book of 2 Thessalonians was definitely written by Paul. Some think that this and the first letter were only written a few weeks apart, most likely when Paul was still in Corinth. It seems Paul was again writing to clear up some false doctrines that had been taught to the Thessalonians.

Some believe that Paul may have heard about some false teachings through the "grapevine," so to speak. Most others believe that whoever brought them his first letter stayed around awhile, made some observations, and brought back another report, which moved Paul to write this second letter. It seems that the Thessalonians had some wrong teaching concerning the return of Christ. Many seemed to think that, because of their persecution, the Day of the Lord had come upon them, and they were living in the Great Tribulation period. Even though Paul warned against this in his first letter, they were "sponging" off other people by quitting their jobs. They had a few doctrinal errors that caused some errors in their practical living.

Let's pray that as we study 2 Thessalonians, our hearts will be encouraged and strengthened. May we be motivated and stirred to increase in love, grow exceedingly in our faith, and have patience in tribulation.

First Day

1. Let's begin this week's study in chapter one of 2 Thessalonians. Read the first chapter, marking any repeated words or phrases you find. "What is your first impression of this chapter? What is the main thought of this chapter?"
2. Read verses 1-4 again. Observe the facts. Who is writing? To whom? What is different in this greeting from Paul's greeting in 1 Thessalonians, chapter one?
3. Read verses 5-10. Observe the facts. What's happening? List any questions you may have.

4. Read verses 11-12. Observe the facts. What is the main thought of this section?
5. Read 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 4:1, 9-10. Were Paul's prayers answered, according to 2 Thessalonians, chapter one?
6. How does Paul encourage the Thessalonians in this chapter?
7. In 1 Thessalonians, Paul talked about the persecution they were experiencing. Was it over? (How do you know?)

The word "**persecution**" usually refers to attacks or hostile actions of others made on a believer because of his Christian stand or beliefs. "**Tribulation**" and "**affliction**" are broader terms and usually include any trouble a Christian may have, including various forms of injury to body and minds a result of persecution.

The believers in Thessalonica were familiar with persecution. Their church was born in persecution (Acts 17:1-9) and seemed to grow in spite of the continued tribulation (1 Thessalonians 1:6, 2:14, 3:1-3).

8. From what we've learned so far, how can trials work "for" us rather than "against" us? (Use Scripture for your answer) How did tribulation affect the church in Thessalonica?

We'll end here for today. I pray that you are allowing the trials and afflictions in your life to work for you and not against you. I pray they make you grow, increase, and abound!

Memory Verse of the Week: "Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith and power ... " 2 Thessalonians 1:11

Second Day

Study your memory verse. Use this as a prayer for someone today.

1. Read 2 Thessalonians 1:1-4 again. What does Paul commend the Thessalonians for?
2. Is Paul obeying his words in 1 Thessalonians 5:18?
3. Was Paul proud of them? Why?
4. It is not usual for Paul to boast about things. Why does he do it here? (If Paul were your friend, would he be boasting about you?)

In verse 3, Paul said that "**it is fitting**" to give thanks for them. This phrase means "and rightly so" or "no more than you deserve." He also says that he is "**bound**." That means he felt compelled to praise them.

5. How much time do you spend "praising" others for their spiritual growth? Is this okay? How much time do you spend thanking God for those around you who are growing in their faith? Why is this important?
6. How has seeing the growing faith in others encouraged you to grow? Can you name a specific person whose faith has encouraged you?
7. The verb "growing exceedingly" describes the growth of that which lives, like seeds, flowers, etc. Spend some time thinking about the growth process of a seed. How do we compare?

8. Read Psalm 1:1-3. What makes this tree grow? Do you fit this description?

The word "abound" means "to over spread as a fire or a flood covers everything in its path."

- Charles Ryrie

9. Using the above definition, what does it mean for love to abound? (Whom should it overflow on?)

10. Does your love spread like a fire on a path? Can you describe the path of your love? (Is it spreading or do you have it contained?)

Tomorrow we will see how Paul encouraged the Thessalonians in their persecution. In both letters, Paul begins by commending them and encouraging them in their faith! He knows how to build people up in the Lord. Let's try that this week, shall we?

Third Day

Practice your memory verse. Use this verse in your prayers for another friend today.

1. Read 2 Thessalonians 1:1-10. What does Paul say is the reward for their suffering?

The church in Thessalonica was a great church! William Barclay said that three things mark a vital church:

- a. A faith that is strong
- b. A love which is increasing
- c. A patience that endures

Even though the faith of the Thessalonians was growing, it seems that some of the Thessalonians were getting discouraged and beginning to question God's righteousness. Why was all this happening to them?

2. How was their endurance evidence, or proof, of the righteousness of God?

3. Why is it a "righteous thing" for God to repay with tribulation? What does that mean?
4. How is retribution different from revenge?
5. Who is promised punishment?
6. What will be their punishment?
7. Will the believers in Thessalonica experience this punishment?

Paul tells the believers that the attitude they had while they endured these persecutions proved that God is who He says He is. They are the "**manifest evidence**" or "**token**". Verse 5 tells us that attaining the Kingdom of God is not a result of human effort but is only due to the grace of God.

The word "**rest**" in verse 7 means relief from tension, or slackening of pressure. This word is used of slackening a taut bowstring.

8. Why is this word "rest" so significant in terms of what the Thessalonians were going through?
9. How does knowing that God is just, and that He will right every wrong, enable us to rest also?
10. What does the word "just" mean? Read the following Scriptures. What do they say about the justice of God?
 - a. Deuteronomy 32:4

b. 1 John 1:9

c. Revelation 15:3

d. Zephaniah 3:5

11. Why does there have to be punishment from sin?

Paul gives us a sad picture of hell in these verses, which we will examine closer tomorrow. I pray that as we take a look at the reality of hell, it will pierce our hearts and encourage us even more to share the Gospel with those who don't know Him.

Fourth Day

What's your memory verse?

Why does Paul suddenly get so serious about retribution and paint such a vivid picture of hell? Why was it so important for the Thessalonians to understand that every wrong would be made right?

I think that we all have wondered why things happen like they do. Why are the unjust prospering? Why do the godly have to be the ones who suffer? Sometimes we can get discouraged and lose heart when life doesn't seem fair. Have you ever had a friend who tried to encourage you by reminding you that God sees everything, and nothing will go unnoticed?

This is what Paul is doing in this section. He is emphasizing the power of God to remind the Thessalonians that no matter how powerful their opponents seem to be, God is more powerful! He is in control! He knows what's going on, and they would be punished.

1. Read 2 Thessalonians 1:4-10 again. Describe the picture of hell Paul paints for us.

What Paul is talking about is a good example of reaping what man sows. Divine retribution is absolutely inevitable. God is not seeking revenge. There is nothing vindictive in the thoughts or acts of God. It has been said, "punishment is the other half of sin." Because He is just, we must expect Him to right the wrongs. He cannot look the other way because He is just. He cannot accept sin because He is holy. Those who have not accepted Christ will be punished for their unbelief and their disobedience.

The phrase "**shall be punished**" in verse 9 literally means "shall pay the penalty." Penalty is from the same root word as righteous, meaning that it is not vindictive punishment, but deserved consequence. God does not hold a grudge against people. He sent His son to die for them on the cross. If they choose to reject Him, He must judge them because He is true to His Word.

2. Read the following Scriptures. What do you learn about hell?

- a. Matthew 13:42
- b. Matthew 25:30-46
- c. Matthew 8:12
- d. Revelation 19:20
- e. Matthew 23:14
- f. 2 Peter 2:4

Everlasting destruction tells us that hell is as eternal for the unbeliever as heaven is for the believer. Hell is being thrown into the everlasting lake of fire at the final judgment. It is not annihilation as some try to teach, but permanent banishment from the presence and power of God. Being separated from God forever has to be the worst part of hell.

3. When will the unbelievers be punished?

The word "revealed" comes from the word "**apokalypis**" and means an uncovering of something once concealed. The world didn't see Jesus come for His bride at the rapture, but the whole world will see Him when He comes to judge the soul of man (Matthew 24:27-30, John 5:22,27).

4. As we look at hell, what are your thoughts? Is your picture of hell different than has been discussed?

The thought of hell is quite sobering. On one hand, I think of those whom I love that have still chosen to reject Christ, and I almost can't bear it. It gives me a greater passion to share with them. On the other hand, it makes me very thankful that I have a place reserved for me in Heaven (1 Peter 1:4), that I will see Him face to face (Revelation 22:4), and that I will live with Him forever.

I can't believe that God paid the penalty for my sin so that I could have eternal life. What a **"Reason to Rejoice!"**

5. How certain is His coming, according to verse 10?

There is not only judgment at His Second Coming, but there is glorification. Charles Ryrie said, *"Paul is making the astounding claim that the glory of the Lord will be mirrored in believers."* His glory will be revealed in and through His saints, which refers to all Christians.

6. Read Colossian 3:4. What does "appear with Him in glory" mean?

Those who have believed the Gospel message and have trusted in Jesus as their Savior will be gathered around Christ on "that day", rejoicing with Him. Phillips translates verse 10 this way: *"To those whom He has made holy His coming will mean splendor unimaginable. It will be a breath-taking wonder to all who believe."*

7. Who will accompany Christ when He returns? (Read Matthew 13:39-42, 47-50)

8. What application do you see for yourself in these 10 verses?

9. Man will reap what he sows. Is this statement an encouragement or a scary thought to you? What have you been sowing? (Read Hosea 10:12-13)

We'll end here for today. This is a very serious chapter. Remember that Paul is still trying to encourage the Thessalonian believers to persevere during their times of tribulation. God will reward them! They will see the Kingdom of God and will reign with Him forever! What better truth to motivate them to endure. I pray that this truth would motivate you to keep pressing on!

Fifth Day

Write out your verse from memory. Can you repeat it to someone?

Let's finish our lesson this week by reading 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12, concentrating on verses 11-12.

1. What is the "therefore" there for?
2. What does Paul pray for them?
3. Why does Paul emphasize the "name" of Christ in verse 12? Read Colossians 3:17, Romans 10:13, and Philippians 2:9-11.
4. Paul had three concerns in his prayer for the Thessalonians. What does he say about:
 - a. Their worthiness?
 - b. Their walk?
 - c. Their witness?

5. How can Christ be glorified "in" us today?
6. How is that a privilege and a responsibility?
7. Take a look at your life. Is the Lord glorified in how you are as a wife?
A mother? A Christian woman?
8. Compare the way Paul prays for his friends with the way you pray for your friends. Does it differ? How?

It is only by God's grace that we can identify with Christ in His suffering, as well as His glory. It is in His name that all glory and honor are due! He's our "**Reason to Rejoice!**"

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Ready and Faithful

2 Thessalonians 2 **LESSON 9**

In our chapter this week, Paul describes the events that will precede the Day of the Lord. Back in 1 Thessalonians 5:9, Paul makes it quite clear that believers are not appointed to wrath and will be raptured before the Tribulation Period begins. For some reason, some of the Thessalonian believers thought that they were living in the Day of the Lord because of all the persecution they were experiencing. In 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, Paul attempts to clear up this false teaching.

Please spend time in prayer before you begin. I pray that this chapter challenges you to purity, encourages you to share the Gospel, and strengthens you in your walk with Him.

First Day

Let's begin by reading 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17. Go back and read verses 1-12 again. List the facts you find in this section.

1. What main thought or point do you think Paul is trying to communicate?
2. Give this section a title that reflects the main point.
3. Are there any repeated words or phrases?
4. Describe Paul's tone in this section.
5. List any questions you have regarding verses 1-12.

6. Read verses 13-17. Observe and write the facts you find.
7. What is the main point of this section? What would you title it?
8. How do verses 13-17 relate to verses 1-12?
9. What immediate application do you find in this chapter for yourself?

This concludes our lesson for today. Why not spend some extra time looking for all the "**Reasons to Rejoice**" you find in this chapter. It will be time well spent!

Memory Verse of the Week: *"Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work." 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17*

Second Day

Go over your memory verse.. It's a long one this week, but, oh, so rich!

1. Read 2 Thessalonians 2:1- 5.
2. Paul introduces the theme of this entire letter in verse one. What is it?
3. Why was it important for Paul to say what he did in chapter 1 before he addressed the problem in chapter two?

The "**parousia**" or the "**gathering together**" that Paul mentions in verse one refers to the time when all believers, living and sleeping, will gather together in the air to meet Christ at His "invisible" return (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Remember from our previous lessons, this event is called the "rapture" of the church.

Somehow the word was being passed around that the Day of the Lord had already begun. Since this wasn't supposed to take place until after the rapture of the church, maybe they felt like they had been left behind. Verse 2 implies that some believed that this teaching came by "supernatural revelation (spirit), or that Paul himself had been teaching it (word), or that a letter (obviously forged) written by Paul had been sent, stating this teaching to be true (letter).

4. What was the effect of these rumors on some of the Thessalonian believers? What does the word "soon" in verse 2 tell us?

5. What should they have done about these rumors? What are we supposed to do when we hear teachings contrary to what we believe to be true, according to God's Word?

The phrase "**shaken in mind**" literally means to "move away from" or to be "shaken out of one's mind." This word implies panic attacks, or being at wit's end. The word "**alarmed**" or "**troubled**" means to be despondent, or have a troubled spirit. They reacted hastily without waiting to consider what they knew to be true. The return of Christ should have been a comforting hope, not a reason to panic.

6. What has to happen first before the Day of the Lord comes?

The word "**apostasy**" is translated as "falling away." Paul doesn't explain much about this falling away from the faith. Men fall away daily, but here Paul is referring to "the" falling away. This word implies an aggressive revolt against God and all that is divine; a defection from the Christian faith. Jerry Vines says this: "*This apostasy is not merely a revolt against God, it is a denial of the existence of any being, or order of beings, superior to man. It is the claim of man to absolute supremacy not only in the world but in the universe.*" Yikes! Look out world! This falling away and the revealing of this man of sin is the signal that big trouble was about to begin! (Paul wrote more about this apostasy later in 1 Timothy 4:1-3, 2 Timothy 3:1-5, and 4:3-4.)

7. Paul is speaking about the antichrist in verse 3, as we call him. Although John is the only writer who uses this term for him (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7), we know this is whom he is referring to. What does Paul call him in verse 3?

8. Who else was given one of these names? (John 17:12, Acts 1:25)

9. What are some other names for him?

- a. Daniel 7:8
- b. Daniel 9:26
- c. Daniel 11:36
- d. 1 John 2:18
- e. Revelation 13:1-10

Charles Ryrie says the antichrist is the "personification of evil and the culmination of all that is opposed to God."

10. What will this man of sin do to religion, according to verse 4?

11. How is his sin like that of Satan's? Read Isaiah 14:12-20 and Ezekiel 28:14-19.

Satan always wanted to be worshipped, and one day the antichrist will surface, causing the world to worship him and believe all of Satan's lies. I'm so glad that I will not be here on that dreadful day, aren't you? Lord, save our family and friends!

We are going to end here today. Because there is so much to learn in these verses, we are going to go through them at a slower pace. I pray that you have ears to hear all that the Lord has for you in this chapter.

Third Day

What's your memory verse? How does it encourage you?

1. Read 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5 again.

The event in verse 4 is called the "abomination of desolation" (Daniel 9:27). The antichrist will proclaim himself to be the incarnation of God and will sit in the temple that the returning Jews will be allowed to build in the land of Palestine, and demand to be worshipped. Daniel also prophesied about this in Daniel 11:36-37.

What else do we know about this man antichrist? Warren Wiersbe gives us a list of facts about him. He says that "He will be a peaceful political leader who unites 10 nations of Europe into a strong power block (Revelation 17:12-13). He will also bring a brief time of peace to the world before the storm of the Day of the Lord hits, as he imitates Christ (Revelation 6:1-2, 19:11, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3).

How do we know how long all these events will last? Again, because Warren Wiersbe does such a good job of explaining this, allow me to quote from his commentary, **Be Ready**. These quotes are referring to Daniel 9:24-27. Please read this entire section, because it is very important, as well as informative.

"First, this prophecy applies to Israel, Jerusalem and the temple, and not to the church. Second, it announces the time when Messiah will come and accomplish certain purposes for the Jewish people. The word 'week' refers to a period of 7 years; 70 weeks are equal to 490 years. Note that these 490 years are divided into three parts: 7 weeks or 49 years, during which the city would be rebuilt; 62 weeks or 434 years, at the end of which time Messiah would come and be cut off; 1 week or 7 years, during which a "prince" would have a covenant with Israel."

"Notice that two princes are involved in this prophecy: Christ, Messiah the Prince (vs 25), and antichrist, "the prince that shall come" (vs 26). The people of the prince that shall come are the Romans, for it was they who destroyed the city and the temple in A.D. 70. The coming antichrist will belong to a nation that was part of the old Roman Empire."

"Finally, note that there is a parenthesis between the 69th and the 70th week. We are now living in that parenthesis. The 69th week ended with the ministry of Christ. The 70th week will start with the arrival of antichrist. He will make a covenant with Israel to protect her and permit her to rebuild her temple. This covenant will before seven years. He will temporarily solve the Middle East crisis. Israel will rebuild her temple in peaceful times. It is the signing of this covenant, not the rapture of the church, that signals the start of Daniel's 70th week, that seven-year period known as the Day of the Lord."

"After three and one-half years, antichrist will break his covenant with the Jews and take over the temple. (Daniel 9:27, 2 Thessalonians 2: 3b). Up to that point, antichrist has been a peacemaking leader of 10 European nations, obligated to protect Israel. But now he reveals his true character by taking over the Jewish temple and demanding that the world worship him (Revelation 13). This abomination of desolation will usher in a period of intense persecution and tribulation. (Matthew 24:21) He will so control the world's economic system that citizens must bear "the mark of the beast" to be able to buy and sell (Revelation 13: 16-17)."

(I need to let you know that grammatically speaking, "antichrist" is supposed to be capital, but I just can't do it. He deserves no such honor. Sorry grammar people!)

2. According to verse 5, had Paul already explained this "stuff" to the Thessalonians?

The word "told" in verse 5 is in the imperfect tense, implying that it had been done "repeatedly." It's almost as if Paul is reproving them for allowing these false teachings to shake them. They began to focus on their circumstances, which caused them to lose the hope of Christ's return.

3. Why is it important to know the events that lead up to the coming of the Lord? We aren't going to be here, so what does it matter?

4. On the other hand, have you seen these facts used in a way that was unbalanced? Can you give an example?

5. What effect has this chapter had on you so far?

We are going to end here for now. You probably have a lot to think about. I know I do. The good part of the whole thing is that no matter how grim it seems as we learn about the antichrist, Jesus Christ will come to destroy him! He does not win this battle! That is our hope and our continual **"Reason to Rejoice!"**

Fourth Day

Have you learned your memory verse? Is your heart comforted?

1. Today let's begin by reading 2 Thessalonians 2:6-12.
2. Paul says that the Thessalonians "knew" what was restraining the antichrist from being revealed until the time was right. Does he tell us what, or who, that is?
3. How long will he be restrained, or held back?
4. What will the Lord do to him, according to verse 8? How will he be punished?

The expression the "breath of His mouth" occurs only here in the New Testament and indicates a "sweeping away like a hurricane, or killing like the blast from a furnace." (Plummer)

5. How does this parallel with the expression the "brightness of His coming"?
6. In this section how does the power of the man of sin compare with the sovereign and almighty power of God?

The word "**destroy**" in verse 8 does not mean annihilation: This term refers to a "putting out of business," or "to make idle" or "render inoperative. "

7. If the antichrist is not annihilated, what happens to him? Read Revelation 19:20 and 20:10. Why is this worse?
8. In what power will the lawless one come?

9. Why will those who follow the antichrist be condemned? Is this a result or a consequence of their unbelief?

The delusion that is sent by God may be either a self-delusion or a product of their own willful thinking.

10. Why does God send a delusion? If God sent it, are they accountable for the choice they make?

This section leaves us with one question: (or maybe many!) Who exactly is the restrainer in verse 6? Who is holding back the full manifestation of evil? The answer to this is debated. Here are a few suggestions that have been given:

- a. The Roman Empire, which held back evil by its advanced system of laws
- b. The preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles
- c. Angelic powers working through the church
- d. God Himself working through the state or the church
- e. The Holy Spirit working through the state or the church
- f. The presence of the God-indwelt church in the world

Most commentators believe that the restrainer is the Holy Spirit! Doesn't the power of the restrainer have to be greater than Satan's, in order to hold him back? I'm sure that God uses the church, good government, and angels as means to restrain evil, but it's the power of God that does the work.

Some argue that since the Holy Spirit cannot be taken out of the world (vs 7), that He cannot be the restrainer. There is a difference between residence and presence. Charles Ryrie said this: "Every person of the Godhead has been, is, and always will be present in the world because God is omnipresent. But the persons of the Godhead and particularly the Holy Spirit have not always been resident within the hearts of God's people, either permanently or universally. Today God has bound Himself to be resident within the hearts of all His people and always (Romans 8:9, 1 Cor. 6:19). Thus, to say that the restrainer is removed is not to say that the presence of God is taken away from the earth, nor is it to imply that God (or specifically the Holy Spirit) will cease to work in the world in any way, including the work of regeneration, because some will be saved in the tribulation period" (Revelation 7:14).

11. Meditate on the power of God. Even the fact that God ultimately controls the antichrist points again to His incredible power. Find a Scripture that talks about God's power and share it with your group. How does it encourage you at this time?

Fifth Day

Write out your verse from memory. How can you apply this verse this week?

1. Let's wrap up this chapter by reading verses 13-17. How do these verses tie things together? Why are they significant?

2. Why was Paul so thankful for them?
3. Considering the previous section, how are verse 13 and 14 such a great encouragement?

According to verse 13, God had the choice of His people in His mind from all of eternity past. *"The end purpose of the choosing was salvation, and this was accomplished through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."* (Ryrie) In this phrase, we see divine choosing and human responsibility working together. On God's part, salvation is a work of the Holy Spirit in sanctifying the believer (1 Cor. 6:11). On the human side, we have the responsibility to know and believe the truth! We were called to accept the truth by the Gospel of Jesus Christ (vs 14).

4. What challenge does Paul give them?
5. What do you think it means to "stand fast"? Compare the fate of those who stand fast with those who "obey not the truth."

The command to "stand fast" is based on something secure to stand on! It is not shaky ground, but the rock of Jesus Christ. **Our election is sure, our sanctification is sure, our hope is sure!** We have no reason to "not" stand fast.

6. Are you standing fast or are you wavering? Are you allowing your problems to shake you? Are you troubled? **What hope does this chapter bring?**
7. Rewrite verses 16-17 using your own words.
8. Have you allowed God to comfort and strengthen your heart? How is it possible to block that?

Paul ends with a prayer for strength for the Thessalonians. He reminds them that they were looking forward to glory, not wrath. But while they wait for His return, be strong and no matter what ... **stand firm!**

"The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold."

Psalm 18:2

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Ready and Faithful

2 Thessalonians 3 **LESSON 10**

In our lesson last week, Paul attempted to clear up some misconceptions about the timing of the Day of the Lord. He ended with prayer, asking the Lord to comfort their hearts and strengthen them as they follow Him. Chapter 2 caused us to look in the future. Now, in chapter 3, Paul brings the Thessalonians back to the present. Most of Paul's letters can be divided into two sections: doctrinal and practical. 2 Thessalonians is no different. Here in chapter 3, Paul moves from the doctrinal issue of the coming of Christ, to commands concerning practical living while we wait for His return.

To summarize 2 Thessalonians, we can break it down as such:

Chapter 1: **Commendation and Assurance**
Chapter 2: **Correction and Instruction**
Chapter 3: **Appeal and Inspiration**

Listen up, ladies! The Holy Spirit wants to speak to our hearts. Are you ready to listen? Are you ready to do? Are you ready to receive?

First Day

1. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:1-18. Note any key or repeated words.
2. This chapter can be divided into three sections. Record the facts and main points of each section. Give each section a title that reflects that point.

Section 1: Verses 1-5

Section 2: Verses 6-15

Section 3: Verses 16-18

3. How many times does Paul use the word "command"? List the things he commands them to do.

4. Paul gives the Lord a special title in this chapter. What does he call Him?
5. Which verse particularly ministers to your heart today?

It sure is evident that Paul loves these people. His prayers for them seem to be continual. Lord, give us a heart that 's committed to pray!

Memory Verse of the Week: "But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good. "
2 Thessalonians 3:13

Second Day

***Memorize your verse today. It's a simple one that God has used often to encourage me.
I pray it encourages you, too!***

1. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5. What does the word "finally" indicate?
2. Paul begins this chapter asking for prayer. What are his requests?

As any missionary, pastor, or teacher, Paul recognized his need of prayer. He depended on God, and knew he needed the constant prayer of his family and friends.

3. Do you ask others to pray for you? Why is it so hard at times to share with someone a need or burden you have?

In verse 1, the phrase "have free course" is best translated "may run." This word is also used in Psalm 147:15. Paul asks them to pray that the Word of the Lord would run swiftly and have free and rapid progress.

He prayed for a swift advance of the Word, and that it would be "glorified," which is seen by the evident effect of the Word of God in turning men to righteousness.

4. Describe how Paul views the Word by his use of this phrase.
5. The Gospel moves swiftly when obstacles are removed. What obstacle does Paul mention in verse 2 that needed to be removed?

6. Does the Word of the Lord have free course to "run swiftly" in your life? What obstacles do you need to clear off your track so the Word can run unhindered? (Hebrews 12:1)
7. What obstacles are you facing as you share the Gospel?

Paul asks for deliverance from "unreasonable and wicked men". The word "**wicked**" means "out of place" or "absurd." The tense used implies that Paul is not speaking about a general deliverance, but specifically about particular enemies that were opposing the Gospel. Remember that Paul wrote this letter from Corinth where he was facing much opposition from the Jews. These Jews were probably the "unreasonable and wicked men" he was referring to. Corinth didn't receive the Word like the Thessalonians did, as Paul says in verse 1 "as it is with you," although sometime later the Word of the Lord did run in Corinth. (Did the Thessalonians respond to Paul's plea for prayer, and God answered?) Paul also reminds the Thessalonians again that not all people have faith in Christ, so expect opposition.

8. Paul's love for the Word is obvious. Let's evaluate for a moment. What is the motive of your heart when you pray for deliverance from trials or obstacles? Is it for the sole purpose of clearing the way for the Gospel to spread? Think about it...

In verse 3, Paul changes directions. He now moves from looking at his own trials and opposition to them, and reminds them of a very important truth!

9. What does Paul say about God's faithfulness?
10. Who is Paul's confidence in?

Because God is faithful, Paul is confident that God not only will establish them, but He will protect them as well. He is also confident in them, not because of their own character or strength, but because of their relationship with the Lord.

11. What do these Scriptures say about God's faithfulness?
 - a. Psalm 119:90
 - b. Psalm 37:3-5
 - c. Psalm 89:8

12. What specific aspect of God's faithfulness particularly ministers to your heart today?

13. Are you confident in God's faithfulness? Can you rest in the Lord because of it?

14. What does Paul pray for them in 2 Thessalonians 3:5?

The word "**direct**" means to "make straight," like removing obstacles from a path (1 Thessalonians 3:11). Paul prays that the Lord would open up the way for them to know the love of God. He also reminded them of the endurance of Christ, and prayed they would follow His example. Charles Swindoll explains verse 5 in this way: *"In the midst of instability, Paul prays that their lives will be characterized by an inner awareness of the **'love of God'**- which provides security -- and an outer expression of the **'steadfastness of Christ'** -- which produces stability."*

15. How is Christ an example of patience, endurance, and steadfastness? Read Hebrews 12:1-3 again. Use other Scriptures for our answer.

God bless you, ladies! See you tomorrow! May we follow Christ's example and run our race with patience!

Third Day

What's your memory verse? I pray that you are not "growing weary."

1. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10. What does Paul command the Thessalonians to do?

2. In whose authority does he give this command?

The word "**command**" is a military term that was used of a general giving orders to his troops. Although this was an authoritative term, it was given with affection, by using the word brethren. The term "**disorderly**" refers to the failure of a soldier to keep in rank.

In Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, he addressed the issue of believers who were unwilling to work. It seems that because of some of the misunderstandings related to Christ's Second Coming, some believed they didn't have to work while they waited for His return. Paul's exhortation to them obviously had not brought the problem to an end. He gives a great deal of attention to it here, as well as some stiff commands on how to deal with the offenders.

Paul had a great work ethic. Paul was not lazy, and didn't believe there was a place for laziness in the life of any Christian.

3. How was Paul an example of the issue at hand? (Also read 1 Thessalonians 1:5-6, 2:2-9)

4. Why do you think Paul says to "withdraw" from a brother who is disorderly?

5. Was Paul saying that it was wrong to ever eat a free meal? What point is he making?

6. Even though Paul had the right to be paid (vs. 9), he chose not to. Why?

Not only had Paul been an example to them, he gave them a rule: "If you don't work, you don't eat." He saw work as ordained by God (Genesis 3:19), and believed that Christians were called to give their best.

7. Do you think there are any exceptions to this "rule"? Explain.

When we are told to "**withdraw**" from the disorderly, it should never be with an air of superiority, but in the spirit of brotherly love. It is for their good as well as for the testimony of Christ. As a fellow brother or sister in the Lord, we withdraw as not to condone the deeds of one who claims to be a believer, but their actions show otherwise.

8. How does withdrawing from one help them?

9. Have you ever had to do this? Why is this so difficult to do?

Notice that verse 10 does not say "cannot work" but "will not" work. It is a voluntary choice to impose on others to take care of their needs.

10. How would you describe your work ethic? Do you believe in working hard? What's the balance between working hard and depending on the Lord? In what ways are you teaching your children to have a Biblical work ethic? (Read Romans 12:11)
11. Read Proverbs 31:10-31. How would you describe her work ethic? (Be specific) Compare her to Ecclesiastes 10:18.

We'll end here for today. I pray that we will offer our work to the Lord as a sacrifice to Him. We can praise and worship Him by the attitude of our hearts as we work. Whether you work outside or inside of the home, do it to the glory of God!

Fourth Day

What's your verse?

1. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15 again, concentrating on 11-15.
2. How did Paul know there was a problem?
3. What was the result of their laziness?
4. Why does laziness cause this?
5. Whose business should we be about? Read 1 Thessalonians 4:11 and Luke 2:49.

"When men are not employed properly, there is always the danger that they will busy themselves in matters in which they ought not to interfere. They can become nuisances and be used of Satan to disturb the peace of the church or the peace of those to whom they look for their support. The tongue does not offend so seriously when the hands are kept busy."

-H. A. Ironside

6. Write your thoughts on the above quote.

7. In verse 13, Paul turns his attention to those who are diligent. What does he say? Also read Galatians 6:9-10.

"Be not weary" means **"do not lose heart,"** (Luke 18:1, 2 Cor. 4:1, 16) and **"well-doing"** means doing the noble, or right, thing. How others are acting doesn't matter; we are to continue doing what is honorable (Hebrews 13:18).

8. As Christian women, what kinds of things make us weary?
9. Have you been "growing weary" of doing good? How do we get "built back up"?
10. Do you ever get discouraged when other "believers" don't do what is right? Why is it so important to keep our eyes off other people?
11. In verse 14, Paul again instructs them on how to handle those who were unwilling to work. Why does he want the offender to be ashamed? What is the ultimate goal?
12. In verse 15, what's the difference between treating him as an enemy and warning him as a brother?
13. What do you think would happen within the church today if Christians followed Paul's instructions on this subject more often?

Ladies, I pray that you are not growing weary. Hang in there! "God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love..." Hebrews 6:10. Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might! Don't quit! God is faithful.

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory. Put this one where you can see it all the time!

1. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:16-18. What does Paul ask the Lord to give them?
2. Why is verse 17 significant in regard to 2 Thessalonians 2:2?
3. Why would peace be so important to the Thessalonians?
4. What word do you find in verse 18 that is Paul's distinguishing and favorite word? (Notice how he begins the letter in 2 Thessalonians 1:2.)

Paul knew he had been saved by grace, sustained by grace, and wanted to remind others about God's grace. Paul fully understood what it meant to receive something he didn't deserve. He knew he deserved death, but received life instead. That is grace. God's Riches At Christ's Expense.

Paul usually dictated his letters, but would add a greeting or signature at the end. Because of the possibility of the forged letter we discussed earlier, he most likely wanted to make sure the Thessalonians knew that this letter was definitely from him.

5. Jesus reminds His disciples about peace the night before He went to the cross. Read John 14:27. How is the peace of Christ different from the world's peace?
6. The Thessalonians were in the middle of persecution, yet Paul told them they could have peace in the midst of it. If you are in the middle of a "situation" right now, what do you need to do to find His peace?

John White, in his book, Greater than Riches says that the heart that has this kind of peace is like a lighthouse in a storm. He continues, "*Winds shriek, waves crash, lightening flickers around it. But inside, the children play while their parents go about their work. They may look out the window to marvel at the powers that rage around them, but they have peace -- the peace of knowing that the strength which protects them is stronger than the strength of the storm.*"

7. Are there any waves that are threatening your peace? Can you trust that He is stronger than the waves?

We've come to the end of 2 Thessalonians. We have seen Paul's passion for the Gospel, his burden for the lost. His excitement for the Second Coming and his heart for God's people to walk worthy of their calling.

Let's take a minute to review.

8. Read 2 Thessalonians chapters 1-3 and answer the following questions:

- a. What was the most significant thing you learned?
- b. How were you challenged?
- c. What did you learn about God?
- d. What did you learn about yourself?

I want to end with a quote by D.L. Moody who had an incredible burden for the lost. He said this, "*I look upon this world as a wrecked vessel. Its ruin is getting nearer and nearer. God said to me, 'Moody, here's a lifeboat. Go out and rescue as many as you can before the crash comes.'*" **Amen, Mr. Moody, Amen!**

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Ready and Faithful

1 Timothy Overview **LESSON 11**

In our lesson this week, we will begin studying 1 Timothy. 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus are commonly referred to as the "Pastoral Epistles." These are the last three books that Paul wrote before he died. Whereas most of Paul's letters are written to churches with the exception of Philemon, these books are written to specific individuals. Chronologically speaking, 1 Timothy and Titus were written first, followed by 2 Timothy.

First Day

In today's lesson, we will simply be reading. We want to get a picture of why this letter was written, who wrote it, and to whom it was written. Sit back, get a cup of coffee and your reading glasses, and begin reading!

First of all, there are three main groupings of Paul's letters. They are:

- a. **His Travel Epistles** – These are written during the years of his missionary journeys. These include Galatians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, and Romans.
- b. **His Prison Epistles** – These were written during Paul's first Roman imprisonment. They are Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon, and Philippians.
- c. **His Pastoral Epistles** – These were written after Paul's release from prison. 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus are in this category. 2 Timothy was written during Paul's second Roman imprisonment.

It is commonly accepted that Paul is the author of the "Pastoral Epistles." Some scholars challenged this in the early 1800's, using the following five arguments:

- 1. Many believe that Paul was put to death at the end of his Roman imprisonment described in Acts 21-28. If this were true, Paul couldn't possibly be the author of these books.
- 2. Some argue that the church government described in 1 Timothy is too advanced to have existed in Paul's day and age.
- 3. Some argue that the problems discussed were not yet present at the time of Paul (i.e. Gnosticism).
- 4. Some think that the vocabulary and style of these three books are different than Paul's other writings.
- 5. Some believe that these letters lack theology, which is unlike Paul's other letters.

These arguments have never provided enough evidence to disprove Paul's authorship. Nowhere in Acts does it say whether or not Paul was released from prison. Tradition and early church history claim he was. No valid charge was ever brought against Paul (Acts 25:14-21, 26:32), and it is fairly safe to assume that he was released. We know that Paul was confident he would be released (Philippians 1:19, 25-26, 2:24, Philemon 22). Many scholars believe that he was released, visited Spain, was rearrested, and eventually executed by Nero.

There was most definitely false teaching present in Paul's day. Gnosticism was in its conception, and there were many from the beginning that denied a physical resurrection (1 Corinthians 15). Paul had already been setting up church governments and organizations (Acts 14:23, Philippians 1:1), and early writings show proof of this.

While it is true that much of the wording found in these epistles is not found elsewhere in Paul's writings, there is good and logical reason for it. We must take into consideration whom he was writing to, the different circumstances and settings, and the different subject matter. Timothy and Titus were familiar with sound doctrine, but needed practical advice in church organization. They were close friends of his, and Paul would naturally use different wording and style when writing to them, as compared to a letter written to an entire church. (Don't you speak to your friends differently?) Although these letters are very practical, they are not void of doctrine, as you will find as we study them.

All this to say that we believe that Paul is definitely the author. For a more detailed explanation of the arguments, read Thessalonians, Timothy and Titus, New Testament Commentary by William Hendriksen.

We know that the recipient of this letter was a young man named Timothy. We completed a character study of Timothy back in Lessons 2 and 4, so let's just take a few minutes to review.

Timothy is one of the most well liked characters in the New Testament. His name appears 24 times. He was from the region of Derbe and Lystra (Acts 16:1, 20:4), and most likely met Paul on his first missionary journey through that area (Acts 13:4-14:27). His father was Greek and his mother was Jewish (Acts 16:1,3). His mother and grandmother are mentioned in Scripture; because of the spiritual training they gave him, beginning from childhood (2 Timothy 1:5, 3:14-15). Paul was probably about 30-35 years old when Timothy was born, and it is thought that Paul led him to the Lord, often referring to him as his "son in the faith" (1 Corinthians 4:14-17, 1 Timothy 1:2). The name Timothy means "honored by God" or "honoring God."

When Paul revisited Derbe, the local people told him that Timothy would be a great assistant to him in his work. Timothy definitely had a good reputation. Paul must have recognized some leadership potential in this young man, so he invited him along. Timothy was circumcised and became Paul's traveling companion and faithful co-worker. During their third missionary journey, Paul and Timothy spent about three years in the city of Ephesus (Acts 19:8, 10; 20:31). Later Paul sent Timothy back to Ephesus to minister. While Paul was in Macedonia, he wrote a letter to Timothy (1 Timothy) to encourage and advise him in his work there in Ephesus.

Timothy had many fabulous character traits! Someone once said of Timothy, "he was one of the magnificent compensations Paul enjoyed for the cruel treatment he received at Lystra." We can imply from Scripture that he was tender and affectionate (1 Corinthians 4:17, Philippians 2:20-21), timid and tactful (1 Corinthians 16:10-11, 1 Timothy 4:12, 2 Timothy 1:6-7), faithful and loyal (1 Corinthians 4:17), conscientious (Philippians 2:19-23), and devoted to God (1 Timothy 6:11).

Timothy was Paul's companion, fellow laborer, Paul's representative to other churches when he couldn't be there, and all in all, a very capable young man.

At times, a picture is painted of Timothy of being extremely timid because of his young age, with a lack of boldness. Although I believe that Timothy needed encouragement (like all of us), I believe he was a man of courage, decisiveness, and unending faithfulness, both to the Lord and to Paul, his mentor. Paul sent Timothy on some specific assignments that were definitely difficult. He sent him to Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 3:1-10), to Corinth (1 Corinthians 4:17, 16:10-11), to Macedonia (Acts 19:22), to Philippi (Philippians 2:19-24), and to Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3). These places were not easy places to minister, especially Ephesus (Acts 19)!

Timothy had to be a man who could handle pressure, problems, and people! It goes to show you, age is no factor when the Holy Spirit calls you and equips you for service!

In a nutshell, Paul wrote this letter to Timothy to encourage him, to explain how to manage the church, and outline the responsibilities of the pastor.

We will end here today. I know it was a lot of reading, but it is important to understand the background of our book before we begin studying it. We will be reading more tomorrow, so hang in there! Try to picture this young man Timothy, and a much older and seasoned Paul. Let both these men become your friends as we get a glimpse of Paul's heart as he shares it with Timothy.

Memory Verse of the Week: *"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. " 1 Timothy 1:17*

Second Day

Review your memory verse. Awesome!

1. Read 1 Timothy through in one sitting. (Got your coffee?) Don't make any notes as you read, simply read this letter like you personally received it from Paul.
2. Now read through it again, making note of the following:
 - a. Repeated words or phrases:
 - b. Repeated thoughts or reoccurring themes:
 - c. Questions you have:

3. What is the tone of this letter?
4. What is your first impression of this letter?
5. Why is this described as a more practical letter than doctrinal?
6. How many titles does Paul use for the Lord? Can you list them?

We'll end here for today. Are you excited about this book? I hope so!

Third Day

What's your memory verse? How does it minister to your heart?

1. After reading this letter through, what purpose does Paul give for writing it? List chapter and verse. (A purpose is a reason the author wrote the book.)
2. What would you say is the theme (or themes) of this letter? (A theme is a main topic that recurs throughout the book)
3. Read each chapter over again, giving each a title. Then write a one sentence summary statement that reflects the main thought of that chapter.

Chapter 1:

Chapter 2:

Chapter 3:

Chapter 4:

Chapter 5:

Chapter 6:

4. What would you choose as the key verse in this book? The key chapter? Why?
5. What challenges you as you read this book? What application do you already see for yourself personally?
6. Why study this "Pastoral Epistle" if you're not a pastor?

We'll stop here for today. I pray that as you gained a birds-eye view of 1 Timothy, the Holy Spirit is already speaking to your heart. I'm already convicted, encouraged, and challenged! I love our memory verse. Our King is definitely eternal, immortal, and wise, deserving all of our praise! Does He have it? He is our **"Reason to Rejoice!"**

Fourth Day

Say your verse. How does knowing that God alone is wise encourage you?

1. Read about Paul's previous visits to Ephesus in Acts 18:18-21, 19:11-21, 19:24-29, and 20:17-38. What specific challenges did he face there?
2. From your reading of 1 Timothy, what challenges did Timothy still seem to face?

3. In 1 Timothy, what references does Paul make to himself?
4. What verses in this book show us how important it was to Paul to preserve the truth of the Gospel?
5. What does Paul call the Gospel in 1:11?
6. Read 1 Timothy chapter 1. How does he introduce himself? Why so formal if he is addressing a friend?
7. How does Paul describe God in 1 Timothy 1:1? Why would this be so meaningful to Timothy?
8. How does that title of God encourage you? (Do you know someone who needs to be reminded of that today?)
9. How does Paul refer to Timothy in verse 2? Why would this be encouraging to Timothy?
10. What words do you find in his greeting in verse 2 that are Paul's "trademark"?
11. Why were God's grace, mercy, and peace so important and meaningful to Paul? (What verses in chapter 1 give us a clue?)
12. Think about God's gift of grace and mercy to you. Are you as grateful as Paul? Are you as excited to tell others about that gift as Paul is? Spend some time thanking the Lord for the grace He gives us daily, and the mercy He shows us minute by minute!

See you tomorrow! My **"Reason to Rejoice "** today is that His mercies are new every morning! They never run out ... that 's a promise! (Lamentations 3:22-23)

Fifth Day

Write out your memory verse. Did you give Him honor and glory this week for everything?

1. In chapter 6, Paul refers to the Christian life as a fight. Why?
2. As his mentor, Paul seemed to be passing the baton to Timothy, sharing with him all the things he believed to be important. If you have children, you should be, in fact, their mentor. You are passing the baton of faith on to them. What things about faith and the Christian life do you feel are important to share with them? Have you been sharing those truths with them? If your children are small, do you have a plan concerning ways to share?
3. What references does Paul make to prayer in this book?
4. Paul talks about the importance of sound doctrine. What does he say about personal integrity? How do they go together?

Charles Swindoll said this in his commentary on 1 Timothy: *"The purity of the Gospel, the integrity of our hearts, the needs of the flock -- all treasures worth guarding ... and adventures worth taking."*

5. Write your thoughts on the above quote. How is this a good summary of 1 Timothy?
6. What encouragement have you received from reading through 1 Timothy?

Included on the next page is an outline of 1 Timothy and a Time Line of Paul 's Epistles. Spend some time looking it over. May God bless you this week as you study His Word. May He also prepare you for what He has for you in chapter 1 of 1 Timothy! See you next week!

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Ready and Faithful

1 Timothy 1 **LESSON 12**

This week we will be studying 1 Timothy chapter 1. I hope that after reading the entire book and getting some background, you feel a bit familiar with our text. Isn't it fun to see Paul's heart and his passion for the Gospel as he shares it with Timothy? Paul was committed to keeping the Gospel of Jesus Christ pure and uncompromised. He wanted none of it to be tampered with. I'm sure Paul would be incredibly grieved at the false teaching that is going on today in our world. I pray that studying this book will ignite a passion in our hearts for the truth of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ!

First Day

1. Read 1 Timothy chapter 1. Make note of any questions you may have.
2. This chapter is divided into three sections. Title and observe each section, listing any facts that you find. (Who's speaking? To whom? Why? When?)

Section 1: Verses 1-11

Section 2: Verses 12-17

Section 3: Verses 18-20

3. What words are repeated in this chapter?
4. Read verses 1-2 again. If Timothy was such good friends with Paul, why do you think the greeting is so formal? Why did Paul need to state his authority? (I asked you this last week ...just wanted to see if you remember!)

5. How many times does Paul use the word "our" in verses 1-2? Why is this significant?
6. Notice that Paul refers to God as our Savior in verse 1, as well as in 2:3 and 4:10. (See also Isaiah 43:3) Why is this significant?

The word "commandment" (vs 1) is from the Greek word "epitage," which refers to a royal command that is mandatory, rather than voluntary. Paul had been specially commissioned for service by God Himself, and he took this command very seriously. The Gospel had been committed to him by God (1:11), and he committed it to Timothy (6:20), who was to guard it (2 Timothy 1:14) and pass it on to faithful men (2 Timothy 2:2).

7. We are all called to be "soldiers" for the Lord (2 Timothy 2:3). Although we are all called to share the Gospel, He has called us all to different types of "duty." He has commissioned you for service. How seriously do you take that call? Do you see it as a commandment from God? Does your life reflect that?
8. Paul calls Timothy his "true" son in the faith. In regard to the false teachers that are discussed in this chapter, why is that term so significant?
9. Why did Timothy need grace, mercy, and peace in his situation?

We'll end here for today. Paul says so much just in his greetings. They are always packed with important truths. I love how he refers to God as "our hope" in verse 1. One of Paul's goals was to encourage his friend in his ministry, and what better way than to remind him of the hope we have in Jesus. Bishop Desmond Tutu said, *"I am always hopeful, for a Christian is a prisoner of hope."* So true! That hope is our **"Reason to Rejoice!"**

Memory Verse of the Week: *"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry ... " 1 Timothy 1:12*

Second Day

Study your memory verse. This doesn't only apply to Paul. God put you into ministry too!

Paul doesn't want Timothy to give up. He tells him in chapter 6 to fight the good fight! Charles Swindoll said this: *"How many people stop because so few people say, 'Go?'"* Go, Timothy, Go!

1. Read 1 Timothy 1:3-11. What does Paul urge Timothy to do?
2. The word "charge" means to give strict orders from a superior officer. What did Paul want Timothy to command "them" to stop doing?
3. Was Paul surprised by these false teachers? Read Acts 20:28-30.
4. What does the word "doctrine" mean? What doctrine did Paul consider to be "sound"?
5. Paul talked about false teachers and false doctrine in 1 & 2 Timothy. How does he describe it (them)? What was the result of that doctrine?
 - a. 1 Timothy 4:1-3, 7
 - b. 1 Timothy 6:3-5
 - c. 1 Timothy 6:20-21
 - d. 2 Timothy 2:14
 - e. 2 Timothy 2:16-18
 - f. 2 Timothy 2:23

It's not clear what exact false doctrine was being taught, or who was teaching it. Some believe it must have been coming from the Ephesian elders, while some think it contained some type of Judaism because they were concerned with certain teachings of the law. Some believe that this was the beginning of Gnosticism because in 1 Timothy 4:3, it seems that they were trying to receive divine acceptance and obtain holiness from certain types of legalistic self-deprivation. Whatever was being taught, we know that it was raising certain questions and leading people astray from the truth. The false teaching was robbing them of their hope in Christ. The result of this doctrine was not producing love from a pure heart, a good conscience, or sincere faith (vs 5).

6. Ephesus was not the only place that was having problems with false teachers. What else did Paul say about them in the following verses?
- a. 2 Corinthians 2:17
 - b. 2 Corinthians 4:2
 - c. 2 Corinthians 11:3
 - d. 2 Corinthians 11:13-15
 - e. 2 Peter 2:1-3
7. What does Paul think should happen to those who teach false doctrine? Read Galatians 1:8-9.
8. How can standing on "false doctrine" practically affect how you live your life? Have you ever bought into any type of false teaching? What happened?

Paul says that the goal of sound doctrine is to produce love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith. He contrasts these with the result of teaching bad doctrine.

9. How would you define: (using Scriptures if possible)
- a. love from a pure heart?
 - b. a good conscience?
 - c. sincere faith?

10. Why would teachers attempt to teach things they don't understand? (vs 7) What might be the motive?

The definition of conscience, according to Webster, is a knowledge or sense of right and wrong, with a compulsion to do right. Irving Jensen defines it as "an inner voice that judges a thought, word, or deed as it is contemplated, in process, or consummated". Conscience judges according to standards, of whatever sort. It has also been defined as "the God-created, self-judging faculty of man. It either affirms or accuses a person (Romans 2:14-15). The mind knows the standard of right and wrong, and when that standard is violated, the conscience reacts to accuse, producing guilt, shame, doubt, fear, remorse, or despair" (Titus 1:15).

11. Read 1 Timothy 4:2 and Titus 1:15-16. What can happen to our conscience? How?

12. Because of this, why can't we always take the advice of Jiminy Cricket, who said, "Let your conscience be your guide"?

13. Explain how sound doctrine keeps our conscience pure and good.

14. Do you see a pure love flowing from your life? How about a good conscience? A sincere faith? Take a minute to honestly evaluate yourself in these areas.

Tomorrow we will look at what "law" Paul is talking about. I pray that you will understand how important knowing and believing sound doctrine is. What do you base your beliefs on?

Third Day

What's your memory verse?

1. Read 1 Timothy 1:3-11 again. Let's talk more about the false teachers.

It's bad enough to want to teach something you don't know much about, but it's even worse to be dogmatic about it! James 3:1 says, "Let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment." D. Martin Lloyd-Jones wrote that *"teaching the Word is such an awesome task that a godly man shrinks from it. Nothing but this overwhelming sense of being called, and of compulsion, should ever lead anyone to preach."*

Some think that these teachers may have been teaching the law as a means for salvation, instead of salvation by grace. Their motives were most likely self-seeking and stemmed in pride.

2. Why is there a stricter judgment for those who teach God's Word? Is this fair?

3. Is the purpose of the law to save? Read Romans 3:20, 28; Galatians 2:16 and 3:11. 'What is the purpose of the law? Read Galatians 3:10-29.

**The law that Paul is referring to is the Torah, or the first five books of the Bible, also known as the Pentateuch, written by Moses. He now gives some examples of the type of people for whom the law was made. If they would heed it, it would show them their sin and their need for salvation.

4. The background /or 1 Timothy 1:7-11 is Exodus 20:1-17. Read through The Ten Commandments. Which ones are being violated by the examples Paul gives?

5. Are The Ten Commandments only for the people in the Old Testament? Are we supposed to obey them? Why or why not?

John MacArthur explains this section very well. He says, *"Paul was not trying to say the law was bad in itself. While he condemned those desiring to be teachers of the law, he did not condemn the law itself. The law is good and useful because it reflects God's will. The law is good when it is applied lawfully. The false teachers were misusing it, thinking they could please God through their own efforts, using the law as a means of salvation. That is a role the law could never fill. Law in general, and the Mosaic Law in particular, is not made for a righteous man. Those who think they are righteous will never be saved (Luke 5:32), since they fail to understand the true use of the law. The purpose of the law is to show willing sinners their sin (Romans 3:19), and need of a Savior (Galatians 3:24). The law is morally right and good, but the law alone is not good news. The law forces man to recognize the bad news that all are guilty of violating God's standards."* Paul is trying to show us the impossibility of anyone keeping the law in their own strength.

6. Why do people have to see they are guilty before they understand salvation by grace?

7. Have you ever thought you were a "good" enough person to go to Heaven? Have you ever been guilty of trying to do enough "good works" to earn your salvation? What did you find out?
8. Can you think of a person in Scripture who was caught up in good works, or thought they could earn their right to salvation by keeping the law?

Ephesians 2:10 tells us that we are "created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." We know that we are not saved by our works, but works are an evidence of our faith (James 2:14-26). Martin Luther once said, *"Good works do not make a good man, but a good man does good works."*

9. Using Ephesians 2:8-10, as well as other Scriptures, can you explain in your own words what it means to be "saved by grace"?
10. We all should watch out for false teachers. We need to make sure what we hear from the pulpit, radio, T.V., etc. is biblically sound. What should we be watching for?
11. There are two extremes concerning the law. The first is Legalism, which teaches that we can be saved by works. The other is Antinomianism, meaning that the law does not apply to Christians. How and why are each dangerous?

We should be judging everything we hear by God's Word. Like Paul says in 1 Timothy 1:10, we should turn away from anything that is "contrary to sound doctrine." We can ask ourselves these questions regarding any doctrine being taught:

- Is their teaching biblically sound? (2 Timothy 2:15)
- What is their goal? (Is it to glorify God or for personal gain?)
- What is their motive? (Selfless or selfish?)
- What is the effect of their teaching? (Is there fruit?)
- How do they define the Gospel?

I pray that each of us continues to hold fast to the sound doctrine of the Word, and allow His principles and standards to govern our life!

Fourth Day

Study your verse. Isn't it exciting that He is the one who enables us to fulfill the ministry?

Yesterday we read about Paul's charge to Timothy. Now He shows us what God's law can accomplish when correctly used, looking at his life as an example. He uses himself to contrast the false Gospel with the power of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ.

1. Read 1 Timothy 1:12-17. How does Paul describe himself?
2. To refresh your memory, read about Paul's life before he met Jesus in Acts 21:40, 22:1-21, 26:9-11. Did Paul accurately describe himself in 1 Timothy 1:13-15? What other words would you use to describe him?
3. For what two reasons does Paul say he was shown mercy? (vs 13 and 16)
4. Does Paul believe that being ignorant excuses him of his sin? Why or why not?

The phrase "this is a faithful saying" appears five times in the pastoral epistles. This means that this statement ought to be regarded as fully reliable. This saying was referring to Christ's forgiveness of sins. (vs 15)

5. Read the other "faithful sayings". What does each saying refer to?
 1. 1 Timothy 3:1
 2. 1 Timothy 4:8-9
 3. Titus 3:8
 4. 2 Timothy 2:11
6. Paul doesn't say, "of who I **was** chief", he said "**am.**" What does that reveal to us about Paul's character? Also read 1 Corinthians 15:9 and Ephesians 3:8.
7. How is Paul's life a "pattern" for us? (vs 16)

Paul recognized the depth of his sin. Because of his past, God's grace was very clear to him. Paul was not excusing his past, but was focusing on the divine mercy that intervened. Looking at his sin caused him to be thankful, rather than guilt-ridden. He could've allowed his sin to paralyze him, hindering anything that God wanted to do with his life. Instead, he allowed it to motivate him to pursue holiness and righteousness. Because of Paul's life, we see that there are no limits to God's forgiveness and mercy!

8. How does this section encourage you? What were you like before you met Jesus? How would you describe yourself?
9. How can we hinder the present or future by living in our past?
10. What happens when you look at your past? Do you feel guilty, thinking that God would never forgive you, or use you in ministry? Have you ever felt that you are just "not good enough" for God? Or do you react like Paul, rejoicing in your salvation? (Read Philippians 3:12-14)
11. How long has it been since you thanked the Lord for the mercy and grace He showed you by saving your soul?

Let's end here for today. Paul's life is an example of a life committed to sound doctrine, as well as a testimony of God's mercy, grace, and love. His life is a reminder of what God has done for each of us! Hallelujah!

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory.

1. Read 1 Timothy 1:12-20. After Paul's testimony to us in verses 12-16, why do you think Paul ended this section like he does in verse 17?

Because God is eternal, the truths Paul talks about are for all generations. Immortal means imperishable or incorruptible! Because He is invisible, He cannot be seen, except by faith. There is only one wise God, who is unique, incomparable, and glorious! (Deuteronomy 6:4, Isaiah 40:12-31) Paul ends his own doxology with an emphatic agreement... AMEN!

2. How does verse 17 minister to you? Which aspect of God's character mentioned is specifically meaningful to you today?
3. Read 1 Timothy 1:18-20. What does Paul charge Timothy to do? (Charge is a military term referring to a command, not a suggestion.)
4. Paul reminded Timothy that he was called by God, and that his calling was confirmed through others. Why do you think Timothy needed to hear that?

"Wage the good warfare" can also be translated "fight the good fight." We know that we enter a spiritual battle-zone as soon as we accept Christ. Satan is warring against the church for many reasons.

John MacArthur mentions a few:

- *Satan blinds the mind of the unbelievers to the Gospel, keeping them away from the church and the truth (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).*
- *Satan tries to devastate those who are already believers, to cripple them and destroy the credibility of their witness (1 Peter 5:8).*
- *Satan attacks marriage and family, thus weakening the church.*
- *Satan attacks the church through its leaders (1 Timothy 3:7). When the shepherds are destroyed, the flock will scatter.*

5. How does Paul say to fight the good fight?
6. Practically, how can you and I "fight the good fight"?
7. Do you feel like you're in a battle? Are you "fighting the good fight" or have you given up? Paul believed it was Timothy's duty and responsibility to hold on to the faith. Do you feel that same responsibility?

It seems like Paul now uses navy terms, referring to Hymenaeus and Alexander as having been shipwrecked. We don't know much about these men. Hymenaeus is believed to be the same one mentioned in 2 Timothy 2:16-18. The name Alexander is listed in 2 Timothy 4:14-15 and Acts 19:33, but it was such a common name at the time that it is unknown whether or not this is the same one Paul mentions in 1 Timothy 1:20.

8. Why does Paul equate rejecting the truth with being shipwrecked?
9. What do you think Paul meant by the phrase "delivered to Satan"? Read Matthew 18:15-17, 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14 and 1 Corinthians 5:3-5 for help.
10. What is blasphemy?
11. Why was the sin of blasphemy so serious? Why is it so dangerous within the church? In what ways is it possible for Christians to commit that sin today? Does it have to be "spoken" to be blasphemous?

Paul delivered these two men over to Satan, meaning that he put them out of the church, or disfellowshipped them. They were taken out of the protection and covering of God's church and put into Satan's grasp. This was not done to be mean, but to teach them that there were consequences to slandering God.

12. Consider this statement: "A good conscience is the rudder that steers the Christian life." What does that mean?

Paul reminds Timothy that it was his duty as a leader to fight for the truth, to hold on to a good conscience, and to keep the church pure from false doctrine. Timothy readily stepped up to the plate and accepted Paul's charge! How about you? Are you ready to accept the charge to be a good soldier and fight the good fight?

13. Are you on course, or are you in danger of being shipwrecked? Why is sound doctrine so vital to smooth sailing? Are you filling your mind with the truth of God's Word on a continual basis?

This chapter lays the foundation for the rest of the book. I pray that as you study, you ask the Holy Spirit to show you how each and every verse applies to you. Whether you are in organized ministry or not, we all are called and commissioned by God, our Commander in Chief. When God calls your name ... do you step up to the plate? See you next week!

***"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise,
be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. "***
1 Timothy 1:17

[illegible]

Ready and Faithful

1 Timothy 2:1-10

LESSON 13

We ended our lesson last week with Paul charging Timothy to "fight the good fight." Now, in chapter 2, Paul gives Timothy some practical advice on how to do that. We know that Timothy was overseeing the church in Ephesus, and most likely churches in the surrounding region. Many met in their homes and were not sure how to organize their worship service.

Paul knew how important it was for the church to "stand together" in the battle. Because it was so important, the church needed to be organized in such a way that would promote order and unity. God is a God of order.

Paul gives Timothy some do's and don'ts of public worship, as well as reminding him about the importance of prayer. There is some "good stuff" in this chapter. Some of it might be a little controversial. May it be our aim to discuss all things without "murmurings and disputing" (Philippians 2:14). Let's let "iron sharpen iron" and allow the Holy Spirit to stretch our minds as we reason through some verses together. Have fun!

First Day

1. Read 1 Timothy 2:1-15. What is your first impression of this chapter?
2. This chapter can be broken into two sections. Observe and list the facts you find in the first section:

Section 1: Verses 1-8

3. What would you title this section? What is the main idea?
4. Do you find any repeated words, phrases or thoughts? What would you say is the "key" verse in this section?

5. What challenge(s) do you find in this section? What truth do you want to apply?
6. Read the next section. Observe and list the facts you find.

Section 2: Verses 9-15

7. What would you title this section? What is the main idea or thought?
8. Do you see any repeated words, thoughts, or phrases? What would you choose as the key verse in this section?
9. What questions do you have regarding this section?
10. What application do you see for yourself?

We'll end here for now. Paul gives us some good application in this chapter, as well as some important doctrine. Let's read with "ears to hear," shall we?

Memory Verse of the Week: *"For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." 1 Timothy 2:5-6*

Second Day

Work on your memory verse. This is a very important truth. Why?

1. Read 1 Timothy 2:1-15 again. After hearing Paul's advice, what problems do you think the church in Ephesus may have been experiencing?
2. Read 1 Timothy 2:1-8 again. How many times does Paul use the word "all"? What do you think Paul is emphasizing?
3. Paul begins to lay down some principles for public worship. What does Paul say to do first? Why?
4. What four "categories" or "kinds" of prayer does Paul mention?
5. Whom does Paul say to pray for? Are they only supposed to pray for those in their church?
6. Why is it important to pray for those who are in authority over us?
7. Why would praying for our authorities result in a peaceful and quiet life?

Paul uses four words in his exhortation to pray. William Hendriksen defines them as such:

*The first word Paul uses for prayer is **supplication**. This word means petitions for the fulfillment of certain definite needs that are keenly felt. They are humble requests which one makes in the light of this or that concrete situation in which God, He alone, can furnish the help that is needed.*

*The next word is **prayers**, which is more general in meaning. As often used, it covers every form of reverent address directed to the Deity. However, in view of the fact that the word here is used as one of a list of four synonyms, and since it is clear that each of the other stresses a particular aspect of prayer-life, the conclusion seems warranted that its meaning in this particular passage must be somewhat restricted. Here it seems to refer to requests for the fulfillment of needs that are always present, in contrast with supplications in specific situations. For example: the need for more wisdom, etc.*

***Intercession** in this passage means to plead in the interest of others, and doing this without holding back in any way.*

*Finally, **thanksgivings** complete the circle, so that the blessings that come from God return to Him again in the form of expressed gratitude.*

8. How is your prayer life? Are any of the above four lacking? (How diligent are you in praying for those in government?)
9. What happens in our own hearts as we pray for the authorities?
10. According to verse 2, how are we supposed to be living? Why? (Also read 1 Thessalonians 4:11, 2 Thessalonians 3:11-12.)

The first word seems to refer to a life that is free from outward disturbances, while the second refers to a life free from inner disturbances. This doesn't mean that Paul believes we will be free of problems. We know that isn't true. He does seem to be implying that freedom from disturbances, such as wars, etc., will facilitate the spread of the Gospel. We should live calmly, not creating unnecessary problems. It has been said, "Christians should be known for their quiet demeanor, not for making disturbances. "

11. Take a look at your life. Would you consider your life to be quiet and tranquil? Is your life characterized by godliness and reverence?
12. How would you describe what it means to live a "life of godliness" ?

Paul says to pray for all men, and the fruit of those prayers may be a quiet life. That way the Gospel can be spread more effectively. Paul said this is good and acceptable to the Lord (vs 3). I wonder if public prayer was lacking in their church, as well as being limited in who was being prayed for. Was peace and tranquility lacking in some of their lives? I pray that we would take heed to these words of Paul and start examining our own lives.

Are we always the one causing problems? I don't mean being persecuted for the Lord and suffering for righteousness. I'm talking about provoking those responses by being disruptive and argumentative. After all, we are called to love our enemy (Matthew 5:43-44), and as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men (Romans 12:18, Hebrews 12:14).

Third Day

Did you study your memory verse?

1. Let's begin today by reading 1 Timothy 2:1-8 again. What does God desire? How can we be part of fulfilling that desire?

2. What do you think the word **all** means in this context? Is Paul saying that everyone on earth **will** be saved? (Read John 3:16 and 2 Corinthians 5:14-15) Explain.

3. Paul says that we are saved when we come to the knowledge of the truth. What is that truth, according to verses 5-6? Also read John 14:6 and Acts 4:12.

4. What does the word "mediator" mean? Why does man need one?

5. Define the word "ransom." How was Jesus a ransom for us? Read also Mark 10:45, Philippians 2:7-8, and Isaiah 53:12.

6. Why is the phrase "gave Himself" so significant? Read John 10:17-18.

7. This truth is what Paul feels called to share with the world. What was his three-fold ministry, according to verse 7?

Not only is there One God, there is only One Mediator. A mediator is one who intervenes between two individuals to restore peace, or ratify a covenant. There is a gap between a holy and righteous God, and unholy, sinful man. Jesus Christ was the perfect God-man, bringing God and man together, bridging that gap. We can't come to God through the angels, saints, or Mary. We can only come to God through Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12). Wilbur Wallis considers verse 5 to be 'the sharpest and most unequivocal assertion of the deity and humanity of Christ.' Christ voluntarily took the stand between the offended God and the offending man, in order to take upon Himself the wrath of God which the sinner deserved.

Jesus gave Himself as a ransom for us. Ralph Earle defines ransom as "what is given in exchange for another as the price of his redemption." Christ paid the ransom to free us from the slavery of sin. This makes us His possession.

Because Jesus died for all, and was a ransom for all, does that mean that "all" will be saved? This doesn't mean "all people without exception, but all people without distinction." Salvation is available for the Jew and the Greek, for the free and the slave, for the rich and the poor. It doesn't matter what nationality or social class you belong to, salvation is available to all. We know that though many are called, few are chosen (Matthew 22:14). Individuals have the choice to accept that free gift of salvation.

Some believe that salvation is universal, meaning that all will be saved, with no exception. Hendriksen says this: *"In a sense, salvation is universal, that is, it is not limited to any one group. No, it is the intention of God our Savior that 'all men without distinction of rank, race or nationality' be saved."* Each man and woman is accountable for the choice they make.

God's sovereignty and man's responsibility – I can't wait to ask the Lord how it all works!

8. *"Jesus was more than a ransom. He became the victim in our place. He died our death, and bore our sin. He gave Himself."* (John MacArthur) How does that make you feel? Meditate on that today. Write a prayer of thanksgiving and love to the One who freed you from the penalty of death.

9. Have you ever used other things as a mediator between you and God? What were they? Why do you think people use all different things to bridge the gap?

10. What does Paul mean by the phrase "testified in due time"? Read Galatians 4:4-5 for help.

11. What was Paul's desire in verse 8? What do you think he means by "holy hands"? Is he literally talking about hands? (Read Psalm 24:4)

The lifting of hands during prayer was mentioned in the Old Testament to indicate an earnest desire for the Lord (1 Kings 8:22, Psalm 141:2, 143:6). Paul is using this term to represent a holy and blameless life.

12. Why is it necessary to have "clean hands" without anger and disputing (vs 8) if we want our prayers to be heard, and be effective?

13. Are your hands "holy"? Are you pursuing a walk of holiness and purity? Do you ever pray with a heart full of anger or bitterness? What do you need to do to make your "hands clean"?

See you tomorrow! Wash those hands before you go to bed, and then again when you wake up!

Fourth Day

Practice your verse. Thank God for the Man Christ Jesus!

1. Let's read 1 Timothy 2:9-15. How would you summarize what Paul is saying?

Paul moves from discussing prayer in public worship, to the role of women in public worship. Most scholars believe that there had been some problems with the ladies being disorderly, causing a distraction during the service. Paul again seeks to remind Timothy that we serve a God who likes everything "decent and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40).

2. What do you think could be controversial in this section? Why?
3. What does the word "modest" mean? How is that term open for private interpretation these days? (Unfortunately)
4. Do you think Paul was forbidding them to wear braided hair or costly clothing? Why or why not? Read 1 Peter 3:3-5.
5. What do you think is considered modest today by the world's standards? What about God's standards?

As Christian women, we are accountable for what we wear. We are called to be modest, above reproach, and holy. We are told not to conform to this world's philosophies or principles, even in our attire. As Christian mothers, we are accountable to the Lord in how we allow our children to dress. Unfortunately, it is very easy to become conditioned to what the world says is okay.

The point that Paul was making was that the women were supposed to be discreet, not flashy or disruptive. The outward appearance is no substitute for the true beauty of a godly woman, on the inside. Proverbs 31:30 tells us that "Charm is deceitful, beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised." Paul wasn't teaching that any outward adorning was sinful, but that it must be kept in balance, always remembering that it is of little importance. It is thought that the ladies in Ephesus used expensive hairdos and jewelry to win popularity. Irving Jensen said that "some of the Jewish women used ostentatious hairstyles, fastening the plaits with ribbons and bows and interweaving gold, silver, and pearls in the hair, causing it to flash brilliantly. Distraction in a worship service was inevitable." The Christian woman has no business getting caught in this trap, in Paul's day or ours.

6. How do you think Satan uses clothing, jewelry, accessories, etc. to draw people away from the Lord?
7. What do you think is "proper" for women professing godliness to wear? (vs 10)
8. I read this question this week, and I thought it was very thought provoking. How would you answer this: "Should we "dress up" for church to show that we're giving God our very best, or should we "dress down" to show our disinterest in things of the world? Which attitude are you most drawn to? Explain.
9. Do you spend more time cultivating your outward beauty, or the inner beauty of your heart? Do you spend more time at the gym, the mall, or reading the Word, Bible study, etc. (A good marker is the amount of time spent on each.)
10. We are not only supposed to display modesty in our dress, but in our speech and actions as well. What does that mean?
11. List any areas that you need to work on concerning modesty. (You don't have to share.)
12. Last question. How do you think that we, as Christian women, are supposed to cultivate the inner beauty that pleases the Lord? Give practical suggestions, as well as Scriptures.

Let's ask the Lord to give us a strong desire for Him alone, shall we? Let's not waste so much time seeking after corruptible things, but instead, seeking after the things above!

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory. How did it minister to you this week?

We are going to talk a bit more about 1 Timothy 2:9-10 today. These verses are very important for us as women, and we don't want to rush through them. We also want more time to discuss verses 11-15 because of their controversial nature, so we will study that section in our next lesson.

1. Read 1 Timothy 2:9-10. Do you think our appearance can reflect the state of our heart? How?
2. "When a woman dresses for the worship service to attract attention to herself, she has violated the purpose of worship." What do you think about this quote?
3. How does (or should) a Christian woman discern the, sometimes, fine line between proper dress and dressing to be the center of attention?

Let me read you a quote from John MacArthur on this topic: *"A woman should examine her motives and goals for the way she dresses. Is her intent to show the grace and beauty of womanhood? Is it to show her love and devotion to her husband? Is it to reveal a humble heart devoted to worshipping God? Or is it to call attention to herself, and flaunt wealth and beauty? Or worse, to attempt to allure men sexually? A woman who focuses on worshipping God will consider carefully how she is dressed, because her heart will dictate her wardrobe and appearance."*

4. Take an honest look at how you dress. (I had to do it too!) What is the intent of your heart when you get dressed? We may have to rethink some of our convictions. Is it okay to wear pants that are too tight, or skirts that are too short? Is it okay to wear shirts or blouses that are low cut? Is it okay to send our kids to school with their bras showing? I pray that each of us takes a good, hard look at how we dress ourselves, as well as our kids. We can't say we're Christians, yet throw out what His Word says about our behavior. Search your hearts.... And see you next week!

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Ready and Faithful

1 Timothy 2:11-15 & 1 Timothy 3 **LESSON 14**

This week we will be continuing our study of 1 Timothy chapter 2. Last week we ended our lesson in the middle of the section dealing with women's conduct during public worship. In verses 9-10, Paul addressed the appearance of a woman in public, which may have been a problem in Ephesus at the time.

In our lesson today, Paul will address a woman's place within the church service. Remember to spend time in prayer before you begin. You want to make sure your heart is ready to receive all that the Lord has for you! This section may also be a bit controversial. Get ready to do some thinking!

First Day

1. Read 1 Timothy 2:9-15. Reread 11-15. What is the main point of this section?
2. Are there any repeated words or phrases?
3. Define the word "submission."
4. What two arguments does Paul use to backup his point? (Can you explain them?)
5. What problems might the church in Ephesus have been facing?
6. What controversies may possibly be raised by this section?
7. Do you think Paul was trying to say that women were inferior and gullible, or should never even talk in church?

8. What does Paul say women are NOT supposed to do?

At the time Paul was writing, an interesting thing was happening. Women had been suppressed so long in both the Jewish and Greek cultures that most likely they were very excited at the new-found freedom they had in Christ. Unfortunately, it is thought that many ladies overreacted, attempting to "take charge" by trying to take the leadership roles in the church. They were speaking out of turn, calling questions and comments out during worship, disrupting the order and peace.

The word translated "silence" in verse 11 is "enhesychia" and is the same word as in verse 2 that is translated "in quietness," as opposed to confusion. Three times in this chapter Paul talks about the peace that should be present during the time of worship. In verse 2, Paul comments on the peaceful and quiet life that we desire as we pray for our government. He tells men to pray without arguing in verse 8, and now he commands the women to learn in all quietness.

Many scholars point out that it is quite possible that Paul is making the point that women were supposed to learn, contrary to what some of the men thought, and was trying to protect their right to be "learners of the Word."

9. Do you think Paul believes women are inferior because he says they are not to teach men? Read Galatians 3:28.

10. Paul says that women cannot teach men in public or usurp authority over them. Can women teach children, women, or instruct men in private? Read Acts 18:26, Titus 2:3-4 and 2 Timothy 1:5.

11. Why do you think God chose men for leadership positions in the church?

We are going to continue our discussion of these verses in tomorrow's lesson. For now, meditate on what you think it means to live a "peaceable and quiet" life.

Memory Verse of the Week: *"Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised." Proverbs 31:30*

Second Day

Work on memorizing your verse for the week. I love this one!

Let's continue our discussion of 1 Timothy 2:11-15. Remember that "Paul is not forbidding women to teach under appropriate conditions or circumstances, but to fill the office and role of the pastor or teacher in the church." (John MacArthur)

1. Why do some ladies take this as a very "sexist" section of Scripture, believing that Paul is saying that women are not capable of leadership, or that they are inferior to men?

"The Old and New Testament alike teach spiritual equality for women (Galatians 3:28) in the context of salvation. But being 'one in Christ' did not remove the distinctions between Jews and Gentiles. Nor did it remove the functional differences between slaves and master (1 Corinthians 7:20-24). Why, then, should we assume it did so between men and women?" (MacArthur)

2. Read these Scriptures and answer the following questions:

- a. To whom did Jesus reveal His Messiahship? (John 4:25-26)
- b. Whom did Jesus heal? (Mark 5:25-34, Luke 13:11-13)
- c. Whom did Jesus teach? (Luke 10:38-42)
- d. Who ministered to Jesus? (Luke 8:2-3)
- e. Whom did Jesus appear to after His resurrection? (Mark 16:9, John 20:11-18)
- f. Who was in the prayer service? (Acts 1:13-14)
- g. Who birthed the Messiah? (Matthew 1:23)

3. All this to say... did Jesus think women were inferior?

Paul gives two arguments to support His point: (1) the order of creation and (2) the order of sin.

4. Who was created first? How was woman created? (Genesis 2:15-25)

God had an "order" in creation. God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of the man, and man is the head of the woman (1 Corinthians 11:3). Again, it is an order of "authority" not "superiority." *"Her very body was taken out of man's, and her very name was derived from his."* (Hendriksen)

5. Why do many women (including ourselves at times!) buck against this order?

Paul's next argument is the order of sin. While some may use this verse to say that women are better suited to lead because even though she was deceived, the man "willingly" chose to sin. Although this is true, Paul is using this statement to show that Eve chose to lead, going against her role to follow Adam, resulting in sin. (Genesis 3:1, 2 Corinthians 11:3) She stepped out from Adam's leadership and protection, and fell. This is not to say that Adam was less capable of being deceived, or from falling. But Adam also rejected the God-given order. He listened to his wife instead of God, thus bringing sin into the world. As the head of their relationship, Adam bore ultimate responsibility. Scripture relates the fall of man to Adam's sin, not Eve's (Romans 5:12-21, 1 Corinthians 15:21-22). The leadership, or headship of man was part of God's original design.

6. What about in the working world? Should women be in positions of authority? Why or why not?

7. Read Ephesians 5:22-29. What is the "role" of the wife? If you are married, are you faithful to that role? Have you been allowing your husband to lead, or do you often challenge him in his leadership role?

8. Does being "submissive" mean that you are supposed to keep your feelings and opinions to yourself? What is the balance?

9. Okay, I know what you're thinking. ***"If you know you are right and your husband is wrong, do you still have to submit?"*** What do you think?

1 Timothy 2:15 may be the most puzzling verse in all of the pastoral epistles. None of the explanations seem completely satisfying. Warren Wiersbe says that, in this verse, *"Paul laid down a general principle that encouraged the believing women of that day. Their ministry was not to 'run' the church, but to care for their home and bear children to the glory of God"* (1 Timothy 5:14).

Another scholar writes, *"Paul teaches here that although a woman precipitated the fall and women bear that responsibility, yet they may be preserved from the stigma through childbearing. His point is that while a woman may have led the race into sin, women have the privilege of leading the race out of sin to godliness. The pain associated with childbirth was the punishment for the woman's sin, but the joy and privilege of child rearing delivers women from the stigma of that sin "*

The verb "to save" is used in the New Testament for both physical healing and spiritual salvation. Here are three other suggested interpretations:

- *The term "childbearing" refers to the birth of Christ, through whom salvation has come into the world.*
- *The verse is related to Genesis 3:15, in which the seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head and bring salvation to mankind.*
- *By giving birth to children, women would be saved from the social ills of the time and so take part in the mission and testimony of the church.*

I know it's a lot of reading, but let me share with you one more quote from Elisabeth Elliot regarding man and woman:

"All creatures, with two exceptions that we know of, have willingly taken the places appointed to them. The Bible speaks of angels who rebelled and therefore were cast out of heaven, and of the fall of man. Adam and Eve were not satisfied with the place assigned. They refused the single limitation set on them in the Garden of Eden and thus brought sin and death to the whole world. It was, in fact, the woman, Eve, who saw the opportunity to be something other than she was meant to be -- the Serpent convinced her that she could easily be 'like God' -and she took the initiative. We have no way of knowing whether a consultation with her husband first might have led to an entirely different conclusion. Perhaps it might: perhaps if she had put the question to him and he had to ponder the matter he would have seen the deadly implications, and might have refused the fruit. She, instead, wanted to be 'like God'."

Unfortunately, people today are still trying to assume roles they are not called to. Many are discontent with the "place" or "role" God has given them. Are you?

Third Day

What's your memory verse? What do you think it means to be a woman "who fears the Lord"?

Today we'll be moving on to chapter 3. Now that Paul has established some guidelines for order of authority between men and women in the church, he now proceeds to give the qualifications for those men who are going to lead the church. Leaders must be a moral and spiritual example. Paul lets us know that it is a high and holy calling, and must not be taken lightly. Those in leadership should be held to a higher standard in their spiritual maturity as well as their moral character.

Our temptation as we read this section is to look at the lives of our own leaders to see if they match up. While this is important, let's also take a look at our own lives. Shouldn't these characteristics be something that we desire to find in ourselves too?

1. Read 1 Timothy 3:1-16. This chapter can be divided into three sections. Give each section a title that reflects the main point or thought of that section. Write the facts you find, along with any repeated words or phrases.

Section 1: Verses 1-7

Section 2: Verses 8-13

Section 3: Verses 14-16

The word for "bishop" in verse 1 comes from the Greek word "episkopos" and means "overseer." This is the same word for elder (Acts 20:17, Philippians 1:1, 1 Peter 2:25, Titus 1:5,7). They were the overseers of the local church. They fed the flock by teaching and preaching. They guarded the congregation from spiritual harm (Acts 20:29-31) and were examples to the members (1 Peter 5:3).

The Greek word for "deacon" comes from the word "diakonos" which means "servant." Irving Jensen writes, "The two-office organization of the New Testament church gradually merged into this three-office arrangement in the centuries that followed: (1) pastor (as preacher-teacher-shepherd), (2) elders (assisting the pastor especially in spiritual matters), (3) deacons (assisting the pastor especially in physical matters, such as the finances of the church). The thing to note here is that the tasks that needed to be done were always present, the titles given to those who performed the tasks varied from church to church and from century to century."

2. According to section 1, is it okay to want to be an elder? Why or why not?

In verse one, the first "desire" is better translated "aspire" meaning to "reach out after." The second desire refers to an inward, passionate compulsion, or an inward desire.

3. What are an elder's
 - a. Personal qualifications?
 - b. Public qualifications?
 - c. Home qualifications?
4. Why is the office of an elder such a "noble" task?
5. Does this section mention any of the "duties" of the elder?
6. *"There is an inseparable link between the character of the church and the quality of the leader."*
What does this quote mean, and do you agree?

In verse 2, Paul says an elder must be blameless, or above reproach. This phrase comes from a Greek word that means "not able to be held." (He cannot be held as if a criminal, there is nothing against him.) Verse 7 also says that he must have a good reputation from those who were outside the church. (This is a standard, not a demand for perfection.)

7. Why is it so important that an elder have a good reputation? How does he reflect the church?
8. How is your reputation outside the church? Are you blameless in your conduct? Does anyone have anything "against you"? What should you do?

9. Why is it so important that the leaders be able to rule their own house well?
10. How is your house being ruled? Is it in order, or out of order? Are" your children respectful? Are they submissive? Obedient? (Again, Paul is not demanding perfection, but holding to a high principle.)
11. Why is it not a good idea to put a new believer into leadership as an elder? What are the dangers? (Read 1 Timothy 5:22)
12. Using a Bible dictionary, concordance, etc., try to define the following character traits:
- temperate -
 - sober-minded -
 - hospitable -
 - not violent -
 - gentle -
 - covetous -
13. Leaders are supposed to be examples to those whom they lead. You are a leader in your home. Are you a good example? How do you measure up with this list?

Tomorrow we'll look at the qualifications of the deacons, which are similar. Paul tells us in Hebrews 13:17 to "obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you. " Think about that. Will your leaders give an account of you with joy?

Fourth Day

Do you know your memory verse yet?

1. Read 1 Timothy 3:8-13. What are a deacon's:
 - Personal qualifications?
 - Public qualifications?
 - Home qualifications?
2. Are there any differences in the list between the elders and deacons?
3. Why do you think they must be "proven" first? Wiersbe said, "An un-tested Christian is an unprepared Christian. " Why?
4. Why do you think Paul included "double-tongued" in their list?
5. Can a man's wife disqualify him for the role of a deacon?
6. Verse 8 says that a deacon must be reverent, or grave. What does this mean?
7. A deacon is supposed to hold the mystery of faith with a pure conscience. They have to be able to understand doctrine and obey it. Why is that so important to those who lead the church?
8. What is the deacon's "reward" for being faithful? (vs 13)

Both elders and deacons were called to be "one-woman men." (vs 2 and 12) *"This is a man devoted in his heart and mind to his wife. He loves, desires, and thinks only of her. He maintains sexual purity in both his thought life and his conduct."* (MacArthur) They are models of sexual purity.

9. Are you a "one-man woman"? Do you continually guard your heart and mind from sexual impurity? Are your thoughts only for your husband, or do you entertain thoughts of others? What does God's Word say about that? Philippians 4:8

10. What specific truth of verses 1-13 has specifically ministered to your heart?

11. Has God showed you any changes He wants you to make in your life?

We'll end here for now. I pray that the leaders of our own church continue to be faithful to their calling, and that we would be faithful to ours!

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory. Put it on your fridge as a reminder of what it is that pleases the Lord!

1. Read 1 Timothy 3:14-16. Paul wraps this chapter up by reminding Timothy why he was writing. What does he say?
2. We are God's church. What did He purchase us with? Acts 20:28
3. Because we are God's church, doesn't He have the right to govern it?
4. The church is a "pillar and support" of the truth. What is the function of a pillar? How is the church a pillar?

The image of a pillar would be familiar to the Ephesians. The temple of the goddess Diana was located there. William Barclay tells us that the temple contained 127 pillars, every one of them the gift of a king. All were made of marble, and some were studded with jewels and overlaid with gold.

Verse 15 reminds us that we are supposed to uphold, guard, defend, and support the truth of God's Word. That is the mission of the church. Now, in verse 16, Paul tells us the message of the church.

5. How was God manifest in the flesh? (Give Scripture for your answer if possible)

"The word 'justified' or 'vindicated' tells us that Jesus was declared to be righteous both by His sinless life of obedience to God which declared His righteousness, and by the testimony of the Holy Spirit, who affirmed His righteousness again by raising Him from the dead." (MacArthur)

6. Jesus was seen by angels. This can mean He was observed, or attended to. When were angels involved in the life of Jesus? Read Matthew 28:2, Luke 24:4-7, and Acts 1:10-11.

Jesus gave us the commission to preach among all the nations (Matthew 28:19-20). Jesus is the Savior of the whole world! (John 3:16) He ascended into Heaven, being taken up in glory (Acts 1:9-10). He went home to be with His Father!

7. How does 1 Timothy 3:16 summarize the Gospel?

8. Why do you think Paul thought it important to remind Timothy of the fundamentals of the faith, in verse 16?

9. Just to review a little:

- a. Why is it so important to pray for your leaders? Are they open for more spiritual attack from the enemy? Why or why not?
- b. Are you diligent in praying for the leadership in your church?
- c. How can leaders guard themselves from the enemy?
- d. How can you guard yourself from the enemy?

We talked a lot about the role of women in the church this week. This quote reminded me of my responsibility as a woman of God:

"We are called to be women. The fact that I am a woman does not make me a different kind of Christian, but the fact that I am a Christian does make me a different kind of woman." (Elisabeth Elliot)

10. Write your comments on the above quote. Do you agree? In what way?

11. Has knowing Christ made you a different kind of woman?

I pray you all had a great time studying God's Word this week. I sure did. There is no better way to use our time! His Word is life changing, isn't it? May we, like Jeremiah, find joy as we "eat" His Word (Yum Yum!)

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Ready and Faithful

1 Timothy 4:1-10

LESSON 15

In our lesson last week, Paul told Timothy that he was writing "so that he would know how to conduct himself in the house of God" (1 Timothy 3:15). Here in chapter 4, Paul begins to get even more specific on ways that Timothy can minister to the needs of the church. In this chapter we learn more about false teachers, the minister himself, and the ministry. As you read, remember to ask the Holy Spirit how these lessons apply to you. Look for specific challenges and exhortations, as well as encouragement.

You may not be a pastor, but you are a minister of Jesus Christ! Let's find out how we can be more faithful in our calling.

First Day

1. Read 1 Timothy 4:1-16. Observe the text and list the facts you find.
2. What is your first impression of this chapter?
3. Give the chapter a title that reflects the main point.
4. What do you think is the key verse of this chapter? Why?
5. Are there any repeated words, thoughts, or phrases?
6. How does Paul's focus change in chapter 4?

7. There are three sections in this chapter. What is the main point of each section?

Section 1: Verses 1-5

Section 2: Verses 6-10

Section 3: Verses 11-16

8. Look up the meanings of any words that are unfamiliar to you.

9. What do we learn about Timothy in this chapter?

10. What immediate application do you see for yourself after reading this chapter?

Paul begins to get more personal in chapter 4. Let's read this letter as if Paul was writing specifically to us. Let's do as Paul says in verse 16... **Take heed!**

Memory Verse of the Week: *"For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things ... " I Timothy 4:8a*

Second Day

Review your memory verse. Meditate on what it means to be godly.

1. Read I Timothy 4:1-5. What does Paul say is going to happen? How did he know?

Paul began this letter to Timothy in chapter 1 with a warning to watch out for false teachings. He now gets more specific, letting us know some things to watch out for, as well as revealing the source of the error. This will result in a willful turning away from the truth of faith in Christ. This falling away is called "**apostasy**".

2. What is the source of the false teaching ?

3. What are some of the false teachings?
4. What does it mean to "speak lies in hypocrisy"?
5. How are the hypocrites described?
6. The word "seared" means cauterized, or deadened. How does one's conscience become "deadened"?
7. Define hypocrisy.
8. Read Matthew 23:13-28, Luke 12:1-2 and Titus 1:16 for help. Why did Jesus call the Pharisees hypocrites?
9. Why is the sin of hypocrisy so serious? How can hypocrisy in the life of a believer be a stumbling block in spreading the Gospel?
10. Time for self-examination. Do you practice what you preach? Do you claim to be a Christian, yet live a life contrary to God's Word? Ask the Lord to reveal any areas of hypocrisy in your life.
11. Is your conscience in danger of being "seared" in any way? Have you been struggling with a certain sin for so long that now it's just part of who you are, and you no longer even feel guilty about it? Have you been ignoring the warnings of the Holy Spirit? Has your conscience become "deadened" in any area?

In the first and second century, Asceticism became very popular. This teaching believed in renouncing the comforts of life, which would lead to happiness and perfection. They equated holiness with self-denial. The "harder" you were on your body, the holier you were. To forbid marriage, which is a holy institution ordained by God, and to demand eating certain foods that God had deemed "clean" was behavior resulting from false doctrine.

Gnosticism also was becoming widespread in the second century. This false teaching elevated knowledge over faith. According to this cult, a good God could not have created the world, for the world is matter, and matter is the seat of evil. Since the human body is matter, it is our enemy and must be conquered. Abusing their flesh was one way to accomplish that. They would either indulge it, or shun it, both being considered "spiritual."

12. Why do you think abstaining from things would make people think they were being more "holy"? Have you ever fallen into this trap?

Let's end here for today. I pray that we continually ask the Lord to help us to **NOT** be a hypocrite. This is often difficult to see in our own life, for some reason. May God open our eyes to any area that is not pleasing to Him!

Third Day

Review your verse. How much time do you spend training yourself in godliness?

1. Read 1 Timothy 4:1-5 again. What do you think is the main point of verses 4-5?
2. The false teachers were obviously saying that it was more "spiritual" to be single. Is that true? Read Genesis 2:18, Matthew 19:1-12 and 1 Corinthians 7:1-24.
3. Is it more "spiritual" to eat certain foods? Read Mark 7:14-23, Acts 10:9-15, and 1 Corinthians 10:23-33. Does that mean it's wrong to be a vegetarian, for instance?
4. How is it possible, as a Christian, to either stumble someone by what you eat, or what you don't eat?

5. In our lesson last week, we saw that false doctrine has a definite effect on behavior. How can these two false teachings affect our behavior negatively?

In reference to verses 4-5, Warren Wiersbe said this: "*The food we eat is sanctified (set apart, devoted to God) when we pray and give thanks; so the Word of God and prayer turn even an ordinary meal into a spiritual service for God's glory*" (1 Cor. 10:31). William Hendriksen points out that, "*Every creature of God is excellent (Genesis 1:31). Nothing is fit to be thrown away, as if it were evil or the seat of evil. Every creature of God is excellent for the very reason that God created it, and because He also consecrated it. With God's blessings upon it, and by means of our confident prayer, it has been consecrated, that is, set apart for holy use, lifted into the spiritual realm. For the Christian, eating and drinking are no secular activities.*" (1 Cor. 10:31)

6. Is Paul saying that all food is created equal in the sense of nutritional value? Is Paul saying that it doesn't matter what we eat? How do we balance that with the fact that we are to take care of our bodies because God is living in us? (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
7. To sum it up, what should be the Christian's opinion of food and eating? Are you balanced, or do you tend to lean in one particular direction?
8. Read 1 Timothy 4:6-10. Write the facts that you find. What would you title this section?
9. Briefly state how Timothy is told to respond to the false teachings.

Tomorrow we will look at this section again. Paul tells Timothy that the remedy for false doctrine is sound doctrine. He also lets us know some characteristics of a good minister. This section is full of great application!

I praise God for the Word that is "given to us by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man (or woman) of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). That's a major "**Reason to Rejoice!**"

Fourth Day

Practice your memory verse.

1. Read 1 Timothy 4:6-10 again. What are the marks of a "good minister"?
2. According to verse 6, what should the minister "feed" on? What are the dangers of a minister who neglects to study the Word?
3. Also according to verse 6, is it good enough for a minister to simply study? What else must he do?
4. Are you diligently studying the Word, and following it carefully? Have you immersed yourself in sound doctrine, or is studying the Bible simply a "pastime"?
5. What is Timothy supposed to reject?

The word "**fable**" comes from the word "**muthos**" from which we get our English word "**myth**." Paul says that they are "fit only for old women," because at that time, women did not have the same educational opportunities as men did. This phrase was often used to infer that only uneducated and unsophisticated people would listen to such a thing. These myths lacked any type of credibility.

Paul wanted Timothy to be nourished by sound doctrine, and not allow any type of myths to pollute his mind. A minister must keep himself pure, unspotted from the world, free from all other garbage.

Paul says that we are to "**exercise**" or "**discipline**" ourselves to godliness. This word translated as "**exercise**" comes from the Greek word "**gumnazo**," from which the English words gymnasium and gymnastics were derived. It implies the rigorous, strenuous, disciplined form of training that an athlete engages in. (I love the word "exercise," don't you?)

Athletics and physical training was very important to the Greek culture. There was a gymnasium in every Greek city, and youth spent most of their time training their physical bodies and perfecting their athletic skills. Paul wisely chooses this analogy, knowing that it would be easy for them to understand his point. Paul says that the Christian should be as devoted to pursuing godliness as an athlete is to his sport.

6. What do you think it means to "exercise yourself in godliness"?
7. Is Paul teaching that it's wrong to exercise? What point is he making?

8. Compare the benefits of physical training and spiritual training. How long do the benefits of each last? What are each profitable for?

"Godliness is from the Greek word 'Eusebeia' which means good, revere, and adore. Godliness is a right attitude and response toward the true creator God, a preoccupation from the heart with holy and sacred realities. It is the heart and soul of Christian character and the aim of Christian living." (1 Timothy 2:2; 2 Peter 3:11) (John MacArthur)

9. Look up the following Scriptures. What do they say regarding godliness?

a. *Psalm 32:6*

b. *Titus 2:11-14*

c. *2 Peter 3:11-14*

d. *1 Timothy 6:6-8*

e. *1 Timothy 6:11-12*

f. *2 Peter 1:2-8*

10. Describe a good "spiritual exercise" program designed to train the inner man. (How would you describe yours? Are you on one?)

11. Do you spend more time training your physical body or your spiritual body? Take time to examine your heart and your lifestyle. Are there any changes that need to be made?

Verse 9 is referring to the truth taught in verse 8. Paul said this truth was evident, obvious, and believed by all. Spiritual godliness is a must.

We will stop here for now and examine verse 10 tomorrow. For now, meditate on these questions: Is pursuing godliness your aim in life? Are you seeking after it diligently and rigorously? Are you more excited about the eternal benefits of spiritual exercise than the benefits of physical exercise? Think about it!

Fifth Day

Write out your verse from memory. I pray that this verse challenged you this week to discipline yourself in godliness!

1. Read 1 Timothy 4:6-10 again. From verse 10, what does Paul say that we are to labor and strive after?
2. From verse 10, what is Paul's motivation to train vigorously?

The word "**labor**" means, "to work to the point of exhaustion". The word "**suffer**" or "**strive**" comes from the word "agonizomai" which means to engage in a struggle. It is from this word that we get our word "**agony**." MacArthur says, "*Paul obviously believes that even though godliness is a heavenly pursuit demanding divine power, it is an earthly task, demanding hard work.*"

3. What does it mean to "labor and strive" in our ministry for Christ?
4. In what ways can ministry, and our pursuit of godliness, be regarded as a struggle?
5. Do you take your call seriously? Are you willing to train hard, exerting your greatest possible effort? Is your eye on the goal? Have you laid aside anything that is keeping you from progressing?
6. Henry Martyn, a missionary to India said this: "*Now let me burn out for God.*" What are your thoughts on this?
7. What is Paul's hope in? (Is it in success, fame, or popularity?)
8. In verse 10, is Paul teaching that all men will be saved (universalism)?

The Bible cannot contradict itself. This verse can't be teaching a universal salvation, because the rest of the Word contradicts that. Warren E. Purdy gives us this interpretation of this verse: *"God is the Savior of all men in that on a temporal basis He gives them life and strength, awakens within them high ideals, provides for their pleasure and sustenance, and graciously allows them to live for a time in the light of His countenance."*

"God is especially the Savior of believers in that He has a special call for them, answers their prayer, and provides for their well-being, not only in this life, but also in the life which is to come."

9. Think about and answer these two questions: (1) Is your hope in the Living God your motivation in life? (2) What is your greatest aim in life? (You don't have to share with your group if you would rather not.)

10. List at least five practical lessons that you have learned so far in this chapter.

I pray that this week we make afresh and new commitment to the Lord to pursue a life of godliness. Let's do **"sit-ups"** for the Savior! **"Leg- lifts"** for the Lord! Let's **"press"** toward the goal! Let's **"run"** after these things with all our might! Let's get spiritually **"FIT"** for the Lord! See you next week! Work on exercising those muscles of faith!

***"Bodily exercise is all right, but spiritual exercise
is much more important and is a tonic for all you do."
(1 Timothy 4:8a, The Living Bible)***

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Ready and Faithful

1 Timothy 4:11-16 & 1 Timothy 5

LESSON 16

Last week we studied the first ten verses in 1 Timothy chapter 4. These chapters are so rich with great truths that it's hard to finish an entire chapter in one lesson. This week we will continue where we left off in chapter 4. This chapter began with a discussion about false teachers, followed by some characteristics that mark a "good" minister. In these last six verses we will continue looking at Paul's charge to Timothy concerning his work as a minister of Jesus Christ. Before you begin, pray and ask the Lord to soften the soil of your heart, making it ready to receive His Words of life!

First Day

1. Let's begin by reading 1 Timothy 4:1-16. Now reread verses 11-16. Observe and list the facts you find in this section.

It is thought that Timothy was most likely about 22-27 years old when he joined Paul on his missionary journey. If this is true, then he would be about 34-39 years old at the time Paul is writing this letter. The word "youth" was used for anyone from the age of youth to 40. He was a very young man for the position he was holding.

2. How was Timothy supposed to gain respect, despite his age?
3. How can we be an example to others in the following ways? (Use Scriptures, along with a practical example, if possible.)
 - in word
 - in conduct

- in love
- in spirit
- in faith
- in purity

4. Paul believed he would be returning (vs 13) to Ephesus. What did he want Timothy to do until he arrived?

Timothy is told to "give attention to" or devote himself to the public reading of the Scriptures, which was an important part of their worship. It is important for the people to hear what the Word says, not just someone else's explanation of what it means. He was to continue to exhort them by challenging them to apply the truths of the Word to their lives. He was also to devote himself to doctrine, or the systematic teaching of the Scriptures. A minister is pulled in many directions, but he must never stray from teaching God's Word and living a life of godliness. A leader's life should be a pattern for others to follow.

5. Paul tells Timothy not to neglect the gift that was given to him. Every believer receives at least one gift of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12). We are given gifts that equip us and enable us to do the ministry God has called us to do. What gift do you think Paul was referring to? What else does Paul tell Timothy about his gift? Read 2 Timothy 1:6-7.
6. How is it possible to neglect the spiritual gift that God has given us? Do you think we have a responsibility to use that gift?
7. What gift have you been given? Has the Holy Spirit given you a gift that you are neglecting to use? (Read a list of the gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-30; Ephesians 4:11; and Romans 12:6-8 for help.) How can you begin to use this gift to glorify the Lord?

The presbytery, or the elders, obviously laid hands on Timothy to pray for him. The laying on of hands was used for various reasons. Sometimes it was done to bestow blessings on a person (Genesis 48:14, 18) or to recognize a call of God on someone's life. Hands were laid on someone when there was to be a transfer of authority (Numbers 27:18-20). People who needed healing had hands laid on them (Matthew 9:18), as well as when they would receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:18). The apostles laid hands on the deacons when they were chosen (Acts 6:6), and on elders, as we see here in our text.

8. In your own words, what was Paul's final exhortation to Timothy in verses 15-16?

9. If we aren't supposed to be worried about pleasing man, why does it matter what everyone else thinks of us?

The word "progress" is taken from a Greek military term meaning "pioneer advancement." Timothy was told to go first, or be the one out in front, setting the example. Verse 16 tells us that holy living and sound teaching go together.

10. Is the progress of your spiritual growth evident to those around you? Can they see a change in you? Can they see a likeness to Christ? What do you think?

11. Paul says to teach, be an example, give attention to, don't neglect, meditate, give yourself over, make progress, take heed, and continue. On which of these do you think you might need a little work?

Verse 16 shows us that a minister's godly life will have a saving impact on those who hear him. It has been said that a minister's life is his most powerful message. If there is no pattern, there is no power. I wonder if our life is our most powerful message ... See you tomorrow!

Memory Verse of the Week: "Do not neglect the gift that is in you ... " 1 Timothy 4:14a

Second Day

Review your memory verse.

1. Read 1 Timothy 5:1-25. Paul goes on to tell Timothy how the church should treat people in the church family. What Scripture specifically struck you as you read this chapter?

2. Read 1 Timothy 5:1-2. As a young pastor, how is Timothy told to treat all people, especially if they are in sin? Why are these such wise words?
3. What does the Word say about older men and women, as well as your mother and father? Read Leviticus 19:32, Proverbs 16:31, Exodus 20:12, and Proverbs 1:8, 23:22.

As a young pastor, Timothy had many "situations" that needed to be dealt with. Paul gives him some very practical guidelines for doing that. The problems and questions within the church are timeless, meaning that we deal with the same things today. We are thankful that the Holy Spirit spoke through Paul to give us some direction in ministry.

4. Read 1 Timothy 5:3-16. Why do you think Paul spent so much time on the topic of how to treat widows? Why is it so important to him? (This topic takes up more verses than any other topic in this letter.)
5. Paul talks about four kinds of widows. List what he says about each:
 - Real widows (verses 3, 5, 9, 10):*
 - Widows with relatives able to support them (verses 4, 8, 16):*
 - Widows living in pleasure (verses 6-7):*
 - Young widows (verses 11-15):*
6. Why does Paul say not to help those who have children, grandchildren, etc.? Is he just being mean?
7. What if the family doesn't want to help? Read verse 8.

8. What qualifies a widow to get help from the church? Why do these qualifications have to be met?
9. Why do you think he says widows who are "really widows" in verse 3?

The phrase "taken into the number" in verse 9 means "to be enrolled and put on a list. " Evidently the church had some sort of official list of widows that they helped out. These widows were most likely very involved in ministering to the congregation.

10. Read the following Scriptures to find out what God thinks about widows:

- a. Deuteronomy 10:18
- b. Deuteronomy 14:29
- c. Isaiah 1:17
- d. Malachi 3:5
- e. James 1:27

11. Are you involved with helping widows in any way? List some ways that you can help them, besides financially. Pray and ask the Lord how you can help meet this need.

We will continue with this section tomorrow. In the meantime, ask the Lord to show us how we can better meet the need of "real widows" in our body.

Third Day

What's your memory verse? Is God speaking to you?

Let's read 1 Timothy 5:3-16 again. Let's look a little closer at some of the specific qualifications of widows in need.

1. What qualification showed a heart of hospitality?
2. What qualification showed a heart for humility and servant-hood?

"Relieving the afflicted" in verse 10 can mean ministering to many different kinds of needs, such as the sick or the poor. "Bringing up children" can mean taking in orphans who were left homeless. If they were referring to their own children, they would have to have died in order to receive help.

"It usually fell upon the local synagogues to relieve the plight of widows. Customarily, a group from each synagogue would make the rounds on Friday mornings, collecting goods and money to be distributed to the needy widows later in the afternoon. In spite of these efforts, however, many widows were still impoverished. The early church continued in the tradition of the Jewish synagogue, motivated in their efforts by the love of Christ." (John MacArthur)

3. Read the story of one widow in Mark 12:41-44. What is she an example of?
4. Can you find any other stories in Scripture about widows?
5. Why did Paul want the younger widows to marry?

Paul seems to be encouraging the younger widows not to take a vow to never remarry, which many do. They may feel indebted to the church for taking care of them, as well as thinking they would never find someone else to take their husband's place. If she makes that vow, she will be obligated to keep it, according to Numbers 30:9. Paul was trying to protect her from being single forever, desiring children, and becoming bitter. This will also protect the church from the young widows looking for relationships in places they shouldn't, because of their desperation.

6. What are some of the dangers of the younger widows staying single that Paul mentions?
7. If a young widow remarries, what becomes her responsibility? (vs 14)
8. Why is being the "keeper of the home" such an important responsibility as a woman?

Verse 15 says that some have already "turned aside after Satan." This was already happening in the church. This may mean that they had chosen to follow a carnal lifestyle, one that is dishonoring to God, falling into various sins. Some may have married unbelievers, bringing shame to the body of Christ. This was a definite problem in the church that Paul believed needed to be dealt with.

9. Paul sums it all up in verse 16 by restating his point. Again, why is it so important to take care of the needs of your own family? By doing so, what are you freeing up the church to do?
10. What kind of extra hardships do you think the widows at that time faced? Why? What kinds of hardships do widows face today?

God has a special love for widows. We are called to reflect His love for them by taking special care of them. The church is obligated to help those widows who are in need. They can help others if they desire, but they are responsible for specific ones. I pray that each of us will ask God to show us what we can do as individuals to minister to the widows in our body.

Fourth Day

What's your memory verse? Let's stir up that gift, shall we?

1. Let's read 1 Timothy 5:17-21. Observe this section and list the facts you find. What is the main point of this section? What would you title it?

Just as the widows were supposed to be honored, the elders were to be treated carefully also. It may be that Timothy was having some problems with the elders in his church. Paul wanted to make sure he understood how to treat them, specifically in terms of pay and discipline.

2. What are elders who "rule well" worthy of?
3. What do you think "double honor" means?
4. What point is Paul making in verse 18? Look up Deuteronomy 25:4, 1 Corinthians 9:7-14, and Luke 10:7 for help.

Double honor can mean either generous pay or a generous sense of recognition. Because of verse 18, it seems very likely that Paul is referring to the elder's pay. God's design was for the church to meet the pastor's needs. There was an Old Testament law that forbade farmers to muzzle their oxen while working to prevent them from eating the loose grain. God was teaching the basic principle that every worker has a right to partake of the fruits of his work.

Paul shows that, because an oxen receives its due, which is grain, and a laborer receives his due, which is wages, so shall an elder receive what is due him.

5. What could be a reason that Paul had to deal with this?
6. In regard to recognition or respect, why do you think pastors and elders should receive "double honor" if they are ruling well? Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13.
7. Do you respect your leadership? How can you show respect for them? What are some practical ways that you can "esteem them" for their work's sake? (I'm not just saying this because I'm married to the pastor!)
8. Now Paul talks about how to honor them in the way you receive an accusation against them. What needs to happen if they are being accused? Why? (Deuteronomy 19:15)
9. If the accusations are true, and he continues to sin, what must be done?
10. Why are elders dealt with more severely and publicly?
11. Why can more damage be done to a congregation when a leader falls? (We see why Paul calls the minister to a higher standard of holiness.)
12. From our past studies, what do you think is the goal of rebuking the elder publicly, both for the elder and for the congregation?

We understand Paul's exhortation to Timothy in the way to treat elders. They are to be honored for their work for the Gospel. When accused of a sin, it is essential to make sure the facts are correct by having witnesses so as not to ruin his reputation by a lie. If the accusation is true, he must be confronted. If he repents, then he is disciplined. If the elder continues to sin he must bear the consequences, which is to be rebuked openly. This is for his good as well as the good of the body. I pray that this section will once again remind us of the severity of sin. May we be diligent in our pursuit of holiness!

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory.

1. Read 1 Timothy 5:21-25. List the facts you find. What is the main point of this section?
2. How does verse 21 tie in with verse 20?

Why does Paul talk about the elect angels in verse 21? Some think that Paul uses them simply to add weight to his statement. Others think that Paul wanted to make sure Timothy understood the importance of this teaching, because all of the Heavens were watching. We are supposed to be pleasing God and not man!

Rebuking an elder is difficult, but it must be done to preserve the purity of the church and to guard God's reputation. We cannot be partial in whom we discipline.

3. The leaders are told to "lay hands" on the elders to acknowledge the call of God to the ministry, or to set them apart for service. Why did Paul caution Timothy not to hurry this? What is the danger of putting a man into ministry before his life is thoroughly investigated?
4. How would this make Timothy partly responsible?
5. Have you ever seen this happen? What was the result?
6. How would being watchful in this area keep Timothy pure?

Verse 23 is a parenthetical, or a parenthesis in the middle of a thought. Paul stops to give Timothy a personal word of advice before he continues his thought.

7. Was Paul giving Timothy a license for social drinking? What was his point?

It is thought that Timothy, because of his desire to be an example of godliness to others and not stumble his brethren, decided to refrain from the drinking of any wine at all (1 Corinthians 8:12-13, Romans 14:13-23). The water in the Middle East was very impure and carried many diseases. Paul wasn't encouraging Timothy to drink/or the sake of drinking, but for medicinal purposes.

8. What is the main point of verses 24-25? (Remember they tie in with verse 22.)

Paul is still speaking about the process of ordaining men into the ministry. He says that the sins of some men are so evident that they are obviously unfit as church leaders, while the sin of others may not be uncovered until careful investigation. The judgment that Paul refers to is not the final judgment, but the judgment of the church to determine whether or not the man is suitable for the position.

In the same way, the good works of some men may be very obvious, but others may be hidden. As you investigate their life, those good works will be brought out into the light as you will be able to see their true character.

Paul proves the point he is trying to make. If Timothy exercises caution in ordaining men into ministry, he will be blessed with suitable, godly leaders for the church in Ephesus.

9. What practical and spiritual lessons did you learn from this chapter? How does this chapter apply to you, personally? Let's put it into practice this week ladies, shall we? See you next week!

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Ready and Faithful

1 Timothy 6

LESSON 17

In our last chapter, Paul instructed Timothy to treat all people in a godly manner. He began with the older and younger men and women, continued with the widows, and concluded this chapter on how to treat the elders of the church. Here in chapter 6, Paul continues his exhortation to treat all people in a godly manner, dealing specifically with the master-slave relationship. Paul gives us some good insight regarding those who are rich, and then makes it even more personal as he challenges Timothy himself.

Are you ready to get to work? This chapter has many exhortations for you and me personally, too! Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with understanding of the Word, and the wisdom to apply it to your life. Have a great week.

First Day

1. Let's begin by reading 1 Timothy 6:1-21. What would you say is the key point of this chapter?
2. Read verses 1-2. Observe and list the facts you find. What is the main point of this section? Are there any repeated words or phrases?

Paul desires to show Timothy how the Gospel of Jesus Christ touches everyone and should affect how we treat all people. Paul begins by addressing those who were slaves.

3. Does Paul say that slaves should try to become free?
4. How is a slave supposed to treat his unbelieving master? (Most believe the master in verse 1 is an unbeliever because Paul draws a contrast in verse 2 with a believing master.) Why?
5. How should a slave treat his (her) believing master?
6. What kinds of special privileges do you think the slaves who had Christian masters might have expected from them?

In the Roman culture at the time, about one third of the population were slaves. People became slaves in different ways. Some were slaves because they were prisoners of war, some were condemned men, some were sold into slavery by their parents, some by debt, by kidnapping, and others were born into it. Slaves could be received as gifts or inherited. Many times even slaves had slaves. Slavery was a popular scheme of employment.

John MacArthur gives us some details concerning slavery: *"In the Ancient East, much of the seasonal field work and part-time project work was done by hired day laborers (Matthew 20:1). Permanently employed domestic slaves served as managers (Luke 16:1), cooks, artisans, and teachers, becoming a part of the household, almost like family. In many respects they resembled the indentured servants of the American colonial era."*

7. We can take the principles that Paul is teaching here and apply them to the employer-employee relationship. Read Ephesians 6:5-9 and Colossians 3:22-4:1. Answer the following questions:
 - a. How should a Christian employer behave? How should they treat their employees?
 - b. How should a Christian employee behave?
8. How can both of these positions be used as an opportunity to glorify the Lord?
9. If you fit into one of these categories, would you say that your behavior glorifies the Lord? Are you as diligent as you possibly can be? Are you working as unto Him? Are you fair?
10. Explain why a Christian employee should be one of the best workers in the company.

Paul doesn't try to disrupt the social order of the day, but shows them how the Gospel can transform their lives right where they're at. I pray that we will evaluate our own work ethic as we end this section.

Memory Verse of the Week: "Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content." 1 Timothy 6:6-8

Second Day

Review your memory verse. It's a little long, but we need to remember this one, don't you think?

1. Read 1 Timothy 6:3-8. Observe and list the facts you find. What is the main point of this section? Are there any repeated words or phrases? What is Paul's purpose in this section?
2. Paul returns to his topic of false teachers. How does he describe them in verse 3-5?
3. What is the result of their teaching in verses 4-5? Why is it impossible for their doctrine to produce godliness?
4. What does Paul mean when he says that they are "destitute of the truth"?
5. How is it possible to use "godliness" or a "religious appearance" as a means of gain? (Read Acts 8:18-23 for an example)

Paul had the right to receive payment for his work concerning the faith, but he didn't (1 Corinthians 9:12). He didn't want anyone to accuse him of being in ministry to gain material wealth. He had witnessed many false teachers with ulterior motives, and it sickened him. Wealth was not high on Paul's priority list ... that's for sure. That wasn't the type of "gain" he was looking for.

6. What does Paul say produces "great gain"?
7. Define contentment. What should bring us contentment, according to verses 7-8? What is Paul's point in verses 6-8?
8. Why does finding contentment in today's world seem so difficult? What kinds of things does the world teach us to pursue?

9. Read Proverbs 30:7-9, Hebrews 13:5 and Philippians 4:10-12. What do these verses tell us about contentment?
10. What other sins can discontentment lead to?
11. Would you consider yourself to be a content person? Are you content with what God has given you, or are you continually striving after more?
12. How can being discontent ruin one's life?

When we leave this world, we leave with exactly what we brought in with us -- nothing. We get so busy wanting and seeking more, that we lose focus on what's important. We are often told in Scripture to keep our mind on what's eternal.

13. Read Matthew 6:19-21. This is a very familiar passage of Scripture, but if we actually applied it, it would be life changing. Examine your heart after reading it.

That's it for today. As hard as it is to be content with what we have, when we get what we want, we are no better off because we soon just want something else. Let's spend time today rejoicing in the Lord for whatever state God has chosen to place us in, and be thankful for every provision the Lord blesses us with.

Third Day

What's your memory verse? How can you apply it today?

1. Yesterday we talked about being content financially with what we have. What other areas of life are we to be content, besides financial?

2. Do you struggle with contentment in other areas besides financial? Are you content being a mom, or in your job, or in your ministry? Describe the difference between contentment with where God has placed you, but continually striving for excellence?

3. Read 1 Timothy 6:9-11. Observe and list the facts in this section. What's Paul's main point?

After talking about contentment, Paul again warns Timothy about the dangers of loving money. Money was a topic that Jesus talked a lot about. He obviously knew it would always be an issue for the human race. We saw how the love of money was judged severely in the early church by the example of Annanias and Sapphira (Acts 5). Money has the power to accomplish great good in the church, but can corrupt men incredibly. Paul felt the need to instruct and warn Timothy on this issue.

4. What is the root of all kinds of evil?

5. What kinds of temptations or snares can people fall into who desire to be rich? What can the love of money result in?

The "love of money" translates "philarguria" which literally means "affection for silver." For some, God is replaced by gold. Paul said that many "pierced themselves through with many sorrows," or "with many a pang. " They have caused themselves much grief by their wandering heart.

6. List some of the "kinds of evil" that the love of money can bring.

7. Why can greediness cause people to stray from the faith?

8. Is Paul teaching that it's wrong to have money, or to be rich?

9. Have you ever been led away from the truth because of the love of money? What temptations have you faced in your life in regard to this topic? (Are you in a snare right now? What should you do?)
10. As Christians, what should satisfy us? Are you satisfied?
11. Finances are often a cause of conflict within a marriage. Why is that? What should we do to guard against it?
12. The world teaches us to desire luxury and comfort way beyond our physical needs. How consumed are you with luxury and comfort? (Be honest with yourself -- God knows your heart anyway.)
13. What can happen if a wife puts undue stress on a husband to provide for certain luxuries and comforts? (Have you ever been guilty of this?)

Let's look for many **"Reasons to Rejoice"** today! God has been so good to us, we can only humbly thank Him. May we beware of the love of money. It doesn't matter if it's \$5.00 or \$500.00. The amount doesn't matter, it's the attitude of the heart that does.

Fourth Day

What's your memory verse? Let's memorize it as a family, if possible.

Paul now addresses Timothy on a personal level, mentor to friend. It's like he's talking right to him, and we're eavesdropping!

1. Read 1 Timothy 6:11-16. Observe and list the facts in this section. What's his main point? Is this a contrast to the above section? What is Paul's tone as he exhorts Timothy?
2. What did Paul call Timothy?

3. What other men were called by this title? Why would this be so encouraging to Timothy?

- a. Deuteronomy 33:1
- b. 1 Kings 12:22
- c. 1 Kings 17:18
- d. 2 Kings 4:16-17
- e. Nehemiah 12:24

4. Timothy was supposed to flee, follow, and fight.

What was he supposed to flee?

What was he to follow?

What was he fighting?

5. You, O woman of God, are you fleeing? You, O woman of God, are you following? You, O woman of God, are you fighting the good fight?

This list may be defined like this:

righteousness is personal integrity and doing what's right before God

godliness is practical piety

faith is confident trust in God for everything

love is agape, the sacrificial, encompassing love for God and others

patience is endurance and perseverance, and

gentleness is kindness and meekness, or power under control.

6. Are you leaving out any of the above in your pursuit of holiness? Which of the ones mentioned is most lacking in your life? What can you do to follow after it more diligently?

Paul was reminding Timothy to stay pure before the Lord in his personal life. John Owens said this: "*A minister may fill his pews, his communion role, the mouths of the public, but what that minister is on his knees in secret before God Almighty, that he is and no more.*" May these words encourage us to flee, follow, and fight!

7. In verse 12, what do you think Paul means by the phrase "take hold of eternal life"?

Timothy's confession before many witnesses refers to his public confession of faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 10:9). He was to maintain an eternal perspective and not get entangled with the things of the world (2 Timothy 2:4).

Paul "urges" or "charges" Timothy to "keep the commandment" in verse 14. It is God who "gives life to all things" or "makes all things alive." We don't have to fear the battle, because we know how powerful God is! He is in charge of all life, including Timothy's! Paul also reminds Timothy that Jesus was the best example of one who held fast to His confession. He remained faithful to God, no matter what the cost. Jesus never compromised, and He entrusted His life to God. Paul exhorted Timothy to do the same!

8. How was Timothy supposed to keep the commandment, according to verse 14? Until when?

The Lord's return should be a motivation to remain faithful as a man, or woman, of God (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Later Paul tells Timothy that there is a crown of righteousness for all those who "have loved His appearing" (2 Timothy 4:8). This hope keeps us going through the hard times of life and ministry.

9. When will Christ appear? (Mark 13:32)

10. Paul gets excited and talks about the incredible greatness of God in verses 15-16. What does He say about Him?

Paul says that God is "blessed" which describes His lack of unhappiness, frustration, and anxiety. He is content, satisfied, and fulfilled. The title "Potentate" comes from a word meaning power, or sovereign. He alone is God; He alone has power over the universe. He alone is ruler and is "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." He alone has authority. This title is used of Jesus (Revelation 17:14, 19:16), but here refers to God the Father.

11. How does the phrase, "God who dwells in "unapproachable light" speak of His holiness?

12. Why do you think Paul breaks out into what seems like praise and worship for the Father at this point of his letter?

13. Which description or title for God specifically speaks to your heart today from this section?

See you tomorrow! To Him be honor and power forever! Amen!

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory. How did God use it in your life this week?

1. Let's wrap up this chapter by reading 1 Timothy 6:17-19, and 20-21. What is Paul's main point in each section? What facts do you find?

Paul returns to the topic he was talking about after his short personal appeal to Timothy.

2. What two warnings to the rich does Paul give in verse 17?
3. What does Paul tell the rich to do?
4. Why can the rich be tempted to be "haughty" or "conceited"?
5. What happens when we trust in riches? (Read Psalm 49:6-12, Proverbs 11:28)
6. Paul says it's possible to be rich and enjoy all things without being in sin. How do we do that?
7. Describe the heart attitude that a godly, rich person should have, according to 17-19.
8. How's your heart? Are you rich in good works, willing to give, and willing to share? When you do have some money, are you a miser, keeping it all for yourself? How is this opposite of what Paul says to do? Take this test ... The more money you get, are you more willing to give, or more prone to hold on to it?

9. Do you think God is happy with your spending habits? (Have you ever asked Him?)

In verse 20, Paul goes back to speaking to Timothy personally as he closes this letter, but his exhortation applies to all.

10. What was Timothy supposed to guard? (Guard refers to keeping valuables in a safe place.)

11. What was he to avoid? What was the sad result of those who hadn't clung to the truth?

12. How is Paul's exhortation applicable to the church today?

I once read that there are seven ways to guard the truth:

***First,** by believing the truth.*

***Second,** by honoring His Word.*

***Third,** by loving the Word.*

***Fourth,** by obeying the Word.*

***Fifth,** by proclaiming the Word.*

***Sixth,** be defending the Word.*

***Seventh,** by studying the Word.*

As we end our lesson, I'd like to leave you with the same exhortation as Paul gave Timothy. Guard the truth! It has been entrusted to you! Hold fast to sound doctrine as long as you live! Look forward to His appearing, and until He comes ... be found faithful!

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Ready and Faithful

2 Timothy – Overview & Chapter 1 **LESSON 18**

Today we will begin our study of 2 Timothy. Chronologically, the book of Titus was written between 1 and 2 Timothy, but we will be studying 2 Timothy first. Let's do a brief history of 2 Timothy before we jump right into it. We won't be spending time developing a character sketch of our author, Paul, because hopefully his story is still fresh in our minds. We are going to read the book through in one sitting, getting a general picture of Paul's reason/or writing.

These are Paul's last written words to Timothy, and to the church. It is often called Paul's last will and testament. As you read, listen for Paul's heart as he shares it with Timothy. If you're really quiet, you can hear it beat...

First Day

Before we begin, let's briefly recap Paul's traveling adventures up to this point. We know that after appearing before King Agrippa (Acts 25:13-23) in AD 58, Paul journeyed to Rome (Acts 27:1-31). There he was put in prison, but was treated like a political prisoner (Acts 28:16-31). He was under house arrest, which meant that he could have visitors, and had the hope of being released. From that prison he wrote Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon, and Philippians.

Paul was released and traveled to Asia Minor. He left Timothy in Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3), while he went to Macedonia. From there, Paul wrote the letter of 1 Timothy to him. Paul probably returned to Ephesus, went to Crete, and left a man named Titus there to minister (Titus 1:5). We will be reading about him in a few weeks.

Paul continued to travel. In AD 64, the city of Rome was seriously burned. Nero, the Roman Emperor at the time, had ordered his own capital city to be torched. Everything from the shacks of the poor to the magnificent pagan temples was destroyed. Many knew that Nero was to blame for this outrage, so he conveniently blamed the Christians, using them as a scapegoat. He convinced everyone that it was the Christians who had done this awful deed. The Christians suffered greatly at the hand of this angry man. They were severely persecuted; many being thrown into arenas with wild animals.

The Roman historian Tacitus wrote, *"But all human efforts, all the lavish gifts of the emperor and the propitiation of the gods did not banish the sinister belief that the conflagration was the result of an order by Nero. Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace."*

Now, five or six years later, Paul was rearrested as some type of rebel, or for "propagating a forbidden cult." Christians were very unpopular at this time, almost enemies of the state.

This imprisonment was very different from the first time Paul was arrested. This time he was treated like a criminal. He could not have any visitors, and he was chained to a soldier. Paul's cell was damp and cold, and he had no hope of release. Most of his friends had deserted him. He awaited execution at the hand of the evil Nero (2 Timothy 4:6).

This letter contains Paul's last words to his dear friend Timothy. He didn't even know if he would ever see Timothy again. Paul knows the end is near, so he has some parting words for his son in the faith. Remember this is Paul's "last testament," so to speak, as you read through this book. This book not only contains Paul's last words to Timothy, but his last word to us, as well.

1. Read 2 Timothy through in one sitting. Write any phrases that you find that make this letter seem "personal. "
2. What is your first impression of this book? How would you describe it?
3. Did you notice any reappearing thoughts, phrases, or themes throughout the book?
4. Read the following Scriptures and describe Paul's imprisonment: 2 Timothy 1:15-17, 2:3, 9-13, 4:6-16.

That's it for today. I hope you got a good, general overview of the book. Tomorrow we'll look at 2 Timothy chapter by chapter. Until then, ask the Lord to show you five "Reasons to Rejoice " today. Thank Him for His Word that is more precious than gold!

Memory Verse of the Week: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. " 2 Timothy 1:7

Second Day

Review your memory verse. How does it speak to your heart?

1. Read 2 Timothy again. This time, notice the reasons that Paul gives for writing this letter. List the reasons and the Scripture references.

2. As you read, give each chapter a title. List the main point of each chapter and choose a key verse from each one.

Chapter 1:

Chapter 2:

Chapter 3:

Chapter 4:

3. Some say that chapter 4, verses 6-8 are the climax of this epistle. Why?
4. Someone once called this epistle "an epistle of mingled gloom and glory." What do you think they meant?
5. How would you describe Paul's attitude in this letter? (Was he depressed? Fearful? etc.)
6. What would you say is the key chapter in this book? Why?

7. Read our Memory verse again. Why do you think this verse's truth would be so meaningful to Paul at that time? What about Timothy?

8. What immediate application do you see for yourself?

Paul continues to stress to Timothy the importance of holding on to sound doctrine, no matter what the circumstance. He wanted to make sure Timothy (and us) understood that we are to cling to the truth of God's Word, as well as protect it. William Hendriksen gives us a brief outline of this book in regard to sound doctrine.

Chapter 1: HOLD ON TO IT *"Don't be ashamed"*

- As did Lois and Eunice
- As I do, never ashamed of the Gospel
- As did Onesiphorus, not ashamed of my chain

Chapter 2: TEACH IT *"Suffer hardship along with us"*

- It brings great reward; is glorious in content
- Vain disputes, on the contrary, serve no useful purpose

Chapter 3: ABIDE IN IT *"Grievous times will come"*

- Knowing that enemies will arise, who have its form, not its power
- Knowing that it is based on the sacred writings, as you learned from trustworthy persons

Chapter 4: PREACH IT *"I charge you"*

- In season, out of season, for apostasy is coming. Remain faithful, in view of the fact that I am about to set sail.
- Items of personal information, requests, greetings

I hope this outline helps you pull it all together. Tomorrow we will begin studying chapter 1. I know you've had to do a lot of reading, but I know it spoke to your heart. I love to learn, don't you? God bless you, sisters!

Third Day

Work on memorizing your verse. It's an important one to remember.

1. Read 2 Timothy chapter 1. Read section 1, verses 1-5. Observe and list the facts you find.

Many believe that because of some of Paul's exhortations to him, Timothy may have been growing weary, discouraged, or even becoming lax in his ministry. His mentor was now in jail, and he was left to face many challenges, along with a huge burden of responsibility. He was a young man with a heart for God, but may have been dealing with fears, doubts, or just plain weariness. (We will examine these issues as we study through this book.) Paul knew that Timothy needed some encouragement from him.

2. Paul was facing death. Was his concern for himself? What was his focus? How is this possible?
3. How does Paul introduce himself? Who does he say he belongs to, and whose service was he in?
4. Was Paul self-appointed?
5. What is the "promise of life"? (Read verse 10 for help)
6. One of Paul's favorite phrases seems to be "in Christ Jesus." What does he mean?
7. What does he call Timothy? What does he pray that Timothy would receive?
8. Now that Paul was in prison, did he think he was done serving? What does this tell us?

Paul said that he was able to serve God with a "pure conscience. " This doesn't mean that Paul thought he was perfect. Paul knew that he was the chief of sinners (1 Timothy 1:15), but he had a clear conscience. It did not accuse or condemn him. He had no hidden sins. He was living a life of holiness before the Lord, and he could say that in all sincerity. His forefathers were an example to him. Paul did not have a godly heritage within his own family, so he must have been talking about the holy men living before him, as well as the apostles and the Old Testament prophets.

9. Do you live with a clear conscience? Can you say that you are doing your best to live a life of holiness and service before the Lord?

10. Paul's thoughts could have been on his hopeless and discouraging situation, but they weren't. How does this speak to your heart? Where is your focus in troubled times?

11. Paul deeply yearned to see Timothy, and he prayed for him constantly. How would that be an encouragement to Timothy?

12. Who else does Paul commend in this section? Why?

13. Paul said that seeing Timothy would fill him with joy. Is that what you fill people with? When people spend time with you, are they filled with joy?

Unfortunately, we need to leave this section. I like to see Paul's affection for Timothy because it makes him seem so real to me. I picture him in a cold, dark, gloomy prison cell, without light, books, or friends. He knows the end is near. Yet the thought of Timothy brings joy to this old man's heart, who has served God so faithfully for so many years. His love for the truth and hope for the future outweighs any fear of the present. The thought of Paul brings joy to my heart. Do you feel the same?

Fourth Day

What's your memory verse? Why would this statement be such an encouragement to Timothy?

1. Read 2 Timothy 1:6-18. Observe and list the facts you find in this section.
2. Make a list of the instructions that Paul gives Timothy in this chapter.
3. How many times is the word "ashamed" mentioned in this chapter? Answer the following questions:
 - a. What does Paul tell Timothy not to be ashamed of? Why does he say this? (vs 8)
 - b. Was Paul ashamed? Why or why not? (vs 12)
 - c. Was Onesiphorus ashamed? How could Paul tell?
4. Paul was emphatic about not being ashamed. Why? What does this tell us about him?
5. What are some possible reasons that Paul may have said what he did in verses 6-7?
6. What has been given to us, according to verse 7? Why is this so important?

7. Do you ever struggle with a "spirit of fear"? Where does this come from? What should you do about it?

Timothy needed to fan the flame, or rekindle his fire of devotion, and use the gifts that God had given him to minister to the body of Christ. God had called him, and the church had ordained him. Charles Swindoll says this: *"Timothy's giftedness - his God-given ability for ministry - had been confirmed at his ordination laying on of hands). But now the gifts needed stirring up. His self-discipline may have waned in study and prayer. He may have been preaching, teaching, and contending for the faith with diminished fervor. It was time to fan the dying embers of God's gifts into full flame. "*

8. Do you have any gifts that need to be stirred up and used? Does your devotion need to be rekindled? What has caused them (or it) to be diminished? (Fear? Doubts? Weariness?)

A "sound mind" can also be translated self-controlled or self-disciplined. This also comes from Him. It describes a person who is sensibly-minded and balanced, who has his life under control. The Holy Spirit does not give us fear, but power, love, and self-discipline. His power is limitless, His love is endless. We are not able to minister effectively without God's power, His love, and a sound mind.

It has been said, *"If a person fears Satan's persecuting power more than he trusts God's ability and ever-readiness to help, he has lost his mental balance. "*

9. Paul outlines the Gospel in verses 9-10. List some of the key points.

10. What are we "not" called according to? What other Scriptures support this?

11. How did Jesus destroy death? Read Romans 3:21-26, 6:20-23, and Hebrews 2:14-15. How did He bring us life and immortality?

Spend some time thanking the Lord for destroying death and bringing us life. What a miracle that truly is. I pray that we will allow the Holy Spirit to empower us and fill us with love and self-control as we continue to serve Him.

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory. Have you experienced the explosive, dynamic power that only comes from the Spirit of God?

1. Let's finish our lesson by reading 2 Timothy 1:6-18 again.
2. For what reason does Paul say that he is suffering? (vs 8-12) Does the suffering make Paul want to quit? What should Timothy be willing to do?
3. Read verses 12-14. What is God's responsibility? What was Timothy's?
4. To what does Paul say to "holdfast"? What does that mean?

In verse 12, the phrase "keep what was committed" means to "guard my deposit." In verse 14, the "good thing" that Paul talks about is the Gospel of truth. In verse 12, it is not quite clear what Paul means. What "deposit" is Paul referring to? There are two interpretations of this verse.

- The deposit which has been entrusted to me (which would be the Gospel)
- The deposit which I have entrusted to Him (which is my salvation)

Some believe that Paul is saying that he deposited his soul in the care and keeping of the Savior, and Paul knew that God would faithfully guard that. This God, who is able, is trustworthy. Amen to that!

5. How can we "keep" the treasure of the Gospel? (vs 13-14)
6. Who deserted Paul?
7. Who stood by his side? What was Paul's prayer for him? (Present and future)

Some believe that Phygellus and Hermogenes were possibly leaders in the church who wouldn't come to his defense in Rome. Perhaps they were ashamed, or fearful. Why were these two men specifically mentioned? Were they good friends of Paul who had really let him down in his time of need? Were they in a position where they could help Paul by appearing on a witness stand, but didn't?

Onesiphorus showed mercy to Paul in his prison, and Paul asked God to show him mercy in return. We don't know anything about this man either, except that he was not ashamed of the Gospel, or of Paul's chains.

His name means "profit-bearing." God used him to refresh Paul in his time of discouragement, as well as during Paul's ministry in Ephesus. The word refreshed means "to cool again." Onesiphorus had to search diligently for him. We aren't sure why. Maybe he didn't know his way around Rome, or recognize it after the fire. Maybe the prisoners were kept in secluded areas, unknown to the majority of people. We don't have any answers, but we know this; God was faithful to Paul in sending him a brother to encourage him, and Onesiphorus was a faithful friend, risking his own life and reputation to minister to a friend in need, and support the Gospel of truth.

8. What are some practical ways that we can **HOLD ON** to and **GUARD** sound doctrine?
9. Are you ashamed of the Gospel? Have you ever been asked to defend your faith? What happened?
10. Why do you think we act like we're ashamed of the Lord at times? What are we afraid of?
11. Have you ever felt like your friends abandoned you because they were ashamed of the Gospel? What happened?
12. What are some ways that we can refresh a friend who is going through difficult times? Is there a friend you need to diligently search for today who needs refreshing?
13. Have you ever had a friend come alongside and refresh you during a difficult time? Why not drop a note of thanks to them, letting them know how God used them in your life. This is a way to refresh them back!

The Amplified Bible translates refreshing as "bracing me like fresh air." Let's be a breath of fresh air to those who are hurting. Let's encourage those in ministry to "keep on" ministering! Let's hold on to the truth, and never be ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Swindoll said that 2 Timothy is a great book for anyone who feels like throwing in the towel! Do you feel like quitting? Don't! Remember, God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love and of a sound mind! That's a "Reason to Rejoice"!

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Ready and Faithful

2 Timothy 2 **LESSON 19**

Paul ends chapter 1 on a sorrowful note, mentioning that many in Asia have turned away from him. He commends Onesiphorus for standing with him, being unashamed of his chains. Here in chapter 2 Paul seems to exhort Timothy that even if everyone forsakes him and the truth, Timothy should stand strong!

This is my favorite chapter in this book (although I think I say that every week!). Paul does a great job in using metaphors to describe a Christian, and in challenging Timothy to rise to the occasion. I enjoy Paul's use of words to paint us a picture that we all can understand.

Someone once said that 2 Timothy chapter 2 should be read weekly by every person involved in Christian ministry. It's very rich with application.

I pray that this chapter gives you a better understanding of what being a Christian is all about. I also pray that along with receiving great insight, our hearts will be changed as we continue to walk with the Lord.

First Day

As you read this chapter, remember that Paul is writing this letter from prison while chained to a soldier, 24/7.

1. Read 2 Timothy 2 in one sitting. What is your first impression of the chapter? Write your thoughts.
2. Did you find any repeated words, phrases, or thoughts?
3. What is the main point of this chapter as a whole? What is Paul's purpose in writing?
4. Make a list of the metaphors that you find, along with the Scripture reference.

5. Which metaphor specifically spoke to your heart as you read this chapter for the first time? Why?
6. Read 2 Timothy 2:1-5 again. List the facts you find. What would you title this section?
7. What challenges do you find in this section?
8. What is the very first thing Paul reminds Timothy in verse 1? Why?
9. What does Paul tell Timothy to do in verse 2? Why?

In chapter 1, Paul told Timothy that he was to hold on to the faith and guard the deposit (2 Timothy 1:13-14), but that wasn't enough. Timothy was also supposed to pass it on! He was to teach "faithful men" who would then pass it on to others. The truth went from Christ to Paul, from Paul to Timothy, from Timothy to faithful men, from faithful men to others. The truth is like a torch that we hand off from generation to generation. These faithful men are considered "stewards" of God (Titus 1:7), because God's Word and His people would be committed to their trust (1 Corinthians 4:1-2).

Are you passing on the truth? Is His Word burning like a torch in your life, affecting all those around you? Paul tells us to be examples to all believers (1 Timothy 4:12). Are you committed to telling all your family and friends the truth?

I pray that we will teach others all we know about Christ. The Gospel is a "deposit" that we have been entrusted with. Let's share the wealth, shall we?

Memory Verse of the Week: "The Lord knows those who are His, and Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity. " 2 Timothy 2:19b

Second Day

Work on memorizing your verse. It sure is a black-and-white verse, isn't it?

There's so much in this chapter, it's incredible. In order to get through this lesson, we may not be able to go as in depth as we would like. Please take the time for additional study in those areas that God is speaking to you.

1. Read 2 Timothy 2:1-5 again. How is a "good" soldier supposed to endure hardships?

2. What do you think Paul may have learned from watching the soldiers in his prison?
3. Notice that Paul doesn't just say to be like any soldier. What can be the difference between a "good" soldier and a "bad" soldier?
4. How do Christians today get "entangled" with the affairs of this life?
5. What is the goal of the soldier, according to verse 4?

A soldier is supposed to be "single-focused." He should have both eyes on the goal so he won't be distracted. A Christian should also have both eyes focused on the Lord so He won't become distracted with the things of the world.

6. Is there anything that is entangling you right now? How does one get "untangled"?
7. Are there any hardships that you are being called to endure? What should you do?
8. What is Paul saying in verse 5?
9. What rules might an athlete be called to follow? What rules are the Christians supposed to be following?
10. Are you competing according to the rules? Can you say that obedience is the goal of your Christianity?
11. Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. How do we "run to win"?

You know me. If I could, I would spend the entire lesson on the similarities between a Christian and an athlete. Don't worry, you're safe. But spend some time today meditating on all the ways we are supposed to be like an athlete. (Endurance, perseverance, diligence, commitment, loyalty, discipline, etc.) Let God speak to your heart as you continue to "train yourself in godliness" (1 Timothy 4:7).

Third Day

What's your verse? Are you departing from iniquity?

1. Read 2 Timothy 2:6-13. Observe and list the facts you find. What is the mainpoint of this section?
2. What challenges do you find in this section?
3. Why is a farmer considered a "hard worker"? Why is Paul saying that Christian service is hard work? Do you find that to be true in your own life?

Paul says that a teacher must be faithful, a soldier must be single focused, an athlete must play fair, and a farmer must work hard. Bishop Maule describes a farmer like this: *"totally devoid of excitement, remote from all glamour of peril and applause."* A farmer receives no harvest unless he works hard at his work. Paul often tells us that Christian service is hard work (1 Timothy 5:17, Colossians 1:29-2:1, 1 Timothy 4:10).

Paul says that a farmer must be first to partake of his crops. A minister must first receive from God before he can give to others. He also must know the blessings of the truth before he can explain that to others. *"The preacher must get great joy out of seeing planted seeds bear fruit in the lives of others. Farming is hard work, but the rewards are worth it."* (Warren Wiersbe)

In verse 7, Paul is telling Timothy to consider, think over, reflect on, or ponder what he's saying, and the Lord will be faithful to give him understanding.

4. Why does Paul bring up Jesus Christ in verses 8-9?
5. List the ways that Jesus was the example of everything that Paul had been saying.
6. Why does Paul call it "my" Gospel? (Read Galatians 1:12, 2 Timothy 1:11, 2 Timothy 1:13,14)

Paul knew that Jesus Christ and His Resurrection would be a great encouragement and example to Timothy. Paul reminds him that Jesus rose from the dead, proving His deity. He was from the seed of David, speaking of His humanity. When we are tempted to avoid pain, suffering, or hard work, we should think of Jesus, that "fragrant forget-me-not."

7. How was Jesus a:

- *Faithful teacher?*
- *A focused soldier?*
- *An obedient and fair athlete?*
- *A hard working farmer?*
- *A victorious minister?*

8. What did Paul mean by the phrase "the Word of God is not chained"?

9. Why is that such an encouragement, especially to Paul and Timothy?

10. Why is Paul able to endure his sufferings?

11. Read the "faithful sayings" in verses 11-13. Why does Paul call it that? Rewrite this section in your own words. Which phrase is especially meaningful to you today?

Like I said before, there is so much in this chapter. We could take each phrase in verses 11-13 and spend an entire lesson just on that. I pray that you will be encouraged to die to yourself, endure hardships, and be faithful. Just knowing that He is faithful, even when I am not, encourages me to strive to be even more faithful! We get to live and reign with Jesus forever! Isn't that an exciting "Reason to Rejoice"?

Fourth Day

Study your memory verse. Are you one of His? If so, do you strive to "depart from iniquity" daily?

In the next two sections, Paul uses three more metaphors to describe the Christian and the ministry: a diligent workman, a vessel of honor, and a gentle servant.

1. Read 2 Timothy 2:14-19. Observe and list the facts. What is the main point of this section? What is the key verse, or verses?
2. What "things" is Paul referring to in verse 14?

The phrase "rightly dividing" means "to cut straight. It has been translated as "cutting a path or a road in a straight direction, so the traveler may go directly to his destination." When used in plowing terms, it can mean "dividing a straight furrow in your proclamation of truth. " (Stott) The teacher is to handle the Word of God accurately and carefully, not confusing it or falsifying it. He stays on the straight path, making it easy for others to follow.

Paul compares a good workman who has been approved with a bad workman, who has reason to be ashamed. The word "approved" means to have been tested like metal, and has been found "tried and true." They have passed the test. Those who have not been approved have failed the test and have reason to be ashamed. Paul uses Hymenaeus and Philetus as examples of this. Hymenaeus was mentioned in 1 Timothy 1:20.

3. Compare a **"good"** workman with a **"bad"** workman. What are the characteristics of each?

Good Workman

Bad Workman

4. What is an example of "striving about words to no profit, "profane and vain babblings," or "foolish and ignorant disputes"?
5. What will be the result of engaging in this kind of talk?
6. How should a Christian respond? (2 Timothy 2:15, 16, 21-25)
7. Why is verse 15 such an important truth?

Those who "strayed concerning the truth" believed that the resurrection had already past. " These false teachers were denying any bodily resurrection to come. They believed in spiritual resurrection only. (Compare this with verses 8 and 11.)

8. What did Paul say about the resurrection of the dead? Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-19. Why is this a central part of the Gospel?
9. Are you a **"good"** workman or a **"bad"** workman? Are you diligent in the way you handle the Word of God? Are you diligent in studying the Word? Have you strayed, or "missed the target" concerning the truth? Do you avoid godless chatter?
10. Why does Paul compare false teaching with cancer? What does he mean? Have you ever been witness to this?

Paul reminds Timothy that even though man may be in error, God remains secure! Paul says that the church is the solid foundation! (1Corinthians 3:9-17, Ephesians 2:19-22).

Warren Wiersbe said, "The foundation of the house is safe and secure because God's seal is on it." God's true church is made up of those who are His (John 10:14), and it is immovable. Remember that Paul said the church was the "pillar" or "support" of the truth! (1 Timothy 3:15)

At that time, there was an ancient practice of engraving inscriptions on buildings to portray their purpose. (Guthrie) God's foundation has a two-fold inscription, or seal. One is invisible, one is visible. The first is that the "Lord knows who are His," and He will keep them safe forever. The next one is public; "let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity. " His life will be proof that he belongs to the Lord. Most scholars believe that this is referring to the story of the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram in Numbers 16:5, 26. A seal implies authority, ownership, protection, and guarantee. This seal reminds us of God's decree. His divine ownership and protection seals us. The seal also reminds us of man's responsibility. Those who are His will choose to depart from sin!

11. Write your thoughts on verse 19. (Is God's seal on you? Are you part of His church? If you claim to be one of His, are you departing from sin? Have you chosen to live a godly life? What would the seal across your heart read?)

12. From this section, what especially ministered to your heart, or challenged you? Are there any changes you need to make in your life as a result?

We know that truth honors God, promotes godliness, edifies others, and builds up faith, love and holiness. Error, on the other hand, dishonors God, deceives and damages man, turns people away from the Lord. May we always be concerned with the truth of His Word. I pray that we would never stray from that truth. Lord, keep us going in the right direction!

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory. How did it minister to you this week?

Let's wrap up this chapter by looking at two more pictures: a vessel and a servant.

1. Read 2 Timothy 2:20-26. Write the facts you find. What is the main point of this section? What is the key verse? What would you title it?

Paul paints a picture of a house with many types of utensils, pots and pans, etc. He puts them in two categories.

2. Describe the different kinds of vessels found in the house of God.
3. What is Paul's point in verses 20-24? What does this have to do with verses 16-19 and 23-26?
4. How does a vessel become sanctified and useful?
5. Are you a vessel of honor? Have you allowed God to make you useful? Have you been cleansed, emptying yourself of your own will and desires? (Are you still sitting on the shelf?) How is God using you? Be specific.

The Lord called Paul a "chosen vessel of Mine." (Acts 9:15) Paul also said that we have this treasure (the Gospel) in earthen vessels (2 Corinthians 4:7). We are all vessels, of some kind.

6. Write a description of what you would look like if you were a "vessel."

7. According to verses 22-23, what are we supposed to be pursuing? Avoiding?

The vessel in the house now becomes the servant, or slave. He is under the authority of God. He is not only called to teach, but to correct error. How he does that is an important issue.

8. How does Paul describe a servant of the Lord? Why are the characteristics he lists in verses 24-25 so important for a minister (or any Christian)?

9. Why must correction always be done in the spirit of humility?

10. Think back over the week. When you had to correct someone, did you do it in humility, gentleness, and patience?

11. What is the goal of correction?

12. What does Paul mean by the phrase "escape the snare of the devil"?

Behind the scenes, there is always a spiritual battle. Satan is like a hunter who tries to capture, snare, or trap his game. A servant of the Lord is to try to rescue those who have been taken captive by the enemy, using the truth of God's Word. People translate verse 26 one of these three ways: (1) they are delivered from the snare of the devil who took them captive to do his will; (2) they are taken captive by God's servant to do God's will; (3) they are delivered out of the snare of the devil, who took them captive, to do God's will. I personally prefer the first interpretation.

13. Has anyone ever come alongside you to "rescue" you from the snare of the enemy? How did they do it? Did you receive it?

14. According to this chapter, are we supposed to avoid all controversy?

15. From this chapter, what are some traps that we should avoid? What are some things that we should follow?

See you next week, ladies! Stay on the path of the truth!!!!

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Ready and Faithful

2 Timothy 3

LESSON 20

This week we will be studying 2 Timothy chapter 3. After Paul encourages Timothy that his character must be built on truth, he now warns him that there are terrible times ahead. Despite the ungodliness, he must abide in the truth. The Word of God will "equip him for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:17) Let's examine our hearts as Paul lists some characteristics to watch out for. Let's look at them as a mirror ... what will we see? I pray we will honestly evaluate our attitudes in the light of God's truth.

First Day

1. Read 2 Timothy 3:1-17. How would you title this chapter? What is the main point? Are there any repeated thoughts, words, or phrases?
2. How would you describe the tone of this chapter? How does it relate to chapter 2?
3. What is Paul's purpose in this chapter?
4. When does Paul say that this will happen? Did he believe Timothy would see this take place?

What does Paul mean by the phrase "the last days"? In the New Testament, this term refers to the beginning of the ministry of Jesus Christ and will continue until He returns. God is completing His purposes for His people. Homer Kent says, "Within this period of the last days, which was already extended more than nineteen centuries, shorter 'seasons' will be set in. These will occur from time to time (even during Timothy's lifetime), but conditions will become progressively worse." Timothy was living in this grievous time. There will also be "times and seasons" during these last days, and as it gets closer to the return of Christ, things will get worse.

5. Do you think what Paul describes is present in our world today?
6. Is Paul describing unbelievers or those who profess to be Christians? How do you know?

7. Observe and list the facts in verses 1-7.
8. What two reasons does Paul tell Timothy this, according to verses 1 and 5?
9. List the characteristics that Paul mentions in verses 2-7. How many did you find?
10. Are you surprised by any in this list? Are you convicted by any?

That's it for today. Paul wanted Timothy to understand that these things were going to happen. He wanted Timothy to have a realistic view of what was happening in the world. Things were not going to get better. This can be discouraging, but remember verse 19 from our last chapter: "The solid foundation of God stands. " In a world full of lies, the truth will win out! That's a promise, and a "Reason to Rejoice!"

Memory Verse of the Week: "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." 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Second Day

Study your memory verse. This is a crucial one to know.

1. Read 2 Timothy 3:1-7 again. "Love" seems to be emphasized. What did men love?
2. What seems to be the root of the problem? Let me give you a hint ... it starts with a "P".)
3. List each characteristic Paul gives us. Write a word or phrase for each one that means the opposite, which is what a Christian should be.

4. God has a lot to say about pride. Look up the following Scriptures. What do they teach us about pride?

a. *Psalms 12:3*

b. *Psalms 101:5*

c. *Proverbs 6:16-19*

d. *Proverbs 13:10*

e. *Proverbs 16:18*

f. *Proverbs 29:23*

g. *Proverbs 16:5*

h. *1 John 2:16*

i. *1 Peter 5:5*

5. What do you think is suggested by people who are "disobedient to their parents"?

6. How can unthankfulness become a form of rebellion?

7. What does Paul mean when he says, "having a form of godliness, but denying its power" ?

The people that Paul was describing actually considered themselves to be religious. They probably went to worship services, sang the hymns with the congregation, and maybe even served in the church. Unfortunately, they had a religious appearance, but not a true conversion. They had "*form without power, outward show without inward reality, religion without morals, and faith without works.*" (John Stott)

8. Does this describe anyone you know? Maybe it describes you at one time. (It does me!) What is the danger of this?
9. Look over the list again. Do any of the character traits describe you? Are there any changes you need to make?
10. Pride is the result of loving and worshipping yourself. Has pride crept into any area of your life? How can we guard against pride?

We'll end here for today. I pray that we are not unloving, unforgiving, unthankful, or unholy people. I hope that each one of us will examine our hearts to see where we stand. Take an honest look. Let's be open to what the Holy Spirit has to say to us.

Third Day

What's your memory verse?

1. Read 2 Timothy 3:1-9. Whom did these ungodly men prey upon? Why?
2. What do you think the phrase "loaded down with sin" means?
3. Do you think Paul is saying that only women can be deceived in this way?

"Gullible" was a term of contempt used for women who were idle, silly, and weak. Paul was just using a common expression of the day. These women seem to have been overwhelmed in the guilt of their sin, clutching at any promise of solution. They appeared to be confused, willing to listen to any teacher. Though they were searching for easy answers, they never arrived at the truth.

4. Can you think of an example of this scenario today?
5. Why is it that someone with a conscience heavily burdened with sin can be drawn to false teachers?

6. What two men does Paul use as examples of those resisting the truth?
7. According to Jewish commentaries, these men are two of the magicians that tried to defeat Moses in the court of Pharaoh. Read chapter 7 of Exodus. What did the magicians do in this story?
8. Why does Paul compare the men he has been describing with Jannes and Jambres?

Satan is an imitator. He tries to imitate everything to distract us and draw us away from God. Just as these magicians tried to imitate everything Moses did, the religious leaders had a counterfeit faith, attempting to imitate the truth.

9. Were the magicians' tricks revealed to all? Read Exodus 8:18-19 and 9:11. Will the truth be revealed concerning these false teachers?
10. Read 1 Corinthians 4:5. How is this a comfort?
11. Are you carrying around a burden of guilt, looking for anything to relieve the weight? Look no further. Romans 8:1 tells us that there is "now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus". When you confess your sins to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive you (1 John 1:9). Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow (Isaiah 1:18). ***Will you give Him your guilt today?*** See you tomorrow, ladies!

Fourth Day

Practice your verse. Do you believe that all Scripture is inspired by God?

1. Read 2 Timothy 3:10-17. Observe the facts you find. What is the main point of this section? What would you say is the key verse?

2. What does Paul commend Timothy for, right off the bat?
3. Read Acts 13:4 through 14:28. Describe Paul 's persecutions at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra.
4. Why do you think Paul brings up the persecution he suffered now?
5. How would hearing about Paul' s persecutions be an encouragement to Timothy?
6. Has the lifestyle of another, especially during hardships, been an encouragement or an example to you? Who, and how?
7. Do you think your manner of life has been an example to someone else? Would you want them to follow your example?
8. Why does he stick verse 12 out there in the middle of the discussion of evil men?
9. Why will all the godly suffer persecution? Read John 15:18-25, James 1:2-4 and 1 Peter 1:6-7 to help with your answer.
10. Will things get worse?
11. Do you think Paul is boasting in himself in this section? Why or why not?

The life Paul lived was a testimony for the Lord. The suffering he endured proved his sincerity. The man definitely lived what he preached. He knew that it was only by God's grace and mercy that he could do what he did, and endure what he endured. Paul was simply giving the glory to God. Paul had most likely met Timothy on his first missionary journey in Acts 14. These memories were probably very dear to both Paul and Timothy' s heart. Again, they could look back and see the faithfulness of God.

12. Can you think of a specific time when you were being persecuted, or going through a heavy trial, and God was incredibly faithful to you? (Was there ever a time He wasn't?) How does that encourage you today?
13. Write a prayer of thanksgiving, honoring God for His faithfulness.

Let's end here for today. Tomorrow we get to read about the sufficiency of Scripture. I love that topic! For now, think of five reasons that you have to rejoice today.

Fifth Day

Write out your verse from memory. How has it ministered to you this week?

1. Let's read 2 Timothy 3:10-17 again. What does Paul exhort Timothy to do in verse 14?
2. Timothy's mom and grandmother taught him Scripture from his childhood (2 Timothy 1:5). What are the Scriptures able to do?

Timothy knew the Bible. He made his confession of faith when he met Paul. His family had laid a great foundation for him. How about you?

3. Are you, or have you been, teaching your children the Scripture? Have you made the commitment to do that? What are some practical ways you can teach small children the Word? Should we stop when they get older?

4. Answer the following questions:

a. Where did Scripture come from?

b. What is it profitable for?

"Given by inspiration of God" come from the Greek word "theopneustia," which means "God-breathed." The Bible does not **contain** the Word of God, or **become** the Word of God, but it **is** the Word of God. I want you to read this paragraph by John Stott on this section of Scripture: *"The Greek single word 'theopneustos' would be literally translated 'God breathed' and indicates not that Scripture itself or its human authors were breathed into by God, but that Scripture was breathed or breathed out by God. 'Inspiration' is doubtless a convenient term to use, but 'spiration' or even 'expiration' would convey the meaning of the Greek adjective more accurately. Scripture is not to be thought of as already in existence when subsequently God breathed into it, but as itself brought into existence by the breath or Spirit of God. There is no theory or explanation of inspiration here, for no reference is made to the human authors, who (Peter says) 'moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God' (2 Peter 1:21). Nevertheless, it is clear from many passages that inspiration, however the process operated, did not destroy the individuality or the active cooperation of the human writers. All that is stated here is the fact of inspiration, that all Scripture is God-breathed. It originated in God's mind and was communicated from God's mouth by God's breath or Spirit. It is therefore rightly termed 'the Word of God' for God spoke it."*

5. Do you believe that the Bible is God-breathed? If so, do you seriously take the time to read it, study it, meditate on it, and memorize it?
6. What Scripture in the Bible reveals our need for a Savior? What Scripture reveals God's plan for salvation?
7. How is the Bible like a mirror to our soul?
8. How is the Bible profitable for:
 - a. doctrine?
 - b. reproof?
 - c. correction?
 - d. instruction in righteousness?
9. What does God's Word do for us, according to verse 17? How?
10. How has God's Word equipped you specifically for good work?

11. The Bible has been called **"the heart of God in the words of God."** (Isn't that a pretty saying?)
What exactly does it mean?

12. Read Romans 15:4. What does this verse say about the Scriptures?

13. How can the Word of God equip you for:

a. marriage?

b. motherhood ?

c. friendships?

d. suffering ?

e. life, ingeneral?

God loves us so much that He wrote a love letter to us. He wants to speak to us daily, minute by minute. Are you spending time listening to Him? He has so much to say. I pray that we would fall in love with His Word, which contains His heart for us.

***"How sweet are Your words to my my taste,
sweeter than honey to my mouth."***

Psalm 119:103

[illegible]

Ready and Faithful

2 Timothy 4 **LESSON 21**

In our lesson last week, we learned what it means to be equipped by God's Word. Paul brings all his thoughts together here in chapter 4.

Remember as you read this last chapter, these are the last spoken or written words we have from our friend Paul. His freedom was not guaranteed, and he knew it. I believe his heart ached as he realized that he might never see his friend Timothy again. In this chapter we read Paul's final farewell, which is full of practical lessons and instructions for Timothy, as well as the church today. It is the climax of not only this one epistle, but of Paul's entire earthly life. We feel a sense of urgency in his voice, full of authority and warning. I pray that knowing these are his last words will make you pay extra careful attention to what they say. After all, it may be Paul's hand, but it's the Holy Spirit's voice!

First Day

1. Read 2 Timothy chapter 4 in one sitting. What do you think is the main point of the chapter?
2. In what way does chapter 4 summarize the first three chapters?
3. How would you describe Paul's tone? Can you detect his emotions? How? Does he show them?
4. Are there any key words, phrases, or thoughts in this chapter?
5. What similarities do you find in verses 1 and 8? Why is this significant?
6. How many people does Paul name in this chapter? Does this tell you anything about Paul?
7. Does this chapter tell you anything about Paul's character?

8. Does Paul mention any regrets?

9. What practical lesson first jumped out at you as you read this chapter?

10. Paul mentions Mark in verse 11. Why is this significant? (Read Acts 13:13, 15:37-41.)

We'll end here for today. Paul gets pretty serious as he wraps it up. There are so many practical lessons and challenges for us in this chapter. I pray that His Word changes our very heart this week, and we "catch" Paul's urgency for preaching the Word!

Memory Verse of the Week: "Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching." 2 Timothy 4:2

Second Day

Work on your memory verse.

Even though this letter is written to a young pastor, it applies to every Christian. Keep that in mind as you read through this chapter.

1. Read 2 Timothy 4:1-5. Observe and list the facts you find. What would you title this section?

2. What does Paul "charge" Timothy to do? (A "charge" is a forceful order.) Whom does Paul call as his witness?

Paul again reminds Timothy that Jesus Christ would be coming back for His church (1 Timothy 6:14, 2 Timothy 4:8, Titus 2:13). He makes this charge in the presence of God as his witness. God will be both the witness, and the judge of all.

3. How can verse 1 be considered an incentive for verse 2?
4. What was Timothy told to preach? Unfortunately, what other things are preached from the pulpit?
5. What does the phrase "be ready in season and out of season" mean?

While Timothy preaches the Word, he is called to convince, rebuke, and exhort. A preacher must present a balanced message as he preaches. There is a time to correct, but a time to encourage. He must be sensitive to the Holy Spirit to know when each is appropriate.

The word "**preach**" means to herald publicly. **Convince**, or "**reprove**," means to correct misbehavior of false doctrine. This word has the sense of motivating the listener to confession or conviction of sin, helping them to understand that what they're doing is wrong. The word "**rebuke**" is a pronouncement of reproof or blame that requires humility and forgiveness, not condemnation. The goal is to bring the erring person to repentance. "**Exhort**" means to remind a person of previously taught knowledge in order to influence him to act upon it. Its methods range from a gentle "you can do it" to an urgent "get moving." The Greek verb "**parakaleo**" is related to the noun "parakletos", the title given to the Holy Spirit in John 14:16. It literally means "to be called alongside" to help someone. After the preacher corrects or rebukes them, he must come alongside them in love, encouraging them to apply what they have learned.

6. Why are all the above necessary in a preacher's message?
7. With what attitude should the preacher do this? Why is this so important?

Timothy was to be ready at all times to share God's Word. Verse 2 in the Amplified Bible reads this way: "Keep your sense of urgency ... be at hand and ready, whether the opportunity seems to be favorable or unfavorable, whether it is convenient or inconvenient, whether it be welcome or unwelcome."

8. "But I'm not a preacher" you might say. Besides giving a formal message, how can we "preach the Word" on a daily basis?

9. Are you "ready at all times"? Do you take advantage of the opportunities God gives you throughout the day to preach His Word? Does convenience play a part?

Paul had previously discussed false teachers and their doctrine. Persecution of the church was becoming more and more severe. More and more false teachers were surfacing. Also, some were not willing to **"endure"** or **"tolerate"** sound doctrine. Sound doctrine is often a stinging rebuke to ungodly living, and many do not want to deal with it.

10. What will happen to those who don't want to endure "sound doctrine"? What does it mean to want your "ears tickled"?

11. Paul again speaks specifically to Timothy and what he's called to do. What does he exhort Timothy to do in verse 5?

"Be watchful" in verse 5 also translates "to be sober in all things." This means to be level-headed, well-balanced, steadfast, and self-controlled.

12. Practically speaking, what does it mean to be "watchful in all things"?

We're going to end here for today, but we will pick this verse up again tomorrow. It's a very important verse for us to understand. It has deep meaning for those who are believers in Christ.

Third Day

What's your memory verse? Do you know it yet? How is it speaking to your heart?

Timothy had been told before that he was called to endure hardships, or to suffer evil. Paul again reminds him that a faithful ministry involves sacrifice, and is costly.

1. Read 2 Timothy 4:5-8.

2. Explain the difference between "doing the work of an evangelist" and "being called as an evangelist." (Ephesians 4:11)
3. As a pastor, should evangelism be Timothy's entire ministry? Explain your answer.

This word evangelize is used in relation to the call of every Christian to be a witness for Christ and proclaim the Gospel to a dying world. We all have a responsibility to herald the good news of salvation, and do the work of an evangelist.

4. Are you "doing the work of an evangelist"? How does this tie in with "ready in season and out"?
5. What do you think Paul means by the phrase "fulfill your ministry"? Considering what Paul says in verses 6-8, why is this so vital?

The word "fulfill" gives the idea of bringing to completion, with eagerness and wholeheartedness. The Living Bible says, **"Leave nothing undone that you ought to do."**

6. What is your ministry? Are you fulfilling your ministry, whatever that may be? Have you been leaving anything undone that God has called you to do?

Paul knew that his time was short. This was the final period of his life and ministry. Although he knew his time was short, he did appear to believe he would see Timothy again (vs 13-21). It was up to Timothy now to carry on the work of the ministry. As Joshua had followed Moses, and Elisha followed Elijah, now Timothy must follow Paul.

7. Paul gives a brief testimony in verses 6-8. He had been ministering for about 30 years. How does Paul describe his life in ministry?
8. Does Paul seem to be depressed or in despair? Did he fear death?

In verse 6, Paul says that he is "being poured out." This Greek verb is literally used in connection with a libation or drink offering (Genesis 35:14). As commanded in Numbers, Israel and the Gentiles who lived among them gave burnt offerings of animals, grain offerings, and a drink offering (Numbers 15:1-10). Paul was most likely thinking of his imminent death as an offering in the service of Christians and their faith. Wilbur Wallis said, *"His whole life had been a sacrifice (Romans 12:1), and now his death would complete his life with a drink offering."* Paul had hope in death because of Jesus Christ.

9. In your own words, explain what Paul means by each of these statements:

I have **fought** the good fight.

I have **finished** the race.

I have **kept** the faith.

10. Why does Paul compare his Christian life to a race? Describe Paul's course.

Bottom line, Paul is saying that he lived his life to the fullest. After he allowed the Lord to have control of his life, he went full steam ahead, in the power of the Lord. He obeyed the call that God placed on his life. He had no regrets, no unfinished business. He knew that he had fully accomplished all that the Lord called him to do. That's what he was telling Timothy to do when he said, "fulfill your ministry!"

11. Would you be able to make that claim? If not, how can you start living your life with that goal?

12. We obviously haven't finished our race yet. We're still running. Describe the course that you are on.

13. If you're getting tired, what should you do? (Read Isaiah 40:28-31)

14. Do you know anyone who is getting weary in their race? What can you do to encourage them?

15. What reward is Paul looking forward to? (vs 8) What is the reward for? Is it only for Paul?

16. Do you fear death, or do you know someone that does? What Scriptures can you share with them (or you) to remind them of the hope we have, even in death?

I love this section of Scripture. Paul is eagerly waiting his crown. He was faithful to the Lord and was **so** ready to be with Him forever. As he handed off the torch, I wonder if Timothy's hand was shaking. His dear friend who had led him to Christ, mentored him, taught him, and trusted him, was now handing the responsibility to him. It was time to step into those shoes and work on fulfilling his own ministry! The coming of Christ, who will be the judge of all, people's unwillingness to endure the Gospel, Paul's time drawing to a close, and the crown he was looking forward to ... these were all reasons that Timothy was to **"PREACH THE WORD!"**

17. Are you looking forward to His appearing? Is your heart set on it? Will you be ready for it? Are you eagerly waiting for His Second Coming? Does your life reflect that? In other words, can you say, with Paul, "there is a crown of righteousness laid up for me"?

See you tomorrow!

Fourth Day

Study your verse. How does it challenge you this week?

1. Now let's read 2 Timothy 4:9-22. List the facts you find. Did you learn anything new? What point ministered to you?
2. What is the main point of this section? What would you title it? What would you choose as the key verse?

Paul ends this letter to Timothy describing his present situation in prison. Paul was a people person, and we sense that he was lonely. This section really shows Paul's human side with human feelings. Often we think of him as some "super" saint, but in the flesh, Paul was just like us. We can sense his deep love for Timothy because of his obvious desire to see him. He began this letter telling Timothy how much he wanted to see him again (2 Timothy 1:4), and he ends the letter the same way. I'm sure Timothy's heart was blessed to feel Paul's love for him seep through the pages of this final letter.

3. Although Paul finished his race well, Demas didn't. What do we know about Demas from Colossians 4:14 and Philemon 24?
4. Why did he forsake Paul?
5. After reading this section, answer the following questions:
 - a. *What needs did Paul have?*
 - b. *Who deserted Paul?*
 - c. *Who stayed with Paul?*
 - d. *Whom did Paul desire to see?*
 - e. *Who was sick?*
 - f. *Why did Paul warn Timothy about Alexander?*
 - g. *Even after everyone left him, who stood by Paul? Why?*

According to verse 17, Paul continued to preach the Gospel. Paul was an example to Timothy, not only in his life, but in his death. He exhorted Timothy to "Preach the Word," and Paul did the same!

We don't know who Crescens is (vs 10), only that he is a faithful man. Paul sent him to the people in Galatia, whom he had a special love for. Paul visited the churches in Galatia on all three missionary journeys. Titus we will get acquainted with next week as we begin studying the book of Titus. Tychicus carried letters from Paul in the past to other churches (Ephesians 6:21,22, Colossians 4:7,8, Titus 3:12), and was quite possibly the one who was going to take this letter to Timothy. We don't know anything about Carpus, or why Paul left his cloak with him. Priscilla and Aquila are familiar to us (Romans 16:3, Acts 18:2, 18:26, 1 Corinthians 16:19), as well as Onesiphorus (2 Timothy 1:16-18). Erastus may be the man found in Romans 16:23 and Acts 19:22. We can read about Trophimus in Acts 20:1-6 and 21:29. Unfortunately he is sick and has to be left in Miletus. The four mentioned in verse 21 (Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, and Claudia) are unknown to us, except they must be faithful servants of the Lord.

6. Who stood with Paul at his first defense?

Most commentators believe that this "first defense" refers to the first hearing, or first investigation of this case. According to Roman law, Paul could have called witnesses to testify for him. Alfred Plummer says this, *"among all Christians in Rome there was not one who would stand at his side in court either to speak on his behalf, or to advise him in the conduct of his case, or to support him by a demonstration of sympathy."*

We're not sure what the charges against Paul were. We know from history what some of the accusations were against other Christians at the time. They were said to have committed all sorts of evil crimes. John Stott wrote this, *"Christians were supposed to be guilty of horrid crimes against the state and against civilized society. They were accused of atheism, cannibalism (because they spoke of eating Christ's body), and even of general hatred of the human race (because of their supposed disloyalty to Caesar and perhaps because they had renounced the popular pleasures of sin). It may be that some of these charges had been made against Paul. Whatever the case, he had no one to defend him but himself. This moment was Paul's Gethsemane."*

7. Have you ever felt abandoned by your friends and family? What did you do? What did Paul do? Where did he get his strength?

8. Is Paul showing signs of weakness because he is sharing his personal need with Timothy?

The books that Paul is referring to in verse 13 are rolls of papyrus, less expensive than the animal-skin parchments. F.F. Bruce said that *"what the parchments were which Paul so particularly desired Timothy to bring we cannot be sure, but it is a reasonable guess that they contained portions of Holy Scripture."*

9. If you were in prison, what do you think you would ask your friend to bring you? Would it include your Bible?

Verse 17 is an encouragement to each of us when we feel like we're standing alone. We're not. The Lord will never leave us or forsake us. He didn't leave Paul, and He won't leave you!

10. Do you feel like you're standing alone in some situation in your life? The Lord wants to be your strength. How do we receive that strength?

What "**lion**" is Paul referring to in verse 17? No one knows for sure, but here are a few suggestions:

- *Emperor Nero Himself, because of his cruel nature (He was called a lion by some.)*
- *The Devil (1 Peter 5:8)*
- *Paul's human prosecutor in court*
- *The overwhelming peril he was in*

John Stott calls Paul a "New Testament Daniel" because the Lord shut its mouth to protect him. I like that! The Lord wants to protect us from the lions in our life as well.

11. What does Paul say the Lord will deliver him from, in verse 18? (death?)

12. Is there a lion in your life that is after you? Whatever, or whoever it is, the Lord wants to protect you too. Will you continue to allow God's message to be preached as you endure afflictions, whether it be by your words or your life?

Wow! What a chapter! Tomorrow we will be taking one more peek at this chapter, as well as an overview of 2 Timothy. As you've studied this week, has God shown you any "Reasons to Rejoice"? Paul was in prison, yet he was still so full of praise and thanksgiving. Can you follow his example, and praise God in whatever circumstance you're in?

Fifth Day

Write out your verse from memory. I pray that it makes an impression on your heart this week.

1. How did Paul end this letter? Look back to 2 Timothy chapter 1 to see how he began this letter.
2. Thinking back over this book, does Paul ever refer to what size Timothy's church should be? Does he talk about the wealth of the church?
3. What do you think makes a church fruitful, or considered a "good church"?

4. Read over the book of 2 Timothy again. Look for the common thoughts that tie it all together. It's a good idea to re-read a book to reinforce what you learned, as well as to return to the author's purpose in writing it. Is it clearer now? Do you understand things better in light of having seen the whole picture? JI Packer calls this the "spiral" approach to Bible study. Our view of the purpose often changes after a closer look.

As you read each chapter, jot down one point or verse that specifically ministers to you.

Chapter 1:

Chapter 2:

Chapter 3:

Chapter 4:

5. List some practical lessons that are taught in this book. How can you apply them?

6. After reading this book, how would you describe Paul?

7. From studying this book, what did you learn about:

- *The character of God?*
- *Your own character?*
- *Christian leaders?*

- *Our witness to the world?*
- *Our responsibility to pass on the torch?*

8. Have you accepted the challenge to pass on your faith? Timothy was called to be faithful to his generation. Where are the men and women who will be faithful in ours? Is it you?

Soon after Paul wrote this letter, tradition tells us that Paul was tried and executed by Nero. James Stalker wrote this:

"In all history there is not a more startling illustration of the irony of human life than this scene of Paul at the bar of Nero. On the judgment seat, clad in the imperial purple, sat a man who in a bad world had attained the eminence of being the very worst and meanest being in it -- a man stained with every crime, the murderer of his own mother, of his wives and of his very best benefactors; a man whose whole being was so steeped in every namable and unnamable vice that body and soul of him were, as someone said at the time, nothing but a compound of mud and blood; and in the prisoner's dock stood the best man the world contained, his hair whitened with labors for the good of men and the glory of God.

The trial ended, Paul was condemned and delivered over to the executioner. He was led out of the city with a crowd of the lowest rabble at his heels. The fatal spot was reached; he knelt beside the block; the headsman's axe gleamed in the sun and fell; and the head of the apostle of the world rolled down in the dust. The city falsely called eternal dismissed with execration from her gates; but ten thousand times ten thousand welcomed him in the same hour at the gates of the city which is really eternal."

Question: Why would Paul work so hard and endure so much? Why would he go to his grave? Why did he have so much joy? Why was he so driven?

Answer: **Jesus Christ!**

"Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected, but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead. I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 3:12-14

See you next week!

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Ready and Faithful

Titus – Overview & chapter 1 **LESSON 22**

This week we will begin our study of the third "Pastoral Epistle" written by Paul. It's always so exciting to start a new book! We're going to meet a new character, a man named Titus. He is not as well-known as Timothy, but just as important to the ministry of the early church. He was also a "son of the faith" to Paul. There are some similarities between Timothy and Titus, as well as some definite differences. I'm totally excited to learn more about Titus and his roll in the church.

This letter has been called "priceless and unrivalled manual of pastoral advice." Even though this book is considered a "pastoral Epistle," it is extremely practical for every professing believer. Martin Luther said, *"This is a short Epistle, but yet such a quintessence of Christian doctrine, and composed in such a masterly manner, that it contains all that is needful for Christian knowledge and life."* It's only three chapters in length, but I pray those chapters make a deep impact on our hearts. Remember to pray before you study each day, asking the Holy Spirit to speak to your heart in each verse. May we be changed as we then apply those truths to our everyday life. Have fun!

First Day

Today we will be learning some of the history behind the book of Titus. It will involve some reading, but it's important for us to understand who wrote this book, why it was written, to whom it was written, and other facts. When we understand more of the purpose behind the book, every chapter makes a lot more sense. So sit back, get comfortable (but not too comfortable!), and have fun reading.

Who is Titus?

1. Read the following verses. What do they say about Titus?

a. *Titus 1:4-5*

b. *2 Corinthians 2:13*

c. *2 Corinthians 7:6-7, 13-15*

d. *2 Corinthians 8:16-17*

e. *Galatians 2:3*

f. *2 Timothy 4:10*

Titus was one of Paul's most trusted and faithful companions. Although his name is not found in the book of Acts, Paul mentions him 13 times in his Epistles. The name Titus was a common Latin name in that day.

His parents were both Greek, and they may have lived in Antioch of Syria (Galatians 1:21, 2:1). It is thought that Titus was most likely converted through Paul's ministry. Here is a brief character sketch of Titus, written by Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa:

"This convert of Paul ("my true son in our common faith" 1:4) was probably from Syrian Antioch, if he was one of the disciples of Acts 11:26. Paul brought this uncircumcised Greek believer to Jerusalem (Galatians 2:3) where he became a test case on the matter of Gentiles and liberty from the Law. Years later when Paul set out from Antioch on his third missionary journey (Acts 18:22), Titus must have accompanied him because he was sent by the apostle to Corinth on three occasions during that time (see 2 Corinthians 2:12-13, 7:5-7, 8:6, 16-24).

He is not mentioned again until Paul leaves him in Crete to carry on the work Titus 1:5). He was with Paul during his second imprisonment but left to go to Dalmatia (2 Timothy 4:10), possibly on an evangelistic mission. Paul spoke of this reliable and gifted associate as his "brother" (2 Corinthians 2:13), his "partner and fellow worker" (2 Corinthians 8:23), and his "son" (Titus 1:4). He lauded Titus' character and conduct in 2 Corinthians 7:13-15, 8:16-17. Sometime after Paul's release from his first Roman imprisonment, he spread the Gospel on the island of Crete and left Titus there to finish the work of organizing the churches. "

Here is a summary of his ministries with the apostle Paul:

1. He accompanied Paul and Barnabas to the Jerusalem council of Acts 15. (Galatians 2:1-4)
2. He was Paul's representative at the Corinthian church during Paul's third missionary journey to alleviate tension there (2 Cor. 7:6, 13-14), and to collect money for the poor (2 Cor. 8:6, 16, 23).
3. He was Paul's representative at the Cretan churches after Paul's release from the first Roman imprisonment (Titus 1:4-5).
4. He had a ministry at Dalmatia (2 Timothy 4:10).

Titus did not get circumcised, as Timothy did. Charles Swindoll calls him a *"living reminder of salvation by faith, alone -- and of God's opening up of His Kingdom not only to the Jews but to every nation, tribe, and tongue."* Unlike Timothy, Titus was not timid or fearful. Not only was Titus capable of handling the problems in Corinth, the island of Crete -- where Paul instructed him to go -- was full of problems and sin. Titus proved himself to be courageous, zealous, and wise. *"He knew how to handle the quarrelsome Corinthians, the mendacious Cretans, and the pugnacious Dalmatians."* (Merrill C. Tenney)

The Island of Crete

The Island of Crete was a Roman province, located southeast of Greece. It is 160 miles long and 30 miles wide. Seafaring traffic from around the world stopped at this island. This coastal town was heavily populated and was described by a writer as "neither peaceable among themselves, nor very patient of foreign dominion." The Cretans had a bad reputation, both morally and socially. It was not an easy place to minister. The Cretans were known for untruthfulness and immorality. A poet named Epimenides, who was a native of Crete, wrote this in the sixth century; "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." Paul quotes this in Titus 1:12. Leonides wrote, "Cretans are always brigands and piratical, and unjust." The phrase "to act a Cretan" came to mean "to play the liar." Do you have a sense of this place where Titus was to begin organizing churches? Not a pretty picture. But Titus stuck it out,

zealously ministering the Gospel of Jesus Christ in this place that needed to hear the Truth in a big way!

We don't know for sure how the church at Crete was started. We don't know if Paul started it, or whether some Jews who were present at Pentecost took the Gospel back to their land (Acts 2:11). Paul didn't go to Crete on his missionary journeys, but visited it briefly after his release from his first Roman imprisonment. This is when he left Titus there to organize the church. Paul wrote this letter about the same time he wrote Timothy, around 62 A.D., perhaps from Corinth. He then wrote 2 Timothy during his second imprisonment.

In his commentary on Titus, Irving Jensen compares the Pastoral Epistles like this:

1 Timothy:	Predominantly pastoral	Theme: Guard the Gospel (6:20)
Titus:	Less pastoral	Theme: Practice the Gospel (3:8)
2 Timothy:	Mainly personal	Theme: Preach the Gospel (4:2)

Jensen also shows us the likenesses and differences between the men themselves:

Likenesses

Both were young and gifted
Both were co-workers of Paul
Both served in difficult church situations

Differences

Timothy

Half-Jew
Circumcised by Paul
Served at Corinth and Ephesus
Nervous and retiring personality
Prominent in Acts

Titus

Wholly Gentile
Uncircumcised
Served at Corinth & Crete
Strong and stern personality
Not mentioned in Acts

We will end here for today. I know this was a lot of reading, but I hope you got a good picture of who Titus is. Tomorrow we will take a look at the book as a whole before we begin looking at it chapter by chapter.

This also is important to help us understand Paul's purpose in writing, as we look for a common thread that runs throughout the book.

Memory Verse of the Week: "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you ... " Titus 1:5

Second Day

Study your memory verse. This is one of the key verses of the book because it gives us one of Paul's purposes for writing. Hopefully this will help you remember in the future what Titus is all about.

1. Read the book of Titus through in one sitting. As you read, begin looking for the theme of the book, reasons why Paul was writing, key words, etc. Don't list them yet, just have that in mind as you read.
2. What is your first impression of the book?
3. What similarities do you notice between the book of Titus and 1 Timothy? (They are sometimes called the "twin epistles.")
4. What specific groups does Paul address?
5. Do you notice any repeated words, phrases, or thoughts through the book?
6. What is Paul's purpose, or purposes, in writing?
7. Write a brief summary statement for each chapter, stating the main point. Choose a key verse from each chapter.

Chapter 1:

Chapter 2:

Chapter 3:

8. What specific problems do you think Titus may have been facing in Crete as he organized the ministry?

9. Does the book of 1 Timothy or Titus seem more personal? Which one was centered more on doctrine? On conduct?
10. What immediate application do you see for yourself upon first reading?

Isn't this a great book? Tomorrow we will begin studying chapter 1 in more depth. Have a good day. By the way, have you made the "**Choice to Rejoice**" today? Let's do it!

Third Day

What's your memory verse?

Both 1 Timothy and Titus contain encouragement, instruction for church leaders, and how to deal with false teachers. It seemed like Paul emphasized good doctrine in 1 Timothy, whereas in Titus he emphasizes good conduct. (Although he doesn't leave doctrine out entirely) It is said that the main theme of Titus is "the maintaining of good works as a demonstration of saving faith" (2:11-14, 3:4-7).

1. Read Titus chapter 1. Then reread verses 1-9. Observe and list the facts you find. (key words, purpose, theme, etc.)
2. Why do you think Paul gives such an elaborate greeting?
3. What are some main points of his greeting?
 - a. What does Paul call himself?
 - b. Who are God's elect? (Ephesians 1:4)
 - c. How is "godliness" acknowledgment of the truth? (In other words, how does the truth and godliness go together?)
 - d. What hope does our faith give us?
 - e. What do we base that hope upon?
 - f. What is something God cannot do?

4. How is God's Word manifested?

The preaching of God 's Word was committed to Paul, and now he commits it to Titus, just as he had to Timothy. Another baton passed in Paul' s spiritual relay race!

5. Why does Paul call their faith "common" in verse 4? Why is that important in light of what Paul says in verses 10-16?

6. Rewrite Paul' s greeting in your own words, just for fun!

7. How does knowing that we trust in a God "who cannot lie" encourage you today?

8. What do we know about God's promises?

a. 1 Kings 8:56

b. Romans 4:20-21

c. 2 Corinthians 1:20

d. 2 Timothy 1:1

e. 2 Peter 1:3-4

f. 2 Peter 3:4-10

g. James 2:5

h. James 1:12

9. As believers, we are promised many things in Scripture. Can you list any promises that we have in Christ? (Give verse if possible)

We can stand on God's promises in His Word. That is so comforting and encouraging. As believers, He promises us so much: eternal life, access to the Father, our names written in the Book of Life, joint heirs with Him, the ability to overcome trials, and much more. I am so grateful that we serve a God who cannot lie, who never changes, and who never leaves us. What more can we possibly ask for?

10. Take some time to meditate on the promises of God. Pick one or two and ponder them throughout the day. I pray that God will comfort your heart with His Words of truth.

Fourth Day

Are you memorizing your verse?

Paul jumps into his main subject immediately. He gets right to the point. He exhorts Titus to take charge of the situation by appointing some godly elders to lead the people. In verses 10-16, Paul exhorts Timothy again to take charge by opposing false teachers.

1. Read Titus 1:1-9 again. What group of people is Paul addressing in verses 5-9?

2. Why did Paul leave Titus in Crete? What was he supposed to do?

It appears that Paul had already given Titus directions on choosing leadership when they were together. He now reinforces that command. Perhaps he tells Titus again to refresh his memory, to confirm his authority in case there was a problem, and for the generations to come.

The phrase "**set in order**" is a medical term, which refers to the setting of a broken limb.

3. Describe how a doctor would set a limb. (Hopefully!) Why do you think Paul chose this word?

4. Remember from our study in 1 Timothy, the words bishop and elder are interchangeable. List the qualifications for elders that Paul mentions. Compare them with the ones given in 1 Timothy chapter 3. Are there any new ones mentioned?

This young church in Crete was in desperate need of some godly leadership. Titus was to appoint, or ordain, men for leadership whose character was in line with the principles of God's Word. Paul knew that God doesn't like unfinished business, and there was much to do in Crete!

5. What does the word "dissipation" or "insubordination" mean?

6. What qualities must an elder "not" have?
 7. Describe what it means to be "self-willed."
 8. Would you consider yourself to be a self-willed Christian? What about a self-willed wife? Mother?
 9. Why shouldn't an elder be quick to anger, or hot-tempered?
 10. What does it mean to be "a lover of what is good"?
 11. Are you a lover of good, or a lover of... not so good? (Do you love that which is virtuous? Do you love to do what is beneficial to others?) Does your life reflect that love?
 12. What does the elder need to know the Word well enough to do, according to verse 9?
- William Hendriksen defines self-controlled as "*possessing the moral strength to curb or master one's sinful drives and impulses*". The elders are supposed to cling to and apply the sound doctrine found in Scripture, as well as, be able to expose the error of those who rebel or contradict the truth.
13. How well do you know the Word? Do you know how to apply the Scriptures to your life? Do you know the truth well enough to recognize the lie?

We see again the need for Godly leadership. We are also reminded that good doctrine encourages good behavior. Let's "holdfast the faithful Word as we've been taught," shall we?

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory.

Paul obviously didn't think the problems that the church in Crete was facing were unsolvable. In this section we find out why it 's so important for the elders to know the Truth and be able to recognize false teaching. We also see how quickly false teaching invades the church.

1. Finish up by reading Titus 1:10-16. Observe and list the facts in this section. What is the main point of this section?
2. Answer the following questions concerning the false teachers:
 - a. What was their character like?
 - b. What did they actually do?
 - c. What was their motive?
 - d. How do we know they weren't believers?
 - e. What was the result of their teaching?
 - f. What was Titus supposed to do? How was he to handle this problem?
 - g. Was this a small problem? (vs 10)

Early churches often met in people' s homes, which explains why "whole households" could be affected. Their lies were dangerous and needed to be stopped! Paul quotes the poet, Epimedes, in verse 12, and agrees with his summary of the people of Crete. They were liars, evil, and lazy! They were condemned by one of their own prophets! Paul says, "their mouths must be stopped". This phrase meant to "stop the mouth by means of a bridle, muzzle, or gag". This was to be done by Titus and the elders.

3. What was the motive of rebuking them? What was the goal? (vs 13)
4. What do you think "those of the circumcision" were doing? (vs 10) Who were they?

The Jews taught man-made laws concerning things that were "clean" and "unclean." They were calling certain food unclean that God had declared clean, or permissible to eat. They were teaching that Jewish dietary laws still applied to Christian believers (1 Timothy 4:3-5). Jesus Himself said, "It's not what goes into a man but what comes out of Him that defiles him" (Matthew 15:11). Paul also said "nothing is unclean in itself" (Romans 14:14). Here in verse 15, Paul is saying that every creature was created by God and not unclean for consumption. It is not the impure thing which makes men impure, but it is impure men who make every pure thing impure. "Defilement takes its rise within, not through things from without" (Mark 7:15).

Paul is saying that it's the teachers that have defiled minds and consciences, and sin had defiled their vision. Wiersbe says, "It's not the foods which are defiling the teachers; it is the teachers who are defiling the foods. " Their own conscience has been seared with a hot iron (1 Timothy 4:2).

5. How does Paul sum up the false teachers in verse 16?
6. Are we able to tell if someone is really a born-again Christian, or only one who is professing to be? Give Scriptures for your answer, if possible.
7. Check out your heart. Is it filled with the truth? Is your faith backed up by works? Look over the list of qualifications again. Are there any you need to work on? How would Paul describe you to Titus?

***"Grace, mercy, and peace
from God the Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
our Savior."
Titus 1:4b***

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Ready and Faithful

Titus 2 **LESSON 23**

We ended our lesson last week with Paul wanting Titus about idle talkers and deceivers who professed to know God, but in works denied Him (Titus 1:10-16). Here in chapter 2, Paul draws a contrast between their behavior and the lifestyle that Titus should exhibit. Paul not only wants Titus to be an example to others, but he wants him to teach the body to do the same.

This is a great chapter, especially for us. Paul, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, deals with some specific areas of our lives as Christian women. He describes what is sometimes called the "Titus 2 woman", giving us some clear principles upon which to govern our lives. Let's listen up!

This chapter has been given some great titles by commentators: "The Lifestyle of a Christian", "Christian Character in Action", "How to Have a Healthy Church", "Making Christian Doctrine Attractive by Example", and "Advising Others". Obviously this chapter is very practical and applicable for our lives today. Before you begin, spend time in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to prepare your heart for the wonderful jewels He has in store for you this week!

First Day

1. Read Titus 2:1-15. What do you think is the main thought of this chapter? What is the key verse? Are there any repeated words, thoughts, or phrases?
2. How would you describe the tone of this chapter? What would you title it?
3. List some contrasts between chapter 2 and chapter 1, verses 10-16.
4. Read Titus 2:1-10 again. Observe and list the facts. Who is Paul talking to? What groups of people? Why is he writing? What is his purpose?

5. Read verses 11-15. List the facts you find. What is the main point of this section? Who is he talking to? How is it different than the first section?
6. What immediate application do you see for yourself?
7. Which people "group" do you find yourself in at your present stage of life? Is any group given permission to "take a break" from their Christian responsibility?

Let's end here for today. Tomorrow we'll jump into the chapter, verse by verse. Until then, think about the answer you gave to question #6. How can you apply what the Lord showed you in a practical way?

Memory Verse of the Week: *"...in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned..."*
Titus 2:7-8a

Second Day

Study your memory verse. Is your life a "pattern" for others?

Chapter 1 dealt with the reason to protect sound doctrine, and chapter 2 exhorts the church to practice sound doctrine. Paul now instructs Titus what to teach to the members of his church. The false teachers were teaching lies, but he was called to teach those things that are healthy and fitting for sound doctrine. Wiersbe said, *"What germs are to a physical body, false teaching is to a spiritual body, the church."*

1. Read Titus 2:1-5. What does Paul mean by the phrase "proper for sound doctrine"?
2. Paul gives Titus instructions on how to teach various age groups, gender, or occupations. What does this tell us?

3. List the exhortation Paul gives to the following groups (include verses):

- a. Older Men:
- b. Older Women:
- c. Young Women:
- d. Young Men:

The word "sober" in verse 2 means "to be temperate or self- controlled, especially in the use of wine." "**Reverent**" means "**serious**" or "**dignified**". "**Temperate**" describes a man who is prudent and exercises self-control over all things in his life.

4. Why do you think an older man should be exhibiting these characteristics? How are these marks of spiritual maturity?
5. Paul tells the older men to be healthy in three things. What does it mean to be healthy in:
- a. Faith?
 - b. Love?
 - c. Patience?
6. If an older man is healthy and mature in faith, love, and patience, how can that be an encouragement to a young man?

Years should teach us to trust God more, not less. The experiences we go through in life should make our faith stronger. Love for God and others should abound more and more as we grow closer to Him. Our tolerance and patience with others should increase. Years of experience should teach us to sympathize with the mistakes of others, and make us willing and able to bear more and more.

7. Do people always grow in their faith, love, and patience, as they get older? Why or why not? What can happen as we age?
8. Even though these instructions were given to the older men, we would be wise to take heed. As you get older, what's happening to your faith? Your love? Your patience?
9. How can we make sure that our faith, love, and patience continually grow stronger?
10. Paul begins his exhortation to the older women with the word "likewise." What does that infer?

We'll stop here for now. I pray that as your faith is tried, it will also be strengthened. Ask the Lord to **"grow you up"** healthy!

Third Day

What's your memory verse? What does integrity mean?

1. Read Titus 2:1-5 again. What does "reverent in behavior" mean?
2. What is slander? What do the following Scriptures say about it?
 - a. Psalm 52:2-4
 - b. Proverbs 10:18
 - c. Proverbs 16:27-30
 - d. Ephesians 4:31

3. Why is it so important for older women to guard against slander? What damage can be done? (How should years teach them to know better?)
4. Older women are supposed to be "teachers of good things." Why can young ladies learn so much more from older women on specific issues?
5. What are the "good things" they are supposed to be teaching?
6. What are some ways that this teaching can be done?
7. What does Paul say is the primary responsibility of the younger women?

Wiersbe writes, "*The Christian home was a totally new thing, and young women saved out of paganism would have to get accustomed to a whole new set of priorities and privileges.*" It has also been noted that the greatest priority in the home is love!

William Barclay said, "*It is a simple fact that there is no greater task, responsibility and privilege in this world than to make a home. There can be no greater career than that of homemaking. Many a man, who has set his mark upon this world, has been enabled to do so simply because someone at home loved him and tended him.*" Paul says the older women should teach them how to love their families, and how to live godly lives.

8. Write your thoughts on the quote from Mr. Barclay. (Does it encourage you? Convict you? What are some things that can distract us from taking care of our home?)
9. What are some practical ways that we can show our family our love?
10. Time to peek at our priorities. Is loving your husband and your children your primary goal and focus? Have other "things" been getting in the way? Are there any changes that need to be made?
11. What does it mean to be "discreet" and "chaste"?

12. "Good" can be translated "kind." Read Proverbs 31:26. Does this describe you?

Being a homemaker simply means to care for the home, or guide the house, so to speak. Her home is her first ministry.

13. How is God honored and glorified when a woman is obedient to verses 4-5?

14. Read verses 4 and 5 again. Is God being honored by your lifestyle, in how you take care of your home, and how you love your family? Are you chaste and discreet (Pure of mind and self-controlled?)

15. As an older woman (you are ALL older than someone), are you being a "teacher of good things"? Is there someone specific that you can come alongside of that may need some help and guidance on these issues?

Who is mentoring our young girls and teenagers? Who are their role models? (Madonna?) Who is teaching them how to live their life? Ladies, that's our job. Paul instructs Titus to teach the older women to do it. That's you and me! The younger women are called to listen and glean all they can from the experience of the older women. Are you doing that? Do you have a teachable spirit and an open heart to learn all you can?

Wow, what a section! We could spend all week just on these verses. Let's take them to heart, ladies. They were written specifically for you and me. Let's teach, and let's be taught!

Fourth Day

Spend time meditating on your memory verse. Is your speech sound?

1. Read Titus 2:6-10. Why is the instruction for young men summed up in one statement? (Sober minded means to be "self-controlled," or "to display sensibility") Why do you think the young men are specifically given this exhortation?

2. What kinds of dangers or temptations do young men face?

I thought what William Barclay wrote about this was interesting: "In youth the blood runs hotter and the passions speak more commandingly. The tide of life runs strongest in youth and sometimes threatens to sweep a young person away. In youth, there are more opportunities for going wrong. Young people are thrown into the company where temptation can speak with a most compelling voice. There are more opportunities to make shipwreck of life. In youth there is often that confidence which comes from lack of experience. In almost every sphere of life a younger person will be more reckless than his elders, for the simple reason that he has not yet discovered all the things which can go wrong. For that reason, the first thing at which any young person must aim is self-discipline and self-control. "He who rules his spirit is greater than he who takes a city" (Proverbs 16:32).

3. Do you exercise self-control and self-discipline? What areas do you need work on in this category?

4. If you have teenagers, are you training them in this virtue? Name some ways that we can teach our kids to exercise self-control.

Paul now tells Titus that his life needs to demonstrate the things that he's teaching. His life would be the best witnessing tool. Titus needed to make sure he was putting into practice and applying all these truths to himself.

5. According to verse 7, what was his life supposed to show?

6. Define:

a. integrity:

b. reverence:

c. incorruptibility:

d. sound speech:

The word "**pattern**" comes from the Greek word "tupos." This is where we get our English word "type." This word originally meant, "an impression made by a die." His life should be one that makes a lasting impression on others.

7. Explain in a practical way what it means to live a life of integrity. How are Christians who have no integrity one of the biggest stumbling blocks to the unbelieving world?
8. Is your life making an impression on those around you? What impression is it? How are you affecting your friends, your family, and your co-workers?

When I think of a pattern, I think of the kinds that are used when sewing a dress. You lay the pattern down, and cut the fabric to match (at least I think so!). Think of our life as that type of pattern. If you laid it out, would you want others who want to know Christ to cut out their life to fit yours? Is yours the correct pattern to follow? Are there any "pattern changes" that need to be made?

9. Sound speech is so important. Read James 3:1-12 and summarize it in your own words. Which part speaks to your heart?
10. Paul tells Titus to exhort servants in verses 9-10. List the things he says **to do**, and then the things **not to do**.

Servants, do this:

Servants, don't do this:

In the early church, many slaves were getting saved, and they were bound to unbelieving masters. Paul is reminding them that the witness of their life may be the thing God uses to win their master to Christ. How important it was for them to be obedient, not answer back, not pilfering (stealing), but living with integrity. Paul didn't want them to revolt, but to submit! Someone said that it "was the task of the workman to show the master what a Christian could be."

11. How does this relate to Christian employees today? How does your attitude affect your witness?
12. What does it mean to "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things"?

"Adorn" is from the Greek word "kosmeo", meaning to "put in proper order." Irving Jensen says: *"an illustration is the arrangement of jewels in such a manner as to show forth their full beauty. By godly living, Christians can add lustre to the doctrine of God our Savior."* Workers are encouraged to work in good faith, so they will make the teachings about our Lord attractive in every way.

13. How does living faithfully "beautify the Bible", or make the Christian message attractive to unbelievers?

14. You know it... I have to ask you this question! Does your life "beautify the Bible," or make the things of God look attractive?

These are great verses, aren't they? God's word is so specific and to the point. I love it! Ladies, let's **"Rejoice"** that God loves us so much that He wants to use us to share His truth with others.

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory. I hope you studied it!

1. Let's wrap up this chapter by reading Titus 2:11-15. What verse and phrase talks about:

- a. The atonement (reconciliation of the guilt by divine sacrifice)
- b. Our redemption (redeem means to "set free by paying a price")
 - Who redeems us?
 - How?
 - Why do we need to be redeemed?
- c. Our sanctification (our process of purification)

2. What are we to leave? How are we to live? Who are we to look for?

Verse 13 reminds us to look forward to the return of Christ, which is our hope! This is the motivating factor to do all that Paul is exhorting us to do! He also boldly declares that Jesus Christ is God!

3. Does Paul say that Jesus "was killed"? What does he say? Why is this significant?

4. What does Paul say about "grace"? Do we "save" ourselves?

The word "**special**" better translates as "**peculiar**." It means "one's own possession." We are God's peculiar people. Not because we're weird, but because we belong to Him, we're His own possession. In 1 Peter 2:9, Peter calls us a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own peculiar people..." Did you know that you're peculiar?

5. Verse 14 says that Jesus redeemed us for Himself. What does this tell us? (Galatians 3:13, 1 Peter 2:24, Romans 3:21-26)

6. What are His "peculiar" people supposed to be zealous for? Why?

We know that we are saved by God's grace. Jesus paid the penalty for our sins by willfully dying on the cross. We were slaves of sin, and His death on the cross redeemed us, or set us free from the bondage of sin. No longer does sin have to control us. The grace that saved us also gives us the ability to live godly today. His grace is purifying us and conforming us into His image (Romans 8:29). This is called the sanctification process, where we are separating ourselves from sin while devoting ourselves to God. We will be rewarded when we meet Him face to face at His appearing!

7. How does knowing that you are one of God's peculiar people encourage and bless your heart?

8. As a Christian, have you ever felt "peculiar" in the sense of just feeling very different? Sometimes we do feel like we just don't "fit." Is that okay? Explain the difference between living **IN** this world, and living **FOR** this world.

9. What is Paul's final exhortation to Titus?

In verse 15, "speak" may be translated as "proclaim" or "teach." Paul again reminds Titus, as he did Timothy, that his role as an elder was to teach or proclaim the Word, exhort and encourage the church, and rebuke or call to conviction the body when needed. The pastor should be willing to exercise his authority, according to the will of God.

10. Let's review for a few minutes, shall we?

a. Does the way you live your life prevent anyone from slanderous you?

b. Are you being a living example of what you're teaching?

- c. What example can we take from older saints? How can we encourage them in the Lord, reminding them how important it is that they share their wisdom with us?
- d. What kind of employee are you?
- e. Are you a faithful "homemaker"?
- f. Are you looking forward to the glorious hope of our Lord?
- g. Is your life marked with the signs of maturity, faith, love, and patience?

Charles Swindoll said: *"Jesus saved us, not only so we could belong to Him, but also so we would live like we belong to Him."* As Paul shares these instructions for living with Titus, we notice that no matter where we live or how old we are, we are called to be *"set apart 'from this world. We never have an excuse to live in rebellion, or walk according to the flesh"* (Galatians 5:16).

Next week we will finish up our very last lesson in the book of Titus. Paul concludes his letter to Titus with a wallop, as usual. But for now, take a few minutes and write a prayer of thanksgiving to the Lord for saving you, for redeeming you, and for sanctifying you. May God bless you as you seek to know Him by studying His Word!

***"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins,
according to the riches of His grace..."
Ephesians 1:7***

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Ready and Faithful

Titus 3 **LESSON 24**

In Titus chapters 1 and 2, Paul instructs Titus about how various groups of believers should behave. Paul then moves to the general behavior of all Christians in chapter 3. This is a very practical chapter, reminding us that our faith should be evident to the world by our works. Our works can't save us, but they are proof of our faith in Jesus Christ. The need for good works as a result of our salvation is stressed six times in these three chapters. Remember that one of the reasons Paul was writing to Titus was to teach him how to "set in order the things that were lacking" in the church at Crete (Titus 1:5). He ends this letter with some great exhortations for not only the Cretans, but for you and me as well. Before you read this chapter, ask the Holy Spirit to prepare your heart. Ask Him to reveal any sin that will hinder you from hearing what He has to say to you. Pray for ears to hear, a heart to receive, and hands willing to serve.

First Day

1. Read Titus 3:1-15. Read it again, listing any repeated words, phrases, or thoughts.
2. How would you break this chapter into sections?
3. What is the main point of this chapter? How does it relate to chapters 1 and 2?
4. What is the key verse?
5. Describe how Paul moves from behavior of specific groups to general conduct of all believers.
6. Did you learn anything new? Did you find any words you need to define?
7. How would you describe Paul's tone as he writes this chapter?
8. Upon first reading, what specific point of application jumped out at you?

9. William Barclay wrote: *"The Cretans were notoriously turbulent and quarrelsome and impatient of all authority. Polybius, the Greek historian, said of them that they were constantly involved in insurrections, murders and internecine wars."* How is this quote relevant to this chapter?

Let's end here for today. I'm looking forward to digging in, aren't you? Make sure you're reading with the purpose of applying it to your life. That's what it's all about, isn't it?

Memory Verse of the Week: *"This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men." Titus 3:8*

Second Day

Spend time memorizing your verse. Are you maintaining good works?

1. Read Titus 3:1-8. Observe and list the facts you find. Whom is Paul speaking to? Whom is he speaking about? Why? What would you title this section?
2. How should Christians respond to authorities? (Read 1 Peter 2:13-17 and Romans 13:1-7.)
3. If the Christian doesn't agree with the authorities, how should he respond? How can he be a good citizen without compromising his faith?
4. Why is a Christian that is a good, law-abiding citizen a great witness to the world?

A. Duane Litfin said this: "A Christian should be an influence for good in the community in every way, demonstrating the loveliness of Christ to all through courteous and gracious behavior."

5. How is your witness in your community? In your neighborhood? Are you a law-abiding citizen?
6. How are we supposed to treat "all" people? Why?

The word peaceable means "tolerant" or "one who is not a fighter." The word gentle describes one whose temper is under complete control.

7. As a Christian, why is it so important that our lives demonstrate the things mentioned in verse 2?

In verse 3, Paul reflects on his past and reminds Titus that they had both acted the same way before they were saved. We can't be prideful when we preach, knowing that we were once in the same condition. If we remember what we were and where we came from, we won't be critical or treat others mean. Barnes said, "When a Christian is tempted to unkind thoughts or words toward others, nothing is more appropriate for him than to reflect on his own past life. "

8. How would you describe your past? Does remembering your past keep you from criticizing others?

The phrase "ready for every good work" means "cooperating in those matters that involve the whole community. " In other words, ready to do your part.

9. Are you "ready for every good work"? What do you think is your responsibility as a citizen?
10. Do you speak evil of people, including those in authority over you? Do you complain in an evil manner, especially in front of your children? Are you living peaceably?

Let's stop here for today. Tomorrow we'll read this section again, concentrating on verses 4-7. What awesome verses! These are some incredible "Reasons to Rejoice"!

Third Day

What's your memory verse?

Paul tells Titus to live peaceably, showing humility to all. After all, they used to be in the same condition. That goes for us too! When he saw a criminal on his way to the gallows, Whitefield said, *"There but for the grace of God go I."* How true. But something changed them. Someone, I mean! We were redeemed for a higher purpose!

1. Read Titus 3:1-8 again. What changed their lives?

The act of redeeming us was one of great kindness, or goodness. The plan of salvation was founded on God's love to man and was the highest expression of that love.

2. How are we saved? Is it based on anything we do? Why or why not? Read Ephesians 2:8-9.
3. What would happen if we could work, or earn, our salvation? Do people try to do this?
4. Who was poured out on us abundantly at salvation? Read Acts 2:38 and Romans 8:9.

God saved us because of His kindness, love, and mercy. He did this through the work of the Holy Spirit. We are "born again," being regenerated by the Spirit. (John 3:5,8) We become a new creature in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). Paul uses the phrase "washing of regeneration." This washing can mean "bathed all over." When a sinner accepts Christ and is born again, he is cleansed from all his sins, and is made a new person in Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit. The word "renewal" means to make new again and is closely linked together as two ways to express the work of one Spirit.

Has your spirit been regenerated? Are you born again? This is the most important decision you will ever make. All of us have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). All of us need a Savior.

Because Christ died for us and paid the penalty for our sins, God is prepared to extend mercy to us. He is rich in mercy, which means He has plenty of it! Romans 10:9-13 says, *"if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart-that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation. For the Scripture says, 'whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."*

If you don't know the Lord and would like to ask Him into your heart and accept Him as your Savior, please let your group leader know. She would love to pray with you and answer any questions you might have.

5. Do you remember what the word "justified" means? What are we justified by?

6. What is the result of God's kindness toward us, according to verse 7?

A good way to remember what the word "justified" means is, I've been made "just as if I've never sinned." Wiersbe defines it as *"the gracious act of God whereby He declares a believing sinner righteous because of the finished work of Christ on the cross. God puts to our account the righteousness of His Son, so that we can be condemned no more."*

7. Why does Paul call this "a faithful saying"?

8. What should be the fruit of a believer's life, according to verse 8? For what purpose were we created? Read Ephesians 2:10.

9. Why do you think Paul uses the word "maintain"?

God doesn't want our own good works. If we could earn or work for our salvation, we wouldn't need a Redeemer. The work of Christ would be unnecessary if we could "do" anything to earn our salvation. Isaiah 64:6 calls our righteousness "filthy rags." Although works can't save us, if our faith is real, it will be proved by works. A living and true faith manifests itself through good works. The Wycliffe Bible Commentary says that "the grace of God is the root; the good works are the fruit." God's grace produces faith, and good works will follow.

10. Read James 2:14-26. In your own words, explain what is meant by the phrase "faith without works is dead."

11. What do you think would be considered "good works"? How are they profitable to men?

12. Heart check. Would you say that you are being careful to maintain good works? Is your faith living or dead? Take some time and ask the Holy Spirit to examine your heart.

Warren Wiersbe said, "The only evidence the unsaved world has that we belong to God is our godly lives. " Think about it. Does your life provide enough evidence to convict you of being a Christian?

Fourth Day

Practice your memory verse.

1. Read Titus 3:9-15. Observe and list the facts in this section. What would you title it? What's the main point? What contrast do you find between verses 8 and 9?
2. What things does Paul tell Titus to avoid? Why?
3. Why is it wrong to argue about non-essentials of the faith? What are some topics that may fall into that category?

The word "divisive" in verse 10 means heretic. Heretic applies to one who holds some fundamental error of doctrine. This divisive man is usually one who causes divisions in the church instead of promoting unity.

4. What should you do with a divisive person? Should you act rashly?
5. What does the word "admonition" mean?
6. Why do you think such a one is "self-condemned"?
7. This may sound like a strange question, but do you think you would be considered divisive? Do you cause division with your discussions or arguments? Do you delight in quarreling? If so, pray and ask the Lord to change your heart, and give you the desire to promote.

8. Name the people in verses 12-15 and what Paul says about each of them.

9. Who was supposed to meet him in Nicopolis? Why?

We don't know anything about this man Artemas, except that Paul wanted either he or Tychicus to replace Titus on Crete so he could join Paul at Nicopolis. Tychicus was the bearer of the letters to the Colossian and Ephesian churches (Colossians 4:7 and Ephesians 6:21). We don't know anything about Zenas. Apollos was a well-known teacher, being "mighty in the Scriptures." (Acts 18:24) These two men must have been traveling together, possibly carrying this letter to Titus. They may have been sent by Paul to visit churches, and Titus was to make sure they had everything they needed.

10. Paul returns to the main theme of the book in his closing. What does he exhort Titus to do in verse 14?

11. Who is "our people"?

12. What needs do you think would be considered urgent? How willing are you to meet urgent needs?

13. Why do you think people who don't meet needs or do good works are considered "unfruitful"?

14. How does Paul close his letter to Titus?

Without works, a believer's life may be considered barren and worthless. The word "maintain" may mean "to be concerned with" but can also mean "to lead or rule." Some believe this to mean that Christians should be in the lead in doing good works.

Paul ends this letter in his typical "grace-ful" fashion. (Get it?) Tomorrow we will do some review. Grace be to you, dear ladies!

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory. How did it minister to your heart this week?

1. Let's review the book of Titus. Can you see the main theme any clearer now? Do you have a better understanding of what Paul is saying to Titus? Read each chapter over and write a specific Scripture or thought that ministered to your heart.

Chapter 1:

Chapter 2:

Chapter 3:

2. What are some practical lessons that are taught in this book? Which ones specifically spoke to your heart?
3. How can you be more of a "Titus 2" woman?
4. What does Paul say about sound doctrine in the book of Titus?
5. What similarities do you find between 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus?
6. What differences do you find between them?

Well, this is it. We've completed our study of 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, and Titus. I can't believe it! Time has flown by. I pray that you have grown as much as I have from studying these books. I have grown to love the character of Paul even more. I learned a lot about the young man Timothy, as well as Titus. In 1 and 2 Thessalonians, I was reminded to look forward to the return of Christ at any minute, and exhorted to live a holy life while I wait. In 1 and 2 Timothy I was challenged to guard, hold fast, and preach the truth. In Titus, we learned that our faith should produce good works, which will be a testimony to the world of who our God is!

Paul 's writings have instilled a passion in my heart to know the Word of God better. I want to be as close to the Lord as I can. I want to love Him with all my heart, and learn to love others as He does. I want to live my life in a way that honors and glorifies Him. I want to be able to say, "I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. "

7. How about you? Look through this year' s studies. What has made the biggest impact on you this year as we studied His Word together? In what ways have you grown:

a. As a Christian woman?

b. As a wife?

c. As a mother?

d. As a friend?

Well, this is it. It' s exciting to finish a book, but it's also kind of sad. I hope that you ladies grew in leaps and bounds this year. May God continue to speak to your heart as you study His Word, and may you find more "Reasons to Rejoice" everyday!

*"Your words were found, and I ate them,
and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart."*

Jeremiah 15:16

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.