

[INSTRUCTIONS OF GOD IN THE LETTERS FROM PAUL

DEDUCTIVE LESSON ONE

1 Thessalonians 1

Jeremiah 15:16 says, “Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; For I am called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts.”

Your purpose, in this study, is not simply to read and understand God’s word, but to ingest it, to internalize it, to draw the nutrients from it—just as your body does with food. And, like a good meal, you will find that adequate study will become a pleasurable thing—just as Jeremiah found it to be the joy and rejoicing of his heart.

How much time do you spend feeding your body each day? If you can sit at the dinner table for twenty minutes, surely you can spend just as long supping on the spiritual food of God’s Word.

Begin your time today, and each day, with prayer. Specifically, you can pray:

For absence of distraction.

For clarity of thought.

For the willpower to spend adequate time on your study.

For fellowship with the members of your group.

That you would not lean on your own understanding, but

That the Holy Spirit would direct your study.

Day One: Verse 1

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:1–10 and answer the following questions.

1. Who is this letter from and who was it addressed to?

(Silvanus is the Roman rendering of the name Silas.)

2. What two five-letter words does Paul use to greet them?

(You will find these two words paired together throughout Paul's writings.)

Let's learn a little more about how Paul came to know Silas and Timothy.

3. We first read about Silas in Acts 15:22. What does this verse tell us?

4. What does Acts 15:32 say about Silas?

5. Read Acts 15:33–40, and briefly describe what happened.

6. In Acts 16:1–5, Timothy enters the picture. What do these verses tell us?

7. How did the church at Thessalonica get its start? (Acts 17:1–4)

Scripture Memory: The title of this year's study is "Instructions From God In The Letters From Paul." We will be memorizing a group of these instructions, found in 1 Thessalonians 5:11–22. This week, we start with verse 11.

"Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing."
1 Thessalonians 5:11NKJV

Day Two: Verses 2–4

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:2–4 and answer the following questions.

1. What does verse 2 tell us that Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy always were constantly doing?

2. What do the following verses tell us about prayer?

Philippians 4:6–7

1 Thessalonians 5:17–18

Colossians 4:2

1 Peter 4:7

3. What three things did Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy remember, in verse 3?

4. These three are mentioned together in 1 Corinthians 13:13, as well. What does that verse say?

Terms and Definitions: Election

Verse 4 mentions the election of the saints in Thessalonica. Election is defined as “the gracious and free act of God by which He calls those who become part of His kingdom and special beneficiaries of His love and blessings.”ⁱ Election is closely tied to the concept of predestination, and we will look at both of these more closely, later in the study.

Scripture Memory: Fill in the missing words from memory.

“Therefore comfort each other and _____ one another, just as you also are doing.”
1 Thessalonians __:11

Day Three: Verse 5

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:5.

1. The word gospel simply means “good message” or “good news.” What does verse 5 say about our gospel message?

2. In your own words, what are the main points of the “good news” found in the Bible?

3. John 3:16 is arguably the most well-known and oft-quoted verse of the Bible, because it so clearly and succinctly summarizes the gospel message. Write out John 3:16 below.

4. What did Paul tell the believers at Rome about this powerful gospel (Romans 1:16)?

5. Many religions of the world have a gospel that comes "in word only." But the true Gospel is more than persuasive words and human wisdom. Why has God sealed his gospel with power and with the Holy Spirit, according to 1 Corinthians 2:4-5?

6. The gospel is not just something that God has done, but something He is doing, and will do. What good news do we find in Ephesians 2:4-7 about our future?

Scripture Memory: Fill in the missing words from memory.

"Therefore comfort each _____ and _____ one another, just as you also are _____." __ Thessalonians __:11

Day Four: Verses 6-8

Reread all of 1 Thessalonians 1, for review. Then answer the following questions.

1. What does verse 6 say about how the Thessalonians received God's word?

2. Acts 17:5–15 gives us an idea of the type of affliction these Thessalonian believers were dealing with. What happened in these verses?

3. What does 1 Thessalonians 1:7–8 tell us about the reputation of the Thessalonian church?

4. The Thessalonians had a reputation of faith and were said to be an example among other believers in Macedonia and Achaia (see map). What do the following verses say about the reputation of a Christian?

John 13:35

Romans 12:18

1 John 3:1, 3:13

Scripture Memory: Fill in the missing words from memory.

"Therefore _____ each _____ and _____ one _____, just as you also are _____." _____:

Day Five: Verses 9–10

Read 1 Thessalonians 8–10.

1. Verses 9 and 10 are one long sentence. Break it down into several shorter ones.

2. Before turning to the Lord, the Thessalonians practiced idolatry. In your own words, define idolatry.

3. Now use a dictionary or other reference to define idolatry (or idol).

4. What are some modern-day idols?

5. What do the following verses say about idolatry?

Galatians 5:19–21

Colossians 3:5

2 Corinthians 6:16

1 Corinthians 10:14

6. How did Jesus respond to the temptation of idolatry, in Luke 4:8?

Scripture Memory: Write this week's Scripture Memory verse completely from memory.

" _____

_____ " _____ : _____

Day Six: Personal Application

1. This letter to the Thessalonians (like so many other New Testament epistles) opens with the words grace and peace. Have you experienced the grace and peace that are found in a relationship with Jesus Christ? If you have not yet given your life to the One who bestows abundant grace and perfect peace, there is no better way to begin this study than by doing so through prayer. Talk to your group leader about what it means to become a follower of Christ and to taste of the grace and peace that He offers.

If you have already given your life to Christ, then describe the roles that God’s grace and peace have played in your life.

2. Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy prayed constantly for the Thessalonian church, giving thanks “always” for them. How is your prayer life? Unbroken, consistent, and filled with gratitude? If not, make a resolution now to commit more effort to prayer. Write down some specific ways you can make your prayer life deeper, broader, and more frequent. Do you need to write it into your schedule? Do you need to make a list of prayer requests? Do you need to claim a quiet place, a personal “prayer closet,” for your prayer time? Do you need to elicit the help of your wife? Do you need to form a prayer group? Whatever you think it will take, write it down and then do it!

3. God has not given us His gospel in word only, but in power and in the Holy Spirit. Spend a few minutes in prayer thanking God for the good news we have in Jesus. Ask for the power of the Holy Spirit to fill you and give you boldness to proclaim this good news to others. After this time of prayer, write down any thoughts you may have.

4. The Thessalonian church had a reputation of faith. How is your Christian reputation? Write down the names or initials of three people that you know are watching your example. Consider the fact that there are people you may never have considered as “watchers,” but who are also intently watching. They want to know if your reputation matches up with your example. Write the names or initials of three more people who could possibly be in this category. Now pray for each of these people by name.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

5. Write down some things that have the potential to be (or that you know to be) idols in your life—things that demand your worship and sacrifices. Ask God to keep you from these things, or to keep them in the right perspective, and to direct your worship to Him only.

<p>Scripture Memory: Write this week’s Scripture Memory verse completely from memory.</p> <p>“ _____ _____” _____:_____</p>
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¹ R. F. Youngblood. *New Illustrated Bible Dictionary*. Thomas Nelson Publishers. 1995. p389. Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures are quoted from the New King James Version.



Map obtained from:

http://www.lakesideministries.net/images/ActsMap_Macedonia_Achaia.jpg on 8/21/09.

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Prayer Requests:

Lecture Notes:
