

CONNECTGROUPGUIDE

Deeply Transformed | Serving Together

STANDING FIRM TOGETHER

1 Thessalonians



INTRO

What helps a church stand firm when following Jesus is difficult? In 1 Thessalonians, we meet a young church learning to live out its faith amid opposition. Paul writes with deep affection, encouraging these believers to grow in love, live lives that please God and hold onto the hope of Jesus' return.

Throughout the letter, we see a church called to live as family: sharing life and encouraging one another to keep trusting Jesus. As N. T. Wright and Michael F. Bird write in summary of 1 Thessalonians:

"It would not be an overstatement to say that when the church sees itself as a family, and acts like a family towards its members, it will not only succeed in caring for its own but also flourish in its mission in the world"

— N. T. Wright and Michael F. Bird, *The New Testament in Its World* (2019), p. 432.

As we explore this letter together, we'll consider how God is shaping us into a church family whose faith, love and hope make Jesus known.

Some guidelines for Connect Group ...

- Come to the study prepared; preparation will greatly enrich your time together; it is recommended to take notes during the Sunday sermon, and to write down your thoughts as you prepare
- As part of your preparation, why not listen to the sermon again during the week (most sermons are recorded and available on **Apple Podcasts**, and also on the **website**)
- As you prepare, pray that God will speak to you through his word
- Be willing to participate in your group. Your sharing will greatly encourage all the other members as you grow together
- Stick to the topic – this allows everyone to participate on level ground and to go deeper into the Bible
- Be sensitive to others and listen attentively; affirm others, especially those who may feel timid or don't often share
- Your leader won't be lecturing, but helping members to think through the questions. Some of the questions don't have a 'right' answer, especially those that apply the Bible to our lives
- Be careful not to dominate, as it could inhibit others from sharing
- Expect God to teach you through the passage and through other members, and always pray that it will be a profitable time together

STANDING FIRM

TOGETHER

Deeply Transformed | Serving Together

Oct 11	1 Thess 1:1-10	The Gospel Builds The Church
18	1 Thess 2:1-16	Church is Family
25	1 Thess 2:17-3:13	Standing Firm Together
Nov 1	1 Thess 4:1-12	Living to Please God
8	1 Thess 4:13 - 5:28	Living in Hope

The Gospel builds the Church

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

SUMMARY

A healthy church is shaped by the gospel and becomes an example to others.

INTRO

Think about a church, or group of Christians who have had a positive influence on you. What was it about them that made the experience positive?

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

1. What three things does Paul continually remember about the Thessalonians? What do you notice about the connection between faith, hope, love, and their lives?
2. Why can Paul be confident that God has chosen the Thessalonians? What kind of evidence does he give?
3. What kind of people were Paul and his companions when they were among the Thessalonians? What is the relationship between the gospel we proclaim and the lives we live?

Sermon Notes

4. What happened when the Thessalonians received the gospel? What might this tell us about discipleship?

5. How far had the impact of their faith travelled? What did people hear about them? What might it look like for us to be known like that?

6. What does genuine gospel transformation look like?

7. The Thessalonians' faith, hope and love could be seen by others. If someone spent a year among us, what might they notice about our faith, hope and love?



- Pray that God would deepen our faith, love and hope, so that He continues to transform us through His gospel.
- Pray that our gospel-shaped lives would be a witness to our community, so that others might see Jesus and turn to him.

Sermon Notes

PERSONAL GROWTH PLAN

Spend some time talking about the Personal Growth Plan.
What can you share this week about the steps you are taking?

LIVING TO LOVE JESUS

#Christ-centred

#Bible-based

Deeply Transformed

How will I fuel my love for Jesus and intentionally grow as a disciple of Jesus?

LIVING TO PROCLAIM JESUS

#Spirit-led

#Mission-shaped

Serving Together

How will I develop my servant heart and make a difference in the world?

SUMMARY

Paul recalls sharing both the gospel and his life with the Thessalonians out of deep love, caring like a mother and encouraging like a father. He thanks God that they received God's word and persevered through persecution. He also warns of judgment against those opposing the gospel.

INTRO

What has helped you feel that you really belong in a group or community?

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-16

1. What motivated Paul and his companions to share the gospel despite opposition? How might seeking God's approval rather than people's change the way we serve others?
2. How did Paul express his love for the Thessalonians? What does the picture of a nursing mother help us understand about caring for one another?

A LITTLE DEEPER

The Greek word translated "lives" in verse 8 is *psychē*, which can also mean "soul" or "self". Paul and his companions loved the Thessalonians so deeply that they gladly shared their very selves. This was love that let people in, giving themselves wholeheartedly in affection, shared life and costly care.

Sermon Notes

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>3. What would sharing our “very selves” or “souls”(v8 –see little deeper on prev page) look like in our church family? What holds us back?</p> <p>4. Like a father(v11), Paul encourages, consoles and urges believers. What is his goal, and why do we need all three?</p> <p>5. What might encouraging, consoling and imploring one another look like in our church family? How can we lovingly urge one another towards a life worthy of God?</p> | <p>6. How did the Thessalonians respond to God’s word despite suffering? (v13–16) How can our church family help us remain faithful when following Jesus is difficult?</p> <p>7. What provokes God’s judgment in v14–16? How might these words reassure believers facing persecution, and what do we find challenging about them?</p> <p>8. Reflect on the whole passage. What is one practical step we can take this week to grow as a family of God?</p> |
|---|--|



- Thank God for our church family and the gospel that brings us together.
- Ask God to deepen our love and help us share our lives, encouraging, comforting and lovingly challenging one another.
- Pray that we receive God’s word with faith and live lives worthy of him, even when following Jesus is difficult.

Sermon Notes

PERSONAL GROWTH PLAN

Spend some time talking about the Personal Growth Plan.
What can you share this week about the steps you are taking?

LIVING TO LOVE JESUS

#Christ-centred

#Bible-based

Deeply Transformed

How will I fuel my love for Jesus and intentionally grow as a disciple of Jesus?

LIVING TO PROCLAIM JESUS

#Spirit-led

#Mission-shaped

Serving Together

How will I develop my servant heart and make a difference in the world?

Standing Firm Together

1 Thessalonians 2:17- 3:13

SUMMARY

Paul longs to see the Thessalonians and sends Timothy to strengthen their faith amid suffering. Timothy's reassuring report brings Paul joy and thanksgiving. Paul prays that their love will grow and their hearts be strengthened in holiness for Jesus' return.

INTRO

How do you think marathon runners, ironmen, or elite athletes keep going when they 'hit the wall'? What keeps them from giving up?

1. How does Paul describe his desire to see the Thessalonians?
2. Paul says, "Satan blocked our way." What might that have looked like? What does spiritual opposition to gospel ministry look like for us?

Sermon Notes

3. How did Paul and Timothy respond to the opposition?

4. What was Timothy's good news that brought Paul joy? What does this tell us about what is truly important in Christian community?

5. Look at Paul's prayer. What does he ask God to do for them?

6. How can we strengthen and encourage one another to stand firm in the Lord during season of change?

7. What do we need to pray for our church in light of Paul's prayer?



- Pray that God would strengthen all of us to stand firm in Jesus together.
- Pray that our love for one another would increase, and overflow, so that we encourage and strengthen one another as we follow Jesus together.

Sermon Notes

PERSONAL GROWTH PLAN

Spend some time talking about the Personal Growth Plan.
What can you share this week about the steps you are taking?

LIVING TO LOVE JESUS

#Christ-centred

#Bible-based

Deeply Transformed

How will I fuel my love for Jesus and intentionally grow as a disciple of Jesus?

LIVING TO PROCLAIM JESUS

#Spirit-led

#Mission-shaped

Serving Together

How will I develop my servant heart and make a difference in the world?

SUMMARY

Paul urges believers to please God more and more, pursuing sexual holiness and honouring others. He calls them to grow in love for one another and lead quiet lives. In this way, they will earn outsiders' respect and avoid depending on others for their livelihood.

INTRO

Who has influenced the way you live through their everyday example? Are there any particular actions or traits that have particularly inspired you?

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

1. What does Paul commend about the Thessalonians in verses 1-2, and what does he urge them to do? What might it mean for us to please God "more and more"?
2. What does Paul teach about God's will for our sexuality (v3-8)? How should knowing God affect the way we use our bodies and respond to our desires?
3. Where does Paul's teaching challenge attitudes towards sexuality today, including within the church? How can we help one another live it out?

Sermon Notes

4. In v8. why does Paul emphasise that these instructions come from God? How do we respond when God's call to holiness challenges our preferences?

5. The Thessalonians already love one another (v9-10). Why does Paul urge them to do so "more and more"? Where could our love grow in our church?

6. What does Paul mean by a "quiet life"(v11)? How do working, taking responsibility and avoiding dependence on others fit into this picture?

7. What do you find encouraging or challenging about this?

A LITTLE DEEPER

Paul's instruction not to depend on others (4:12) flows from his call to love as family. Taking responsibility where we can shows love by not taking advantage of others' generosity. Church family means supporting those in need and contributing what we are able.

8. How might this kind of life point others towards Jesus? What is one change we could make this week to live more faithfully in our everyday responsibilities?



- Ask God to help us please him more and more, growing in holiness through his Holy Spirit.
- Pray that our love for one another would deepen through practical care and generosity.
- Ask God to help us live quiet, responsible lives that point others towards Jesus.

Sermon Notes

PERSONAL GROWTH PLAN

Spend some time talking about the Personal Growth Plan.
What can you share this week about the steps you are taking?

LIVING TO LOVE JESUS

#Christ-centred

#Bible-based

Deeply Transformed

How will I fuel my love for Jesus and
intentionally grow as a disciple of Jesus?

LIVING TO PROCLAIM JESUS

#Spirit-led

#Mission-shaped

Serving Together

How will I develop my servant heart
and make a difference in the world?

SUMMARY

Paul reassures believers that those who have died in Christ will share in his return, and calls them to live with faith, love and hope as they await that day. He urges them to encourage one another and grow as a loving, prayerful church family. Their confidence rests in the faithful God who calls them and will complete his work in them.

INTRO

When has having something to look forward to helped you through a difficult time?

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

1. What concerns is Paul addressing?
How does Jesus' death and resurrection allow Christians to grieve with hope?
2. How does verse 17 emphasise that we will be with the Lord forever?
What most excites you about this?

Read 5:1-11

3. What do the pictures of a thief in the night and labour pains tell us about the day of the Lord?

Sermon Notes

4. Why does Paul say Christians can be encouraged about the day of the Lord? How should this hope shape the way we live now?

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

5. In verses 12-15, What responsibilities do leaders and church members have towards one another? Why might different people need warning, encouragement or practical help—and everyone need patience?

6. In verses 16-22, what instructions does Paul give the church? Which do you find most encouraging, and which are hardest to put into practice?

7. What does Paul pray for the Thessalonians? How does the promise of God's faithfulness encourage us as we seek to live this way?

8. What has most encouraged or challenged you through this series? What is one practical step we can take to help one another stand firm in faith, love and hope?



-
- Thank God that Jesus' resurrection gives us hope beyond death, and pray for those who are grieving.
 - Ask God to help us encourage one another and grow as a patient, prayerful and caring church family.
 - Thank God for his faithfulness, and ask him to strengthen us in holiness as we await Jesus' return.

Sermon Notes

PERSONAL GROWTH PLAN

Spend some time talking about the Personal Growth Plan.
What can you share this week about the steps you are taking?

LIVING TO LOVE JESUS

#Christ-centred

#Bible-based

Deeply Transformed

How will I fuel my love for Jesus and
intentionally grow as a disciple of Jesus?

LIVING TO PROCLAIM JESUS

#Spirit-led

#Mission-shaped

Serving Together

How will I develop my servant heart
and make a difference in the world?



*Living to Love and
Proclaim Jesus*
tewantin sunshine peregrian

Deeply Transformed | Serving Together

©2026 Anglican Church Noosa