NEW TESTAMENT · PAUL'S LETTERS · BOOK 52 OF 66

1 Thessalonians

And so shall we ever be with the Lord (4:17)

5	Paul	c. A.D. 50–51	Every Chapter
Chapters, 89 Verses	With Silas and Timothy	From Corinth	Christ's Coming

STRUCTURE

The Book in Two Parts

Chapters 1–3 look back on the church's beginnings and Paul's love for them. Chapters 4–5 look ahead to the Lord's return and how to live until then.



Each bar shows that part's share of the 89 verses.

I 1–3 · 43 verses

Looking Back

Thanksgiving, Paul's ministry, Timothy's good news.

II 4–5 · 46 verses

Looking Ahead

Holy living, the Lord's coming, final commands.

1:10

Waiting

"To wait for His Son from heaven."

2:19

Our Crown

"In the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming."

3:13

With His Saints

"At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints."

4:16–17

Caught Up

"So shall we ever be with the Lord."

5:2

As a Thief

"The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."

5:23

Preserved Blameless

"Unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Each chapter ends with, or turns on, the Lord's return.

ACTS 17:1–10

How the Church Began

Paul, Silas and Timothy came to Thessalonica after being beaten and jailed at Philippi.

1 ACTS 17:2–3

Three Sabbaths

Paul reasons from the scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

2 ACTS 17:4

Many Believe

Some Jews, a great multitude of devout Greeks, and chief women.

3 ACTS 17:5–9

An Uproar

Jason's house assaulted: "These that have turned the world upside down."

4 ACTS 17:10

Sent Away by Night

The brethren send Paul and Silas to Berea.

5 3:1–2

Timothy Sent Back

From Athens, to establish and comfort them.

6 3:6

Good Tidings

Timothy brings news of their faith and love; Paul writes.

Faith, Love and Hope; Paul's Example; Holy Living

CHAPTER 1

Faith, Love and Hope

> *"Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ"*
>
> 1 Thessalonians 1:3 (KJV)

1:9
Turned
"Ye turned to God from idols."

1:9
To Serve
"To serve the living and true God."

1:10
To Wait
"And to wait for His Son from heaven."

Paul joins faith, love and hope again in 5:8 ("the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation") and in 1 Corinthians 13:13.

CHAPTER 2

Paul's Example

Paul reminds them how he, Silas and Timothy lived among them.

2:4
Pleasing God
"Not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts."

2:7
Like a Nurse
"Gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children."

2:9
Working Night and Day
So as not to be chargeable to any of them.

2:11–12
Like a Father
Exhorting each one to walk worthy of God.

> *"ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."*
>
> 1 Thessalonians 2:13 (KJV)

CHAPTER 4:1–12

God's Will for Holy Living

4:3
Sanctification
"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification"

4:9
Brotherly Love
"ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another."

4:11
A Quiet Life
"study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands"

The Lord’s Coming and Children of the Day

CHAPTER 4:13–18

The Lord’s Coming

Some believers had died. Would they miss the Lord’s return? Paul answers with comfort and hope.

1 4:16

The Lord Descends

From heaven, with a shout, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God.

2 4:16

The Dead Rise

“The dead in Christ shall rise first.”

3 4:17

Caught Up Together

The living caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

> *“and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”*
>
> 1 Thessalonians 4:17–18 (KJV)

“Wherefore comfort one another with these words” (4:18).

CHAPTER 5:1–11

Children of the Day

THE NIGHT	THE DAY
The day comes as a thief in the night 5:2	Ye, brethren, are not in darkness 5:4
They that sleep sleep in the night 5:7	Let us watch and be sober 5:6
Sudden destruction cometh upon them 5:3	God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation 5:9

> *“Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.”*
>
> 1 Thessalonians 5:5 (KJV)

Commands, Themes and Key Verse

CHAPTER 5:12–22

Short Commands for Church Life

5:13
Be at Peace
Among yourselves.

5:14
Support the Weak
Be patient toward all men.

5:15
Follow Good
Render not evil for evil.

5:16
Rejoice Evermore
Joy at all times.

5:17
Pray Without Ceasing
A life of prayer.

5:18
Give Thanks
In every thing.

5:19
Quench Not the Spirit
Despise not prophesyings.

5:21
Prove All Things
Hold fast that which is good.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:23–24

Sanctified Wholly
"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."

BIG IDEAS

Key Themes

The Lord's Return
The hope in every chapter.
1:10; 4:13–18

Faith, Love, Hope
The marks of a living church.
1:3; 5:8

The Word of God
Received as God's word, at work in believers.
1:5; 2:13

Holiness
God's will is our sanctification.
4:3–7; 5:23

Comfort
Not sorrowing as those without hope.
4:13, 18; 5:11

Prayer and Thanks
Rejoice, pray, give thanks.
5:16–18

KEY VERSE

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 (KJV)