

I Thessalonians

BACKGROUND:

Paul the Apostle writes from Corinth in 51 A.D. to a church established in Thessalonica on his second missionary journey, during which he also began the work in Phillipi, one hundred miles away and also on the main road from Rome to the east. Acts chapters 17 and 18 will help you in the study of this letter. A seaport, Thessalonica (today Salonica) was a prosperous city and the capital of Macedonia.

The main theme is the return of Jesus Christ. One of the most helpful passages in the Bible on this theme is found in 4:13-5:11. In fact, every chapter references this great event: 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:1-11 and 5:23.

This is a very personal letter revealing Paul's innermost feelings, his tenderness, affection and great concern for the spiritual welfare of this young church. Upon hearing Timothy's positive report on the church, Paul commends their steadfastness under afflictions, encourages them to grow still more in their walk and consoles them concerning loved ones who have died in Christ.

A brief outline:

- I. **LOOKING BACK:** Reflections on the church (1:1-3:13).
 - A. Commending their growth (1:1-1:10).
 - B. Their founding by Paul (2:1-2:16)
 - C. Timothy's strengthening of the church (2:17-3:13).
- II. **LOOKING FORWARD:** Instructions to the church (4:1-5:28).
 - A. Directions for growth (4:1-4:12).
 - B. Concerning the dead in Christ (4:13-4:18).
 - C. The Day of the Lord (5:1-5:11).
 - D. Instructions for holy living (5:12-5:28).

HELPS: Before turning to these, read prayerfully the Word of God, praying that the Holy Spirit will guide you and instruct you.

If you don't own a Bible dictionary, encyclopedia, atlas, or reference search, don't worry. They are all available on the link below.

http://www.preceptaustin.org/2_corinthians_commentaries_3.htm

This excellent website is full of helps including commentaries. You will find John MacArthur, Ray Stedman and John Piper along with Charles Spurgeon and the Intervarsity Press Commentary (Navigators) as well as Matthew Henry's Commentary.