



WINTER 2023 // WEEK 8

Life Group Questions

A People of Hope // March 4/5, 2023

God's Will for His People // 1 Thessalonians 5:16-28

## Introduction

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This week's passage concludes Paul, Silas, and Timothy's first letter to the Christians in Thessalonica. In rapid fire succession, they give the Thessalonian church a list of final commands to keep it growing and on track. Paul and his cohorts then add a benediction and final greeting filled with resources the Thessalonians can rely on to fulfill their calling to be faithful to Jesus.

To think through the main ideas in the sermon and prepare for your discussion together, we invite you to look over all the questions on the following pages and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group. Due to preferences over a wide range of groups, we do not expect you will cover every question each week.

## Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

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- 1) You are called before the Lincoln City Council and given the authority to make one change in the city's traffic laws. What change do you make and why?
  
- 2) What book of the Bible challenges you most to live faithfully for God? Why?

## Getting Started

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Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
    - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
    - b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
    - c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you
  - 2) Choose someone to read the passage aloud for the group.
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## Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

- 1) What part of this week's message did you find most helpful? Why?
  
- 2) A frequent question Christians ask is "How do I determine God's will for my life?" Verses 16-18 partly answers that question. **What is your reaction to hearing that God's will for your life is that you "rejoice always," "pray continually," and "give thanks in all circumstances?"**

How were each of those commands explained in the sermon?

- 3) The next series of commands (verses 19-22) ends with a two-part command to hold on to what is good and reject every kind of evil. **Where in your life do you struggle to hold on to the good and reject evil?**

How can the members of your life group help you in that struggle?

- 4) Sometimes it's easy at the end of a New Testament letter to skip or briefly skim over the benediction and/or a greeting. Look more carefully at the benediction and greeting in this week's text (verses 23-28). **What resources do you find in those verses that would help the Thessalonian Christians obey the instructions they were given in this letter?**

How do these same resources help you today in living faithfully for Jesus?

## Personal Spiritual Exercises

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Just like physical exercises help strengthen and stretch our bodies for healthy living, these spiritual exercises are meant to move us spiritually in ways that may be new so we might experience inner growth. Since God longs for us to experience Him with our whole selves—mind, body, spirit—we invite you along each week to strengthen your souls with suggestions and prompts. **Next week in Life Group, take a few moments to share how the Lord may have used this exercise in your life.**

**Prayer Focus:** How do we become people who pray without ceasing? Try the following exercise this week. Find some specific item you want to talk with God about (a burden, plans, work, family). Set a reminder on your watch or phone (or by some other means) for every hour (or two hours). When your reminder alerts you, pause for a moment and have a quick conversation with God about the topic you chose. You don't need to ask God for anything. You can simply talk to him about it. Toward the end of the week, you might find that you are talking to God about that topic without needing a reminder.

**Scripture Focus:** Spend time this week (preferably every day) thoughtfully reading *Romans 12*. As you do, notice some of the similarities between it and the end of *1 Thessalonians* (5:12-28); rejecting evil and embracing good, pursuing holiness with our whole being, the importance of love and support of brothers and sisters in Christ, not seeking revenge, and more.

### Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

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A significant part of “coming together” is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say “Amen” aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?