

Women of Grace

Lesson 6

Ministry & Hindrances 1 Thessalonians 2:14-18

Day 1: Imitation in Suffering (v. 14)

1. From verse 14, what is the evidence that the Thessalonians had received and accepted the Word of God?
 - a. What will happen to all who are faithful in Christ Jesus? See 2 Tim 3:12.
 - b. What is the reward for those of us who suffer persecution? See Matt 5:10.
2. Whose example are we following when we suffer persecution? See 1 Peter 2:21-25.
3. What should our response be to those who persecute us?

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4. See Matt 5:44; Romans 12:14-21; 1 Cor 4:12; & 1 Thess 1:6.
 - a. Read Matthew 13:5-6, 20-21. How did those described in the passage react to persecution?

5. Who were the Thessalonians imitators of in their suffering?
 - a. Who previously led the persecution against the Judean churches? See Acts 7:54-8:4.

 - b. From our study so far, what changes do you see in Paul?

6. How quickly did the persecution start? See Acts 17:1-8.

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- a. The church received persecution from both Jew and Gentile. Why did the Jews persecute the Thessalonians? What application is there for us to today?

7. Why does suffering accompany godliness?

Day 2: Gospel Hostility (v. 15)

1. Considering the end of verse 14 and verse 15, what kind of persecution was the Thessalonians' suffering likened to?

2. The Jewish people had a long history of violently rejecting both the message of God and the messenger of God. Find one prophet of God that the Jews killed for the message that he brought to them:
 - a. from the Old Testament

 - b. an apostle or disciple from the New Testament

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3. Who was humanly responsible for the death of Christ? See also Matt. 27:20-25 & Luke 23:20-25.
 - a. What does Acts 2:23 contribute to the discussion?
 - b. What practical benefit does this have for your life?
 - c. If you are facing persecution, read Genesis 50:20. How does this passage help your thinking?
4. The Jews were hostile to the Word of God and were therefore hostile to those who preached it. Do we see this same type of pattern in our culture today?
 - a. What caused the Jews' hostility? See Romans 10:19 & 11:11.

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- b. What should our heart be towards the Jews who are God's Covenant people? See Romans 9:2-4 & 10:1.

Day 3: Gospel Hindrance (v. 16)

1. What were the Jews attempting to do in verse 16?

2. What is the consequence of the Jews' persistent rebellion against God (verse 16)?

3. What does Paul mean by the phrase "with the result that they always fill up the measure of their sins"?

4. What is the ultimate expression of the wrath of God against sin?

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5. What does John 3:36 say about those who believe and those who reject Christ?
 - a. Have you been saved from God's righteous judgement against your sin?
 - b. Do you warn others of the wrath to come?
 - c. Write a prayer of thanksgiving that God has saved you from the wrath to come. Ask the Lord for gospel opportunities to warn others of what is to come.

Day 4: The Departure (v. 17)

1. What does the phrase "but we" contrast in the preceding and following verses?

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2. How were Paul and his companions torn or taken away? See Act 17:5-10.
 - a. What does “torn away” convey?

3. What verses in 1 Thessalonians indicate Paul and his companions had not been taken away in spirit?
 - a. When you are not present with the church body, what are your thoughts about her?

4. What words in verse 17 convey Paul’s affections for the Thessalonians?

5. What various images and descriptions does Scripture use in reference to the Church? (For example, the church is described as a body.)

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- a. Does this help you have a greater affection for those who believe?

Day 5: Further Hindrance (v. 18)

1. Who is introduced in verse 18? Why would he be hindering Paul?
 - a. Genesis 3:1-7
 - b. Job 1:6-12
 - c. Matthew 4:1-11
2. What do the following Scriptures tell us about who Satan is and how he works?
 - a. Genesis 3:1-7
 - b. Job 1:6-12
 - c. Matthew 4:1-11

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d. 2 Corinthians 4:4

e. 2 Corinthians 11:3,4

f. Ephesians 6:11-12

g. 1 Peter 5:8

3. What do you think could have been the means used to hinder Paul from coming to the Thessalonians? See Act 17:9 & 2 Corinthians 12:7.

4. What are your thoughts of spiritual warfare? Can you use Scripture to back up your claims?

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5. Though Satan had hindered Paul from coming, what truths did Paul cling to? See Gen 50:20; Job 42:1-2; Psalm 46:1-2 & Rom 8:28.
6. How are these truths a comfort to you as you face difficulties and hindrances in your life?

Dig Deeper

1. Read a biography of a believer who faced persecution. What lessons can you learn from their example?
2. Read Joel Beeke's book, *Fighting Satan*.
3. Reading Revelation 20 and write out in your own words what will happen to Satan in the last days.

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4. Spiritual warfare is a battle for the mind. What sinful thoughts tend to plague your thinking: fear, worry, anxiety, etc.? In one column write out a list of thoughts that constantly bombard you. In a separate column write out verses that will combat those thoughts.