

1 & 2 THESSALONIANS

Following Jesus While Waiting for His Return

PART 2: READY OR NOT

When an important guest is expected, we make preparations. In 1 Thessalonians, Paul tells these new Jesus followers to live in a way that shows they are expecting Jesus to return. He gives them specific instructions in the areas of sex, work, and the afterlife.

WIN

To live in a way that demonstrates we're ready for Christ's return

CONNECT

Take a few minutes to discuss the following questions as a group:

1. Ask if anyone was able to read through 1 Thessalonians. What stood out?
2. Were you able to memorize the verse from last week (1 Thessalonians 2:8)?

LEARN

Before watching the video together and discussing the questions provided, we suggest taking a few moments to pray. Here's a simple prayer you can use:

Heavenly Father, Thank you that we are never alone. You are always with us. May we not set our hope in this present world, but on the one to come. Amen.

After praying, watch the video for Part 2.

APPLY

Discuss the following questions as a group:

1. Who has been the most impactful person in terms of instructing and encouraging you to live out your faith? What did that person do for you that brought them to mind?
2. In answer to some ethical questions raised by the Thessalonians, Paul challenged them with two very countercultural mindsets:
 - Sex **was not** to be shared with anyone other than your spouse.
 - The fruit of your labor **was** to be shared with others.

The Thessalonians' behaviors had been shaped by the culture around them. Once they started to follow Jesus, they had to learn a new way of living. What are some possible benefits that following those two principles would have had on this community?



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3. What's an example of a past behavior shaped by the culture around you that changed as you began to follow Jesus?
4. In general, what are some ways our work can be a way to influence people outside the faith? What are some ways your specific role or job might be an opportunity to impact someone?
5. Paul also spoke to the afterlife, hoping to alleviate concerns some of the Thessalonians had about loved ones who had recently died. Read **1 Thessalonians 4:13–14**. How might those words have impacted people who were wondering about people who had recently died?
6. Read **1 Thessalonians 5:1–11**. How should anticipating Christ's return impact how we live today? Why?

PRAY

We suggest ending your group with prayer, asking God to help you in any area where you should adjust your perspective and the courage to change where you need to.

BEFORE NEXT TIME

Read through 2 Thessalonians before your next session. In addition, try to memorize these passages:

**It is God's will that you should be sanctified:
that you should avoid sexual immorality.**

1 Thessalonians 4:3

**...make it your ambition to lead a quiet life:
You should mind your own business
and work with your hands, just as we told you,
so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders
and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.**

1 Thessalonians 4:11–12

