



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

THESSALONIANS,
TIMOTHY, TITUS
& PHILEMON

Week 1

Before You Begin Your Journey...

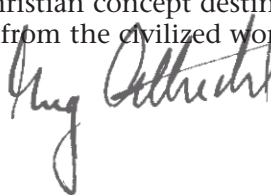
Pastoring is no easy task. A good pastor must be a close friend of Jesus—must possess certain God-given gifts, aptitudes and character traits—must have a special love and concern for God’s people—and must realize that they are *God’s* people.

In these books we see the heart of a pastor expressed as nowhere else in scripture. We have combined what are commonly called Paul’s pastoral epistles (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus) with three other books that exemplify pastoral love—Paul’s two epistles to the Thessalonians and his short letter to Philemon.

First Thessalonians is probably the earliest of Paul’s letters in the Bible. We see a church of new believers under attack from those who wanted to discredit Paul’s ministry.

In Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus we learn that the duties of a Christian pastor include teaching sound doctrine and maintaining a Christ-centered environment within the church. We see an older, wiser apostle giving some specific advice to a younger, less experienced evangelist and pastor at Ephesus.

In the brief and intensely personal letter to Philemon we see Paul’s interaction with an individual believer, as he encourages Philemon to take back his runaway slave, Onesimus, without punishment. The teaching in this epistle—that all, whether slave or free are united and equal in Christ—is the uniquely Christian concept destined eventually to abolish slavery from the civilized world.



Greg Albrecht
Executive Director, Plain Truth Ministries

How to Use the CWR Bible Survey...

1—Read and study at your own pace. This is a devotional. It is designed to help you consider and ponder the great truths of God's written revelation. It is designed to help you worship and come to know God. If you get behind, you can always catch up.

2—We suggest you set aside a special time for the *CWR Bible Survey* every day. We recommend allowing 30-45 minutes, but even if you can only spare 15 minutes, try to make it part of your regular schedule.

3—You will need a good Bible. This might be an excellent time for you to consider purchasing a new Bible. Plain Truth Ministries recommends the *New King James Study Bible* published by Thomas Nelson and the *New International Version Study Bible* published by Zondervan.

4—Always read the assigned passage of the daily lesson in your Bible first. Each daily lesson builds upon the portion of the Bible being covered that day. You may want to begin by praying about what God has in store for you as you read, and then look at the questions and background information.

5—Consider the format of each daily lesson. Almost every daily lesson will include:

• **Opening Up to the Word** —a section designed to help you open your mind to the teaching God has inspired.

• **Digging Into the Word**—this section will encourage you to get your nose into the Bible and think deeply about what it says.

• **Living Out the Word**—here you will be challenged to consider the practical implications for your life. How does this passage help you live?

• **Window On the Word**—will offer key insights to help you more clearly understand the daily Bible passage.

6—After you finish the daily lesson, take some quiet time. You may simply think, look out the window, take a walk, or even get down on your knees. But use this time to let this daily lesson sink in. Ask God to show you what he wants you to understand from your reading and study.

7—Consider the *CWR Bible Survey* for small groups in which you may be involved. Tell your friends about it. If you are involved in a small group that meets for prayer and Bible study, introduce your group to it. Many are seeking an easy-to-read guide to help them understand the Bible and to help them know God. the *CWR Bible Survey* can do that!

8—Remember that while we may refer to the Bible as the word of God—the Eternal Word of God is noneother than Jesus, who inspired the Scriptures to be written by human instruments. Words on paper may tell us about him—but it is not the words that we worship—it is Jesus Christ, the Eternal Word.

•Abbreviations Used in the *CWR Bible Survey*—

Genesis	Ge	Nahum	Na
Exodus	Ex	Habakkuk	Hab
Leviticus	Lev	Zephaniah	Zep
Numbers	Nu	Haggai	Hag
Deuteronomy	Dt	Zechariah	Zec
Joshua	Jos	Malachi	Mal
Judges	Jdg	Matthew	Mt
Ruth	Ru	Mark	Mk
1 Samuel	1Sa	Luke	Lk
2 Samuel	2Sa	John	Jn
1 Kings	1Ki	Acts	Ac
2 Kings	2Ki	Romans	Ro
1 Chronicles	1Ch	1 Corinthians	1Co
2 Chronicles	2Ch	2 Corinthians	2Co
Ezra	Ezr	Galatians	Gal
Nehemiah	Ne	Ephesians	Eph
Esther	Est	Philippians	Php
Job	Job	Colossians	Col
Psalms	Ps	1 Thessalonians	1Th
Proverbs	Pr	2 Thessalonians	2Th
Ecclesiastes	Ecc	1 Timothy	1Ti
Song of Songs	SS	2 Timothy	2Ti
Isaiah	Isa	Titus	Tit
Jeremiah	Jer	Philemon	Phm
Lamentations	La	Hebrews	Heb
Ezekiel	Eze	James	Jas
Daniel	Da	1 Peter	1Pe
Hosea	Hos	2 Peter	2Pe
Joel	Joel	1 John	1Jn
Amos	Am	2 John	2Jn
Obadiah	Ob	3 John	3Jn
Jonah	Jnh	Jude	Jude
Micah	Mic	Revelation	Rev

THESSALONIANS,
TIMOTHY, TITUS
and PHILEMON

A Pastor's
Love for
God's People

Introduction to 1 Thessalonians

Authorship: Many scholars agree that Paul wrote this epistle.

Date: Paul probably wrote this letter during the latter part of A.D. 50, while living in Corinth. Shortly thereafter he wrote 2 Thessalonians. These are among his earliest writings.

Setting and purpose: Paul wrote out of deep concern for this newly established congregation. While he was aware that some Jews deeply believed and followed Christ, he also had felt the stinging attacks of Jewish leaders in Thessalonica, Berea, Athens and now in Corinth (Ac 17, 18). He now embraced his commission to the gentiles with renewed vigor (Ac 18:4-6).

Persecution came not only from Jews—gentiles also wanted Christ-followers to abandon Christianity (1Th 2:14). They viciously attacked Paul’s ministry, accusing him of being an itinerant confidence man who was only after people’s money.

Further afflictions plagued this new church (1Th 1:6). New Christians were often immature or naïve, believing that Christ would never allow his church to endure trials and deaths. Paul approaches this discouragement by ending each major section with a reminder of the great hope of Christianity, the resurrection of the dead.

Background: In a vision Paul was told to go to Macedonia (northern Greece). The first church in Macedonia was established in Philippi, where Lydia and others were converted (Ac 16:14). Paul and Silas were beaten and imprisoned (Ac 16:19-24), but the judges released them because they were Roman citizens and unjustly beaten. Paul comforted the believers and left for Thessalonica (Ac 16:35-40).

Thessalonica was a major port on the road from Rome to Asia Minor—extremely important for the expansion of Christianity. As Pula said in 1 Corinthians 10:20, “To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews.” Therefore, for three Sabbaths Paul reasoned with the Jews from Scripture, pointing out the prophecies of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. Some Jews and many Greeks believed. In spite of Paul’s attempt to win the Jews, most of this

new church at Thessalonica was gentile (Ac 17:1-9).

The Jews persecuted Paul and Silas and brought charges against them for sedition against the king. Jason posted their bond and the believers immediately helped Paul and Silas to escape danger (Ac 17:5-9).

They went to Berea where, along with some Jews, many Greeks believed (Ac 17:11-12). When news got back to the Jews in Thessalonica, many angrily pursued Paul, so he continued on to Athens, while Silas and Timothy stayed behind (Ac 17:13-15).

In Athens, Paul was shocked at the extent of idolatry and he debated with Jews and gentiles there (Ac 17:16-17).

Later in A.D. 50, Paul travelled to Corinth and worked with two tentmakers, Aquila and Priscilla (Ac 18:1-3). Silas and Timothy came to him with word from Thessalonica and Berea. During his lengthy stay in Corinth, Paul wrote his two epistles to the Thessalonians.

Outline:

I. THANKSGIVING FOR THE CHURCH, 1:2-10

- A. Greetings, 1:1
- B. Faith, Hope and Charity, 1:2-5
- C. Their Example to Other Churches, 1:6-10

II. DEFENSE OF HIS MINISTRY, 2:1-20

- A. Paul Preached Despite Opposition, 2:1-2
- B. Paul Did Not Force the Truth on Them, 2:3-4
- C. Paul Worked Night and Day, 2:5-9
- D. Paul's Conduct Was Proper, 2:10-12
- E. They All Suffered Persecution, 2:13-16
- F. Paul Was Hindered by Satan, 2:17-20

III. PAUL'S LOVE FOR THE CHURCH, 3:1-13

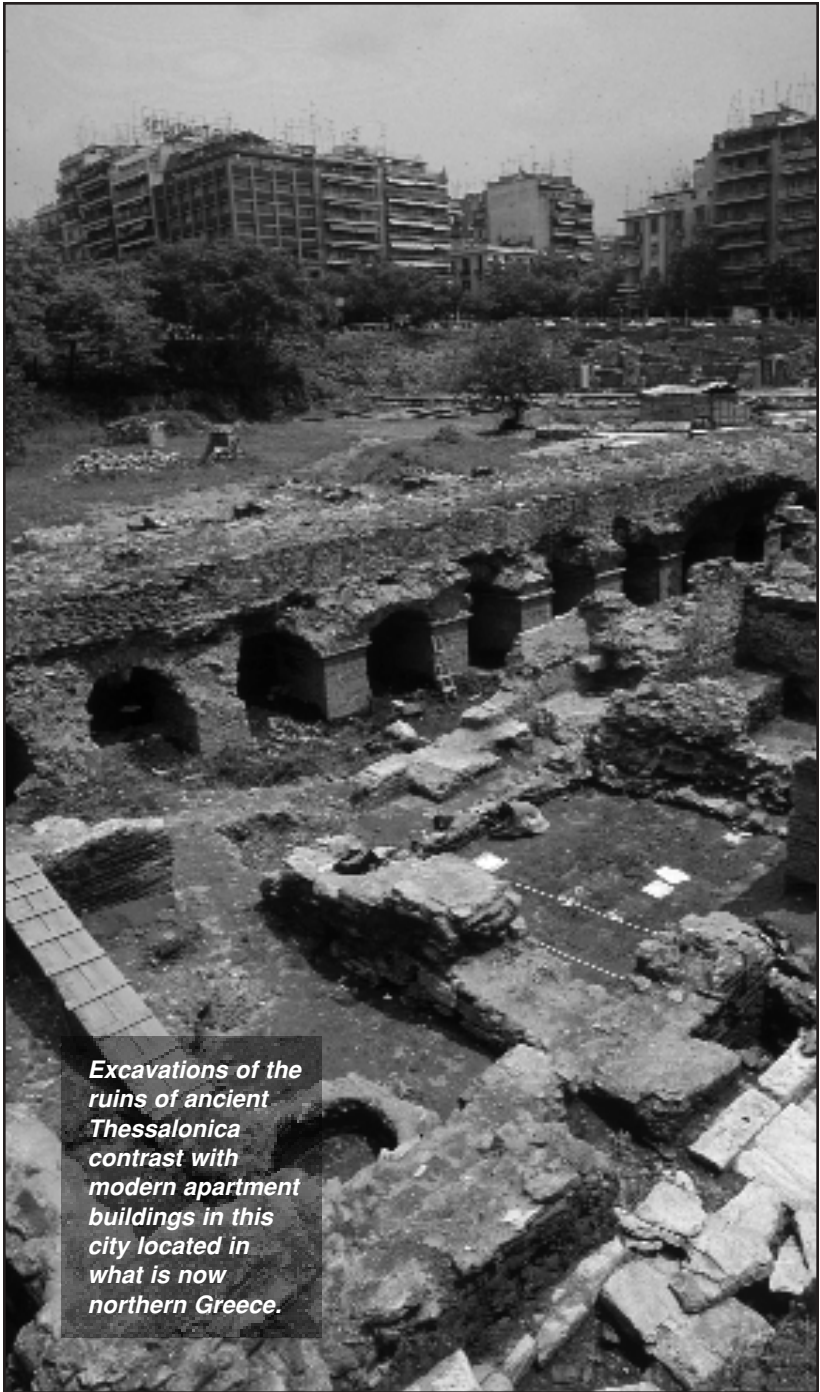
- A. Care for the Church, 3:1-5
- B. Timothy's Good Report, 3:6-10
- C. Paul's Prayer for Them, 3:11-13

IV. CHRISTIAN MORALITY, 4:1-18

- A. Instruction About Christian Behavior, 4:1-8
- B. Brotherly Love, 4:9-12
- C. The Living Hope of the Resurrection, 4:13-18

V. LOOK AHEAD, LIVE IN THE SPIRIT, 5:1-28

- A. Waiting for Jesus, 5:1-11
- B. Unity in the Spirit, 5:12-28



Excavations of the ruins of ancient Thessalonica contrast with modern apartment buildings in this city located in what is now northern Greece.

Thanksgiving Day

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Remember your best Thanksgiving Day? How did family and friends fill the day with joy? Turkey, dressing, pumpkin pie? Did anyone line up for “seconds” when it came to giving thanks?

1. Compare Paul’s opening comments in his two epistles to the Thessalonians with his epistles to Timothy and Philemon. Do you see a pattern?
 2. What three virtues are central to Paul’s preaching (see v. 3 and 1Co 13:13 and Col 1:4, 5)?
 3. Paul commends the Thessalonians’ work of faith, labor of love and patience of hope (v. 3). From Whom do these three virtues flow?
 4. What compliment was given to this church throughout the body of Christ (vs. 7-10)?
 5. Did these young and immature Christians expect Jesus to return during their lifetime?
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1. Are faith, hope and love active in your life? How has God’s grace produced these virtues in you?
 2. How has the gospel come to you? Have you experienced its assurance?
 3. Which is more important—following religious authorities or Jesus? Have you ever been disappointed in a church leader? Can a church leader be more focused on religion than on Jesus?
 4. Like the Thessalonians (see v. 10), have you turned from idols to serve the living and true God?
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***Evangelism** was accomplished through teamwork. Jesus used teamwork with the twelve disciples (Mt 10) and the seventy by sending them out in pairs. Paul followed the same example.*

DAY 1

OPENING
up to the Word

DIGGING
into the Word

LIVING
out the Word

WINDOW
on the Word

DAY 2

Credit Where Credit Is Due

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

OPENING
up to the Word

Ever watch an awards show on television—and watch the stars shine in their glory? How often do earthly “stars” give glory to God?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. Paul was accused of seeking his own glory rather than serving the congregation. In defense of his apostolic ministry, what claims does he make (see 2:1-12)?
2. For Christians, what is the source of glory (vs. 4-6)?
3. How is a mother’s care for her children like the Christian’s passion for spreading the gospel?
4. What three verbs describe the purpose of Paul’s preaching in Thessalonica (v. 12)? How do they parallel those stated later in 1 Corinthians 14:3?
5. How does a father’s responsibility for his children compare to the care of Paul for his congregation?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Are you a parent? How is the love of a mother and a father similar? How is it different?
2. How do parents express “tough love”? Do children ever claim that parental love is mean or unfair? Did that happen to Paul?

WINDOW
on the Word

*Paul felt a **parental relationship** with the believers he had evangelized. The team, with Paul as the leader, had sacrificed to nourish and nurture these Christ-followers as a mother to her children (v. 7). They gave direction and correction to them as a father does his children (v. 11). And, in the language of family, those who followed Jesus were encouraged to relate to others as loving brothers and sisters (4:6, 9).*

“I Didn’t Do It!”

DAY 3

1 Thessalonians 2:13-20

Have you ever been slandered or corrected for something that was no fault of your own? Did your persecutors ask for your side of the story? Did they listen?

1. List the five points in Paul’s defense (vs. 1-12). How did those he served respond (v. 13)?
2. The Christians in Thessalonica had become imitators of their spiritual brothers and sisters in Judea in the face of persecution. Had Paul, himself a Jew, also persecuted Christians (see Ac 9:1-3; 26:9-11)?
3. How did Satan hinder Paul in his ministry? If Satan can do this, can he also stop the body of Christ (Mt 16:18)—or overcome the faithful (Eph 6:11-13)?
4. What is Paul’s hope, joy and crown of rejoicing?

1. Do you know people who have been persecuted for their beliefs?
2. Consider taking time today to pray for persecuted Christians. Even today, many Christians in “non-Christian” countries are not only persecuted, but martyred.
3. Do you get joy from serving other people? Are they your crown of rejoicing?

Persecution was part of life in the first century. Stephen, a deacon in Jerusalem, had been stoned to death by the Sanhedrin (Ac 7). Paul himself had persecuted Christians in order to uphold the standards of the Sanhedrin (Ac 9:1-2). James, the brother of John, was martyred about A.D. 42 by Herod Agrippa (Ac 12:1-2). In Thessalonica, Paul had been staying with Jason, who in turn was attacked. Paul was sent ahead to Berea, where these same Jews from Thessalonica came and stirred up many people against Paul.

OPENING
up to the Word

DIGGING
into the Word

LIVING
out the Word

WINDOW
on the Word

“In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as you well know.”

1 Thessalonians 3:4



Anabaptists Hanged in the Dam in Amsterdam, by Doove Barend

What's Love Got to Do With It?

1 Thessalonians 3:1-13

Have you ever been concerned for friends you haven't seen for some time?

1. On his third journey, Paul had travelled to Athens via Thessalonica (Ac 17:1-15). Why had Paul sent Timothy back to Thessalonica?

2. Now that Timothy had returned to Paul, what was his report about the health of their spiritual brothers and sisters? "Memories" (1Th 3:6) may refer to prayers for Paul and his party.

3. How important to Paul is the Thessalonians' faith (vs. 2-10)?

4. What does love have to do with faith (vs. 6, 12)?

1. What report on your loved ones would most please you? Most disappoint you?

2. Consider love and faith. How does your love demonstrate your faith?

*Timothy was a **coworker** (synergon) in the gospel (v. 2). The goal of the ministry is to serve God and to work with other ministers to create a **synergy** that establishes and encourages the members of the church as the body of Christ.*

DAY 4

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

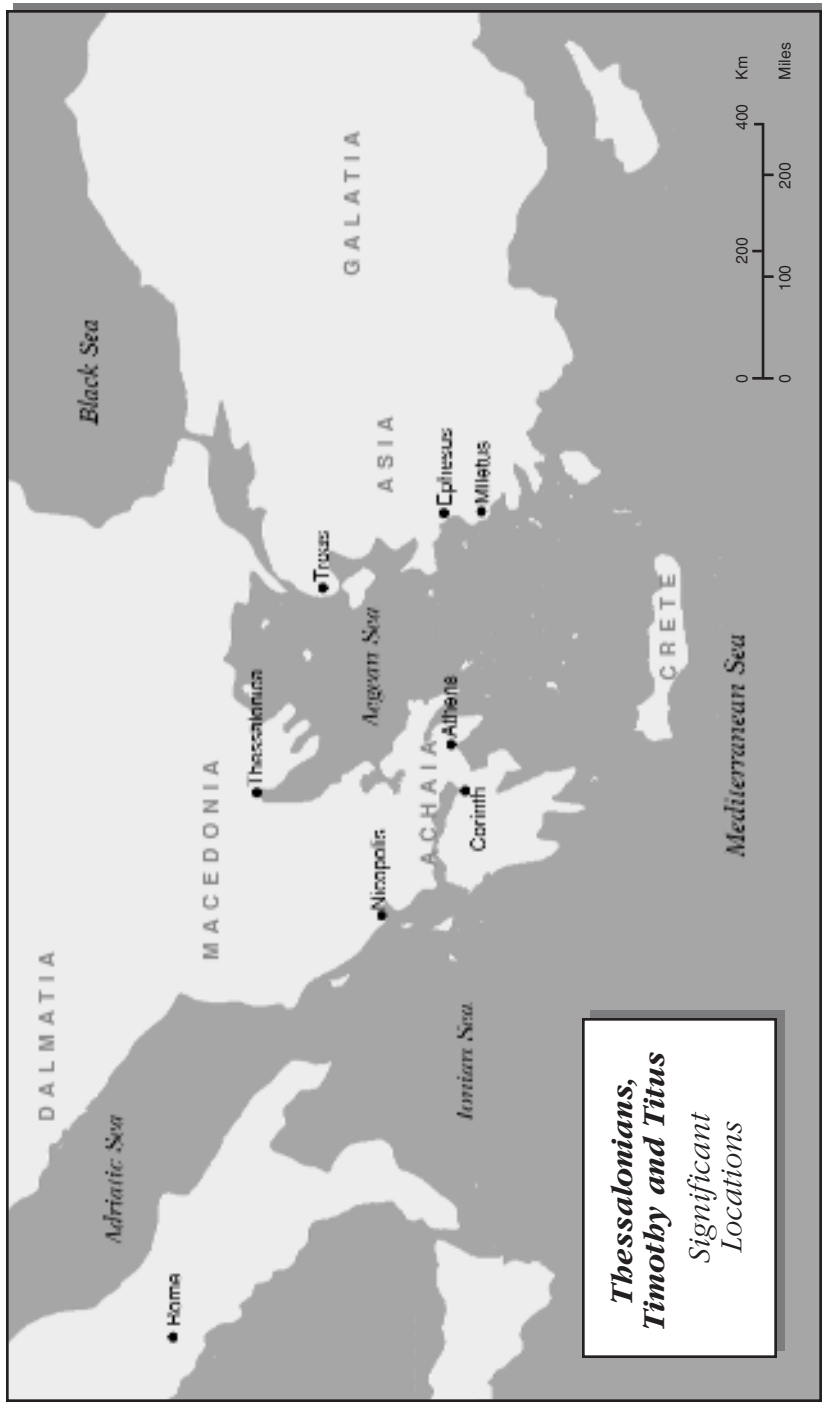
into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word



***Thessalonians,
Timothy and Titus
Significant
Locations***

Safe Sex

DAY 5

1 Thessalonians 4:1-18

What is “safe sex”? (a) no sex, (b) no pregnancy, (c) no disease, (d) no sin.

1. Paul follows his statement about holiness (3:13) with advice on Christian conduct. How do the three issues discussed (4:3-12) relate to holiness?

2. What is Paul’s teaching about sexual immorality (vs. 3-6)?

3. What value encouraged by Paul affects a Christian’s approach to life and work (vs. 9-12)?

4. This passage explains some of the events that will occur at the Second Coming of Christ (vs. 13-18). According to this passage, who returns with Jesus? Who “rises” first to be with Jesus? What happens to Christians living on the earth at the return of Jesus?

1. When you make decisions, do you consider whether you are pleasing Christ ?

2. What elements do you feel are included in brotherly love? (a) encouragement, (b) a smile, (c) tough love, (d) deep friendship.

3. Three aspects of Christian living are mentioned in verse 11. As you mature in Christ, to what degree do you feel Jesus is already producing these Christ-centered attributes in your life?

4. What hope do you have for your loved ones who have died? How does Paul’s assurance of the resurrection at the return of Jesus comfort you?

The resurrection to life, first of Jesus (about A.D. 30) and then of the saints at his return, is a key doctrine of Christianity. Sadducees and gnostics denied the bodily resurrection. Pharisees rejected the resurrection of Jesus but believed in a general bodily resurrection at the end of the age (Ac 23:6-8).

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

DAY 6

It's Just a Matter of Time

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

OPENING
up to the Word

How patient are you? Does standing in lines frustrate you? What if someone is late for an appointment with you? Do you “go ballistic”?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. How is the return of Jesus like a thief in the night (v. 2)? Like a woman giving birth (v. 3)?
2. Does God give Christians a precise schedule of events so they will know when Christ will return?
3. Contrast the actions and attitudes of people of the day with people of the night (5:5-8).
4. Compare the armor of the Christian soldier (v. 8) with Paul's more detailed description in Ephesians 6:10-18.
5. How did Paul use the assurance of salvation and the return of Jesus to give comfort to these persecuted Christians?

LIVING
out the Word

1. If you knew Jesus would return soon, what changes would you make? (a) get married, (b) stop smoking, (c) pray more, (d) quit saving money, (e) sell everything and travel (f) rest in his grace.
2. Jesus said to watch and be sober, meaning to examine our lives, to be self-controlled, and to rely on God's grace. So, how sober are you?
3. Are you a day or night person? When do you do your best work? In a spiritual sense, are you of the day or of the night?

WINDOW
on the Word

*One key for effective Bible study is a proper understanding of the use of **figurative language**. In looking back at 1 Thessalonians 4:13-16, the term “asleep” was used figuratively for the dead in Christ (v. 16). In chapter 5, those who are “asleep” are people of darkness, not of the light (5:6, 7). They are not alert to the danger of sin, nor to the equal danger of attempting to please God through one's own good works.*

“Attaboy!”

1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

Ever win an award? Was it satisfying to be recognized for your accomplishment or service?

1. Paul concludes with practical advice for Christian living (5:12-22). Consider using a concordance or marginal reference to find corresponding passages to expand on these instructions.

2. Which instructions are stated negatively?

3. How was Paul’s epistle to be used in the Thessalonians’ meetings?

1. Consider thanking a friend who has helped you to serve Jesus. Don’t put it off—just text, email, phone or write at your convenience.

2. Rate yourself in relation to the list of practical lessons in verses 12 through 22. As you read this list, how do you feel God has enabled you to grow in Christ?

3. Commit to at least one activity in which God’s grace can be better served. Thank God and rejoice in his grace (5:16-18).

Sanctification is the continuing state of God’s righteousness having been imparted in the life of the Christian. This state of holiness comes to characterize the attitude and action of Christians in every aspect of life. See sanctification in 1Th 4:3; 5:23 and holiness in 3:13.

DAY 7

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word