

1 Thessalonians 4 Study notes



Opening Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we come before You with a desire to learn more about you. Re-ignite the fire within our hearts to seek and know You more. Give us a passion to live for You - that our souls may find peace in serving You and Your Church. We bring our talents irrespective of what they are, to serve You and grant us your presence in this series of study. Amen

Just a minute:

Each person is to take 1 minute to note something that engaged them from week 3.

Letters

Have any of you received a letter because of this study series? Have any of you sent a letter? How has it made you feel?

What is Theology

Theology seems to be a bad word today. To many it communicates bigotry, arrogance, and exclusivism riddled with impracticality. Sure,

people will allow you to have your theology, just don't let it be known with too much conviction that you actually believe it. You can have your beliefs just don't push those upon others.

Most simply put, theology is the study of God. It comes from the word *theos* which is Greek for "God," and -ology which is from the Greek word *logos* meaning "word." Most literally then the word theology means "words about God" or "the study of God." If one were to use the term generically, it functions much like "philosophy" or "worldview." People often use the word this way in secular venues. Often it is used very specifically, speaking only about God. Generally speaking, theology is a belief system that is built upon intellectually and emotionally held commitments concerning God and humankind.

Read (have this read by someone)

1 Thessalonians 4

Take 10

Discuss the sermon and the reading. What was new or a challenge? Where has theology been misinterpreted or misrepresented in the public space?

Read

Hebrews 10: 22-25 alongside of 1 Thess 4:3-8

Paul's words corporately and individually encourage the church to accountability.

How is accountability lacking in our churches, home groups and lives today? What could help fix this?

How does accountability or lack thereof jade societies' view of God.

Take 2 mins

In quietness reflect: Some Christians do more to hurt the Christian faith through their words than their actions could ever rectify.

Now Share

Share an evangelism, ministry or mission experience where people knew you were a Christian (outside of the church walls) by your actions as well as by your words?

National Church Life Survey: says that bible reading is diminishing. Apathy, irrelevance? Society clashing? Discuss how and why you see this as a challenge and how we could change this.

Society and Culture

The church has made some mistakes over the past years. Society is able to articulate where our faults are better than we sometimes can ourselves. How does personal and corporate accountability stand within the culture of our church?

Church Culture

Vs 13-18 talk about the return of Jesus. This was a huge topic for this church in the early times. Some even sold up all they had as they expected Jesus return was imminent. What would be 3 things you would do if you had 1 week till God's return?

Extension:

1 Corinthians 13:1-7

How does this passage challenge the church to live in our society as ambassadors of God? Why is this passage used more at weddings and funerals than teachings on evangelism?

If Paul was writing to your church today where would he celebrate how you are loving the community and where would he encourage you to love more?

Encouragement

When our mortal lives end, as a Christian, it is a hyphen and not a full stop. Knowing our destination speaks richly into our testimony of God in our lives. Things of mortality and death seem like taboo topics in our

current society and yet the early church and Paul's letters addressed this regularly.

Engage

Many in our society believe in a spiritual realm, however they rarely discuss life after our mortality has ceased. Share how you may be able to talk of the hope of our destination?

How does this phrase resonate with you: When we as Christians talk about death, we do so with a hyphen and not a full stop, this is the hope of the Gospel.

For the week ahead

Challenge: Read 2 Thessalonians and note the different influences and themes in the letters.

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5

Prayer

Gracious God. Thank You for bringing us together and for this period of study. We thank you for the thoughts we have shared, for the opportunity to know each other a little bit better - to trust each other more. Encourage us to spread the Good News to our community as we are all desperate to know and love You more.

Lord, be our anchor, and stir up our smouldering faith that people may know You through our love, our hope and our deeds. Amen