

1 Thessalonians 3 Study notes



Opening Prayer:

Gracious Father

We thank you for the opportunity to come together to study your word. We pray you will help us learn from Paul's letter to the Thessalonians. Help us to understand the letter, and may we, with prayer, apply it to our lives. May we be encouraged, just as the Thessalonians were, when they read this letter.

In Jesus' name. Amen

Just a minute:

Each person is to take 1 minute to note something that engaged them from week 2.

Christianity is different

Did you investigate a non-Christian sect or religion? What differences they had to Christianity? Share with your group.

Spreading the good news is a "body" event. The whole church across all denominations is involved. We may not be the mouthpiece but we are often the hands and feet.

Church Unity in Australia (have this read by someone)

The National Council of Churches in Australia

The modern ecumenical movement began to take shape as the 19th century drew to a close. Initiatives among students and between Church mission agencies led the way. This country saw the formation of the Australian Student Christian Movement (1896) and the National Missionary Council (1926).

Out of the devastation of World War II sprang the Australian Committee for the World Council of Churches (1946). This developed into the Australian Council of Churches which, in 1994, gave way to the National Council of Churches in Australia.

The movement for Christian unity in this country was, initially, a Protestant affair. Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches came in, in strength, during the 1960s and 70s. For Catholics, the 2nd Vatican Council opened up fresh possibilities for relationships with other Churches, and the transition to the National Council of Churches in Australia (1994) saw the Catholic Church become a full participant in Australia's national ecumenical body.

Read (have this read by someone)

1 Thessalonians 3

Take 10

Discuss the sermon and the reading. What was new or a challenge? Why is Unity hard in the greater and local church context?

Take 2 mins

In quietness reflect: Have you ever been treated negatively or shunned for being a Christian? Would you be confident or self-conscious if you were found reading your Bible in a public place or café?

Now Share

Has society and its views changed towards the public expression or engagement of our faith. If so where have you noticed these changes?

Read

1 Corinthians 3:6-9

What gifts do you have and how do you enjoy sharing them?

How do these compliment others in your group?

Society and Culture

The early disciples suffered violent opposition to the Gospel. Today this opposition comes in different forms - apathy to God, vilification of the church, false statements about the churches power/wealth, etc. etc... What do you see as emerging opposition or opportunity areas to the Gospel in our society?

Church Culture

Vs 8: Your strong faith in the Lord is like a breath of new life. What acts of strong faith (in you or others) have encouraged you in your walk with God.

Extension:

The Servant King – Graham Kendrick
I the Lord of Sea and Sky- Daniel Schutte
Blessed be your name – Matt Redman

Have someone read the words of one or more of the songs to the group. How do these words help your view of Jesus' call to fulfilling your destiny?

How does this song speak to you in a call to follow Him?

Encouragement

William Arthur Ward said, "Flatter me, and I may not believe you. Criticize me, and I may not like you. Ignore me, and I may not forgive you. Encourage me, and I will not forget you."

Engage

Why has God called you to be part of your church at this time? How may he use you in the coming months or years?

For the week ahead

Challenge: write a letter or email thanking someone who has done something that has increased your faith in God.

Read: 1 Thessalonians 4

Prayer

Father God, we thank you for your servant Paul and for his letters to different communities. Paul was continually focused on you. He believed that you are the source and goal of all, and we should live and work moment by moment in your presence. May we too believe and act similarly. Thanks for this study and be with us now as we go our separate ways.

Amen