

1&2 Thessalonians, 2&3 John, Jude

As You Wait for the Coming of the Lord

Marilyn Kunz & Catherine Schell

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*1 & 2 Thessalonians, 2 & 3 John, Jude:
As You Wait for the Coming of the Lord*

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1 & 2 THESSALONIANS, 2 & 3 JOHN, JUDE

As You Wait for the Coming of the Lord

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Acts 17:1-10; 1 Thessalonians 1—5

—— Background and Overview of 1 Thessalonians

Have you ever said goodbye to someone very wise and then immediately thought of questions you wished you had asked while you had been together?

The first letter of Paul written to the Thessalonians provides a fascinating view of Paul's deep pastoral concern for a very young church. Since Paul's time in Thessalonica had been cut dramatically short by opposition, he had left the young church without experienced leadership. As a result, this letter reveals questions that the earliest Christians were asking, and Paul's wise answers.

Read Acts 17:1-10

1. On the map on pages 88-89, find the cities mentioned in Acts 17:1.

2. Where, when, and what does Paul preach in Thessalonica (verses 1-3)?

3. Who responds positively to the news about Jesus (verses 2-4, 9b-10)?

What negative responses do some people have, and why (verses 5-9)?

*Note: In verse 4, **God-fearing Greeks** were people who followed the Jewish religion to some extent without being full converts.*

4. What positive and negative responses to Jesus do people have today?

5. If you were one of the new believers in Thessalonica, what emotions would you feel during the riot and as you help Paul, Silas, and Timothy to escape (verses 5-10)?

Read Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians

6. Take one chapter each and read the whole letter from a contemporary translation (NIV, NLT, CEV).

From the tone of the letter, how would you describe the relationship between Paul and these new believers?

7. Based on the topics that Paul mentions, what might be areas in which this young church needed teaching and encouragement?

What topics in this letter catch your interest?

SUMMARY

1. From what Paul communicates to the Christians at Thessalonica, what is he hoping this letter will accomplish?

2. If you had been part of the church in Thessalonica, how would you have felt as you heard this letter read?

3. Jude 1:24-25 is a blessing that has been used in the church through the ages; it is also an excellent response to the content of this study. In future weeks you will have the opportunity to learn and recall these verses. As a group, decide which translation you would like to memorize so that you can easily say the verses together. (You may want to use the version printed in the foreword on page 5, which is the NIV.) This week, write the verses out on a 3x5 card and place it where you will see it often.

PRAYER

O Lord, just like the Christians at Thessalonica, each of us has a story of how you have changed our lives. Thank you for those who introduced your message to us and who helped us to grow. May we trust you when we experience conflict because of our relationship with you. Help us to live for you even in times when our leaders aren't able to walk alongside us. Help us to be open to their direction when they do speak your wisdom into our lives. May our actions be filled with faith and love and hope in our Lord Jesus Christ so that he will be glorified. Amen.