

The letters to the Thessalonians are God's love letter to us spoken through Paul. They are messages of life, hope, instruction, and encouragement that transcends time and place, and as applicable to us today as they were to the church 2000 years ago. To understand Paul's message, you will need to understand the background of the letter and the problems facing the believers in Thessalonica. Let's begin.

DAY ONE AND TWO

1. Remember to begin your time in prayer. You will begin by reading through I Thessalonians looking for and recording any information that helps you understand the background and trials which the people endured. Read all the questions first, then as you read I Thessalonians, answer the following questions. Make sure you include chapter and verse with your insights.
 - a. How did the gospel first come to the Thessalonians?
 - b. What circumstances surrounded their conversion? Ask the 5 W's and H. How did they receive it? What did they do after they received it? How did their countrymen treat them? You get the idea.
 - c. Where was Paul before he came to Thessalonica? What happened there? Answer this from your observations from I Thessalonians only.
 - d. What happened after they received the gospel?
 - e. There are several geographical locations mentioned through the letter. As you read, underline these places on the map provided on page 18.

DAY THREE THROUGH FIVE

Today you are going to embark on a chapter study of I Thessalonians 1. Please note that you will only be looking at chapter one so don't go beyond that. I will give you step by step instructions on how to proceed. Remember that observation is the key component to an inductive study. Just work through the process one step at a time. I am giving you all the steps that you would follow for any chapter study, not just this particular chapter, so you may not find each one applicable to I Thessalonians 1. Just taking the time to look at and think through each step, will help you interact with the chapter and the Scripture will fill your heart and your mind.

1. Read through I Thessalonians 1. Don't do anything else at this time, just read.
2. Read through I Thessalonians 1 again, watching for key words that you marked from last week. Did you miss any markings? Did you notice other key words that you may have missed last week? Don't forget to make lists of what you learn from each of these words.
3. Read through chapter 1 again, this time marking the key words of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit if you haven't done that already. I mark God in a purple triangle, Jesus with a red cross, and the Holy Spirit with a purple dove. You can mark them anyway you wish. When you complete marking the Godhead in chapter 1, record what you learn about each Person of the Godhead on the pages of key words that you started last week.
4. Read through I Thessalonians 1 one more time. Are there any other words that are key in **just** this chapter? If so, mark them and then make a list of what you learn about them. You could do this in the columns of the side of your observation worksheets.
5. Look for and mark geographical locations. I use a green compass over the place. We did this in days one and two but you may not have marked them. Mark them now and find them on the map.
6. Are there certain people other than the author and recipient that are mentioned in the chapter? If so, mark that person in a unique way.
7. Look for and mark expressions of time. I use a blue clock. These could be mentions of feasts, day or evening, or words like when, then, after this, until, now, soon, etc.
8. Look for and mark instructions. I underline mine in orange. Look for specific "do this" commands. Then make a list of instructions on a separate paper.

9. Look for and mark warnings. I put my warnings in a black box. Make a list of the warnings you have marked. I put them on the opposite side of the paper as my instructions.
10. Are there any lists in the chapter? If so, you can number the items on the list. Here is an example that comes from Galatians 5. There are two lists, one that are the deeds of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit, so here is how you can mark them. You can make a list in the side columns of your worksheets.

19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: ¹immorality, ²impurity,
³sensuality,
 20 ⁴idolatry, ⁵ sorcery, ⁶enmities, ⁷strife, ⁸jealousy, ⁹outbursts of anger, ¹⁰disputes,
¹¹dissensions, ¹²factions,
 21 ¹³envying, ¹⁴drunkenness, ¹⁵carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you,
 just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit
 the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is ¹love, ²joy, ³peace, ⁴patience, ⁵kindness, ⁶goodness,
⁷faithfulness,
 23 ⁸gentleness, ⁹self-control; against such things there is no law.

11. Look for and mark contrasts. These show the differences between two words or concepts - opposites. I mark mine with a yellow lightening bolt through the word, then I put that lightning bolt on the side of the observation worksheet next to the verse and put the two words that are being contrasted on either side. Look for words like - but, however, yet, nevertheless, on the other hand.
12. Look for and mark comparisons showing the similarities between two or more words or concepts. I mark mine with brown lines going in both directions over the word and then I draw a line to the two words that are being compared. Look for words like - like, as, such as, also, etc.
13. Look for and mark terms of conclusion. These are words like - wherefore, therefore, for, for this reason, finally, etc. The author has stated certain facts and then states that this is how you should respond, this is what you should do. I put the word in a red box and draw lines that tie the fact with the response.
14. In each chapter, there are several paragraphs. These paragraphs are distinguished by vertical lines separating two verses. Summarize the paragraph by giving it a paragraph title. Follow the same procedure as you did for chapter titles. In I Thessalonians 1, there is only one paragraph, so you will not need to do that for this chapter, but you will want to do that for the proceeding chapters.

15. After you have completed all of your work, check the chapter title that you chose for I Thessalonians 1. Are you happy with it or do you want to change it?

16. Do you have any questions about this chapter? If so, write them down below.

17. Don't look at any commentaries at this time. We are not done with our observations on chapter one.

