

SHARPENING YOUR SWORD  
1 THESSALONIANS — AN INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

BY WAY OF REVIEW

1 The Apostle Paul's affection for the church at Thessalonica is obvious throughout his letter. Verses 1-5 focus on his thankfulness as he remembered the fruit of their salvation. In your own words, describe how and why the salvation of the believers was plain to see.

1 THESSALONIANS 1:6-10

2 Read the first chapter of 1 Thessalonians daily to prepare for your study.

3 In verse 6, name the 3 features that describe how the Thessalonians received the word.

4 Look up 1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1; Ephesians 5:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:14; and Hebrews 6:12 to see who we are to imitate and to what agree we are to imitate them.

5 Can you say as Paul does, "Imitate me as I follow Christ?" If so, how does that guide your conduct and help you follow Christ more closely? If you don't want people to imitate your behavior, why not? Could it be that you need to work on some areas?

6 Trace the progression of the Word in verses 5, 6, and 8. What do observe about its work and effect upon those who hear it?

7 Read Acts 17:5-10 to remind yourself of the circumstances surrounding the new believers at the time. See also 1 Thessalonians 1:4 for a further description of their trials. What do you learn?

8 From verses 6 through 8, explain how the Thessalonians became an example to all believers.

9 Using a concordance or Blue Letter Bible online, define the word example (Strong's #5179) from verse 7.

10 Look up the following verses to see what the Bible has to say about being an example: Philippians 3:17; 2 Thessalonians 3:9; 1 Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7; 1 Peter 5:3

11 In verse 9, what actions accompanied the Thessalonians' turning?

12 For the Thessalonian believers, turning represented a complete change in their life — a 180-degree exact opposite kind of turn. As you think of your life, even now after salvation, how are you turning to God and from idols, from sin, from the world's distractions?

13 Compare what the Bible says about idols with the living and true God:

> Psalm 115:4-8; 135:15-17; Habakkuk 2:18-19

> Deuteronomy 5:26; Joshua 3:10; Jeremiah 10:7-16; Acts 14:15

14 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of... the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:2-3).

In the first commandment, God established that He alone is God and must be worshiped exclusively. Standing in sharp contrast to the practice of the surrounding nations who worshiped many gods, exclusive loyalty to the one Creator God was (and remains) bedrock to the worship of His covenant people. This is clearly taught throughout Scripture. God says of Himself, "...I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God" (Isa 44:6), and "I am the LORD, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God.... That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun that there is no one besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other..." (Isa 45:5-6).

...Because Scripture teaches that only the Creator God is worthy of supreme love and worship, all competing loves are false gods: Any person, any object, any activity that usurps the solitary place of the true God in the heart of a person is a false god. Any passion of the heart that absorbs devotion or diminishes focus from the supreme God is a false god. Any love that competes with a person's love for God—whether the love of things or money or pleasure or immorality is idolatry, a false god. To find sufficiency in oneself or in another human being is idolatry, a false god (Jer 17:5). To exalt human ability and wisdom is idolatry, a false god. By all these things people exchange "the truth about God for a lie" (Rom 1:25). "Thus says the Lord: 'Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight,' declares the Lord" (Jer 9:23-24).

Is there any idol or allegiance you need to turn away from so that you can serve the living and true God?

15 Finally, name the two action verbs from verses 9-10 that should accompany all believers. What practical impact should the verses below have on your life? Consider what changes you may need to make to apply them.

> Romans 12:1

> 2 Peter 3:11-18