



Still Growing: Week 8

Message Date: March 14, 2021

Primary Biblical Texts: 1 Thessalonians 5:1–8

Purpose of the *Still Growing* Series

Still Growing is a close look at the first letter to the Thessalonians. It is a letter written to a community of people to help them keep growing. The Apostle Paul specifically focused on how to pursue faith, love, and hope with this new church in Thessaloniki. Through reading the letter, we will focus on encouraging our congregation to keep growing, as well. We also hope to teach participants how to begin reading the Bible more effectively on their own.

Message Content

This week, Christian encouraged us to follow Paul's exhortation that Christians shouldn't just *believe* the gospel, we should *become* the gospel. God has rescued us out of the darkness and brought us into the light and has charged us to prepare ourselves to live the gospel. It won't be easy, but it is what we were designed for. To help us understand what it looks like to become the gospel, Christian shared three stories of people who taught him to embody the work of faith, the labor of love, and the steadfastness of hope.

Mixer

If you had the ability to take the form of one animal at will, what animal would you choose? Why?

Introduction Questions

1. Who or what tries to communicate "there is peace and security" in our world?
2. What do you think Paul would urge us to be wary of putting our hope of salvation in?
3. How do you remind yourself of your identity in Christ? What sustains your faith and practice?
4. Think about your life: Where are you asleep or drunk? Where do you need to be prioritize being "awake and sober?"

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Putting on Faith: Read Hebrews 11:1–7

1. Some of the best examples of faithful people are found in the Bible. Who is someone from scripture you admire for his or her faith? Why?
2. Can you picture how it looks to be a person whose **faith** shines? What does it look like?

Love's Great Light: Read John 13:31–35

1. Jesus taught that his disciples would stand out for the way that they love others, like a candle in the dark. Have you been around someone whose **love** brought light into your life or someone else's life? What did they do?
2. Where in your life do you need more light? What would it look like to not live in darkness?

Hope: Read 2 Corinthians 4:16–18

1. God always promises to restore us and give us hope. What stands out when you read Paul describe this process in 2 Corinthians verse 4?
2. We cannot do this faith journey alone. Do you know from experience what it's like to have more **hope** because someone else is hopeful? What was that like? How did they help you hope?

Personal Reflection

1. Think of someone who has shown you what faith looks like. Write down what stood out about their faith. Then ask God to grow your faith so that you can be an example to others, just like they were to you.
2. Love changes people, but it is also a choice. Choose to love someone around you differently this week. Be a light.
3. Find one person this week you can inspire to be more hopeful by being a person of hope in their life. Pray for them.
4. If you are in need of hope, spend time using your imagination to see the future where all will be made right.

Take Time to Pray Together