

Study Guide



***ADULT BIBLE STUDY
IN BASIC ENGLISH***

**PHILIPPIANS,
COLOSSIANS &
1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS**

Don C. Jones and Albert W. Gammage

BAPTISTWAY

Dallas, Texas

ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN BASIC ENGLISH
STUDY GUIDE
PHILIPPIANS, COLOSSIANS & 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS

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BAPTISTWAY Management Team

Executive Director, Baptist General Convention of Texas: Charles Wade
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Publishing consultant: Ross West, Positive Difference Communications

Language Materials Team

Writer for Basic English Study Guide for Unit 1
Don C. Jones, Inglewood Baptist Church, Grand Prairie, Texas
Writer for Basic English Study Guide for Units 2, 3
Albert W. Gammage, Lamar Baptist Church, Arlington, Texas
Editor for Basic English Bible Comments for Units 1, 2, 3
Jennifer Carson, First Baptist Church, Arlington, Texas
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Philippians, Colossians & 1 and 2 Thessalonians

The Apostle Paul started many churches. Often he would offer his leadership to these various churches by means of a letter. The churches at Philippi, Colosse, and Thessalonica were three such recipients of these letters. Paul's letter to the Philippians offers praise and instruction for this new church as it faces a conflict between two of the church's leaders. Paul urges them to remain united and be joyful as they serve Christ and suffer for His sake. Paul's letter to the Colossians offers advice as many new believers in the church are being deceived by both Jewish and pagan religious practices. Paul exhorts this church to live in the sufficiency of their relationship with Christ in the midst of a culture that glorifies religious rules and ceremonies. Paul's letters to the Thessalonians offers advice to this new church who is setting an example for other churches in the area. Paul discusses church leaders, church discipline, right living, and the return of Christ.

The churches in Paul's time were not so different from the churches today. Many churches struggle to attain unity and serve Christ well. Many churches find themselves battling a culture which says that Jesus Christ is not the most important thing. Many churches desire to have stronger leaders and stronger members. Churches want their members to have a clear understanding of Christ's return. Then church member can point a hopeless world to the sure hope of Christ's return. Paul's letters build our Christian faith in these important areas so that we can better do the work He has called us to do as His body.

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◆ Philippians, Colossians & 1 and 2 Thessalonians ◆



Adult Bible Study in Basic English

UNIT 1: PHILIPPIANS: REJOICING IN CHRIST

Lesson 1

**Look at Life with Hope
Philippians 1:1-26**

Lesson 2

**Live a Life as the Good
News Says You Should
Philippians 1:27-2:15**

Lesson 3

**Make a Difference with
Your Life
Philippians 2:19-30**

Lesson 4

**Keep Focused on
Knowing Christ
3:2-14**

Lesson 5

**Live with True Joy
Philippians 4:2-19**

UNIT 1:

PHILIPPIANS: REJOICING IN CHRIST

The book of Philippians is only four chapters. Paul wrote this letter to the church in Philippi. You can read this church's story in Acts 16. Paul and his friends went to Philippi. They spoke to several women who met by a river to pray. This small group began the church at Philippi. It became the church that Paul loved best. This church showed Paul more love than other churches did.

Even so, there were at least two problems. First, Paul was in prison. He was in jail for preaching the Gospel. He was chained to Roman guards day and night. He could write letters, but he could not travel freely. He could not preach and teach God's Word. The second problem was within the church at Philippi. Two of the women leaders had a problem with each other. The church lost its unity and joy.

In spite of the problems, Paul's letter is joyful. Paul had the joy of Christ in his heart. He challenged the Philippians to be united. He wanted them to have the love, joy and peace of God. He wanted them to rejoice in Christ. He knew Christ was able to care for all of their needs.

Dr. Don C. Jones and his wife Nita served as missionaries to South Korea for thirty-seven years. They graduated from Howard Payne University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. They are now retired, living in Grand Prairie, Texas. They are members of Inglewood Baptist Church. Don teaches a Sunday School class, and he is a member of the North Central Group of the Singing Men of Texas. They have two grown children, both living in Texas.



Adult Bible Study in
Basic English

Bible Text

Philippians 1:1-26

Memory Verse

“I am sure that God
Who began the good
work in you will keep
on working in you
until the day Jesus
Christ comes again.”
—Philippians 1:6

Word List

Philippi-A city in
Macedonia founded
by Phillip the Great

peace-Not just peace,
but peace with God

Gentile-Not Jewish

grace-Tender mercies,
God’s free gift

supplication-An ask-
ing, a plea, a request

Look at Life with Hope

Paul wrote to the church at **Philippi** with bright, cheerful words. He wrote joyful words even though he was in prison. His love for the people and his joy in Christ were evident. We see this in the greeting. Paul combined the Jewish idea of **peace** with the Gentile idea of **grace**. Paul said both ideas come “from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 2).

Joy in Prayer (Philippians 1:3-11)

As Paul prayed, he thought of the different Christians at **Philippi**. He could have thought of the bad experience in prison there (Acts 16:19-36). He preferred to think of his friends. He thanked God for each one. He was encouraged as he thought of God’s work in their lives.

He also asked God to bless them according to their needs (vv. 9-11). His prayer began with thanks and moved on to **supplication**. He made requests to God for them. God is pleased when we thank Him before we make requests. Paul was pleased because these Philippians shared the **Gospel** with others. They **witnessed** to their friends. They also sent help to Paul when he had special needs.

Paul expressed great faith in the Philippians and in God’s plan. He said that God had begun something wonderful in their lives. He assured them God would continue this “until the day Christ Jesus comes again” (v. 6). Paul expressed his love for them. Then he made some very special requests to God for them. His requests are found in verses 9-11. Paul says the blessings in our life should honor God.

Good Out of Ill (Philippians 1: 12-20)

The Philippians knew that Paul was in prison. They thought this was a terrible thing. Paul explained that God can use even

Gospel-The Good News about salvation in Jesus Christ

witnessed-To tell what one has seen and heard; to tell how you became a Christian

Things To Think About

1. How could Paul be happy even in prison?
2. When we pray, why should we thank God first before asking His blessings?
3. Do you have to be a preacher like Paul to share the Gospel?
4. What five things did Paul ask God to give the Philippians?
5. How can God take bad things and work them together for good?

terrible things for His honor. In prison, Paul could not choose his own food or travel freely. However, there was a good side to being in prison. Roman soldiers guarded Paul every minute he was in chains. They knew Paul was in prison for preaching the Good News. Little by little, all the soldiers heard the Good News. Many believed in Jesus and were saved. Christian brothers and sisters in the region saw Paul's courage. Their own courage increased. Some preached the Gospel with bad purposes and some with good. Paul rejoiced that the Gospel was preached more and more. In Romans, Paul says that "God makes all things work together for the good of those who love Him and are chosen to be a part of His plan" (Romans 8:28). Paul was sure that his sufferings for Christ would result in good.

Joy in Life or Death (Philippians 1: 21-26)

Paul knew that his prison experience could end in his death. He did not know what would happen to him. Whatever happened, Paul knew God could make it result in good. Paul says, "To me, living means having Christ. To die means that I would have more of Him" (v. 21). For Paul, dying would end his suffering. However, if Paul lived longer, he could win more people to Christ. Once in Korea, I heard a famous pastor tell of his three great wishes. First, he wished for wisdom to retire at the right time. Second, he wished not to be trouble to the next pastor. Third, he wished that even his death might bring honor to God. I believe his spirit was much like Paul's spirit.

Surely, Christians' lives should be more joyful than non-Christians' lives. Though we do not know the future, God does. God has not promised that our lives will have no sorrow or trouble. Christians know that God brings good from the bad things we experience. We need not fear death.

Our God is the God of heaven and earth.
Death means only our departure from
earth. It is our arrival in heaven for
eternity.

Philippians 1:1-26

1: This letter is from Paul and Timothy. We are servants owned by Jesus Christ. This letter is to all who belong to Christ Jesus who are living in the city of Philippi and to the church leaders and their helpers also.

2: May you have loving-favor and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3: I thank God for you whenever I think of you.

4: I always have joy as I pray for all of you.

5: It is because you have told others the Good News from the first day you heard it until now.

6: I am sure that God Who began the good work in you will keep on working in you until the day Jesus Christ comes again.

7: It is right for me to feel like this about all of you. It is because you are very dear to me. While I was in prison and when I was proving that the Good News is true, you all shared God's loving-favor with me.

8: God knows what I am saying. He knows how much I love you all with a love that comes from Jesus Christ.

9: And this is my prayer: I pray that your love will grow more and more. I pray that you will have better understanding and be wise in all things.

10: I pray that you will know what is the very best. I pray that you will be true and without blame until the day Christ comes again.

11: And I pray that you will be filled with the fruits of right living. These come from Jesus Christ, with honor and thanks to God.

12: Christian brothers, I want you to know that what has happened to me has helped spread the Good News.

13: Everyone around here knows why I am in prison. It is because I preached about Jesus Christ. All the soldiers who work for the

leader of the country know why I am here.

14: Because of this, most of my Christian brothers have had their faith in the Lord made stronger. They have more power to preach the Word of God without fear.

15: Some are preaching because they are jealous and want to make trouble. Others are doing it for the right reason.

16: These do it because of love. They know that I am put here to prove the Good News is true.

17: The others preach about Christ for what they get out of it. Their hearts are not right. They want to make me suffer while I am in prison.

18: What difference does it make if they pretend or if they are true? I am happy, yes, and I will keep on being happy that Christ is preached.

19: Because of your prayers and the help the Holy Spirit gives me, all of this will turn out for good.

20: I hope very much that I will have no reason to be ashamed. I hope to honor Christ with my body if it be by my life or by my death. I want to honor Him without fear, now and always.

21: To me, living means having Christ. To die means that I would have more of Him.

22: If I keep on living here in this body, it means that I can lead more people to Christ. I do not know which is better.

23: There is a strong pull from both sides. I have a desire to leave this world to be with Christ, which is much better.

24: But it is more important for you that I stay.

25: I am sure I will live to help you grow and be happy in your faith.

26: This will give you reason to give more thanks to Christ Jesus when I come to visit you again.



Adult Bible Study in
Basic English

Bible Text

Philippians 1:27-2:15

Memory Verse

“You are to shine as lights among the sinful people of this world.”

—Philippians 2:15b-16

Word List

humble-Lowly, not proud

privilege-Special right given to a person or group

criminal-Someone who breaks the law; crook or wrong-doer

foretold-Predicted; told something before it happened

Live a Life as the Good News Says You Should

Paul wished to encourage the Christians of Philippi. He wanted them to live the right kind of lives. He knew that it would not be easy because the world is sinful. He wanted them to learn to work together with love for one another. He wanted them to obey God’s Word with a **humble** spirit.

The Gift of Suffering (Philippians 1:27-30)

We preach a Gospel of truth and love and mercy. Our lives should show the same truth and love and mercy. Then people will be attracted to the Gospel we preach. When we defend God’s truth, we must stand true. Like good soldiers, we must move forward preaching His Word. We have the **privilege** of believing in Jesus. We may also have the **privilege** of suffering for Him. We may even learn to sing His praises while suffering. Paul and Silas did this as they sang in the Philippian jail (Acts 16: 25). We may suffer for Christ. It will not be more than He suffered for us. There was a missionary who died for Christ in South America. He once said that he would rather fail in a cause that will succeed than to succeed in a cause that will finally fail.

Reasons for Faithful Obedience (Philippians 2: 1-4)

Paul asked several questions. Do we have comfort in His love? Do we have joy in sharing the Holy Spirit? Do we have loving-kindness for one another? The answer to these questions is *yes*. Then we should keep on loving one another. We should keep on working together. We should not always be thinking first of ourselves. In fact, the word *joy* suggests this. Think of **J**esus first. Think of **O**thers second. Think of **Y**ourself last. As God’s servants we should be lowly in heart. We should think of what Jesus did for us all.

Things To
Think About

1. Why is it important that we live the Gospel and not just preach the Gospel?
2. How can a Christian suffer and still be joyful?
3. Why should a Christian think of the needs of others before thinking of his own needs?
4. How is it possible that God can work through us as we serve Him?
5. What do we have to do in order to shine as lights in a dark world?

Faithful Obedience of Jesus (Philippians 2: 5-11)

Many people believe that these seven verses are the greatest in the whole Bible. They tell exactly what Jesus did for our salvation. They remind us of a verse in 2 Corinthians. It says that even though Jesus was rich, for us He became poor (2 Corinthians 8:9). He was willing to leave His heavenly home. He was willing to be born as a helpless baby. He was willing to grow up in a **humble** home. He obeyed His parents until He was fully grown. He was God in a man's body. He was a king who became a servant. He obeyed even to dying as a **criminal** on a cross. He left a place of comfort to receive our pain and suffering. He left the praises of the angels to receive the curses of men.

Isaiah **foretold** this eight hundred years before. "All of us like sheep have gone the wrong way. Each of us has turned to his own way. And the Lord has put on Him the sin of us all" (Isaiah 53: 6). Jesus entered our world. He became like us for a while. This way, He might introduce us to God. This way, He made it possible for us to be God's children.

Because of this, God has lifted Him up higher than everything. God has given Him a name above all names. The day will come when everyone will say, "Jesus is Lord!" Everyone will give honor to God the Father (v. 11). The Philippians must be like Jesus to please God. They must be obedient and lowly in heart.

Following God's Plan for Our Lives (Philippians 2:12-15)

Jesus was faithful to all of God's plan for Him. We must do our best to be faithful to His plan for us. We work for God like soldiers work for their army. When we work to obey, God is working in us. He helps us to do His work (v. 13). The power must come from Him.

Paul says one more beautiful thing in these verses. The

Philippian Christians lived in a very sinful city. Even so, they were trying to live lives of goodness. They were trying to be pure and obedient to God. They were like lights in the midst of a very dark place. In fact, Paul said that they were to “shine as lights among the sinful people of this world (v. 15).

Philippians 1:27-2:15

27: Live your lives as the Good News of Christ says you should. If I come to you or not, I want to hear that you are standing true as one. I want to hear that you are working together as one, preaching the Good News.

28: Do not be afraid of those who hate you. Their hate for you proves they will be destroyed. It proves you have life from God that lasts forever.

29: You are not only to put your trust in Him, but you are to suffer for Him also.

30: You know what the fight is like. Now it is time for you to have a part in it as I have.

Philippians 2:1: Are you strong because you belong to Christ? Does His love comfort you? Do you have joy by being as one in sharing the Holy Spirit? Do you have loving-kindness and pity for each other?

2: Then give me true joy by thinking the same thoughts. Keep having the same love. Be as one in thoughts and actions.

3: Nothing should be done because of pride or thinking about yourself. Think of other people as more important than yourself.

4: Do not always be thinking about your own plans only. Be happy to know what other people are doing.

5: Think as Christ Jesus thought.

6: Jesus has always been as God is. But He did not hold to His rights as God.

7: He put aside everything that belonged to

Him and made Himself the same as a servant who is owned by someone. He became human by being born as a man.

8: After He became a man, He gave up His important place and obeyed by dying on a cross.

9: Because of this, God lifted Jesus high above everything else. He gave Him a name that is greater than any other name.

10: So when the name of Jesus is spoken, everyone in heaven and under the earth will bow down before Him.

11: And every tongue will say Jesus Christ is Lord. Everyone will give honor to God the Father.

12: My Christian friends, you have obeyed me when I was with you. You have obeyed even more when I have been away. You must keep on working to show you have been saved from the punishment of sin.

13: He is working in you. God is helping you obey Him. God is doing what He wants done in you.

14: Be glad you can do the things you should be doing. Do all things without arguing and talking about how you wish you did not have to do them.

15: In that way, you can prove yourselves to be without blame. You are God's children and no one can talk against you, even in a sin-loving and sin-sick world. You are to shine as lights among the sinful people of this world.



Adult Bible Study in
Basic English

Bible Text

Philippians 2:19-30

Memory Verse

“We have worked together like brothers. He was like a soldier fighting beside me.”

—Philippians 2:25b

Word List

prisoner-a person kept in jail

priorities-Things that are important

concerns-cares or interests

warfare-Continuing war, battle, strife

homesick-Longing for home and family while away

Make a Difference with Your Life

Paul could not visit Philippi himself. He was a **prisoner** of the Roman government. He planned on sending two good friends to Philippi. He would send his friends to help the church. Timothy was a young preacher who had worked faithfully with Paul. Epaphroditus was a Philippian. The Philippians sent Epaphroditus to help Paul. Paul was sending him back home early. Paul wanted them to understand what a Godly servant Epaphroditus was.

Timothy (Philippians 2: 19-24)

The first time Paul went to Philippi, Timothy went with Paul (2 Timothy 1:1-5). Paul worried about Timothy’s youth. Paul feared the Philippians might not respect young Timothy. Paul called Timothy his son in the faith (1 Timothy 1:2). In spite of Timothy’s youth, Paul said that Timothy was a worthy servant. No one else cared about the Philippians as much as Timothy. Paul said we should follow Timothy’s example.

Paul said that most people thought of themselves instead of Jesus Christ (Philippians 2: 21). This may seem like strong words from Paul. Other Christians loved the Lord, but their **priorities** were mixed up. Their first **concerns** were for their own lives. To Paul, life was like being in spiritual **warfare**. The Christian must be like a soldier for Christ. We must not think first of our own comforts. We must think first of what God wants us to do. We must be ready like a soldier to obey.

Paul was waiting to learn the Romans’ plans for him. Then he would send Timothy to the Philippians. Paul hoped that the Philippians would honor Timothy. Paul hoped they would hear what Timothy had to say. Paul hoped that he also would

intentions-Plans or aims**Things To Think About**

1. Must a person be older than us in order to gain our respect?
2. Is it alright for us to be concerned about the comforts of our lives?
3. Are we taking part in spiritual warfare today?
4. Was Epaphroditus a failure in trying to help Paul?
5. What does it mean to have right priorities in our lives?
6. Is it still important to God that our hearts be right with Him?

be able to join them soon in Philippi.

Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25-30)

Epaphroditus was well-known in the Philippian church. The Philippians sent him to bring a gift to Paul. They sent him to be Paul's helper in prison. Epaphroditus was not able to help as much as he wished. He became very sick and almost died. He may have thought that he was no help to Paul. Paul did not want him to think that way.

Epaphroditus tried so hard. His **intentions** were altogether good. After all, he did bring the gift. He went through some dangers in travel. There was much danger in serving a prisoner.

Paul sent Epaphroditus back to Philippi. Epaphroditus was **homesick**. He was not completely well from his illness. Paul judged this whole matter by **intentions**, not by results. Epaphroditus' heart was right. Paul was happy to send Epaphroditus back to them. He gave praise for Epaphroditus and for the church. God's tender mercies were also in Paul's heart. This is like a verse from the Old Testament. "A man looks at the outside of a person, but the Lord looks at the heart" (I Samuel 16:7b). Paul wanted the church to welcome Epaphroditus with joy and honor. Both Timothy and Epaphroditus had hearts for serving God. Both of them did their very best to serve God and the church.

Deacon Yoon was a man who worked for the Baptist Hospital in Pusan, Korea. He was a joyful Christian. He was faithful to his church. Once, his church faced big money problems. They were in the middle of building a new church. Deacon Yoon felt led to sell his own house. He lived through the cold Korean winter in a tent. His neighbors mocked him and called him a fool. He obeyed

the leading of God's Holy Spirit. Later God gave him a better house. Christians should serve God even when the cost seems high. God rewards those who serve Him faithfully.

Philippians 2:19-30

19: I hope by the help of the Lord Jesus that I can send Timothy to you soon. It will comfort me when he brings news about you.

20: I have no one else who is as interested in you as Timothy.

21: Everyone else thinks of himself instead of Jesus Christ.

22: You know how Timothy proved to be such a true friend to me when we preached the Good News. He was like a son helping his father.

23: I hope to send Timothy as soon as I know what they are going to do to me.

24: I hope by the help of the Lord that I can come soon also.

25: I thought it was right that I send Epaphroditus back to you. You helped me by sending him to me. We have worked together like brothers. He was like a soldier fighting beside me.

26: He has been wanting to see all of you and was troubled because you heard he was sick.

27: It is true, he was sick. Yes, he almost died, but God showed loving-kindness to him and to me. If he had died, I would have had even more sorrow.

28: This is all the more reason I have sent him to you. When you see him, you will be glad and I will have less sorrow.

29: Take him into your church with joy. Show respect for men like him.

30: He came close to death while working for Christ. He almost died doing things for me that you could not do.



Adult Bible Study in
Basic English

Bible Text

Philippians 3:2-14

Memory Verse

“My eyes are on the prize. I want to win the race and get the prize of God’s call from heaven through Christ Jesus.”

—Philippians 3:14

Word List

discipleship-Being a disciple or follower or learner

salvation-Being saved from sin; having God’s forgiveness

Gentile-Anyone who is not a Jew

relation-Connection or link

Keep Focused on Knowing Christ

The main idea in Paul’s letter is **discipleship**. He has already talked about right priorities. Here he tells the Philippians to stay focused on knowing Jesus. However, he first warns them about evil teachers.

Watch Out for Evil Teachers (Philippians 3:1-3)

Paul preached **salvation** through faith alone. Some of the Jewish Christians disagreed. They felt that a **Gentile** must first become a Jew. After that they could become a Christian. Paul said that we must add nothing to **salvation** through faith. Jesus Christ died on the cross. He provided our salvation. No religious acts of ours can add to it.

Gains That Became Losses (Philippians 3:4-6)

Paul himself was a Jew. There was a time when he was very proud of that. He was born a Jew. When he was eight days old, he received the first mark of a Jew. His parents were Jews from the tribe of Benjamin. He studied hard. He became a proud law-keeper of the Jews. He even traveled around punishing Christians. He thought Christians were enemies of God.

As a Jew, Paul lived a comfortable life. His family had money for him to get a good education. He was well-known and admired for his enthusiasm. Paul tried his whole life to find a right **relation** to God. He did this through keeping the Jewish law. These things all became losses when he met Christ.

Losses That Became Gains (Philippians 3:7-8)

When Paul met Christ, he changed. Paul gave up everything that was important to him. Compared to knowing Christ, those things suddenly became “worth nothing” (v. 8). It is like the

sacrifice-To give up something of value; an offering

righteousness- Goodness or holiness like God

redeemer-One who redeems or saves

Things To Think About

1. What can we add to our faith for salvation?
2. Why did Paul punish Christians?
3. How did Paul first try to know God?
4. Do we ever know Christ completely?

story Jesus told about the man who searched for pearls. This man looked for the best pearl he could find. Finally, he found it. The man sold all his other pearls so he could buy the best one (Matthew 13:46).

Once, a man admired a missionary he knew. The missionary **sacrificed** so much in order to serve overseas. He said, “You left your beautiful and wealthy country to come to our poor country. You **sacrificed** so much.” The missionary smiled and said, “Sometimes I have tried to **sacrifice** for my Lord. But every time I try, I find that God blesses me richly. I cannot possibly call that a **sacrifice**.”

Paul wanted to follow Christ closely. Paul wanted to share in the pleasant things. Paul also wanted to share in Christ’s suffering. He said this also in Galatians 2:20: “I have been put up on the cross to die with Christ. I no longer live. Christ lives in me. The life I now live in this body, I live by putting my trust in the Son of God. He was the One Who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

Gaining Christ (Philippians 3:9-11)

Paul learned that keeping the law did not bring a right **relation** to God. He was made right with God by faith in Christ. It was not a matter of Paul’s goodness. It was a matter of Christ’s goodness. Through faith, Paul’s sins were forgiven. The **righteousness** of Christ was given to him. It was a free gift through God’s mercy.

Paul wanted more. He wanted to know Christ as a friend, brother, and Savior. Paul wanted to follow Christ closely. He wanted to live a life in perfect oneness with Christ. After many years of marriage, a husband and wife may know each other well. Yet, there is always more to know. So it is with Christ. We may walk with Him for a lifetime. We may seek to know Him well. But there is always more. Several hundred

years ago, a British pastor prayed, “O most merciful **redeemer**, friend and brother, May I know thee more clearly, love thee more dearly, and follow thee more nearly; for thine own sake. Amen.”

Following On (Philippians 3:12-14)

Paul admitted he had not succeeded in following Christ perfectly. Even so, he kept trying. He was not just following Christ. Like an athlete, he was giving his very best. It is difficult to say in English just what the Greek says. The New American Standard Bible says, “I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus” (v. 12). The New Living Bible says, “I keep working toward that day when I will finally be all that Christ Jesus saved me for and wants me to be” (v. 12). No wonder Paul had not reached his goal. He wanted to do everything Christ wanted him to do. He wanted to be everything Christ wanted him to be. May we all follow Paul’s example. May we all follow Christ’s perfect plan for each of us.

Philippians 3:2-14

2: Watch out for false teachers. Watch out for sinful men. They want you to depend on the religious act of becoming a Jew for your hope.

3: The act of becoming a Jew has nothing to do with us becoming Christians. We worship God through His Spirit and are proud of Jesus Christ. We have no faith in what we ourselves can do.

4: I could have reason to trust in the flesh. If anyone could feel that the flesh could do something for him, I could.

5: I went through the religious act of becoming a Jew when I was eight days old. I was born a Jew and came from the family group of Benjamin. I was a Jewish son of Jewish parents. I belonged to the group of the proud religious law-keepers.

6: I followed my religion with all my heart and did everything I could to make it hard for the church. No one could say anything against the way I obeyed the Law.

7: But I gave up those things that were so important to me for Christ.

8: Even more than that, I think of everything as worth nothing. It is so much better to know Christ Jesus my Lord. I have lost everything for Him. And I think of these things as worth nothing so that I can have Christ.

9: I want to be as one with Him. I could not be right with God by what the Law said I must do. I was made right with God by faith in Christ.

10: I want to know Him. I want to have the same power in my life that raised Jesus from the dead. I want to understand and have a share in His sufferings and be like Christ in His death.

11: Then I may be raised up from among the dead.

12: I do not say that I have received this or have already become perfect. But I keep going on to make that life my own as Christ Jesus made me His own.

13: No, Christian brothers, I do not have that life yet. But I do one thing. I forget everything that is behind me and look forward to that which is ahead of me.

14: My eyes are on the prize. I want to win the race and get the prize of God's call from heaven through Christ Jesus.

15: All of us who are full-grown Christians should think this way. If you do not think this way, God will show it to you.

16: So let us keep on obeying the same truth we have already been following.

17: Christian brothers, live your lives as I have lived mine. Watch those who live as I have taught you to live.

18: There are many whose lives show they hate the cross of Christ. I have told you this before. Now I tell you again with tears in my eyes.

19: Their god is their stomach. They take pride in things they should be ashamed of. All they think about are the things of this world. In the end they will be destroyed.



Adult Bible Study in
Basic English

Bible Text

Philippians 4:2-19

Memory Verse

“Be full of joy always because you belong to the Lord. Again I say, be full of joy!”

—Philippians 4:4

Word List

agreement-Finding peace; agreeing with one another

involved-Concerned or entangled; taking part in a situation

reasonable-In accord with reason; moderate or fair

courteous-gracious or polite in behavior

fragrance-sweet

Live with True Joy

The idea of joy has filled this letter of Paul to the Philippians. Paul also talked much of God’s peace. Paul is trying to deal with the hard problems between two women of the church. But the ideas of joy and peace continue in this chapter.

Unity (Philippians 4:2-3)

Paul’s approach was direct. Paul did not say who was wrong. Paul called them both by name. He asked each of them to get their minds and hearts in **agreement**. This is what Christians should do. This was not an easy problem. Paul also asked his “true helper” and Clement to help. Why should they get **involved**? The problem started between just two people. It became a problem to the whole church. The whole church could lose its peace, joy, and unity. The problem had to be solved. Paul shared some secrets of peace and joy. These were important in his own life.

Gladness (Philippians 4:4)

Paul told them twice to be full of joy always. It is not easy to rejoice always. Sometimes we face money problems. Other times we face work problems or family problems. If we have our eyes on Jesus, we can rejoice always. If our joy is in the Lord, we can rejoice always. Our outward problems change often. Jesus remains the same-yesterday, today and forever.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

“Let all people see how gentle you are” (v. 5). Other translations use words like humble, **reasonable**, and **courteous**. This is a quality not often seen in the non-Christian world. Even Christians find it easy to argue about things. Paul is saying that we need to be more like Jesus. If we must disagree, let us do it in

smell, like a flower or perfume

scrolls-Long rolls of paper with writing on them

synagogue-Meeting place of Jews, for worship and school

Things To Think About

1. What are the three suggestions Paul made in vv. 4-6?
2. How can we be full of joy always?
3. Why should we let all people see how gentle we are?
4. What is the secret of not worrying?
5. What was Paul's secret of happiness?

a kind and gentle way. Paul reminds the Philipians that the Lord is coming soon.

Prayer (Philippians 4:6)

This verse has one secret. It is expressed in several different words. These words are *pray*, *give thanks*, and *ask*. The New Living Bible says, "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done" (v. 6). We cannot keep worries from coming. However, we don't need to let them stay in our minds. We can simply take every worry to God as it comes. We can trust that He will help. When my wife and I first retired, I was worried. I wondered if our retirement salary would be enough. I worried whether it would take care of our needs and wants. I soon realized I was worrying. I thought about the many years we trusted God. We trusted Him to take care of our needs. Why should we do differently in retirement? I asked God to forgive me for worrying. I asked Him to help me trust Him more.

The Peace of God (Philippians 4:7)

We should do the things that Paul has suggested in verses 4-6. Then God's wonderful peace will guard our hearts. His peace will be just like a soldier guarding a house or a city. God does not always take away our troubles. He does give His peace in our hearts. He does this even in the midst of trouble. His peace is too great for our minds to understand. We can feel it in our hearts as He cares for us.

High Thinking and Doing (Philippians 4:8-9)

Paul gave here a list of things to think about. Paul's body was in prison, but his mind was not. Some people can think only of the bad things that happen. Paul's mind was thinking

about heavenly things. Movies, television, and the internet expose us to much evil thinking. Paul suggested that we think of things that are true, honorable, and right. He suggested thinking about what is pure, lovely, and good. He told us to think about things worth giving thanks for. They will help to give our lives the **fragrance** of Christ.

As for doing, they were to do the things they learned from Paul. They were to do the instructions they received from him. They were to do whatever they heard from him or saw him do. Few preachers today would be bold enough to say others should be like them. In the Philippians' time, church members did not have their own Bibles. Printing had not been invented. Most Old Testament books were **scrolls** owned by the Jewish **synagogues**. They were all hand-copied. The New Testament was not yet put together. There were only handwritten copies of the Gospels and letters. Really, Paul's life was the Bible that they knew, saw, and heard. Paul said that they should do these things. Then, the God Who gives peace would be with them (v. 9). It may be that our lives are the only Bible some people read. Hopefully, many want to know God because of what they read in us.

The Secret of Happiness (Philippians 4:10-20)

Paul thanked the Philippians for the gift they had sent to him. He wanted them to know that he was not asking for more gifts. He always had enough given to him from God. Sometimes he had little, sometimes much. He had learned a secret. The secret was to trust God. The secret was to be happy with whatever the Father gave. Paul finished this thought with the wonderful words of verse 13. "I can do all things because Christ gives me strength." The New Living Bible says, "For I can do everything with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need" (v. 13).

Paul thanked the Philippians for helping him several times in the past. He said that he was especially glad for their help. He said their gifts pleased God. He said God would bless them. He finished this section with a wonderful promise: "And my God will give you everything you need because of His great riches in Christ Jesus" (v. 19). Thank God for this letter from Paul. It blesses our lives today.

Philippians 4:2-19

4: Be full of joy always because you belong to the Lord. Again I say, be full of joy!

5: Let all people see how gentle you are. The Lord is coming again soon.

6: Do not worry. Learn to pray about everything. Give thanks to God as you ask Him for what you need.

7: The peace of God is much greater than the human mind can understand. This peace will keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8: Christian brothers, keep your minds thinking about whatever is true, whatever is respected, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever can be loved, and whatever is well thought of. If there is anything good and worth giving thanks for, think about these things.

9: Keep on doing all the things you learned and received and heard from me. Do the things you saw me do. Then the God Who gives peace will be with you.

10: The Lord gives me a reason to be full of joy. It is because you are able to care for me again. I know you wanted to before but you did not have a way to help me.

11: I am not saying I need anything. I have learned to be happy with whatever I have.

12: I know how to get along with little and how to live when I have much. I have learned the secret of being happy at all times. If I am full of food and have all I

need, I am happy. If I am hungry and need more, I am happy.

13: I can do all things because Christ gives me the strength.

14: It was kind of you to help me when I was in trouble.

15: You Philippians also know that when I first preached the Good News, you were the only church that helped me. It was when I left for the country of Macedonia.

16: Even while I was in the city of Thessalonica you helped me more than once.

17: It is not that I want to receive the gift. I want you to get the pay that is coming to you later.

18: I have everything I need and more than enough. I am taken care of because Epaphroditus brought your gift. It is a sweet gift. It is a gift that cost you something. It is the kind of gift God is so pleased with.

19: And my God will give you everything you need because of His great riches in Christ Jesus.

◆ Philippians, Colossians & 1 and 2 Thessalonians ◆



Adult Bible Study in Basic English

UNIT 2: COLOSSIANS: CHRIST OVER ALL

**Lesson 6
Christ Is Number One
Colossians 1:4-18**

**Lesson 7
Relationship-Not Rules
Colossians 2:6-23**

**Lesson 8
Christ Is Our Life
Colossians 3:1-15, 18-21**

UNIT 2:

COLOSSIANS: CHRIST OVER ALL

What is the most important thing in life? This is the most important question people must answer. Some think money is most important. Others think family is most important. Still others think their job is most important. Some think religious activities are most important. The Book of Colossians says that Christ is over all these things. He is first in importance and power.

Colossians was written by Paul. He wrote it while he was in prison. He was in prison for preaching the Good News about Jesus. Most Bible scholars think Paul wrote from Rome around 60 AD. Somehow Paul heard about the problems in the church at Colosse. Some Jewish members were following Jewish religious practices. Some Gentile members were following pagan religious practices.

In this letter, Paul tells the Colossian Christians how to solve this conflict. He tells them to put Christ first rather than following other ideas. He says their spiritual lives should not focus on ceremonies and religious laws. Finally, he tells them to make Christ the center of their spiritual lives. They should live for him every day. We will study these three teachings in three lessons. We will apply them to our own lives.

Albert W. Gammage wrote the unit on Colossians. He is an emeritus missionary who served with his wife, Nettie, for thirty-eight years in Korea and the Philippines with the International Mission Board. He is a member of Arlington's Lamar Baptist Church and is active in the church's ministry to internationals.



Adult Bible Study in
Basic English

Christ Is Number One

Many years ago, the big ship Titanic hit an iceberg. The ship was going down into the ocean. The men helped the women and children into lifeboats. They put the women and children first. But some of the men were **selfish**. They got into the life boats before the women and children. They put themselves first.

Christ is to be over all. His followers must put Him first in their lives. This lesson will look at several truths. They will help us put Him first.

Bible Text

Colossians 1:4-18

Memory Verse

“I pray that God’s great power will make you strong, and that you will have joy as you wait and do not give up.”

—Colossians 1:11

Word List

selfish-To want the best for yourself more than for others

wisdom-To be able to see spiritual truth

understanding-To be able to apply spiritual truth to life

relation-To be connected to

Get a Good Start (Colossians 1:4-8)

The most important part of a race is the start. A runner must start well. If not, he will not win the race. In the same way, Christians must start well in religious life. To start well, they must put Christ first. The Christians in the church at Colosse had started well. Paul wrote to them, “Your life was changed the day you heard the Good News” (v. 6). At that time, they “understood the truth about God’s loving-kindness” (v. 6). They knew that being religious would not make them God’s people. Instead, they had to depend upon God’s loving-kindness and grace. God would forgive their sins and change them. He would do this because of His loving-kindness. They did not deserve this. So why did God do it?

God showed his loving-kindness to them because of their “faith in Christ Jesus” (v. 4). Paul told the Ephesians, “For by His loving-favor you have been saved from the punishment of sin through faith” (Ephesians 2:8). Saving faith is trusting in Jesus to save us from sin. It is surrendering to him as Lord of one’s life.

The Christians at Colosse showed their faith by their “love for all those who belong to Christ” (v. 4). This love was given to them by the Holy Spirit. Faith works through love (Galatians 5:6). A person who has true faith in Christ will love others. A

**Things To
Think About**

1. Do you think that a person who believes that one must be baptized for salvation has made a good start to religious life? Why?
2. Do you think that you are doing the four things you need to do to please God?
3. Was Jesus fully God? Was He fully human?
4. Did Christ make Satan and demons?

Christian will love both Christians and non-Christians. Love is wanting to do what is best for others. Real love is willing to suffer for others. Jesus died for us because He loved us.

People who get a good start in their religious life put Christ first in their lives. They must start with understanding the Good News about Jesus Christ. Then they must decide to have faith in Him. If they have true faith, they will love others as Christ did.

Grow in Faith (Colossians 1:9-14)

In these verses, Paul prays that the Colossian Christians will grow in faith. Then they will put Christ first in their lives. Paul's prayer begins by asking God to help the Colossians. Paul wants them to know what God wants them to do (v. 9). They must know this to grow in their faith. God must fill them "with the **wisdom** and **understanding** the Holy Spirit gives" (v. 9). This does not come from their thinking alone. The Holy Spirit gives **wisdom** and **understanding**. He gives it to those who ask and depend upon Him for it.

Paul says they must learn what God wants. Then their "lives will please the Lord" (v. 10). Paul tells them four things that will please the Lord. First, they must "do every kind of good work" (v. 10). Good work means good actions. These come from the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer's heart. Second, they must "know more about God" (v. 10). They could learn what God is like. Then they would know what God wanted them to do. Third, they must depend upon "God's great power" (v. 11). This would make them strong spiritually. If they did this, they would have joy. They would wait and not give up (v. 11). Fourth, they must give "thanks to the Father" for the "good things given to those who belong to Christ" (v. 12). Paul tells about some of these good things.

Christians should do the four things Paul says. This will help them grow in faith and put Christ first.

Know Why Christ Is First (Colossians 1:15-18)

Why should Christ be first in our lives? Answering this question should help us put Him first. One man, R. E. O. White, talks about this in *The Broadman Bible Commentary*. His article on Colossians says that Christ is first in His **relation** to God. He “is as God is” (v. 15). Christ is fully God. God the Father, “cannot be seen” (v. 15). But Christ, the Son of God, could be seen. The Son became a man so we could know God better. By His life and teachings, people can know more about God. God “has spoken to us through His Son” (Hebrews 1:2).

R. E. O. White also says that Christ is first in His **relation** to things that were made. “Christ lived before anything was made” (v. 15). He has been alive with the Father and the Holy Spirit forever. “He was with God in the beginning” (John 1:2).

“Christ made everything in the heavens and the earth” (v. 16). He made the things that are seen. He made the earth, the stars, and people. He also made the “things that are not seen” (v. 16), like

the angels. So Christ “was made greater and better than the angels” (Hebrews 1:4). Everything is made by Christ. All things were made “for Him” (v. 16). This means that all things were made to help Christ do His job. He shows people what God is like. He saves people from their sins. He builds the church. Christ did not stop when he made everything. “All things are held together by him” (v. 17). All things, seen and unseen, exist by Christ’s holding power.

Finally, White says that Christ is first in His **relation** to the church. He “is the head of the church which is His body” (v. 18). He is the head, the most important part of the body. The church belongs to Christ. He can tell it what to do. If the church does not obey Christ, it will be useless. It will be like a body without a head. “He is the first to be raised from the dead” (v. 18). He is head of the church. He rules the church from His throne in heaven.

Christ has “first place in everything” (v. 18). He has first place in His relation to God. He is first in things that are made. He is first in the church. Christians should know this. Christ must be first in their lives. Christ must be above all.

Colossians 1:4-18

4: We give thanks to God for you because we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus. We thank God for your love for all those who belong to Christ.

5: We thank God for the hope that is being kept for you in heaven. You first heard about this hope through the Good News which is the Word of Truth.

6: The Good News came to you the same as it is now going out to all the world. Lives are being changed, just as your life was changed the day you heard the Good News. You understood the truth about God's loving-kindness.

7: You heard the Good News through our much-loved brother Epaphras who is taking my place. He is a faithful servant of Christ.

8: He told us that the Holy Spirit had given you much love.

9: This is why I have never stopped praying for you since I heard about you. I ask God that you may know what He wants you to do. I ask God to fill you with the wisdom and understanding the Holy Spirit gives.

10: Then your lives will please the Lord. You will do every kind of good work, and you will know more about God.

11: I pray that God's great power will make you strong, and that you will have joy as you wait and do not give up.

12: I pray that you will be giving thanks to the Father. He has made it so you could

share the good things given to those who belong to Christ who are in the light.

13: God took us out of a life of darkness. He has put us in the holy nation of His much-loved Son.

14: We have been bought by His blood and made free. Our sins are forgiven through Him.

15: Christ is as God is. God cannot be seen. Christ lived before anything was made.

16: Christ made everything in the heavens and on the earth. He made everything that is seen and things that are not seen. He made all the powers of heaven. Everything was made by Him and for Him.

17: Christ was before all things all things are held together by Him.

18: Christ is the head of the church which is His body. He is the beginning of all things. He is the first to be raised from the dead. He is to have first place in everything.



Lesson
7
Adult Bible Study in
Basic English

Bible Text

Colossians 2:6-23

Memory Verse

“As you have put your trust in Christ Jesus the Lord to save you from the punishment of sin, now let Him lead you in every step.”

—Colossians 2:6

Word List

slaves-People who are owned by other people

human nature-What people are like naturally

spiritually-Having to do with the spirit of people

Relationship-Not Rules

A certain religious group in the Philippines says they are Christians. They teach that they are the only ones who will be saved. They teach that only they will escape the punishment of sin. They teach that faith in Christ is not enough. You must be baptized in their church. You must give at least one-tenth your money to their church. You must not miss their worship services. If you do not obey these rules, you will be put out of the church. According to their teaching, then you will not go to heaven.

Some church members at Colosse believed similar things to this church in the Philippines. They believed that Christians must obey certain man-made rules. Paul wrote a letter to the Colossian church. He wanted them to know that Christ is more important than rules. Christ was enough to save them from their sins. Christ alone could help them be obedient in the Christian life. This lesson should help Christians realize that Christ is more important than rules.

Saved by Faith Alone (Colossians 2:6-16)

Paul wrote to the Christians at Colosse. He said, “You have put your trust in Christ Jesus the Lord to save you from the punishment of sin” (v. 6). They had accepted Christ as the Lord and master of their lives. They had put their faith in Him for salvation. They did not have to obey any rules to be saved. However, there were some teachers of false religion. These false teachers said that faith in Christ is not enough (v. 8). They told the Colossians to obey religious rules for salvation.

Paul’s letter told them the false teachers were wrong. First, Christ “is God in human flesh” (v. 9). Everything that is in God also was in His body. The Colossian Christians had Christ, so they were “complete” (v. 10). They had everything they needed for salvation. They did not need to obey any rules. Second,

physically-Having to do with the body

Old Testament-The part of the Bible written before the time of Jesus

Things To Think About

1. Did Christ free you from any certain sin when you trusted in Him to save you?
2. Do you think the babies of Christian parents should be baptized? Why?
3. What are some rules for Christians that some people teach? Are these found in the Bible?
4. Is Christ more important than rules? Is this true in your life?

Christ “is the head over all leaders and powers” (v. 10). He has power over all people and spirits. No one could keep the Christians from being saved by faith in Christ.

Third, the Colossians had become Christians. “They were set free from the sinful things of the world” (v. 11). They no longer were **slaves** to their sinful **human nature**. They were set free to do what is right. This change was not because of a religious ceremony “done by human hands” (v. 11). They were set free “by what was done in Christ’s body” (v. 11). The death of Christ set them free from the sins of the old self.

Fourth, the Colossian Christians “were baptized” (v. 12). They were **spiritually** baptized. They were buried with Christ. They were raised through Christ. Their baptism was through their “faith in the power of God” (v. 12 (NIV)). Christ died and was buried because of the sins of all people. When people have faith in Christ, they are joined to Christ’s death. Then they die to their old life of sin. They do not want to sin any more. When God raised Christ from death, Christ broke the power of sin. Christians are raised with Christ above the power of sin.

Also, the Colossian Christians were **physically** baptized. This baptism was to show that they had been **spiritually** baptized. In baptism, they were put under water. This showed that they had died and been buried **spiritually**. Then they were raised up out of the water. This showed that they had been raised up from death **spiritually**. They first had to be baptized spiritually. Then they could be baptized **physically**. Only people that had faith in Christ were baptized **physically**. Babies were not baptized.

Paul gave one last reason why faith in Christ was enough for salvation. God “forgave” the sins of the Christians at Colosse (v. 13). By sinning, they had broken the Law of God (v. 14). The Law said that they should be punished for their

sins. Christ took all their punishment when He died on the cross. God forgave all their sins when they trusted in Christ. Their sins no longer kept them from getting close to God. They did not need to obey any rules for salvation.

Rules and Christian Living (Colossians 2:16-19)

Paul goes on to teach that Christ is more important than rules. Christ is the most important thing for Christian living. Paul said they did not have to obey religious rules. These rules were obeyed by the Jews. Some of the rules were in the **Old Testament**. Some of these rules were about what to eat. Others were about what to do on certain days. The **Old Testament** rules were given by God to help the Israelites understand about Christ when He came. After Christ came, the rules were no longer needed.

Paul warned against those who taught about keeping rules for salvation. He said they were “not a part of Christ” (v. 19). They were not true Christians. A Christian’s strength comes from Christ, not obeying rules. There are false teachers today who are teaching that Christians must obey certain rules. For example, some say that you have to worship God on a certain day of the week. Others teach that it is a sin to drink coffee or tea.

However, Christians grow **spiritually** by worshipping God. They grow by studying the Bible and serving Christ in His church.

Why Not Obey Rules? (Colossians 2:20-23)

Why not obey rules? First, Christians have “died with Christ, and become dead to those old ways” (v. 20). Before, people followed the old way of obeying religious rules. When a person dies with Christ, they are set free from rules.

Second, some of those rules were “man-made” (vv. 20, 22). God did not make those rules. He did not want them to obey the rules. Jesus talked to the proud Jewish law-keepers about this. He said, “You put away the Law of God and obey the laws of man” (Mark 7:8).

Third, rules “do not take away a man’s desire to sin” (v. 23). Rules are worthless for that. Only trusting in Christ can take away the desire to sin. These are reasons not to live the Christian life by obeying rules.

Is Christ more important than rules in your life? Some people think they will go to heaven if they are baptized, go to church, and try to live a good life. These are good things to do. However, they will not get you into heaven. The only way to salvation is to trust in Jesus Christ.

Colossians 2:6-23

6: As you have put your trust in Christ Jesus the Lord to save you from the punishment of sin, now let Him lead you in every step.

7: Have your roots planted deep in Christ. Grow in Him. Get your strength from Him. Let Him make you strong in the faith as you have been taught. Your life should be full of thanks to Him.

8: Be careful that no one changes your mind and faith by much learning and big sounding ideas. Those things are what men dream up. They are always trying to make new religions. These leave out Christ.

9: For Christ is not only God-like, He is God in human flesh.

10: When you have Christ, you are complete. He is the head over all leaders and powers.

11: When you became a Christian, you were set free from the sinful things of the world. This was not done by human hands. You were set free from the sins of your old self by what was done in Christ's body.

12: When you were baptized, you were buried as Christ was buried. When you were raised up in baptism, you were raised as Christ was raised. You were raised to a new life by putting your trust in God. It was God Who raised Jesus from the dead.

13: When you were dead in your sins, you were not set free from the sinful things of the world. But God forgave your sins and gave you new life through Christ.

14: We had broken the Law many ways. Those sins were held against us by the Law. That Law had writings which said we were sinners. But now He has destroyed that writing by nailing it to the cross.

15: God took away the power of the leaders

of this world and the powers of darkness. He showed them to the world. The battle was won over them through Christ.

16: Do not let anyone tell you what you should or should not eat or drink. They have no right to say if it is right or wrong to eat certain foods or if you are to go to religious suppers. They have no right to say what you are to do at the time of the new moon or on the Day of Rest.

17: These things are a picture of what is coming. The important thing is Christ Himself.

18: Do not let anyone rob you of your prize. They will try to get you to bow down in worship of angels. They think this shows you are not proud. They say they were told to do this in a dream. These people are proud because of their sinful minds.

19: Such people are not a part of Christ. Christ is the Head. We Christians make up His body. We are joined together as a body is held together. Our strength to grow comes from Christ.

20: You have died with Christ and become dead to those old ways. Then why do you follow the old ways of worship? Why do you obey man-made rules?

21: These rules say, "You must not put your hand on this." "Do not put this into your mouth." "You must not put your finger on that."

22: All these things come to an end when they are used. You are following only man-made rules.

23: It looks as if it is wise to follow these rules in an act of worship, because they are hard on the body. It looks as if they are done without pride, but they are worth nothing. They do not take away a man's desire to sin.



Adult Bible Study in
Basic English

Bible Text

Colossians 3:1-15,
18-21

Memory Verse

“If then you have been raised with Christ, keep looking for the good things of heaven. This is where Christ is seated on the right side of God.”

—Colossians 3:1

Word List

terrorists-People who hurt or kill people who are not soldiers for political reasons

destroy-To get rid of something

fornication-All kinds of sex sins

Christ Is Our Life

On September 11, 2001, something terrible happened. **Terrorists** crashed two big airplanes into the World Trade Center. Many fire fighters and policemen rushed in to help. When the buildings fell down, some of them were killed. They died saving others. This changed the lives of those who were rescued. Many decided to start helping others, like the ones who saved them.

Christ died to save people from punishment for their sins. Those who are saved should live like the one who saved them. They should live for Christ by living like Him. In this lesson we will study how to live for Christ.

Think About Heaven (Colossians 3:1-3)

In order to live well for Christ, we should “think about things in heaven” (v. 2). What are the things in heaven? The most important thing is Christ. He “is seated on the right side of God” (v. 1). Christians should think about His perfect life and teachings. Doing this will help us live as Christ desires.

Christians should also think about those who are already in heaven. They are free from sin and suffering. Christians should want to live for Christ in this world of sin and suffering. The spirits of Christians “have been raised with Christ” (v. 1). They have the Holy Spirit’s power to help them live like Christ.

Christian should “not think about things on the earth” (v. 2). This means we should not dwell on things like food or clothes (Matthew 6:31-33). When Christians are raised with Christ, we die with Christ. We are “dead to the things of this world” (v. 3). We do not think money, houses, cars, and clothes are the most important things. Our “new life is now hidden in God through Christ” (v. 3).

The new life of Christians is hidden from non-Christians. They cannot understand why Christians live as we do. They do

fellowship-The loving service of Christians to each other

submit-To be willing to do what someone tells you to do

lust-Strong desire to do something bad

covetousness-Wanting something someone else has

Things To

Think About

1. How often do you think about heaven?
2. What sin is hardest for you to put to death?
3. What right thing is hardest for you to do?
4. Should a husband be willing to die for his wife?
5. Why do some teenagers not obey their parents?

not know that “Christ is our life” (v. 4). They may say bad things about Christians. They may even hurt or kill Christians. But still, Christians must live for Christ.

Put Sin to Death (Colossians 3:5-11)

Christians must “**destroy** the desires to sin” (v.5). This means to put sin to death. Christians die with Christ spiritually when we trust in Christ for salvation. We still sin when we fail to trust in Christ daily. We must trust Him to help us live rightly. We must die to the desire to sin all the time.

Some of these sins are **fornication, lust, and covetousness**. These sins make sex and things we want more important than God. Doing these sins “is worshipping a [false] god” (v. 1). We must worship only Jesus Christ. There are some other sins that Christians must stop doing. They are: “anger, bad temper, bad feelings towards others, talk that hurts people, speaking against God, and dirty talk”(v. 8). Also, we must not lie to each other. These are sins that hurt the **fellowship** of Christians.

A Christian must put sin to death. A Christian has “now become a new person ” (v. 10). He “is always learning more about Christ” (v. 10). Christians do these thing to keep on “being made like Christ” (v. 10). It does not matter what people were before becoming Christians. In Christ, people of different races, religions, nations, and work, “are the same” (v. 11). “Christ is everything” in a Christian’s life (v. 11). He is all we need to please God. “He is in all of us” to help us live for Him (v. 11).

Do What Is Right (Colossians 3:12-15)

Paul told the Colossians it is not enough to put sin to death. God had chosen them to be holy people (v. 12). Holy

people do what is right. Then Paul told them some right things they should do. Christians “should be full of loving-pity,” or compassion (v. 12). This means we should care about the problems of others. We “should be kind to others” (v. 12). Christians should “have no pride” (v. 12). We should not think that we are better than others. Christians should “be gentle” (v.12). Do not say or do things that hurts people’s feelings. Be patient and “willing to wait for others” (v. 12).

If Christians hurt each other, we should “forgive each other” (v. 13). Since “the Lord forgave them for their sins against Him, they should forgive others” (v. 13). Paul said that all the good things he told them about before were not enough. They “must add love” (v. 14). This love is the kind Jesus had when he died for all people. (John 15:12-13). Only this kind of love can hold Christians together and make them perfect.

Paul says, “Let the peace of Christ have power over your hearts” (v. 15). This kind of peace means good relations with God and others. It comes from trusting in Christ. Christians should always have good relations with other church members. We must do what is right in order to live for Christ. He must be over everything in our lives.

Live for Christ at Home (Colossians 3:18-21)

One of the hardest places to live for Christ is at home. Paul says, “Wives **submit** to your husbands” (v. 18 (NIV)). The New Life Version of the Bible says that **submit** means “obey.” Until modern times, nearly all Christians believed this meaning. They believed that all Christian wives should do it. Now some Christians believe that this teaching was only for Paul’s time. They do not believe it applies today. Some other Christians believe that husbands and wives should submit to each other.

Paul also says, “Husbands love your wives” (v. 19). This kind of love is like Christ’s love for the church. “He gave His life for it” (Ephesians 5:25). If husbands love their wives, they will not “hold hard feelings against them” (v. 19).

Paul says, “Children obey your parents in everything” (v. 20). This does not mean that children should obey if it is against the Word of God. Parents must encourage their children in “trying to do what is right” (v. 21). If parents are not encouraging enough, the children may **rebel**.

Christ must rule over every part of our lives. He must be over what we think about. He must put sin to death in our lives. We must do what He tells us is right. We must live for Him in our families. Let us live for Christ!

Colossians 3:1-15, 18-21

- 1:** If then you have been raised with Christ, keep looking for the good things of heaven. This is where Christ is seated on the right side of God.
- 2:** Keep your minds thinking about things in heaven. Do not think about things on the earth.
- 3:** You are dead to the things of this world. Your new life is now hidden in God through Christ.
- 4:** Christ is our life. When He comes again, you will also be with Him to share His shining-greatness.
- 5:** Destroy the desires to sin that are in you. These desires are: sex sins, anything that is not clean, a desire for sex sins, and wanting something someone else has. This is worshiping a god.
- 6:** It is because of these sins that the anger of God comes down on those who do not obey Him.
- 7:** You used to do these sins when you lived that kind of life.
- 8:** Put out of your life these things also: anger, bad temper, bad feelings toward others, talk that hurts people, speaking against God, and dirty talk.
- 9:** Do not lie to each other. You have put out of your life your old ways.
- 10:** You have now become a new person and are always learning more about Christ. You are being made more like Christ. He is the One Who made you.
- 11:** There is no difference in men in this new

life. Greeks and Jews are the same. The man who has gone through the religious act of becoming a Jew and the one who has not are the same. There is no difference between nations. Men who are sold to work and those who are free are the same. Christ is everything. He is in all of us.

12: God has chosen you. You are holy and loved by Him. Because of this, your new life should be full of loving-pity. You should be kind to others and have no pride. Be gentle and be willing to wait for others.

13: Try to understand other people. Forgive each other. If you have something against someone, forgive him. That is the way the Lord forgave you.

14: And to all these things, you must add love. Love holds everything and everybody together and makes all these good things perfect.

15: Let the peace of Christ have power over your hearts. You were chosen as a part of His body. Always be thankful.

Colossians 3:18: Wives, obey your husbands. This is what the Lord wants you to do.

19: Husbands, love your wives. Do not hold hard feelings against them.

20: Children, obey your parents in everything. The Lord is pleased when you do.

21: Fathers, do not be so hard on your children that they will give up trying to do what is right.

◆ Philippians, Colossians & 1 and 2 Thessalonians ◆

Unit 3

Adult Bible Study in Basic English

UNIT 3: 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS: FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE

Lesson 9

**A Church for Which to Be
Grateful**

**1 Thessalonians 1:1-10;
2:14-15**

Lesson 10

**Leaders Who Inspire
Followers**

**1 Thessalonians 2:1-12;
5:12-13**

Lesson 11

**Instructions for Lives That
Please God**

**1 Thessalonians 4:1-12;
5:14-21**

Lesson 12

**Hope for Loved Ones and
Ourselves**

1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11

Lesson 13

**Faith That Works in the
Workplace**

2 Thessalonians 3:6-15

UNIT 3: 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS: FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE

The Apostle Paul wrote 1 and 2 Thessalonians around 50 AD. 1 Thessalonians was the first letter Paul wrote. Paul was a missionary. He started a church in the city of Thessalonica. His co-workers Silas and Timothy helped him. Thessalonica was the capital of Macedonia.

Paul preached about Christ in the Jewish temple three times (Acts 17:2). Some Jews and many Greeks became Christians. The missionaries led them to start a church. Then the missionaries taught them how to be good Christians. Some Jews did not believe in Jesus. They were angry with Paul and his co-workers. The three missionaries had to leave Thessalonica.

Later Paul sent Silas and Timothy back to Thessalonica. He sent them to see how the church there was doing. Paul waited for them in the city of Corinth. Silas and Timothy returned to Corinth with news of the Thessalonians. Then Paul wrote two letters to the Thessalonians. Paul wanted to give them advice. We will study five lessons from the Thessalonian letters. This should help us live for Christ. It will help us do the work of our church better.

Albert W. Gammage wrote the unit on 1 and 2 Thessalonians. He is an emeritus missionary who served with his wife, Nettie, for thirty-eight years in Korea and the Philippines with the International Mission Board. He is a member of Arlington's Lamar Baptist Church and is active in the church's ministry to internationals.



Adult Bible Study in
Basic English

Bible Text

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10;
2:14-15

Memory Verse

“While praying to God our Father, we always remember your work of faith and your acts of love and your hope that never gives up in our Lord Jesus Christ.”

—1 Thessalonians 1:3

Word List

discouraged-To be sad and about to give up doing something

encourage-To say things that help someone not to be discouraged

example-To show

A Church for Which to Be Grateful

When I was a missionary in the Philippines, I often praised the new Christians. I praised them for the good things in their lives. Many of them had a hard time. Their family and friends did not want them to be Christians. They could easily be **discouraged**. Paul praised them to **encourage** them. It helped them keep on living good Christians lives. Paul praised the new Christians at Thessalonica. His words help us know how to help new Christians.

Praise Their Changed Lives (1 Thessalonians 1:1-6)

Silas and Timothy had visited the Christians at Thessalonica. Then they met Paul in Corinth. They told Paul about the changes they saw in the Thessalonians. Paul began his letter with a greeting. He wished for them to have the “loving-favor and peace” that God gives (v. 1). Then Paul praised them for their changed lives. He thanked God for them and prayed for them often (v. 2). Paul praised them for their “work of faith”(v. 3). This means they were doing good deeds because of their faith. Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus, “He has made us to belong to Christ Jesus so we can work for Him” (Ephesians 2:10). If people have faith for salvation, they will work for Christ.

Paul also praised their “acts of love” (v. 3). These acts showed their love for God and other people. This was the kind of love that God had for people. He sent his Son to die on the cross for our sins. This was the kind of love Jesus had when He gave Himself on the cross. John said, “The person who does not love has not passed from death to life” (1 John 3:14). The Thessalonians’ love showed that they were true Christians.

Paul praised them for their “hope that never gives up” (v. 2). The Thessalonian Christians did not stop serving Christ in the

others how to do something

governor-A leader who can tell a group of people what to do

Things To Think About

1. What are some changes you have seen in the lives of new Christians you know?
2. Do you know some people who say they are Christians but still live like non-Christians? How can you help them?
3. What are some false religions in the place where you live? Is it easy to get the people who believe false religions to turn away from them?
4. Do you know any new Christians who are suffering because of their faith? How are they suffering?

face of trouble. They were being treated badly by those who were not Christians. They were “in our Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 2). They believed that He would care for them whatever happened in the future. They trusted Him even in death (v. 3).

Paul, Silas, and Timothy knew that God had chosen the Thessalonian Christians (v. 4). This means that God had chosen them for salvation to serve Him. He chose them because He knew they would trust in Christ. The missionaries knew that God had chosen them. They had seen the change in the Thessalonians’ lives. That is how we can know a person is really a Christian. The change in the lives of Christians is very clear. It is possible because of the power of the Holy Spirit (v. 5).

Paul praised them saying, “You followed our way of life and the life of the Lord” (v. 6). Because of their changed lives, they “suffered for others” (v. 6). But they “had the joy that came from the Holy Spirit” (v. 6). Christians should praise new Christians when they suffer for Jesus’ sake. Christians should praise new Christians even more when they suffer joyfully.

Praise Their Example (1 Thessalonians 1:7-10)

Paul praised the Thessalonians for their **example**. They were “showing all the Christians in the countries of Macedonia and Greece how to live” (v. 7). The new Christians in those countries were following the **example** of their good lives.

The Thessalonians spoke the “Word of the Lord” in other places (v.8). They did this everywhere. This means in many places, not every place. They had been Christians only a short time. However, they were already doing missionary work in many places.

Some new Christians think they should not do missionary

work. They think they do not know the Word of God well enough. But they know enough of the Word of God to believe in Jesus and be saved. They *can* tell the Good News about Jesus. Jesus said to a new Christian, “Go home to your own people. Tell them what great things the Lord has done for you” (Mark 5:19). The man went to everyone in his home place. He told them the Good News. Christians should praise new believers who tell the Good News to others.

Paul went to new places to tell the Word of God. When he and the others arrived, the people already knew about faith in Jesus. They heard that the Thessalonians had “turned from false gods” to the “true and living God” (v. 9). It is hard for people to turn away from false religions to God. Often people say bad things about them. Sometimes people do bad things to them. New Christians should be praised for turning to God.

People in other places had heard something else about the Thessalonians. The Thessalonians were “waiting for His Son Jesus to come down from heaven” (v. 10). They believed that “God raised Him from the dead” (v. 10). They believed that Jesus would save them “from the anger of God that is coming”(v. 10). This means God will punish those who do not trust Jesus for salvation. Christians should look forward to the return of Christ. Christ will

return to take them to heaven.

Praise Them for Suffering Joyfully (1 Thessalonians 2:14-15)

Paul praised the new Christians at Thessalonica for suffering joyfully. They took it “just like the churches in the country of Judea” (v. 14). The Christians in Judea did not stop worshipping God together. The Jewish religious leaders told the Christians to stop talking about Jesus. One time the religious leaders beat them for telling the Good News. These Christians were “happy that they could suffer shame” for Jesus (Acts. 5:41).

“It was the Jews who killed the Lord Jesus” (v. 15). The Jews did not kill Jesus with their own hands. They told the Roman **governor** to kill Him on a cross. However, the Jews did kill one Christian. They killed Stephen by throwing stones at him. Just before he died, Stephen prayed out loud. “Lord, do not hold this sin against them” (Acts 7:60). Like Stephen, the new Christians even loved the people who hurt them.

Christians today should help new Christians by praising them. We should praise them for the good changes in their lives. We should praise them when they set a good **example** for others. We should praise them when they take suffering like the early Christians in Judea.

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10; 2:14-15

1: This letter is from Paul and Silas and Timothy. It is to you, the church, in the city of Thessalonica. You belong to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. May you have His loving-favor and His peace.

2: We thank God for you all the time and pray for you.

3: While praying to God our Father, we always remember your work of faith and your acts of love and your hope that never gives up in our Lord Jesus Christ.

4: Christian brothers, we know God loves you and that He has chosen you.

5: The Good News did not come to you by word only, but with power and through the Holy Spirit. You know it was true. You also knew how we lived among you. It was for you good.

6: You followed our way of life and the life of the Lord. You suffered from others because of listening to us. But you had the joy that came from the Holy Spirit.

7: Because of your good lives, you are showing all the Christians in the countries of Macedonia and Greece how to live.

8: The Word of the Lord has been spoken by you in the countries of Macedonia and Greece. People everywhere know of your faith in God without our telling them.

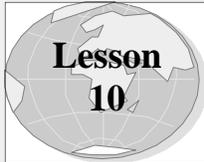
9: The people themselves tell us how you received us when we came to you. They talk of how you turned to God from

worshiping false gods. Now you worship the true and living God.

10: They tell us how you are waiting for His Son Jesus to come down from heaven. God raised Him from the dead. It is Jesus Who will save us from the anger of God that is coming.

1 Thessalonians 2:14: Christian brothers, you became just like the churches in the country of Judea. You had to suffer from the men in your country as those churches had to suffer from the Jews.

15: It was the Jews who killed the Lord Jesus and the early preachers. The Jews made it hard for us and made us leave. They do not please God and are working against all men.



Adult Bible Study in
Basic English

Bible Text

1 Thessalonians 2:1-
12; 5:12-13

Memory Verse

“You must think much
of them and love them
because of their work.
Live in peace with
each other.”
—1 Thessalonians
5:13

Word List

motives-Reasons for
doing something

preach-To tell the
Good News to a group
of people

homosexuality-for
men to have sex with
men or women with
women

Leaders Who Inspire Followers

Once I was a member of a church that had a new leader. The leader before him had been there many years. One of the members of the church was a new Christian. She did not like the new leader. He was not the same as the old leader. He led the church and preached in a different way. The new Christians did not know what a new leader should be like. She did not know how she should follow the new leader.

The new Christians in the Thessalonian church were like that. Paul wrote to them what a church leader should be like. He told how to follow new leaders. What Paul wrote should help Christians today. It helps us know about church leaders.

Why Leaders Serve (1 Thessalonians 2:1-9)

Why do church leaders serve? Church members need to understand the **motives** of good leaders. Paul explained why he, Silas, and Timothy had served them. Their **motives** were those of good leaders. These missionaries wanted to tell them the Good News about Christ. They “had no wrong desire in teaching them” (v. 3). They “did not try to fool” them (v. 3). Some teachers of false religions fool people. False teachers cause people to believe what is not true. Paul and the other missionaries had received the truth. They had the Good News from God. So they preached “it to please God, not man” (v. 4).

The missionaries “never tried to get money” from the new Christians “by **preaching**” (v.5). Many teachers of false religions asked their followers for money. But the missionaries did not ask for money. They “worked night and day” to provide for their own needs (v. 9). Probably they made tents out of animal skins. Church leaders should receive their living expenses from the church. But they should not serve with the

comfort-To help a sad person not to be sad

kingdom-A nation ruled by a king

responsibility-Something someone is expected to do

Things To

Think About

1. Should a church leader preach what he believes to be true? Even if the members do not like it?
2. In one country a church leader can be put in jail if he preaches that homosexuality is a sin. If you were a church leader would you teach that it is a sin?
3. If a church leader tells you with strong words that you are doing something wrong, what should you do?
4. How can church members show their love for their church leaders?

motive of making money.

The missionaries “never looked for thanks from men” (v. 6). They did not serve in order to be thanked. Good church leaders do not expect to be thanked for their service. They want God to be thanked and praised for their service. The missionaries did not ask the new Christians for much (v. 6). They were gentle to the church members. They were “like a mother caring for her children” (v. 7). The missionaries wanted to do good things for the new believers.

The missionaries “were happy to give” them “the Good News” (v. 8). They loved the Thessalonians. They “were ready to give” them their “own lives also” (v. 8). The missionaries were willing to die to tell them about Jesus. Some people did not want them to tell the Good News in Thessalonica. These people could have killed the missionaries. Jesus died for people because He loved them. Good church leaders love people. They are willing to sacrifice greatly to help them.

What the Leader Does (1 Thessalonians 2:10-12)

The missionaries lived good Christian lives while serving in Thessalonica. This showed the new Christians how they should live. The missionaries lived pure, or holy, lives. (v. 10). This means they lived good lives like God. They did not live like unbelievers. This showed the new Christians that their lives must change. The missionaries lived rightly. This means they obeyed the rules of God in the Bible. They were without blame among the new Christians. No one could say the missionaries did not live good lives. Good church leaders set an example that new Christians can follow.

The missionaries helped the new Christians “as a father helps his children” (v. 11). They encouraged them when they were discouraged. Some non-Christians did bad things to the

Christians. Some of the unbelievers probably were friends and family members. New Christians could easily have become discouraged. The missionaries gave them **comfort** when they were sad.

The missionaries told the new Christians “with strong words” that they “should live to please God” (vv. 11,12). They should live good Christians lives because God chose them. God wanted them to come into His holy nation and share His “shining-greatness” (v. 12). God’s holy nation is His kingdom. It is made of people in heaven and on earth. It is all whose lives are ruled by God. Because of this, they share His glory.

How to Treat Leaders (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)

Paul told the new Christians how to treat their church leaders. The church leaders were called pastors, elders, or overseers. First, Paul told the church members to “respect” their leaders. They should respect leaders because leaders worked hard among them (v. 12). Good church leaders have to work very hard. Usually they spend more time working than other people do.

Also, the church members should respect their leaders. The Lord had “placed them over” the people (v. 12). This means

that Christ gives church leaders responsibility. Leaders care for the spiritual lives of the church members. What a big **responsibility!** Church members should respect their pastors for this.

Paul tells the people that the church leaders were their teachers (v. 12). This word for teach is special. It means teaching people what they are doing wrong in a kind way. Telling people they are doing wrong is hard to do. People do not like being told they are doing wrong. However, they need to hear it so they can change. This is an important job for church leaders. Paul said to love church leaders “because of their work” (v. 13). Loving the leaders helps them lead and serve the members well.

Church members should “live in peace with each other” (v. 13). This is one way to treat church leaders well. There should not be conflict among church members. Members may have different ideas about the work of the church. They should not fight about it. Conflict makes the leader’s work harder.

How can churches help new Christians? They can help them know why their church leaders serve. They can help them know what a leader should do. They can help them to know how to treat their church leaders. All these things will help new Christians.

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12; 5:12-13

1: Christian brothers, you know that my visit with you was not wasted.

2: Just before we came to you, we had been in the city of Philippi. You know how they worked against us and made us suffer. But God helped us preach the Good News to you without fear, even while many people hated us and made it hard for us.

3: You remember what we said to you was true. We had no wrong desire in teaching you. We did not try to fool you.

4: God has allowed us to be trusted with the Good News. Because of this, we preach it to please God, not man. God tests and proves our hearts.

5: You know we never used smooth-sounding words. God knows we never tried to get money from you by preaching.

6: We never looked for thanks from men, not from you or from anyone else. But because we were missionaries of Christ, we could have asked you to do much for us.

7: Instead, we were gentle when we came to you. We were like a mother caring for her children.

8: We had such a strong desire to help you that we were happy to give you the Good News. Because we loved you so much, we were ready to give you our own lives also.

9: You remember, Christian brothers, we worked night and day for our food and clothes while we preached the Good News

to you. We did not want to make it hard for you.

10: You know, and so does God, how pure and right and without blame we were among you who believe.

11: As a father helps his children, you know how we wanted to help you and give you comfort. We told you with strong words

12: that you should live to please God. He is the One Who chose you to come into His holy nation and to share His shining-greatness.

1 Thessalonians 5:12: We ask you, Christian brothers, to respect those who work among you. The Lord has placed them over you and they are your teachers.

13: You must think much of them and love them because of their work. Live in peace with each other.



*Adult Bible Study in
Basic English*

Bible Text

1 Thessalonians 4:1-
12; 5:14-21

Memory Verse

“By doing this, you will be respected by those who are not Christians. Then you will not be in need and others will not have to help you.”
—1 Thessalonians 4:12

Word List

tempt-To try to get someone to do something wrong

Philippi-A city in the country of Macedonia

Berea-A city in the country of Macedonia

Instructions for Lives That Please God

Husbands and wives usually try to please each other. Husbands may help their wives with the housework or shopping. They may give their wives gifts. Sometimes they may take their wives out to eat. Wives may say nice things about their husbands. They may prepare the kind of food their husbands like. Wives may try to look good for their husbands. Paul told the new Christians at Thessalonica how to please God. In this lesson we will study what Paul said. What he said should help us know how to please God.

Know How to Please God (1 Thessalonians 4:1-2)

Paul called the Thessalonian believers “Christian brothers” (v. 1). All true Christians are spiritual brothers. God is their Father. All are the same. No one is higher than the other is. Jesus gave Paul the authority to tell the Thessalonians what to do (v. 2). Paul did not have this authority on his own. Church leaders today receive their authority from Christ, too. They are not better or higher than other believers.

Paul had already told them how to “please God” (v. 1). Now he talked to them strongly. He said to “keep on living” the way he had taught them (v. 1). This way they would “grow in the Christian life” (v. 1). New Christians must know how to live in a way that pleases God. If they do not know, they will not grow. They will always be spiritual babies. That does not please God.

Keep Away from Sex Sins (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8)

Keeping away from sex sins pleases God (v. 3). Some people in Thessalonica did not know God. They did many sex sins. Sex sins were even part of their religion. They thought that their gods wanted them to do sex sins. They followed these ways before

Things To**Think About**

1. How can new Christians in your church be taught how to please God?
2. Why do you think that there are so many sex sins in America today?
3. How can Christians love their brothers and sisters in Christ more and more?
4. Should Christians help people who will not work? Why?
5. Can you think of a time when God used something bad to help you grow stronger in your faith?

they became Christians. Paul told them to stop doing sex sins. He said, “God wants you to be holy” (v. 1). Being holy means being set apart for God’s purposes. Holy people do not live as those who do not know God.

Paul said “the Lord will punish a person who does” sex sins (v. 6). Some very bad diseases can be caught through sex sins. God may allow those who do sex sins to get these diseases. They can even die from some of these diseases. Most people in America today do sex sins. Some men and women who are not married have sex together. Some married people have sex with someone they are not married to. Some men have sex with other men. Some women have sex with other women. God’s Word says that all of these are sex sins (Exodus 20:14; Matthew 5:19; I Corinthians 6:9-10, 16, 18; Romans 1:26-27). Christians must be careful to keep away from these sex sins. Christians should stay away from places and things that might **tempt** them.

Love More (1 Thessalonians 4:9-10)

Paul knew the new Christians already loved each other like brothers. God had taught them “to love each other” (v. 9). God was like a loving father to them. They understood that they were brothers and sisters in God’s family. The Thessalonians had met the Christians in **Philippi** and **Berea**. They loved them also like brothers and sisters. Paul asked them to keep loving their fellow Christians more and more.

Work Hard (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12)

Some of the Christians in Thessalonica had stopped working. Probably they believed that Christ would come back soon. Christians should not believe people who say they know when Christ is coming. No one knows when He will come (Mark 13:32). Paul told them to “learn to do your own

work well” (v. 11). Paul gave two reasons they should work hard. First, they would “be respected by those who are not Christians” (v. 12). If they did not work, unbelievers would think Christians were bad people. Second, they would “not be in need of things” like food and clothes (v. 12). Christians should always work hard to get the things they need to live. If they can work, they should not depend on others.

Help Others (1 Thessalonians 5:14-15)

Paul told the new Christians that they must help others. Some of the Christians were discouraged. They felt that they could not “keep going on” (v.14). Paul said that other Christians should comfort them. Paul said this to help those whose faith was weak. Probably those were Christians who used to worship false gods. The strong believers could help teach them God’s Word. The strong believers could pray for them.

All Christians are weak in some ways. Christians should “be willing to wait for” others to grow stronger (v. 14). Christians should not repay bad for bad. Instead, they should bless others. Christians should be patient with the weaknesses of others.

Do Some Things (1 Thessalonians 5:16-21)

Paul said Christians should do some things to please God. First, Paul tells them to

“be full of joy at all times” (v. 16). People were doing bad things to the new believers. However, they could always have joy in their hearts. Joy is a gift of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:23).

Second, Paul said they should “never stop praying” (v.17). Christians always should be aware that God is with them. They should talk to Him about what they are doing. When they pray, they should give thanks in everything (v.18). They should give thanks even when bad things happen. “God makes all things work together for the good of those who love Him” (Romans 8:28).

Third, Paul said, “Do not put out the spirit’s fire” (v. 19 (NIV)). The Holy Spirit makes the Christian’s heart warm with love and joy. Christians put out the Spirit’s fire when they sin. Fourth, Paul told them to “test everything” (v. 21). There were some false teachers in Thessalonica. Paul told them to test everything by the truth the missionaries taught.

The things Paul talked about are important for Christians today. We cannot please God if we do not rejoice and pray. Having the fire of the Holy Spirit pleases God. Testing all things by God’s Word pleases Him, too. We have studied God’s Word about how to please Him. Are you pleasing God? If not, promise God that you will start today.

1 Thessalonians 4:1-12; 5:14-21

1: Christian brothers, we ask you, because of the Lord Jesus, to keep on living in a way that will please God. I have already told you how to grow in the Christian life.

2: The Lord Jesus gave us the right and the power to tell you what to do.

3: God wants you to be holy. You must keep away from sex sins.

4: God wants each of you to use his body in the right way by keeping it holy and by respecting it.

5: You should not use it to please your own desires like the people who do not know God.

6: No man should do wrong to his Christian brother in anything. The Lord will punish a person who does. I have told you this before.

7: For God has not called us to live in sin. He has called us to live a holy life.

8: The one who turns away from this teaching does not turn away from man, but from God. It is God Who has given us His Holy Spirit.

9: You do not need anyone to write to you about loving your Christian brothers. God has taught you to love each other.

10: You love all the Christians in all the country of Macedonia. But we ask you to love them even more.

11: Do your best to live a quiet life. Learn to do your own work well. We told you

about this before.

12: By doing this, you will be respected by those who are not Christians. Then you will not be in need and others will not have to help you.

1 Thessalonians 5:14: We ask you, Christian brothers, speak to those who do not want to work. Comfort those who feel they cannot keep going on. Help the weak. Understand and be willing to wait for all men.

15: Do not let anyone pay back for the bad he received. But look for ways to do good to each other and to all people.

16: Be full of joy all the time.

17: Never stop praying.

18: In everything give thanks. This is what God wants you to do because of Christ Jesus.

19: Do not try to stop the work of the Holy Spirit.

20: Do not laugh at those who speak for God.

21: Test everything and do not let good things get away from you.



Adult Bible Study in
Basic English

Bible Text

1 Thessalonians 4:13-
5:11

Memory Verse

“You know for sure
that the day the Lord
comes back to earth
will be as a robber
coming in the night.”
—1 Thessalonians 5:2

Word List

fault-Something
wrong or bad

destroy-To ruin,
break up, or get rid of
something

Things To Think About

1. Do you have any
problems about
Christ’s return? If so,

Hope for Loved Ones and Ourselves

William Miller was a Christian with strong faith. He wanted to know when Christ would come back. He studied the teachings of the Bible about Christ’s second coming. He decided that Jesus would return on a certain day in 1890. Many others believed him. Miller and his followers got ready for Christ’s return. They sold everything they owned. They made special clothes to wear on that day. On the day they expected Christ to return, they put on their special clothes. They waited, but He did not come. Knowing about Christ’s return was a big problem for them. Knowing about Christ’s return was a problem for the Thessalonians, too. In this lesson, we will study what Paul taught about it. This can help us know more about Christ’s return.

Christians at Christ’s Return (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

The Thessalonians knew that Christ would return to earth. They knew that Christ would return to take Christians to heaven. But the new believers had a problem. They did not know what would happen to the dead Christians. Paul wrote them about this.

Paul did not want the Christians “to have sorrow as those who have no hope” (v. 13). The unbelievers did not know about life after death. They had no hope for dead people. Christians should have hope because “Jesus died and then came to life again” (v. 14). Paul said, “God would bring to life again all those who belong to Jesus” (v. 14). “He was the first One to be raised from the dead and all those who are in graves will follow” (1 Corinthians 15:20).

Only the bodies of the Christians who have died will be raised. The souls of Christians go right to heaven at death. Their bodies will not be the same as when they died. They will be new bodies without **fault** or weakness (1 Corinthians 15:42-53).

what can you do to solve them?

2. If Christ returns before you die, what dead person besides Jesus would you most like to see in the sky?

3. Does Jesus know now when he will return?

4. Before you studied this lesson, were you watching for Christ's return?

The first ones to meet the Lord will be the bodies of the dead Christians (v. 16). Their new bodies will be joined to their souls. Then the Christians “who are still living here on earth” will meet the Lord. They will receive new bodies, too. They will be gathered together with the dead Christians “in the clouds” (v. 17). Living and dead Christians will “meet the Lord in the sky and be with Him forever” (v. 17). Because of Paul’s teaching, the new Christians could “comfort each other” (v. 18). They did not have to be sad about death. They could be sure that they would meet the dead believers again.

The Time of Christ’s Return (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3)

Some of the believers thought that Christ would return right away. Many of the Christians wanted to know the time of His return. Would it be right away or some other time? Paul answered that they did not need to know (v. 1). Jesus said, “But no one knows the day or the hour. No! Not even the angels in heaven know. The Son does not know. Only the Father knows” (Matthew 24:36). Only God knows when Christ is coming again.

Paul told them that the coming of Christ would be unexpected. His return would “be as a robber coming in the night” (v. 2). No one expects a robber to break into their house. On September 11, 2001, no one expected terrorists to attack the World Trade Center. It was a great shock to everyone. People will feel like that when Christ returns.

Just before Christ returns, people will think that “everything is fine and safe” (v. 3). But suddenly those who have not trusted in Jesus “will be **destroyed**” (v. 3). “They will be punished forever and taken away from the Lord” (2 Thessalonians 1:9). It will begin “like pain that comes on a woman when a child is born” (v. 3). Suddenly they will be suffering in hell.

Watch for Christ's Return (1 Thessalonians 5:4-11)

Christians do not know the time of Christ's return. His coming back will not be expected. So Paul told the Thessalonian Christians to watch for his coming. He said that they were not in darkness like the unbelievers. Unbelievers did not know that Christ would come back (v. 4). The believers knew that Christ would return. Christ's return should not surprise them "as a robber would" (v. 4). Christians should "keep awake" (v. 6). They should "not sleep" like the unbelievers (v. 6). This means that believers should not forget about Christ's return. They should always remember it and think about it.

Paul said that Christians should be like soldiers guarding a city. They should keep their minds awake (v. 8). Soldiers on guard must always be looking for enemy soldiers. In the same way, Christians should always be looking for Christ's return.

In Paul's time, soldiers covered their face and head with metal for protection. Christians must protect themselves against their spiritual enemies. "Our fight is not with people. It is against the leaders and power and the spirits of darkness in this world. It is against the demon world that works in the heavens. Because of this, put on all the things God gives you to fight with" (Ephesians 6:12-13). Christians must cover themselves with faith, love, and hope (v. 8). Faith is

trusting in Christ. Faith causes a believer to have love and hope. Love is wanting to do what is best for God and others. Hope is believing that Christians will be saved. When Christ returns, they will be saved from the punishment, power, and presence of sin (v. 8).

Christians are not saved because they try hard to be saved. They are saved because "God planned to save" them (v. 9). Christians "are chosen to be part of His plan. God knew from the beginning who would put their trust in Him. So He chose them and made them to be like His Son" (Romans 8:28-29). God planned to save those who have faith "through our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 9). Jesus died for Christians so that they will be with Him when He returns (v. 10). There will be no difference between the living and the dead.

Because of the truth about Christ's return, Christians can "comfort each other" (v. 11). They should "make each other strong" in faith, love, and hope (v. 11). They can do this by praying for each other. They can also teach each other God's Word.

We do not need to worry about Christ's return. All true Christians will rise to meet Him in the sky. We do not know when that will happen. We should be watching for His coming. We should keep our minds awake. We should make each other strong in faith, love, and hope.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11

13: Christian brothers, we want you to know for sure about those who have died. You have no reason to have sorrow as those who have no hope.

14: We believe that Jesus died and then came to life again. Because we believe this, we know that God will bring to life again all those who belong to Jesus.

15: We tell you this as it came from the Lord. Those of us who are alive when the Lord comes again will not go ahead of those who have died.

16: For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven with a loud call. The head angel will speak with a loud voice. God's horn will give its sounds. First, those who belong to Christ will come out of their graves to meet the Lord.

17: Then those of us who are still living here on earth will be gathered together with them in the clouds. We will meet the Lord in the sky and be with Him forever.

18: Because of this, comfort each other with these words.

1 Thessalonians 5: 1: You do not need anyone to write to tell you when and at what kind of times these things will happen.

2: You know for sure that the day the Lord comes back to earth will be as a robber coming in the night.

3: When they say, "Everything is fine and

safe," then all at once they will be destroyed. It will be like pain that comes on a woman when a child is born. They will not be able to get away from it.

4: But you are not in darkness, Christian brothers. That day will not surprise you as a robber would.

5: For you are children of the light and of the day. We are not of darkness or of night.

6: Keep awake! Do not sleep like others. Watch and keep your minds awake to what is happening.

7: People sleep at night. Those who get drunk do it at night.

8: Because we are men of the day, let us keep our minds awake. Let us cover our chests with faith and love. Let us cover our heads with the hope of being saved.

9: God planned to save us from the punishment of sin through our Lord Jesus Christ. He did not plan for us to suffer from His anger.

10: He died for us so that, dead or alive, we will be with Him.

11: So comfort each other and make each other strong as you are already doing.



Adult Bible Study in
Basic English

Bible Text

2 Thessalonians 3:6-
15

Memory Verse

“When we were with you, we told you that if a man does not work, he should not eat.”

—2 Thessalonians
3:10

Word List

lazy-Not wanting to work

discipline-Actions that help a person learn the difference between right and wrong behavior

Faith That Works in the Workplace

I was a missionary in Korea. A lady often came to our house. She and her two young children were dressed in rags. She told us that she had no money. She said she could not buy food for her family. Usually we would give her money. Other missionaries gave her money, too. One day we learned that she was not really poor. She had large amounts of money in three banks. She was rich. Her husband did not work. Instead, the family depended on others to give them money.

In the church at Thessalonica, some people would not work. They depended on other Christians to give them what they needed. In this lesson we will study what Paul taught about this problem. This study should help Christians to have the right attitude towards work.

Christians Should Work Hard (2 Thessalonians 3:6-9)

The Thessalonians knew they should live like Paul, Silas, and Timothy lived. In 1 Thessalonians 1:6, Paul said, “You followed our way of life.” New Christians should follow the way of life of their leaders. The missionaries “worked hard” while they were in Thessalonica (v. 7). The new Christians had seen this. The missionaries “did not eat anyone’s food without paying for it” (v. 8). Christians should offer to pay if they stay with others and eat with them.

The missionaries “worked hard night and day” (v.8). The Thessalonians did not have to give them anything. Paul knew how to make and sell tents (Acts 18:13). Silas and Timothy probably helped him do that kind of work. By working hard, they were able to pay for all their food. Some missionaries today work to support themselves. Sometimes they are called *tent-maker missionaries*.

Things To**Think About**

1. Why should Christians work hard?
2. Can missionaries expect to get their living expenses from other Christians? Why?
3. What should Christians do about church members who will not work?
4. Why does the church discipline its members?

Paul said, “We could have asked you to give us food” (v. 9). He said that missionaries have the “right to food and drink when” they “are working for the Lord” (1 Corinthians 9:4). Paul believed what the Lord said. “The Lord has said that those who preach the Good News should get their living from those who hear it” (1 Corinthians 9:14). This is true for missionaries and church leaders today. They have a right to get their living expenses from other Christians. Usually they are supported by churches.

Paul, Silas, and Timothy could get food from the Thessalonian Christians. They did not do this. They wanted new Christians to follow their “way of living” (v. 9). They wanted them to work for things they needed to live. Christians today should do the same.

Those Who Will Not Work**(2 Thessalonians 3:6, 10-12, 14-15)**

Paul also told the Thessalonians about those who would not work. First, he told them to “keep away from any Christian who is **lazy**” (v. 6). The Christians who worked should treat those who did not work differently. They should be treated like unbelievers.

Paul told them to do this “in the name of the Lord Jesus” (v. 6). In other words, Jesus wanted him to teach this. Jesus Himself taught the same thing. Jesus taught about church members who are living wrongly. He said, “If he does not listen to the church, think of him as a person who is as bad as one who does not know God” (Matthew 18:17).

Paul said to stay away from any man who does not want to work. Then “he will be put to shame” (v. 14). If he became ashamed, he might turn away from being lazy. He might start working. Church members should “talk to him as a Christian brother” (v. 15). They should “not think of him as one who

hates” them (v. 15). They should talk to him with kind, loving words. This will show that they are trying to help, not hurt.

Once in Corinth, a church member was doing a sex sin. Paul wrote to the Christians there. “The man who is living like that should be sent away from you” (1 Corinthians 5:1). The church kept away from the man. He became sorry for his sin and turned away from it. When Paul heard about this, he wrote to the church again. Paul said, “Now you should forgive him and comfort him. If you do not, he will be so sad that he will want to give up. I ask you to show him you do love him” (2 Corinthians 2:7-8).

In Baptist churches today, we call this church **discipline**. Pastors and deacons have this responsibility if a church member keeps sinning. They should try to help that person stop sinning. If that person does not stop, the church members have a meeting. They vote to **discipline** the one who is sinning. That person loses all their rights as a church member. Hopefully that person will become sorry and stop sinning. If that happens, the church should forgive and comfort that person. That person can again have the rights of a church member.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-15

6: Now this is what we tell you to do, Christian brothers. In the name of the Lord Jesus, keep away from any Christian who is lazy and who does not do what we taught you.

7: You know you should follow the way of life we lived when we were with you. We worked hard while we were there.

8: We did not eat anyone's food without paying for it. We worked hard night and day so none of you would have to give us anything.

9: We could have asked you to give us food. But we did not so that you might follow our way of living.

10: When we were with you, we told you that if a man does not work, he should not eat.

11: We hear that some are not working. But they are spending their time trying to see what others are doing.

12: Our words to such people are that they should be quiet and go to work. They should eat their own food. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ we say this.

13: But you, Christian brothers, do not get tired of doing good.

14: If anyone does not want to listen to what we say in this letter, remember who he is and stay away from him. In that way, he will be put to shame.

15: Do not think of him as one who hates you. But talk to him as a Christian brother.