
Study Questions for the July 11, 2021 Sermon:
“A Thankful Longing”
1 Thessalonians 2:13-20

1. In verse 13, Paul rejoices because the Thessalonians had received his teaching as “the word of God.”
 - a. Refer to another verse in which the Apostles claim that their teaching is by the direct inspiration of God.
 - b. How would you respond to someone who claims:
 - i. That there are additional writings, composed after New Testament times, that are also directly inspired and inerrant?
 - ii. “We have learned a lot more about science and human nature since the time of the Apostles.”
2. Paul also rejoiced that the word of God *effectively works in you who believe*. In other words, studying the word of God was not just an academic exercise for the Thessalonians. It changed the way they thought, spoke and acted. If there ever been a single verse, or a passage of scripture, that has “effectively worked” in you, to enable you to overcome a besetting sin, or acquire a good habit, please share it.
3. Pastor Paul made a distinction between the inspiration experienced by the Apostles and Old Testament prophets, and the illumination which all believers may experience. Explain the difference. If possible, support your explanation with scripture.
4. In verses 14 – 16, Paul writes about how the Thessalonians are being persecuted by their fellow Gentiles, just as Christian Jews were persecuted by their fellow Jews.
 - a. Share a verse in which Jesus prophesied this persecution.
 - b. In verse 16, Paul writes of those persecuting Christians: *But wrath has come upon them at last!* ESV. The King James translates this verse as: *But wrath has come upon them to the uttermost*. These versions, and most others, state that the persecutors were already experiencing the wrath of God. The persecutors had not been swept into hell. In what sense were they already experiencing God's wrath?

5. Pastor Paul spoke about how active persecution from unbelievers is not the only factor hampering the spread of the gospel. There is also passivity within the church. Think about a time you did overcome passivity and share the gospel. What gave you the boldness to speak?

6. Christianity is community-based. Our God manifests community in his trinitarian nature. We are called to develop relationships with other believers. We are commanded to avoid compromise on critical doctrines. How do we foster relationships with Christians with whom we differ on doctrine? Or should we foster these relationships?