Life in the Word

Cornerstone Sermon-based Life Group Lesson



Sermon Series: **Hope Now and Forever**

Sermon Title: Living with Hope

Scripture Passage: 1 Thessalonians 3:1-13

Getting Started Sharing from personal experience

Lets start out with a bit of review on the historical background of the Thessalonian Church.

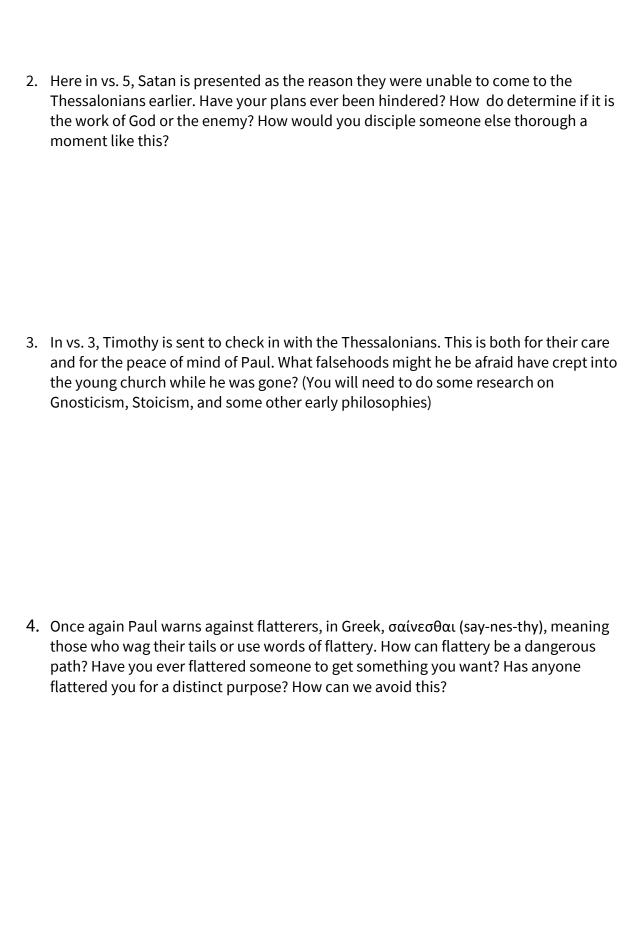
Paul most likely wrote 1 Thessalonians in A.D. 51 from Corinth. Although Timothy and Silas are mentioned in the beginning of the letter, they are not considered contributors to the actual writing of it. Keep in mind that Paul wrote this letter to defend his own integrity, to encourage the Church to persevere under persecution, to exhort them to live lives that were holy unto the Lord and to comfort and teach the flock about the coming of Jesus.

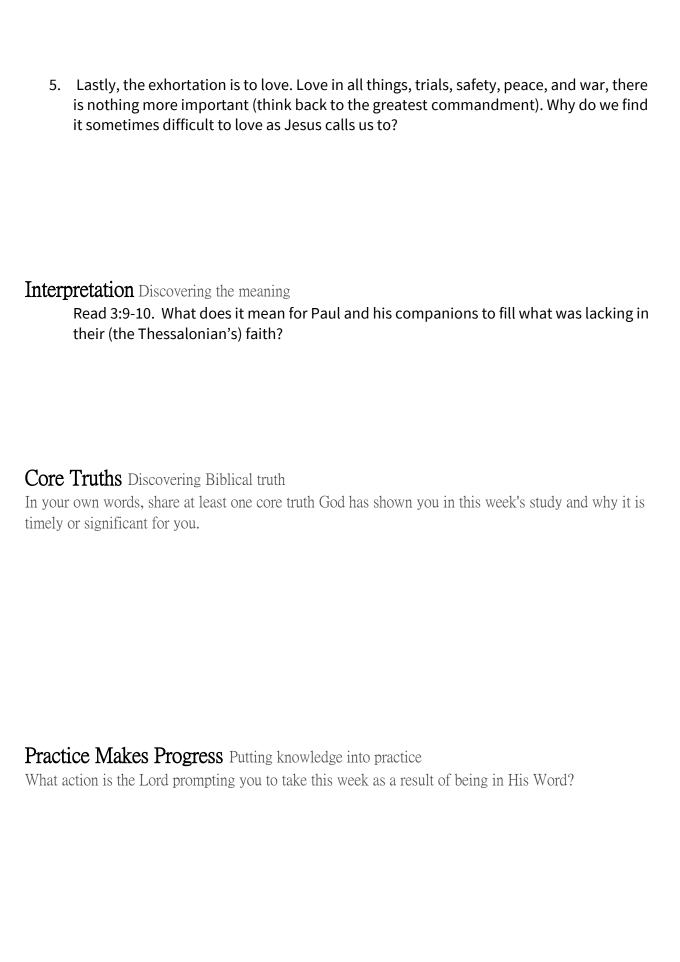
The city of Thessalonica was founded by Cassander, one of Alexander the Great's generals in 315 B.C. He named the city after his wife, and when it was conquered in 167 B.C. by Rome, the name remained. It became the capital of the four remaining districts. In 42 B.C., due to its assistance to Mark Antony and Octavian, it held the honor of being a "free city" (which means they could mint their own coins, take care of their own local affairs, and did not need military occupation, with the added bonus of some tax concessions). It remained a polytheistic culture.

Fun Fact: "The office of Politarch, mentioned twice by Luke in his description of Paul's ministry in Thessalonica (Acts:17:6,8), is unique to the province of Macedonia (modern day Turkey) and found only rarely in other cities. Archaeologists have so far discovered twenty-eight references to this distinctive office in Thessalonica. These findings prove that Luke was familiar with the political structure of the different cities in Paul's journeys and thus suggest that his recording of these travels in Acts is historically reliable." (Jeffrey Weima, Zondervan Biblical Backgrounds commentary).

	1) With this in mind, put yourself in the place of a companion of Paul'show would you suggest you spread the Gospel in Thessalonica? (Dig into the background of the Thessalonian Church a bit to come up with some strategies).
	2) How might what you came up with differ from today's approach? Should our
	approach be different than in Paul's day?
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Observation Discovering the context Lets jump in:	
1.	Paul begins this chapter expressing just how much he longs to see the Thessalonians. The word in Greek is $\sigma t \acute{\epsilon} \gamma \omega v$ (ste-gōn), a verb that refers to keeping water out of a vessel (like a boat or house). Paul is using this to show that he cannot contain his desire to see them any more. Lets reflect on the characteristics of a good shepherdcan you make a

list? What does Scripture say?





Worth Memorizing

Scripture: To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power...2

Thessalonians 1:11

Prayer Time

How can your Life Group pray for you this week?

Praise Time

How has God blessed you and answered prayer this week?