

# First Thessalonians

MARK IT UP

## HomeGroup Discussion Questions

Week 4: May 1st-7th

***Special note: Sermon questions will not be produced after the last week of this series on May 30th. We encourage our HomeGroups to break from meeting weekly over the summer so everyone can have a time of rest and reinvigoration before the fall.***

Main Texts: 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20 (Note: Pastor Thomas focuses in on v. 13 in the online sermon, and cites Matthew 13:19-23 as an additional text.)

### Connect

1. Take a minute to compare notes. What did you mark up from the passage this week?
2. What did you find significant about the sermon or passage? What questions or thoughts did it raise for you?

### Learn

3. Go ahead and read the passage if you haven't already. What happens when someone accepts the word of God "as what it really is" (v. 13)? What do you think Paul means when he says that this word is "at work in you believers"?
4. Verses 14-16 reveal that the church in Thessalonica faced harsh opposition from their "own countrymen" as they received and accepted the word of God. What impact do you think this opposition might have had on their "young" faith?
5. Paul uses the words, "but Satan hindered us" in verse 18. We don't know the details of what prevented Paul from returning to Thessalonica, but what do these words reveal about his belief about the nature of the opposition he faced?
6. What do Paul's words in verses 17-20 express about his feelings toward the Thessalonians?

### Apply

7. What prevents people from accepting the Bible "as it really is"—God's word? What is your view on the ultimate source of the Bible? Is it a human-created collection of books, or is it God's word?

8. This passage reminds us that God's word is powerful, yet we can feel discouraged when we don't see that power unfolding as we expect. What does the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:19-23 remind us about the difference between our role and God's in sharing the gospel message?

9. Opposition is a recurring topic in this letter, and Paul commends the Thessalonians for how they imitated the kind of faithfulness or steadfastness that others had displayed in Judea (i.e., the region in and around Jerusalem). What can we do to encourage each other to imitate their example in our own lives today?

### **Going Deeper**

Pastor Thomas mentioned in the online sermon how Calvary is committed to what we call *Biblical Authority*. In short, this means we submit our lives to the teaching of God's Word. Here's what we believe about the Bible (from the Evangelical Free Church of America's statement of faith):

We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

As you read through this statement, what do you find significant? What's confusing? Do you agree with it, and, if not, what do you disagree with?

If you have questions that your group can't answer, please reach out to the staff so we can help!