

The First Letter of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians

Author

Who is the author of the letter and who accompanied Paul as part of his missionary team?

Destination

Where is Thessalonica located?

Who was enraged by the success of Paul's preaching and what were the consequences?

Purpose and Themes

What is the focus and theme of the letter?

What doctrinal point is Paul emphasize in this letter?

Read 1:1 Who is Sylvanus? (Note 1:1)

Read 1:2-3 What are the theological virtues that changed the lives of the Thessalonians? (Note 1:3)

Read 1:4-10 How does Jewish tradition view the difference between idols and serving a living and true God? (Note 1:9)

Read 2:1-8 How was the term apostle used in the New Testament? (Note 2:6)

Read 2:9-13 How was the word of God delivered to the New Testament Christians? How does this compare with the Old Testament? (Note 2:13)

Read 4:1-8 Is sanctification part of God's plan? What is meant by progressive sanctification? (Note 4:3)

Read 4:9-12 What does Paul mean with his exhortation "mind your own affairs"? (Note 4:11)

Read 4:13-18 What is meant by the verse "And the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we shall always be with the Lord"? (Note 4:17)

Read 5:12 What is meant by the following verse: "But we beg you, brethren, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and esteem them very highly in love because of their work"? (Note 5:12)

Read 5:14 What does Paul mean when he says “admonish the idol”? (Note 5:14)

Read 5:15-22 What does Paul mean when he says do not quench the Spirit? (Note 5:19)

The Second Letter of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians

Author

How does modern scholarship view the authorship of the second letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians?

Purpose and Themes

What doctrinal and moral issues does Paul address in this letter?

Read 1:3-5 How does Paul's theology blend suffering and sanctification? (Note 1:5)

Who are the doomsday prophets and how does Paul contradict their message?
(Note 2:1-12)

Read 2:1-4 Who is the man of lawlessness? (Note 2:3)

Read 2:9-12 What is meant by the verse: “therefore God sends upon them a strong delusion to make them believe what is false”? (Note 2:11)

Read 2:13 What is the relationship between sanctification and the Holy Spirit?
(Note 2:13)

Read 2:14-15 What does Paul mean when he says: “So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word-of-mouth or by letter”? (Note 2:15)

How does a misunderstanding of the end times lead to idleness and how does St. Paul react to this problem? (Note 3:6-15)

The Letter of Saint Paul to Philemon

Author and Date

What are the four captivity epistles?

Destination

Who does Paul address this letter to?

Purpose

What is the relationship between Philemon and Onesimus?

How does Paul counsel Philemon concerning the right reaction to the return of Onesimus?

Themes and Characteristics

Was there a significant slave population in the Roman Empire at the time of St. Paul?

What was the Roman punishment for a runaway slave?

Does the Christian ethic exceed the civil law?

Read the entire letter of Saint Paul to Philemon -- In the eyes of God what is the difference between a slave and a free man? (Note 16)