

**2019**

***School of the Word***

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# Exploring St Paul

**Part 4**  
**Letter and Teaching**

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# Sequence

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- (1) Summary
- (2) Reading 1 Thessalonians
- (3) Teaching about Jesus

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# Summary here..

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1Th. 1:9 For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, 10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

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# Layout: 1 Thess

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	Letter	Speech (Rhetoric)
1:1	Superscript	
1:2-10	Thanksgiving	Introduction
<i>1:9-10</i>		<i>Thesis in 3 parts</i>
2:1-3:12	Body	Proof 1: Relationships
4:1-12		Proof 2: Holiness
4:13-5:11		Proof 3: End-time issues
5:12-27	Exhortations	Peroration
5:28	Postscript	

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# Topic in 3 parts

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1Th. 1:9 For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you,

[= 2:1-3:12]

and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God,

[= 4:1-12]

10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

[= 4:13-5:11]

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# Reading the Text

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Task: re-reading:

Proofs                      Nos. 1, 2 and 3

Thesis                      1:9-10 (= partitio)

Introduction              1:2-10

Conclusion                5:12-27

1Th. 1:2 We **always give thanks** to God for all of you and mention you in our **prayers, constantly** 3 remembering before our God and Father your **work of faith** and **labour of love** and steadfastness of hope in our **Lord Jesus Christ**. 4 **For we know**, brothers and sisters **beloved** by God, that he has **chosen** you, 5 because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the **Holy Spirit** and with full conviction; just as **you know** what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. 6 And you became imitators of us and of the **Lord**, for in spite of persecution you received the word with **joy** inspired by the **Holy Spirit**, 7 so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. 8 For the word of the **Lord** has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in **God** has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. 9 For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to **God** from idols, to serve a living and true **God**, 10 **and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.**

1Th. 5:12 But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to **respect** (lit. *to know*) those who **labour** among you, and have charge of you in the **Lord** and admonish you; 13 esteem them very highly in **love** because of their **work**. Be at peace among yourselves. 14 And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. 15 See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. 16 **Rejoice always**, 17 **pray without ceasing**, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of **God in Christ Jesus** for you. 19 Do not quench the **Spirit**. 20 Do not despise the words of prophets, 21 but test everything; hold fast to what is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil.

1Th. 5:23 May the **God** of peace himself **sanctify** you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body **be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**. 24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

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# Towards a conclusion

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- (1) 1Thessalonians = earliest surviving Christian document
- (2) We can locate the letter in the life and mission of Paul
- (3) Written during the second missionary journey, from Corinth
- (4) The content is certainly concrete (contingent), dealing with immediate concerns of the Thessalonians
- (5) The content can also be placed into a larger (coherent) view of Pauline theology, which is our next task

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# The context...

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1. Order and Well-being (Delphi, capricious, Tyche, monotheism)
2. Death (mystery religions, Isis, Cabiri)
3. How to live / behave? (Early Christianity, “schema”)
  - Trade guilds
  - Abolition of social stratification
  - Civil authorities

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# Overview

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## (1) God and Father

(a) The Language of the Relationship with God x36

(b) The Configuration of the relationship with God

- (i) Not an idol: but living and true
- (ii) God called “father”
- (iii) Controls history / can be angry
- (iv) God raised Jesus and raises the dead
- (v) The Thessalonians are in the church of God
- (vi) God gives the Thessalonians his Word, his Gospel, his Spirit, “taught by God”
- (vii) God desires our sanctification and our salvation,

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# Overview

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## **(2) Jesus**

- (a) Historical Jesus
- (b) Risen Jesus
- (c) Present Relationship
- (d) Future Jesus

## **(3) Life in community**

- (a) Called, elected and chosen
- (b) Attitudes of faith, hope and love (waiting):
- (c) Prayer
- (d) Actions
  - (i) Personally
  - (ii) Within the community
  - (iii) Encouragement

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# Jesus in the Letter

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1. Jesus x 16
2. Christ x 10
3. Lord x 24 - almost always in ref. to Jesus, although:  
1:8; 4:6; 5:2.
4. Son is used once: 1Thess 1:10, though elsewhere of  
disciples 1Thess 5:5.

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# Jesus: (i) Historical Jesus

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1Th. 2:14 For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you suffered the same things from your own compatriots as they did from the Jews, 15 who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out; they displease God and oppose everyone.

*1Th. 4:14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. 15 For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. 16 For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever.*

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## Jesus: (ii) Risen Jesus

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1Th. 4:14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. 15 For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. 16 For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

1Th. 1:10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

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# Jesus: (iii) Present Jesus

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1Th. 1:1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,  
To the church of the Thessalonians in  
God the Father and the Lord Jesus  
Christ:

Grace to you and peace.

1Th. 1:3 remembering before our God  
and Father your work of faith and labor  
of love and steadfastness of hope in our  
Lord Jesus Christ.

1Th. 1:6 And you became imitators of  
us and of the Lord, for in spite of  
persecution you received the word with  
joy inspired by the Holy Spirit,

1Th. 1:8 For the word of the Lord has  
sounded forth from you not only in  
Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place  
your faith in God has become known, so  
that we have no need to speak about it.

1Th. 3:8 For we now live, if you continue  
to stand firm in the Lord.

1Th. 3:11 Now may our God and Father  
himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way  
to you. 12 And may the Lord make you  
increase and abound in love for one  
another and for all, just as we abound in  
love for you. 13 And may he so strengthen  
your hearts in holiness that you may be  
blameless before our God and Father at the  
coming of our Lord Jesus with all his  
saints.

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# Jesus: (iii) Present Jesus

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1Th. 4:6 that no one wrong or exploit a brother or sister in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, just as we have already told you before-hand and solemnly warned

1Th. 4:1 Finally, brothers and sisters, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus that, as you learned from us how you ought to live and to please God (as, in fact, you are doing), you should do so more and more. 2 For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

1Th. 2:19 For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?

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## (2) Jesus: (iv) Future Jesus

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1Th. 1:10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

1Th. 3:11 Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. 12 And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. 13 And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

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## (2) Jesus: (iv) Future Jesus

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1Th. 4:14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. 15 For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. 16 For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever.

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## (2) Jesus: (iv) Future Jesus

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1Th. 5:2 For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

1Th. 5:9 For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

1Th. 5:23 May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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## Matera: a summary from 1 Thess.

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Jesus, the Son of God, endured a life of affliction. His afflictions were similar to those endured by the Jewish prophets of old. Just as the Jewish people killed the prophets, so they killed Jesus. The death of Jesus, however, played a significant role in God's plan of salvation, for he was God's son, and God raised him from the dead. Christ died on behalf of others, and when he returns he will rescue believers from God's wrath and lead them to salvation. Because of Jesus' death, believers enjoy the gift of the Spirit; they are the sanctified and elect people of God.

(New Testament Christology 90-91)

