

# The Last Impression

## A Look at the Conclusions of Various Epistles

### *I Thessalonians*

---

#### Initial Meeting

Paul's first visit to Thessalonica was c. 49-51 A.D. Paul and Silas explained and proved Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. The city is thrown into turmoil by those who were jealous of the success of Paul and Silas' preaching. A believer named Jason's home is stormed by a mob, he's arrested, but Paul and Silas slip away. Bond is posted and they're released. See **Acts 17:1-9**.

#### Current Situation

The opposition to Christianity in Thessalonica was strong. The believers, very young believers, had paid a high price for their faith even as they were still coming to learn and understand what it was they believed! Perhaps one of the first letters written by Paul to a congregation, I Thessalonians, written c. 52 A.D. encourages them in their faith by remarking on how exemplary it is and how highly Timothy praised them. Filled with many personal expressions of longing to be with each other in person, this letter addresses confusion about the return of the Lord Jesus in glory at Judgment Day. The end of the letter moves to an encouragement in godly living, what it looks like to live as children of light, who are prepared for heaven by the Holy Spirit. The conclusion to the letter stands on these verses:

- **I Thessalonians 5:10-11** He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. <sup>11</sup> Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

#### Last Impression

##### **I Thessalonians 5:12-28**

Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. <sup>13</sup> Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. <sup>14</sup> And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone. <sup>15</sup> Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else. <sup>16</sup> Be joyful always; <sup>17</sup> pray continually; <sup>18</sup> give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. <sup>19</sup> Do not put out the Spirit's fire; <sup>20</sup> do not treat prophecies with contempt. <sup>21</sup> Test everything. Hold on to the good. <sup>22</sup> Avoid every kind of evil. <sup>23</sup> May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup> The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it. <sup>25</sup> Brothers, pray for us. <sup>26</sup> Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss. <sup>27</sup> I charge you before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers. <sup>28</sup> The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

1. Respect and do what for those who work hard in the Lord? Is it easy to respect people whose work this is?

- What potential for abuse by clergy is found in **vs. 12-13a**?
2. In many places, God's people are told to be peacemakers and live at peace with each other. How?
  3. In what manner are these closing instructions presented? Why might this be?
  4. All of the general manner of Christian living can be found in this send off.
    - On whom are **vs. 13b-15** focused? Meditating on them will lead you to think of any number of situations and people where this godly guidance would prove useful, but can you think of any off the top of your head?
    - On whom are **vs. 16-18** focused? What's the scope of these verses, when do they apply?
  5. What is the common theme of the instructions in **vs. 19-22**?
  6. What are some interesting things about the blessing of **v. 23-24**?
  7. Why should we pray for those who preach and teach the Word?
  8. Why aren't we greeting one another with a holy kiss these days?
  9. What's the final instruction of this letter? Why this?
  10. What's the last impression of **I Thessalonians**?