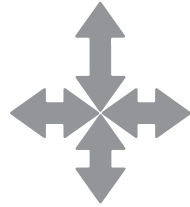




GUIDE FOR GROUP STUDY: the week of November 10th

This study is designed to help your community group grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. There are three dimensions to following Jesus.



UP: growing in relationship with God

IN: growing in relationship with other followers of Jesus

OUT: growing in relationship with the world around us as we join God in God's mission.

Get Started:

What are some of the best "words of wisdom" you have received in your life? Who passed those on to you?



UP: Connect with God through Spending Time in His Word

Read aloud the passage for the week: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12. Allow a few moments to silently reflect on what you heard. Underline or note words or phrases that seem meaningful. Pray for your study of God's Word.

1. Reread verses 1-2. Paul is writing to people who are anxious about false claims that Jesus had already returned, and that they had been forgotten. Describe a time in your faith journey when you have found yourself confused. What helped you work through that situation or question?
2. Reread verses 3-4. The Roman emperor Caligula had attempted to erect a statue of himself in the Temple in Jerusalem to be worshiped shortly before Paul wrote this letter. Paul foresees the trajectory of the leaders of the ancient world and knows things will only get worse. As you think about our world, where do you see "lawlessness"? Where do you see the continuation of the trajectory that Paul describes?
3. Reread verses 5-10. These verses have often been analyzed in an attempt to predict the second coming of Christ. But, this is not the most helpful way to approach the text. More appropriate is to draw encouragement from Paul's proclamation that there will be a time when Jesus will return and bring God's justice¹. How then might these verses encourage you in the season of life you are currently in?

¹N. T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone Galatians and Thessalonians*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 148-149.

4. Reread verses 11-12. These verses describe how God will ultimately hand people over to the lie of Satan that they are delighted to believe. This is an encouragement for those in Thessalonica who are anxious about the return of Christ. Paul lets them know that the signs of Christ's return will be obvious, that they need not worry. When are you most tempted to believe the lies of Satan? How do you respond in these seasons?

5. How might this passage encourage you to grow in faith, love, and perseverance in a difficult season of life?



Out: Connect with the World Around Us (Join God in His Mission)

There are many people in our world who are being seduced by the lies of Satan. Throughout the fall we have been praying for individuals in our lives who don't know or have rejected Jesus. Take time again as a group to lift up these names to the Lord, praying for them to be open to the Good News of Jesus Christ.



IN: Connect with Each Other

Close your time by sharing prayer requests. If people in your group are in a particularly difficult time, consider having them sit in the center of your group, lay hands on them, and take turns praying for their situation.