

“1 Thessalonians 5:1–28”

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website (churchofgodbigandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of May 16, 2026.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I continued a series about 1 and 2 Thessalonians. The title of the presentation was “1 Thessalonians 5:1-28.

Future resurrection

Let’s take a brief glimpse at chapter 4.

- 1 Thessalonians 4:13—Although death brings understandable sorrow, we should not sorrow as others who have no hope.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:14—If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:15—Those who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who are asleep (have died).
- 1 Thessalonians 4:16—The Lord will descend from heaven with the trumpet, and the dead in Christ will rise first.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:17—Then those who are alive will be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:18—“Comfort one another with these words.”

Thief in the night

- 1 Thessalonians 5:1—Paul continued to talk about the “the times and the seasons.”
- 1 Thessalonians 5:2—Paul mentioned that the day of the Lord would come to many people like a thief in the night.
- 2 Peter 3:10—Peter talked about the day of the Lord coming like a thief in the night.
- Matthew 24:36-43—More importantly, the Son of God Himself talked about His return being like the coming of a thief in the night.
- Revelation 3:3—The Son of God reminded members of the congregation at Sardis that they would not know what hour He would come unto them.

■ Revelation 16:15—The Son of God reminded people that His coming as a thief in the night should encourage them to watch and to have the proper garments.

Children of the light

■ 1 Thessalonians 5:3—Although many preachers give messages about “peace and safety,” sudden destruction will come upon people like labor pains upon a pregnant woman.

■ 1 Thessalonians 5:4—Brethren should not be in darkness or be surprised.

■ 1 Thessalonians 5:5—Brethren are children of the day and not of the night.

■ 1 Thessalonians 5:6-7—Brethren should be watching and staying sober instead of sleeping and getting drunk.

■ 1 Thessalonians 5:8—Notice how faith, hope and love are mentioned.

■ 1 Thessalonians 5:9-11—Salvation is available through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us that we should live together with Him—which are extremely comforting words.

Recognize the tyrants

■ 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13—Paul wrote: “We urge you to recognize those who labor among you (and are over you in the Lord) and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake.”

■ Matthew 20:25-28—Recognize the difference between those who imitate the rulers who “lord it over” people and who “exercise authority over” people and those who serve like Christ did.

■ Matthew 23:2-15—Recognize the wrong approach that Christ mentioned about many religious tyrants.

■ 2 Corinthians 11:20—Recognize the five specific mistakes that Paul mentioned about many religious tyrants.

Goals of servants

Notice the four goals mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 5:14.

■ Warn those who are unruly.

■ Comfort the fainthearted.

■ Uphold the weak.

■ Be patient with all.

Practical advice

Notice the following practical advice.

■ 1 Thessalonians 5:15—Do not render evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good (both for yourselves and for all).

- 1 Thessalonians 5:16—Rejoice always.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17—Pray without ceasing.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:18—Give thanks in everything (since this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you).
- 1 Thessalonians 5:19—Do not quench the Spirit.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:20—Do not despise prophecies.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:21—Test all things and hold fast to that which is good.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:22—Abstain from every form of evil.

Back to verse 21

Let's go back to verse 21 for a few minutes. In fact, let's see how verse 21 may shine a new light upon the disciple that people like to call "Doubting Thomas."

- It is my belief that Thomas gets a bad rap.
- It is my belief that Christ is not criticizing Thomas as many clergymen like to do.
- John 20:24—Thomas was not with the other disciples when the Son of God came to them.

(I don't know why Thomas missed being with the other disciples when they saw the Lord. Thomas could be complimented for what he was doing. Helping widows would be worthy of compliments. Murdering someone would be worthy of criticism.)

I don't see Christ criticizing Thomas for Thomas's request.

Thomas said he would not believe unless he saw the following things (listed in John 20:25).

- Unless Thomas saw the print of the nails in Christ's hand.
- Unless Thomas could put his finger into the print of the nails.
- Unless Thomas could put his hand into Christ's side.
- John 20:27—What was Christ's answer: "Reach your finger here and look at My hands. And reach your hand here and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."
- John 20:29—It is true that Christ said: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."
- But Christ invited Thomas to check out His hands and His side.
- Test all things and hold fast to that which is good.

Final words

- 1 Thessalonians 5:23—"May the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely. May your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

- 1 Thessalonians 5:24—"He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it."
- 1 Thessalonians 5:25—"Pray for us."
- 1 Thessalonians 5:26—"Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss."
- 1 Thessalonians 5:27—"Read the epistle to all the holy brethren."
- 1 Thessalonians 5:28—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."