

“Thanks for the Memories” (1 Thessalonians 1:1–10)

Sermon Application Review from Hebrews 10:19–25

Who did you encourage to return to corporate worship?

What personal commitments did you make to gathering with other believers?

Scripture References

1 Thessalonians 1:1–10

Acts 17:1–10

Romans 1:7–9

Romans 5:1–5

Galatians 5:22–23

1 Corinthians 13:1–13

1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1

Study Questions

1. Are you sincerely thankful for CBC (1:2–10)? How do you express your gratitude to your leaders and fellow members? Read about other examples of Paul’s thankfulness in Romans 1:8; 1 Corinthians 1:4; 2 Corinthians 1:11; Ephesians 1:15–16; Philippians 1:3–5; Colossians 1:3–4; and 2 Thessalonians 1:3. What is Paul thankful for in these passages? How can you learn to share his heart of gratitude?
2. Do you have a prayer list (1:2–3)? If so, who is on your list? If not, will you begin one today? Who will you include? Will you include anyone from CBC? If so, who? How will you faithfully fulfill the task of praying for others? In what ways can CBC grow in prayer? How can you be involved?
3. How would you define Christian faith, love, and hope (1:3; 5:8)? Why are these terms mentioned so frequently in the New Testament? See Romans 5:2–5; 1 Corinthians 13:13; Galatians 5:5–6; Colossians 1:3–4; Hebrews 6:10–12; 10:22–24; and 1 Peter 1:21–22. How can CBC grow in her understanding and application of each of these areas? How can you apply these characteristics in your life? How would a stronger faith, love, and hope produce stronger endurance for the trials we face?
4. How well do you exude joy amid tribulation (1:6)? What was your response to the last trial you experienced? How can you improve both your perspective and your response? How can you imitate godly Christian leaders and become a spiritual model worthy of imitation (1:6–7)? Why is it easier to suffer well when you see the motivating example of others who go before you (1:7)?
5. How do you faithfully spread God’s Word to others (1:8)? In what specific ways did your conversion to Christ change you (1:9)? How does the promise of Christ’s return affect your life (1:10)? What is your #1 takeaway from 1 Thessalonians 1?

Recommended Reading

Tony Merida, *Love Your Church: 8 Great Things About Being a Church Member* (The Good Book Company, 2021)

J. T. English, *Deep Discipleship: How the Church Can Make Whole Disciples of Jesus* (B&H, 2020)

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (HarperCollins, [1954] 1978)

“A Model Ministry” (1 Thessalonians 2:1–12)

Sermon Application Review from 1 Thessalonians 1:1–10

How often did you express thanks for CBC this past week (1:2–10)?

When did you receive the word with joy (1:6)? What were the specific circumstances?

Scripture References

1 Thessalonians 2:1–12

Acts 16:19–24

Philippians 1:27–30

Galatians 1:10

John 5:41, 44

2 Timothy 2:24–26

1 Corinthians 9:1–27

Study Questions

1. How often do you share your faith in Christ with others (2:1–2)? When do you find it most difficult? With whom have you been bold? What do you think are the most important elements in sharing Christ? How can you cultivate these essentials?
2. What *legitimate* accusations could the world or church bring against your character (2:3–4)? How do you measure up to the character traits in 1 Timothy 3:1–12; Titus 1:6–9; and 2:1–8? In what specific areas do you need the most improvement? To whom do you look to as a spiritual model? Contact this person today and set up a time to meet.
3. In what ways do you struggle being a people-pleaser (2:4)? Read Galatians 1:10. How would someone who knows you well characterize your life? In what areas do you find it most difficult to please God? Why are these areas so hard? Of what are you afraid? Read Matthew 10:24–32 (especially 10:28) for encouragement. How should this passage change your thoughts and actions?
4. In what ways would others describe you as a spiritual father or mother (2:7, 11)? How are you presently raising up mature believers (2:12)? How can you become busy or selfish with your time and energy? How can you free your schedule for disciple making? What will you do this week to help another believer grow in Christ?
5. How would you have defined a model ministry before studying this passage? In what ways has your understanding changed since working through this text? What roles do boldness and perseverance play in your new understanding of a fruitful ministry? How can you see these qualities grow in your life and ministry?

Recommended Reading

Ken Boa, *The Perfect Leader* (Chariot, 2006)

Peter Sczerro, *The Emotionally Healthy Leader* (Zondervan, 2015)

Peter Sczerro, *Emotionally Healthy Discipleship* (Zondervan, 2021)

Anonymous, *Embracing Obscurity* (B&H, 2012)

“Tomorrow’s World” (1 Thessalonians 2:13–20)

Sermon Application Review from 1 Thessalonians 2:1–12

What area of your character did you cultivate this past week?

How did you *practically* live out the gospel with your life?

Scripture References

1 Thessalonians 2:13–20

Psalm 19:7–11

James 1:21–25; 5:7–8

2 Thessalonians 1:4–5

2 Timothy 1:12; 2:3, 9

Romans 15:17–18

Philippians 3:20–4:1

Study Questions

1. How is 2:13 a key to being a healthy disciple and disciple maker? In what ways do you prepare your heart every Sunday morning to receive the preached Word? How do you spend time in Scripture throughout the week with the goal of feeding your soul? What have you learned over time? With whom will you share your experiences (both good and bad)?
2. What are some potential hardships that accompany the gospel (2:14)? Have you experienced any of these hardships? How will you prepare your heart and mind for future suffering that you may experience? How can you encourage unbelievers to believe in Christ (2:14–16)? How does God’s future judgment give you a sense of confidence and urgency?
3. How do you feel when you are not able to be with your CBC family (2:17)? What can you do to ensure that your desire for your church family grows? What is your present level of commitment to CBC? How can you take a step to increase your devotion?
4. How do you harmonize God’s sovereignty with Satan’s ability to hinder God’s people (2:18)? How have you experienced Satan hindering you in your life and ministry? As you look back on this experience, do you now see how Christ used Satan to accomplish purposes for God’s glory and your good? Read Genesis 50:20.
5. How have you been active in evangelism and discipleship (2:19–20)? Who are the people that are your eternal reward? How often do you affirm these dear ones? How does your involvement at CBC play a role in your eternal reward? See Philippians 4:1.

Recommended Reading

Ken Ramey, *Expository Listening: A Practical Handbook for Hearing and Doing God’s Word* (Kress, 2010)

Kenneth Berding, *Bible Revival: Recommitting Ourselves to One Book* (Lexham, 2018)

Paul N. Benware, *The Believer’s Payday* (AMG, 2002)

“Built Faith Tough” (1 Thessalonians 3:1–13)

Sermon Application Review from 1 Thessalonians 2:13–20

How did you specifically apply God’s Word from your Bible reading this past week (2:13)?

Who did you intentionally invest in (2:19–20)?

Scripture References

1 Thessalonians 3:1–13

Acts 17:10–15

Philippians 1:22–26

1 Peter 4:12–19; 5:8–9

Luke 22:31–32

Ephesians 3:20–21

Colossians 4:12

Study Questions

1. Who has provided you the greatest encouragement and exhortation in your quest for spiritual maturity (3:1–2)? Who is doing so currently? Who have you spiritually marked over the years you have been a Christian? Who are you presently seeking to help grow spiritually?
2. What is your understanding of the role of trials and suffering in the Christian life (3:3–4)? How have you suffered for the cause of Christ? How did God use suffering in Jesus’ life (Hebrews 5:8)? To better comprehend the New Testament emphasis on suffering read Matthew 5:10–12; John 15:18, 20; 16:33; Acts 14:22; Romans 8:17; 2 Corinthians 4:7–11; 11:23–27; Philippians 1:29; 2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Peter 2:21; 4:12–16.
3. Why is mutual love and respect between leaders and church members so important (3:6–8)? How can you be a source of joy to your pastors and leaders (3:9)? Read Hebrews 13:17. How can church leaders demonstrate servant leadership toward those they serve? Read Matthew 20:26–28.
4. In what ways can CBC learn to pray “night and day” for opportunities to help others mature in Christ (3:10)? How can you take one step forward to increase your zeal and urgency to help others grow in Christ? Who can you develop further in their discipleship pathway?
5. Why is abounding in love for others so important in these days (3:12)? How would you rate your current love for the CBC family? How can you “increase and abound” in your love for fellow believers? Read John 13:34–35; 15:12–17; Romans 13:8; 1 Peter 4:8; and 1 John 4:7–13. What can you do to cultivate a greater love for the global church? How does love for all the believers in God’s family prepare you for a good showing at the judgment seat of Christ (3:13)?

Recommended Reading

Daniel Henderson, *How to Pray in a Crisis: A 4-Step Guide to Renewal* (Moody, 2020)

D. A. Carson, *Praying with Paul: A Call to Spiritual Reformation*, 2nd ed. (Baker Academic, 2015)

Chuck Lawless, *Mentor: How Along-the-Way Discipleship Will Change Your Life* (Lifeway, 2018)

“Service with a Smile” (1 Thessalonians 4:1-12)

Sermon Application Review from 1 Thessalonians 3:1–13

How did your perspective on affliction change this past week (3:3–4)?

What spiritual victories did you celebrate (3:6–10)?

What request in Paul’s prayer (3:11–13) did you pray most frequently?

Scripture References

1 Thessalonians 4:1–12

Ephesians 5:3–5

Psalms 119:9–11

1 Corinthians 6:12–20

Matthew 5:27–30

John 13:34–35

Colossians 4:2–6

Study Questions

1. In what specific way is your “walk” (i.e., personal behavior) pleasing to God (4:1–2)? What tangible examples of Christian maturity can you share from your own life? How are you seeking to “excel still more” in your obedience to God’s “instruction” and “commandments”? What specific area of your life is God presently working on?
2. When you think of “the will of God” (4:3), what immediately comes to mind? How do you strive to maintain your purity? What have you learned from your failures and sins in the sexual realm? What can others learn from your mistakes? In what ways do you need to grow in your thoughts, words, and actions? Read Ephesians 5:3–5. How can you apply this passage to your daily life?
3. Will you obey the Lord in all that He says (e.g., sexual purity, love for believers, a godly work ethic)? Do you recognize that when you fail to do so you are “rejecting” God (4:8)? Why do you think Paul mentions such severe punishments for sexual immorality? What effect should these warnings have on Christians? How can Christians take specific steps to live sexually pure lives? How do bad habits increase the power of temptation over a long period of time?
4. How can you grow in your love for fellow believers (4:9–10)? Who are you presently struggling to love? How can you express love and compassion for this person? What are some of the ways brotherly and sisterly love is expressed at CBC? In what ways might we grow in love?
5. Why is it so important to provide for yourself and your family and not be dependent on anyone (4:11–12; cf. 1 Timothy 5:8)? How is your work a witness to those around you? If Jesus were working beside you, how would your work attitudes and actions change? Read Ephesians 6:5–9 and Colossians 3:22–4:1.

Recommended Reading

Daniel Henderson, *Think Before You Look: Avoiding the Consequences of Secret Temptation* (AMG, 2005)

Bruce Wilkinson, *Overcoming Temptation: Break Away from Captivity and Embrace God’s Freedom* (Harvest House, 2018)

Tony Merida, *Love Your Church: 8 Great Things About Being a Church Member* (The Good Book Co., 2021)

Bryan Chapell, *Grace at Work: Redeeming the Grind and the Glory of Your Job* (Crossway, 2022)

“Hope Beyond the Grave” (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18)

Scripture References

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

1 Corinthians 15:50–58

2 Corinthians 4:16–5:10

Philippians 1:21–24; 3:20–21

John 14:1–3; 5:24–29; 11:21–27

1 John 2:28–3:3

Titus 2:11–14

Study Questions

1. What was the general attitude about death in your family growing up? Who was the first person you were close to that died? How did this person’s death affect you? What else has shaped your view of death and dying? How have you responded when you have lost a non-Christian loved one in death? What was the difference when losing a Christian loved one?
2. The Bible teaches that the moment a believer dies, he or she goes immediately into the presence of Jesus. Read 2 Corinthians 5:6–8 and Philippians 1:21–23. How do these verses comfort your fears and uncertainties? Paul anchors the Christian’s hope in the death and resurrection of Jesus. According to 1 Corinthians 15:14–19, what are some of the consequences if Jesus did not truly rise from the dead?
3. How is the reality of Jesus’ return affecting your life today? Of what area in your life do you need to relinquish control? Who will you share this with? What relationship do you need to make right before Christ’s return? What will you do today in attempt to reconcile with this person?
4. Who are you currently helping walk through grief? How can you offer comfort to this person? What, if anything, should you say? What can you do to show the love of Christ? Read 2 Corinthians 1:3–4. Who has recently comforted or encouraged you with God’s truth? How did you express your gratitude to this sister or brother? Read Hebrews 10:23–25.
5. What is your understanding of the end times? How are your views based on Scripture, your personal experience, or the opinions of others? In what ways are you prone to dogmatism, pessimism, escapism, or sensationalism? How can you ensure that you seek the Scriptures when deriving theological convictions on the end times?

Recommended Reading

Haddon W. Robinson, *Grief: Comfort for Those Who Grieve and Those Who Want to Help* (Discovery House, 1996)

Erwin W. Lutzer, *Heaven and the Afterlife* (Moody, 2016)

John Hart, *Answers to the Most Important Questions About the End Times* (Bethany House, 2016)

John Hart, ed. *Evidence for the Rapture* (Moody, 2015)

David Allen and Steve Lemke, eds. *The Return of Christ* (B&H, 2011)

Paul N. Benware, *Understanding End Times Prophecy* (Moody, 1995)

“No Sleepwalking!” (1 Thessalonians 5:1-11)

Sermon Application Review from 4:13–18

Who did you grieve with this past week? How did you comfort this person?

How did you look forward to Christ’s return?

Scripture References

1 Thessalonians 5:1–11

Matthew 24:42–44

Mark 13:33–37

Luke 21:34–36

Romans 13:11–14

Ephesians 5:7–20

Ephesians 6:10–20

Study Questions

1. During your Christian life, how much time have you spent studying the end-times (5:1–3)? What have you learned? How has this information led to transformation in your life? What specific attitudes and actions have you implemented?
2. Does the reality of Tribulation judgment upon unbelievers shake you to your core (5:3)? Think of family members, coworkers, and neighbors who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus. How will you be motivated to share the love and grace of Jesus with them? Since many unchurched people have an interest in the end-times, how can you use this topic in your spiritual conversations? Read Colossians 4:5–6.
3. What is your spiritual opinion of yourself? Do you have a healthy, biblical understanding that you are a son or daughter of light (5:4–5)? Would your family members, friends, coworkers, and neighbors consider you a son or daughter of light? Why or why not? How can you be “light” to those around you?
4. Are you ready for Jesus to return? Read 1 John 2:28 and 2 Corinthians 5:10. In what area of your life are you a spiritual sleepwalker who has been intoxicated by the world (5:6–7)? What personal steps can you take to return to fellowship and intimacy with Christ? Who can help you grow in your relationship with Christ? Will you contact this person today and ask for his or her assistance?
5. How does the coming day of the Lord provide encouragement for you (5:11)? In what ways are you presently seeking to “encourage” and “build up” fellow believers? Read Hebrews 10:24–25. How can you intentionally spur other believers on to love and good deeds as the day of Christ’s return draws near?

Recommended Reading

Erwin W. Lutzer, *The King is Coming: Ten Events That Will Change Our Future Forever* (Moody, 2015)

Lonnie Pacelli, *The Lawless One and the End of Time* (Pacelli Publishing, 2018)

Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines within the Church* (Moody, 1996)

“L.I.P. = Live in Peace” (1 Thessalonians 5:12–22)

Sermon Application Review from 5:1–11

How did you affirm your Christian identity and put on your spiritual armor (5:4–5, 8)?

In what specific ways did you encourage and build up other believers (5:11)?

Scripture References

1 Thessalonians 5:12–22

Hebrews 13:17

2 Thessalonians 3:6–13

Romans 12:9–21

Philippians 4:4–7

Ephesians 6:18–20

1 Corinthians 14:26–32

Study Questions

1. Do you honestly esteem your ministry leaders (5:12–13)? If so, how do you express love and appreciation to them? In what ways are you faithfully living out Hebrews 13:17? What tangible acts can you perform to demonstrate care?
2. In what ways have you been guilty of gossip about leaders who are serving you? Have you confessed this sin to the Lord and others? How can you make a conscious decision to “live at peace” (5:13)? When other members say critical things about CBC leaders, how will you respond? Will you lovingly, but firmly rebuke a fellow believer for having a divisive spirit? Read Psalm 133.
3. How are you seeking to minister to the different types of people at CBC (5:14)? Which of the four types of individuals listed is the most difficult for you? How can you improve your ability to care for these individuals? Will you begin to pray for them? In what ways will you strive to forgive those who sin against you (5:15) as you have been forgiven by God and others?
4. How have you learned to fulfill the commandments of contentment, prayer, and gratitude even when you don’t feel like it (5:16–18)? Why are these disciplines so difficult to master? How often do you ask God to supernaturally enable you to be the person He wants you to be? What fellow believer have you observed modeling these characteristics? What can you learn from this person’s life?
5. Do you know God’s Word well enough to discern truth from error (5:19–22)? How can you strike the biblical balance to test proposed prophecies against Scripture? In what ways have you quenched the Spirit? Today, will you begin to pray that the Lord will help you “test the spirits” so that you will know what is truly from Him? Read 1 John 4:1–6.

Recommended Reading

Joseph H. Hellerman, *When the Church Was a Family: Recapturing Jesus’ Vision for Authentic Christian* (B&H Academic, 2009)

Howard & William Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron: Building Character in a Mentoring Relationship* (Moody, 1995)

Daniel Henderson, *Transforming Prayer: How Everything Changes When You Seek God’s Face* (Bethany House, 2011)

R. T. Kendall, *Just Say Thanks: Cultivating Gratitude Deepens Intimacy with God* (Charisma House, 2005)

“Grace to the End” (1 Thessalonians 5:23–28)

Sermon Application Review from 5:12–22

How did you honor ministry leaders this past week?

What church members did you shepherd?

Scripture References

1 Thessalonians 5:23–28

Jude 24–25

2 Corinthians 1:12; 7:1

Hebrews 10:10–18

1 John 3:1–3

2 Peter 3:1–14

1 Corinthians 1:8–9

Study Questions

1. How have you matured spiritually since you became a Christian (5:23a)? In what specific area have you grown the most? What tangible difference has this made in your life? In what ways is God sanctifying you this month? If those who know you best were asked these same questions about you, how would they respond? Would you be pleased or embarrassed by their answers?
2. If Jesus returned today, would you be ready to meet Him (5:23b)? Why or why not? Are you struggling with a particular sin that would cause you shame if Jesus appeared? Read 1 John 2:28 and 2 Corinthians 5:10. Who can help you overcome this sin? Will you contact this person today?
3. How has God proven Himself faithful in your Christian life and growth (5:24)? Do you have complete assurance that God loves you and is working in your life? If not, why? When do you lack security and confidence? How do you respond when you are plagued by doubts about your salvation and sanctification? How would you help a sister or brother struggling with assurance to find hope in Christ?
4. Are you committed to praying for the spiritual leaders God has placed in your life (5:25)? In what ways can you pray for them? How can you stretch yourself in greeting your brothers and sisters in Christ (5:26)? Are you committed to hearing and responding to God’s Word in your local church (5:27)? In which of these areas do you need the most growth? Will you ask God to help you in this area?
5. How would you define “grace” (5:28)? How does “grace” distinguish Christianity from all other religions? What has God’s grace meant to you personally? With whom are you able to share how God has manifested His grace in your life?

Recommended Reading

Jerry Bridges, *Transforming Grace* (NavPress, 1991)

Jerry Bridges, *The Discipline of Grace* (NavPress, 1994)

Charles R. Swindoll, *The Grace Awakening* (Words, 1990)