

Subject: Living Glory: Preparing for Christ's Return - Sermon Recap

Dear Church Family,

Here is a brief summary of our recent study of 2 Thessalonians 1:6-12, which challenges us to examine whether our daily investments reflect the eternal reality of Christ's return. For those interested in devotions, studies, and other discipleship materials, they are available [[HERE](#)].

Summary: The sermon explored the sobering and exciting truth that Jesus is coming back—not as the humble servant of His first coming, but as the righteous Judge who will settle all accounts. Paul reminds us that biblical prophecy isn't given so we can predict dates, but so we can keep our lives ready for Christ's arrival. This passage presents two eternal destinies: rest for those who have received Christ in faith, and destruction for those who reject Him. The good news is that God has made the way clear, given us the standard (faith in Christ as Messiah), and provided everything we need—His Word, the Holy Spirit, and the church—to successfully enter into fullness of relationship with Him. We ultimately choose our own destiny through our response to Jesus.

Takeaways:

1. Heaven and hell are real, and our choices have eternal consequences. We cannot remake God's truth to suit our preferences. Eternal life means everlasting joy with Christ; eternal punishment means everlasting separation from Him. God's justice demands we take both the horror of sin and the beauty of grace seriously.
2. Prayer is our lifeline to living worthy of God's calling. Paul's immediate response to eternal realities was prayer—not mere communication, but communion with God. Through prayer, we worship, confess, seek guidance, intercede for others, and receive strength for spiritual warfare. Prayer is the wide-open door between God's heart and ours.
3. We are called to bring God glory through humble, loving obedience. Being "counted worthy" means faithfully living out our calling: loving God supremely, loving others genuinely, keeping Christ's commands, and making disciples. This happens as we walk in humility, gentleness, unity, and love—using our spiritual gifts to build up the body of Christ until He returns.

Let me ask you the question from our opening illustration: Do the investments of your time and treasure look like someone trying to make this temporary world their permanent home? Or are you living with eternity in view? Christ is preparing a place for you, and He's coming back. Let's live ready, pray fervently, and shine brightly so that others may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven.

In Christ's Service,

Pastor Jim

2 Thessalonians 1:6-12 Living Glory

I. Introduction: A Reality Check

II. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10: Settling Your Account

- Bible prophesy is given that we may keep our 'house' ready for His arrival
- Heaven and hell are real and every person ever born will, of our free will, eternally live in one or the other

Additional Scripture References: Jn 14:1-4; Phil 2:12-13

III. 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12: Choices Come with Consequences

- Prayer is not simply communication with God, but communion with Him – it is the door thrown wide open between God's heart and yours
- How can one be found worthy

Additional Scripture References: Mt 5:16; 22:36-40; Jn 14:15; Mt 28:18-20; Ephesians 4:1-7, 15-16; John 17:22-23

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Living Glory

2 Thessalonians 1:6-12

IV. Introduction: A Reality Check

1. A man checked into a hotel for one night. He immediately started tearing out wallpaper, replacing carpet, and remodeling the bathroom.

The manager said, "Sir, you're only here until tomorrow."

The man replied, "I know, but I'm really trying to make this place my permanent home."¹

2. Do the investments of time and treasure in my life look like this?

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V. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10: Settling Your Account

1. There is some thought that the Thessalonians may have connected their persecution and suffering to the Day of the Lord. While history testifies that Day has not yet arrived even to our day, despite a countless number of false prophets trying to do this very thing, Paul's letter reminds every generation of the church that *bible prophesy isn't given to us so we can guess the dates of the rapture and Christ's 2nd coming; it's given so we may keep our 'house' ready for His arrival.*

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2. From Scripture, we know that at His 1st coming, we entered the church age or the age of grace as Jesus came in peace to invite people to receive Him as Messiah. As Paul notes here, at Jesus 2nd coming, He will come as a righteous judge in a flaming fire to have His vengeance on those who have rejected Him as Lord and persecuted His followers.

¹ Created on ChatGPT on June 1, 2026 with the following prompt: Find me a short, humorous sermon illustration of end times being a great motivator for how we are to live out our lives

3. We read that all will one day give an account for their lives to the righteous Messiah, Jesus...some to destruction and some to rest.

Within this broad truth are several important considerations including, what is rest, what is destruction, and how can we accept a good and holy God giving eternal judgment and punishment of such devastation as described in Scripture.

- A. To start, I want to encourage you with the embedded theme that Jesus is coming back for you. He makes this promise in John 14:1-4:

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“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also. ⁴ And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

By His grace, through faith we will see Him face-to-face one day and for all eternity. This reality will see us through the many life trials and tribulations yet to come.

- B. It’s this picture of a loving God serving, saving, and living with us that resonates in all people’s hearts. This is the kind of God that it seems will stick by us no matter our choices...a truly magnanimous God that is for us. While too often hidden under layers of blinding pride demanding an outcome of our desires, there is a scarlet thread of truth running through this thought that Paul touches upon in this passage.

- i. Jesus not only judges, he tells us the standard by which He judges. After telling us the standard [*faith in Him as Messiah*] He makes the way for us to achieve the standard AND He gives us His word, the Holy Spirit, and one another that we may successfully come into the fulness of relationship with Him. Let me come at this from a different perspective.

- Jesus shares the Gospel via His death & resurrection, creation, the Word, the Spirit, the Church, and even through life circumstances;
 - With our knowing the consequences of our choice, He gives us free will to choose to follow Him OR NOT. You & I, in effect, choose the one of the two judgments Paul is presenting in this passage – rest or destruction.
- ii. The Greek word for ‘rest’ here does NOT carry with it the idea of sleeping or lounging; instead it is a removal of the pressures, hardships, and cares of this life in favor of the promises of living in Christ’s fulness, eternally separated from the sorrows, persecutions, and tribulations of this life. As the Bible indicates, in our eternal state we will be busy serving, first Jesus and others in the millennial reign here on earth and then Jesus and others in our eternal homes in the new heaven and earth.
- iii. The Greek word here for destruction (*‘olethros’*) can mean ruin, punishment, and even death. Some have, I think wrongly, concluded that this and other similar references in the bible refer to death in the form of annihilationism or that a person ceases to exist. This fits their narrative that ‘a good God would never make people suffer forever’. Of course, we have to deny the plain reading of Scripture, (including in today’s passage) in telling God who He is and just how His holiness and righteousness functions to arrive at this conclusion.

As we read here in **2 Thessalonians 1:9**, along with numerous other passages (e.g., Mt 25:41, 46; Rev 20:10, 21:8; Mk 9:43-48; Dan 12:2) God’s righteous judgment and punishment is everlasting or eternal. What’s more, in a senseless contradiction, we accept (and love) that eternal life means eternal or everlasting WHILE those holding to annihilationism are convinced that eternal

punishment is not really eternal. Since His holy thoughts and righteous ways are most certainly NOT our thoughts and ways, wisdom demands we let God be God and we be His faithful, obedient, and loving children.

To wish that Scripture does not indicate that hell involves eternal suffering resulting from one's own choice to reject God does not sway God's word nor change our destiny. What's more, I suggest the path to annihilationism cheapens the grace of the God and the sacrificial death of His Son by cheapening the evil of our sin by abrogating or abolishing God's clearly stated just punishment.

4. One final note of irony that is also a GREAT warning...people demand freedom to choose to reject God and when given this freedom, some deceive themselves in trying to reject the built-in consequences that won't 'offend' their good senses.
5. We've spent time unpacking these verses because it's an encouraging wake-up call – heaven and hell are real! Indeed, as we read in v8, our eternal dwelling place is an outworking of our choice to surrender our lives in obedience to Jesus' or NOT! Indeed, in **Philippians 2:12-13**, we are told to work out our faith in fear and trembling – God's righteous judgment is real!

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VI. 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12: Choices Come With Consequences

1. Because we do have free will...because there is one way to heaven...because there are entailing consequences to our choices...and mostly because God is faithful, loving, grace-filled, compassionate, and forgiving, He has given us a path to being eternally in His presence.

And so, in what is incredibly instructive for us, Paul's reflex is to pray. He both knows and models the importance of prayer in encouraging us to purpose to pray. Indeed, the bible and history testify that no revival, no healings, and no war can be fought and won outside of prayer. Folks, prayer is not simply communication

with God, but communion with Him – it is the door thrown wide open between God’s heart and yours. In short, the treasury of prayer is vast with the following just a few of the gems:

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- A. In prayer, we express our reverence, praise, and delight in God. (Mt 6:9; Ps 95:6; Rev 4:11; Ps 103:1-2)
- B. By prayer, we thank God for His goodness, provision, and protection (Phil 4:6; Col 4:2; 1 Thes 5:18; Ps 100:4)
- C. Through prayer one confesses sin and seeks forgiveness that we may be restored to relationship with God (1 Jn 1:9; Ps 51:1-17; Pro 28:13; Dan 9:3-19; Mt 6:12; Lk 18:13-14; Ps 32:5)

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- D. Via prayer we seek and receive God’s transcendent will, wisdom, and guidance (Mt 6:10; Lk 22:42; Ja 1:5; Ro 12:2; Ja 1:5; Prov 3:5-6; Ps 25:4-5; Acts 13:2-3; Phil 4:6; Mt 7:7-11; Heb 4:16; 1 Pet 5:7)
- E. In our prayers, God offers us strength, peace, and healing (Phil 4:6-7; Ps 50:15; 2 Cor 12:7-10; Heb 4:16; Phil 4:6-7; Jn 14:27; Isa 26:3; Ja 5:14-16; Mk 1:40-42; Ps 103:2-3; Jer 17:14)
- F. It is by prayer that we intercede for our families & friends, the lost, leaders, missionaries, and for our own spiritual growth (1 Tim 2:1-2; Eph 6:18; Job 42:10; Col 1:9; 1 Tim 2:1-2; Ezra 6:10; Jer 29:7; Eph 1:15-19, 3:14-21; Col 1:9-12; 3 Jn 2; Eph 6:19-20; Col 4:3-4; 2 Thes 3:1-2; Ro 10:1; Mt 9:37-38; Lk 10:2; Col 1:9-12; Eph 3:16-19; Ps 119:18)

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- G. In prayer, we receive the power of God for ministry and we are overcomers in spiritual warfare (Acts 1:14; Acts 4:29-31; Acts 13:2-3; Luke 24:49; Eph 6:18; Mt 17:21; Dan 10:12-13); and finally, for today;
- H. By prayer we bring God much Glory (Jn 14:13; Psalm 115:1; Matthew 6:9)

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A summary of just what prayer is, goes this way... Prayer is God and man communing that we may worship Him, be in relationship with Him, and be about His good and holy will in edifying the church and making disciples in our lost world.

2. The object of Paul's prayer is the saints in the Thessalonica church God's church of every age; specifically that God will count the church as worthy of His calling in being about His business in His power in the faith that He gives us. And that in so doing, God would be glorified. Jesus Himself says it this way in Matthew 5:16:

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Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. We will return to this shortly, but let's take a few minutes to consider what Paul means when he says that we may be counted as worthy of the calling God gives us.

A. The word for calling here means an **invitation to experience a special privilege and responsibility**.² And to be worthy carries with the idea of being faithful and true or obedient to God's will.

B. In **Is 43:7**, **1 Cor 10:31**, and our passage today, we read that we were created to bring God glory. This, in turn, begs the question of 'how?'

While I want to give some specifics in responding to this question, let's use three Scriptures to frame up our "to be" description of living for Christ glory. Importantly, we can use hundreds of Scriptures to support and extend this framing:

- i. In **Mt 22:36-40**, Jesus says the two GREATEST commandments are to love God and love one another.
- ii. In **John 14:15**, we read that if we love Jesus, we will keep His commandments.

² William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 549.

- iii. Finally, in **Matthew 28:18-20**, we read the GREAT COMMISSION or God's will that we, together, will go and make disciples in teaching them to also obey Jesus.

C. Being reminded that they and we don't know the time of Christ coming for His church nor His second coming, Paul is telling them get and stay ready that they (and we) may be found worthy when He does come. *So, while not exhaustive, Paul offers great insights on our being found worthy in **Ephesians 4**:*

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I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, ²with all lowliness [*HUMILITY*] and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, ³endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴*There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

Spiritual Gifts

⁷But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. ...

¹⁵but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

– **Ephesians 4:1-7, 15-16**

D. If God is in us, these things will be alive, growing, and maturing us [*by His power*] in bringing Jesus glory until the day we go to be with Him or He returns to snatch us up into the air with Him at the rapture of His church. *A glory, we note, that Paul prays Jesus will share with us, just as He incomprehensibly promises in **John 17:22-23**:*

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²²*And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.*

3. Is God awesome beyond measure?! We don't need to imagine the impossible because Jesus is the author and finisher of our eternal abundant lives AND with what again seems so impossible as to be silly, He invites us to be a part of His family; including sharing His glory. Truly amazing! We praise and thank you Lord.

Invitation.

Communion

5-Day Devotional

2 Thessalonians 1:6-12

Living Glory

Day 1: Investing in What Lasts

Reading: Mt 6:19-21; 2 Thes 1:11-12

Devotional: The hotel guest frantically remodeling a temporary room illustrates our earthly existence. Are we investing our time, resources, and energy into what endures eternally? Jesus warns against storing treasures on earth where they decay and disappoint. Instead, we're called to live worthy of our heavenly calling—not through our own strength, but through God's power working within us.

Today, examine your calendar and bank statement. Do they reflect eternal priorities? Prayer, worship, loving others, and making disciples are investments that transcend this temporary world. Ask God to align your daily choices with His eternal purposes. When Christ returns, may He find you faithfully building His kingdom, not merely decorating a temporary dwelling.

Day 2: The Justice and Mercy of God

Reading: Ro 2:5-11; 2 Thes 1:6-10

Devotional: God's justice and mercy coexist perfectly, though our finite minds struggle to comprehend this divine balance. Scripture clearly teaches both eternal rest for believers and eternal destruction for those who reject Christ. This isn't cruelty—it's the natural consequence of free will. God has revealed Himself through creation, Scripture, the Holy Spirit, and the Church.

He's provided the standard (faith in Christ) and the means to achieve it (grace through Jesus). We choose our eternal destination by choosing or rejecting Him. This sobering reality shouldn't lead to fear for believers, but to urgency in sharing the Gospel. Who in your life needs to hear about Christ's offer of salvation? Let God's justice motivate your evangelism and His mercy fuel your compassion.

Day 3: The Power and Purpose of Prayer

Reading: Phil 4:6-7; Eph 6:18-20

Devotional: Prayer is not merely communication with God—it's communion with Him. Paul's immediate response to eternal realities was prayer, modeling its central importance in Christian life. Through prayer, we worship, confess, seek guidance, intercede, and receive strength. Prayer opens the door between God's heart and yours, inviting His power into your circumstances and His will into your decisions. No revival, healing, or spiritual victory occurs apart from prayer. Yet how often we treat it as optional or last resort?

Today, commit to deepening your prayer life. Start with thanksgiving, move to confession, pray for others, and seek God's wisdom for your decisions. Remember: prayer doesn't change God's mind; it aligns your heart with His purposes and releases His power into your world.

Day 4: Called to Bring God Glory

Reading: Mt 5:14-16; 1 Cor 10:31

Devotional: You were created for God's glory. This isn't egotism on God's part—it's the highest purpose imaginable. When we live in humility, gentleness, unity, and love, using our spiritual gifts to edify the body of Christ, we reflect His character to a watching world. Jesus promises to share His glory with us—an incomprehensible honor. But glory isn't passive; it's active obedience to the Great Commandment (love God and others) and the Great Commission (make disciples).

Being "counted worthy" doesn't mean earning salvation, but faithfully stewarding the calling God has given you. How are you letting your light shine today? What good works point others to your Father in heaven? Live intentionally for His glory in every conversation, decision, and relationship.

Day 5: Ready for His Return

Reading: 1 Thes 5:1-11; Mt 24:42-44

Devotional: We don't know when Christ will return, but we know He is coming. Biblical prophecy isn't given for date-setting but for readiness. The question isn't "when?" but "am I ready?" Jesus promises rest from life's pressures, hardships, and persecutions—not inactivity, but purposeful service in His eternal kingdom. This hope sustains us through present trials.

Are you living with eternity in view? Readiness means ongoing faithfulness: walking in holiness, growing in love, serving others, and sharing the Gospel. It means keeping short accounts with God through confession and living in the power of the Holy Spirit. Today, examine your spiritual house. Is it ready for the Master's return? Don't frantically remodel when the alarm sounds—live each day as His faithful servant, eagerly awaiting His glorious appearing.

Small Group Study Guide

2 Thessalonians 1:6-12

Living Glory

Opening Prayer: Pray that the Lord would open your eyes to see and understand His word as you discuss the sermon.

Key Takeaways: Query the group for takeaways first...you may stay with one or more of those.

1. Heaven and hell are real. Our eternal destiny is determined by our response to Jesus Christ.
2. Jesus is coming back. We should live with readiness and expectation, not trying to predict dates but preparing our hearts.
3. Prayer is essential. It's not just communication but communion with God—the open door between His heart and ours.
4. We are called to bring God glory. This happens as we love God, love others, obey His commands, and make disciples.
5. God's judgment is righteous. While difficult to fully comprehend, we must trust God's character and let Scripture define truth rather than our preferences.

Discussion Questions: Did the Holy Spirit prompt any questions with you? Start with those.

1. The sermon opened with a story about a man remodeling a hotel room he'd only occupy for one night. Where do you see yourself investing most of your time, energy, and resources? Do these investments reflect eternal or temporary priorities?
2. What does it mean practically to "keep your house ready" for Christ's arrival? What areas of your life might need attention?
3. How does knowing that Jesus will return as a righteous judge affect the way you live today? Does it bring comfort, urgency, or both?
4. The sermon addressed the reality of eternal punishment. Why do you think people struggle with the doctrine of hell? How do we balance God's love with His justice?

5. Read verse 8 together. What does it mean to "not know God" versus to "not obey the gospel"? Are these different, or the same thing?
6. The sermon emphasized that we choose our eternal destiny through our response to Jesus. How would you explain this to someone who believes all paths lead to God?
7. Paul describes "rest" not as inactivity but as freedom from life's pressures and sorrows. How does this biblical picture of heaven differ from popular cultural ideas?
8. What hardships or persecutions are you currently facing? How does the promise of eternal rest with Christ encourage you in these struggles?
9. The sermon listed numerous purposes and benefits of prayer. Which of these resonated most with you? Which area of prayer do you need to develop more?
10. Paul's immediate response to eternal realities was to pray. What does this teach us about the priority and power of prayer in the Christian life?
11. Read verses 11-12 again. What specifically is Paul praying for the Thessalonians? How can we pray these same things for one another?
12. The sermon referenced Ephesians 4:1-7, 15-16 as a description of living worthy of our calling. Which of these characteristics (humility, gentleness, patience, unity, speaking truth in love) is most challenging for you?
13. Matthew 5:16 says our good works should cause others to glorify God. Can you share an example of when you've seen this happen—either in your life or someone else's?
14. How does understanding that we were created to bring God glory change your perspective on daily activities, relationships, and challenges?

Practical Applications: Query the group for applications first...you may explore one or more of those.

- Daily Readiness Check: Each morning, ask yourself: "If Jesus returned today, would I be ready? What needs to change?"
- Prayer Expansion: Using the list of prayer purposes from the sermon, spend time each day focusing on a different aspect of prayer (praise, confession, intercession, etc.).

- Eternal Investment Audit: List your top 5 time commitments and top 5 financial expenditures. Evaluate: Are these investments eternal or temporary? What adjustments might God be calling you to make?
- Glory-Giving Actions: Intentionally do good works this week with the specific goal that others would see and glorify God (Matthew 5:16). Report back to the group.
- Worthy Living: Choose one characteristic from Ephesians 4:1-7 (humility, gentleness, patience, unity, etc.) and ask God to develop it in you this week. Share your progress with an accountability partner.

Closing Prayer Points:

- That God would count each person worthy of His calling
- That God would fulfill every good purpose in their lives
- That their faith would produce powerful works
- That the name of Jesus would be glorified in and through them
- That they would experience the grace of God in deeper ways

Discussion Questions

2 Thessalonians 1:6-12

Living Glory

1. How do the investments of your time and treasure reflect whether you view this world as a temporary dwelling or a permanent home?
2. In what ways does understanding that Christ is coming back for you personally help you endure current trials and persecutions?
3. How does the concept of free will in choosing or rejecting Christ challenge or affirm your understanding of God's justice and love?
4. What are the dangers of redefining biblical concepts like eternal punishment to fit our own sensibilities rather than accepting God's revealed truth?
5. How does viewing prayer as communion rather than just communication change the way you approach your prayer life?
6. Which aspect of prayer mentioned in the sermon do you most need to develop in your relationship with God, and why?
7. What does it mean practically for you to be counted worthy of God's calling in your daily life and relationships?
8. How can you intentionally use your spiritual gifts to edify the body of Christ and maintain unity in the bond of peace?
9. In what ways does loving God and loving others directly connect to fulfilling the Great Commission in your sphere of influence?
10. How does the promise that Christ will share His glory with believers impact your motivation to live faithfully and obediently today?

Dinner Conversation Starters

2 Thessalonians 1:6-12

Living Glory

1. Living For What Lasts

If someone looked at how our family spends our time, money, and energy, would they say we're treating this life like a hotel stay or like a permanent home? What's one practical way we could live more for eternity this week?

2. Rest or Ruin: Our Choice Matters

The sermon talked about eternal "rest" with Jesus versus "destruction" apart from Him. How does knowing that our choices have eternal consequences change the way we look at everyday decisions or priorities?

3. Letting God Be God

We heard that some people reshape God's judgment to make it feel more comfortable. Are there any areas where we're tempted to tell God how He should be, instead of letting Scripture tell us who He is?

4. Prayer as Communion, Not Just Requests

The sermon said prayer is not just communication, but communion with God. How do we usually treat prayer in our home—more like a "wish list" or like a real relationship? What's one new way we could grow in prayer together as a family?

5. Being Worthy of the Calling

Paul prayed that believers would be counted worthy of God's calling—loving God, loving others, and making disciples. Which of those three (love God, love others, make disciples) do you feel strongest in right now, and which one do you think God is inviting you to grow in next?

Family Conversation Guide for Children & Early Teens

2 Thessalonians 1:6-12

Living Glory

AGES 5-7: SIMPLIFYING THE MESSAGE APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Living for Jesus, Not Just for “Right Now”**: Help them see that we don’t just do what feels fun right now; we choose what makes Jesus happy because we’ll live with Him forever.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) Why do we obey Jesus even when it’s not fun right now?
 - (b) What do you think makes Jesus smile more: doing what we promised or just doing what we want?
 - (c) Can you think of one way you can “live for Jesus” tomorrow at home or at school?
2. **Choosing Kindness When Friends Are Mean**: Introduce the idea that our choices show whether we are following Jesus, especially when others are unkind.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) When someone is mean, what are some choices we could make?
 - (b) Which choice would show we’re following Jesus?
 - (c) Let’s practice: If a friend says, “You can’t play with us,” what is one kind thing you could say or do?
3. **Learning to Pray as Talking with a Friend**: Teach that prayer is talking with God about everything: happy, sad, scared, thankful.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) What is something you’d like to tell Jesus about today?
- (b) When you feel scared, what’s a short prayer you could say?
- (c) How does it make you feel to know Jesus is listening all the time?

AGES 8-12: BUILDING UNDERSTANDING APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Remembering Eternity When Friends Pressure You**: Connect “living worthy of God’s calling” to peer pressure. They’re old enough to understand that their choices now matter for their relationship with Jesus.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) When your friends want you to do something you know isn’t right, what are some options you have?

- (b) How could remembering that you belong to Jesus help you in that moment?
- (c) Can you share a recent time when you had to choose between fitting in and doing what's right?

2. **Practicing Prayer as “Checking In” with God During the Day**: Show how prayer can help them in social and school situations: asking for courage, wisdom, or kindness before responding.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) What is something at school or with friends that you could pray about before it happens?
- (b) Next time you feel left out or upset, what's a one-sentence prayer you could say?
- (c) How do you think God might answer prayers about friendships or problems at school?

3. **Being Different Online (or on Devices) Because You Follow Jesus**: Connect “worthy of the calling” to digital spaces: YouTube, games, kids’ messaging apps, early social media (through family accounts).

Discussion Questions:

- (a) If someone says something mean in a game chat, what are three ways you could respond?
- (b) How can you honor Jesus with what you watch, read, or type online?
- (c) If Jesus was sitting next to you while you were on your tablet/computer, what would change?

AGES 11-15: DEEPENING THE CONNECTION APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Owning Your Faith: Living for God’s Glory, Not Just Approval**: Connect “being counted worthy of the calling” to identity: Are you living for Jesus’ approval or for friends/likes/status?

Discussion Questions:

- (a) In your friend group or online spaces, what do people usually live for—God’s glory, popularity, comfort, something else?
- (b) Where do you feel the most pressure to compromise what you believe (school, social media, sports, etc.)?
- (c) What might it look like for you to live for Jesus’ glory in one specific situation this week?

2. **Digital Integrity: Who You Are When No One’s Watching**: Apply the sermon’s teaching on judgment and holiness to hidden online behavior: what they watch, post, and say in DMs or private chats.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) What are some digital spaces (apps, websites, chats) where you feel the strongest temptation to cross a line?
 - (b) If you imagined Jesus reading your last 20 messages or checking your browsing history, what would you feel?
 - (c) What boundaries or habits could help you honor Jesus online (e.g., no private chats with strangers, no deleting history, time limits)?
3. Responding to Injustice, Bullying, and Exclusion: Tie in God's justice and our calling: God is a righteous judge; we're called to respond in a Christlike way, not with revenge.

Discussion Questions:

- (a) When you see someone mistreated in your friend group or online, what do you usually do—and why?
- (b) How does believing that God is a just Judge help you handle unfairness, bullying, or rumors?
- (c) What's one brave, Christlike way you could respond next time (speaking up, supporting the person privately, refusing to share a hurtful post)?

Tips for Parents

- Be patient and listen: Give your child time to think and respond.
- Relate to everyday life: Use real-life examples and stories familiar to your child to make abstract concepts more tangible.
- Encourage questions: Let your son or daughter know it's okay to ask questions, even if things don't make sense right away.
- Share personal insights: Tell a personal story about a time you experienced these themes, adapting as needed for age appropriateness.

Family Conversation Guide for Gen Z

2 Thessalonians 1:6-12

Living Glory

1. Living for Eternity in a “Now” Culture

Bible Reference: 2 Thessalonians 1:7–9; Matthew 6:19–21

Application: Remember that your life is not just about the next 24 hours, next post, or next achievement. Jesus is returning as Judge and Savior; live for His “well done,” not just for likes, followers, or short-term comfort.

Scenario: Your friend group plans to ditch a commitment (youth group, serving, family event) to go to a last-minute party everyone is hyping. You feel torn between short-term FOMO and long-term faithfulness.

Discussion: When you think about Jesus actually returning and you standing before Him, how does that change which “invitations” you should say yes or no to in your friend group?

2. Rejecting “Soft” Views of Sin and Judgment

Bible Reference: 2 Thessalonians 1:8–9; Romans 6:23

Application: Don’t rewrite God’s character to make Him more comfortable or “on brand” for your generation. Take His holiness, sin, and eternal judgment seriously—even when your online world normalizes or jokes about what God calls sin.

Scenario: You scroll through TikTok/IG and see creators making light of hell, joking about “going to hell together,” or identifying as “deconstructing Christians” who deny judgment and eternal consequences.

Discussion: When you see sin or hell turned into a joke or “aesthetic” online, how can you respond in your own heart, and possibly in conversation, in a way that honors what God actually says?

3. Owning Your Faith Under Social Pressure

Bible Reference: 2 Thessalonians 1:10–12; Matthew 5:14–16

Application: Live in such a way that Jesus is glorified “in you and you in Him.” That means standing out when following Christ clashes with your group’s values—even at the cost of awkwardness, unfollows, or being misunderstood.

Scenario: In your friend group or class, everyone laughs at crude jokes, sexual innuendos, or tearing people down. You know it grieves God, but you don’t want to be “that religious person.”

Discussion: What is one concrete way you could shine your light (Matthew 5:16) in that group—without being self-righteous—but still clearly aligning yourself with Jesus?

4. Using Digital Spaces as a Disciple, Not Just a Consumer

Bible Reference: 1 Corinthians 10:31, Colossians 3:17

Application: Whatever you post, watch, or share—do it for God’s glory. You’re not just a content consumer; you’re Christ’s representative. Your For You Page and your output (posts, comments, DMs) should reflect that you belong to Jesus.

Scenario: You’re about to post a thirst trap, a borderline meme, or a rant that will get attention and validation—but you know it doesn’t line up with the holiness and love Jesus calls you to.

Discussion: If Jesus took over your social accounts for a week, what kind of content would change—what would be deleted, added, or reshaped to better glorify Him?

These points aim to empower Gen Z to live out their faith genuinely and courageously in various aspects of their daily lives, reflecting Biblical integrity, compassion, and steadfastness.

Slide 1	Blank
Slide 2	2 Thessalonians 1:6-12 Living Glory
Slide 3	Blank
Slide 4	2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 Settling Your Account
Slide 5	Blank
Slide 6	Bible prophesy is given so we may keep our 'house' ready for His arrival.
Slide 7	Blank
Slide 8	John 14:1-4 (reference only)
Slide 9	Blank
Slide 10	2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 Choices Come With Consequences
Slide 11	Blank
Slide 12	A. In prayer, we express our reverence, praise, and delight in God. B. By prayer, we thank God for His goodness, provision, and protection. C. Through prayer one confesses sin and seeks forgiveness that we may be restored to relationship with God.
Slide 13	D. Via prayer, we seek and receive God's transcendent will, wisdom, and guidance. E. In our prayers God offers us strength, peace, and healing. F. It is by prayer that we intercede for our families & friends, the lost, leaders, missionaries, and for our own spiritual growth.
Slide 14	G. In prayer, we receive the power of God for ministry and we are overcomers in spiritual warfare. H. By prayer, we bring God much Glory.
Slide 15	Blank
Slide 16	<u>Prayer</u> Prayer is God and man communing that we may worship Him, be in relationship with Him, and be about His good and holy will in edifying the church and making disciples in our lost world.
Slide 17	Blank
Slide 18	Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. – Matthew 5:16
Slide 19	Blank
Slide 20	Ephesians 4:1-7, 15-16 (reference only)
Slide 21	Blank
Slide 22	And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³ I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. – John 17:22-23
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