



## Message Series Guide

### Living Hope

#### Part I – Hope in Christ’s Return

##### I Thessalonians 1:1-10

Paul traveled to Thessalonica around 49-50 A.D. The city was crucial to the Roman Empire and almost became the capital of the world because of the waterways that ran into it, and the amount of trade and commerce that took place there. Paul, Silas and Timothy led the charge as they shared the gospel to the people in Thessalonica. Along with sharing the message of Christ, they were there to encourage the believers and establish the church. The background of the church can be read in Acts 17:1-9. Paul’s letter (with help from Silas & Timothy) gave these new believers guidance for holy living, encouragement through suffering, and how to take hold of the living hope we all have through Jesus Christ.

### READ:

**I Thessalonians 1:1-10 • Acts 17:1-9 • I Peter 1:3a • I Corinthians 13:13 • Romans 5:8 • John 6:44a • Acts 1:11**

- When you communicate with others, are you more of a letter writer, emailer, texter, caller, or face-to-face talker? If you were to write a letter to The Ridge Church family, what God-honoring traits and practices would you praise and recognize?
- In verse 2, Paul says that he always thanks God for them continually and prays for them persistently. How do you think this affected Paul’s relationship with the people of Thessalonica? How could constant prayer and encouragement affect your relationship those in your church family or small group?
- What outstanding qualities did Paul acknowledge and give thanks for in the lives of the believers in Thessalonica? What are “works” and how do they produce faith? What is “labor” and how is it affected by love? What/Who is our living hope and why does it help build endurance?
- In verses 4-5 Paul describes how the message of the gospel came to them. What is the message of the gospel? How was the message of the gospel delivered to the Thessalonians? How does the power of the gospel change those who accept and embrace it?
- What do you think Paul meant when he said in verse 5, “*For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you...*”? What does the word, *chosen*, mean in this passage? Who initiates salvation, God or man? What role does man have in his salvation? What role does man’s free will play in salvation?
- Why is Paul’s statement that the Thessalonians had “turned to God from idols” a great picture of what salvation entails. What are some idols to which we cling? How can we turn away from those idols?

### DISCUSS:

- How would those in your life (family, neighbors, coworkers, etc.) describe your faith? What “evidences” would they cite as proof that you are an authentic follower of Jesus?
- How can you labor in love when it comes to your relationships both inside and outside the church?
- Why is hope so important to the Christian life? Why is Jesus described as our living hope? How does the hope of Christ’s return affect your daily walk?

### PRAY:

Pray that the power of the Gospel continues to “change” and strengthen your hope in Christ.

### RESPOND:

Pick one area of your life (marriage, attitudes, service to others, etc.) and write down how the gospel affects that area of your life.