

5

Leader Guide

Groups: Life Together

October 29, 2023

Main Passage: 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; 3:1-9

Theological Theme

We were created for community and God intends for us to be connected with others who are likeminded and will encourage and support us as we follow Him.

Introduction

- ? Why do you think strong adult connections lead to health benefits?
- ? What positives have you experienced because of a friend or friend group?

1. Strong Bonds (2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; 3:1-2)

The relationship between Paul and the Thessalonians was deep and demonstrates some important characteristics of being connected with others. Paul had invested in and taught these people what it meant to follow Jesus. Their lives had been impacted by Paul's ministry, and they supported and encouraged Paul. If you have accepted Jesus as your Savior, there are likely people who have invested in you in a similar fashion.

- ? Who is like Paul in your life? Who has pointed you to Jesus and shown you what it means follow Him, whether you are following Jesus or not?
- ? How have you experienced the blessing of having others pray for you?
- ? Application: What would be different if the Word of God was unhindered in you?

2. Strong Confidence (2 Thessalonians 3:3-6)

Paul spoke and wrote with great confidence based entirely on the Lord and who He is. Instead of being confident in his own work, effort, or success, Paul knew the only basis for a confidence that cannot be shaken is God. People mistakenly look to many other things for confidence, but they can and will likely fail at some point. Think about how circumstances, the economy, other people, your health, and other worldly things can fail you and are not worthy of your confidence.

- ? Why is misplacing your confidence dangerous? When was a time you did this? What did God teach you from this experience?
- ? All people fail and hurt others at times, including those who follow Jesus. What do we misunderstand about following Jesus if we think the failures of God's people means God is not trustworthy or good?
- ? Application: How can you seek to build further relationships with those who are seeking God daily?

3. Strong Examples (2 Thessalonians 3:7-9)

Not many of us are quick to tell others to follow our example of following Jesus. We may be too worried that our choices and imperfections will lead people astray instead of right to Jesus. The truth is we should strive to live our lives in such a way that we can confidently lead others to see what righteous living looks like.

- ❓ What is the biggest reason you might hesitate to tell others to follow your example in various areas of life? If you are following Jesus, what is intimidating about living as an example for others in this area?
- ❓ If you're a Christian, what are some things you can do to follow the strong example of Paul and make sure your life represents Christ well? If you aren't yet a follower of Jesus, who in your life represents Jesus well?
- ❓ Application: How does the behavior of Christians affect the advance of the gospel? How does your life need to change so that you are following Paul's example of following Jesus faithfully?

Questions to Guide Your Group's Discussion

1. What does this passage say?
2. What did this passage mean to its original audience?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about man?
5. What does this passage demand of me?
6. How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (*How can you use this information this week at work or with friends and neighbors?*)
7. How does this passage prompt me to pray to God?

*Adapted from Seven Arrows by Matt Rogers pastor of The Church at Cherrydale, Greenville, SC

Here's How to Become a Christ-Follower:

Read the following verses and ask after each one: "What does this say to me?"

- **All have sinned:** Romans 3:23 & 1 John 1:8
- **The wages of sin:** Romans 6:23 & John 3:18
- **But while we were sinners, salvation was provided:** Romans 5:8
- **Become a Christ-follower:** Romans 10:9-10 Confess and Believe

Accepting Christ is Just the Beginning:

Next Steps:

- Publicly profess your faith by being baptized (Matthew 10:32-33; Luke 3:21; Romans 6:4).
- Join a church which follows the Bible, where you can grow in your faith through prayer, Bible study and fellowship with other Christians.
- Get involved in groups for encouragement and accountability.
- Begin a daily personal worship experience with God where you study the Bible and pray.
- Share with others what Jesus has done for you. Tell your story (Romans 10:14; Matthew 28:19-20).
- Begin to live for God (Romans 12:1-2, 9-18; James 1:19-27).