

## One Bible, One Story

**New Testament Survey***uffering - the Surprising Path to Unity and Joy: Letters to the Thessalonians and Philippians***I. Last Week's Points**

- Scripture is grounded in place and time
- “Children of the light” – pluralism then and now
- Complete knowledge of God's will that we might become like Christ

**II. Introduction**

- Paul's 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Journey – Philippi and Thessalonica on the Egnatian Way
- Common theme of joy and mutuality in perseverance for the work of the gospel

**III. Key Concepts/Themes and Outlines**

Book's Key Concepts	Outline
<b>1 Thessalonians</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouragement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Persecution</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Godly living</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assurance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Parousia - “coming”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	A. Greeting, Thanksgiving (1:1-10) B. The Gospel's Arrival in Thessalonica (2:1-3:13) C. Exhortations to the Thessalonians (4:1-5:22) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Concerning Personal Life (4:1-12)</li> <li>b. Concerning the Coming of Christ (4:13-5:11)</li> <li>c. Concerning Church Life (5:12-22)</li> </ul> D. Final Prayer, Greetings and Benediction (5:23-28)
<b>2 Thessalonians</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinforces ideas of 1 Thess <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Growth</li> <li>○ Eschatology – “end times”</li> <li>○ Encouragement</li> <li>○ Warning against idleness</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	A. Greetings, Thanksgiving and Prayers (1:1-12) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Thanksgiving for Their Faith, Love and Perseverance (1:3-10)</li> <li>b. Intercession for Their Spiritual Progress (1:11-12)</li> </ul> B. Prophecy Regarding the Day of the Lord (2:1-17) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Combating False Doctrine/ “The Lawless Man” (2:1-12)</li> <li>b. Standing Firm Through Calling</li> </ul> C. Final Instructions (3:1-15) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Mutual Prayers (3:1-5)</li> <li>b. Charge to Discipline Those Who Refuse to Work (3:6-15)</li> </ul> D. Final Greetings and Benediction (3:16-18)
<b>Philippians</b> <b>Key Verse - 4:4</b> “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JOY! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In Suffering</li> <li>○ In Partnership for the Gospel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unity</li> <li>▪ Generosity</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	A. Greetings, Thanksgiving and Prayers (1:1-11) B. Paul's Imprisonment, Anticipated Release, Either through Life or Death (1:12-26) C. Exhortations to Unity (1:27-2:18) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Call for Unity (1:27-2:4)</li> <li>b. The Example of Christ (2:5-11)</li> <li>c. Corporate Conduct (2:12-18)</li> </ul> D. Commendation for Timothy & Epaphroditus (2:19-30) E. Warnings against Opponents (3:1-21) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The “Mutilators of the Flesh” (3:1-4a)</li> <li>b. Paul's Past and Present Values and Credentials (3:4b-14)</li> <li>c. Following Paul's and Other's Example (3:15-21)</li> </ul> F. Final Exhortations: Stand Firm, Be United, Rejoice(4:1-9) F. Thanks for the Philippian's Generosity (4:10-20)

#### IV. Focus Passage: Philippians 2:6-11, “The Christ Hymn”

As a table, carefully read this passage and discuss the following questions.

1. What does this passage teach us about who Christ is? What does it teach us about the attitude we should have as Christians?
2. How did Christ suffer by making Himself nothing and taking on the nature of a servant (2:7)? In what ways have you experienced this kind of suffering? Have you experienced joy in it or resurrection as a result of it? In what ways?
3. Some scholars see the entire hymn as an Adam/Christ parallel and contrast. Discuss the contrasts outlined here...and the hope we have in Christ.

##### Christ

Existing in the form of God  
Did not grasp equality with God  
Took the form of a slave  
Obedient to death

##### Adam

created in the image of God  
tempted to be like God  
enslaved to sin  
death after disobedience

#### V. Application

1. Set aside time this week to slowly read the Christ Hymn and meditate on its example for Christ-like living, passed down from the earliest Christian worshippers to us. As we prepare to celebrate Christ’s resurrection next week, and our rising with Him, are there any lingering areas you still need to “die to” before you can fully and joyfully participate in that resurrection? Ask Christ for the humility to lay this thing at the cross, trusting that “whoever loses his life for (His) sake will find it”.
2. As a spiritual discipline this week, practice focusing your thoughts on that which is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable – anything that is excellent or praiseworthy (Phil 4:8), especially under trying circumstances. Try keeping a gratitude journal or recording the ways in which changing your thoughts has changed your heart or your perception (or even reality) of your circumstance.

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<sup>1</sup> All Outlines adapted from The New Testament in Antiquity by Burge, Cohick and Green and the Zondervan Study Bible