

RECAP

Were you able to memorize 1 Thessalonians 4:1-2? What were some things that God taught or revealed to you as you memorized the passage?

IDEA 1

1 Thessalonians 5 continues the conversation of Christ's return but goes after the question: When will it happen? Rob explained that false teachers in Thessalonica had given rise to the idea that Jesus' return was very near and confusion, even with regards to what Paul and Silas had taught, was present.

Rob pointed out that there is a correlation to desperation and bad theology. How have you seen that to be true?

What are some things that make us prone to listen to false teachings today?

What are your thoughts about the statement: Our certainty is in the uncertainty of Jesus's return?

What are some things or people that you tend to go to for security or safety instead of Jesus? Brainstorm together how we can continue to keep Jesus first.

Rob reminded us that the suddenness of Jesus' return isn't there to cast fear, it is a reminder that we live in expectant hope, that we should be ready—that we should dwell on the truth that He will return daily and live into this hope. **How does this fact encourage you?**

IDEA 2

Continuing on in the chapter Paul addresses two questions:
How do we handle false teaching, prophecies and ideologies?
How do we preserve community when things are a bit chaotic and inequitable?

When it comes to false teachings, Rob asked the questions: How are we doing—do we filter, have grids, and have safeguards? Or in our despair for things to get better do we grab onto teachings that make us feel better in the moment? **How would you answer those questions?**

IDEA 2 CONT.

False prophecies can be divisive and can cause hurt and confusion. But Paul didn't stop this young church from prophesying, he just reminded them to act with wisdom and to test the Spirits. **What does this look like at Salem Alliance? In what ways have you experienced this done well?**

What are some ways that we can listen for God's voice?

How would you answer the question Rob asked: How do we act in community when it's not all going great—when there is chaos and inequity?

EXPERIENCING GOD TOGETHER

Spend some time in reflective prayer together, asking God to help you be spiritually alert, to clothe you in faith, hope, and love, and to give you the grace to live in peace and holiness as you wait for Christ's return.

Together, pray through each of these three words, slowly, leaving room for God to respond.

Lord, we ask You to clothe us with faith.

Together, pause for silence in order to notice how God responds. Pay attention to any Scriptures, situations, images, songs, etc. that come to mind. Allow God to prompt your thoughts.

Lord, we ask You to clothe us with hope.

Pause to notice how God responds.

Lord, we ask You to clothe us with love.

Pause to notice how God responds.

Give some time at the end for people to share if they feel so led.

PRACTICE THIS WEEK

Before you end this week, spend some time brainstorming together what one action step from these week's passage could be. Sometimes application is done better in community—ideas from other can help us come up with our own ideas as well.

Encourage each person to prayerfully decide what their action step will be.