



Inspiring quotes

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. 14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died.

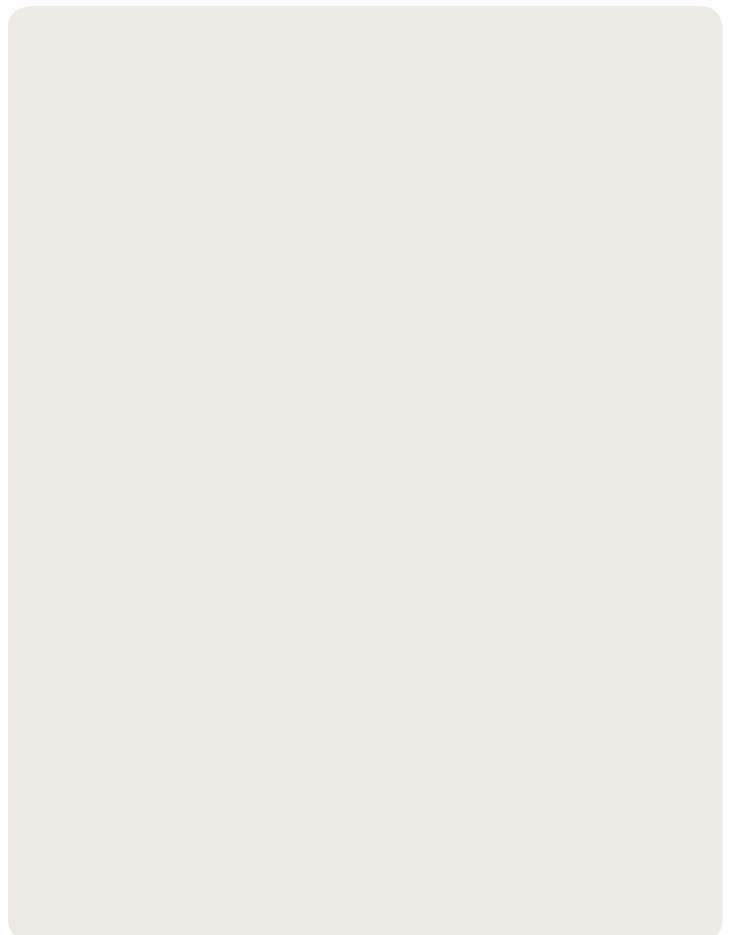
(1 Th 4:13-14)

16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

(1 Th 5:16-18)

1 Thessalonians gives its authors as Paul, Silvanus (called Silas in Acts) and Timothy. Paul is clearly the lead author but he talks in the first person plural (we) throughout the epistle implying that Silvanus and Timothy did collaborate with him on the epistle.

Paul is probably the best known of all the early Christians. Before encountering Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, he was a zealous Pharisee who sought to maintain the purity of Judaism. After his experience on the Damascus road, he turned his zeal to proclaiming Jesus Christ among the Gentiles. This brought him into conflict with some other early Christians, not least Peter, who thought that followers of Jesus Christ should convert to Judaism. He travelled around the Roman empire (though primarily in Asia Minor – modern-day Turkey – and Greece) proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ and founding communities of Christians as he went. He also wrote a large





Look out for...

The Thessalonians seem to have been having a hard time; Paul mentions persecutions more than once. Look out for this theme throughout the book.

One of the major and striking themes of 1 Thessalonians is the second coming of Jesus. In 4.17 Paul talks about 'we who are alive, who are left', which implies that he expected to be alive when Jesus returned. This is an important theme at the end of chapter 4 and beginning of chapter 5. It is this that provides the basis for hope.

Another theme in the book is imitation, keep an eye open for this especially in the first two chapters.

Some people think at 2.14-16 were not originally part of the letter but were added in later, because the language and style is very different from the rest of Paul. Have a look at these verses and see what you think.



What could this mean for me?

The theme that weaves through the whole book is hope. Reflect on what difference the kind of hope that Paul is talking about here makes to the way in which we live our lives.



Discussion group questions

Were there any parts of the book that you particularly liked or which inspired you?

Were there any parts of the book that you disliked or which troubled you?

What did you think the book was about?

Discuss Paul's expectation about the end of the world and Jesus' return. He seems to believe that it will happen very soon. If so was he wrong, or are we misunderstanding what he was talking about? What do you think?

For Paul, expectation about Jesus' return was what gave hisFor 10 Ws22n wingy7imita7it Jesus6pu