

# Boot Up

## Christ Is Coming



Strong Students Introduction ..... 2

Kit Contents and Resources..... 3

How to Teach Strong Students ..... 4

Knowing Your High School Students..... 5

Session	Title	Theme	Page
1	Grab Your Boots!	God expects us to show Christ in our character and actions.	6
2	Serve with Love	God's love for the lost should motivate us to share the gospel and be a good testimony.	16
3	Overcome Barriers and Temptations	God will help believers overcome barriers to ministry and temptations to give up.	26
4	Help Others Grow in Christ	God blesses those who help believers grow in their faith.	36
5	Make Daily Progress	God provides both the instructions and the enabling for our daily walk with Him.	46
6	Anticipate Christ's Return	God wants us to anticipate Christ's return to resurrect dead believers and rapture living believers.	56
7	Stay Awake!	God expects believers to live in response to the coming Day of the Lord.	66
8	Pursue Peace	God enables believers to have peace with each other and in their hearts.	76
9	Trust God's Justice	God will deal justly with both believers and unbelievers during end-time events.	86
10	Trust God's Sovereignty	God will work His plan for the future according to His revealed Word.	96
11	Stand Fast in the Faith	God calls believers to hold on to Biblical teaching as their guide for life.	106
12	Support Fellow Believers	God wants us to pray for effectiveness, expect His faithfulness, and expect spiritual fruitfulness.	116
13	Maintain Fellowship	God wants churches to seek to restore sinning members to fellowship.	126



**Regular Baptist Press**

Middle and High School Teacher Guide • Vol. 3, No. 4 • © 2024 Regular Baptist Press • Printed in U.S.A.  
King James Version

# STRONG

## curriculum

A world weak on truth needs a strong, trustworthy message. STRONG Curriculum builds stronger churches by teaching all Scripture to produce spiritually mature believers who measure up to the stature of Christ.

### A Plan You Can Trust

The Bible has the answers to what students need most. No other book or philosophy contains God's power to save and transform lives. Because of this, we've made it our unwavering commitment to build Strong Students upon the sure foundation of God's Word. With this curriculum, your church can develop teens who will be strong defenders of the faith.

The Strong Students scope and sequence is designed around the seven teaching aims Jesus modeled in His ministry. Since these are Jesus' aims, teachers can be confident in the aims' effectiveness and purpose. Every lesson in the Strong Students scope and sequence addresses at least one of Jesus' teaching aims.

Every lesson also focuses on students' needs. We understand the challenge of teaching the Bible to today's teens because of four barriers culture has pushed on them:

- Struggles with identity
- Subjective view of truth
- Hope in a social utopia
- Belief that a career and wealth guarantee happiness

Strong Students takes care of the tough part for you by striking at the foundation of these barriers and providing a Biblical response to each one. With Strong Students, you can concentrate on communicating to your teens and helping them grow into strong believers in Christ without worrying whether you are effectively addressing the philosophies competing for their minds.

Look for the **BuildUP** icons in the table of contents and on the first page of each lesson.

### JESUS' TEACHING AIMS



**BELIEVE THE GOSPEL.** Jesus taught His students to trust in Him alone for salvation and to share the gospel with others. This aim is obviously fundamental to all the rest



**UNDERSTAND BIBLICAL ETHICS.** Jesus instructed His students to live according to moral values. These values provided them with the tools to make wise decisions.



**INTERNALIZE GODLINESS.** Jesus taught His followers to be godly on the inside. He warned them not to become like the Pharisees, with a mere outward appearance of godliness.



**LEARN DOCTRINE.** Jesus knew the importance of teaching His students the truth and identified doctrine as one of the means for spiritual growth. Wishy-washy doctrine leads to faulty practice.



**DEVELOP LIFE SKILLS.** Jesus taught His followers to meet life's challenges in a way that honored and glorified God. He gave them the skills to navigate those challenges successfully.



**UPLIFT OTHERS.** Jesus' life was all about others. Leading by example, He taught His followers to be all about others too.



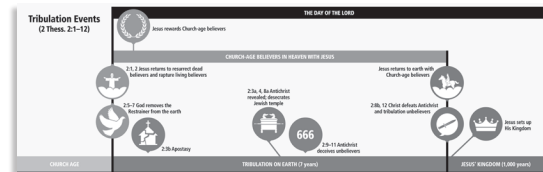
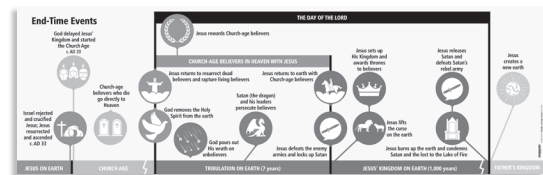
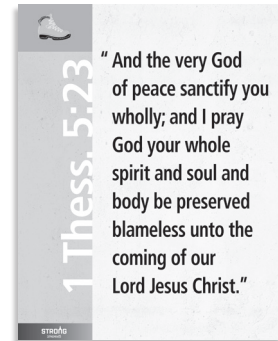
**PREPARE TO SERVE.** Jesus prepared His followers to serve in the context of local churches that were established soon after His ascension. He emphasized sacrifice and dedication.

# STRONG<sup>®</sup> curriculum

In this quarter's Strong Students for Middle and High Schoolers, the students will study Paul's teaching in 1 and 2 Thessalonians. They will gain a better understanding of end-time events and will be challenged to serve God in light of Christ's any-moment return.

## Kit Contents

- Teacher Guide
- Student Book
  - Order one book for each student*
- Resource CD with online download code
  - Includes PowerPoint, resources, Home Connection Tool, and additional teacher resources*
- DVD
- Verse Poster
- Posters



## Ordering Information

All materials are available from Regular Baptist Press.

- Web: [www.StrongCurriculum.com](http://www.StrongCurriculum.com)
- E-mail: [orders@rbpstore.org](mailto:orders@rbpstore.org)
- Toll-free orders in the United States: 1-800-727-4440
- Fax: 1-847-843-3757
- Canada: Contact your distributor.



## The Doctrinal Basis of Our Curriculum

*A more detailed statement with references is available upon request.*

- The verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures
- Only one true God
- The Trinity of the Godhead
- The Holy Spirit and His ministry
- The personality of Satan
- The Genesis account of creation
- Original sin and the fall of man
- The virgin birth of Christ
- Salvation through faith in the shed blood of Christ
- The bodily resurrection and priesthood of Christ
- Grace and the new birth
- Justification by faith
- Sanctification of the believer
- The security of the believer
- The church
- The ordinances of the local church: baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper
- Biblical separation—ecclesiastical and personal
- Obedience to civil government
- The place of Israel
- The pretribulation rapture of the church
- The premillennial return of Christ
- The millennial reign of Christ
- Eternal glory in Heaven for the righteous
- Eternal torment in Hell for the wicked



# How to Teach **STRONG STUDENTS** Lessons

# Leading a Student to Christ

STRONG STUDENTS has been designed to help you clearly present God's Word to your students. Each lesson will guide students through the Bible, encouraging them to interact with the material and apply it to their lives.

Familiarize yourself with the resources included in the kit so that you can maximize your effectiveness in the classroom. The key resources you need are Student Books, the PowerPoint (CD), and the Home Connection Tool (CD).

Encourage students to use their Student Books during each lesson so they can follow the PowerPoint presentation by taking notes. The words to fill in the blanks are either part of the outline or highlighted in orange in the sentences in the PowerPoint.

Some of the PowerPoint presentations contain additional slides that obviously tie into the teacher guide lessons. Make sure you review the PowerPoint presentations before teaching.

The student books include a daily devotional. Encourage your students to complete them either before or after coming to class.

The Home Connection Tool gives the parents of your students an idea of what you are teaching in class. Consider emailing those to each family represented in your class. You can find them on the CD or online using the download code.

## Before Each Lesson

- Read the Scripture Focus passage several times.
- Do the Time with God section of the Student Book to know what your students are studying.
- Memorize the key verses.
- Prepare the materials you will need for each activity.
- Work through the Bible Study section and carefully plan the lesson.
- Plan how you will apply the Bible lesson to your students' lives. Make sure what you say is clear and shows students how they can use the lesson.
- Pray for yourself, your students, and your lesson.

AS A TEACHER, your most important concern is the personal salvation of your students. Find out whether your students know Jesus Christ as their Savior in a way that doesn't introduce doubt in their minds. An easy and gentle way to find this out is to give your students several minutes to write out an answer to a question like, How can a person get to Heaven? Collect their answers and read them during the following week. If any of your students seem confused about salvation, you can present the gospel to them and provide the opportunity for them to receive Christ. If possible, deal with students individually.

## The Plan of Salvation

- Everyone is a sinner. No one can live up to God's perfect standard (Romans 3:23).
- Sin's penalty is death (Romans 6:23).
- God loves us and sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to pay for our sin. Christ died in our place (John 3:16; Romans 5:8).
- When a person places his trust in Jesus' payment for sins, Christ becomes his Savior. His sins are forgiven, and he receives God's gift of eternal life (John 1:12; 5:24).
- Everlasting life begins the moment we trust in Jesus (John 3:36).
- After that, nothing we ever do will take us out of God's hand; we are secure (John 10:27–29).
- The experience of the new birth (being born into God's family) is not based on a feeling, but on confidence in God's Word (1 John 5:11, 12).

Encourage students to pray, but explain that prayer does not save a person. Prayer is how we communicate our inward thoughts to God. Ask new believers to explain what they have done and what has happened to them.

## Discipleship

Encourage new believers to read the Bible, and explain the importance of prayer. Also explain 1 John 1:9 to them so they can deal with sin in their new Christian life. Make it a priority to follow up with new believers.

# Knowing Your High School Students

## Description of Physical, Social, and Emotional Development

- I MAY feel developmentally out of step with my peers—behind or ahead in physical changes—as I experience puberty.
- I MAY be sensitive about my weight and body shape and worry about whether I am normal.
- I AM developing my own sense of identity.
- I AM more interested in and influenced by my peer group than by the adults in my life.
- I MAY be moody, depressed, or anxious about academic or social issues in my life.
- I AM very focused on myself and may feel both high expectations and lack of confidence.
- I AM better able to express feelings through talking, but I tend to respond dramatically, feeling that no one else has ever experienced the same feelings and emotions.
- I DO NOT always exhibit the emotional maturity that matches my more adult-like appearance. I have trouble thinking before acting; sometimes I seem silly and unfocused on the task at hand.

## Effective Responses

- Provide emotional and spiritual support and encourage students to develop a strong sense of self as a valuable person created by God.
- Accept students as they are and avoid comparing them to others. Resist stereotyping. Not every tall boy is a basketball player.
- Generate an atmosphere of acceptance and love for all, demonstrating interest and care for each student.
- Create an atmosphere of mutual respect so youth feel they are part of a community.
- Help build genuine relationships by honestly sharing mistakes and life experiences.
- Help students talk through the ramifications of their choices without asking, How could you? What were you thinking?

- Avoid arguments by remaining calm and not engaging in banter over an issue.
- Be patient with the tendency of some youth toward constant personal grooming.

## Cognitive (Learning) Development

- I MAY be hesitant to try new things for fear of embarrassing myself in front of my peer group.
- I AM developing new thinking skills and am able to think about multiple options and possibilities.
- I CAN think more deeply and significantly about abstract ideas such as faith.
- I AM developing a stronger sense of right and wrong.
- I MAY be ready to take significant steps in areas of faith and Christian growth.

## Effective Instructional Methods

- Create an open and stress-free environment where youth can learn and share concerns in a confidence-building atmosphere.
- Provide background information, a purpose to the lesson, and understanding of the text.
- Combine love, high energy, enthusiasm, and seriousness with engaging ways to present the lesson.
- Use personal stories that illustrate Biblical principles to keep students engaged in learning.
- Provide honest answers to questions.
- Stimulate thinking in areas of salvation and Christian growth.
- Help Christians work through issues of assurance of salvation and to begin studying the Bible for daily decision making.
- Encourage students to articulate Biblical principles of right and wrong that they are learning from God's Word.
- Invite volunteers to look up and read aloud Bible passages. But don't put students on the spot or ask them to do things that make them feel foolish.

## SESSION 1

# GRAB YOUR BOOTS!

### Scripture Focus

Acts 17:1–10; 1 Thess. 1

### BuildUP Theme



INTERNALIZE GODLINESS

God expects us to show Christ in our character and actions.

### Measurable Response

The students will set godly examples for other believers.

### Memory Verse

“For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing” (1 Thess. 1:8).

## Teacher Preparation

- If a new believer had followed you during the past month, observing your Christian walk, what would the believer have learned about following Christ? Are there things you would have done differently if a new believer had been trying to learn from you?
- Read Acts 17:1–10. When Paul and his missionary partners planted the church in Thessalonica, they provided powerful examples of faithfulness even against opposition. Although the missionaries were forced out of the city, the new believers continued to imitate them and to imitate Christ.
- Near the end of his second missionary journey, Paul wrote two letters to the Thessalonian church. A common theme runs throughout both letters: hope in the return of Christ. The first letter encouraged the believers in their faithfulness under persecution and comforted them in their grief over loved ones who had died in Christ. Paul also offered practical advice on how to live while waiting for Christ’s return.
- Read 1 Thessalonians 1. Paul’s actions in Thessalonica reflected the transforming power of the gospel. The Word came to the Thessalonians with power through the Holy Spirit, and the Thessalonians became effective examples to other believers.
- As you study this course, challenge yourself to “boot up” and live with an anticipation of Christ’s any-moment return. Challenge your students to do the same. Use this session to help them realize the impact they can have on others as they live with an expectation of Christ’s coming.

## Cultural Barrier

This session addresses the false idea that truth is subjective. When Paul presented the gospel to the Thessalonians, both Jews and Gentiles believed. Their dramatic conversions and continued faithfulness during hardship proved the gospel is true. God’s Word brings real change because it is the truth. Any beliefs that are contrary to the gospel are false and powerless.



# Session Starters

## Option 1—Instrument Identification

### Gather

- Musical instrument sound effects from the internet (8 to 10).

### Steps

1. Before class, locate a website that has sound effects from a variety of musical instruments.
2. Play the instrument sound effects. Have students keep a list of the sound effects and check their answers after all the effects have been played. Or simply have them raise their hands when they think they know what it is. Call on students to share their guesses.
3. Talk about the sounds instruments make.

**ASK:** Which instruments do you like to listen to?

**ASK:** What instrument sound do you think best represents your life? Why?

4. Transition to the Bible lesson.

Paul compared the lives of Thessalonian believers to trumpets. They were living loudly, but in a good way. In this session will learn about the Thessalonian believers and what made their lives so noticeable. They provide a good example for us to follow.

## Option 2—Mimics

### Gather

- Slips of paper.

### Steps

1. Before class, write serving actions on slips of paper (e.g., helping to serve a meal at a homeless shelter; witnessing to a friend; caring for an injured friend; helping an elderly person; singing in the church choir).
2. Ask for a volunteer to choose a slip of paper and begin acting out the activity. As other students think they understand the action, they begin to act it out too. Each person who joins may simply copy the original person's actions, do their own version, or interact with others who are already acting. After several students have joined, or

after a minute, ask the volunteer to stop. Invite those who did not join to guess the action(s). Those who were acting can clarify their actions if necessary. As time allows, repeat the game with other students choosing a different slip of paper and beginning a different action.

3. Discuss the game.

**ASK:** How were you able to mimic what the actor was doing? *By watching carefully, by imagining what he or she might be doing, by imagining how I would do the same thing.*

**ASK:** Why were there differences in interpretation of the actions, if any?

**ASK:** What did the actions have in common? *They were all actions believers might participate in; they all showed works that flow out of our faith; they were all godly actions.*

4. Transition to the Bible lesson.

Unlike our game, no one had to guess about the faithful actions of the believers in Thessalonica. Their faith under persecution proved the genuineness of their salvation. As we begin our study on Paul's letters to the Thessalonians, we'll see how these believers imitated Paul's Christlike example, which led them to become examples for other believers.

## Bible Study

### Gather

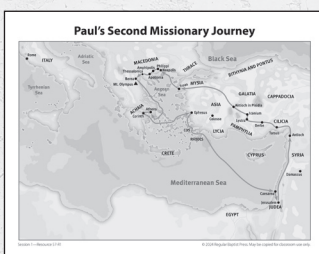
- Resources 57-R1 and 57-R2.
- Trumpet player or solo trumpet music from the internet.
- Video 1 from the DVD—"End-Time Events."
- End-times poster.

### I. Christlikeness Demonstrated (Acts 17:1–10)

#### A. Proclaiming Christ (17:1–4)

**DISPLAY:** Resource 57-R1. Point out the locations you mention during the lesson.

On his second missionary journey, while in **Troas**, Paul received a vision during the night of a man calling out, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!" Paul heeded the call and headed to the region of **Macedonia**, along with his co-workers, Silas, Timothy, and probably Luke (Acts 16:8–10).



57-R1



**READ:** Acts 17:1–4.

After establishing a church in **Philippi**, Paul went to **Thessalonica**. This major port city was the capital of Macedonia. It lay along an important Roman road called the Egnatian Way. The city was busy and heavily influenced by the pagan Greek culture of the day. Paul and his companions set out to preach Christ. They weren't interested in making a name for themselves. They wanted others to know Christ. Every believer should live in a way that proclaims Christ, not self (Phil. 1:20, 21).

**ASK:** What might be some clues that believers are focused on proclaiming Christ? *They talk about Christ a lot, protect their testimonies, admit when they are wrong, and show genuine concern for others.*

Paul followed his usual pattern of going to the synagogue (Jewish place of worship) to preach. For three Sabbath Days, he used the Scriptures to prove to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah and that He had to suffer and then rise from the dead. Paul persuaded some of the Jews, who then joined Paul and Silas and became associated with them. Many of the God-fearing Greeks, both men and women, believed the gospel as well. All these new believers joined together to form the Thessalonian church.

## **B. Changing the world (17:5–10)**

The unbelieving Jews in Thessalonica became jealous, perhaps over the number of new believers Paul had gained through his ministry. So the Jews began to stir up trouble against Paul and Silas. Seeking to bring the missionaries to trial, the Jews gathered a mob and stormed the house of Jason, where Paul and Silas had been staying (Acts 17:5).

**READ:** Acts 17:5, 6.

**ASK:** Why should we expect opposition when we live like Christ? *The world is opposed to Christ. Satan uses unbelievers to oppose Christians and undermine their service for Christ.*

When the mob found Paul and Silas were not there, they dragged Jason and some of the other believers to the authorities, claiming that these men had “turned the world upside down.” Christlike believers change the world by turning people to Christ. A new believer's life turns upside down. He has new loyalties, new friends, a new love, and a new mission. The gospel was changing people's actions and attitudes and giving them a new identity.

**ASK:** What “changes” does the world call teens to make? *Make the world safer by going green; make people feel accepted by approving their sinful lifestyles; make sacrifices for the greater good.*

Teens who “go green” won't change the world in a meaningful way.

Turning the world on its head begins by dedicating oneself to sharing and showing Christ. Christ works through dedicated believers to bring radical change to people's lives.

**READ:** Acts 17:7–9.

Because Paul's team taught that there was "another king," the Jews accused the believers and Paul and Silas of treason against Rome. The authorities took money from Jason and the others as a "guarantee" they would cause no more disruptions due to Paul's preaching. Then they let them go.

The Jews would, no doubt, stir up more trouble, so the believers sent Paul and Silas to **Berea** that night to protect them (17:10).

## **II. Christlikeness Began (1 Thess. 1:1–5)**

Later, Paul sent Timothy to check on the new believers in Thessalonica. Timothy returned with an encouraging report. First Thessalonians is Paul's response. Paul probably wrote both letters from **Corinth**, near the end of his second missionary journey.

### **A. The evidence (1:1–3)**

**READ:** 1 Thessalonians 1:1.

Since Paul, Silas (Silvanus), and Timothy ministered together in Thessalonica and shared the same concerns about the new believers there. Paul listed them as senders of his letter.

Paul emphasized the Thessalonians' new standing "in God" and in "Christ" as opposed to those around them who were in the *world* and in *sin*. Through Christ, the believers had become children of God the Father and had entered a life-changing relationship with Him.

Paul wished the Thessalonians grace (God's favor and help) and peace, a greeting he used in his letters. The Thessalonians, who were in the middle of persecution and unease, needed God's supporting help and peace.

**READ:** 1 Thessalonians 1:2, 3.

Paul thanked God for the new believers in Thessalonica and felt compelled to pray for them every time he thought of them. Paul's prayer included evidence that the Thessalonians had trusted in Christ as their Savior. Those who put their faith in Christ will be noticeably different from the world.

First, Paul noticed the Thessalonians' work of faith. He did not mean they had gained salvation through works. Rather, their strong faith and belief had led them to do good works. Their works were evidence of their faith and of their thankfulness for salvation (Eph. 2:8–10; James 2:17, 18).

Second, Paul said the Thessalonians had labored in love. God's love working in their hearts overflowed to those around them. By labor Paul meant hard work to the point of exhaustion or even against opposition. The new believers in Thessalonica had labored to show God's love through their service to others. Only those filled with the love of Christ would selflessly serve Him when facing dangerous and troubling times.

**ASK:** What opportunities do you have to work to exhaustion for Christ?

Third, Paul was thankful for the Thessalonians' constant hope. Their "hope" was a deep expectation that Christ would return for them. Bravely, they had continued serving God even under persecution, knowing that their time to serve Christ might end at any moment. Their hope drove them to use their time wisely, buying up opportunities to serve the Lord while they could.

**ASK:** What does God expect out of teens? Does He care if you buy up opportunities to serve Him?

## **B. The election (1:4)**

**READ:** 1 Thessalonians 1:4.

The Thessalonians' faith, love, and hope revealed they were true believers. These qualities served as evidence that God had elected, or chosen, them for salvation. The truth that God ultimately works in people to draw them to Himself so that they respond to Him in faith should encourage us to be faithful witnesses. Election should never be used as an excuse not to witness. The Bible is clear that God has chosen to use believers to share the gospel (Matt. 28:19, 20; Rom. 10:14, 15).

We know from other passages that God loves the world and doesn't want anyone to die without trusting Christ (John 3:16; 2 Pet. 3:9). God's love motivates Him to choose some to salvation, including the Thessalonians. So Paul added that God elected the Thessalonians because they were loved by God.

**ASK:** On what basis does God elect some to salvation? *Based on His grace. No one deserves salvation nor merits it more than anyone else (Eph. 2:8, 9).*

## **C. The empowerment (1:5)**

**READ:** 1 Thessalonians 1:5.

Paul depended on the Holy Spirit to empower and guide his preaching. And he counted on the Holy Spirit to work in the lives of those who heard the gospel. The Spirit had convicted the Thessalonians of their sin and changed them when they put their faith in Christ.



Paul preached with assurance that the Holy Spirit would work in hearts. Some Thessalonians responded by putting their faith in Christ.

Paul added that as he shared the gospel with the Thessalonians, he and Silas were living testimonies of the Spirit's power. The missionaries had been beaten in Philippi before arriving in Thessalonica (Acts 16:22, 23). Their confident and enthusiastic preaching despite their wounds and bruises provided strong evidence of the Spirit's power.

**ASK:** Does how you act affect what people think of the gospel? Explain.

### **III. Christlikeness Trumpeted (1 Thess. 1:6–10)**

#### **A. Walking by the Spirit (1:6–8)**

The Thessalonians imitated Paul's example of responding to persecution joyfully and faithfully by the Spirit's power.

**READ:** 1 Thessalonians 1:6–8.

The Thessalonians' lives had become examples for believers in Thessalonica, in the region of Macedonia, and then beyond to the region of **Achaia**. They were walking by the Spirit, and it showed. People began talking about it, noticing there was something unusual going on.

Paul wrote that the Thessalonians' testimony had "sounded" out the word of the Lord. The "sound" was like a trumpet blast.

**ACTIVITY:** Invite a trumpet player to play a few notes. Or play the sound of a trumpet using your phone with the volume turned up. Note the attention the trumpet attracts.

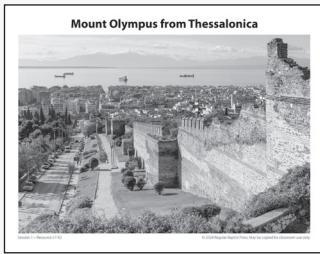
**ASK:** Why do you think Paul compared the Thessalonians' example to a trumpet blast? *Actions consistent with the gospel often sound out louder, clearer messages than words alone.*

All believers have the Holy Spirit and the opportunity to be a "trumpet blast" in their worlds.

#### **B. Worshiping God (1:9)**

**READ:** 1 Thessalonians 1:9.

People in surrounding areas continued to report the faith of the Thessalonians, and Paul had heard reports of their faith as well. They made a dramatic change from the worship of false gods to the worship of the true, living God. The false gods included the Greek pantheon of Olympian gods. The region of Macedonia was named after Makedon, the son of Zeus. Mount Olympus can be seen from Thessalonica.



57-R2

**DISPLAY:** Resource 57-R2. Note Mount Olympus in the distance as viewed from Thessalonica.

The Thessalonians' "turn" to God was final. They didn't add God to their worship of false gods. They worshiped Him exclusively. Like the Thessalonians' worship, our worship of God should be obvious to the world.

### C. Waiting for Christ (1:10)

**READ:** 1 Thessalonians 1:10.

The Thessalonians waited for Christ's return. That doesn't mean they sat around. It means they anticipated it and looked forward to it. It motivated them and carried them through when they experienced persecution. They knew their suffering wouldn't last. God has raised Jesus from the dead, and Jesus had promised His followers that He will come again. In the meantime, they served their living Savior Who had already delivered them from sin and would deliver them from God's coming wrath.

**DISPLAY:** End-time Events poster. Point out the Rapture of living believers from the Church Age, the Tribulation, and the Great White Throne Judgment along the timeline.

**VIDEO:** Show video 1 ("End-Time Events") as a good overall presentation of the major end-time events. Consider showing the video later in the course as needed as a review.

At the Rapture Christ will remove all believers from the earth and take them to Heaven. Shortly after the Rapture, the Tribulation will begin on earth. During the Tribulation, God will pour out His wrath on unbelievers. God's coming wrath also includes His condemnation of unbelievers to the Lake of Fire. That will happen at the Great White Throne Judgment just before eternity begins.

**ASK:** How should Christ's any-moment return affect our daily lives? *It should give us comfort and encouragement in our trials and motivation to live each day trying to please Him.*

Christ didn't come back in the days of the Thessalonians, but that doesn't mean they were foolish to wait for His return. Christ's any-moment return should be on our minds every day. It should motivate us to boot up and serve the Lord.

## Memory Builder

### Gather

- Whiteboard and marker.

## Steps

1. Write 1 Thessalonians 1:8 on the board and review its meaning.

The Thessalonian believers looked to Paul and Silas as their examples of true followers of Christ. Soon they too became examples for others. Their faithful service for God spoke more powerfully than their words. News of their faith spread throughout their region of Macedonia and beyond. Their faith had become so well known that Paul didn't need to encourage them to share their faith with others.

2. Read the verse together as a class, replacing "Macedonia" with the name of your church's county and Achaia with the name of your state. Discuss how your class and church have been an example and how they can be an example in the future.

**ASK:** In what ways can we as a class, youth group, or church sound forth a more effective witness in the community and beyond?

3. Invite a student to lead the class in practicing the verse. The leader calls out the verse in phrases using various voices (high-pitched, low-pitched, excited). The rest of the class repeats each phrase after the leader, mimicking him or her as closely as possible. Repeat with different leaders as time allows.
4. Erase parts of the verse and invite volunteers to recite it from memory.

## Session Application

### Gather

- Play-Doh.

### Steps

1. Review the lesson.

Paul and Silas established the church in Thessalonica during Paul's second missionary journey. Persecutors soon chased them out of town. Later, Paul sent Timothy to check on the new believers. When Timothy returned with a good report, Paul responded with his first letter. He encouraged the new believers by thanking God for their evidence of faith. He praised them for following the Christlike example he and Silas had set for them and for becoming examples themselves. News of the believers' life-changing faith spread as they continued living for Christ and waiting for His return.

2. Discuss spiritual examples in the lives of your students and ways your students can become examples.



**ASK:** What characteristics should a believer demonstrate if that person wants to present a Christlike example? *Consistency in faithfulness to the church, service to others, love, kindness, purity, forgiveness.*

**ASK:** Think of someone who has become an example for you. For what reasons would you model that person's life?

**ASK:** In what specific ways can students become spiritual examples for other believers? *Participation in church activities, refusal to engage in gossip or other destructive speech, willingness to serve those that others might shun, showing kindness to younger students who look up to them.*

3. Distribute lumps of Play-Doh.

Shape your Play-Doh into an object that either represents a person who has been an example for you or represents how you hope to be a model for other believers. For example, a football or other sports object might represent a godly coach. A pair of glasses might show that you want to set an example of keeping your eyes on Christ.

4. Allow students to share and explain their models.

## Session Takeaways

Before dismissing the students, draw their attention to the Time with God page in their student books. Instruct them to complete the study on their own. The activity will challenge them to become good examples of living for Christ.