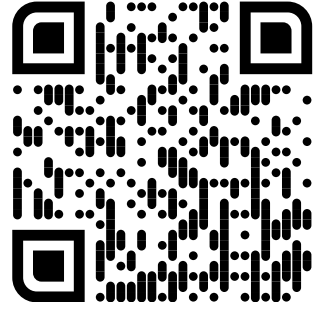


Imago Dei Church Bible Reading Plan



As a church, we are taking 2024 to dig deeper into books of the Bible, slowly reading them over the course of a month. Each month, you'll get a handout like this with background info and a breakdown of the book, along with example questions to help you study the Bible deeper.

Galatians and 1 Thessalonians

April

● Historical Context

Who wrote this book? Paul wrote both of these books.

When was it written? Galatians and 1 Thessalonians are Paul's first two letters. Paul was converted around AD 33-34 and he was martyred around AD 64-67. Galatians was written in AD 48 and 1 Thessalonians was written in around AD 49-51.

To whom was it written? **Galatians:** This letter was written to churches in the Roman province of Galatia.

1 Thessalonians: Paul wrote this letter to the church in Thessalonica, the capital city of Macedonia. Paul and his companions had established the church in Thessalonica but were forced to leave by opponents of the gospel.

Why was it written? **Galatians:** False teachers were trying to force the Galatians to follow the Old Testament Jewish law of circumcision in order to be Christians. As a result, there was division within their church.

Paul wrote this letter to refute this false teaching and call believers back to believe in the simple truth of the gospel and live their lives in the power and guidance of the Spirit, not the law.

1 Thessalonians: Paul received a report from Timothy about the Thessalonian church. Paul writes to them to restore their hope, which has been tested by unexpected deaths in the church.

The main theme is Jesus' second coming. That those who are dead who believed in Christ will be brought back to life with Him when He returns. In addition, in preparation for that great day, Christians are called to be holy and blameless.

● — Literary Context —————

In what literary style was this book written?



Epistles

These two books are epistles - letters written by apostles to the early churches intended to be read aloud in their assembly.

Where does this book fit into the big, Gospel story? (*Creation, Fall, Redemption, Restoration*)

In Galatians Paul primarily speaks of the redemption that we find in Jesus alone. He reminds the church that we are justified by faith, not works, and ends the letter by calling believers to live their lives led by the Spirit as new creations in Christ.

In 1 Thessalonians Paul reminds the church of their future hope when Christ returns and their lives are resurrected with Him. He encourages the believers to pursue sanctification (holy living) in light of their future reality. The purpose of salvation is to restore humanity to life with God - to dwell with Him forever and reflect his image.

How does this book of the Bible point to the Rule and Reign of God?

Galatians: You see that God is the giver of life, the giver of the law, and giver of the fulfillment of the law (by providing Jesus). God is the one who saves, not man.

1 Thessalonians: This letter tells that Christ's kingdom will forever reign and not even death can thwart it. As Christians we live our lives now as citizens of that kingdom.

Calendar

1

Galatians 1-6

What themes do you notice in this book?

2

Galatians 1:1-10

Why is Paul "astonished" (v.6)? What repetitions do you see? What similarities do you notice about verse 1 and 10? Why is Paul writing this letter to the church in Galatia?

3

Galatians 1:11-24

Who shared the gospel with Paul? Who commissioned Paul to share the gospel?

4

Galatians 2:1-10

How did the apostles respond to Paul?

5

Galatians 2:11-21

Why did Paul "oppose" Peter? Paul mentions the "truth of the gospel" twice, What is the truth of the gospel? (use v15-21 to answer) Define "justified."

6

Galatians 3:1-14

What is Paul's point in bringing Abraham up? Why is he significant? If we "rely on works of the law" for salvation what will the result be? (v.10-14)

7

Galatians 3:15-29

What was the purpose of the law?

8

Galatians 4:1-7

Why doesn't the law serve a purpose any more? What has changed? How are we (as believers in Jesus) changed?

9

Galatians 4:8-20

How is following the law the same as following the "elementary principle(s) of the world" of pagan worship? What does Paul mean by saying that they are "turning back" to their old ways?

10

Galatians 4:21-31

What is the allegory Paul is trying to communicate? How did each birth come about? How is this a picture of the false and true way to find salvation? (Use Genesis 16, 18:1-15, and 21:1-17 if you are unfamiliar with their stories)

11

Galatians 5:1-15

What leads to slavery? Where do we find freedom? What is the purpose of our freedom?

12

Galatians 5:16-26

In calling the Galatian Christians to "walk by the spirit" (v.16) is Paul contradicting himself and setting a "law" before them to follow? Why or why not? What is the significance of the word "fruit" in v.22?

13

Galatians 6:1-10

What is Paul warning the Galatian believers to avoid when he says "do not be deceived?"

Calendar

14

Galatians 6:11-18

What is "new creation" (v.15)? Look back to 5:6 to help you answer. How does seeing v.12-13 help you understand what new creation is *not*?

15

Galatians 1-6

What is the big idea of this book? Can you write or think of a chunky, run-on sentence to summarize it?

16

1 Thess. 1-5

What themes do you notice in this book?

17

1 Thess. 1:1-10

What did Paul think about this church? What did other churches think about this church? What were the characteristics of this group of believers?

18

1 Thess. 2:1-20

How would you describe Paul's ministry? What was his character like? What was his aim for them?

19

1 Thess. 3:1-5

Paul writes that Christians are "destined" for affliction (v.3). What is the danger for Christians when they encounter afflictions? Why was Paul concerned?

20

1 Thess. 3:6-13

How was the church responding to affliction? What is Paul's ultimate desire for the church in the midst of their pain? (v.11-13)

21

1 Thess. 4:1-12

What is God's will for our lives? Why is it important that we pursue this? (use the passage to answer this question, not your own opinion or prior knowledge)

22

1 Thess. 4:13-18

What is our "hope" (v.13) in the face of death?

23

1 Thess. 5:1-11

How does 1 Thess. 4:16-17 help you understand what "the day of the Lord" is in 5:2?

As "children of light" (v.5), what key characteristics are we called to live in as we wait and prepare for that future reality?

24

1 Thess. 5:12-28

What is Paul's final prayer for this church in the midst of their affliction? Who does the work of sanctification?

25

1 Thess. 1-5

What is the big idea of this book? Can you write or think of a chunky, run-on sentence to summarize it?