



# Study Guide

## Lesson 4

### “How To Grow The Church”

It was not easy to be a Christian in Thessalonica where believers faced persecution and suffering. Their situation explains Paul’s choice of words: *affliction* (1 Thes. 1:6; 3:3), which means “pressure from circumstances”; *suffered* (1 Thes. 2:14), the same word used for our Lord’s sufferings; *persecuted* (1 Thes. 2:15), meaning “driven out and rejected”; *contrary* (1 Thes. 2:15), used of winds that blow against and hinder progress; and *hindered* (1 Thes. 2:18), which pictures a road so broken up that travel is blocked.

Yet in the midst of suffering, the Thessalonian Christians experienced joy. They received Paul’s ministry of the Word “in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit” (1 Thes. 1:6). Paul certainly was burdened for his brethren who were going through suffering, and yet he also had joy (1 Thes. 2:19–20). It was a fulfillment of our Lord’s promise, “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

Churches do experience “growing pains” as they seek to win the lost and glorify the Lord. We may not experience the same kind of political and religious persecution that the early Christians suffered (though in some parts of the world today the persecution is just as intense as it was then). Yet if we are living “godly in Christ Jesus,” we will suffer for His sake (2 Tim. 3:12). In this paragraph, Paul explained the divine resources we have in times of suffering and persecution.

#### **God’s Word Within Us                      2:13**

1. They Appreciated The Word. The Thessalonians accepted the words Paul preached as words of \_\_\_\_\_, not words of \_\_\_\_\_.                      2:13
2. They Appropriated The Word. Two words are used in the Thessalonians reception of the words of God. One means the hearing of the \_\_\_\_\_ the other the hearing of the \_\_\_\_\_                      2:13
3. They Applied The Word    The word of God within us is a great source of \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 1:16).                      2:13

#### **God’s People Around Us                      2:14-16**

1. Most of the early persecution of the church came at the hands of the \_\_\_\_\_ leaders. (Acts 17:5, 13).
2. The wrath of God came upon the Jews because they “displease \_\_\_\_\_ and are hostile to all men in their effort to keep us from speaking to the \_\_\_\_\_ so that they may be saved. 2:16
3. Remember when you face trials, you will not be facing them alone.

#### **God’s Glory Before Us                      2:17-20**

1. Paul uses two phrases to show how much he loved the Thessalonians: \_\_\_\_\_ (2:17) and \_\_\_\_\_ (2:20).
2. Paul would not dwell on the past but looked to the future when he and the Thessalonians would see one another again. Who had stopped them from that homecoming so far? \_\_\_\_\_ (2:18)
3. Paul will glory in the presence of the Lord because of the \_\_\_\_\_ brethren (2:20).