



INTRODUCTION

Paul writes his second letter to the church of the Thessalonians. In doing so, he tells them how thankful to God he is that they are growing in faith and love in the middle of suffering. In fact, their steadfast faith in affliction is purifying them even more.

INSTRUCTIONS

This guide is meant to facilitate discussion which will lead to a response to God's word. Therefore please use it as a tool that best fits the needs of your small group.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What was the most interesting idea/concept about Sunday's sermon?
- How does the story of Eulalia impact you?

REVIEW

- Have someone read **2 Thess 1:1-5**.
- Why does Paul write the "church" and not to the "Christians?" Is there a difference?
- How does grace lead to peace?
- What is the connection between faith and love? Does one lead to the other? Discuss.
- What difference do you see between persecution and affliction (**v4**)?
- Why does persecution and affliction always follow the gospel?
- How do trials test the authenticity of faith (**v4-5**)?
- What does he mean by "worthy" of the kingdom of God (**v5**)?

APPLICATION

- What role does the return of Christ play in your life? Does it help you when you face ridicule or loss for the sake of Jesus? Why or why not?
- The Thessalonians faith and love is "growing abundantly." Is yours? Why or why not?
- What are some ways Christians are persecuted or afflicted in America? Do you see things changing? How so? How can we think biblically about those coming changes?
- How does this passage challenge the way you view the presence of pain in your life? What can affliction and pain teach you about how God deals with those He loves?
- What has following Christ cost you?
- God's priority is your holiness over health. Is that your priority? Why or why not?
- How has suffering in your life made you "worthy of the kingdom of God" (**v5**)?

PRAYER (divide the group based on gender if desired)

- What action/repentance does God want you to take according to the truths of this text?
- Are there any other prayer needs?