

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

*Worshipping Together* is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. [frankstonrp.org.au](http://frankstonrp.org.au) [bit.ly/WTrpcaf](http://bit.ly/WTrpcaf)

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. [airdrierpcs.org](http://airdrierpcs.org)

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. [bit.ly/WkBbl](http://bit.ly/WkBbl) or [bit.ly/3yrBbl](http://bit.ly/3yrBbl)

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries on commentaries on 2 Thessalonians by John Calvin, William Hendriksen, Ian McNaughton, and notes from the HCSB Study Bible, and the Reformation Study Bible

# Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

*The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.*



*If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men\* should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father\* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

*Read, pray, repeat.*

\* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested, a godly mother will lead her children

**Reading** 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2 Pray for us

**Notes** (See back page for authors)  
As Paul concludes this 2<sup>nd</sup> letter to the young church at Thessalonica, he asks them to pray. “Pray for us” – Paul, Silas, and Timothy (1:1). What can we learn from this request for prayer?

First, note that it was not primarily for personal needs. Instead Paul asked them to pray for the gospel work in which he was involved (in Corinth). Paul often uses images from the races and does so here. Pray that the word will race – that it will run quickly (spread rapidly) and that it will win the race and so be honoured as the victor. How would this be evident? By people believing the gospel as the Thessalonians had. (Acts 17:1-4)

Do we pray like this? We should. Let’s ask God to cause others to come to faith and repentance as we have. Think about your own conversion – maybe it was through preaching at church or special meetings, or a pastor speaking the gospel privately to you; maybe it was through your parents sharing the gospel with you and modelling the Christian life of faith and repentance; maybe it was a friend sharing Christ. Pray that the gospel message will run rapidly and be honoured as God brings people to the faith He brought you to.

- Questions** (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. Why do we need to pray for ministers and missionaries?
  2. What should we pray for gospel work?
  3. How did you come to believe the gospel?
  4.     

- Praise Pray** Psalm 119a<sup>2</sup>
1. Pray God may bring others to believe as He did you
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

<sup>1</sup> You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord’s Day you review the previous week’s readings and/or the previous or current week’s sermons and pray together

<sup>2</sup> Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

**Reading** 2 Thessalonians 3:16-18 Peace and Grace

**Notes** (All the notes today are from Ian McNaughton)  
*These last words from Paul sum up his thoughts and reveal his understanding of the needs of the church at Thessalonica.*  
*Here Paul speaks of ‘the Lord of peace’...our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ... The Lord the Thessalonian believers serve is the Lord of peace and, whatever their lot in this fallen world, they are to receive ‘the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding’, which will guard their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:7). Paul prays for such peace to be known experientially by all the believers in Thessalonica.*

*The blessing of Christian peace is...a given peace, and is promised as a permanent (subjective) peace, felt always and in every way. Paul’s hope is that they will know the continual calmness of spiritual peace, whether in persecution or suffering, and with every turning life demands. The source of this present and constant peace is the ‘Lord’ himself...This peace comes independently of outward circumstances and reigns in the hearts of all who trust God’s grace as faith is exercised (Ps. 46:10–11).*

*Only by the grace that comes through Jesus Christ can the Christian be kept from evil until the day of the Second Coming. In this final sentence, the apostle calls for the believers in Thessalonica to look away from themselves and look back to Christ.*

- Questions** (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. Where does peace come from?
  2. Where does grace come from?
  3. How can believers experience grace and peace?
  4.     

- Praise Pray** Psalm 119a
1. Pray that you and your family will know and share the peace and grace of God
  2. Pray for your family
  3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
  4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God’s word tomorrow

**Reading** 2 Thessalonians 3:12-15 (6-15) Don't grow weary in doing good

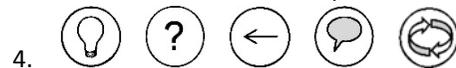
**Notes** Paul now repeats his command that Christians are to work faithfully and quietly. As a result, they will have food to eat. As McNaughton notes, *we were created to work (Gen. 1:28; 2:15), so idleness is not what God has planned for humanity. It is, therefore, sinful to be idle when one could be at work earning a living, unless one is unwell or disabled.*

(See back page for authors)

It won't always be easy, in this fallen world. Work is hard. We'll get tired. But we are not to grow weary in doing good. Our faithful God will reward us for our faithfulness (Gal 6:9) which His strengthening (v3) motivates and enables.

Then Paul concludes with repeating his instruction that the church is to respond to those who sin. Church discipline is sometimes viewed with suspicion, but Jesus has clearly entrusted His church with such duty (see Matt 18). The ones who refuse to obey are not to be treated as if all is well. Instead, the church is to withdraw intimate fellowship from them. Why would the church do such a thing? Hendriksen comments that *clearly this purpose is reformatory. It springs from love, from the desire to heal, not from the desire to get rid of an individual whom one does not happen to favor.* Calvin notes that it is so *that those who have sinned may by shame be constrained to repentance.*

- Questions** (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. How are Christians to live our lives?
  2. Will that be easy? Why or why not?
  3. How must the church respond to disobedient members?



**Praise** Psalm 119a

- Pray**
1. Pray that you and your church will do good with His energy
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

**Reading** 2 Thessalonians 3:3-5 The Lord is faithful

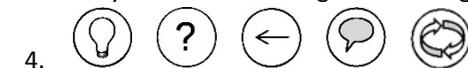
**Notes** Even though the Thessalonians had come to faith, not all have faith (v2). In contrast with these unfaithful people, God is faithful. And this faithful God is for them – on their side!

(See back page for authors)

As Hendriksen notes, *by a very natural transition Paul, having dwelt for a moment upon the theme of his own conflict at Corinth, returns to the very similar battle which the Thessalonians are waging. Inwardly the young, struggling church is in need of strengthening. Outwardly—for Satan is surely an outsider!—it needs to be guarded. Paul now assures the readers that what he had wished with respect to them (see on 2:16, 17) will also come to pass. They will be both “encouraged and strengthened” (2:16, 17) or, as the apostle now expresses it “the Lord will both strengthen and guard” them. This guarding will prevent the Thessalonian believers from falling into the snares of the evil one, such as fanaticism, loafing, meddlesomeness, neglect of duty, defeatism (see verses 5–8).*

It was his confidence in God's faithful work in these believers that gave him confidence they would obey his commands – commands that he gave, not in himself, but in the Lord (v.6) We tend not to like being told/commanded what to do. But God, in His faithfulness, bring us to understand that His commands are not a burden (1 Jn 5:3). His work in our hearts (His love and Christ's endurance) enables us to obey Him – and makes us want to obey Him.

- Questions** (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. What does God do in His faithfulness for these believers & us?
  2. What do we know about God's commands?
  3. Why do we need strengthened and guarded from the Evil One?



**Praise** Psalm 119a

- Pray**
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to obey God's commands, with His help.
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

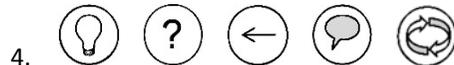
**Reading** 2 Thessalonians 3:6 (6-15) Withdrawing fellowship

**Notes**  
(See back page for authors)  
Paul now gives direct instructions to the church – commanding them in Jesus’ name. This command had to do with some of the Christians in Thessalonica being unfaithful. It may be that the false claim (deceitfully claimed to be Paul’s own message) that the Lord’s return had already come (2:1-2) had led some, as McNaughton notes, to *draw the wrong conclusions and were now living in a way that was bringing dishonour to Christ and his church. As a result, they were walking ‘disorderly and not according to the tradition which [they] received from us’ (v. 6).*

The rest of the church was to respond to this unfaithfulness. While we may think it is no one else’s business how we live our lives the Bible makes clear that is a wrong idea. Each local church collectively has a responsibility for each individual member within it. Such responsibility is never in the terms of “you’re not measuring up to my standards,” but “God, who is faithful, has called you and me, in Jesus, to a higher standard.”

When one in the church is clearly living irresponsibly against God’s standard, the church is to withdraw some measure of fellowship. As Hendriksen comments, *when admonition does not succeed, segregation must be resorted to, at least to a limited extent...the rest of the congregation should not “get mixed up with him” (verse 14), that is, should not associate with such a person on intimate terms, agreeing with him and following his example.*

- Questions**  
(see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. Is Paul’s instruction in v6 and following optional? Why/not?
  2. How is the church to respond to unfaithful members?
  3. Why should it matter to the church how we live our lives?



**Praise** Psalm 119a

- Pray**
1. Pray that you will live faithfully within Christ’s church
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

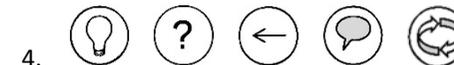
**Reading** 2 Thessalonians 3:7-11 (6-15) Working and eating

**Notes**  
(See back page for authors)  
In these verses Paul gives addresses the irresponsible behaviour of some of the believers. Rather than being faithful, as God is, some were, as Hendriksen translates v11b, *“not busy workers but busybodies.”* As Hendriksen continues, *these persons—there were some, not many—laying down their tools, running from one “brother” to another with fantastic stories about Christ’s immediate Return—the “day” had already arrived!—making extravagant claims for the truthfulness of their thrilling tales, returning home without the day’s wages to buy food, then attempting to sponge on others or even on “the benevolence-fund” of the church, meddling in the affairs of the authorities, etc.*

This behaviour was at odds with God’s faithfulness, with Paul’s instruction (v10, 12) and with his own example to them (v7-9). Paul had even, as he often did, refused a legitimate salary from the church as he laboured in the Word among them.

For the pious (?) sluggard who does not want to work, Hendriksen notes, *the command which Paul, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, was constantly issuing was this, “Do not permit such a person to eat,” that is, “Do not supply his material needs.” If he refuses to work, let him go hungry. That may teach him a lesson. Paul keeps perfect balance. While, on the one hand his heart goes out to those who are really in need...on the other hand he has no sympathy whatever with the attitude of people who refuse to do an honest day’s work.*

- Questions**  
(see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. What was the irresponsible behaviour of some in the church?
  2. How had Paul modelled faithfulness among them?
  3. What should be the result of unwillingness to work?



**Praise** Psalm 119a

- Pray**
1. Ask God to make and keep you a faithful worker
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member