

“FOR ALL OF YOU ARE CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT”

The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians

Who wrote The Letters to the Thessalonians?

The Letters to the Thessalonians were written by the Apostle Paul.

How did The Letters to the Thessalonians get their names and/or what do their names mean?

The Letters to the Thessalonians were named for the Church established in Thessalonica.

When did these events take place?

The First Letter to the Thessalonians was written around 51 A.D. The second letter followed soon after that. However, some scholars speculate that the Second letter may have been written after Paul's death (even as late as the year 90 A.D.) by a disciple using Paul's name to give it credibility.

For more about The Letters to the Thessalonians:

See pages 1298 and 1302 in the [Fireside Catholic Youth Bible](#).

Under normal circumstances, when you turn the ignition in your car, you have every reason to believe that the engine will start. When you flip on a light switch, you have every reason to believe that the light will come on. When you dial your home phone number, you have every reason to believe someone in your house will answer. You have faith that these things will happen because you have seen them happen before – so many times that you probably don't even think about them when they do.

But what about the things you can't see? Do you have the same confidence in them? Have you ever noticed that it is easier to doubt the things you cannot see or that the faith in the unseen is often the first faith we lose? In 51 A.D., false teachers took advantage of this tendency among members of the early church in Thessalonica. They spread false doctrine that made the people doubt their faith in things they could not see or prove by existence. Specifically, they suggested that Christ had already returned to earth in His second coming. They taught that Jesus' promise to return to them had already been fulfilled. They even circulated a letter among the people that was attributed to Paul and his disciples supposedly containing this false teaching.

When Paul got word of this, he wrote the Thessalonians that they should trust in their faith as it was first taught them by the disciples. He assured them that Christ had not yet come back. Remember, most people believed that Jesus was going to come back in their lifetimes. Because of this, many of the people did not fully understand the death of their loved ones. Because of this, especially in his first letter to the Thessalonians, Paul reminded the people that those who have “fallen asleep” in Christ are still joined with Him, even though they are not “in the flesh.” Paul encourages the church to keep the faith in things they cannot see, namely that those that have died before will one day be raised up through the power of Jesus.

We are reminded in The Letters to the Thessalonians of the importance of prayer for the dead as well as how important it is for all of us to be ready at any time for the day we will die. That's why it is so important for us to live in the state of grace and as Christ-like as possible every day.

Interesting Fact: Paul called everyone who believed in Jesus “Children of the Light.”

Bonus Point: At the beginning of Paul's second missionary journey, who did he choose as his traveling companion?