

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2026**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—
FIRST AND SECOND THESSALONIANS**

Message Five

The Church Being the Embodiment of the Triune God

Scripture Reading: 1 Thes. 1:1a; 2 Thes. 1:1; 1 John 1:1-2; 2:23-24; 2 John 9

I. “To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ”—1 Thes. 1:1a:

- A. First and 2 Thessalonians were addressed to the local church in Thessalonica, composed of all the believers in Christ in that city.
- B. Such a local church is of the believers and is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
 - 1. This indicates that a local church is born of God the Father with His life and nature and is united with the Lord Jesus Christ organically in all that He is and has done.
 - 2. It is of men (such as the Thessalonians), yet is in God and in the Lord organically.
 - 3. This organic union in the divine life and nature is the vital base for the believers to live a holy life for the church life; such a living is the theme of the two Epistles.

II. We are blessed to see that the church is the embodiment of the Triune God—John 1:12-13; 1 John 5:11-12; 2 Pet. 1:4:

- A. We are in the church, which is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ—1 Thes. 1:1.
- B. Now we are being transformed into the image of the Triune God and conformed to this image to be in reality and practicality the embodiment of the Triune God, having the Father as our element, the Son as our form, and the Spirit as our expression, shining the glory of the Triune God to the universe—Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18.
- C. This is the church filled with the Triune God—2 Thes. 1:1.

III. The Triune God is the structure of the New Testament:

- A. “If *I*, by the *Spirit of God*, cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you”—Matt. 12:28.
- B. “Baptizing them into the name of the *Father* and of the *Son* and of the *Holy Spirit*”—28:19.
- C. “The *Comforter*, the *Holy Spirit*, whom the *Father* will send in *My* name, *He* will teach you all things and remind you of all the things which *I* have said to you”—John 14:26.
- D. “When the *Comforter* comes, whom *I* will send to you from the *Father*, the *Spirit of reality*, who proceeds from the *Father*, *He* will testify concerning *Me*”—15:26.

- E. "Having been exalted to the right hand of *God* and having received the promise of the *Holy Spirit* from the *Father*, *He* has poured out this which you both see and hear"—Acts 2:33.
- F. "If the *Spirit* of the *One* who raised *Jesus* from the dead dwells in you, *He* who raised *Christ* from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through *His Spirit* who indwells you"—Rom. 8:11.
- G. "*God* has sent forth the *Spirit* of *His Son* into our hearts, crying, *Abba, Father!*"—Gal. 4:6.
- H. "That *He* would grant you, according to the riches of *His* glory, to be strengthened with power through *His Spirit* into the inner man, that *Christ* may make *His* home in your hearts through faith"—Eph. 3:16-17a.
- I. "One Body and one *Spirit*...one *Lord*...one *God and Father*"—4:4-6.
- J. "How much more will the blood of *Christ*, who through the eternal *Spirit* offered *Himself* without blemish to *God*, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living *God*?"—Heb. 9:14.
- K. "Chosen according to the foreknowledge of *God the Father* in the sanctification of the *Spirit* unto the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of *Jesus Christ*"—1 Pet. 1:2.
- L. "Grace to you and peace from *Him* who is and who was and who is coming, and from the *seven Spirits* who are before *His* throne, and from *Jesus Christ*, the faithful *Witness*, the *Firstborn* of the dead, and the *Ruler* of the kings of the earth"—Rev. 1:4-5a.

IV. The Epistles of John reveal the Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—1 John 1:1-2; 2:23-24; 3:24; 4:2, 6, 13-14; 5:6, 11-12; 2 John 9:

- A. To know God as the Father is to know Him as the source, the unique Initiator, the One who plans, originates, and initiates; everything originates with Him, and everything proceeds from Him—1 John 1:2-3; 2:13, 15; 3:1; 4:14; Matt. 15:13; Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 3:14-16:
 - 1. The Father is the source of the eternal life; from Him and with Him the Son was manifested as the expression of the eternal life for the people of the Father's choice to partake of and enjoy—1 John 1:2-3; 5:11-12.
 - 2. The title *Father* refers to the impartation of life; through Christ's resurrection the Father imparts His life to His children—3:1; 1 Pet. 1:3.
- B. In 1 John 1:1-2 both *the Word of life* and *life* denote the divine person of Christ the Son, who was with the Father in eternity and was manifested in time through incarnation—John 1:1, 14:
 - 1. Christ the Son is the eternal, preexisting One who is from the beginning—1 John 2:13a, 14a.
 - 2. The Son of God was manifested, that He might undo and destroy the works, the sinful deeds, of the devil—3:8b.
 - 3. God sent His Son as a propitiation for our sins—4:10:
 - a. Christ is the sacrifice for our propitiation before God—2:2.
 - b. The Lord Jesus Christ offered Himself to God as a sacrifice for our sins (Heb. 9:28), not only for our redemption but also for the satisfying of God's demand, thus appeasing the relationship between us and God.
 - 4. God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might have life and live through Him—1 John 4:9:

- a. The Son of God saves us not only from our sins by His blood but also from our death by His life—Eph. 1:7; 1 John 3:14-15; John 5:24.
 - b. Christ is not only the Lamb of God who takes away our sin but also the Son of God who gives us eternal life—1:29; 3:36; 10:10b.
5. The Son of God is the means through which God gives us eternal life—1 John 5:11-12:
- a. Because the life is in the Son and the Son is the life, the Son and the life are one, inseparable—John 11:25; 14:6; Col. 3:4.
 - b. He who has the Son has the life, and he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life—1 John 5:12.
6. Our Advocate with the Father is Jesus Christ the Righteous; when we sin, the Lord Jesus, based on the propitiation that He accomplished, takes care of our case by interceding and pleading for us—2:1; Rom. 8:34.
- C. The Spirit of truth in 1 John 4:6 is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of reality—John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13:
- 1. The Spirit is the reality; this means that the Spirit is the reality of all that Christ as the Son of God is—1 John 5:6.
 - 2. By the Spirit whom God gave to us, we know that the Triune God abides in us—3:24.
- D. First John 4:13-14 reveals that we are abiding in God the Father and He in us, that God the Father has given to us of His Spirit, and that the Father has sent the Son as the Savior of the world:
- 1. *Out of His Spirit* (lit.) in verse 13 implies that the Spirit of God, whom God has given to us, is bountiful and without measure; by such a bountiful, immeasurable Spirit we know with full assurance that we and God are one and that we abide in each other—Phil. 1:19; John 3:34.
 - 2. Our God, the Father, has given us the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit, who is the bountiful supply of Jesus Christ, the Son—1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17.
- E. To see God means to enjoy God and experience Him—3 John 11:
- 1. We cannot see God without enjoying Him, and we cannot know God without experiencing Him—Job 42:5, footnote 1.
 - 2. Knowing God and seeing God are a matter of experiencing and enjoying Him; our experience of God is our knowing of Him, and our enjoyment of God is our seeing of Him.
- F. When the Triune God becomes our experience and enjoyment, He is not only the One on the throne who is universally vast, but He is also the One in our heart—Rev. 4:2-3; 5:6; 1 John 3:19-21:
- 1. We know the Triune God not in the vastness of the universe but in the personal realm of our heart—Heb. 8:10-11.
 - 2. The concern of the New Testament is that we know the Triune God who has come to dwell in our being—the One who dwells in our spirit and desires to spread into all the inward parts of our heart—Eph. 3:14-17a; 1 John 3:19-21.
 - 3. The New Testament way for us to know the Triune God is personal, detailed, and experiential—2:20, 27; Heb. 10:16.
 - 4. How precious is this experiential way of knowing the Triune God!