

**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 Twelve

The Meaning and Goal of Fostering

Scripture Reading: 1 Thes. 1:5; 2:1-20; 2 Thes. 3:9

- I. To foster is to bring up, to nurture, to nourish and cherish, to cultivate, to promote growth and development—1 Thes. 2:7.**
- II. In 1 Thessalonians 2 we have a description of the fostering of the young Christian life:**
 - A. From this chapter we may learn to serve with children and young people so that they may be fostered to grow to maturity—v. 7.
 - B. Paul's intention was to nourish the believers, to cherish and foster them—v. 11:
 1. His main concern was not to teach but to do a fostering work to help the young believers to grow—Heb. 6:1; 1 Cor. 3:6; 2 Cor. 3:18.
 2. Paul regarded the believers as members of a large family, and in such a family the emphasis is on raising the children by cherishing, nourishing, and fostering them so that they may grow.
 3. Paul conducted himself as both a mother and a father to the believers:
 - a. "We were gentle in your midst, as a nursing mother would cherish her own children"—1 Thes. 2:7.
 - b. "Yearning in this way over you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us"—v. 8.
 - c. "Just as you know how we were to each one of you, as a father to his own children, exhorting you and consoling you and testifying"—v. 11.
 - C. The church may be compared to a farm (1 Cor. 3:9), and in 1 Thessalonians 2 Paul was watering, nourishing, and cherishing the tender young plants so that they could grow in life.
 - D. Paul fostered the young believers mainly by presenting them a pattern of life, a pattern of a proper living; this pattern was actually Paul himself—1:5; 2:10; 2 Thes. 3:9.
- III. We need to see and understand the development of faith—1 Thes. 3:2; 2 Thes. 1:3-4:**
 - A. The Christian life is a life of faith, a life of believing—2 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 1:17; Heb. 11:6:
 1. Faith receives the divine things and realizes the spiritual and unseen things—John 1:12; Heb. 11:1.
 2. Faith is the foundation of the basic structure of the Christian life—1 Thes. 1:3.
 - B. Faith has two aspects—the objective aspect and the subjective aspect—3:2, 5-7, 10; Gal. 1:12; 2:16; 1 Tim. 1:19; 3:9; 2 Tim. 4:7:
 1. Objective faith denotes that in which we believe, and subjective faith denotes the action of believing.
 2. The objective faith produces subjective believing, for our believing is out of the things we believe and is in the things we believe:

- a. The objective faith includes the contents of God's New Testament economy—1 Tim. 1:4.
 - b. When we accept the word of God, it becomes both our objective faith and our subjective faith—1 Thes. 2:13; 1:6, 8.
 - c. When we receive a word concerning the objective faith, the contents of God's New Testament economy, subjective faith is spontaneously produced in us—Gal. 1:23; 3:2, 5, 25-26.
- C. The work of faith includes all the actions that issue out of our living faith—1 Thes. 1:3, 9:
- 1. Genuine faith is never in vain; rather, a certain kind of work will always issue from living faith—v. 3.
 - 2. Faith works, acts, and issues in many things; in particular, it causes us to turn to God from everything else—v. 9.
- IV. We need to see and understand the development of love—Eph. 3:17; 4:16; Col. 3:14; Jude 21:**
- A. Faith and love are two inseparable, excellent virtues of the believers in Christ—Eph. 6:23; 1 Tim. 1:14; Titus 3:15:
- 1. Love enjoys the things received and realized by faith and partaken of by hope for nourishing ourselves, building up others, and expressing God.
 - 2. Faith is for appreciating, substantiating, and receiving the unlimited riches of the Triune God; love is for experiencing, enjoying, and living out the immeasurably rich Triune God.
- B. Paul first wanted to perfect the believers' faith and then encourage them to increase and abound in their love—1 Thes. 3:10, 12; 2 Thes. 1:3:
- 1. Love flows out of faith, and faith operates through love—Gal. 5:6.
 - 2. Paul's emphasis on love indicates that love is a vital factor in the Christian life—1 Thes. 3:12; 2 Thes. 1:3; 3:5.
 - 3. The divine love is immeasurable; therefore, we need to increase and abound in love—Eph. 3:19; 1 Thes. 3:12.
 - 4. Following faith is love, which issues from faith and works together with faith as an indication of growth in life—Gal. 5:6; 1 Tim. 1:14.
- C. Love is the motivation and characteristic of our Christian labor—1 Thes. 1:3:
- 1. Serving the living God is related to the labor of love—2:9, 11.
 - 2. The labor of love is truly a labor; it is not merely an action or some kind of conduct.
- D. Paul's desire was that the believers' faith would be perfected and that their love would increase and abound in order that the Lord would establish their hearts blameless in holiness—3:13.
- V. We need to see and understand the development of hope—1:3; 3:13; 2 Thes. 2:16:**
- A. The holy life for the church life is a life with a future, a life with hope; this hope is in the Lord's coming back with resurrection and rapture—1 Thes. 1:10; 4:13-17.
- B. God the Father has "regenerated us unto a living hope"—1 Pet. 1:3.
- C. God has given us "good hope in grace"—2 Thes. 2:16.
- D. Endurance issues from the hope of the Lord's coming back and is supported by it—1 Thes. 1:3; 2 Thes. 1:4; 3:5.
- E. We need to participate in the endurance of Christ that we may endure suffering, as the Lord did, to stand against Satan, the enemy of God.
- F. We need to guard and protect faith, love, and hope as the basic structure of the genuine Christian life—1 Thes. 1:3; 5:8.