

Consider how your life would change if you could know the future—if you could accurately predict the weather or outcomes of baseball game. If you could know how your life is going to turn out, would you live today differently? In the bigger picture of God’s plan for the world, we do know the future. God reveals the outcome of His plan for humanity in His Word.

In the Book of 1 Thessalonians, Paul writes about the future to encourage believers facing persecution. Their hope as believers then is the same as our hope as believers today. We look forward to a final resurrection, the return of Jesus, and the judgment of the world.

Around AD 50, the city of Thessalonica was filled with those who worshiped idols, Greek and Roman gods, and even the Roman emperor himself. So when Paul started a church there, he quickly faced persecution and was forced to flee the city. Even though he could not return, Paul still loved the young church and was concerned for them, so he sent Timothy to check on the believers.

Timothy reported back with good news—though the church was suffering from persecution, they were holding tightly to their faith. They did have some misunderstandings about Christianity, especially the return of Jesus, but they were working hard for the Lord. Paul wrote a letter to encourage the believers and to clear up misunderstandings about the future and what happens when Christians die.

Perhaps Paul’s greatest message was about the return of Jesus. **The prophets in the Old Testament told about the Day of the Lord, a day when God would come to judge the world and save His people. Paul said that in the future, on the Day of the Lord, Jesus will return for His people and judge the wicked. Believers live with hope, knowing that Jesus will come again.** That’s a promise we can still claim today.

Paul’s letter gave believers hope. Help your kids understand this week that the hope we find in the Bible is stronger than just wanting something to happen; biblical hope is expecting with confidence because we know God is faithful and true.

Check this session’s Activity Page and Big Picture Card as well as the Gospel Project for Kids Family App for ways to interact with the Bible content this week.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

● **Babies and Toddlers**

○ God teaches us through the Bible.

○ Jesus promised He would come back.

○ Paul said to be ready for Jesus to come back.

○ People who love Jesus will be with Him forever.

● **Preschool**

○ How do we live while waiting for Jesus to come back? We follow Jesus and tell everyone about Him.

○ Paul encouraged believers in hard times.

● **Kids**

○ How do we live while waiting for Jesus to return? We remember God’s truth, grow in godliness, and spread the gospel.

○ Paul encouraged the Thessalonians by reminding them that Jesus will return.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE

● **2 Timothy 3:16-17 (2 Timothy 3:16 for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers)**