Message Guide

THE JOURNEY
REAL CHURCH FOR REAL PEOPLE

Built Different | The Checklist of Faith | Week Five

KEY TAKEAWAYS

It's not about what we can achieve.
It's about what we have the power to receive.

Being a follower of Christ can sometimes feel like an impossible checklist of things we're supposed to do. In 1 Thessalonians 5, Paul reminds us that while followers of Jesus are called to live differently, our faith isn't built on our own effort. As we surrender to God and depend on the Holy Spirit, he faithfully transforms us into the people he has called to be.

- **1 Thessalonians 5:9-24** - As Paul closes his letter, he gives instructions for living out their faith. But Paul doesn't leave them with an impossible list of unrealistic expectations. He ends with a reminder that God is the one who makes this transformation possible because he is faithful.
- **Our faith begins with Jesus** - Our faith is not built on what we do for God, but on what God has done for us through Jesus. When we remember the "why" behind our faith, we can live with purpose instead of burnout.
- **Live out your faith with others** - Following Jesus was never meant to be a solo journey. As we honor, encourage, care for, and show patience towards others, we reflect the love of Christ.
- **Choose God's way over the world's way** - Rather than paying back evil for evil, we are called to do good, show grace, and love others, even when it's difficult
- **Stay connected to God everyday** - Joy, prayer, and thankfulness are daily practices that help us remain aware of God's presence and depend on him.
- **Be led by the Holy Spirit** - God shapes us through the work of the Holy Spirit. As we stay rooted in scripture and open to his leading, we learn to recognize his voice.
- **God is the one who transforms us** - We don't become more like Jesus by trying harder or checking a box. As we surrender to God, he faithfully changes us.

PRAY

As you pray this week, try to stop thinking about what you need to achieve and instead focus on receiving the blessings God has for you.

Heavenly Father, thank you for blessing us with a sure hope for the future through your son, Jesus. Help us live each day with confidence in your grace and neverending presence in our lives.

Teach us to live peaceful and encouraging lives, to rejoice always, pray continually, and give thanks in every circumstance. Give us the gift of discernment, so that when we test what we are told, we know what to hold on to and what to let go of.

Open our hearts so the Holy Spirit can flow through us and make us the kind of people who reflect Jesus to the world around us. Give us strength to follow you faithfully, knowing that you are at work in each of us every day. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

WORSHIP

Bring the worship set from this weekend into your Slot and Spot and praise him for his power.

House of the Lord - Vertical Worship
That's My King - CeCe Winans
What a God - SEU Worship

LEARN

This week, read through the scripture shared in the message and dive deeper into God's word.

Read

- 1 Thessalonians 5
- 1 Thessalonians a - 3 day devotional

Watch

- 1 Thessalonians by the Bible Project

Listen

- 1 Thessalonians 5 from Through the Word

REFLECT

Reflect on these questions during your Slot and Spot/discussions with others.

Growing in any area of life often requires more than simply knowing what to do - It requires putting that knowledge into practice.

- What is one skill or habit you've tried to develop? What helped you grow the most: learning about it, practicing it, or having someone encourage and guide you?

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:9-24. Paul closes his letter by giving practical instructions for living as followers of Jesus, but he reminds the Thessalonians that God is the one who empowers them to be this way.

- What part of Paul's instructions stands out to you the most? Why do you think that specific command sticks out to you?
- Verse 24 says, "God will make this happen, for he who calls you is faithful." How does that verse change the way you think about spiritual growth?
- Which area of Paul's "checklist" feels the most challenging for you right now? What might it look like to rely on God's strength instead of your own in that area?

Throughout the message, we were reminded that our faith is built on what God has done for us and not what we do for him.

- Have you ever found yourself treating your faith like a checklist? What helps you shift your focus back to God's grace instead of your performance?
- Pastor Abby shared that it's not about what we can achieve, but about what we have the power to receive. What do you think it looks like to receive God's guidance, peace, and strength in your everyday life?
- What is one practical step you can take this week to create more space for God to work in your life?

NEXT STEPS

- Don't grow alone this summer! Make it a priority to show up to your J-Group this week and take a step toward becoming the person God is calling you to be.
- If God is putting it in your heart to grow as a leader, take your next step by applying to Journey Leadership Institute.