



## SDG Discussion Guide

### 1 Thessalonians 5

September 30, 2018

For starters:

What causes you to “blow a gasket”: Gridlock traffic? Christmas shopping? Inconsiderateness? Long lines? Burned dinners? Or what?

What to you is an encouragement - what encourages you? What to you is a gesture of respect - what causes you to feel respected?

Interaction with the text: The following questions are meant to provide points of further interaction with the respective sermon text. Feel free to forward the questions to your small group members ahead of the respective Sunday. Group members may also find these questions in print on that Sunday.

As you can, read aloud the chapter in your group; read it aloud a second time but from a different Bible translation (eg, read from the Message after first reading from the NIV). Before you begin your discussion, pray and ask God to speak to your group. Notice, what may God be highlighting for your discussion and learning?

Now that you have read the text together, what points and questions arose? Spend plenty of time in your group to address these. Explore and see how God may steer the discussion. The following are further questions for interaction.

1. Do Paul's words about Christ's coming like a “thief in the night” (at an unknown time) calm, or stir up fear? How does Paul's analogy of night and day speak to this fear?
2. How do faith, love and hope sum up what it means to “belong to the day” (5:8; see 1:3)?
3. From this chapter, what people make up the Christian community?
4. What attitudes underlie Paul's various commands here? What impressions of the Christian life do these commands give you?
5. How would you summarize the goal and hope of the Christian life (vv 23-24) in your own words?
6. How do the commands in verses 12-22 relate to the multi-dimensional blessing of verse 23? To the promise of verse 24? To the requests of verses 25-27? To the benediction of verse 28?
7. Of the various commands, which are most relevant to your church? Your small group? Your workplace? You? Which do you feel you already are practicing well? Which one can you work on this week? How?
8. What encouragement, sanctification and grace do you receive from God to fulfill these commands? How has your small group been a help to you in this regard?

Spend some time in prayer. Ask God to continue to speak to you from his word in this chapter. Pray, how can your small group be deliberate to “encourage one another and build each other up” ... and “respect those who work hard among you”? As you go forth, be alert to notice God's “nudge” ... and act on it.

\*These questions were adapted from *The Serendipity Bible for Groups* (Zondervan, 1998).