

An aerial photograph of a zebra crossing on a paved road. The crossing consists of alternating black and white horizontal stripes. Several pedestrians are walking across the crossing, and their long shadows are cast onto the pavement. The shadows are cast to the right, indicating a sun in the upper left. The pedestrians are dressed in casual summer attire. One person in the upper right is looking at a phone. Another person in the lower right is holding a blue umbrella. The overall scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

# LAST DAYS LIVING

A STUDY IN I & II THESSALONIANS



# **“An Overview of the Thessalonian Epistles”**

**I THESSALONIANS 1:1**



- Theology proper (study of the person and nature of God)
- Soteriology (study of salvation)
- Ecclesiology (study of the church)
- Hamartiology (study of sin)
- Anthropology (study of man)
- Angelology (study of angels – good and bad)

## **Branches of Theology**



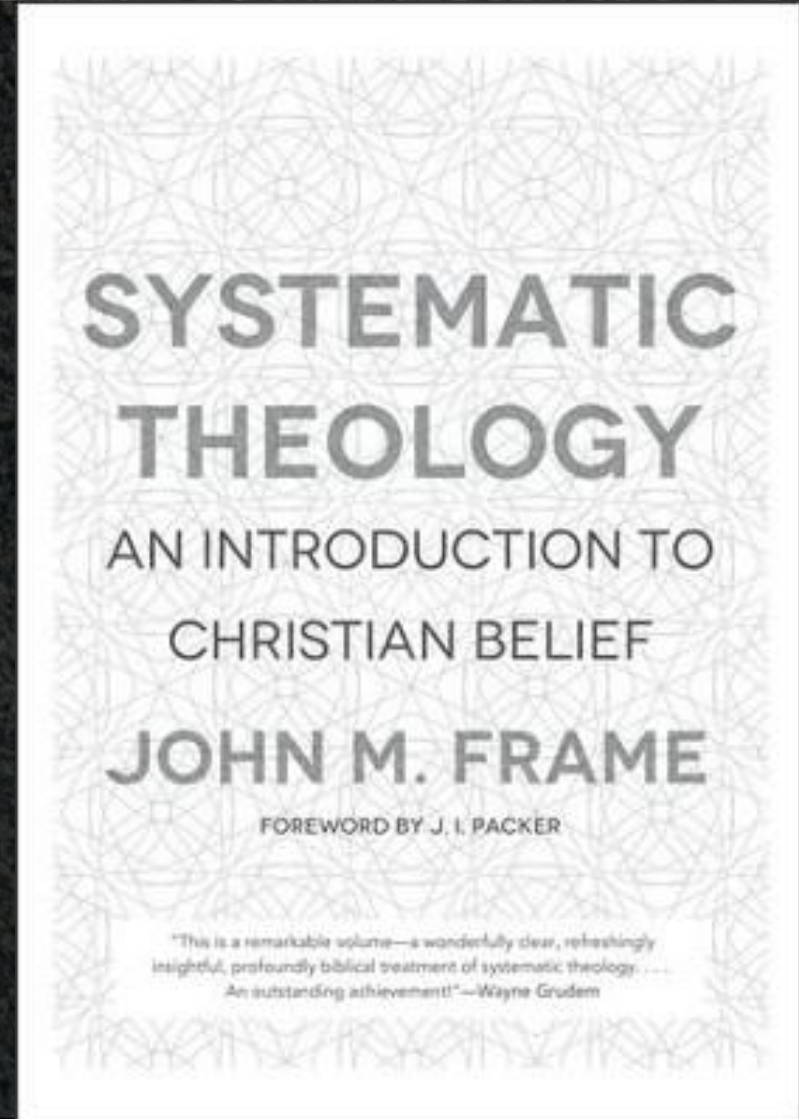
- Christology (study of Jesus Christ)
- Pneumatology (study of the Holy Spirit)
- Bibliology (study of the Bible)
- Eschatology (study of last things)

## **Branches of Theology**



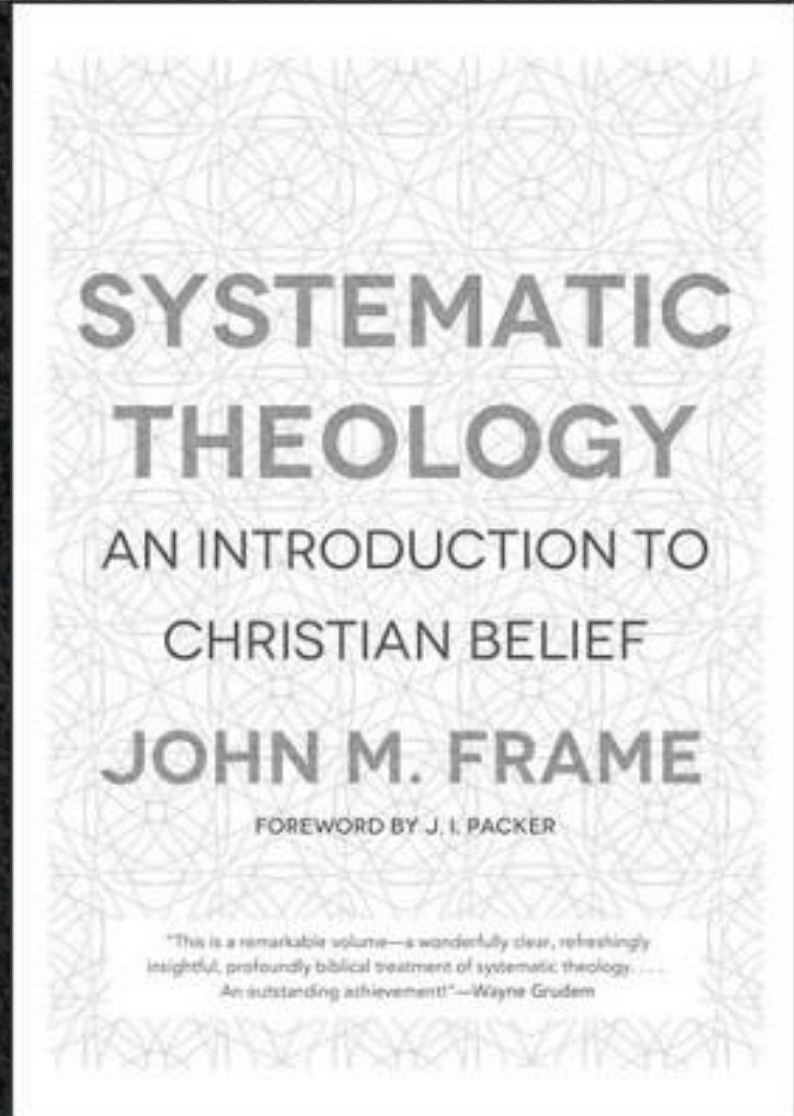
“In my view, when Scripture tells us about the return of Christ, it doesn’t give us this information so that we can put it on a chart and watch the events as they pass by. That would be catering to our intellectual pride, among other things.

Why, then, does Scripture have...





“...so much to say about the last days? So that we can reorder our lives in the light of Jesus’ coming... .So far as I can see, every Bible passage about the return of Christ is written for a practical purpose—not to help us to develop a theory of history, but to motivate our obedience.”





- I. Studying eschatology will prepare you for persecution and death.

## **3 Applications for Studying Eschatology**



*Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until ...*

**Revelation 20:4-6**



*... the thousand years were ended.*

*This is the first resurrection.*

*Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.*

**Revelation 20:4-6**



*After this I looked, and behold,  
a great multitude that no one could number,  
from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and  
languages, standing before the throne and before the  
Lamb, clothed in white robes,  
with palm branches in their hands,  
and crying out with a loud voice,  
“Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne,  
and to the Lamb!”*

**Revelation 7:9-10**



- I. Studying eschatology will prepare you for persecution and death.
- II. Studying eschatology reminds us that our labors are not in vain.

## **3 Applications for Studying Eschatology**



*Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.*

**I Corinthians 15:58**



- I. Studying eschatology will prepare you for persecution and death.
- II. Studying eschatology reminds us that our labors are not in vain.
- III. Studying eschatology will tell you how to live now.

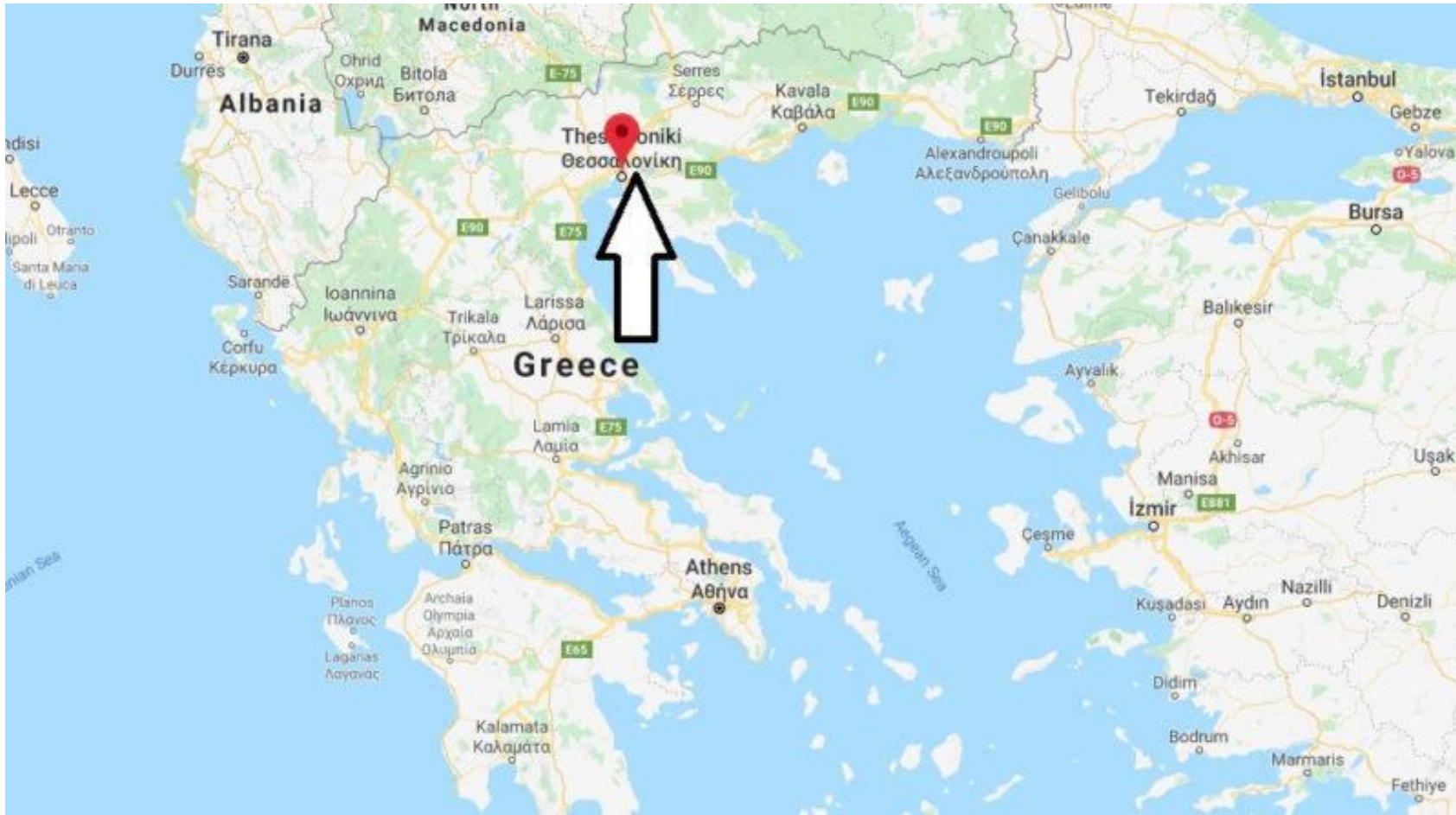
## **3 Applications for Studying Eschatology**



- Nicknamed “the eschatological epistles.”
- 26% of I Thessalonians deals with the future.
- 40% of II Thessalonians deals with the future.
- Includes resurrection, Jesus’ return, hope, death, resurrection, judgment, glorification, eternity with Christ, wrath, hell, Antichrist, the kingdom to come, the Day of the Lord, and Daniel’s 70th week.

## **The Thessalonian Epistles**





# The City of Thessalonica



- Population barely 200,000 people.
- Founded in 316 B.C. by Cassander, king of Macedonia, who named it after his wife (Thessaloniki) and daughter of Philip II and half-sister of Alexander the Great
- Ruled by politarchs (Acts 17)
- A prominent seaport and along an important route called the Egnation Way that connected Philippi to Thessalonica to Berea.

## **The City of Thessalonica**



*For they themselves report concerning us the kind of  
reception we had among you,  
and how you turned to God from idols to serve the  
living and true God,*

**I Thessalonians 1:9**



# **The Birth of the Thessalonian Church (Acts 17)**



- In Damascus (Acts 9:20)
- In Cyprus (Acts 13:5)
- In Antioch (Acts 13:14)
- In Iconium (Acts 14:1)
- In Berea (Acts 17:10)
- In Athens (Acts 17:17)
- In Corinth (Acts 18:4)
- In Ephesus (Acts 19:8)

## **Paul Preaching in the Synagogue**



# **The Purpose and Date of the First Letter to the Thessalonians**



- Written between A.D. 50-52 from Corinth
- Church barely 1 year old
- Purpose: to commend them in their new faith and to prepare them live in light of the hard days to come

## **Purpose and Date**



*But now that Timothy has come to us from you,  
and has brought us the good news of your faith and  
love and reported that you always remember us  
kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you—  
for this reason, brothers,  
in all our distress and affliction we have been  
comforted about you through your faith.*

**I Thessalonians 3:6-7**



*For this reason, when I could bear it no longer,  
I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow  
the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be  
in vain.*

**I Thessalonians 3:5**



*and to wait for his Son from heaven,  
whom he raised from the dead,  
Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.*

**I Thessalonians 1:10**



*For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting  
before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?*

**I Thessalonians 2:19**



*so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.*

**I Thessalonians 3:13**



*For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God.*

*And the dead in Christ will rise first.*

*Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore encourage one another with these words.*

**I Thessalonians 4:16-18**



*Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**I Thessalonians 5:23**



# Outline of I Thessalonians



- I. The Connection Between Paul and the Thessalonians (Chapters 1-3)
  - A. Affirming Their Spiritual Growth (1)
  - B. Recalling Their Beginning (2:1-16)
  - C. Strengthening Their Resolve (2:17-3:13)



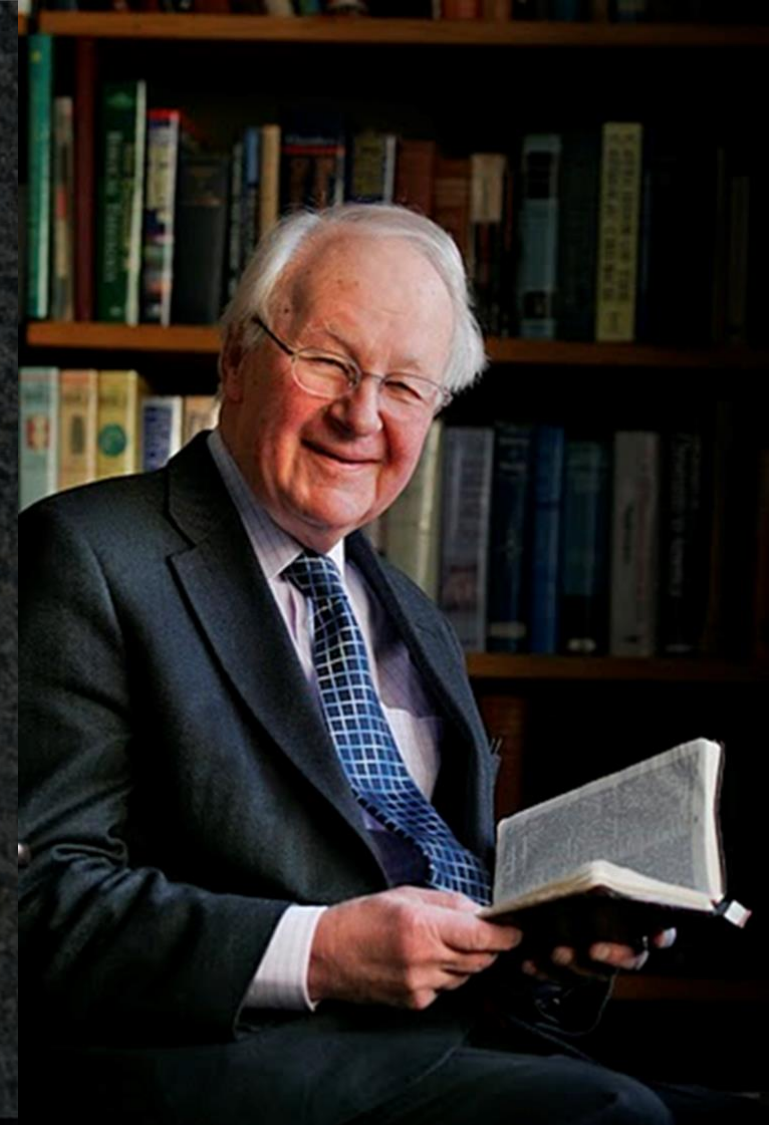
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  - C. Strengthening Their Resolve (2:17-3:13)
- II. The Instruction Paul Gives to the Thessalonians (Chapters 4-5)
  - A. On Sexual Purity (4:1-8)
  - B. On Loving the Brethren (4:9-12)
  - C. On the Resurrection (4:13-18)



- D. On the Day of the Lord (5:1-11)
- E. On Recognizing Leaders (5:12-13)
- F. On Shepherding Others (5:14)
- G. On Nonretaliation (5:15)
- H. On Rejoicing (5:16)
- I. On Regular Prayer (5:17)
- J. On Gratitude (5:18)
- K. On Testing the Spirits (5:19-21)
- L. On Sanctification (5:22-28)



“He loves them,  
gives himself for them,  
is anxiously concerned for  
their welfare, teaches and  
admonishes them, begs  
them to stand firm, and  
prays for them constantly,  
urgently and personally. We  
can hear his heart-beat and  
see his tears. It would be  
hard to find a finer model for  
ministry than Paul.”



**John Stott,  
*The Message of I & II  
Thessalonians***



*But we were gentle among you,  
like a nursing mother taking care of her own children.*

*So, being affectionately desirous of you,  
we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of  
God but also our own selves,  
because you had become very dear to us.*

**I Thessalonians 2:7-8**



“The main reason that God speaks so much in Scripture about the return of Jesus is that this doctrine purifies the hearts of his people. May he use it to purify you and me, as we continue on our journey to glory.”

