

SERMON GUIDES

Talking through the message during the week helps you and your group turn what God is saying to you into action steps. Begin with the key questions, add in any optional scriptures and questions if needed, then wrap up by deciding on your next steps.

Visit woodlakeumc.org/sermonessentials for weekly sermon guides, devotionals, and more or if you have questions, contact **Jill Perrin** at jperrin@woodlakeumc.org.

You are the Message ... Dealing with Opposition | WEEK #1

01.

INTRODUCTION

This is the first of (4) sermons on “You are the Message” which focuses on the entire book of 1 Thessalonians. The subject of today’s message is how to face opposition when you are a believer in a way that will show you are a believer.

02.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

1. Pastor Gordon begins his sermon today discussing how he scheduled a homecoming party at his previous church which conflicted with a previously scheduled trip by a group of church members to Myrtle Beach that same weekend. This conflict brought him into serious opposition with many in the church.
 - a. Did you ever get into a conflict where you feel you did everything right but still got into trouble?
 - b. How did you respond?
2. Read **Acts 17:1-10**.
 - a. Who started the conflict and how did they do it?
 - b. How did believers react to the conflict?
 - c. What was the conflict in the Thessalonian church that caused the trouble?
 - d. Did Paul do anything wrong to cause the opposition?
 - e. What happened to the people that started the conflict?
 - f. Do we as Christians often retreat as a method for solving our problems?
3. Pastor Gordon talks about how we can be a “message” in spite of opposition. The first of these was listen for the truth.
 - a. When someone is opposed to you, is your first instinct to discount everything they say as false? Do you get defensive?
 - b. What steps can you take to introspectively listen to what they are saying and be honest about acknowledging that there could be “nuggets of truth” in what they are saying?

SERMON GUIDES

Talking through the message during the week helps you and your group turn what God is saying to you into action steps. Begin with the key questions, add in any optional scriptures and questions if needed, then wrap up by deciding on your next steps.

Visit woodlakeumc.org/sermonessentials for weekly sermon guides, devotionals, and more or if you have questions, contact [Jill Perrin at jperrin@woodlakeumc.org](mailto:jperrin@woodlakeumc.org).

4. The second of these to not take everything personally.
 - a. Do you often take things personally during times of conflict or stress?
 - b. During stressful times, we often say things that are critical that we regret. What are some examples of times in your life where you have done this? How did the situation get resolved?
5. The third was to respond with love and take the high road. We should avoid doing or saying anything we might regret as Jesus forgave those that were mocking him while on the cross.
 - a. Why was the church able to grow after Jesus's death and resurrection?
 - b. Is the message you live influencing others to seek out why we are different than non-believers?
 - c. If not, what steps could you and our church take to align our messaging with a response of love?
6. The final way we can be a message in spite of opposition is don't give up. John Wesley was physically abused and mistreated especially when preaching in the public. His message was radical to the cultural beliefs at the time but he never gave up in spite of the opposition.
 - a. Do you show by action in your life the message of God, not only words?



NEXT STEPS

1. Listen for the truth in opposition.
2. Don't take everything personally.
3. Respond with love.
4. Don't give up.