

## Enduring Hope in Jesus' Coming 1Thessalonians 4

*\*\*\*Before you start, please spend time in prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you dig deeply in the passage. You **many not get some of the questions which is just fine**. Also, feel free to ask your own questions. Sometimes, we need to live with "I don't know" and move on. Being in a group of other believers can help the process. After the group study, find a trusted commentary and/or a trusted pastor (John MacArthur and Alistair Begg, etc) to listen to the sermons on the passage. However, do what you can first and trust the Lord to guide you in the process.*

**Icebreaker: As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up and why?**

Questions: **Ob**= observation questions **Int**= interpretive questions **App**= application questions  
(*application questions can be very personal so please only share as you feel comfortable*)

**\*\*Before beginning do a quick review of the background information and chapter 3 to prepare. Pay special attention to 3:11-13 as the instructions Paul gives in 4:1-12 flow out of this prayer.** Read through 1 Thessalonians 4. Note all the repeated words and phrases in the chapter.

**V1. Ob** - What did the Thessalonians receive from Paul and his companions?

**Int** - Based on the language used in this verse (urge, ought [literally "it is necessary for you"], more and more) how strongly do Paul and his fellow missionaries feel about the commands they are giving in this section? How do these commands flow from the prayer in 3:11-13?

**App** - From where have you received instruction on how you ought to live and please God? Has this instruction proved true to God's word? How and how not?

**V2. Ob** - From where did Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy's instructions come?

**V3. Ob** - What is the will of God? See also 5:16-18.

**V4. Ob** - What adjectives should describe the Thessalonians control of their bodies?

**Int** - What does it look like to "control (your) own body in holiness and honour"?

**V5. Ob** - How shouldn't the Thessalonians behave? What example are they not to follow?

Int - What is the passion of lust (see Romans 1:26)? What did they know instead of God (see Galatians 4:8)?

**V6. Ob** - Why is it important that the Thessalonians follow the instructions in vv 3-5? When were they told this? In what tone?

Int - What does it mean that "the Lord is an avenger in all these things"? See Hebrews 13:4. Why might Paul have added this phrase to his message?

**V3-6. Ob** - What does sanctification look like? What is opposite to sanctification? For further study on sanctification (optional) see Romans 6:19,22, 1 Corinthians 1:30, 2 Thessalonians 2:13, 1 Peter 1:2

Int - Read 1 Corinthians 6:18, Romans 13:13, Ephesians 5:5, Hebrews 13:4. How seriously does the Lord take sexual immorality?

**V7. Ob** - To what has God not called the Thessalonians? In what did he call them?

**V8. Ob** - If the Thessalonians disregard this teaching, who are they actually disregarding? Why should they not disregard him?

Int - Read Ezekiel 36:25-27. What does it mean that believers have received the Holy Spirit from God? How is this supposed to change how they live?

**V3-8. App** - How seriously do you take your personal sanctification (living holy before the Lord)? What are some things you could do or change in your life to help you in living to please the Lord? What should be the underlying motivation for these changes?

For more on sanctification: <https://www.gotquestions.org/sanctification.html>

For more on sexual immorality: <https://www.gotquestions.org/sexual-immorality.html>

**V9.** Ob - About what does Paul not need to write the Thessalonians? Why not?

Int - The phrase “brotherly love” here could also be translated “family love” and in other usage always means love between biological siblings (Shogren). What does this teach about how we should view our fellow Christians?

**V10.** Ob - What is the evidence the Thessalonians have been effectively taught to love the brothers? What is Paul’s encouragement in this? Note the repetition here from v 1 - this indicates emphasis.

**V11-12.** Ob - Define aspire. To what 3 things are the Thessalonians to aspire? Why?

Int - Read Colossians 4:5-6, Romans 13:13. How are we to “live properly before outsiders”?

**V13.** Ob - About what do Paul and his companions not want the Thessalonians to be uninformed? Why not?

Int - Who are “those who are asleep”? See v 16.

**V14.** Ob - What hope should they have? Who will God bring with him (Jesus)?

Int - What is the connection between Christ’s death and resurrection and the hope the Thessalonians can have for their departed fellow believers?

App - How has faith in our resurrected Lord shaped how you grieve the loss of fellow believers?

**V15.** Ob - Who is this word (message) from? Define precede. Who will precede whom?

**V16-17.** Ob - What will be the order of events when Jesus returns?

Int - What will be the end result of the events outlined in vv 16-17?

**V18.** Ob - What are we to do with the information from vv 13-17?

Int - How might the message in vv 13-17 be an encouragement to believers?

App - How does the knowledge of the second coming encourage you personally? Do you encourage other believers by reminding them of the second coming? Why or why not? What passages could you meditate on and memorize to keep this closer to mind?

Here's something to think about as we wrap up this chapter. I've found it helpful to ponder. It's from a Tim Challies article titled "How to Cheapen a Marriage": <https://www.challies.com/articles/how-to-cheapen-a-marriage/>

Is my deepest longing for Christ? Can I honestly say that I long for *him*? Or do I actually long for the benefits that come with him? I want to have a body that is completely whole again, I want to see my loved ones again, I want to have a soul that will never sin again. Of course I do! But if I could have all this without Christ, would I take it? And as I ponder the glory of wholeness and sinlessness and wonderful reunions, do I ponder the even greater glory of meeting Christ, of knowing Christ, and of being with Christ?