

**1 Thessalonians 3:9 – 4:12**

New International Version (NIV)

1 <sup>9</sup> How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the  
 2 joy we have in the presence of our God because of  
 3 you?<sup>10</sup> Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may  
 4 see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.

5 <sup>11</sup> Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus  
 6 clear the way for us to come to you. <sup>12</sup> May the Lord make  
 7 your love increase and overflow for each other and for  
 8 everyone else, just as ours does for you. <sup>13</sup> May he  
 9 strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and  
 10 holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord  
 11 Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

12 **4** As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed  
 13 you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are  
 14 living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to  
 15 do this more and more. <sup>2</sup> For you know what instructions we  
 16 gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.

17 <sup>3</sup> It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you  
 18 should avoid sexual immorality; <sup>4</sup> that each of you should  
 19 learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and  
 20 honorable, <sup>5</sup> not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do  
 21 not know God; <sup>6</sup> and that in this matter no one should wrong  
 22 or take advantage of a brother or sister. The Lord will  
 23 punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and  
 24 warned you before.<sup>7</sup> For God did not call us to be impure,  
 25 but to live a holy life. <sup>8</sup> Therefore, anyone who rejects this  
 26 instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very  
 27 God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

28 <sup>9</sup> Now about your love for one another we do not need to  
 29 write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to  
 30 love each other. <sup>10</sup> And in fact, you do love all of God's  
 31 family throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers  
 32 and sisters, to do so more and more, <sup>11</sup> and to make it your  
 33 ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own  
 34 business and work with your hands, just as we told you,  
 35 <sup>12</sup> so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders  
 36 and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

**Observation (What does it say?):**

Consider the observation questions on the back of this page. What do you notice in this passage?

- Repeated words or ideas?
- Comparisons or contrasts?
- Purpose or explanation?
- Unusual or symbolic language?
- Commands or instructions?
- Conditional (if–then) statements?
- Other observations?

**Interpretation (What does it mean?):**

After observing the passage:

- What parts seem clear and straightforward?
- What parts seem unclear or confusing?
- What parts challenge your previous thinking?
- What questions come to mind as you read?
- How would you title this passage?

**Application (What does it mean for me?):**

- What parts of this passage fit your current life situation?
- What parts seem unrelated to your circumstances?
- How might this passage affect your understanding of who God is and what He is doing?
- What part of this passage would be the most challenging for you to apply?
- What would be different (attitudes, behavior) if God used this passage to change you?

**Additional questions for thought and discussion:**

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**Inductive Bible Study**

(A few general ideas)

**Observation**  
(What does it say?)

What facts do you **observe** about the passage that help bring out the writer's thought process?

- Who are the people involved?
- What action takes place?
- What type of literature is it (poetry, history, didactic, etc.)?
- What details are included or left out?
- Are any unusual words used?
- Is there symbolic language?
- What is the grammar of the passage (pronouns, prepositions, verb tenses)?
- Are words or ideas repeated?
- Any comparisons or contrasts?
- Any cause and effect?
- Are there indications of purpose ("in order that...")?
- Are there conclusions ("Therefore...")?
- Are there explanations?
- Does the passage logically break into sections?
- How would you summarize the passage?
- What would be a good "headline" for the passage?

**Interpretation**  
(What does it mean?)

What questions come to mind about the facts that would help you **interpret** the meaning?

- How would the original readers have understood the passage?
- What is the main emphasis?
- Why does the writer use repetition, or contrast, or unusual words?
- What does the grammar or structure of the passage reveal about the writer's thought pattern?
- Is there a logical sequence in the passage?
- How are different ideas in the passage connected?
- Are there any new ideas or concepts presented?
- Are there difficulties in the passage?

**Application**  
(What does it mean for me?)

What is the impact on your life? What **application** does the Holy Spirit want to show you?

- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a promise to be thankful for?
- Is there an attribute of God to worship?
- Is there an example to follow?

**Read nothing into the Scriptures, but draw everything from them, and suffer nothing to remain hidden that is really in them.**  
**J.A. Bengel (1687-1752)**