

# 1 Thessalonians 4:13 – 5:11

English Standard Version (ESV)

1 <sup>13</sup> But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about  
2 those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do  
3 who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For since we believe that Jesus died and  
4 rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him  
5 those who have fallen asleep. <sup>15</sup> For this we declare to you by  
6 a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until  
7 the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have  
8 fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself will descend from  
9 heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an  
10 archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the  
11 dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive, who  
12 are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to  
13 meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the  
14 Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore encourage one another with these words.  
15 **5** Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you  
16 have no need to have anything written to you. <sup>2</sup> For you  
17 yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come  
18 like a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup> While people are saying, “There is  
19 peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon  
20 them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they  
21 will not escape. <sup>4</sup> But you are not in darkness, brothers, for  
22 that day to surprise you like a thief. <sup>5</sup> For you are all children  
23 of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the  
24 darkness. <sup>6</sup> So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us  
25 keep awake and be sober. <sup>7</sup> For those who sleep, sleep at  
26 night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. <sup>8</sup> But since  
27 we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the  
28 breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of  
29 salvation. <sup>9</sup> For God has not destined us for wrath, but to  
30 obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>10</sup> who died for  
31 us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with  
32 him. <sup>11</sup> Therefore encourage one another and build one  
33 another up, just as you are doing.

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

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

- What words or phrases does Paul use several times?
- What contrasts does he describe?
- What symbolic language does he use?
- What direct commands does he give?
- Other observations?

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

*After observing the passage:*

- How do you determine what parts are literal and what parts are symbolic?
- The Lord comes “with a cry of command...and the trumpet of God” yet “like a thief in the night.” How do those descriptions fit together?
- What questions come to mind as you read?

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

- What (if anything) do you find most encouraging about this passage?
- How can we use the truths in this passage to encourage one another?
- How might this passage affect your understanding of who God is and what He is doing?

**Additional questions for thought and discussion:**

## 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)**