

1 Thessalonians 4:7 – 18

English Standard Version (ESV)

1 ⁷ For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness.
 2 ⁸ Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but
 3 God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.
 4 ⁹ Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone
 5 to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God
 6 to love one another, ¹⁰ for that indeed is what you are doing to
 7 all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you,
 8 brothers, to do this more and more, ¹¹ and to aspire to live
 9 quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your
 10 hands, as we instructed you, ¹² so that you may walk properly
 11 before outsiders and be dependent on no one.
 12 ¹³ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about
 13 those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do
 14 who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and
 15 rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him
 16 those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by
 17 a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until
 18 the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have
 19 fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from
 20 heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an
 21 archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the
 22 dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who
 23 are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to
 24 meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the
 25 Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Observation (What does it say?):

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

- Pick out one or two key words to summarize each paragraph:
 - Vs. 7-8 _____
 - Vs. 9-12 _____
 - Vs. 13-18 _____
- Other observations?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

After observing the passage:

- Looking at the first word in each paragraph, how might these thoughts connect together (or do they)?
- Do you see any flow to Paul's thinking, or is he simply jotting down various thoughts as he is writing?
- What questions come to mind as you read?
- How would you title this passage?

Application (What does it mean for me?):

- Which paragraph most gets your attention? What in this passage do you most want to understand about God's work in your life?
- What parts of this passage seem unrelated to your circumstances?
- 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)