

1 Thessalonians

Lesson #13, Chapter 4:9-18

Ask the Lord for His help and insight as you study His Word.

1. Paul continues instructing his beloved congregation. What issue is he addressing in verse 9?
2. What reason does Paul maintain for not giving more instruction in this area (verse 9)?
3. The Scriptures have much to teach about loving the brethren. Look up this sample of verses to see what the Bible says about this topic: John 13:34-35; Hebrews 10:15-16; 1 John 4:16-21; 5:1-2.
4. As in 4:1, Paul urges the Thessalonians to excel still more in their love toward believers. Survey the books of 1 and 2 Thessalonians to find examples of how the Thessalonians practiced their love for each other.
5. How are you practicing your love for fellow believers? Would Paul say to you, "for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren?" In what ways can you excel still more in your love for other believers?

6. That one little phrase, “excel still more” is a clarion call to continued progress and growth in your walk with the Lord. Paul echoed this same theme in other letters (See 1 Corinthians 9:24 and Philippians 3:14). How is your progress in the faith? Are you pressing on so that you may grow in the Lord Jesus? How is that attitude lived out in your life?

7. Paul’s second reminder to the Thessalonians in this section comes in verse 11. What is it?

8. Some have thought that the Thessalonians may have been so excited about the Lord’s imminent return that they were neglecting their work and care of their homes. This makes good sense in light of the many references to the return of the Lord in this book, especially the section immediately following in verses 13-18 (For similar treatment on this issue see 1 Corinthians 15:58 which also closes a section discussing the return of the Lord). Discuss what Paul meant by the phrase, “lead a quiet life and attend to your own business,” by comparing and contrasting 1 Thessalonians 4:11 and 2 Thessalonians 3:11.

9. Why was it necessary to attend to your own business and work with your hands? See verse 12.

10. The Scriptures address this issue of working and being a witness to others in other letters. What do you learn from the following verses about why we are to work? See Romans 12:11, 13; Ephesians 4:28; 2 Thessalonians 3:7-15; and Titus 3:14. How does this balance out when someone is in need and cannot work or attend to their own business due to “circumstances beyond their control?”

11. How is *your* witness in this area? Do you try to work hard and attend to your own business or do you have a habit of relying on others to help?

12. In verses 13-18 Paul is clearing up some confusion about believers who have already died. Verses 13-14 form Paul's thesis statement. What does he say to the Thessalonians?

13. Paul structures his comments very logically in verse 14 stating, "For if...even so...." What is his line of reasoning (see 1 Corinthians 15:20-24 for more insight)?

14. Paul encourages the believers with the timeline of events of the *parousia*, the coming of the Lord. What will happen during this momentous occasion (verses 15-17)?

15. This "catching up" that Paul mentions in verse 17 is called the Rapture. First Thessalonians 4:13-18 and John 5:25-29 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 are the key texts that discuss this event. Read all three references and record what you learn about the Rapture.

16. Paul ends verse 18 with the words, "Therefore comfort one another with these words." What is it about the contents of the preceding verses that were meant to bring comfort to the Thessalonians?

17. How do those verses comfort and encourage you?

...AND THUS WE SHALL ALWAYS BE WITH THE LORD.
1 THESSALONIANS. 4:17