

The Great Wait: Delight and Discernment in the Second Coming

The Church That Unbelievers Need to See

1 Thessalonians 4:9–12

August 31, 2025

The Lord's Day Morning

1 Thessalonians is structured like a door on a hinge. In chapters 1–3, Paul establishes his *credibility* with the Thessalonian church by communicating his *compassion* for them, his *competence* in articulating and defending the faith, and his good *character* in all his dealings with them. He will need all that credibility for what comes next, because in chapters 4–5 he gives the church many counter-cultural *commands* and instructions on how to live God-honoring lives while they “wait for his Son from heaven” (1:10).

Overview of 1 Thessalonians

INDICATIVES		IMPERATIVES
Statements that communicate what God has done for the Thessalonians, preparing them for Christ's return.	“Finally” 4:1 The Hinge Verse	Commands that communicate what God wants the Thessalonians to do during the Great Wait so more can hear the gospel and be prepared.
1	3	4
		5

In 1 Thessalonians 4, Paul gives five commands that unbelievers need to see us consistently obey during the Great Wait:

1. Sexual integrity: Rebel against a culture of sexual promiscuity (4:1–8).
2. Global _____: Love the _____ and _____ church (4:9–10).
3. Emotional _____: Calm down and _____ (4:11a)
4. Financial _____: _____ hard to match your _____ to your _____ (4:11b–12).
5. _____: Next week! (4:13–18).