

Women of Grace

Lesson 10

Sanctification

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

Day 1: A Pleasing Walk (v. 1)

Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us instruction as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you excel still more. – 1 Thessalonians 4:1

1. Define:
 - a. *Request*

- b. *Exhort*

2. What is Paul's request and exhortation?

3. What does it mean to excel? What does it mean to excel in sanctification?

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4. What is the ultimate goal of striving towards sanctification?

5. What is our aim and ambition in life? See 2 Corinthians 5:9.

6. From the following passages, what are believers to do to “walk and please God”?
 - a. Matthew 28:19-20

 - b. Romans 8:6-8

 - c. Galatians 6:2

 - d. Ephesians 2:10

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e. Col 1:9-12

f. 1 John 1:9

7. Why is it important for a Christian to be urged (and be urging others) to excel still more?

Day 2: The Will of God (vs. 2-3)

For you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;
— 1 Thessalonians 4:2-3

1. By whose authority did Paul give these instructions? What does this say about our obedience?
2. When you talk to others, whose commandments are you giving them? Are you more prone to give your advice than God's own heart on a matter?

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3. From this passage, what is God's will for your life? (For further study on God's will, see "Dig Deeper".)

4. Define the word *abstain*. Can Christians dabble a little bit in sexual sin? Why or why not?

5. Is the word abstain (or abstinence) a word that our culture understands? How might living in a culture who has no concept of this word influence us as believers?

6. What does Paul mean by the words "sexual immorality" (porneia in the Greek)?

7. Does sexual immorality only mean sexual activity, or does it also include the thoughts and attitudes of the heart? Use Scripture to support your answer.

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Day 3: Possessing Your Vessel (vs. 4-5)

that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; — 1 Thessalonians 4:4-5

1. What does it mean to “possess your own vessel”?
2. What two words does Paul use to describe how a person is to possess his own body? What is the significance of each?
3. Why is the question “how far can an unmarried couple go physically before it becomes sinful?” the wrong question to ask? How does verse 4 relate to that question?
4. Define *lustful* (epithumias) and *passion* (pathos). What do these two words emphasize?
5. What are the consequences of not knowing God? See Romans 1:18-32.

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- a. Why does sexual immorality characterize those who do not know God?
6. From verse 5, what does a believer look like to a dying world when they fail to pursue purity?
7. When we set boundaries to protect our sexual purity, it is not primarily for us nor the other person (though that is important!). What does our sexual purity put on display? See 2 Corinthians 11:2.
 - a. What does a disregard for setting boundaries point to?
 - b. Are there areas of sexual impurity that you need to turn from? See Genesis 39:7-18 to see how you should be responding to sexual sin.

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Day 4: The Solemn Warning (v. 6)

and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you.

— 1 Thessalonians 4:6

1. What does it mean to *transgress* (or violate the rights) against someone? What does it mean to *defraud* someone?
2. Find at least two other verses that speak against us being a stumbling block for other believers.
3. Why is it so serious when we violate, defraud, or cause another to stumble?
4. What does Paul say is one of the consequences for defrauding another believer sexually?
5. What are the potential consequences of sexual sin?

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6. Is there any way that you are currently transgressing against or defrauding another believer in sexual sin? If so, what steps will you take to confess and forsake that sin?

Day 5: The Calling and Acceptance (vs. 7-8)

For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification. So, he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.

— 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8

1. What is God calling us to?
2. Salvation requires that we not only call Jesus our Saviour, but also our Lord. How do we see this principal in verse 7?
3. It is a great sin against God to dishonour Him with sexual sin. What does 1 Corinthians 6:15-20 tell us about how serious it is?
4. How is impurity contrary to sanctification?

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5. What do the following verses tell us about impurity?
 - a. Galatians 5:19
 - b. Ephesians 5:3
 - c. Colossians 3:5
6. What does Paul say is the ultimate result of continuing in sexual sin?
7. What steps can you take to help prevent you and your family from falling into sexual sin?

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Dig Deeper

1. Use historical sources to better understand the Greek culture of the time. What were their attitudes and morals regarding sexual activity?

2. How does this help you to better understand what temptations the Thessalonians might be facing?

3. Does this better help you apply Paul's teaching to the church today when you compare our culture with the Greek culture of Paul's day?

4. Read the following verses for a more comprehensive view of God's will:
 - a. 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9
 - b. Romans 12:1-2
 - c. Ephesians 5:17-19
 - d. 1 Peter 2:13-15
 - e. 1 Thessalonians 5:18
 - f. 1 John 5:14-15
 - g. Psalm 103:21
 - h. 1 Peter 3:17; 4:19
 - i. 1 Peter 5:2

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5. Modesty is a big part of sexual purity. Read Chapel Library's booklet on Christian Modesty:
<https://www.chapellibrary.org/read/cmod>

Recommended Books for those caught in sexual sin:

Passion of the Heart by Dr. John Street
Finally Free by Heath Lambert