

Pure Vessels

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

1 Thess 4:1-2

Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God; 2 for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

Abound more and more:

A) **The emphasis to this church doing well is:** “Do better. Continue on. Mature even more in your faith.”

A) Have a walk that is pleasing to God !

1) Paul is going to focus here in one specific area – their Sexual Purity !

B) V. 3 *For this is the will of God* -

1) People are always wondering – what is God’s will for my life?

C) Easy question to ANSWER! -

1 Thess 5:18 *In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

2 Peter 3:9 *It is God’s will that none should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

1 Thess 4:3 **For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality**

A) **Sexual immorality is a broad term** – Greek word is porneia { Our English word pornography comes from this word

B) **So sexual immorality would include pornography – but it is not limited to pornography**

1) The word basically describes any type of sexual activity outside of marriage: Adultery / Homosexuality

C) **Including: Oral sex – popular today/ Petting / Foreplay/ Fantasizing/ Even heavy kissing /**

1) Basically anything that would cause someone to be aroused falls under the tree of Sexual immorality

D) **This is something that a lot of People fail to realize is the broadness of this term**

1) Many are under the impression that if they are not having intercourse – then anything goes – **it is Ok**

E) Biblically that is not true. { Anything sexual outside of marriage

So This is the Will of God your Sanctification: You abstain from Sexual immorality !

A) Abstain = to refrain – hold back from something !

B) Also used of the Fast – keeping from food !

C) Refrain from Sexual immorality !

A SEX CRAZED SOCIETY

A) Every day we're bombarded with thousands of sexual messages through advertising, television, radio, movies, bumper stickers, , email.

Magazine rack at the Check out line at a super market – Every Mag – tips to improve sex life

B) Today, people use sex as a tranquilizer, as an antidepressant, as a way of venting anger, as a way of proving their worth,

1) as a way of dominating other people and, probably most of all, as a way of finding some sort of joy or meaning out of life.

Sex and TV

A) Study performed by the Henry Kaiser foundation found that **64% of all shows on TV have some degree of sexual content per episode.**

1) Primetime shows it is even higher – 75% 7out of 10 episodes

B) And in the top 20 shows aimed at teenagers it is even higher **83% of the episodes have some sexual content**

D) TV, Movies and today's Secular music is feeding us this myth: **REAL LOVE IS SEX.**

1) This is the myth portrayed in movie after movie, song after song in our culture. – **We have bought into!**

One Reason why: 70 million Americans have an incurable sexually transmitted disease

A) 2/3 of those are between the ages of 15- 24 = 52 million and there are 15million new cases every year.

B) Was it any different in Paul's day?

1) No Paul was writing to a culture that viewed sex as a sport, as a normal bodily function like eating.

Bb) Further contributing to the sexually permissive environment in Thessalonica was the **influence of the religions that advocated ritual prostitution.**

1) They taught that if a follower **engaged in sex** with a **temple prostitute**, he would be communing transcendently with the deity the prostitute represented.

C) In Paul's day there was nothing sacred about sex – or the marriage relationship

D) One Greek writer reflected the attitude of that day when he wrote, *"We keep mistresses for pleasure, concubines for our day-to-day bodily needs, but we have wives to produce legitimate children and serve as trustworthy guardians of our homes."*

Thessalonica was part of that debased Greco-Roman culture.

A) When Paul, Silas, and Timothy planted the church there, they rescued people out of that pornographic society.

B) Many of those new converts, who had lived in immorality, no doubt had mistresses,

1) and many of the women likely engaged in harlotry.

C) But now Paul was calling them to abstain from that type of behavior

1) In many ways – this would have been a great Shock to them – **Sexual immorality was such a way of life to them.**

Question: Is it becoming a way of life to us?

A) Christians who have lowered their standards –
Singles who think – no big deal

B) Parents who take an attitude *that kids will be kids*

1) We did it and turned out ok –

C) Like saying I smoked and didn't get cancer – so I don't care if they do

1) Just don't get Pregnant –

D) There is so much more at Stake than getting pregnant or getting an STD

Why is being sexually pure so important? 3 Reasons in our text

A) One reason is that sexual sin reflects secular values (4:5).

Ba) We are acting like people who don't know God !

B) The Thessalonians lived in a society that didn't value marriage or the Lord at all.

1) It was a do whatever you want society ! What ever makes you happy view of Sexuality!

C) Men / women / animals / Multiple partners or one – it didn't matter

Our Society today is not much different:

A) Five popular ideas that constitute our world's immoral & unscriptural outlook regarding sex.

B) First, like in Paul's day people say: since sexual activity is only a biological function it is normal and necessary to engage in it without placing on it any **moral restrictions**.

C) Second since "casual" sex is just another form of fun and pleasure, it is permissible to enjoy sexual activity recreationally, **any time** with any consenting partner.

Third, fulfilling one's sexual desire is a major goal in life, more important than developing meaningful personal relationships.

Fourth, *instant gratification* is more important than *delayed satisfaction*.

Therefore, having premarital sex is legitimate and preferable to waiting until marriage to have sex.

Fifth, enjoyable sexual intercourse is the most important factor in establishing a good marital relationship.

Therefore, the early stage of every romantic relationship should include sex.

A couple should live together to determine sexual compatibility and fulfillment before they marry.

Hey that is the mindset of the world – that is the mindset of the people who don't know God!

A) The person who doesn't know God is not going to trust that God knows what is best for them.

B) God says *Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure.* Heb 13:4 NIV

1) God says – **Save yourself for marriage** 1 Cor 7:1,2

2) God says your body is the temple of the HS 1 Cor 6:19

3) God says abstain from sexual immorality

1Thess 4:3/Eph. 5:3 / 1 Cor. 6:18

C) God says that the person who sins in this area of sexual immorality sins against his own body – **He is hurting himself!** 1 Cor 6:18

The person who doesn't know God says – what does He know!

A) God's commandments concerning sex are not for the purpose of robbing people of joy, but rather of protecting them that they might not lose their joy.

B) The world doesn't believe that – they don't know God

C) But we Know God – we know His heart

We know that Father truly does Know Best!

A) Father says Abstain – from Sexual immorality: Here is why

Sin is not bad because it is forbidden – it is forbidden because it is bad !

B) In other words the heart of a loving father says – there are certain things that I want to keep you from – **because although they might bring temporal pleasure – ultimately they will destroy your lives**

C) You might not notice a little bit of poison in a batch of Chocolate chip cookies but by the time you eat the batch – you will be dead!

D) So first of all Sexual sin reflects a secular society

1) A society that doesn't know God

E) But A loving father – says I want you to be different – good for you – better for you –

Rom 12:2

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Reason #2 Sexual sin defrauds people v.6a

that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter,

A) The word defraud does not refer to business practices, but speaks of sexual matters. *“I got a piece of her,”* the world says regarding sexual union.

B) That’s exactly right. Whenever sexual intimacy takes place outside of marriage, a piece of one’s soul is taken away, simply to fulfill a lustful desire.

C) You see, physical intimacy is not simply two bodies expressing passion.

1) It’s the essence, the souls of two people being made one.

2) Consequently, if it’s done outside of marriage, people are defrauded, deceived, and cheated out of what would have otherwise been theirs to enjoy.

D). Sexual sin always leaves victims because by its very nature it devalues people by turning them into sexual objects.

1) The people who buy the lie that real love is sex are victimized, as they live with shame.

Prov 6:26 *By means of a Seductress*

A man is reduced to a crust of bread;

And an adulteress will prey upon his precious life.

Prov 6:32 *Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding;*

He who does so destroys his own soul.

E) Sexual sin also victimizes the spouse of the person we sleep with.

An adulterous partner robs his or her partner of trust, security and intimacy.

A) Sexual sin also victimizes the children of the people involved, as well as any child conceived as a result of their actions.

B) In the end sexual sin reduces people to objects to be used rather than people to be valued.

Sexual sin results in a harvest of sorrow !

Five facts about Sex!

1) Those who live together before marriage are 80% more inclined to get divorced and report a much higher incidence of marital infidelity.

2) The introduction of sex in a dating relationship almost always ushers in the “break-up” of that relationship.

3) Sexually transmitted diseases (including AIDS) can remain dormant for up to a decade or more; but be passed on to others during that time.

There is no such thing as “victimless” sexuality immorality!

A) This is why God is so strong on this issue—because he loves us and knows what is best for us.

B) He doesn’t want to see People Defrauded

C) Contrast

4) **Those who abstain from sexual intercourse before marriage report the highest levels of sexual satisfaction in marriage.**

5) Those who abstain from sexual intercourse before marriage have the highest rates of fidelity in marriage.

**D) So sexual purity is important because sexual immorality reflects a secular society
#2 it defrauds others**

#3 SEXUAL SIN QUENCHES THE HOLY SPIRIT

A) Sexual sin involves willful disobedience – rebellion

B) If you are a Christian the HS serves as an alarm – get out – stop – no

1) Doesn't matter that He or she is not saying no – the HS says – Stop/ NO/ GO

C) To engage in that behavior is to ignore his voice

1) Ignore him – you are quenching Him

D) Cutting yourself off from the flow of His power – the sense of His presence in your life { Dam of a river – get parched dry – powerless – hard

1) Nothing worse – than a Christian who is no longer operating under the influence of the HS – Flesh is the result

E) Seen Christian people – get sexually involved – grow very hardened in their hearts – Calloused

So For those reasons Paul says – Abstain from sexual immorality: How ?

Sexual Purity Demands a Game plan

1) **Develop Convictions** : Purity requires a personal commitment to the truth.

Eph 5:2-3 Walk in Love

Walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints

True Love SAYS I WILL WAIT

A) Not going to defraud or hurt their relationship with the Lord waits - Love for the Lord

B) Love for the other person – Not defile

2) Ponder the Consequences

Fear can be a legitimate and healthy motivator for delayed gratification. **STD's Avenger**

A) Cause one of his Children to stumble – better if a millstone be put around neck

Eph 5:5-6

5 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience

Sign that you don't know God !!

3) Make Pre- Decisions

Advanced decision making is an absolute necessity for sexual purity.

1 Thess 4:4-5

4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God

Know how to possess your own vessel in Sanctification and honor

A) What to avoid – places – her apartment / Places that sell porn / KL / dresses /

Prov 6:27-28

27 Can a man take fire to his bosom,

And his clothes not be burned?

28 Can one walk on hot coals,

And his feet not be seared?

4) Get accountability!

Asking others to help you keep your commitments to God will empower you to walk “pleasing to the Lord.”

2 Tim 2:22

22 Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart

Flee = Fugo –Fool go !

If you find yourself in a situation of temptation, do what Joseph did when Potiphar's wife grabbed him.

“Lie with me,” she said. Joseph fled youthful lusts. He ran for his life (Genesis 39:12).

Run to those who are following the Lord -

Oregon lived by a River –

A) Always see these Geese flying overhead in a perfect “V.”

B) Why do geese fly in this formation? The reason is AMAZING .

C) You see, while the geese in the back are cruising, they're honking to the geese in the front, saying,

“Keep it up in the front. You guys are doing great.”

D) Then, when the front boys get tired and drop to the back, the geese in the back work their way toward the front.

E) The geese now in the back honk encouragement to them.

For the geese to make it all the way to nice weather, they must encourage one another.

A) They can't leave the flock, or they'll tire out.

If you say, "I'll flee from temptation, but I don't really need to be with other Christians," you're in for real problems because you'll never make it alone.

B) Run from temptation to the congregation.

1) Run to the place where there are people who love the Lord and want to walk with Him.

2) Run from sin to the saints.

Already Blown it – God will and can forgive !

A) Always consequences –

B) But you and your spouse can make it thru

1) Focus is the Lord

C) He forgives – so should we !

D) See them the way Jesus does!

Better still to avoid

Better still – Virgin