

1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 Holy Vessels

So we left off last week with Paul praying for the church - abound in Love -

A) That God would establish their hearts in Holiness

B) Tonight we will see that Paul continues to speak about their personal holiness in one particular area

Finally then, brethren, { true Pastor – 2 whole chapters} we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, {Keep growing- go further} 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.

3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; 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; 6 that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. 7 For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. 8 Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.

V.3 This is the will of God – that should get your attention!

A) What is the will of God for my life is the one question that I have received the most as a Pastor

B) It is interesting that the Lord – tells us in several places what is his Revealed will for us!

C) Examples of God's revealed will in Scripture:

- To be saved: 1 Timothy 2:4
- Live transformed lives: Romans 12:1-2
- Be a good witness: 1 Peter 2:13-15
- You are filled with the Spirit: Ephesians 5:17-18
- To be thankful: 1 Thessalonians 5:18

BIG ONE: V.3 This is the will of God Your Sanctification – YOUR HOLINESS!

A) Sanctification = To be set apart/ dedicated to God!

B) It is both A Standing and a Process.

C) Our standing: Set apart FOR GOD! Bought with a precious price!

1) God held nothing back in rescuing you and I.

If redemption could have been paid with rubies or gold and silver or real-estate

A) God has an ENDLESS SUPPLY of those things.

B) He paid with what He only had one of – HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON

1) SINLESS SACRIFICE – HIS BLOOD –

C) You have been bought with a price – You belong to God! – POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION

PRACTICAL SANCTIFICATION – The way you live – Set apart in lifestyle!

A) Paul zero's in here on the subject of sexual immorality.abstain from sexual immorality;

B) Sexual immorality Greek word Porneia – we get our English word pornography from it.

C) Speaks of any type of sexual activity outside of marriage.

1) Premarital - Extra marital – Homosexual – all included in that word – PORNEIA

Thessalonica was a very immoral sex Crazy society - Everything goes mentality

A) Temples employed prostitutes that was part of the worship – experience

B) Husband announced he was heading to church – you knew what he was probably doing.

C) We live in a sex crazed culture as well - Porn industry is a Multi -billion dollar industry

D) Ruining lives - marriages - families

E) Our culture glorifies immorality and adultery in movies and TV shows

1) The “Hook up” mentality is rampant on high school and college campuses - across the nation

Times have changed - the temptations might be in a different form that they were dealing w/ in Thess.

A)But God's will has not changed - He still wants his people to live pure

B)And not be given over to sexual immorality

This is the will of God.... your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality

A)Abstain = refrain from

B)Abstain from anything outside of Marriage!

1)If you are having sex today in any form with someone you are not married to – SIN

C)**Don't like that – don't get mad at me** – I am just telling you – God's word says!

D)You can go out into the parking lot and shake your fist at God!

1)Everyone keep your distance from that person –the lightning bolt could be DEADLY!

Note the simplicity of Paul's command:

A)**Abstain:** - simple – not 12 steps – not some program

B)Abstain – refrain from - Abstain – simple command – not 12 steps.....**that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,**

C)**This is an interesting idea: Your body is a Vessel - a Vessel that has been set apart for the Lord**

D)Well this verse reminds me of something else Paul wrote In 2 Timothy 2:20 keep place - turn there.

“But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.

So In I Thessalonians Paul says we need to learn to possess our vessels

A)In II Timothy 2 – He tells us there are different types of vessels

B)Some for honor – some for dishonor

C)Now the enemy will tell you when you blow it - sin fail in your flesh - you are a vessel of dishonor

D)You are never going to get it- You are never going to be a vessel for honor

Paul would say not so - God wants every one of us to be a vessel of honor - and here is how it happens.

Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” – II Timothy 2:20-23

Flee also youthful lusts

A)Flee in the Greek is Fugo - I love that - fool go

B)Being tempted - Fool – run, flee

1)Get out of that situation - run away literally

C)Paul is telling us how to walk in purity here - 2 key ideas -

#1 Run from temptation

#2 Run to the congregation

Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” – II Timothy 2:20-23

A)You run from sexual temptation by pursuing something else: Faith – love – peace – with other like minded people!

B)This is the biggest mistake that some people make – they try to run from lust –

1)but they don't run anywhere.

C)Flee lust – by pursuing RIGHTEOUSNESS-faith- love peace with others who are pursuing those things

D)Put it simply: Flee youthful lust by pursuing Jesus with other people who are pursuing Jesus.

Sin brings Shame - Adam and Eve realized naked Shame leads to isolation - they hid themselves

A)God came to rescue - Where are you....

B)Sent Jesus to deal rescue us from sin and shame - set us free

C)But we need each other - “Don't shoot the wounded! ☺

²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25

So Paul is wanting them to go further to grow in the Lord - grow in Holiness - Abstain from sexual...

A) Reasons to Abstain in V.5-12

B)#1 Sexual sin reflects secular values V.5 that you should abstain from sexual immorality; 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;

C) Animals have no self-control - they just give into their sexual urges

Let's say Your dog escapes from your yard and goes from house to house impregnating the female dogs in the neighborhood

A) Your neighbors are probably going to be really mad at you for letting your dog escape

B) But they are not going to be mad at your dog - because they realize - that is what dogs do.

1) Why you get your male dog neutered

C) But Humans have been made in the Image of God
- IMAGEO DEI - His IMAGE

D) Man uniquely made with a moral compass - made to know God.

1) HIGHER STANDARD - GREATER GOAL

Paul says the Gentile or the person who is an unbeliever - live like animals

A) Given to be controlled by their lust

B) Because they don't know God - they don't realize they have been made for a higher purpose

C) They exercise no control in the area of their sexual urges

Our world doesn't understand that - Sexual union is more than a physical union - spiritual - one soul

A) Not just two bodies coming together - two souls - two spirits

B) Christian - Joining Christ to that person

¹⁵ Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make *them* members of a harlot? Certainly not!

¹⁶ Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body *with her*? For "*the two*," He says, "*shall become one flesh.*" ¹⁷ But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*.

C) Not just a physical thing - spiritual

Paul continues ¹⁸ Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality **sins against his own body.** {HEAVY - hurting yourself

Proverbs 6:32 Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; he who does so destroys his own soul.

A) Engaging in sexual immorality with someone is like giving away a part of yourself - never get back

B) In marriage sex builds upon the oneness - the oneness of a couple gets stronger

C) Outside of marriage - Sex is only a give and take - you are giving away a part of yourself never get back

1) A person becomes like the layers of the onion being peeled away - shell of a person

D) Seen very sexually promiscuous people - there is a lack of depth in their lives

God's commandments concerning sex are not for the purpose of robbing people of joy,

A) but rather of protecting them that they might not lose their joy.

B) World says - the best Sex - forbidden sex

C) **Wrong!** Best sex is between man and woman - love respect honor - committed Death do...part

D) God Created marriage/Sex is to be enjoyed in Marriage

1) Marriage is between one man and one woman
Rephrase – Genetic male – Genetic female

E) We need to protect MARRIAGE – It is the only thing we have left from the fall. –

1) Picture of Christ relationship with the Church.
DON'T MESS WITH THAT!

So we are to abstain from sexual immorality #1
Sexual sin reflects secular values V.5

#2 Sexual sin defrauds people. V.6a

6 that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified.

A) Sometimes pp in the world will use the crude phrase – concerning sex – **I got a piece of Her/Him**

B) Crude- but true – Giving away a piece of yourself

C) You are taking something that doesn't belong to you

Proverbs 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.**

Paul concludes his teaching on Sex in 1 Corinthians 6 with by saying this ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

A) Your body is not your own - it is God's temple - it belongs to him

B) Bought with a precious prize - The blood of God's son

C) You engage in sexual immorality - you are defrauding your brother or sister

D) Messing with a child of God - take that seriously

1) tell young people - a big way - I stayed pure when dating Denise - 20-21 met

E) I was so in love with her - drawn to her walk with Jesus - I knew that would hurt it -

1) Didn't want to do anything that would negatively affect her walk with JESUS

**So we are to abstain from sexual immorality #1
Sexual sin reflects secular values V.5
#2 Sexual sin defrauds people. V.6a**

#3 Abstain V.8 When we commit sexual Sin – we are resisting and rejecting the Holy Spirit.

8 Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.

A) Sexual sin involves willful disobedience – rebellion – doesn't just happen – clothes off - going for it -

B) Always a progression – **HS IS THE ALARM** – The HS is like those new sensors on a car

C) Beep when backing up - or drifting from your lane

1) Hard to ignore - they can be annoying -

D) Unplug them - or disengage them

Spiritually we can do the same thing to the voice of the HS in our hearts - Ignore

A) More we ignore - there is like a coating that begins to cover our hearts - hearts harden

B) Sin and compromise get easier - pretty soon - we find ourselves - far from God

C) Completely given over to sin and bondage

D) So don't resist the Spirit - respond to the Spirit - you will be the better for it

Now Paul is going to contrast that behavior – defrauding others - with Behavior pleases God

A) A walk that pleases God – focus on 3 things

❖ Love others genuinely (4:9-10)

⁹ But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; ¹⁰ and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all

Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more;

1)Ambassadors represent their King and country in another country - OUR PURPOSE

**C)Don't settle- Always growing – never arrive
1)keep growing looking for ways to increase in our love!**

**D)Holy Spirit in us – Love of God poured into us by the Holy Spirit
1)Most like God when we are LOVING!**

Do your work diligently (4:11)

¹¹ that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, {not a gossip busy body and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you,

A)WED – God's command Adam and Eve

B)Be Fruitful – take care of what I have placed in your hands. -

Work diligently.

A)Wisely invest the talents that He “has given you. Do your job with a quiet and restful spirit.

B)Use your hands to reflect a deeper motivation for your work than that of merely earning a paycheck.

**C)Don't spend your time worrying about what everyone else is doing.
1)Focus instead on pleasing the Father in the exact place where He has placed YOU**

A walk that pleases God

- **Love others genuinely (4:9-10)**
- **Do your work diligently (4:11)**
- **Live your life purposefully (4:12)**

¹² that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and *that* you may lack nothing.

REMEMBER – WE ARE HERE – Shine as lights in a dark world –

A)You name the name of Jesus - You are a light - people are going to watch you

B)What will they see in US

C)Our purpose: Ambassadors of Jesus