

Pleasing God More and More

Jesus is coming back. There is coming a day when you will see Him face to face.

Every Christian lives between two great moments — the moment you believed in Jesus, and the moment you will see Him face to face.

What does God want to do in you during that time?

God wants to grow you. He wants to mature you. He wants to make you more and more like Jesus.

At the end of chapter 3, Paul says that God wants to establish your heart blameless in holiness at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But what does Christian growth mean? That's what 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 explains.

CHRISTIAN GROWTH MEANS LEARNING TO PLEASE GOD MORE AND MORE.

Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. 2 For you know what

instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. 3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: ESV

How do you please God more and more? This chapter outlines **four ways**

Way #1 - Pursue Sexual Purity (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8).

God is not against sex. God is the designer of it. He knows the intoxicating joy and closeness it can bring between a husband and a wife. But because God designed it, He also knows how destructive it becomes when it is taken outside of His design.

Sexual misconduct hurts people, ruins relationships, breaks trust, and most of all, it hinders your ability to please God. You cannot please God while being caught up in sexual sin.

3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, 5 not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; 6 that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. 7 For God has not called us

for impurity, but in holiness. 8 Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you. ESV

Way #2 — Practice Brotherly Love (1 Thessalonians 4:9–10)

Jesus said, “By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” The apostle John wrote, “God is love,” and if God has loved us, then we also ought to love one another.

Christianity and love go hand in hand.

9 Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, 10 for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more

Paul says, “You’re already doing this so well.” Their love was real. But then he adds, take it to the next level — do it more and more.

Way #3 — Quietly Work Hard (1 Thessalonians 4:11–12)

11 and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, 12 so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one.

Live a quiet life. Mind your own business. Work hard. That will make you a great testimony, and that will make you please God.

God is watching you in the ordinary parts of life. Even when no one else notices you, God does.

Way #4 — Live with Heavenly Hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18)

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. 14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.

15 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who

are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.

1. In verse 14, Paul explains how you can know that you have hope. He explains how you know that you'll be with Jesus forever. He says, "*For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again...*"
2. Notice from verse 13 that God wants believers living with hope, not fear. Hope in the Bible means confidence that God will do what He promised.
3. Paul explains exactly what Christians are hoping for: The Rapture of the Church.

Verse 17 - "caught up." The Greek word is *harpazo*. It means snatched away suddenly. When that word was translated into Latin, it became *rapturo*, which is where the English word *rapture* comes from.

There is coming a day when Jesus will descend from heaven, and all Christians of all generations will be resurrected. Believers who have died will be resurrected first. Then believers who are still alive will be suddenly snatched away with them in the clouds to

meet Jesus in the air. And Paul says, “so we shall always be with the Lord.”

That is the hope of the Christian life. You’ll get to be with Jesus forever.

Living with that hope, because you have believed in Jesus, pleases God.