

10/10/99

**1Thessalonians 4:1-12**

We come to chapter four which deals with the coming of Christ in relation to the resurrection.

Though it still is dealing preserving sanctification from chapter three, the theme is resurrection life.

1. Living under the power of the resurrection in the present. 1Thess. 4:1-12
2. Looking for the resurrection hope. 1Thess. 4:13-18

The custom of Paul was to give to the believer first the doctrinal section, then the practical, and Thessalonians is no exception.

1. The first three chapters are doctrinal, personal and historical. 1Thess. 1-3
  2. The last two chapters are practical, personal applicable. 1Thess. 4-5
- \* This does not mean that there is no doctrinal in the last two nor that the first three have not application!

**4:1-2 The plead regarding the resurrected walk.**

**4:1** Paul requests the that Thessalonians walk to please God.

- 1) The word “finally” is used here as a transition not as the finalizing of the letter. Phil. 3:1
- 2) The ones being addressed are “brethren”, those who have excepted Christ as their Lord and Savior.
- 3) Paul urges and exhorts them to grow in their spiritual life.
  - a) The word we urges “erotao” means to request, demonstrating their responsibility as the messengers, who brought them the gospel.
  - b) The word exhort “parakaleo” means to come along side, revealing their love for them and their authority was “in the Lord Jesus”, not their own.
  - c) They were to abound more and more, implying that the Christian life is never a static one but a progressive one.
    - 1)) Not that they were not doing so!
    - 2)) The danger is in becoming complacent and being satisfied with oneself.
  - d) They had been instructed this when the apostles were with them.
 

\* Peter says, “I will never be negligent to put you in remembrance of these things.” 2Pet. 1:12

- e) They are to do all this, regarding how they ought to please God.
- 1)) The word “ought” means must, obligation or duty.
    - \* "We ought to obey God rather than man. Acts 5:29
  - 2)) The word walk “paripateein” means a habitual practice, in the present tense, “to go on walking”.
    - \* Walk worthy of the vocation... Eph. 4:1
    - \* Walk in the Spirit.. Gal. 5:16
    - \* Ought himself also to walk as He walked. 1Jn. 2:6
  - 3)) To please God.
    - \* Do you know that you were created for God's pleasure? Rev. 4:11
    - \* They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. Rom. 8:8-9
  - 4)) How do we please God? 1Thess. 2:4
    - a)) Bear infirmities of the weak and not please ourselves. Rom. 15:1
    - b)) Please our neighbor. Rom. 15:2
    - c)) Visit the widow and the orphan. Ja. 1:27
    - d)) Keep ourselves unspotted from the world. Ja. 1:27

\* Knowing that all is open and naked to Him. Heb. 2:13

**4:2** The responsibility was the Thessalonians.

- 1) The authority was the Lord's.
- 2) They knew the commandments given to them, at the planting of the church.
  - \* The word commandments “paraggelia” is a military term for a soldier's orders that are passed from a captain to his troops. 1Tim. 1:5; 2Tim. 2:4
- 3) They order were given through the Lord Jesus.
  - a) The apostles were mere instruments of Jesus.
  - b) The orders were really given by Jesus.

#### **4:3-8 The particular of the resurrected walk**

- 4:3** The will of God is sexual purity.
- 1) The will of God refers to whatever God has clearly revealed to man in the Scriptures.
  - 2) The particular in this matter is their sanctification: that they should abstain from sexual immorality.
    - a) The word sanctification “hagiasmos” simply means to be set apart from

certain things, usually in order to be dedicated to other things.

- 1)) This took place at the time the became Christians.
  - 2)) My body is the temple of God.  
1Cor. 6:19
- b) Sexual immorality is the word “porneia” which often was related to prostitution, such as in the Corinthians letter.  
\* The orders are to stay away from all sexual fornication!
- c) The word “porneia” is also used for any illicit sex, usually prior to marriage or even incest and often translated “fornication”.
- d) The word “porneia” can also be used in view of adultery, being unfaithful to one’s mate.
- 1) ) We get our word pornography from this word, God's will for you is sexual purity! Prov. 5-7  
\* Marriage is honorable and the bed undefiled... Heb. 13:4
  - 2)) Fornication is the only sin against my own body. 1Cor. 6:18
  - 3)) Speaking for the Greeks  
Demosthenes said, “We keep prostitutes for pleasure, mistresses for the day to day needs of the body and we keep wives for the

begetting of children and faithful guardians.”

- 4:4** The will of God has a purpose, that you and I know how to possess your body, set apart and in honor.
- 1) God doesn’t just want to make us miserable but to live to the fullest by living according to His design.
  - 2) We are to present our bodies to God.  
Rom. 12:1
  - 3) They are not our own but bought with a price and are to glorify God in our bodies. 1Cor. 6:20
  - 4) Some believe the word vessel refers to a wife but the context is a bit strained and it would also demean the woman as a sex object!  
\* 1Pet. 3:7 weaker vessel
- 4:5** The way they used to live, in dishonor of their bodies is prohibited as Christians.
- 1) Not in passions of lust, ungoverned desires.
    - a) The desire to have the forbidden, what is wrong and evil, beast like.
    - b) The phrase is used in the New Testament for the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.  
1Jn. 2:16; Col. 3:5-6; Eph. 2:2-3; Rom. 6:1-14; Gal. 5:24

- 2) Like the Gentiles who do not know God.
  - a) They live demonstrating that they do not know God nor obey Him.
  - b) Knowing God, they did not want to retain the knowledge of God and worshipped the creature more than the Creator, even changing the used of the woman and the man. Rom. 1:21-28
  - c) Dishonoring their own bodies. Rom. 1:24
  - d) There is a three-fold downward spiritual in man's depravity, unclean thought, vile affections and a reprobate mind. Rom. 1

**4:6** The purpose of this particular command for the believer.

- 1) That no one should take advantage of another person in sexual matters.
  - \* The word advantage "huperbaino" means to go over the limits or boundaries.
- 2) That no one should defraud a brother in this matter, sexually.
  - a) The word defraud "pleonekteo" means to have more, to make gain or cheat. No one should gratify their sexual desires at the expense of others, under self serving motives which are false motives. Eph. 5:3, 5; Col. 3:5; Heb. 13:4-5

- b) The word matter "pragma" appears ten times in the New Testament and none are used for business dealings as some suppose, to argue commercial dishonesty as he proper interpretation.
- 3) The reason is given clearly.
  - a) God is the avenger of all such people who have come to Christ and live that way.
  - b) Paul says, "Avenge not yourselves but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay says the Lord". Deut. 32:35; Ps. 94:1; Rom. 12:19
- 4) The warning is given and confirmed by them.
  - \* All of this would be contrary to the command to sanctification of their bodies!

**4:7** The reason for the command.

- 1) God did not call us to uncleanness.
  - a) We were unclean already. "us" indicates the believer.
  - b) We were living in uncleanness.
- 2) God called us to holiness.
  - a) The resurrected standard is holiness!
    - \* Be you holy... 1Pet. 1:15
  - b) Without holiness no man shall see God. Heb. 12:14

**4:8** The significance of rejecting the command.

- 1) Whoever rejects the command, is not rejecting man.
  - a) The word rejects “atheteo” means, to do away, nullify or make void, what has been laid down.
  - b) The natural man may deny the standard but not escape the consequences and judgment.
- 2) Whoever rejects the command, is rejecting God. Gal. 6:7-8
  - a) He or she treats them as of no account or importance!
  - b) The authority is God’s not man’s. 2:4, 13
- 3) Paul is addressing in the context is a believer, for Paul says, for it is God who has given us the Holy Spirit.
  - a) Implication being, that the ability to obey is present.
  - b) Implication being, that they refuse to obey.

**4:9-12** **The prevention, so not to laps from the resurrected walk.**

**4:9** The correct type of love they were to express to each other.

- 1) Brotherly love “philadelphia”, emotional and fondness of love.

- 2) They had no need that Paul tell them, for they were taught of God. 1Thess. 1: 5
  - a) The word love “agapao” is God’s love.
  - b) The love that will honor the boundaries and not pervert the “phileo”, emotional love, in order to obtain the “eros” sexual conquest and gratification.
- 3) The Scriptures are clear.
  - a) God is love. 1Jn. 4:8
  - b) By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another. Jn. 13:35
  - c) Shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:22

**4:10** They were obeying the command.

- 1) They were doing so to all in Macedonia and prayed that they keep on doing it. 1Thess. 1:3, 3:12
  - \* Their reputation has been mentioned from the beginning of the letter. 1Thess. 1:6-10
- 2) They were urging, requesting that they increase more and more.
  - a) The natural tendency is to do the least.
  - b) The super-natural tendency is to do the more! Phil. 3:12
    - \* gave of their poverty... 2Cor. 8:1

**4:11** They were to live as examples.

- 1) Aspire to lead a quiet life.
  - \* It means, don't be a fanatic, literally be ambitious to live calmly.
- 2) Mind your own business or affairs.
  - \* In other words, don't be a busy-body.
  - 1Pet. 4:15; 2Thess. 3:11
- 3) Work with your own hands.
  - a) As they had done. 1Thess. 2:9-10; 2Thess. 3:7-10
  - b) To the Greek work was degrading but to the Hebrew it was respectable!
- 4) All these things Paul has mentioned are not merely as directives but without doubt there were some among the Thessalonians who were pressing the boundaries of their liberty, as the Corinthians. 1Thess. 5:14-15; 2Thess. 3:6-15

**4:12** The purpose is two-fold.

- 1) To walk properly toward those who are outside, the unbeliever.
- 2) To insure that we lack nothing, being hard workers.
  - a) There are to be no lazy people in the church.
  - b) There are to be no Christians who live off the body as a form of practice, it is incongruent.