

The Fullness of Holiness

3:11-4:8

vs. 11-13, Paul diligently prays for them.

1. Allow us to spend time together once again.
2. May you overflow with Jesus centered love for one another and for your neighbor (all people). Don't give up!

1 Thessalonians 4:10 In fact, you are doing this toward all the brothers and sisters in the entire region of Macedonia. But we encourage you, brothers and sisters, to do this even more,

3. We pray for your holiness. We pray that your hearts will be blameless (unashamed). Remain set-apart and ready for the return of Jesus.

Zechariah 14:5 Then the Lord my God will come and all the holy ones with him.

Live your lives in the confidence and assurance of Jesus.
He is the coming King whom they await! (Greater than any earthly army).

This finishes the first half of the letter.

- Paul longs for fellowship with the church in Thessalonica.
- They are dear to him.
- They are his hope, joy and crown (2:19).
- They have made him alive (3:8). Motivation and encouragement to press on.

Philippians 1:27 Just one thing: As citizens of heaven, live your life worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or am absent, I will hear about you that you are standing firm in one spirit, in one accord, contending together for the faith of the gospel,

Philippians 2:2 make my joy complete by thinking the same way, having the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

We are spoiled by the ability to be around other followers of Jesus.

Question: Do you understand the significance of the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life? Do you understand the church as the body of Christ? Do you understand the unity necessary for the body to function with health? What would it look like for you to hunger and thirst for this type of meaningful relationships?

Fellowship is a means of life itself!

Chapter 4

You have been called to live according to kingdom standards.

Kingdom citizenship requires wholeness and holiness.

vs. 1-8, holiness

vs. 9-10, love

vs. 11-12, integrity

The new has come. The free gift of new life entails a new set of personal and social standards.

Jesus is Lord!

Christian ethics answers the question, How do we follow Jesus?

vs. 1, as you are doing (walking)

Wholeness -> not segmented

“The scandal of Christianity in our day is the heresy of a 5 percent spirituality.” ~ Richard Foster

I live under the Lordship of Jesus at all times, not just when I deem it ok to be spiritual / religious.

Live *consecrated* lives.

You are dedicated to holiness.

Stay in a continued closeness with God, immediate availability, dedicated to serving God with all of your heart.

vs. 3-8,

Context

“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.” ~ Demosthenes’s oration *Against Neaera*

There was no moral judgement concerning sexual exploits.

Roman and Greek cultural saw no restraint concerning a man’s urge to engage.

God’s will

Sanctification

Holiness

Keep away from sexual immorality.

Know how to control you own body in holiness and honor.

vs. 5, Don’t be defined by lustful passions like those who do not know God.

vs. 6, You are part of the kingdom. Don’t cause destruction!

vs. 7, God has called you out of this pollution (impurity).

The Holy Spirit has been given!

Hebrews 13:20-21 Now may the God of peace, who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus—the great Shepherd of the sheep—through the blood of the everlasting covenant, **21** equip you with everything good to do his will, working in us what is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

2 Peter 1:3 His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

Ephesians 3:16 I pray that he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power in your inner being through his Spirit,

The Holy Spirit enables obedience.

Sexual purity is God’s idea of holiness. This is not some arbitrary human boundary.

God’s will

- Live in holiness (vs. 3)
- Gain mastery over your bodies (vs. 4).
- God has called you to holiness (vs. 7).

1 Thessalonians 1:5 because our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, in the Holy Spirit, and with full assurance.

The Spirit (Holy One) is the source of our new selves.

This reality leaves us without the argument of helplessness!

The Spirit transforms a believers whole life; which puts to an end the (earthly) plea that people have no power to resist impure desires.

If we are experiencing the presence of the Holy Spirit then we will benefit from his effectual empowerment in our struggle against sin.

- This is not a guarantee for perfection, but it is a huge gift from God.
- Holiness is not a barrier or a restriction, but true freedom in God.

Question: Do you need to gain a Jesus centered perspective concerning holiness? Are you in need of restoration concerning sexual wholeness? What needs to happen in order for you, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to control your body?

Does your walk consistently reveal your dependence on the Holy Spirit? Are you simply living a life of obedience and holiness?