

1 Thessalonians 4

Jesus

- **Ch. 1** Growth through Faithful Preaching
- **Ch. 2** Growth through Faithful Pastoring
- **Ch. 3** Growth through Faithful Exhortation
- **Ch. 4** Instructions/Warning: Walking with/Pleasing God

I. Living to Please God

1 **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...**

- **Walk:** lit. Manner of Living

Genesis 5:24 ...Enoch **walked with God**; and he was not, for God took him.

Hebrews 11:5 By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he **pleased God.**

Paul's Urgent Exhortation Walk with God in a Manner that Pleases God

- **New Greek Believers:** No OT. No examples. What do we do?

2 ...you know what **commandments we gave** you through the Lord Jesus.

Acts 15:1 [Paul at home-base Antioch teaching Gentile believers] ...certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, **you cannot be saved.**" [Jews telling Gentiles [non-jews] unless you keep the Jewish law you're not saved] 2 **Therefore**, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question... 22 Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas who was also named Barsabas [He and Matthias candidates for Apostleship] , and Silas, leading men among the brethren. 23 They wrote this letter by them: The apostles, the elders, and the brethren, To the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings. 24 Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, "**You must be circumcised and keep the law**"—**to whom we gave no such commandment**— 25 it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth. 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to **lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things**: 29 that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.

- **Instructions to New Greek Believers?**
 1. Nothing re. Circumcision
 2. Nothing re. Sabbath Keeping [no believers kept in Acts]

- **Three things for Gentiles:**

1. **Don't eat** food offered to demons
2. **Don't drink** blood offered to demons [things strangled] *

* v21 [**Rationale for these two?** To save Jews] *For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath*

1 Corinthians 8:13 ... if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

3. **Don't engage** in Sexual Immorality

Urge/Exhort you to walk w/God in a Manner that pleases God

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

- **God's will for us is Sanctification:** Set apart from sin. Set apart to Jesus

Biggie. Abstain from Sexual Immorality

- **Sexual Immorality** gr. *porneia* including Adultery, Fornication, Pornography etc.

Abstain from all Sexual Activity Outside of Marriage

Hebrews 13:4 Marriage is **honorable** among all, and the **bed undefiled**; but fornicators and adulterers **God will judge.**

- Sex outside of marriage is **immoral** God will Judge
- Sex within marriage is **honorable** God will Bless

4... each of you should know how to **possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor...**

We have the Spirit of God
Our flesh is subservient to the Spirit of God

Galatians 5: 16 I say then: **Walk in the Spirit**, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh... **19** Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness...**21**...those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. **22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** gentleness, **self-control.**

Walking in the Spirit means Yielding to God's Spirit
Not led by lust/instinct like animals but by His Spirit

- **Know how to Control your body:** Practice self discipline in all areas [e.g., fasting]

Take responsibility for your body w/honor as one created in the image of God...

5 not in **passion of lust, like the Gentiles** who do not know God

The Gentiles knew gods who were the personification of their own ambitions and lusts but they did not know the true God, the God who is Himself holy and wills the sanctification of His followers." [Hiebert]

Demosthenes, Roman Historian: We keep prostitutes for pleasure...mistresses for the day to day needs of the body... wives for the faithful guardianship of our homes.

I just listen to my body. When I feel hungry, I eat. When I feel...

What about when you feel like killing someone? Do you act on that?

What about when you felt like eating 2 dozen Krispy Kream Donuts? How'd that work out?

1 Corinthians 6:13 [You say...] Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the **body is not for sexual immorality** but for the Lord, and the **Lord for the body.**

- **Paul commended the church in Ch. 3:** Paul warns the church in Ch. 4

1 Corinthians 10:12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. **13** No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will **not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able**, but with the temptation will also make the **way of escape**, that you may be able to bear it.

- **Way of escape: Love God**, Walk in Spirit, don't make provision, **Love God**

Why so urgent? We drag Jesus with us into the filth...

1 Corinthians 6:15 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. **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.** **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.

Satan is cruel: Loves to tempt us in this area: Potential for lifelong pain
He knows what it does to the Sinner/Spouse/Families/Ministries...God

Psalms 51:3 For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me. **4** **Against You, You only, have I sinned**, And done this evil in Your sight...

- Abstain from sexual immortality

6 ... that no one should take advantage of and defraud [lit. Take advantage of what belongs to another] his brother **in this matter...**

When we are sexually immoral, we take advantage of and **defraud others** and we cheat them in greater ways than we can imagine. The adulterer defrauds his mate and children. The fornicator defrauds his future mate and children, and both defraud their illicit partner. [Guzik]

6b... because the Lord is the **avenger of all such**, as we also forewarned you and testified.

Leviticus 18: [Serious issue w/serious consequences] We are not to uncover the nakedness of another that is not our spouse...The nakedness of an individual belongs to his or her spouse and no one else, and it is a violation of God's law to give that nakedness to anyone else, or for anyone else to take it. [Guzik]

Adultery is worse than murder for the victims who remain mortally wounded yet still alive

- **God will judge** the unrepentant adulterer/fornicator
- **God will avenge** those who have been betrayed

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.

Sexual sin renders us unclean...God is Holy

Rejecting God's command to abstain from Sexual Immorality...Is rejecting God Himself

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

- **What now?** That was me. I want to be clean. Good News...

God is still the Healer. You did not take God by Surprise...

1. **Confess:** Agree with God you sinned against God and others

1 John 1:7 ... if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the **blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin**. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to **forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

1. Confess
2. **Repent:** Turn from sin and to God w/no regrets...

Romans 6:19b... For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so **now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness**.

1 Peter 1:14 ...as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "**Be holy, for I am holy.**"

- **God is Holy**

Brethren, a pure and holy God cannot endure sin: he cannot have fellowship with it, or with those who are rendered unclean by it, for it would be inconsistent with his nature so to do. On the other hand, sinful men cannot have fellowship with God: their evil nature could not endure the fire of his holiness. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? What is that devouring fire, and what are those everlasting burnings, but the justice and holiness of God? [Spurgeon]

- **How can any of us** approach such a Holy God set apart from sin?

Hebrews 10:19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to **enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus**, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts **sprinkled from an evil conscience** and our **bodies washed with pure water**. [Believe it]

Jesus is the Great Physician: He can Heal both sinners and victims
Alli sinners and victims of sin. Welcome to a Fallen World

SUMMARY Living to Please God

II. Living an Orderly Life

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...**

- Spirit is teaching you to love one another

Micah 6:8 He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

11 that you also **aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business,** and to **work with your own hands**, as we commanded you, 12 that you may **walk properly toward those who are outside**, and that you may lack nothing.

- **Paul's Encouragement...**
 1. Increase more/more in love
 2. **Pursue a Quiet Life** [lit. Study to be quiet] manifested in two areas...

Minding your own Business and Working with your Hands

Acts 17:21 [Laziness imbedded in Greek culture/Too much time on hands?] ... the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.

- **Minding our Business:** No Fixers

1 Peter 4:15 ...let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a **busybody** [meddler/fixer] **in other people's matters**.

Proverbs 26:17 He who passes by and **meddles in a quarrel not his own** Is like one who takes a dog by the ears. [not smart]

- **Instead of meddling...**
- **Work with your own Hands:** Good old hard work

Ephesians 4:28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, **working with his hands** what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

Boredom is a powerful force for evil

Idol hands are the devil's workshop

▪ **Result of Minding our business/Working with Hands?**

1. We would be seen as good examples to non-believers of walking **properly/honestly**
2. We would be able to provide for ourselves and others

▪ **How did they do in Thessalonica?** Still some work that needs to be done...

2 Thessalonians 3:10 [Few months after 1 Thes.] [Remember] ...when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, **neither shall he eat.** 11 For we hear that there are some who [still] walk among you in a **disorderly manner** [Quiet life?], **not working** at all [no less w/hands], but are **busybodies** [Not minding own business]. 12 Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they **work in quietness** [2x?] and eat their own bread. [A+ I love work needed in other areas]

Our walk [Manner of Living] **must be Proper/Honest/Holy before God/Others**

Abstaining from Sexual Immorality. Leading Quiet lives manifested in...
Minding our own Business/Working w/our hands/Waiting for Jesus [next week]

SUMMARY Living an Orderly Life

- Those are your instructions **as you wait for Jesus...**

II. Caught Up Maranatha

13 But I do not want you to be **ignorant**, brethren, concerning those who have **fallen asleep, lest you sorrow** as others who have no hope.

New Believers excited about Rapture/Comforting one another [5:11]
Grieving about what might have happened to those who "fell asleep"

- **Fallen Asleep:** Euphemism for death

John 11:12 [Jesus: Lazarus is sleeping. Disciples...] "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get well." 13 However, Jesus **spoke of his death**, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. 14 Then Jesus said to them plainly... **"Lazarus is dead..."**

There is no real death for those in Christ

John 11:23 [Jesus to Martha re. Lazarus], "Your brother will rise again." 24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, **"I am the resurrection and the life.** He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me **shall never die.** Do you believe this?"

Don't worry about those who died in Christ...
They are with Jesus now/will come back with Him...

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will **bring with Him** those who sleep in Jesus.

- We believe Jesus died/rose again/ascended
- We believe Jesus is **coming back to pick up His Bride...**

John 14:1 "Let not your heart be troubled...**2** In My Father's house are many mansions [lit. dwellings] ...I go to prepare a place for you. **3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again and receive you to Myself**; that where I am, **there you may be also.**

When Jesus comes for us...

Souls of those who died in Christ will be with Him to escort us home

15 For this we say to you by the **word of the Lord**, that **we who are alive and remain** until the **coming of the Lord** will by no means precede those who are asleep. **16** For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the **dead in Christ will rise first.** **17** Then **we who are alive and remain** shall **be caught up together with them in the clouds** to meet the Lord in the air.

- **Caught up:**
 1. Latin vulgate translates **caught up** as *rapturus*; i.e., **Rapture**
 2. Lit. to seize. Snatch up quickly from earth
- **Sequence of Rapture:**
 1. Jesus descends from Heaven w/souls of dead in Christ
 2. Bodies rise to meet Him/**Reunited w/souls**
- Bodies are a shell w/no Spirit/No Soul just as Jesus body in the tomb
- **What happened those 3 Days?**

Today you will be with Me in paradise...yet Jesus body was in the tomb

- Though Jesus body was in tomb...**Jesus was in Paradise**
- Though believers' bodies are in ground...**Souls are with the Lord**

2 Corinthians 5:8 We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be **absent from the body** and to be **present with the Lord.**

- Jesus descends
- Dead rise
- We who are alive follow caught up together w/them **to Jesus**

Lord will descend from Heaven w/3 Audible Signs

Jesus **shouting**/Angel **speaking**/Trumpet **blasting** ushering in the Big Event

- **Going Home:** New Bodies for all!

1 Corinthians 15:39 All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds. **40** There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the **glory of the celestial is one**, and the glory of the terrestrial is another...**42b** The body is sown in corruption, it is **raised in incorruption.** **43** It is sown in dishonor, it is **raised in glory.** It is sown in weakness, it is **raised in power.**

44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a **spiritual body**. There is a natural body, and there is a **spiritual body**. 45 And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 46 However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. 47 The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. 48 As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. 49 And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, **we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.**

- New Bodies for all...when

Paul said *we who are alive* will be caught up together with them... vv 15/17
Paul believed in the imminent return of Jesus for His Bride

IOWs Paul hoped He would be Raptured before he died. Any moment.

- Our bodies also will be changed given Wedding Garments
- Meet Jesus in the air/Consummate 7 Year Jewish Wedding Celebration

Allusions to the Rapture... OT/NT

Genesis 5:24 ...Enoch walked with God; and **he was not, for God took him.**

2 Kings 2:11 ... suddenly a **chariot of fire** appeared with horses of fire...and **Elijah went up** by a whirlwind **into heaven.**

Revelation 4:1 After these things I looked, and behold, a **door standing open in heaven**. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "**Come up here**, and I will show you things which must take place after this." [Also 2 witnesses Rev 11]

- Church not mentioned again till Rev 22

Every Believer alive/dead will meet the Lord in the air at the Rapture 17b... And thus **we shall always be with the Lord.** 18 Therefore **comfort one another with these words.**

John 14:3 ... if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, **there you may be also.**

To those who love Him... it is a comfort know He is coming

2 Timothy 4:8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to **all who have loved His appearing.**

- Jesus descends from Heaven
- Bodies of dead in Christ rise/changed/reunited w/souls meet Him
- Those alive in Christ follow...rise/change to meet them and Jesus in air

SUMMARY Caught Up Maranatha Come O Lord