

Sermon Notes 11/7/21
“God’s Will for your Life”
What is God’s will for us?

1. Live to _____ God.

1 Thessalonians 4:1

Ephesians 5:8-10

2. Live a _____ and honorable life.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4

1 Thessalonians 4:7-8

3. _____ in our love for each other.

1 Thessalonians 4:9-10

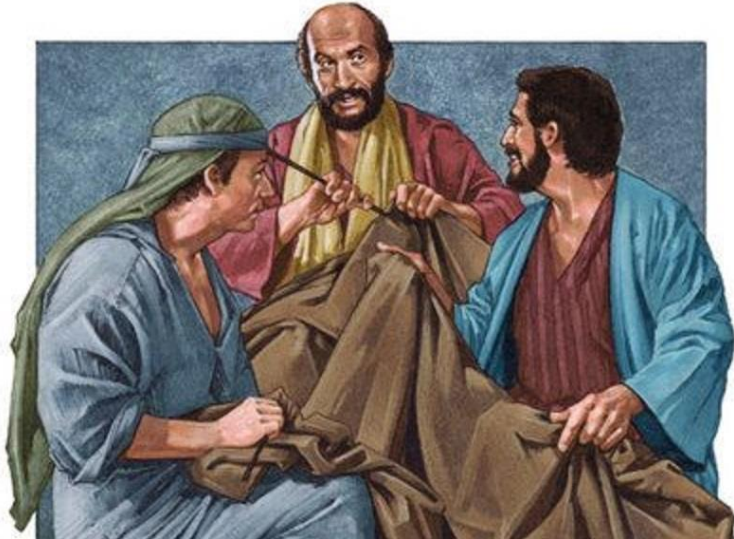
1 John 4:7-12

4. Lead a quiet and _____ life.

1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

1 Thessalonians 2:8-9

2 Thessalonians 3:8-9



As a tentmaker, Paul provided an example of a Christian work ethic to the new church in Thessalonica (1 Thess. 2:8-9; 2 Thess. 3:8-9).

Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 5: November 7-14

1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

In chapter 4, Paul gives us practical instructions about living according to God's will. This chapter teaches us about God's will for our spiritual growth, our sexual behavior, our love for one another, and our witness at work. Like the Thessalonians, many Christians have already heard these lessons, but because these principles apply to situations we face in life week after week, we need to be reminded of them often.

Read Thessalonians 4:1-12

1. What did Paul teach the Thessalonians when he was with them? (4:1)
2. What did Paul ask and urge his readers to do in verse 1?
3. By what authority did Paul give his instructions? (4:2)
4. According to verse 3, what is God's will for us?

The Greek word for “sexual immorality” is *porneia*, from which we get the English word “porn.” It is the most general word used to describe all kinds of sexual sin including adultery, premarital sex, homosexual behavior, etc. Charles Swindoll observes,

There's no doubt about God's will for our lives in the area of sexual practice. We don't have to pray about whether we should have sex before marriage. We don't have to conduct in-depth word studies in Scripture to discover whether an affair is okay. We don't need to ponder whether God might, in fact, rubber-stamp our indulgence in Internet pornography as “stress relief.” The answer is clear and concise: “This is the will of God, your sanctification; that is that you abstain from sexual immorality.”¹

5. How should a Christian's sexual conduct be different from those who do not know God? Why? (4:4-5)

¹ Charles R. Swindoll, *Insights on 1 & 2 Thessalonians* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2016), 52.

Those who live to satisfy their own physical desires do not know God. They don't have a life-changing relationship with God through Jesus Christ. They have not allowed unselfish, sacrificial love of God to penetrate their hearts and shape their values. However, Leon Morris points out that these people have also rejected the light of God's truth.

Paul speaks not of an innocent ignorance, but of blameworthy neglect of the light they had received, so that they were given up to unnatural lusts (Rom. 1:19-20, 24-27). Unbelief often has its basis in the rejection of the light God has given.²

6. What warning did Paul repeat in verse 6?

Jon Weatherly notes,

Though immorality committed in secret may escape the notice of all but its participants, God brings to light that which is secret (Eph 5:8-14) in a judgment that is sure and final. The idea that sexual behavior is entirely a private matter, that it can be treated casually or that immorality has no victims or consequences is entirely incompatible with the existence of a just and almighty God who both establishes the standards of morality and brings retribution when the standards are disobeyed.³

7. How is sexual immorality connected to wronging a brother or sister or taking advantage of them? (4:6)

8. According to verse 7, what kind of life has God called us to live?

9. When people ignore or reject God's instructions on sexual behavior, what are they rejecting? (4:8)

10. Why does Paul remind us in verse 8 that God has given us the Holy Spirit?

The main reason we have the Holy Spirit is to help us live holy lives (Gal. 5:16-26).

² Leon Morris, *1 and 2 Thessalonians* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007), 82.

³ Jon A. Weatherly, *The College Press NIV Commentary: 1 & 2 Thessalonians* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1996), 138.

11. Why did Paul urge his readers to grow in their love for one another since they were already doing so well in that area? (4:9-10)
12. What ambition were the Thessalonians told to pursue? (4:11-12)
13. What does it mean to lead a “quiet” life and “mind your own business”? (4:11)

Swindoll writes,

This means not letting our 24-7 devotion to Christ become an excuse for dropping out of our 9-to-5 dedication to our employers. Face it: From an outsider perspective, religious fanatics can make terrible employees. And sometimes that’s not just perception...The truth is we accomplish far more for the gospel by being dependable, hardworking, and honest than by letting our duties slide while we try to convince skeptics how much better people we are with the Lord in our lives.⁴

14. Why did Paul tell the Thessalonians to lead a respectable life? (4:12)
15. What are some of God’s instructions that we often need to be reminded to follow? Why?
16. Why is God concerned about the sexual behavior of His people?
17. How does the culture around us influence our attitudes about sex?
18. What does it look like when you see someone living a holy and honorable life?
19. How can a quiet Christian with a good work ethic have a positive influence on others?
20. What will you do this week to live a holy and honorable life?
21. How will you deepen your love for your brothers and sisters in Christ?
22. How will you demonstrate a quiet and respectable life this week?

⁴ Swindoll, *Insights on 1 & 2 Thessalonians*, 61-62.