



“Let’s Fellowship in the Will of God!”

1 Thessalonians Chapter 4:1-12

Intro: In this chapter Paul, the apostle, will prepare every believer for the **RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH**; in verses 1-12 we are to get ready for the rapture; in verses 13-18 the “Bride of Christ” will be taken to Heaven before the *Great Tribulation* (*Revelation chapters 6 thru 19*).

> **Let’s take three steps and fulfill the “will of God” in our lives:**

- **Step #1 – Let’s desire to WALK with God! (v1-2)**
- **Step #2 - Let’s desire the WILL of God! (v3-8)**
- **Step #3 - Let’s desire to be a WITNESS for God! (v9-12)**

> **Step #1 – Let’s desire to WALK with God! (v1-2)**

- **ENOCH WALKED with God!** – Genesis 5:21-24; Hebrew 11:5-6; Genesis 6:1 – 7:1.

- **JESUS, THE SON OF GOD OUR SAVIOR**, prophetically spoke of the corruption of this world in the *last days* before His Second Coming; He said that it would be like the *“days of Noah”* (turn to Matthew 24:32-51).

- How can we be ready? Follow His COMMANDMENTS: Matthew 22:37-40; John 13:34-35

> **Step #2 - Let’s desire the WILL of God! (v3-8)**

- One commentator writes, “All of God’s Word contains God’s will—both affirmations and prohibitions. Specifically, God’s will includes *salvation* (1 Tim. 2:4), *self-sacrifice* (Rom. 12:1,2), *Spirit filling* (Eph. 5:18), *submission* (1 Pet. 2:13–15), *suffering* (1 Pet. 3:17), *satisfaction* (5:18), *settledness* (Heb. 10:36), and particularly here—SANCTIFICATION, which literally refers to a state of being set apart from sin to holiness.”

- Jesus PRAYED for our SANCTIFICATION in John 17:15-19 - *I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.*

- In Christ we have the PROMISE of our SANCTIFICATION, which is a state of separation unto God; all believers enter into this state when they are born of God: *“But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption”* (1 Corinthians 1:30).

- Believers are commanded to **PRACTICE SANCTIFICATION** "*be holy*" (**Leviticus 11:44; 1 Peter 1:15-16**); to "*be perfect*" (**Matthew 5:48**); and to "*present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness*" (**Romans 6:19**).

- In this context, it means being set apart from sexual impurity in particular, holding oneself away from immorality by following the instruction in vv. 3–8:

(v3-7) Christians are to "**ABSTAIN FROM SEXUAL IMMORALITY!**"

> **11 Facts About Teens and STDs:**

1. New estimates show that there are about 20 million new sexually transmitted infections in the United States each year.
2. Young people, between the ages of 15 to 24, account for 50% of all new STDs, although they represent just 25% of the sexually experienced population.
3. 46% of American high school students have had sexual intercourse and potentially are at risk for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection and other STDs. Get yourself tested for HIV.
4. In 2012, gonorrhea rates were highest among adolescents and young adults. In 2012, the highest rates were observed among women aged 20–24 years (578.5) and 15–19 years (521.2).
5. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that there are more than 110 million STIs among men and women in the US. This includes both new and existing infections.
6. The annual number of new infections is roughly equal among teen girls (51%) and teen guys (49%).
7. HPV (human papillomavirus) accounts for the majority of prevalent STIs in the US.
8. The US has the highest rate of STD infection in the industrialized world.
9. 6 in 10 sexually active high school teens reported using condoms during their most recent sexual intercourse.
- 10.1 in 4 teens contract a sexually transmitted disease every year.
11. Less than half of adults age 18 to 44 have ever been tested for an STD other than HIV/AIDS.

(v8) Rejection of this "*sanctification*" is equal to rejecting God.

Paul prayed in **1 Thessalonians 5:23**, "*The God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

(Beware and be warned according to 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 - *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the*

kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.)

> Step #3 - Let's desire to be a WITNESS for God! (v9-12)

- We WITNESS THROUGH:

(v9a) *brotherly love* (Philadelphia)

(v9b) by *loving one another* (agape)

(v10) Christians should *increase more and more!*

(v11) *Three keys to the good life:*

(1) *lead a quiet life;* (a self-controlled/God controlled life)

(2) *mind your own business;* (don't be a busybody, a gossip, a gossiper, a rumormonger)

(3) *and to work with your own hands.* (don't be a lazy sluggard, a leech)

(v12) *BE A GOOD AND GREAT WITNESS TO THE WORLD!*

- As The Book of Hebrews declares:

*Therefore we also,
since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,
let us lay aside every weight,
and the sin which so easily ensnares us,
and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
looking unto Jesus,
the author and finisher of our faith,
who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross,
despising the shame,
and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
Hebrews 12:1-2*

“LET'S GO FOR GOD!”