

1 Thessalonians 4:1-12  
A Sacrificial Life Pleasing to God  
March 3, 2024  
Sermon 5

**Greeting to church ☒ Happy March ☒ How are we here already? ☒ Covid memories**

Good morning church! Happy March to you! How are we in March of 2024 already?

**Begin with how thankful we are for you here at LCBC ☒ How thankful I am**

I want to begin this morning by letting you all know how thankful we are for you here at Lake Chelan Bible Church! How thankful I am for all of you.

**My name is Pastor Nick ☒ We welcome all who are visiting with us into the LCBC family**

My name is Pastor Nick Longmire and if you are visiting with us we welcome you into the Lake Chelan Bible Church family!

**Once a month ☒ Opening sermon w/ reviewing theological doctrines of faith**

Once a month or so I have been starting the beginning of our messages out reviewing theological doctrines of our faith.

**Use to be weekly ☒ In the new year I wanted to look at these catechisms more in depth**

We use to review these weekly but as we started the new year I wanted to look at these catechisms more in depth.

**What catechism means ☒ Teaching and learning Biblical doctrine in a Q&A format**

This term catechism is a process of teaching and learning Biblical doctrine in a question-answer format.

**The question we answered in January was:**

What is our only hope in life and death?

**Today we are going to be answer the question of:**

What is God?

**Mankind has been trying to answer ☒ Beginning of time ☒ Many look for answer in man**

Now mankind has been trying to answer this question since the beginning of time. Unfortunately, many look for their answers to this question in unreliable, manmade sources.

God is the creator and sustainer of everyone and everything. He is eternal, infinite and unchangeable in his power and perfection, goodness and glory, wisdom, justice and truth. Nothing happens except through him and by his will.

**So that's a lot! Let's break this down a bit.**

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**What is God?**

**God is the creator and sustainer of everyone and everything.**

**Most who believe agree with concept that God created everyone and everything**

Now most people who have a general belief in the existence of God can get around this concept that God created everyone and everything.

**We rush life and forget ☞ All we do daily hangs on sustaining mercies and graces of God**

Many of us rush about our lives however and forget that all that we do on a daily basis hangs on the sustaining mercies and graces of God.

Psalm 86:8-10; 15

<sup>8</sup>There is none like you among the gods, O Lord,  
nor are there any works like yours.

<sup>9</sup>All the nations you have made shall come  
and worship before you, O Lord,  
and shall glorify your name.

<sup>10</sup>For you are great and do wondrous things;  
you alone are God.

<sup>15</sup>But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

**God has given us earth and directed its position ☞ Perfect habitation for humans**

God has given us a planet to reside on that he has directed to position itself in a way that makes it the perfect habitation for humans.

**Earth any closer to sun and water would evaporate ☞ Further and it would freeze**

In its orbital path around the sun, if the earth was any closer the water on the surface of the earth would evaporate. Any further and the water on the earth's surface would freeze solid.

**Air and temperatures as sustained by God**

The very air we breathe, or the tolerable temperatures are sustained by God.

**What is God?**

**God is eternal.**

Revelation 1:8

<sup>8</sup>"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

**We can trust in God because he will always be there for us. He will never let us down.**

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What is God?

He is infinite.

This means that God is limitless or endless in space, extent, or size.

Psalms 139:7-10

<sup>7</sup> Where shall I go from your Spirit?

Or where shall I flee from your presence?

<sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, you are there!

If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!

<sup>9</sup> If I take the wings of the morning

and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

<sup>10</sup> even there your hand shall lead me,

and your right hand shall hold me.

What is God?

God is unchangeable in his power and perfection.

Hebrews 1:10-12

<sup>10</sup> And,

“You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning,  
and the heavens are the work of your hands;

<sup>11</sup> they will perish, but you remain;

they will all wear out like a garment,

<sup>12</sup> like a robe you will roll them up,

like a garment they will be changed.

But you are the same,

and your years will have no end.”

What is God?

God is unchangeable in his goodness and glory

Numbers 23:19

<sup>19</sup> God is not man, that he should lie,

or a son of man, that he should change his mind.

Has he said, and will he not do it?

Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?

Hebrews 13:8

<sup>8</sup> Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

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**What is God?**

**God is wisdom and truth!**

Proverbs 9:10

<sup>10</sup>The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,  
and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

John 14:6

<sup>6</sup>Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

**What else is God?**

**God is also justice.**

Isaiah 30:18

<sup>18</sup>Therefore the LORD waits to be gracious to you,  
and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you.  
For the LORD is a God of justice;  
blessed are all those who wait for him.

**Nothing happens except through him and by his will.**

**This is another way of saying that God is in complete control!**

**Conversations with people who □ "God is in control" □ Circumstances cause ?'s**

Believe it or not I have had several conversations with people who believe that God is in complete control until they have a circumstance in their life that when they plug the circumstance into "God is in control..." Their human mind cannot connect the dots.

**Don't fully understand everything on this earth □ 2 choices**

There will be many things that we don't fully understand on this earth but we are left with two choices: Trust Him more or Trust Him less.

**If you want to see the truth of God's control read Job 38**

If you haven't had a chance to read Job 38, the Lord explains how powerful he is to Job after Job spends the middle portion of the book questioning God.

James 4:14

<sup>14</sup>yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.

Ecclesiastes 11:10

<sup>10</sup>Whatever has come to be has already been named, and it is known what man is, and that he is not able to dispute with one stronger than he. <sup>11</sup>The more words, the more

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vanity, and what is the advantage to man? <sup>12</sup> For who knows what is good for man while he lives the few days of his vain life, which he passes like a shadow? For who can tell man what will be after him under the sun?

**Stood on the shores ☐ On the mountain tops ☐ God's vastness ☐ Valleys = pride**

There have been times when I have stood on the shore of the ocean or looked out on the peak of a mountain to see the vastness of God and realize how small I am. I am only seeing a fraction of the world and yet in the valleys of my selfish pride my world can be the only thing that matters at times.

**Limited amount of time ☐ How we spend it = what our life becomes**

We have a limited amount of time on this earth and how we spend it equates to what our life becomes.

**As believers ☐ This is not our home ☐ No hope and comfort in this earthly kingdom**

As followers of Christ this place is not our home. This earthly kingdom is not where we want to find our hope and comfort.

**If we believe nothing happens except through Him ☐ don't need to worry about our lives**

If we believe that nothing happens except through him and by his will then we don't need to fret and worry about our lives. The Lord has a bigger plan, and he has chosen you and I to join him in his plan.

**Back to this age old question: What is God ☐ creator, sustainer ☐ Owe him everything**

So back to the age-old question: What is God? God is our creator and sustainer and we owe everything to him for **our existence and salvation into eternity.**

**Let Us Pray**

**Last week ☐ looked at Paul's letter to Thes. Church ☐ Paul concerned for their welfare**

Well, we spent last week looking at Paul's letter to the Thessalonica church as Paul was concerned for their welfare.

**Paul having separation anxiety ☐ young church needed care, guidance ☐ Turbulent culture**

Paul was having separation anxiety because he knew the young church needed care, guidance and encouragement amidst the turbulent culture they were in.

**Paul was pleased to hear ☐ Church stood firm despite persecution**

Paul was pleased to hear that while he was away that they stood firm in the Lord despite the persecution that was taking place around them.

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**1 Thes. 4:1-12 ☞ Listen for question “What is God?” throughout this section**

This morning we look at 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12. I want you also to be listening for how this same question of “what is God?” fits into the section we are in today.

**1 Thessalonians 4:1-12**

**4** As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more. **2** For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.

**3** It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; **4** that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, **5** not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God; **6** and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister. The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before. **7** For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. **8** Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

**9** Now about your love for one another we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. **10** And in fact, you do love all of God’s family throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more, **11** and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, **12** so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

**Young church is impressionable ☞ What is God? ☞ Thes. Church is trying to understand**

The Thessalonica church is young and impressionable. This question we just answered: what is God? Is the very question that the Thessalonica church is trying to understand as well.

**Apostle Paul is teaching them ☞ Learning ‘who’ and ‘what’ God is ☞ How to please Him**

The Apostle Paul is teaching them. Because they are learning more about who and what God is they are learning about what pleases Him as well.

**Thes. Church lived in a worldly manner 3 yrs prior ☞ Had idols ☞ Served lesser gods**

The Thessalonica congregants just 3 years prior were living in a worldly manner. They had idols and served lesser gods.

**People today have idols ☞ Have made into gods ☞ Can always tell an idol in someone’s life**

Many people today have idols in their lives that they have made into their gods. You can always tell an idol in someone’s life by:

- how important it is to them
- how much time they spend with it
- how protective they are of it
- how much they know about it

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**It is funny the things that we make into idols.**

**Even at a young age I have vivid memories of God making a mockery of things I made into idols**

Even at a young age I have vivid memories of God making a mockery of the things I made into idols.

**God teaching me lessons before my life was transformed by Him**

I really believe that God was teaching me these lessons early on before my life was transformed by Him.

**The bottom line is that we end up serving these idols and they distract us from the truth.**

**Now the church was learning how to serve a new God, a different God, the Almighty God.**

**Paul giving church feedback on how to please the Almighty God with the way they live their lives.**

Now Paul is giving the church feedback on how to please the Almighty God with the way they live their lives.

1 Thessalonians 4:1

'As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more.

**We could easily make one sermon just off of this first verse in chapter 4.**

**Church is new, weak haven't practice much Paul urging more and more**

The church is new at this, they are weak at it, they haven't practiced it that much -- for that long. So Paul is urging them to do this more and more. **Keep practicing!**

**Dr. Walls office Football Kalen DeBoer ex UW coach mentioned quote**

I was in Dr. Wall's office getting my back adjusted about a month ago or so and we were talking about football and Kalen DeBoer, the former University of Washington Head Coach going to Alabama. He mentioned a quote that coach DeBoer made that may have derived from a Vince Lombardi quote, but the quote was:

**"We will strive for perfection and settle for excellence."**

**What scriptures call us to do Never perfect Christ like**

This is exactly what the scriptures call us to do as believers. We will never be perfect, but Christ calls us to be Christ like.

**More we strive to be like Him Closer to living a life of excellence**

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The more we strive to be like Him the closer we will get to living a Christian life of excellence.

You might ask, "What will people think of me if I am always striving for perfection?"

Right now the general consensus by the world is that Christians are hypocrites.

**1<sup>st</sup> □ as Christians □ do with excellence □ Raise bar of living life □ Will bring life**

First of all, as Christians would we rather do things with excellence and raise the bar of living a life that will bring life?

or

Would we rather live like the world demonstrating that we are no different than it?

**2<sup>nd</sup> □ Dying to self means we no longer care to please man but please God**

Secondly, part of dying to ourselves means that we no longer care about what people think of us. We care more about what God thinks of us.

Galatians 1:10

<sup>10</sup> Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

**Power to grow □ comes from God not us**

The power to grow doesn't come from within us, but from God.

**Human perspective □ We can't be truly Godly □ b/c of flesh**

Humanly speaking, we don't have the resources to be truly godly.

God allows us to "participate in the divine nature" in order to keep us from sin and help us live for him.

**When born again □ God empowers us by His Spirit □ w/ His own moral goodness**

When we are born again, God by his Spirit empowers us with his own moral goodness.

John 3:6

<sup>6</sup> That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

On our first birthday we were born of flesh. On our second birthday we were born of the Spirit that lives within us!

John 14:16-23

<sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— <sup>17</sup> the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. <sup>18</sup> I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. <sup>19</sup> Before long, the world will not see me



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anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. <sup>20</sup> On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. <sup>21</sup> Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”

**Advocate ☐ Holy Spirit ☐ Lives in us as believers ☐ Referred to here as**

The advocate that John speaks of is the Holy Spirit that lives in us as believers. It is referred to here as the “Spirit of truth.”

2 Corinthians 5:21

<sup>21</sup> God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

**We are made perfect in Christ ☐ When born again we have a perfect Spirit in us**

So we are made perfect in Christ. When we are born again we have a perfect Spirit that lives within us.

**As humans ☐ Things get in way ☐ Pride, selfishness, arrogance, evil behavior, etc**

There is this other thing however that gets in the way. Our pride, our selfishness, our arrogance, evil behavior, etc. You name it, we do it.

This is why Christ is necessary for us! He is what sustains us! We talked about this earlier in the question: What is God? He sustains us by the power of the Holy Spirit.

1 Thessalonians 4:2

<sup>2</sup> For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.

**Paul stimulated his convert’s memory ☐ Instructions are binding ☐**

Paul stimulates his converts’ memory of what he and his companions had told them. These were binding because they were given “by the authority of the Lord Jesus.”

**People today ☐ Saw it on news, read it on internet ☐ true ☐ Those sources let us down**

Most people today go by the philosophy that if they saw it on the news or read it on the internet that it must be true. As we know however, those sources will only juice us up only to let us down.

We can know that the word of God is true because:

1. It always proves itself.
2. It is the authoritative word of Jesus Christ.

**James Dobson ☐ Focus on the Family ☐ Ryan Dobson ☐ Author/speaker to millions**

Many of you may remember the long-time radio host of Focus on the Family, Dr. James Dobson. His son Ryan Dobson has also been involved in ministry as a speaker to millions of people around the world and as an author to many books.

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**One book titled “Be Intolerant” by Dobson proves that Bible is true, inspired word of God**

One of his books titled “Be Intolerant,” Dobson lays out proof that the Bible is the true and inspired word of God.

He claims that the proof is in the prophecy of scriptures.

**OT 332 distinct prophecies of Messiah These include...**

“The Old Testament lays out 332 distinct prophecies or predictions about the Messiah, Jesus Christ. These include the place, time, and manner of His birth; His betrayal by a trusted friend; the manner of His death, suffering and burial; and hundreds more. All 332 were literally fulfilled in Jesus!”

**Odds of a handful of these being true**

So what are the odds that even a handful of these prophecies could have been luck that they were fulfilled?

**Scientist in 1958 Peter Stoner Science Speaks odds of 8 of 332 being fulfilled**

“Way back in 1958, a scientist named Peter Stoner tackled this question. In a famous book titled Science Speaks, Stoner looked at the probability that just 8 of the 332 prophecies of the Messiah could’ve been coincidentally or accidentally fulfilled in one man, much less a man who proclaimed himself to be the Messiah. He looked at the probability of each of the eight individually, and then added up the probabilities for all eight.”

**Conclusion American Scientific Affiliation 1 in 10<sup>17</sup> One in one hundred quadrillion**

“His mathematical conclusion, verified by the American Scientific Affiliation, was that the chance of all eight being accidentally fulfilled in one man was 1 in 10<sup>17</sup>. That is a 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000 (one hundred quadrillion) chance of it being coincidental.”

**Illustration to grasp one hundred quadrillion silver dollars Texas 1 red blindfold**

“To help us even grasp such a small probability, Stoner came up with this illustration. Take one hundred quadrillion silver dollars and lay them out across the state of Texas. They would cover the entire land surface of the Lone Star State two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars—paint it red—and toss it into the stack. Mix it up real good. Finally, blindfold a guy and tell him he can walk across the state as far as he wants, but then he’s got to bend down and pick up just one silver dollar. And it has to be the red one on the first try.”

“That’s how likely it is that eight messianic prophecies could’ve been randomly fulfilled in anyone.”

**Paul establishes the Bible is true instructions on how to live life pleases and protects**

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Now that Paul had established with Thessalonica church that the Bible is true and that they can believe it, he goes on to give him instructions on how they should live their lives. This change in how they live life will not only please God but it will protect them from the natural consequences of sin.

**Section is challenging for culture ☒ Highly sexualized ☒ God is author ☒ gives instructions**

This next section can be a very challenging section for our culture. We live in a highly sexualized culture that promotes and expects people to view sexuality in a casual and detached manner. God, the author of our sexuality, had specific instructions for intended use. Within those confines it is a life giving union between a husband and wife.

1 Thessalonians 4:3

<sup>3</sup> It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality;

**1<sup>st</sup> instructions to the church ☒ God's will for their life is that they are sanctified**

Here we have Paul's first instruction to the church. Paul is explaining to them that God's will for their life is that they should be sanctified.

"Sanctification is the work of God's free grace whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God and are enabled more and more to die unto sin and live unto rightness."

**Definition ☒ Baptist Catechism based on Westminster Shorter Catechism**

This definition of sanctification is from the Baptist Catechism which is based on the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

**Definition based on scripture written in 17<sup>th</sup> century ☒ valued as accurate today**

This definition based on scripture was written in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and Christians have valued them since then as accurate summaries of Christian doctrine.

**Sanctification ☒ Ongoing process ☒ is a work ☒ not an act**

Sanctification is an ongoing process. The understanding that sanctification is a *work* rather than an *act* emphasizes the progressive nature of sanctification.

**Justification ☒ is an act ☒ not a work ☒ happens in a moment**

On the other hand, justification or redemption in Christ is an act because it happens in a moment.

**Thes. Church has been redeemed ☒ act that took place in a moment**

The Thessalonian church has been redeemed. It happened as an act that took place in a moment.

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**Paul teaches ☐ not automatically sinless ☐ Sanctification at work ☐ course of life**

Now Paul is explaining that they aren't magically sinless creatures, but that sanctification is a work that takes place over the course of the rest of their lives.

**Begins at moment of redemption ☐ not completed until earthly death**

The process of sanctification begins the moment a sinner receives Christ, but it is not completed until a Christian dies and he or she is made perfect in holiness.

**Sanctification ☐ not passed on human works ☐ Cannot sanctify self**

It is also important to note that sanctification isn't based on anything we as humans can generate. We can't sanctify ourselves in other words.

**Sanctification ☐ God's free grace ☐ Teaches several crucial truths ☐**

Sanctification is a work of God's free grace, and this teaches several crucial truths. Sanctification is God's personal work in a redeemed sinner, as highlighted in:

**2 Thessalonians 2:13**

<sup>13</sup> But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you as firstfruits to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

**Our part with sanctification ☐ Christian should cooperate in process ☐**

Here is where our part comes in though: A Christian ought eagerly to cooperate in the process of sanctification by taking advantage of all the means of grace that God has appointed in His Word.

All human efforts toward sanctification are useless apart from the work of God.

**Paul conveys ☐ redemption is done**

Paul is conveying to the young church that God has redeemed them...that part is finished, no need to worry about that part, you are written in the book of life.

**Now is process of sanctification ☐ Take advantage of these graces**

Now is the process of sanctification that the Holy Spirit will be doing in your life, over the scope of your life, but you have to take advantage of these graces.

**God won't force sanctification ☐ He will lead ☐ Disobedience can be unpleasant**

God won't force us to be sanctified. He will lead us there, however if we call him Lord and then have patterns of disobedience the consequences can be unpleasant in this lifetime.

**Finished Hosea in January ☐ Israelites chosen by God ☐ Disobedient ☐**

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We just finished the book of Hosea in January. We saw the Israelites, also chosen by God to be redeemed and yet they willfully disobeyed God. Over and over and over again they lived lives similar to what is taking place in the secular Thessalonica.

**Due to Israelite patterns disobedience ☐ uncomfortable lives ☐ earthly death ☐**

Due to the Israelite patterns of disobedience despite warnings of consequences because of their wayward living they received discipline from the Lord, and it was extremely uncomfortable while the Israelites walked the earth. Many of them even perished physically from the world though they were redeemed eternally.

The second half of verse 3 Paul warns them about avoiding sexual immorality.

**Sexuality ☐ God's good gift ☐ source of much human happiness**

Sexuality is one of God's good gifts and the source of much human happiness.

**Expressed outside intended purpose ☐ Can become one of most destructive forces**

At the same time, once expressed outside its intended context of marital fidelity, it can become one of the most destructive forces in human existence.

In addition to adultery and fornication, the Bible expressly forbids homosexuality, bestiality, incest, prostitution, rape, pedophilia, and all other forms of sexual deviance (Exodus 22:16-17; 19; Leviticus 18:6-18; 22-23; Proverbs 7:1-27; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13).

**Thes. Church in midst of persecution ☐ pagan Jews ☐ Tempted to return old ways of living**

The Thessalonica church is in the midst of strong persecution by pagan Jews living in the community. The church was also heavily tempted to return to a life they once all knew filled with lawlessness and sexual promiscuity.

**Better understand ☐ 4:3-8 ☐ context ☐ sexual culture ☐ Greco-Roman ☐ 1<sup>st</sup> Century**

To better understand Paul's encouragement to the church in 4:3-8, we need understanding on the historical context of this passage, particularly the sexual culture of the Greco-Roman world of the first century.

**Sexual tolerance ☐ social norm ☐ expected, encouraged ☐ young men ☐ sex b-4 marriage**

Sexual tolerance was the social norm, even expected and encouraged. For example, it was socially acceptable for young men to have sexual relationships before marriage.

**Man ☐ female slaves ☐ "human property" ☐ sexual desires ☐ Prostitutes ☐ any man**

A man who owned female slaves could use his "human property" to satisfy his sexual desires, while prostitutes were at the service of any man.

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**Profits from brothels ☞ revenue ☞ respectable citizens ☞ innkeepers, cookshops ☞ extras**

The “profit from prostitutes working at brothels was an important source of revenue for many respectable citizens. In addition, innkeepers and owners of cookshops frequently kept slave girls for the sexual entertainment of their customers.”

Antipater, a former governor of Thessalonica commented, “Mistresses we keep for the sake of pleasure, concubines for the daily care of our persons, but wives to bear us legitimate children and to be faithful guardians of our households.”

You can see how twisted the culture was in regards to wholesome Godly living.

**While Paul had congratulated them on their faith in 1:3 ☞ still sin in church ☞ sexual sins**

While Paul had congratulated them on their faith in 1:3, this did not mean that there was no occasional misbehavior, even sexual sins, within the church (1 Corinthians 1:4-9; 5:1-5; 6:12-20)

**1 Corinthians 6:12-20**

<sup>12</sup> “I have the right to do anything,” you say—but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything”—but I will not be mastered by anything. <sup>13</sup> You say, “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both.” The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. <sup>14</sup> By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. <sup>15</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, “The two will become one flesh.” <sup>17</sup> But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit. <sup>18</sup> Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. <sup>19</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; <sup>20</sup> you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

**Language of Paul ☞ We urge you bros and sis ☞ live a life pleasing to God ☞ more and more**

As we look at the language that Paul uses throughout his letter to the Thessalonians he repeats the words, “...we urge you, brothers and sisters to [live a life pleasing to God] more and more.”

**Words ☞ More and more ☞ development off of sanctified ☞**

These words “more and more” are a development off of the word “sanctified”. Paul is saying, allow the Spirit of God to sanctify you in your growth in Jesus Christ...do this more and more.

**1 Thessalonians 4:4-5**

<sup>4</sup> that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, <sup>5</sup> not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God;

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The positive side of holiness requires one to “learn to control his own body.”

1 Corinthians 7:2-5

<sup>2</sup> But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband. <sup>3</sup> The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. <sup>4</sup> The wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife. <sup>5</sup> Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

**Wholesome marriage ☐ Paul’s antidote for sexual immorality**

A wholesome marriage was thus Paul’s antidote for sexual immorality.

**Phrase ☐ holy and honorable ☐ way to maintain right kind of marriage ☐**

The phrase “holy and honorable” used at the end of verse 4 describes the way to maintain the right kind of marriage, holiness being due God and honor being due the wife.

God is trying to separate the way in which we should live from the ways that the world lives.

The guiding principle of the pagans is “passionate lust.” Believers are obligated to maintain much higher standards of living.

1 Thessalonians 4:6-7

<sup>6</sup> and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister. The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before. <sup>7</sup> For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.

**Paul continues ☐ sexual transgressions**

Paul is continuing here the matter of sexual transgression.

**Relations outside marriage ☐ trespass against God/man ☐ defrauds fellow Christian who will take ☐ has taken as wife ☐ One who is robbed ☐ spiritual relative**

To have relations with a woman outside marriage is not just a trespass against God’s law, it also defrauds some fellow Christian who eventually will take, or has taken, this woman as his own wife. The one who is robbed is a spiritual relative of the robber.

**Don’t know why Paul was prompted to write this ☐ It was a problem culturally**

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We don't exactly know what prompted Paul to put these dire consequences in writing about judgement. Perhaps urgency required stern words.

1 Thessalonians 4:8

<sup>8</sup> Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

**Conditional clause □ Instructions □ To reject teaching is to reject God**

Here we see the conditional clause of the instruction that Paul has been giving to the Thessalonica church. To reject Paul's teaching on sex is to reject God, the source of Paul's instruction.

1 Thessalonians 4:9-10

<sup>9</sup> Now about your love for one another we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. <sup>10</sup> And in fact, you do love all of God's family throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more,

The phrase "now about" is a frequent Pauline formula for introducing a new subject.

**Paul responding to different element □ Timothy's report**

At this point Paul is now responding to a different element of Timothy's report from his visit.

**Paul acknowledges compliance to love each other □ doesn't spend much time □**

Paul acknowledges their practical compliance with a responsibility to love each other. He doesn't spend much time here writing about it because he sees that they are getting this component because they have been "taught by God."

Romans 13:8-10

<sup>8</sup> Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup> The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." <sup>10</sup> Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

The Thessalonica church is fulfilling the law by loving one another as God intended.

Paul finishes out verse 10 with encouraging them to keep doing this.

1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

<sup>11</sup> and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, <sup>12</sup> so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

**Mind your own business**



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From now on whenever someone tells you to mind your own business, know that they are just quoting scripture to you!

**Final two verses □ related to 10b □ logical connection not obvious**

These final two verses of this section are closely related to verse 10b, but the logical connection is not immediately obvious.

**More to Christian living than loving other Christian □ Responsible in all areas**

There is more to Christian living than simply loving other Christians. We must be responsible in all areas of life.

**Some Thes □ adopted life of idleness □ handouts □ Manual labor □ work hard □ quiet life**

Some of the Thessalonian Christians had adopted a life of idleness, depending on others for handouts. Some Greeks looked down on manual labor. So Paul told the Thessalonians to work hard and live a quiet life.

**Ephesians 4:28**

<sup>28</sup> Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

**Credibility tied to witness □ striving to live Godly life □ prepared to share Gospel**

Our credibility as Christians is directly tied to our witness. We must always be working striving towards living a Godly life and being prepared to share the Gospel message at any given moment.

**1 Peter 3:15**

<sup>15</sup> But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

**Not effective sharing faith □ no respect □ careers, community, social media □**

As believers we can't be effective in sharing our faith with others if they don't respect us. Whatever we do, in our careers, in our interactions in the community, in our exchanges on social media we need to do it with love and gentleness rooted in truth.

Whether we like it or not, much of our witness takes place before we even have the chance to witness.

**I'd like to invite the ushers to start passing out communion and also have the worship team come back up.**

**March □ Good Friday □ Easter □ reflect □ what the Lord has done for us**

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As we enter the month of March and have Good Friday and Easter in our sights, we reflect on what the Lord has done for us.

**Refreshed thinking of death of Christ □ no need to sensationalize □**

As believers we are often refreshed when thinking of the death of Christ. I've never thought we need to sensationalize it or dress it up, **the simple and truthful details surrounding the death of Jesus will suffice.**

**The beatings, the torment, the mockery, the physical affliction he endured on the cross, the darkness, the aloneness;**

**Speaks loudly □ love of God for his people**

all of it speaks loudly of the love of God for his people.

**Talking the event of Jesus' death □ helps bring gospel back to fresh in our minds**

To talk of the event of Jesus' death helps bring the point of the gospel back to a fresh place in our minds.

**Lord gives opportunity □ communion table □ to ask Lord to make Gospel fresh in our minds**

The Lord gives us an opportunity before the communion table to ask the Lord to renew us.

**This reminds of us of the answers to our question about "What is God?"**

**In 1 Thes. 4:9-10 □ Paul commends church □ loving one another □ importance**

In 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10 Paul commends the church for how they are loving one another. He reminds them of how important this is and that because they have been taught by God they are doing a good thing.

**Paul encourages □ Keep on loving one another more and more**

Paul encourages us to keep on doing this. To keep on loving one another more and more.

**As sheep □ we quickly forget □ quarreling □ This time is so important to remind**

As sheep we quickly forget this and we can easily find ourselves quarreling amongst each other.

**In this time □ confess sins □ reconciliation w/ one another □ enemy will divide**

In this time, we must confess before the Lord our transgressions before approaching the communion table. If there is any lack of reconciliation, this is a time the Lord has given us to resolve this here this morning. **If there is anything that the enemy can use to divide the family, divide the church, it is a lack of being reconciled.**

**Paul □ 1 Cor 13:8 □ Love never ends □ broken relationships □ will of god □**

The Apostle Paul tells us in the first part of 1 Corinthians 13:8 that love never ends. If there

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are broken relationships in the church, it is not the will of God for those to remain broken. It can't be broken **because love does not end.**

1 John 1:8

**8 If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth.**

**Silent time in prayer □ approach Lord □ forgiveness □ one another □ confess**

I want to give us some time in silent prayer to approach the Lord with our requests for forgiveness. I also want to give us this time to approach one another before we partake in communion, to confess anything you may be harboring against one another. Let's take some time to do this now.

## Reflection

### Prayer and Confession

**Lords supper □ powerful time of**

The Lord's supper is a powerful time of **reconnection, reconciliation and recommitment** to the Lord by dining with Him at his table.

**Reminder of sacrifice □ our forgiveness and redemption □ reflection what the Lord has done**

This is a reminder of his ultimate sacrifice for our forgiveness and redemption. Let this moment be a time of reflection of what work the Lord has done for you and I on the cross.

**The Apostle Paul gives us instructions in how to partake in the Lord's supper. He says in...**

1 Corinthians 11:27-32

Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. Paul goes on to say that if we judge ourselves truly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

On the same night when he was betrayed, he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "this is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

### Eat of the bread

In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

### Drink the Juice – Go right into worship

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Worship

Prayer

Home Group Questions:

1. How has your understanding of “what is God?” changed over the years? Compare to how your family raised you to consider this question to how God has evolved your understanding today.
2. What is the difference in the way someone lives their life when they live to please God out of merit-based motives verses living to please God out of the desire to please their Lord?

Read the following verses about pleasing God: (1 Thes. 2:4; 2 Cor. 5:9; Ephesians 5:8-10; 17; Col. 1:10; Hebrews 11:6; 13:15-16; 1 John 3:22)

3. Re-read 1 Thessalonians 4:8: In the world we live in today it is becoming more and more unpopular to become a Christian. The world seems to reject Christians who hold to a pure lifestyle. Verse 8 tells us that a person who rejects this teaching isn't rejecting a person but is rejecting God. The more modern approach to Christianity is bending the truth of God by saying you can live a willful patter of sin AND still follow after Christ. How does this not only skew the word of God but confuse people seeking Christ?
4. What is most challenging to you when Paul discusses loving those in the family of God. How has God been sanctifying you when loving hard-to-love Christians in the family of God?
5. In the final two verses of this section (11-12), Paul speaks on the topic of idleness or looking for handouts from those who have more than them. In what areas of your life have you found yourself to be idle in?