

High Peaks Bible Fellowship

Grow in Holiness as God Has Planned (1 Thessalonians [4:1-12](#))

Paul's exhortation to continued holiness of life (1 Thess. [4:1-3a](#))

- Finally (*loipos*) = "as for what remains to be said." Paul has several specific issues to address, and he will now discuss these things.
- Paul's urgent plea is made in the Name and by the Authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. This commands the attention of the Thessalonians and of us.
- Paul had carefully instructed the Thessalonians when he was with them, both in doctrine and in proper conduct. But there is always room for continued growth in the things of the Lord.
- Commandments (*parangelias*) = to pass on an announcement, to give an order. Even though the Christian is no longer obligated to obey the Mosaic Law, the believer in this dispensation has new instructions that need to be obeyed and a new power that can enable him to succeed.
- Two Aspects of Sanctification:
 1. Positional Sanctification: At the moment of salvation, the believer was positioned "in Christ." The holiness and righteousness of Christ were imputed to the believer, and God views the believer as holy because of his position in Christ.
 2. Experiential Sanctification: Even though the believer is holy because of his position in Christ, he lives the remainder of his earthly life in a fallen, earthly body which still tends toward sin. The indwelling Holy Spirit can enable the believer to gain control over the flesh and to choose holiness of life, but the believer is still capable of sinning and sometimes does commit sin. In 1 Thessalonians Paul is exhorting the believers to continue growing in holiness and walking or living in a way that pleases God.

Abstain from sexual immorality (1 Thess. [4:3b-8](#))

- Abstain = *to keep distant from* (see 1 Cor. [6:18](#); 1 Tim. [6:11](#); 2 Tim. [2:22](#)).
- Sexual immorality (*porneia*) = illicit sexual intercourse. Acts [15:20](#) recorded that this was to be commanded of the Gentiles. Paul wants them to "come to know" or "to learn" how to gain control over their body (vessel -- see 2 Cor.4:7) so that they can use it to bring honor to God and add value to God's work.
- Our calling from God does not contain any plan for impurity. Those who commit sexual immorality are rejecting God's plan for His "holy ones." They are also rejecting or ignoring the Holy Spirit who enables the believer to do what is right.

Grow in self-sacrificing love for brothers in Christ (1 Thess. [4:9-10](#))

- The Thessalonians were already practicing self-sacrificing love for each other, but Paul reminds them to continue growing in this virtue (see 1 Thess. [3:12](#)).
- Treating others with this kind of love will also be an effective antidote to the poison of sexual immorality, as well as to the problem Paul discusses in the next two verses.

Live in quietness and peace, continuing to do your daily work (1 Thess. [4:11-12](#))

- There was a small group of believers in Thessalonica who were not doing their daily work -- they were not

going about their normal business -- and this was disturbing the entire church.

- When he was with them Paul had commanded them to stop being idle and to work with their hands. Now he reminds them of this command. Unfortunately he will also need to deal with this issue again in his second letter to the Thessalonians.
- Paul will elaborate on this situation in his second letter, but here he simply exhorts them to live in quietness and peace by continuing to do their normal work. If this problem were solved, then it would certainly help them to excel more and more in brotherly love within the Church.

Points of Application:

- We cannot live in obedience to commands that we do not know, so we should continue to study the Scriptures to learn God's will for our daily living.
- In particular, sexual immorality is a very destructive misuse of the body, mind, and spirit that God has given to us. We must flee from it!
- Practicing self-sacrificing love toward others will keep us from abusing them in any way.
- Knowing the truths of God's Word will help us to lead a settled and quiet life. We can go about our daily work knowing that it is valuable in God's sight.

© 2004 by [Steve Lewis](#)

[High Peaks Bible Fellowship](#)

Our primary purpose is to uphold the truths of the Word of God.

I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. (1 Timothy 3:15)

Our primary responsibility is to equip the saints for the work of ministry.

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-12)