

The Unstoppable Pursuit of Holiness

1 Thessalonians 4:7 "For God has not called us to impurity but to sanctification."

Text: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

Topics: Sexual immorality, Sanctification

Series: Unstoppable

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What does it mean for us to be holy?

When God told Israel to be holy in Leviticus 11 and 19, He was instructing them to be distinct from the other nations by giving them specific regulations to govern their lives. Israel is God's chosen nation and God has set them apart from all other people groups. They are His special people, and consequently they were given standards that God wanted them to live by so the world would know they belonged to Him. When Peter repeats the Lord's words in 1 Peter 1:16, he is talking specifically to believers. As believers, we need to be "set apart" from the world unto the Lord. We need to be living by God's standards, not the world's. (Gotquestions.org)

To walk properly in holiness...

1. _____ from sexual immorality (vs. 1-8)
 - a. What constitutes sexual immorality? According to the Bible it includes adultery, fornication, homosexuality, incest, prostitution, rape, and lust.
 - b. We are to control our bodies in sanctification and honor.
 - I. Sanctification - in holiness, purification, dedicated to God.
 - II. Honor - to respect its value, to exhibit behavior suitable before God and humans respectively.
 - c. We must heed God's warnings in all matters of sexual immorality, for "the Lord is the avenger of all these offenses." (Vs. 6)
2. Abound in your love for _____ (vs. 9-10)
 - a. God has given us each other to help in fighting against sin and reaching the world for Christ.
 - b. We must work towards improving our fellowship with other believers so that our love can increase.
3. Aspire to live properly towards _____ (vs. 11-12)
 - a. We are to be good workers and not place burdens on other people by the way we live our lives.
 - b. We must pay attention to how unbelievers view us - seeking to maintain a reputation from which we may reach them with the Gospel.

Questions for Application

- 1) How much do you think people are influenced by what they watch on television?
- 2) How is sex viewed by many of the people you know and work with?
- 3) What instruction had Paul given to the Thessalonians when he was with them? (4:1)
- 4) What did Paul urge his audience to do? (4:1)
- 5) By what authority did Paul give his instructions? (4:2)
- 6) What are God's desires for our sexuality? (4:3-8)
- 7) How is the Christian's sexual conduct to be different from that of the non-Christian? (4:4-5)
- 8) How did Paul characterize the heathen? (4:5)
- 9) When people ignore or reject God's instructions on sexual behavior, what are they rejecting? (4:8)
- 10) What command of God were the Thessalonians known for obeying? (4:9-10)
- 11) What ambition were the Thessalonians to pursue? (4:11-12)
- 12) What is the result of living a quiet, respected, and responsible life? (4:11-12)
- 13) How often do we need to be reminded about God's instructions for our lives?
- 14) In what way can ambition for fame, success, or wealth hurt a believer?
- 15) How does God want us to use our bodies?
- 16) How would you respond to someone who says it is possible to be a good Christian while also being sexually immoral?
- 17) How do the media influence our attitudes about sex?
- 18) How can we wrong a person through our sexual behavior?
- 19) What is a holy life?
- 20) What would motivate you to live a life that is pure and holy?
- 21) What influence on people and society can a hardworking, quiet person have?
- 22) In the future, how could you help a Christian caught in sexual sin?
- 23) What can you do to maintain your purity?
- 24) When can you spend some time examining your ambitions in light of God's priorities for you?