

Edgemont Bible Church
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Thessalonians

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Intro:

IX. Abstaining from Sexual Sin - 1 Thess 4:3-8

A. What Kind of Sexual Conduct does God Require - vs 3

1. For - ties this section to the previous (that you continue to abound)
2. this is the will of God,
 - a. Paul already knew that they wanted to do the will of God - 1:3-10
 - b. your sanctification:
 - i. **Hagiasmos** - purification, (the state) purity; a purifier:--holiness, sanctification.
 - ii. The process of being separated from sin and being set apart to God's holiness - Ps 4:3; Jer 1:5; Jo 17:17,19; Acts 20:32; 26:18; Ro 6:22; 15:16; 1Co 6:11; Eph 5:26-27; 2 Tim 2:21; Heb 2:11; 10:10; 13:12
 - iii. A direct result of salvation
 - iv. Refers back to 1 Thess 3:13 in which Paul was praying that God would establish their hearts blameless in holiness
3. that you should abstain from sexual immorality;
 - a. the 1st priority in the devotion to sanctification within a sexually permissive culture
 - i. Understanding habits - recognizing the tendency to fall back into habitual life patterns,
 - ii. Understanding triggers - especially under the stress of persecution
 - b. Paul gives a direct, uncomplicated command
 - i. abstain - **Apechomai** - to hold oneself off, refrain:--abstain.
 - Staying completely away from
 - includes any thought or behavior that violates the principles of God's word
 - ii. **Porneia** - used to describe any form of illicit sexual behavior - Jo 8:41 - figuratively, idolatry; Ac 15:20,29; Ac 21:25; 1Co 6:13,18; Rev 2:21 - sexual immorality; 1 Co 5:1 - adultery; **2Co 12:21; Ga 5:19; Eph 5:3; Col 3:5; Re 2:20-21; 9:21 - fornication;**
 - the contrast is Marriage is honorable among all - He 13:4a
 - iii. Paul's (God's) teachings on sexual morality are very strict
 - Eph 5:3 But fornication and all **uncleanness** or covetousness, let it **not even be named** among you, as is fitting for saints;
 - Col 3:3,5 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, **uncleanness**, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.
 - uncleanness - **akatharsia** - impurity (the quality), physically or morally, uncleanness; includes - meaning extends beyond acts of

sexual sin to include thoughts and intentions - Mt 5:27-28

iv. Those that are habitually engaged in sexual immorality are not saved -

1 Co 6:9-10; Gal 5:19-21; Rev 21:8; 22:15

v. 1 Co 6 also indicates that Christians may sometimes commit sexual sins
- 15-20

B. How Can A Believer Be Sexual Moral? - 4:4-6a

1. The Body Should Not Control The Believer - vs 4

a. that each of you - no one is exempt

b. should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,

i. **eido** – having the knowledge or skill necessary to accomplish the desired goal

- requires knowing oneself

- requires acknowledging weaknesses, and evil propensities

ii. How to possess - **Ktaomai** - to gain mastery over, get, acquire (by any means; own):--obtain, possess, provide, purchase.

iii. **Skeuos** - a vessel, implement, equipment or apparatus, (specially, *a wife as contributing to the usefulness of the husband*) goods, sail, stuff, vessel.

- wife does not fit the context

-just b/c it is used this way in 1 Pet 3:7

-in this context, it would mean that the wife is no more than a vessel to satisfy the husband's sexual desires

- the NT uses this word

-metaphorically for utensils, implements or tools - Ro 9:21; 2 Co 4:7; 2 Tim 2:21

-in reference to people – Acts 9:15; Ro 9:22-23

- in this case, body is the best translation

-unredeemed flesh is the beachhead for sin and immorality

– Ro 7:18; 8:5-8,23

- Paul urges believers to

-kill the flesh – Ro 13:14; 2 Co 7:1

-live by the Spirit – Ro 8:13

-dedicate their bodies to God and be transformed by renewing their minds – Ro 12:1-2

- since the culture of Thessalonica and our culture operate largely according to appetites, impulses, and superficial emotions, this exhortation is important to us

- Paul made it clear that the only way to control the flesh is reliance upon the Spirit – Ro 7:23; 8:2

-Walk in the Spirit – Gal 5:16

-in order to walk, one must be filled with the Spirit – Eph 5:18

-in order to be filled, one must let God's word dwell within them – Col 3:16; Ps 19:7-11; 119:11,105 - they must read, study, and apply scripture so that it saturates their lives

saturates their lives and allows them to yield to the Spirit

iv. In sanctification and honor

- sanctification – see

- honor – the result of separation from sin - **Time** - a value, money paid, valuables; esteem, or the dignity itself, honor, precious, price, some.

-they should show respect to their bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit and instruments of Service to Christ

-no Christian should ever ask how close can we get to the line and still avoid sin

2. The Believer Should Not Act Like the Unbeliever - vs 5

a. not in passion of lust,

i. the uncontrolled desire for sexual gratification which is typical of unregenerate people

ii. **Pathos** – uncontrollable desires, compelling feelings, a passion, (especially concupiscence):-- (inordinate) affection, lust - Ro 1:26; Col 3:5

iii. **Epithumia** – refers to a out of control craving, a longing (especially for what is forbidden), concupiscence, desire, lust (after) - Ro 6:12; 2 Tim 2:22; Tit 3:3; 1 Pet 4:3 – can refer to legitimate desires – Phil 1:23; 1 Thess 2:17

iv. Used together to forcefully characterize immorality

b. like the Gentiles who do not know God

i. not transformed by the divine work of salvation

ii. We are different, regardless of up-bringing

– Gal 5:24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

- 1Jo 3:9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

iii. We must not subject ourselves to societies sexually immoral temptations - 2 Tim 2:22; 1Jo 2:15-16

iv. Over exposure to such temptations lowers one's resistance, reduces outrage, and can lead a believer to actions that are inconsistent to their position in Christ – 1 Co 6:15-20

3. The Believer Should Not Take Advantage of Others - vs 6a

a. that no one should

i. take advantage of

– **huperbaino** –to transcend, to overreach:--go beyond.

- to transgress – to sin against, includes the concept of stepping over the line, exceeding the lawful limits,

ii. and defraud – **pleonekteo** - to selfishly greedily take for something for personal gain and pleasure at someone else's expense, includes the idea of taking advantage of someone.

b. his brother in this matter,

- i. serious matter in that it goes against the 2nd greatest commandment
- ii. To be a stumbling block for a fellow believer

C. Why Should A Believer Be Sexually Moral - vs 6b-8

1. 1st Motive - Because of God's Vengeance - vs 6b

a. because the Lord is the avenger of all such,

- i. **ekdikos** - carrying justice out, i.e. a punisher:--a (re-)venger.
- ii. Heb 13:4 Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.
- iii. Many times God's judgment or chastisement is found in the consequences of our sin

- a severely damaged marriage with loss of love and respect in the family resulting in divorce

- Sexually Transmitted diseases or pregnancy

- absence of God's blessing

- some sort of loss of eternal reward

b. as we also forewarned you and testified – Paul always tried to teach the whole counsel of God – Acts 22:27

2. 2nd Motive - Because of God's Purpose - vs 7

a. For God did not call us to uncleanness, - **akatharsia**

b. but in holiness.

i. **hagiasmos** – 3rd time used in this passage

ii. Holiness is a direct result of God's calling on their life – Eph 4:1; 1 Thess 2:12; 1 Jo 3:9

iii. Paul was intent on working with Christ on presenting the church as a bride “not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing” – Eph 5:27

3. 3rd Motive - Because of God's Holy Spirit - vs 8

a. Therefore he who rejects this

i. **atheteo** - to set aside, i.e. (by implication) to disesteem, neutralize or violate:--cast off, despise, disannul, frustrate, bring to nought, reject.

ii. does not reject man, but God, - this is not a matter of opinion (Ro 14)

b. who has also given us His Holy Spirit.

i. one purpose for the giving was to be able to live as God has called us to live - Joh 14:16-17; Ro 8:9; Gal 5:16; 1Jo 3:24; 4:13

ii. Given – abides with you forever – Isa 59:21; Jo 14:16; 2Co 1:22; Eph 1:13-14;

iii. Because He is forever abiding in you, everything you do, He is their with you - 1Co 6:19-20;