

Find Your Calling to Holy Sexuality

1 Thessalonians 4:7-8 - January 28, 2024

“The message of sexual purity was a ‘hard sell’ in Thessalonica, and, clearly, the first round of teaching on this matter was not sufficient for some members of the church. The language of this passage could not be weightier or more emphatic. Though Paul employs euphemisms in describing sexual sin, he speaks with great plainness about what God expects and the consequences of disobedience. But the passage is also filled with positive words about God’s will and calling, as well as his empowerment through the Holy Spirit. From Paul’s perspective Christians *must* and *can* lead a life that conforms to God’s and not society’s norms. The present passage speaks loudly and directly to the church of our day, which is still working through the implications of the ‘sexual revolution.’” (Green, G. L. (2002). *The letters to the Thessalonians* (p. 201). W.B. Eerdmans Pub.; Apollos.)

1. Find your calling (4:7)

a. God has called us

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 *God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved.... To this he called you through our gospel.*

1 Thessalonians 1:5 *because [the] gospel came to [them] not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.*

b. God has called us to or for something

c. God has called us to be a vessel that is not impure

d. God has called us to be a holy vessel

2 Peter 2:20, 22 *For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first.... "The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire."*

e. God has called us to be a God-like vessel

1 Peter 1:14–15 *Do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct*

f. God has called us to be a vessel of blessing

2. Walk with the One who called you (4:8)

Isaiah 1:2–4 *"Children have I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against me. 3 The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand." 4 Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, children who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the Lord, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged.*

Ezekiel 36:25–27 *I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. 26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.*

Galatians 5:18 *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*

Galatians 5:25 *If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.*

Galatians 5:16 *walk in the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.*

Benediction and Charge: 2 Peter 1:2–11