



What does increased love for the brethren look like, when believers are already doing it well?

Pastor leads his family in today's "Hopewell @Home" passage. 1Thessalonians 4:9–12 looks forward to the second serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these four verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that love means being ambitious to be quiet (not dramatic), engaged in our own business (not nosing into others'), and laboring with our own hands (and not expecting others to do it for us.

Thursday, May 5, 2022 ▫ Read 1Thessalonians 4:9–12

Questions from the Scripture text: About what had the Thessalonians needed him to write (v1–8)? About what had they not needed (v9a)? How had they come to love one another well (v9b)? Whom else did they love well (v10a)? Now what were they to do (v10b)? What three commands (v11) does he now add to the instruction about marriage from v1–8 and brotherly love from v9–10? What will obedience to these three things result in toward others (v12a)? Toward themselves (v12b)?

The apostle has previously asserted that the will of God was their sanctification (v3) and then spent the next five verses emphasizing holiness in the manner by which one obtains a wife. In that discussion, the most important thing was to express properly the knowledge of God (v5) and avoid provoking the vengeance of God (v6b). But it was not unimportant that they be careful not to defraud their brother (v6a).

Now, the **love of the brethren takes center stage** (v9a), even though they have already made much progress in grace in this area (v9b–10a). So when the apostle tells those who have already attained significantly to love one another that they are now to “increase more and more,” all true believers will wish to pay attention. This is the great new commandment of the church: that we love one another as Christ has loved us (cf. Jn 13:34). And now the apostle is about to give a course in “advanced loving one another.” So, we should all perk up our ears.

Now that we're paying attention, what does this “increase more and more” in loving one another look like? He gives us three brief commands using almost poetic language to urge us against hysteria, nosiness, and laziness.

Against hysteria: “aspire to lead a quiet life.” Literally, “be ambitious to be quiet.” There's the type of person who is always up in arms about something. Always aiming at some new thing. Always rallying the troops for something. It's not loving to continually rile people up. It's contrary to the steadiness that belongs to walking by faith in Christ. The fruit of the Spirit is patience, gentleness, self-control. The “riler-upper” thinks himself ambitious. Others might think he is too. So the apostle gives him something to aspire to, something to always be going after: quietness. Be ambitious to be quiet.

Against nosiness: “mind your own business.” This needs almost no explanation. The second part of v11's course in advanced brotherly love is to stop sticking your nose into other people's business. The verb is an activity, engagement verb. It goes well with the “be ambitious” ... something like “be active” or “be engaged.” This is another stroke of vocabulary genius, because we tend to excuse our nosiness as just being engaged. So the apostle says, “be engaged *in that which is your own*.” There's no word in the original corresponding to “business” in our translation, leaving the word that means “that which is your own” alone for emphasis.

Against laziness: “work with your own hands.” There's nothing free in this life. If *your own* hands aren't providing for you, then *someone else's* are. The apostle will return to this subject in 2Thess 3:6–12. It seems that those who were hysterical and were busybodies were so caught up in it that they didn't bother to work. Perhaps they figured it was relatively little to ask from others to just share what they had. But love sacrifices itself, rather than expecting others to sacrifice for itself. We must diligent to provide for ourselves, if we can, especially since this may gain for us the opportunity to provide for others who can't (cf. Eph 4:28).

Avoiding these things will keep us from becoming an unnecessary stumbling block to unbelievers (v12a). But it's also the way that we come to “lack nothing” (v12b)—both materially and spiritually. Materially, the Lord has so ordered His world that a quiet, diligent person who minds his own business ordinarily is able to provide for all his needs that way. More importantly, however, it is very important that we not lack love for one another. If we want to “lack nothing,” let us heed this lesson in “advanced love of the brethren”!

In which of the areas above do you most need to grow in loving others? In dependence upon the Lord, and using His means, what is your specific plan for growing in it?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for loving us and for producing love in us. Forgive us for our emotional instability, and give us the levelheaded quietness that benefits our brethren. Forgive us for our nosiness, and give us the contentment and focus to be engaged in our own lives and roles to which you have called us. Forgive us for our laziness, and give us the diligence to labor with our own hands and generosity to share with those who can't. For, we ask it through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP15 “Within Your Tent, Who Will Reside?” or TPH409 “Blest Be the Tie That Binds”

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

First Thessalonians 4 versus 9 through 12. These are God's words, but concerning brotherly love. You have no need that. I should write to you for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another, and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia, but we urge you brethren that.

You increase more and more that you also aspire to lead a quiet life to mind your own business and to work with your own hands. As we commanded you that you may walk properly towards those who are outside and that you may like nothing so far. The reading of Gods inspired and then Aaron tort

So the beginning of this chapter, he started talking to them about the will of their will of God for them, which is sanctification and the big part of that growth and holiness that belongs to entering into marriage in the right way. Now, he moves on from that, which is urgent and intense, and many people feel the need of it, holiness in those sorts of things.

To the every day, nitty-gritty of holiness and Christian love and Christian, love was something they already had. And they already knew in their hearts because they were loving all of the brethren and all Macedonia. He doesn't mention exactly what this was. It may have included collecting and sharing wealth with them and it probably included sending evangelists as well.

If we combine what we read about, the Thessalonian church and Acts with what we indeed have already read even in first Thessalonians that they wished for all to know the gospel which they had received as the Word of God. Well, sometimes it's easy to love those who are in other places and not to love those.

Well love. Well, those whom the Lord has placed nearer. You. And so he wants them to abound more and more to increase more and more in this. Love verse 10, even though they are already loving. Many brethren in a good way and he gives these three instructions that you aspire to lead a quiet life that you mind your own business and that you work with your own hands and these three commands.

He actually kind of uses ironic language. He uses words that tackle. The excuse that a person can give himself for not following the Lord's commands in each one. And we find out in the first command that brotherly love is against hysteria against always being up in arms. About something are always having some crisis to, to rail everyone up about.

And then the second place that brotherly love is against nosiness. Always being asking about and engaging in other people's lives for the, for the purpose of trying to change the way they are doing something or make comment on the way they're doing something. And then the third place that probably love is against laziness and not the sort of laziness that is inactive that the sort of laziness that says, I'm too busy with other things to do my ordinary work.

And supply for me and my for my and my family's needs. So, in the first place, brotherly love is against hysteria. He says that you also aspire to lead a quiet life. He uses a word that means ambitious People who are ambitious are often trying to influence the world.

And so he uses the word, that means ambitious. And he says you should be very ambitious to be quiet. In other words, gentle all that energy into not railing people up into restraining, your own tendency to want to be dramatic. You know someone says well I just have a dramatic personality.

Then you say, yes, it's called original sin and loving others means not being dramatic. It means being ambitious to be quiet. That's what the Apostle by the Spirit here. Says, So you may feel in your heart especially in There's a situation ongoing situation with people in a social circle or there's something in your own private life or in the community, that could be something that gets a lot of attention and you like that attention, you may have within your heart or your mind the temptation to plan for how you're going to talk to people about it.

And just resist, the desire trial people up or the tendency throughout people up. Not everyone has it but it's unloving to do that to them. It is not a loving thing keep people always on edge always stressed out, making them always feel like there's some new things they have to do.

Our God has given us. Ordinary means and ordinary work and ordinary life laboring for his glory and ordinary things framed by worship morning and evening day by day and then all day on the Lord's Day and we love one another well by being ambitious, to be quiet. So brotherly love is against hysteria or drama.

Brotherly love is also against nosiness. They also sparked to lead a quiet life and to mind your own business. And here he uses a word to that means to be engaged and someone who has nosy, not just gossipy, but always probing into what others are doing so that they can make a ton of suggestions as if they are appointed to manage everyone else.

They may flatter themselves saying, oh, I'm just a really engaged person. It's too bad. Everyone else is so passive. They must not care as much as I did, or they must not be as engaged as I am. And the apostle says, yeah, be engaged in your own business. You have such wonderful ideas about the best way to do things.

Come up with wonderful ideas about the best way to do your things and leave other people alone. So that's against nosiness And the last place is against laziness. So not only that you aspire to lead a quiet life and not only that you mind your own business, but to work with your own hands as we commanded you

God has designed that we would be provided for by labor. It's part of the fall that that labor is wearisome by sweat. And if you are not working hard with your own hands, then somebody else is gonna have to work with their hands to support. You we'll find out as we move through first Thessalonians this comes up again and second Thessalonians.

There were some who thought that the Lord had already come and that the world was in this kind of weird, limbo. And there were others who thought that the Lord was coming so imminently that they should just go around and talk about it instead of working to support themselves and to be able to give to others.

And eventually the apostle is going to have to say, he will not work. Let him not eat. You know, they'll figure out that they need to work pretty soon. This is they get hungry but our work is whatever. The Lord has given us to do, and one of the ways that we end up lazy, as a wind instead of paying attention to our own work, we take on a bunch of other things that, that make our responsibilities start to fall through.

It's very unloving to make others, to make yourself dependent upon others. When you could have worked and taking care of yourself and hopefully, even be able to be generous with those who can't work because we are still in the creation. That's bound to corruption and decay. And there are those who are literally because of opportunity or ability incapable of working and so we should each want to work enough.

That not only can we take care of ourselves and our household functions as a unit. It doesn't mean that each of you have to figure out how to contribute to the grocery budget, but we should work enough that we would not only be able to take care of ourselves, but be able to be generous with others in their time of need, like we learned in the book of Ephesians as well.

So there are three things here that the Apostle commands brotherly love against being dramatic or hysteria Mosey being lazy. He says that you be ambitious to be quiet. That you'll be engaged in your own business and that you labor with your own hands and those who love each other.

In such practical ways will be viewed by outsiders. As those who walk properly. Go be shocked. Here's a people who lack nothing member how in the early days of the church. It said no one had any lack because and we looked back at how the Lord had told his people before about being generous.

And there would be times even when there were no poor among them. And yet they also told them the poor would never cease from the land. So obviously, they were not going to do it. Well, on a consistent basis for the church has done it well at times. Did it well and acts which we already saw and the church?

The Thessalonian Church here was encouraged that if they do these things. Well, there would not be lack among them in verse 12 and then this would be a sign to the world that they would see that believers are highly functional in this life. That that their piety towards God has not made them use less but more useful to one another than anyone else.

So we too should want to be. I don't know how to call it psychologically, emotionally psycho-emotionally useful to one another by not being dramatic, and socially useful to one another by not being nosy, and economically useful to one another by working with our own hands. All of these are ways, our areas of life that God is merciful to us.

And if we're imitating in and our love for the brethren, They'll be ways that we want to be merciful to others. That's good for us to remember that. Things like over dramatic and nosiness and laziness that. These are unmerciful towards others. So, love one another. Well, says the apostle.

There's some application to you guys. Even in the way that you talk and act about things, don't be dramatic. Let our house. Be a quiet house. What a house. Be a house where your ambitious to be quiet. Don't be nosy of seven. People are doing. Homeschool at one table.

There's a temptation to pay more attention to what they are doing than what you were doing. I don't know. Some of you may have actually been instructed to help others. That's not being nosy. That's what your directed to do, but it seems like everyone acts like their instructed to help others.

So Watch out for that and then don't be lazy. Don't find a million side projects to do so that the house gets bogged down by. You still having your lessons to do. When it comes time to do something else. Late in the day. Knock it out. Well, knock it out.

Early. Do the side projects later after your responsibilities are fulfilled and your way of having extra to give to others, may even be to take on chores or things that mom would have needed help with. Don't be a slave to the chart that says this job is, is my job and then you'd be like a union person and say, no one else is allowed to do this.

This is mine and I'm not going to do anything else. And I want to touch somebody else's job, and in the Hakeem Family Union. No work hard with your own hands and help one another rather than requiring others to help you. If everyone brought to the fellowship meal the way, mom brings to the fellowship meal, we'd have to buy six more tables and like go out into the streets of Columbia and gather 200 people to eat the food every week.

Make the way work in our house gets done to be like that with everyone trying to do a triple share instead of just trying to make sure that your tiny little slice gets done. And then being exasperated with everyone else. Of course, if you're all doing a triple share them, ain't nobody gonna be exasperated with everyone else.

We just live and love which is the point of the passage, love the brethren and increase in it, more and more. Let's pray Our Father in heaven. We pray that you would blessed to us. This portion of your word, There are some Lord who think that they are being loving but

Have really been unmerciful towards your people and it's so easy for us. It identify them and the passage because it describes them. So clearly help us Lord, not to read it first in that way, although we do ask, but you'd help them to see and understand what real love is.

And that your spirit would produce in them. More Christ, like love, but we pray. First and foremost, that you would help us with the things that we were talking about at the end and making our home a loving place in the way that the apostle defines love and in this particular text that we would be quiet non-dramatic and not noisy.

But each of us engaged in our own business and that we would be diligent with the work of our hands, so that the house would lack nothing. But have instead and abundance and pray that Christ will be glorified by you producing this in us and that your spirit, therefore would take your word, which we have heard with our ears and now write it on our hearts and shape.

Our lives by it. We ask it in Christ's name. Amen.