

1 Thessalonians 4: 1-12

“A Walk That Pleases God”

I.) Intro.

II.) Vs. 1-3a Walking In His Will

III.) Vs. 3b-8 Walking In Self Discipline

IV.) Vs. 9-10 Walking In Love

V.) Vs. 11-12 Walking To Win

I.) Intro.

In First Thessalonians Paul covers their past, present and future. He reminded them how they became Christians and how to maintain their walk with the Lord. Next week Paul will address their future and how that should influence their present. Today, Paul brings up the present; twice in these 12 verses he speaks to them about their walk. It is fact one of Paul’s favorite subjects in all of his letters. *The Christian life begins with a step a faith, which must lead to a walk of faith.* Paul uses the word walk 31 times in his letters using several Greek that can be rendered “walk” in English.

- One word means to “march in rank, to conform in virtue and holiness”, Paul uses that word only four times.
- Another word means “to move all around” and is the preferred word that Paul uses as he uses it twice in this passage as well as some 33 other times.

I find it interesting that when Paul is speaking of a “walk” that pleases God he **doesn’t use** the Greek word that means to “*march in some ordered perspective*”. Instead he uses the word for “walk” in the Greek that means “freedom of movement”. Saints a walk that

pleases God is not “*rank and file marching around*” it is about a “*life of freedom*” that is only found in obedience to Gods Word!

II.) Vs. 1-3a Walking In His Will

Vs. 1 The word “finally” doesn’t mean he is finished, it means that Paul is going to speak about the practical application of “*establishing your heart blameless in holiness*”, (verse 2:13). I notice Paul tells them five things in verse 1 then they need to know if they are going to have “*hearts established in holiness*”:

- 1.) **Brethren**: First, whatever he has to say from here on out is qualified by the fact that they are believers in Jesus. Paul is not asking them to do something that they are not capable of doing, he is asking them to be what they are as a Christian!
- 2.) **We Urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus**: Walking to please God is not an option it is a necessity that grows out of a healthy relationship with God. Paul begs them and exhorts them in the “*Lordship of Jesus*”. This reveals us that **the lack of spiritual growth in a believer life is always a “Lordship” issue!** Some people will respond to the gospel message that emphasizes **Jesus as Savior**, because no one wants to go to hell. But **He is not your Savior if He is not your Lord!**
- 3.) **That you should abound more and more**: Thirdly, Paul uses the word “*abound*” and in the Greek it describes a bud of a flower coming into full bloom. The flower is starting to open to reveal the beauty of their Christian life, but he didn’t want them to stop but to allow it to

come to full bloom. The Christian life is designed to come into full bloom it ought to pick up speed as we go along.

- 4.) **Just as you received from us how you ought to walk**: Fourthly, Paul tells them that they had already been instructed on how to walk so now he was only telling them to keep going.
- 5.) **To walk and please God**: Lastly, **It is our growth in His grace that pleases Him. Folks, it's not your profession of faith, or what you say you believe that pleases Him**. Are you? Right now are you closer to Him then when you first made your profession of faith? Has there been a steady growth towards Jesus? *"Does all your life please God?"*

Vs. 2 The word "*commandments*" is a military term that means "*orders handed down from the superior officer*". These were not suggestions they are commandments from the Lord Jesus. Many things would clear up if we just applied this in our lives!

Before we were Christians our main interest was to please ourselves. **As Christians our main interest is to please God not ourselves. Our first question ought to be, "Does this please God?"** You cannot have the benefits of being a Christian and live only to please yourself.

Vs. 3a You can go to any Bible book store and see books on the "*will of God*" but right here we are told that the will of God is. Its concern is for us to always center our lives around being set apart. **A life that is pleasing to God is one that is in the Will Of God! And the Will of God for us is, "SANCTIFICATION" or "to be separate for Gods use". This is not the Lord's hope, He insists on it! It's His will for your life!** Every believer is already set apart for Gods use, so it is not something that we are attain instead

it is a state by which we through His grace live our lives. **If we are not right now living a set apart life for God then according to Paul we are not pleasing Him!** Paul is going to suggest three areas where they need to make sure that they were set apart.

III.) Vs. 3b-8 Walking In Self Discipline

Vs. 3b **Abstain from sexual immorality:** The Bible has a lot to say on the subject of sexual relations. The word “*sexual immorality*” is the word where we get our word pornography from and refers to any sexual relationships outside of the marriage covenant. Paul is going to state this principal both in a positive way and a negative way as he lived in a culture that sexual immorality was encouraged. Paul didn’t care that this was seen as normal and good, it is Gods will that people be sexually pure. Sex was designed both for procreation as well as pleasure, but Satan has corrupted this making sex outside of marriage what people want. There is no mention of why Paul says this to these believers as such this was to prevent them from going in the wrong direction to start with.

A.) Vs. 4 **Positive:** Knowing how to possess your vessel in sanctification on honor. The word vessel here can both refer to our own bodies or your spouse. In either case the idea is to so control our lives sexually in a way that please God.

B.) Vs. 5 **Negative:** Not in passion and lust like the Gentiles who do not know God. Believers living to please God we are not to be driven by our lust! Marriages that are based upon lust will not last! *You should find someone who is attractive but the most important feature in not whether they turn you on, it is whether they are turned on towards the Lord!*

Vs. 6 Paul says to not live a separate life to God in the area of sexuality will cause social implications as well as spiritual ones and God will judge those who disregard this.

Vs. 7-8 Paul here lists **two reasons** for his statement:

- 1.) Vs. 7 **It is your call**: If you are a believer then this is what God has called you to. We are not called to be unclean but rather to be Holy even as He is holy! Sexual immorality is inconsistent with who we are now in Jesus! Paul said in 1 Cor. 6:9-12 that we “*should glorify God in our bodies and in our Spirit, which are the Lord’s.*”
- 2.) Vs. 8 **To reject it is to reject God**: Now this is a universal truth, if you reject the counsel of God’s word then you are not rejecting man’s opinion but Gods. Being a believer is never an excuses for sin, for we are called to holiness. A holy walk involves being self-disciplined which means that we want what He wants to the denying of pleasing our flesh!

IV.) Vs. 9-10 Walking In Love

Vs. 9-10 Paul tells them that what pleases God is to walk in love. They were already walking in love towards one another but here he tells them to that they need to increase more and more in this. Our nature determines our action! He tells them that they are already enjoying success in this area and to continue to blossom in the area of love. Perhaps those people who get under your skin are there to enable you to grow in your love towards others? *We are not called to love people based upon their deserving it we are called to love folks because it is part of our new nature in Christ!*

V.) Vs. 11-12 Walking To Win

Vs. 11-12 Lastly Paul tells them that they ought to walk in a way that please God and be an example towards those who do not know Jesus. We ought to walk in a way that wins others and Paul tells how that is done.

A.) **A quite life**: Literally a life that hold its peace. Instead of protesting this or picketing that we are to **live out what we believe by doing two things**:

- 1.) **Mind your own business**: Don't put your nose into a place where it does not belong. Taking care of me is a full time job as get into enough trouble without trying to fix the world. If I would only put as much effort into allowing the Lord to fix me as I do the world I would be far better off!
- 2.) **Work with your own hands**: Mind your own store. Keep busy, an idle mind makes for a troubled heart! We ought not use God's blessing upon our life to make us lazy. Some of these Christians had left their jobs and were sponging off of other Christians.

Vs. 12 As we do this we not only walk properly with the Lord we also do so towards those who are not believers. There you have it who are you pleasing?