**Willing to be a Vessel of Honor**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**1 Thessalonians 4:1-5**

**Wednesday Evening**

**October 13, 2021**

**1 Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God; 2 for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus.**

**3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;**

**1 Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God;**

Saints, the word finally signals a change in subject, as Paul moved on to practical application of faith. Apparently, Timothy’s report had brought Paul great joy regarding the believers’ faith but also included a few noteworthy concerns, for Paul gave instructions for right living in some very specific situations.

**Deuteronomy 5:33**

"You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess."

**Ephesians 2:10**

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

**Hebrews 13:20-21**

20 Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

**2 for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus.**

Saints, the believers had been taught from Paul and his companions to live in a way that pleases God. The apostles had set an example for them of how Christlike living looks. Evidently, they had learned, for Paul said that they were doing just that; but he wanted them to do so more and more. Living to please God is every Christian’s priority.

Saints, knowing Jesus as Savior brings salvation and should prompt every believer to please God. Through obedient believers, God works in the world. Obedience pleases God. Believers cannot claim to know and love God if they do not seek to please him.

**Matthew 22:34-40**

34 But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. 35 Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" 37 Jesus said to him, " 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'

38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

**2 Corinthians 10:3-6**

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty

in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

**Colossians 1:9-14**

9 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 that you may have a walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; 12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. 13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, 14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

**3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;**

Saints, the phrase, God wants you to be holy, refers to a process called “sanctification.” This process continues throughout every believer’s lifetime on earth. God takes the old patterns and behaviors and transforms them to his standards and will. Those who are being sanctified have accepted Christ as Savior and are allowing the Holy Spirit to work in their lives, making them more and more like Christ.

**1 Corinthians 6:12-20**

12 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. 13 Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

14 And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. 15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! 16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." 17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

18 Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

**1 Corinthians 10:1-13**

1 Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, 2 all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

5 But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. 6 Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. 7 And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."

8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; 9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; 10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come.

12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. 13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

**4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,**

Saints,because God wants his people to become holy, believers need to uphold certain standards here on earth. Christianity is not a list of dos and don’ts but a relationship in which the believers desire to please their heavenly Father. To please him requires obedience to his standards.

Apparently the area of sexual sin was plaguing the church in Thessalonica, as it was plaguing the Roman Empire as a whole. The many idols worshiped in the regions across the empire often had an emphasis on sex—some temples even employed prostitutes for the pleasure of “worshipers.” In general, people regarded any kind of sexual activity as acceptable. It was quite common for a man not to limit his sexual relationship to his wife. Homosexuality was common. Incest was overlooked. Slaves were kept and used for sex.

Saints, God is looking at us that we would walk in Sanctification and Honor unto Him!

**2 Timothy 2:19-22**

19 Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity." 20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor.

21 Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. 22 Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

**1 Samuel 2:30**

30 "Therefore the LORD God of Israel says: 'I said indeed that your house and the house of your father would walk before Me forever.' But now the LORD says: 'Far be it from Me; for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed.

**Proverbs 18:10-12**

10 The name of the LORD is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe. 11 The rich man's wealth is his strong city, And like a high wall in his own esteem. 12 Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, And before honor is humility.

**5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;**

Saints, Paul taught that believers must control their bodies and live in holiness and honor—not in lustful passion as the pagans do, in their ignorance of God and his ways.

Sex should be kept in the context of marriage between a man and woman; honorable conduct is contrasted with an evil, lustful attitude that can contaminate even a marriage. People who live by “lustful passion” are ignorant of God because they have chosen to ignore the knowledge of him that they have been given and to ignore his messengers who had brought the Good News to them.

**Galatians 5:16-22**

16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,

21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name!**