

Faith Bible Fellowship of Fairfield Glade
David M. Evangelista, Pastor ~ March 1, 2009
Series on "All Things New"
"How to Please Your Father" ~ 1 Thessalonians 4: 1-12

The Christian life can be compared to a journey or a 'walk'. In fact, this is one of Paul's favorite pictures. Walking suggests progress and we must make progress in the Christian life. Paul described a threefold walk for the believer in Christ to follow:

- 1.) Walk in holiness.**
- 2.) Walk in harmony.**
- 3.) Walk in honesty.**

(See 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8).

At the time of this writing, the moral climate in the Roman Empire was not healthy. Immorality was a way of life—and thanks to slavery; people had the leisure time to indulge in the latest pleasures. Paul gave *four reasons* why they should live a holy life and abstain from sensual lust.

Reason #1. To "walk in holiness" is to please God your Father. (See 1 Thessalonians 4:1). Everybody lives to please somebody. Unfortunately, many live to please themselves. Born-again Christians cannot go through life pleasing only themselves. Pleasing God ought to be the major motive of the Christian life and walk. Pleasing God means more than simply doing His will—it is possible to obey God and yet not please Him! Jonah is a case in point. He obeyed God and did what he was commanded, but his heart was not in it!

Reason # 2. To obey God. (See 1 Thessalonians 4:2-3). When Paul ministered in Thessalonica, he gave the believers the commandments of God regarding personal purity. In verse 3 of our text, Paul reminded these new believers that sexual immorality did not please God! God created sex and He has the authority to govern its use. From the beginning, He established marriage as a sacred union between one man and one woman. God

created sex both for the continuance of the race and for the pleasure of the marriage partners! Marriage should be honored by all and the marriage bed kept pure (See Hebrews 13:4). His commandment is clear; no amount of liberal theology or modern philosophy can alter it!

Reason # 3. Walk to glorify God. (See 1 Thessalonians 4:4-5). This is the positive side of God's commandment. Christians are to be different from the unsaved! The believer who commits sexual sin is sinning against his own body (See 1 Corinthians 6:19-20)—and he is robbing God of the glory He should receive through a believer's way of life. This explains why God gives such demanding requirements for leadership in the church (See 1 Timothy chapter 3). If we glorify God in our bodies then we can glorify in THE BODY of the church!

Reason #4. Walk to escape the judgment of God. (See 1 Thessalonians 4:6-8). God is no respecter of persons—He must deal with His children when they sin (See Colossians 3: 23-25). While it is true that the Christian is not under condemnation (See Romans 8:1), it is also true that he is not free from the harvest of sorrow that comes when we sow to the flesh (See Galatians 6:7-8). How does the Spirit of God help us live a clean life—free from sexual impurity? To begin with He creates holy desires within us so that we have an appetite for God's pure word (See 1 Peter 2:1-3). He teaches us the word that helps us to recall God's promises in times of temptation (See John 14:26 and Ephesians 6:17)! Paul devoted a great deal of space to His theme of sexual impurity—because it was a critical problem in the church in that day—as well as today!

Walk in harmony. (See 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10). Just as God's love is

a holy love,—so our love for one another ought to motivate us to holy living and harmony. The more we live like wants us to—the more we will love one another. If a believer in Christ really loves his brother, he will not sin against him.

Walk in honesty. (See 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12). Christians not only have the obligation to love one another, but also—to be good testimonies to the people of the world. It is quite clear we are to walk in honesty. Notice in verse 11 it states—*"mind your own business and work with your hands."* As we review this section, we see how practical the Christian walk is! The obedient Christian will have a holy life by abstaining from sexual sin—a harmonious life—by loving the brothers and sisters and an honest life by working with his hands and not meddling in the affairs of others!

Challenge for the day: May the unsaved community see Christ magnified in our lives—if so—they will either oppose it with envy or desire it to have it for themselves! Either way—God is glorified!

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