

1 THESSALONIANS: VERSE-BY-VERSE THROUGH PAUL'S FIRST EPISTLE  
SESSION 8 | 1 THESSALONIANS 4:6-12

1 THESSALONIANS 4:1-8 | HOLY LIVING IN LIGHT OF JUDGMENT

- Verses 1-5 included on session 7
- Verse 6 –
  - God's will is **your sanctification** (v. 3). This sanctification is elaborated on in two parts. First, **that ye should abstain from fornication** (v. 3), and second **that no man go beyond and defraud his brother** (v. 6).
  - The word **defraud** is *to take advantage of or to make a gain from*.
    - The KJV marginal note uses the word *oppress*.
    - This *taking advantage* is concerning **any matter**, with the word *any* inserted by translators. The literal Greek (as in the KJV marginal note) is *in the matter*.
    - It is possible that the **matter** is **fornication** (v. 3), and thus the passage is warning about oppression of a brother who has been caught in sin, and using his sin to your advantage. This should not be done **because the Lord is the avenger of all such** (v. 6).
    - The grammar in context is connected with fornication, but the grammar in words alone can go either concerning fornication or concerning **any matter** (v.6).
- Verses 7-8 –
  - Paul makes a pronoun shift in verses 7-8, from *you* in the previous verses, and continuing again in verse 9, to *us* in verses 7-8.
    - The student of the Word must ask if this "us" is an *inclusive* or an *exclusive* pronoun.
    - The previous verses (1-6) have been directed to the Thessalonians in the second person plural.
    - While most of the first-person plural in the epistle are *exclusive* (in reference to Paul, Silas, and Timothy), there are a few that are *inclusive* of both Paul and the Thessalonians (1 Thes. 1:10, for example).
    - It seems best to take this pronoun change as including both Paul and the Thessalonians together.
  - The topic is being a *called-out* people, one *called into holiness*.
    - These rings true of the Jewish nation (1 Peter 2:9, for example) more than for the church, though the need for holy living would certainly hold true.
    - Since God gave the Holy Spirit to the Jewish nation (v. 8), it continues to give evidence that Paul has been speaking to a group of Jewish messianic believers.

1 THESSALONIANS 4:9-12 | MATTERS OF CHRISTIAN LIVING

- Verses 9-10 –
  - Paul turns his attention to **brotherly love**, though states that he adds nothing new, for God has already spoken on the matter (v. 9). This presumes a knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures. God certainly *had* taught the Jewish people to **love one another** (Lev. 19:18).

- Paul commended them on their love **toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia** (v. 10, a note that indicates some degree of familiarity and fellowship with other believers), and also encouraged them to **increase more and more**, a word appropriate for all people of all times.
- Verse 11 –
  - In the previous two verses, Paul states something of which they had been **taught of God** (v. 9). Now, however, he speaks of something that **we commanded you**.
  - These commands can, presumably, be taken as *for the church* and not just *for the Jewish remnant we call the saints*.
  - In addition to the command to **increase more and more** in love (v. 10), Paul gives three related commands, each having to do with the believer's life:
    - **study to be quiet** - The word **study** is φιλοτιμέομαι [philotimeomai], from *philo* (practical love) and *timeo* (honor). That is, "for the love of honor, **be quiet**. The word used for **quiet** isn't as related to *sound* as to *peace*. From Strong's Enhanced Lexicon: "said of those who are not running hither and thither, but stay at home and mind their business" (Strong's Greek #2270).
    - **to do your own business** - This likely means "mind your own business," but could even be taken literally as, "be self-employed and self-contained." In light of persecution, one is much better off with their **own business**.
    - **to work with your own hands** - That is, Christians should *be skilled*.
  - These commands have been largely ignored by modern Christians, save a few notable groups (such as the Mennonite Brethren).
- Verse 12 –
  - The reason for Paul's commands in verse 11 is twofold:
    - Honesty of living toward **them that are without**.
      - The word **honestly** is εὐσχημόνως [euschamonos], literally a "good scheme," or, as we might say, "honest living."
      - This living was toward the outsiders. Which ones? Mark 4:11 uses the same words, in reference to those who do not **know the mystery of the kingdom of God**.
        - This could be taken in that manner (and this should be our primary consideration, since scripture interprets itself), and would also be good general advice.
        - Paul also uses the term in 1 Corinthians 5:12-13 and Colossians 4:5.
    - Having **lack of nothing**.
      - The Thessalonians were living in dangerous times, especially for believers.
      - God was not going to miraculously provide their needs (He does not do so in the Pauline dispensation, and rarely did so in other dispensations).
      - The Thessalonians needed to work in such a way that they were not dependent upon others.