

Living a Holy Life | 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

Is the Christian life more a matter of following rules or fulfilling the demands of a relationship? Or could it involve both?

READ 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

1. What is the point of rules (or “instructions”) in Paul's thinking, and on what grounds are they given (vv. 1-2)?
2. Why is it important to *progress in holiness* in the Christian life (vv. 1, 10)? Compare Philippians 3:10-15. What kind of forces or feelings might tempt us to settle for mediocrity in Christian living today?
3. What does it mean to “be sanctified” (v. 3)? For Christians, is sanctification something that happens in the past, the present, or the future (c.f. Heb 10:10, 14)?
4. Why is it that sexual immorality, as Paul defines it (vv. 3-8), is always so at odds with holy living? In what ways have we allowed such behaviour to become so prevalent (and “normalised”) in today's society?

5. How does the certainty of a future judgment (v. 6) square with experiencing God's grace in Christ? Is there any hope at all for Christians who fall into sexual sin?
6. Re-read verses 9-10. What are some of the barriers to a warm spirit of brotherly (or sisterly) love between true believers today?
7. What might be Paul's motivation behind his call for Christians to “lead a quiet life” (v. 11)? What is the purpose behind Paul's command, and why is it still such a timely instruction for us to heed today?

APPLICATION: Discuss *the next step of progress* for each of you in the following specific areas of faithful obedience and holy Christian living:

- Sexual purity
- Brotherly love
- Quiet productivity (in the workplace / classroom / home)

Pray for Carols, for a fine night and great community event as we celebrate the true meaning of Christmas ...