

LOVE STILL MORE
1st THESSALONIANS 4:9-12

INTRODUCTION:

When the Lord Jesus Christ was here during His earthly ministry, He told His disciples how the world would know that we were disciples of Jesus Christ. He explained this to them in John 13:35 where He said, “*By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*” (John 13:35, NASB95) Our love for one another is a powerful testimony of our faith in Christ. It was because of this love that Christianity spread rapidly through the Roman Empire. The disciples of Jesus Christ loved one another, and the world noticed, just as Jesus had said they would.

Love is the heart of Christianity and the heart of our witness to the world because in our love for one another we reflect the love of Christ. This morning our passage deals with love and its proper place in our lives so that we live in such a way that we please God in all things.

- I. LOVING ONE ANOTHER PLEASURES GOD (1st Thess. 4:9-10)
 - a. In this chapter Paul is concerned with our walk and if we are _____ God in all that we do. (1st Thess.4:1)
 - b. Paul begins by writing that the Thessalonian believers have no need for anyone to write to them concerning _____ love. (Romans 5:5; 1st John 4:7-11)
 - c. Paul goes on to say that the Thessalonian believers are _____ this love.
- II. THREE COMMANDS TO EXCEL IN LOVE (1st Thess. 4:11)
 - a. Paul does not just simply tell them to love more and more but he gets practical and tells them how they can _____ in love for one another.
 - b. Paul’s first command is for us to make it our _____ to lead a quiet life. (1st Timothy 2:1–4; 1st Peter 3:15)
 - c. Paul’s second command is that we _____ to our own business. (2nd Thessalonians 3:10-12)

- a. From these verses we see there are several _____ taking place at one time in this situation.
- b. Paul’s third command to the Thessalonian believers was to _____ with their hands.

II. THE RESULTS OF EXCELING IN LOVE (1st Thess. 4:12)

- a. Paul did not give these commands only, but with them he gave _____ why we are supposed to live this way.
- b. The first reason that Paul gives that we are to live this way is so that we will behave properly toward _____.
- c. The second reason that Paul gives to living this way is so that we will not be in any _____.
- d. Understand what Paul is saying, if we live in a way that reflects brotherly _____, it will be obvious to people we come in contact within our culture.

CONCLUSION:

Paul’s theme throughout this chapter has been the same, that theme is expressed in verse one where he wrote, “*Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us instruction as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you excel still more.*” (1 Thessalonians 4:1, NASB95) This theme is an emphasis on pleasing the Lord in our lives. Although Paul addressed the specific areas of sexual immorality and brotherly love, those concerns fit with the broader framework of his two perspectives on the Christian life. The first is Christian growth. The Thessalonian believers were walking in a way that pleased the Lord, and Paul urged them to do so more and more. Paul was calling upon them to not be satisfied with their present state as believers, but to keep growing.

The second area that Paul highlights in this chapter is the importance of a sacrificial life. In other words, he wants believers to be unselfish. This idea of sacrificial living is seen in the opening verse when Paul writes, “*Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us instruction as to how you ought to walk and please God ...*” (1 Thess. 4:1a, NASB95)

What is the goal here? Paul clearly says as Christians our goal is to please God. We should evaluate our lives by asking these questions: Am I living a life that pleases God? Are my priorities in order? Or is my life consumed with myself and what I want? How am I using my gifts and abilities? Am I using them in the service of the Lord or in my own service? Am I living a God-centered life or a self-centered life?

Why is this even important? Why should we live a sacrificial life? Because we follow the One who sacrificed Himself for us. We follow the One who gave up everything that He had in order to bring us to God. That is the root of why we obey these things. We should thank the Lord Jesus Christ that He did not decide to watch out for Himself when He came to this world, but that He had the thought of our redemption, our forgiveness, our future on His mind when He went to the cross. May we imitate that kind of love for one another.