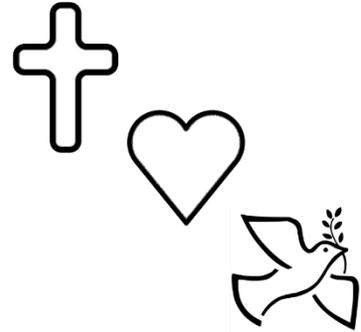


November 15, 2020
Willerup United Methodist Church
Sermon Notes
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1 & 2 Thessalonians, Lesson 7
Living to Please God



This series of meditations is based on the books of First and Second Thessalonians.

The Letters to the Thessalonians were written by Paul to confirm the truths he had taught while he was with them and to dispel any false teachings that had spread among them. He commended them for their faith, encouraged them to press on in faith and love, and showed why they could always have hope in Christ.

Living to Please God

1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

Finally, brothers, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more. ²For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.

³It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; ⁴that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, ⁵not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; ⁶and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. ⁷For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. ⁸Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.

⁹Now about brotherly love we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. ¹⁰And in fact, you do love all the brothers throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers, to do so more and more.

¹¹Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you, ¹²so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

Believers are under an obligation to please God, which means that one lives in accordance with the will of God.

Paul is giving a guideline to the believers.

Vs. 2.

We are under the authority and Lordship of Jesus Christ. It is our obligation to honor Christ in and through our daily living.

The rules of conduct are given by the authority of Jesus Christ.

They are given so that we can become Christ-like.

Vs. 3-8 MORALITY

1. Relationship with opposite sex - We need to live a sanctified life and avoid sexual immorality.

Paul writes to them that you know the Holy God who has called you to be holy as He is holy.

The lust of the eyes, the lust of flesh and pride of life are temptations to defy the will of God and to displease the Holy God.

1 John 2:16-17, "For everything in the world – the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does – comes not from the Father but from the world."

2. To please God – one must do the will of the Lord. His will is the sanctification of the believers. Paul also writes to Roman believers.

Romans 12: 1-2, “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God- this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the patterns of the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

The Greek noun *porneia* means illicit sexual relations of any kind, originally meant primarily with harlots. Sexual union within marriage is sanctified by the gospel, outside of that it is forbidden. The Gospel took a firm stand in opposition to the mores of Graeco-Roman society, which was permissive and had a different standard.

Evangelical Commentary of the Bible, Elwell, pg 1078

3. Marriage Relationship, ‘Each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God.’ (1 Thess. 4:4)

Another translation says, ‘each of you learn to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor your body.’

The Greek word for vessel is *skeuos*, and refers to the body.

2 Corinthians 4:7, “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.”

Our bodies are described as ‘jars of clay’ in the NIV translation.

4. Don’t take unfair advantage of church members, especially in legal matters, 1 Corinthians 6:11-18.

Set an ethical boundary. Do not defraud your brother. In fact the Ten commandments also set the boundary that one should not lust or covet anything which belongs to his neighbors. Adultery is the violation of the marriage relation.

Paul then gives three reasons why the Christian should live differently than the people of this world.

a. The Lord will punish men. Vengeance belongs to the Lord. You have accepted him and made him Lord of your life, which includes your body, soul and mind.

b. We are called to be holy by the Lord. 1 Corinthians 1;2

c. Living a holy life is possible because of the fact that at our conversion God's holy spirit is given to us. WE have become the temple of the Lord.

Rejecting Paul's instructions (Paul as the messenger of the Lord Jesus) is not rejection of man but of God.

Vs. 9-12 CHRISTIAN

1. Love each other. Romans 12:10

The Greek word *PHILADELPHIA* is described as brotherly love.

We are brothers as we belong to same Father, who has taught us.

John 6:45, "It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God. Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.

Isaiah 54:13, "All your sons will be taught by the Lord, and great will be your children's peace."

Leviticus 19:18, 'Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord. "

John 13:34-35 'A new command I give you; Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.'

Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

2. The second instruction is not only to love each other but to love all the brothers and sisters throughout Macedonia. Make it your ambition to live a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your own hands.

To be “quiet” here is a warning against fanaticism and against “advent fever” and the temptation of becoming busybodies. (2 Thess. 3:11) - Elwell, pg. 1079

Working with your own hands is encouraged, as Paul and other missionaries worked and set a good example. The pagan world considered the work of the hands to belong to slaves only. Your daily life may win the respect of outsiders so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

3. Peter mentions that we are partakers of the divine nature. 2 Peter 1:5-8, “For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

References used in preparing sermons in this series:

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