

First Thessalonians

VERSE-BY-VERSE



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| Letter | Date of Writing | Place of Writing |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1st Thessalonians | 54 A.D. | Corinth |

Verse 13 | From Session 10

Paul closes his prayer that **the end** of everything in his prayer **he may establish your hearts unblameable** (Shows great grace that we can live without condemnation) **in holiness. At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.** The second coming of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 4

Verse 1–

- **That as you have received from us.** It was imperative they pay attention to the gospel given or that they **received** from Paul. Any other gospel is a false gospel. [Galatians 1:9](#).
- Paul's gospel teaches us who are in the body of Christ today to **how we ought to walk** in our Christians lives and how we **ought to please God**.
- The result of walking in holiness, as Paul taught and pleasing God, causes us to **abound more and more**. Abound in what? In love one toward another and toward all men (2:12).

Verse 2–

The word **commandments** should cause a question in our minds. Don't we live under grace? If so, how can there be **commandments**? The Greek word is **παράγγελία** | *paraggelia*. There are variances in translation with this word. It means to "come alongside with a message." Note how it is used in various English translations:

KJV - commandments
NKJV - commandments
ESV - instructions
NASB - commandments
NIV - instructions
YLT - command
Darby - charge

The Darby Translation perhaps translates the closest as *For ye know what charges we gave you*. The KJV translates this same word as "charge" in [1 Timothy 1:18](#). Therefore, rather than commandments, Paul is saying to the church in Thessalonica, "For ye know what charge (or instructions) we gave you by the Lord Jesus." Is a charge or an instruction different than commandments?

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We are either under grace or not. We can't be under grace and law. For the believer in the body of Christ, there is liberty. Nonetheless, the (commandments) instructions or charge by the Lord Jesus is for us to abound more and more in love.

Verse 3–

God's will for the Thessalonians was their **sanctification**. This is the same word translated in verse 7 as holiness, and holiness is a clear use of the word in verse 3 too. God wills for them to be holy. How? **That ye should abstain from fornication**--this is the Greek word **πορνεία** | *porneia*.

Paul says in [1 Corinthians 6:18](#) to *Flee fornication*. This is obviously easier said than done since Paul had to remind the Corinthians of it, and now the Thessalonians. We are emotional and sexual beings. God created both of these and they are both good. But, as with anything they can become twisted and distorted by the prince and power of the air, Satan. In our sex crazed world it is difficult to keep our minds pure. Paul's remedy is found in [1 Corinthians 7:2](#). This assumes a man and wife are living in a God-honoring marriage where they respect and understand the sexual needs of each other.

Paul was writing this letter (presumably) from Corinth. That city was steeped in illicit sexual activity, and later it had crept into the body of Christ ([1 Corinthians 5](#)).

When this word **abstain** is used in the New Testament it has to do with the following:

Abstain from:

1. [Acts 15:20](#): The pollution of idols
2. [Acts 15:29](#): Meats offered to idols, blood, things strangled, fornication.
3. [1 Thessalonians 4:3](#): Fornication.
4. [1 Thessalonians 5:22](#): All appearances of evil.
5. [1 Peter 2:11](#): Fleshly lusts.

To abstain means *to hold back, to keep off or to hold one's self off*.

Verse 4–

God's will is that the Thessalonians **should know how**. Abstaining from fornication does not come naturally. We need to know how. We learn right and holy living from the Word of God.

Every one should know how **to possess his vessel**. Vessel just means, body.

In sanctification. That is, holiness. **And honour**. That word honour can carry the idea of value. Don't devalue your body through fornication. Paul says elsewhere ([Romans 1:21-25](#)) when we do that, i.e., dishonour our bodies through sexual sin, we become fools.

Verse 5–

Not in the lust of concupiscence (con-q'pa-since). Here is a word we don't use often (or probably never!). It is from the word, **con-** (expressing intensive force) + **cupere** to desire, i.e., strong sexual desire. If one is going to *possess his vessel in*

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sanctification and honour he must control his lusts.

You have received a charge from the Lord. Those without Christ have not received that charge, therefore they might be expected to be controlled by concupiscence. But not us! Remember God's will for us.

Verses 6,7-

Giving in to sexual desire is typically not a private matter. We eventually harm others around us; family, friends, those we attend church with, coworkers. To **Defraud** can mean, to get an advantage over someone. It is what Satan does to us when we are ignorant of what he can do ([2 Corinthians 2:11](#)).

This *defrauding* of a brother in Christ happens when we overstep the rights of another. Sexual immorality wrongs another brother (or sister) because it draws him in or involves him in behavior that goes against God's plan and ideal for sex. The one who initiates the act takes advantage of the other.

Paul cites as to why sexual immorality should be avoided.

1. Sexual immorality is sin. While Christ died for all sins, sin often brings temporal judgment, i.e., divorce, disease, even death.
2. It is against God's will for a Christian. God's will for a Christian includes living a purified life. Certain pagan cults promoted unclean ceremonies, but Christ's plans for a Christian are to clean him up. A holy life demonstrates God's supernatural power at work overcoming what is natural, and it glorifies God.

The Lord is the avenger of all such. There are only two entities in which vengeance can be exacted: First is God, the second is the government or our earthly rulers ([Romans 13:1-4](#)). The word for *rulers* in [Romans 13:3](#) is the Greek word *archon* in which we get the word Monarch. That carries the idea of a king or queen. God has set up earthly kingdoms and allows them to rule and exact *revenge* (i.e., vengeance).

God has not called us to uncleanness, but unto holiness. The Greek word for holiness is **ἁγιασμός** | *hagiasmos*. Paul has used it three times, in verses 3, 4, and 7. KJV and NKJV translate it sanctification twice and holiness once (vs. 7).

Verse 8-

He therefore that despiseth. To despise is to reject. Reject what? God's call to holiness. Those who continue to reject a life of holiness are ultimately rejecting God. The one who despiseth is forgetting he has God's holy Spirit living within him.

Paul really lays out a case that fornication is powerful, but because we have the holy Spirit we have the ability to live our lives in holiness.