Women’s Bible Study

I & II Thessalonians

**Fifth Study** - I Thessalonians Chapter Four verses 1-12

**“An Exhortation to Sanctification”**

Studies in I & II Thessalonians Pages 28 through 32 (using Lesson 6)

Once again, the questions from Rev. Hanko’s Study Guides are in parenthesis after the questions.

All quotes by Wm. Hendrikson are from his New Testament Commentary on I & II Thessalonians

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**\_Day One**

**How to Walk to Please God**

Today we look at how Paul urges the Thessalonians to live what they were taught.

**I Thessalonians 4:1&2 - Study Guide page 28**

**Read:** I Thessalonians Four Philippians 1:8-11 II Peter 1:5-10 Matt. 28:19&20

**Do:** 1. Read the introduction to Lesson Six on page 28 in Rev. Hanko’s Study Guide.

2. What does ‘beseech’ mean?

3. What does it mean that the missionaries exhorted the Thessalonians ‘by the Lord Jesus’? (verse 1)

1. What does ‘abound’ mean here - what were they to abound in? (verse 1)
2. How are we to take that truth to our lives? How can we abound more and more?

 See Romans 13:8-14 and I Cor. 15:58

1. What ‘commandments’ do you think Paul is speaking of here in verse 2?

 See Matthew 28:19&20

**Food for thought:** “Both the phrase of introduction (“for the rest”) and the subject matter makes it clear that a new section begins here. This is neither Defense nor Expression of Joy, but Exhortation to live sanctified lives with respect to all classes and at all times. In order to preclude the charge of being guilty of issuing arbitrary orders, *hence, in order to add weight to his exhortation, the apostle stresses two matters: a. That those instructions or directives* (a military term occurring also in Acts 5:28 and I Tim. 1:5 & 18) are *not new*. They are orders given previously, while Paul was with them. b. That they are given *through* the Lord Jesus, that is, at his command, hence, with his authority...The readers must be made aware of the fact that whoever rejects the instructions here given rejects not man but God…It is not merely *Paul* writing but *God* directing.” Wm. Hendrikson

**To take with you:** I Thessalonians 4:1

**“Thy word sheds light upon my path. A shining light, it guides my feet.**

 **Thy righteousness judgments to observe, My solemn vow I now repeat.”** Psalter 334 St. 1

**\_\_Day Two**

**The Will of God - Even Your Sanctification**

Today we will take a close look at the doctrine of sanctification.

**I Thessalonians 4:3&4 - Study Guide page 29**

**Read:** I Thess. 4:1-4 Philippians 2:1-15 Romans 6:22 Titus 2:11-14 I Peter 1:2

1. Walking in sanctification: (#2 pg. 29)

 What is sanctification? (Q. 2.a. pg. 29)

1. Look up the definition in Reformed Dogmatics by Rev. Herman Hoeksema. (Q. 2a..pg. 29)

 We will quote a beautiful section of that book here.

 If you care to read more, you will find the complete chapter on sanctification in the book:

pages 520-546 in the ‘old’ edition

In the new edition it is in Volume 2, Chapter 29 beginning on page 120

 “Sanctification is that act of God whereby He delivers the justified and regenerated sinner from the defilement and dominion of sin as a spiritual, ethical power, renews him according to the image of Christ, and enables him to walk in all good works, which God has prepared for him…..Sanctification, however, although it is complete in Christ and is also given us in principle in regeneration, yet does not dominate the believer completely in this present life. It follows a process, a continued mortification of the old man and quickening of the new.

..Scripture emphasizes the necessity and the reality of the sanctification of the people of God in the midst of the world. They are sanctified in principle, cleansed and purified. They already have put off the old man and put on the new man. They have been born of God, are crucified with Christ, and liberated from the law of sin and death. They are also being continually confirmed and strengthened through grace and live continuously out of the Spirit. And God Himself preserves in them the good work which He has begun. At the same time, they themselves also perfect holiness in the fear of God. They keep themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, work out their own salvation with fear and trembling and fight the good fight of faith even unto the end, that no one may take their crown. Thus, Scripture presents the truth of sanctification in all its implications.

 God is first, also in the work of sanctification and without Him we can do absolutely nothing. Only when He realizes His promises unto us, so that we actually have hold of those promises can we cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit and perfect holiness in the fear of God. Our work is rooted in the work of God, and it is the fruit of His work in us. He works in us the spiritual energy, the living spiritual power to work out our own salvation and to walk as children of light. All spiritual power is alone from Him. From Him is life, faith, love, hope, purity of heart, the illumination of our understanding, knowledge, righteousness, and holiness.

 But His work in us always preserves us as rational and moral creatures, so that we bear fruit consciously and willingly and perfect holiness in the fear of God. God works within us, not without our will, but rather in such a way, that we willingly present our bodies a living sacrifice to God and make our members subservient to righteousness.

 Thus then, God, works continuously in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. He regenerates us not only in principle, but He sanctifies us through the Spirit of Christ continuously. But nevertheless, that work of God in us is of such a nature that we now consciously and willingly bear fruit unto righteousness.

 It is not thus, that God works our sanctification, and that we work also, and that these two aspects of the work of salvation stand independently from each other or must be conceived as an irreconcilable contradiction. Nor is it thus, that God must do it, and that we are being dragged along as stocks and blocks on the way of sanctification as is the presentation of the antinomians. Still less is the relation between the work of God and our work such, that we must work, and that if we work, God will help us, as is the view of the Pelagians. All these wrong conceptions are repudiated by Scripture. Quote continued…

**\_\_\_Day 2\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ cont.** “But the relation is always thus that we work out of the power of the work of God in us. God is first. And we follow. God is the Fountain out of which we live. God works our salvation to will and to do of His good pleasure; and we work out our own salvation as the fruit of the work of God. God is the Light; we are always the light-bearers. God energizes us through Christ, and we manifest His energy as rational, moral creatures. He gives, preserves, and strengthens our life; and we live. He works and continues to work in us the true faith; and we believe. He works in us continued conversion; and we turn. He gives us and preserves in us the love of God; and we taste His love and love Him. He works within us the sorrow after God, and we call upon Him in penitence for the forgiveness of sins. He gives us true humility, and we walk in meekness of heart and life. He enlightens us, and we know. He leads us by his Spirit, and we walk. He makes us hungry and thirsty for the bread and water of life, and we hunger and thirst after righteousness. He calls efficaciously, and we come. He gives us the power to persevere, and we persevere. The power and the operation of the power. Faith and believing, love and loving, hope and hoping, the eye and the seeing, the ear and the hearing, the understanding and the knowledge, the will and the willing, the power to fight and the fighting, and all this in connection with gift and talent, with means, circumstances, and time, - it is all from God alone. He sanctifies us, and we walk in sanctification.

 But exactly because of this arises the possibility and the high calling of the people of God to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, because all this does not violate the moral, rational nature of the sanctified people of God, but preserves it. We must not say therefore: Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, but God must do it. Still less must we say: Work out your own salvation, then God will do it. But according to Philippians 2:12&13: ‘Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for God works in you to will and to do of his good pleasure.’ Of Him, and through Him, and unto Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever.”

1. What are the three things Rev. Hoeksema points out sanctification is not.

 a.

 b.

 c.

1. What is the relation of what God does and what we do?
2. According to Philippians 2:12&13 what must we say concerning our sanctification?

**Food for thought:** “Sanctification is one of the last steps in the order of salvation, but it certainly is not last in importance. In sanctification the divine purpose of our salvation - the glory of God - begins to be fulfilled. Sanctification has to do with holiness, the word meaning ‘to make holy’, and in their holy living God’s people begin to show the glory of God and of his grace. Sanctification, then, is the lifelong work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and lives of believers by which they are made holy, delivered from the filthiness and power of sin, and in which they begin to live in obedience to God and to his Word. It begins with regeneration and ends with death and glorification.” Rev. Ron Hanko in Doctrine According to Godliness

**To take with you today: Philippians 2:12&13**

**“Sanctification is not optional.**

**Sanctification is God’s people learning to live the life of heaven.”** Rev. Ron Hanko

 **\_ Day Three\_**

**Sanctification**

Today we will take another look at sanctification and what it means for our lives.

**I Thessalonians 4:3&4 - Study Guide pages 29**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4:1-4 Ephesians 4:17-32

**Do:** 1. Since sanctification means ‘to be holy, even as God is holy,’ what two elements are implied in holiness? See for example I Peter 1:13-16 (Q. 2.b. pg. 29)

 2.According to Ephesians 4:22-24 what does sanctification include? (Q.2.c. pg. 29)

2.Using Ephesians 4:22-24 and I Peter 1:13-16, consider: How have the actions required there been shown in my life in the recent past?

**Food for thought**: “Holiness, however, always has two parts to it. It is both separation from something, and separation unto something. Both are important. Believers are called first to be separate from wickedness and wicked persons. They cannot go out of the world but must nevertheless separate themselves as much as possible from the company, the fellowship, the deeds, and the life of the ungodly. Above all, they must keep themselves pure, ‘unspotted form the world.’ James 1:27… we are also separated unto God. Without this, holiness is not complete. To be separated unto God is to be consecrated and dedicated to him, just as the priests were in the Old Testament.” Rev. Ron Hanko in Doctrine According to Godliness

**To take with you today: Psalm 1:1&2**

**“Sanctification is being set apart for God’s service with our whole life,**

 **our time, our possessions, even our bodies.”** Rev. Ron Hanko

 **Is that truth lived out in my life today?**

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**\_Day Four**

**Called to Walk in Sanctification**

Today Rev, Hanko has us look at our own activity in our walk of sanctification.

**I Thessalonians 4:3&4 - Study Guide page 29**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4: 1-4 Romans 7:14-25 Philippians 3:1-14

**Do:**

1. If sanctification is the work of God’s Spirit in our hearts, why are we called to *walk* *in* sanctification?

 see: (Q. 2.d. pg. 29)

1. Romans 6:12-16
2. Canons of Dordt Fifth Head Article 4.
3. Heidelberg Catechism Lord’s Day 44 Q. & A. 115
4. What are we called to do in the following passages, and why?
5. Matthew 5:16
6. John 15:8-10 Question 2 Continued….

**\_\_\_Day 4\_\_\_ cont.**

1. Ephesians 2:10
2. Philippians 3:13-14
3. James 2:14-22

**Food for thought:** “It cannot be denied, therefore, that the justified sinner must perform good works. It is not true that you can live like the devil because you are justified. Even though in justification the believer is sovereignly freed from the guilt of every sin, his justification is not the ground for a wicked life. That is the lie of the devil. We who believe in the sovereignty of God’s grace, believe that God so works in the hearts of His people that He causes them more and more to flee sin and seek that which is good and right. Good works are an essential part of the Christian life… But are these good works the product of the believer’s own strength? Do they contribute anything to salvation? No, Never! The believer does what is pleasing to God only because God sovereignly works that good work in him.”

 Rev. Steven Houck in the pamphlet God’s Sovereignty in Salvation

**To take with you today: Philippians 3:13&14**

**“The battle is hard. But be of good cheer!**

**The end is sure, the victory is won,**

**the crown of life shall surely be given us in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ,**

 **Who fought the battle for us, and Who will fight it through us even unto the end!”**

Rev. Herman Hoeksema in the book Wonder of Grace

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**\_\_Day Five\_**

**Abstain From Fornication**

Today we get to the heart of Paul’s use of the word sanctification in this chapter -

 that of abstaining from fornication.

**I Thessalonians 4:3-5 - Study Guide page 29**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4:1-7 Acts 15: 20 & 27-29

**Do:** 1. Abstaining from fornication and living sanctified in marriage.

 What is the distinction between fornication and adultery? (Q. 3. Pg. 18)

 see Acts 15: 20 & 27-29

 I Cor. 6:9-20

 I Cor. 7:2

 Eph. 5:3-5

1. Why are particularly fornication and adultery mentioned to those who recently came out of heathendom?

 (Q. 3.b. pg. 29)

 see a. Numbers 25:1-3 with I Cor. 10: 7&8

1. I Kings 14:22-24
2. Hosea 4:12-14
3. Romans 1:24-27
4. I Peter 4:3&4
5. In what ways is this a sin that affects us?

 Continued….

**\_Day 5, cont.**

**Food for thought:** “In the New Testament, fornication (Greek: porneia, from the word for a whore) does not refer only to the sexual sin of unmarried persons before marriage. Often, it refers to sexual sin of all kinds whether committed by unmarried persons or by married persons. In Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9 ‘fornication’ refers to illicit sexual activity on the part of a married person. In Ephesians 5:3 it is used broadly to include all forms of transgression against the seventh commandment… The fornication against which Paul warns in I Cor. 6 was intercourse with whores not only by the unmarried men of the Corinthian congregation but also by the married men. This was so common in the pagan world of Paul’s time, and especially in Corinth, that nothing was thought of it. It was accepted behavior like eating and drinking. For this reason the apostle had to insist on a radical difference between eating and fornicating… The gospel is the sworn foe of sexual immorality! The true servant of the Lord makes no concessions to the fornicating age, offers no compromise with the world’s thinking on fornication, and licenses no church member’s fornication by appeal to the liberty of the gospel of grace. The Christian is ‘joined unto the Lord (Jesus)’ and this ‘joining’ includes the body… This makes fornication an appalling, repulsive, almost unthinkable sin. The fornicating Christian unites the members of Christ with the whore: ‘Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot?” (I Cor. 6:15)… The horror is that the Christian does this with a body that is united to Christ so that now Christ is united to a whore through the fornicating Christian.”

 Prof. David Englesma in Better To Marry (If you have the book - read the whole first chapter!!)

**To take with you today: Eph. 5: 3&5**

**‘Flee fornication’ is a warning to those whom Christ bought at the price of His blood**

**and in whom the Holy Spirit has taken up His abode,**

 **because fornication dishonors their Lord Jesus, His Spirit, and His God.”** Prof. Englesma

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**\_Day 6\_**

**Obedient in Body**

Today Rev. Hanko has us look at how to abstain from fornication.

**I Thessalonians 4:3&4 - Study Guide page 29-30**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4: 1-7 I Peter 3:1-7

**Do:** 1. Why is it so very important to seek a God-fearing mate? (Q. 3.c. pg. 29)

2.What does scripture say about seeking a God-fearing mate? (Q.3.d. pg. 29)

 see Amos 3:3

 I Cor. 7:39

 II Cor. 6:14

3.What is the meaning of the phrase ‘to possess his vessel in sanctification’? (vs. 4) (Q. 3.e. pg. 30)

4.How does possessing one’s vessel in sanctification apply to all marital relationships? (Q. 3.f. pg. 30)

**Food for thought:** “Paul is discussing one matter, not two. He is discussing sanctification, and here in verses 3-8 in particular the duty of everyone to abstain from immorality, such as is practiced, for example, by those who, instead of taking a wife and doing this in a manner that is in keeping with the requirement of sanctification, are motivated by lust.” “For this is God’s will, your sanctification, that you abstain from immorality, that each one of you know how to take a wife for himself in sanctification and honor.”

 Wm. Hendrikson Food for thought continued….

**\_\_\_Day 6\_, cont.**

 “In light of the account of God’s institution of marriage, it is plain that marriage is an institution that belongs to the sphere of creation, not to the sphere of redemption… Marriage is an ordinance of God in the realm of creation, similar to the ordinance of civil government and the ordinance of labor. For this reason, marriage is genuine outside of the church, even as civil government is legitimate apart from the Church. A marriage is valid before God and men, even though it was not solemnized by a minister… Unbelievers are validly married, just as they are genuinely possessors and wielders of the authority of civil government. Therefore, those unbelievers who commit adultery are judged and condemned by God for a real violation of a true marriage. But the unbeliever does not honor marriage as the institution of God, nor does he honor it as the mystery of Christ and the Church. Even when he formally conforms to God’s laws for marriage, he does not do so to the glory of God. He ends, in his marriage too, in himself. Therefore, he sins in his marriage from beginning to end…Because the unbeliever does not regard God’s Word in the matter of his marriage, he is ignorant of the true wisdom concerning marriage and, therefore, foolishly plunges himself into many miseries. Refusing to honor marriage as God’s institution, he throws open the door to the corruption and destruction of marriage.” Prof. David Engelsma in Marriage: The Mystery of Christ and the Church

**To take with you today: I Thessalonians 4: 3&4**

**“Only the regenerated child of God can honor marriage.**

**He honors it by receiving it from God as God’s institution.**

**He honors it by living in it according to God’s laws.**

**Thus, he displays in the reality of his married life**

**the living relationship of love between Jesus Christ and the Church.”** Prof. Engelsma

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**\_Day Seven\_**

**Taking One’s Wife in Sanctification and Honor**

Today we look at how the marriage of sanctified believers differ from the marriage of unbelievers.

**I Thessalonians 4:4&5 - Study Guide page 30**

**Read:** I Thess. 4:2-5 I Cor. 6:15-20 Heidelberg Catechism Lord’s Day 41 Q.& A. 108 & 109

**Do:** 1. How does Paul distinguish a godly relationship from the marital relationships of those who know

 not know God? (Q. 3.g. pg. 30)

 see Eph. 4:17-20

 2. What is meant in verse 5 by ‘the lust of concupiscence’?

 see Romans 1: 24-26

1. How is there danger that we could make ourselves guilty of ‘the lust of concupiscence’? (vs. 5)

(Q. 3.h. pg. 30)

1. What is the relationship between the lust of concupiscence and the many divorces of our day?

 (Q. 3.i. pg. 30)

1. Are these sins signs of the times? Find scriptures to support your answer. (Q. 3.j. pg. 30)
2. How can we guard ourselves against this evil? Col. 3:1-6

 Continued….

**\_\_Day 7\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ cont.**

**Food for thought:** “Sex was corrupted through man’s fall into sin. Fallen sinful man pollutes this aspect of his nature as well as every other. But fallen mankind’s perversion of sex is special; mankind concentrates on abusing this aspect of their life. This is because sex itself is something special by virtue of God’s creation. It belongs to marriage, and marriage is the earthly sign of the communion of God and His people, a symbol of the covenant. Therefore, the devil works especially hard to obtain the special perversion of sex among men. But the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ restores the right attitude toward sex and the right use of sex in the elect believer. The goodness of the sexual relationship as concerns believers underlies all of I Corinthians 7… The proper behavior is that each of us ‘possess his vessel in sanctification and honor,’ that is, be married. Hebrews 13:4 declares that ‘whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.” However, ‘marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled.’

 Bitterest evils result from fornication, evils that not only destroy the body but also scar the soul. This is so because fornication itself is an evil, a sin against God… The way to escape the pitfall of fornication is to avoid all that stirs up lust. This is what Paul means when he cries out: ‘Flee fornication’ (I Cor, 6:18) Run away from it. Shun pornographic books and magazines; do not attend the movie or watch the television program that promotes sexual immorality; do not wear clothing that entices men to lust; do not play with sexual fire… Today, sex is virtually a god. The church must condemn this idolatry and resist it.

 If this is the truth about sex, only we believing parents are able to teach our children about it. The world is unable to do this. They only corrupt our children, whether by their filthy talk; their perverted movies, television programs, and books; or their formal classes of sex education in the public schools. ‘The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned’ (I Cor. 2:14). But we know the truth and are able to educate our children. And this is our duty.”

 Prof. David Engelsma in Marriage the Mystery of Christ and the Church

 (If you have the book - read all of chapter 5.)

“Nowhere can these intimate and delicate things be so objectively and chastely treated as between mother and daughter, and father and son. This reduces the danger of vulgarity and removes the glamour and undue excitement which the treatment of this subject could arouse. It removes the glamour of indecency and brings our youth face to face with certain realities of life. This induces them to see this phase of life in its proper proportion… Matters can be discussed objectively and piously and they may there be taught in the ways of the Lord. While thus they may be warned for the pitfalls and the dangers that surround their path. Let the parents provide this information wisely and opportunely. Let them go as far as Scripture goes.”

 Rev. M. Gritters in a Standard Bearer article

**To take with you today: I Cor. 6:19&20**

**Marriage in its entirety is a good creature of God,**

 **made for us and given to us to be enjoyed with thanksgiving.**

**Our criticism of the world is not that it esteems sex highly,**

 **but that it abases sex, refusing to honor it as a good creation of God.** Prof. Engelsma

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**\_\_Day Eight\_**

**Honor in Marriage**

Today we will look at how honor is shown in a believer’s marriage.

 **I Thessalonians 4:5 - Study Guide page 30**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4:1-7 Ephesians Chapter 5 I Peter 3:7

**Do:** 1. Define the word ‘honor’.

1. How must the husband honor his wife in the marriage relationship? (Q. 3.k. pg. 30)

 Questions continued….

**\_\_\_Day 8\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ cont.**

1. Is the wife God’s gift especially for her husband? (Q. 3.l. pg. 30)

1. How can a husband dishonor his wife? (Q.3.m. pg.31)

**Food for thought:** “The apostle (Peter) insists that the Christian husband must dwell with his wife according to knowledge. He must know how to treat her with respect. He must stand in the proper attitude towards her. He must know her in love, not with mere carnal infatuation, but with the love which proceeds from the love of God, which is spread abroad in his heart. As with the weaker vessel! This belongs with the foregoing, not with that which follows in the text. The first part of the text therefore may be translated thus: ‘Ye men, likewise, are dwelling according to knowledge as with the weaker vessel, the wifely one.’…This does not mean that he is to tyrannize over her, treat her with brute strength as a master over a slave. Not at all! But the very opposite will be true - he will know that she is the weaker, and therefore threat her accordingly, as a man of understanding. Moreover, he will bestow honor upon her as being co-heir of the grace of life! Here, undoubtedly, the apostle points out that from a spiritual point of view there is equality. By the grace of God they together are heirs of the grace of life… An heir is one who is destined to receive a legacy, a possession which is gratuitously granted by a testator. Here God is the Testator Who has willed to give the grace of eternal life to all His people, male and female, bond or free Jew of Gentile. This the man with his strength cannot give to his wife, but both the Christian husband and the Christian wife are given this grace by God in His mercy and love….When a husband and a wife are married in the Lord, they are deeply conscious of this grace, which they observe also in one another. And the apostle stresses the point that when a man dwells in the house of knowledge, he will honor his wife as co-heir with him of this grace.”

 Rev. M. Schipper in the Standard Bearer article: Dwelling in the House of Knowledge

**To take with you today: I Peter 3:7**

**“When the husband considers this, that his wife is his spiritual equal,**

**and that she with him is an heir of eternal life,**

**then he will honor his weaker vessel and hold her in respect**

**not only as his wife but as a child of God.**

 **How blessed to so dwell in the house of knowledge!”** Rev. Schipper

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**\_Day Nine**

**Defrauding One’s Brother**

Today we will look at what Paul means by not defrauding his brother.

**I Thessalonians 4:6 -Study Guide page 31**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4: 1-7 I Cor. 7: 1-11 Proverbs 6:27-33

**Do:** 1. Define ‘defraud’.

1. The King James translation leaves the impression that the ‘defrauding’ of the brother in verse 6 is in business but according to the context it can well refer to marital relationships. In what ways can one defraud his brother? (Q. 3.n. pg. 31)

1. What does Lord’s Day 41 of the Heidelberg Catechism say about the evil of defrauding a brother?
2. 3.o. pg. 31)

 Questions cont.

\_\_Day 9\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_cont.

1. Considering what we have learned, what does verse 7 mean in this context?

**Food for thought:** “From the preceding it is clear that Paul is discussing *one* matter, not two. He is discussing sanctification, and here in verses 3-8 in particular the duty of everyone is to abstain from immorality, such as is practiced, for example, by those who, instead of taking a wife and doing this in a manner that is in keeping with the requirement of sanctification, are motivated by lust; or, disregarding the bounds of decency, enter into illicit, clandestine relationships with their brother’s wife or daughter. Though the brother who has thus been outwitted and defrauded, may never discover the wrong that was done against him, there is, nevertheless, an Avenger, even God… The evil of shamefully defrauding a brother (by practicing immorality with his wife or daughter) is here condemned….Such sins are often practiced in secret: the father or the husband does not know what is going on and his rights are being denied: he is being defrauded. But God knows, and he will prove to be the Avenger!” Wm. Hendrikson

**To take with you today: Proverbs 6:32**

**Everywhere, Scripture condemns sex outside of marriage as sin and holds up sex in marriage as approved. Extramarital relationships are temptations of the devil, sins, and the means by which he tries to devour men.** Prof. David Engelsma in Marriage the Mystery of Christ and the Church

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**\_\_Day Ten\_**

**Despising God**

Today Rev. Hanko has us take a look at what actually takes place when we sin.

**I Thessalonians 4:7&8**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4:1-8 Psalm 51: 1-4 Psalm 119: 1-8 Romans 13:14

**Do:** 1. Despising God’s’ grace (#4 pg. 31)

 How do we despise God and His work of grace when we sin? (verse 8) (Q. 4.a. pg. 31)

 2.Do God’s admonitions come to us as advice or as a divine mandate?

 Prove your answer from scripture (Q. 4.b. pg. 31)

 3.Is God an avenger in this life? Give examples. (Q. 4.c. pg. 31)

**Food for thought:** “From a spiritual point of view there are only two places to walk. We either walk in God’s law, or we walk outside of that law. The psalmist puts it this way in Psalm 119:1 “Blessed are the undefiled in the way who walk in the law of the Lord.”…Our flesh does not agree with these words. For our flesh it is bliss to walk in sin…But the word of God stands! The only place where we will have and enjoy that which is truly a blessing is to be in the sphere marked off by God’s law. And that sphere is that of walking in love to God and to the neighbor.” Rev. John A. Heys in Daily Devotions from the Psalms

**To take with you today: I Thessalonians 4:7&8**

**“Walk in love to God, and you will enjoy God’s love for you.**

**Walk as His Son did, and you will know the joy of what that Son did for you.**

**Only while walking in the light can you enjoy it.”** Rev. Heys

**\_\_Day Eleven-**

**Brotherly Love**

Today we look into the need to live in brotherly love.

**I Thessalonians 4:9-10 - Study Guide page 31**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4:9&10 Taught of God: Is. 54:13 John 6:44&45

 Love: John 13:34&35 John 15: 12-17 Col. 3:12-14 Heb. 13:1 I Peter 1:22

**Do:** 1. Using the texts above describe brotherly love.

2. What does it mean that they were ‘taught of God to love one another’?

 John 6:45

 Heb. 8:11

 I John 2: 20&27

1. The walk of believers who have the love of God spread abroad in their hearts. (#5 pg. 31)

 To what are believers admonished? (Q. 5.a. pg. 31)

1. What are some specific ways we can increase more and more in brotherly love?

**Food for thought:** “Paul has just said that the Holy spirit had been given to the church . In this very connection he now adds that this indwelling Spirit (in connection with the message from the missionaries) has already taught them to love each other. Hence, writing about this at length is not now considered necessary. The Thessalonians are actually showing this love, and on a very wide scale. Why then should Paul write about it at length?... The term *philadelphia* or love to the brothers…in the New Testament always denotes love to the brother in Christ. The Thessalonians had been taught by God thus to love one another… To all the brothers in Christ with whom the Thessalonians came into contact, throughout the whole of Macedonia, genuine ‘brotherly love’ was being revealed. Hence, Paul can only add: ‘But we urge you, brothers, to abound the more’. Perfection had not yet been reached. This admonition is always timely for in this life no Christian ever reaches the ideal of ethical perfection.” Wm. Hendrikson

**To take with you today: I Peter 1:22**

**“If we love God we will also love His saints.**

**Brotherly love requires self-sacrifice and self-denial.**

**May it be said of (us): Behold, how they love each other.”**

 Rev. A. denHartog in the S.B. article: Distinctive Traits of True Godliness: Brotherly Love

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**\_\_Day Twelve\_**

**Work With Your Own Hands**

Today we will look at Paul’s admonitions to the Thessalonians concerning their work.

**I Thessalonians 4:11&12 - Study Guide page 41-42**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4:1-12 II Thess. 3:6 -12 Romans 12:10&11 Eph. 4:28

**Do:**

1. What does it mean: “to be quiet” (vs. 11)? (Q. 5.b. pg. 31)

 Questions cont.

\_\_Day 12\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_cont.

2.What does it mean “to do your own business, and to work with your own hands” (vs. 11)? (Q. 5.c. pg. 32)

1. What does it mean to “walk honestly” (vs. 12)? (Q. 5.d. pg. 32)
2. Why is it necessary within the church “to be quiet,… to do your own business, … to work with your own hands,” and to “walk honestly”? (Q. 5.e. pg. 32)
3. Why is it necessary for those outside the church that believers live this way? (Q. 5.f. pg. 32)

 I Peter 2:12

**Food for thought:** “…Fanatics, busybodies, and loafers, nearly every church has them! Often one and the same person is all three. Hence, the three admonitions do not concern three separate classes of people, but in a sense the entire congregation, for the seed of every sin is embedded in every heart…The admonitions concern the membership in general, though naturally they concern some far more than others… Although there is nothing here that proves a connection between conditions in the church and excitement about Christ’s expected return, such a connection is, nevertheless, probable. Note also that here in I Thess. 4 the three admonitions are immediately followed by instruction with reference to the second coming… The intent then of the present admonition is that the members of the recently established congregation, instead of seeking to be supported by the church and of interfering with the leaders if they did not get their way, should continue at their daily occupation, earning their own living. The gospel of salvation is intensely practical. It dignifies labor. All these things had been made perfectly plain to the Thessalonians when the missionaries first visited them. Definite orders had been given. Hence, fanatics, busybodies, and loafers could not offer any reasonable excuse for their misconduct… With respect to diligence, fanatics - afflicted probably with Parousia hysteria - should become ‘ambitious to be calm’; busybodies should begin to mind their own affairs; and loafers should start working with their hands. (In all probability the same persons were all three: fanatics busybodies, and loafers.) No offence should be given to outsiders. Besides, by working diligently a person develops the art of being ‘dependent on nobody.” Wm. Hendrikson

**To take with you today: I Thess. 4: 11&12**

**“Whatever God has made your position, or your work, abide in that…**

**Let your first care be to glorify God to the utmost of your power where you are.**

**Teach me, my God and King, in all things Thee to see;**

**And what I do in anything, to do it as to Thee.”**

 C.H. Spurgeon in Morning and Evening

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**\_Day Thirteen\_**

**Review of I Thessalonians 4: 1-12**

4:1 Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

 Verse 4 cont.

\_\_Day 13\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_cont.

**4:1 Furthermore then** (For the rest, as to what remains - a new section begins here) **we beseech you, brethren,**

(we request - urge you) **and exhort you by the Lord Jesus,** (and teach you - in virtue of Paul’s representing the Lord whose Spirit has inspired him) **that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God,** (that as you have received instruction from us when we were with you on the manner in which you should live and conduct yourselves in order to please God) **so ye would abound more and more.** (that you will overflow or excel in that conduct of pleasing God - Make progress.)

4:2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

**4:2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.** (Because you know the commandment - instructions - that we gave you through the Lord Jesus. ‘The Lord’ shows authority, requiring implicit obedience.)

4:3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

**4:3 For this is the will of God,** (For this {meaning the following three commands beginning with the word ‘that’ in verses 3b, 4a and 6a}is the will of God.) **even your sanctification,** (these things among others are your sanctification) **that ye should abstain from fornication**: (that you keep yourself totally from immorality - lust which was not regarded as such by the heathen.)

4:4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

**4:4 That every one of you should know** (And that every one of you should have or acquire his own wife so to avoid fornication.) **how to possess his vessel** (his own wife) **in sanctification** (in opposition to dishonoring his brother by lusting after his wife.) **and honour;** (and honorably for the man that prostitutes his body to fornication covers it with shame.)

4:5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

**4:5 Not in the lust of concupiscence,** (Not in the passion of lust - all base lusts of the flesh and all that allures us to pleasure and carnal delights) **even as the Gentiles which know not God:** (as do unbelievers who do not know God.)

4:6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

**4:6 That no man go beyond** (And that no man trespass the boundaries or overreach that which is right and proper

**and defraud his brother in any matter:** (and take advantage of his brother in any way) **because that the Lord is the avenger of all such,** (For though the brother may never discover the wrong, God is the avenger of this evil - the one who punishes and makes right in all such cases.) **as we also have forewarned you and testified.** (as Paul had made clear to them when he was with them.)

4:7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

**4:7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.** (God had not called them for the purpose of committing uncleanness but to the great work of sanctification. God sets us apart as His peculiar possession - to holiness.)

 Continued…

**\_\_Day 13 cont.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

4:8 He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

**4:8 He therefore that despiseth,** (He that despises or rejects this instruction in relation to his brother)

 **despiseth not man, but God,** (rejects not man, but God) **who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit**. (Who is the author of this calling to holiness. Paul reminds them that they, by God, had been endowed with the Spirit of God - His own Spirit - the Spirit of holiness.)

4:9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

**4:9 But as touching brotherly love** (Now a new admonition - concerning the brother - do not defraud the brother, but rather love him. Love the brother in Christ.) **ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.** (Paul did not have to remind them of this admonition, because God has engraven it upon their hearts how to love.)

4:10 And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;

**4:10 And indeed ye do it** (And in fact you are showing love, genuine brotherly love) **toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia:** (toward all the brothers in Christ in all Macedonia, with all they came in contact with)

 **but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;** (but perfection has not yet been reached and Paul urges them to make progress - to press on - to strive to overcome themselves in loving one another.)

4:11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

**4:11 And that ye study to be quiet,** And be ambitious about living calmly - maintaining peace - not be fanatics)

**and to do your own business,** (and to be engaged in your own affairs - do not intrude, do not be busybodies.)

**and to work with your own hands,** (but work with your own hands - support yourselves - don’t be lazy loafers)

**as we commanded you;** (as we have told you before.)

4:12 That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing

**4:12 That ye may walk honestly** (So that -the purpose of these admonitions is in order that you may walk honestly- or live becomingly) **toward them that are without,** (toward outsiders - those not in the church. Conduct yourselves properly so as not to bring discredit upon the Church of Christ.) **and that ye may have lack of nothing** (and so that you may be dependent on no one, and not have to beg, so that you may have a sufficiency formaintaining life and may conduct yourselves honorably before unbelievers.)

**Food for thought:**

“Love for the brethren must of course be more than a beautiful doctrine for us. It must be practiced and walked in. Paul defines love as a bond of perfect-ness. Love is and must be the bond that unites the saints together and causes them to delight in one another’s fellowship and friendship… Brotherly love involves working for the highest good and welfare of our brethren. In love we must not all seek our own but also the things of others. Love is action and work done for our brethren. Food for thought continued

 **\_\_Day 13 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ cont.**

Brotherly love requires self-sacrifice and self-denial. If we love our brethren we will spend much of our own time and energy and resources for the good of our brethren…. Love is action and work done for our brethren. Brotherly love requires self-sacrifice and self-denial. If we love our brethren we will spend much of our own time and energy and resources for the good of our brethren. It is good sometimes to consider how much we really do for our brethren. Our evil world is characterized by horrible self-centeredness.

Because of our sinful nature we as Christians can sometimes also be very selfish. This is a great evil from which we must repent. How much of our time and energy and money is really spent on ourselves. s “How little often is given freely for others. Brotherly love means that we bear with one another’s weaknesses and sins and forgive one another constantly. It means that we are not easily offended by the sinful words and deeds of our brother. How needful this is. We are all such great sinners. We sin against each other repeatedly. Unless we are conscious of our own great sinfulness we can never continue in brotherly love. Unless we are by the grace of God ready to forgive until seventy times seven, brotherly love will soon cease with us. Humility is an absolutely necessary corollary to brotherly love. Where there is pride there can be no true brotherly love. Brotherly love is revealed in its most beautiful character when our brother is in need or in distress. This world is full of misery and wretchedness. The saints of God cannot escape the misery of the suffering of this world, of sickness, disease, and death. The saints of God are often lonely and forsaken, especially because the world hates them. Jesus said that He will judge all men whether they have given food to their hungry brethren, taken them in when they were strangers, clothed them when they were naked, and visited them when they were sick and in prison. Have we done these things? If we truly love our brethren we will always be careful what we say to them and about them. How often love is violated by words of hatred and strife and of harsh judgment. What grief and sorrow this has brought to many a dear saint of God. Scripture tells us always to speak the truth in love. It exhorts us to be careful about the words that we speak that they may always minister grace to the hearers and be to the use of edifying. To love our brethren is to use our mouth to exhort and encourage and comfort our fellow saints with the truth of God….Let us all be careful to dwell in love with our brethren in the Lord. God is glorified by this. His virtues are most gloriously displayed in the earth when the saints dwell together in love.

 Rev. A. denHartog in the S.B. article: Distinctive Traits of True Godliness: Brotherly Love

**To take with you today: I John 3: 10&11**

**“The church of Jesus Christ must be characterized by love.**

 **When there is hatred and confusion the name of the Lord is greatly dishonored,**

**the Spirit of God is grieved,**

**and the world is given occasion to blaspheme**.”

 Rev. denHartog