

February 23, 2025

God's Good News Story-The Church Alive & Growing

**I Thessalonians 4:1-12 – More & More Like Jesus
Part 4**

God's Good News Story - "The Church Alive & Growing" is our ongoing multi-year sermon series where we are working our way chronologically, historically, and missionally through the New Testament. Our goals are to have a clear understanding of what the Bible says about the 1st Century church and its' growth and the principles and lessons we can learn from them to keep the Church Alive & Growing in the 21st Century.

We are in week 4 of our mini-series in the book of 1st Thessalonians in which Paul, Silas & Timothy address concerns by the church in Thessalonica by encouraging them to live right, trust in God and place their hope in the sure and certain 2nd coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Key Theme: Encourage & Comfort one another in the midst of uncertain times.

Today we will discover Paul's guidelines to the 1st Century Church in Thessalonica on how to become **More & More Like Jesus**. Remember, Paul had a great love and desire for these new believers to "**Walk In A Manner Worthy Of God**" (1 Thess. 2:12). Now, we, as the 21st Century Church here in Broussard, can utilize these same ageless principles to help us to become 'More & More Like Jesus' and "**Walk In A Manner Worthy Of God**'.

Knute Larson in the Holman NT Commentary states it this way... "*The point of life is to please God, to learn what brings Him the most honor and delight. By living a worthy life today, we will then be prepared for that great day when Christ returns and ushers us into eternal life.*" (p. 52)

Paul exhorts the Church to...

**1. Walk More & More in Sanctification,
Godliness & Holiness**

1 Thessalonians 4:1-12...Finally then, brothers & sisters, we request and implore/encourage 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 do this MORE & MORE. ² For you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. ³ For this is the will of God, your SANCTIFICATION (Godliness, Holiness); that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you know how to possess his own vessel/body in sanctification and honor, ⁵ not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶ and that no man transgress and defraud his brother or sister in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. ⁷ For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification. ⁸ So, he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.

In case you may not be aware of this fact, the moral climate in the Roman Empire during the 1st Century was, well to put it nicely, less than pure and biblical. It was a sad, deviant culture. The Thessalonian believers were immersed in a sex-crazed, materialistic society... does that sound and feel a little too familiar? They may not have had Internet Porn, Social Media and TV to saturate their minds but it was still rampant and tragically destructive.

Paul, Church Planter/Evangelistic/Pastor/Discipler & Father-Figure has already shown us that he had a deep and passionate love and concern for these believers. He reinforces that even more in this section of his letter. In verses 1 he says “***I request and implore (encourage/exhort/plea)***”... well you get the point; Paul is adamant about his deep desire to see them “***walk and please God***” and to increase in this holy & godly lifestyle of **sanctification**. He wants them to be ‘*set apart, consecrated unto God*’.

When We Live More Like Jesus:

- a. We Bring Pleasure to God (vs.1)
- b. We Obey God (vs. 2,3)
- c. We Glorify God (vs.4,5)
- d. We Escape the Judgement/Vengeance of God (vs.6)
- e. We Fulfill God’s Purpose of Purity in Our Lives (vs.7)

God wants his Church to walk in a manner worthy of God, Holy, Godly, Sanctified and Pure...Graciously God gives us His Holy Spirit to empower us to accomplish this (vs. 8)

I implore you to commit or renew your commitment to purity sexually as well as in all areas of your life. Let’s live up to God’s purpose and desire for us to be holy and sanctified.

2. Walk More & More in Love For One Another

1 Thessalonians 4:9,10... ⁹ *Now as to the love of the brethren (Greek-Philadelphia), you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to LOVE (agapeo) ONE ANOTHER;* ¹⁰ *for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers & sisters, to do so MORE & MORE,*

In addition to living a holy, pure life, Paul reminds us that LOVE is a Key Ingredient to ‘***Walking Worthy of God***’ and becoming ‘***More & More Like Jesus***’.

Paul had already emphasized this as we saw in last week’s passage, which is an introduction to today’s lesson.

Let’s reread as background and foundation...

1 Thess. 3:11-13... ¹¹ *Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you;* ¹² *and may the Lord cause you to increase and overflow in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you;* ¹³ *so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.*

True & Genuine Believers will not only have Holy lives, but they will have Loving Lives.

Let’s take a quick inventory...

Is your life one of Holiness & Love?

3. Walk More & More in Integrity, Honesty and Excellence of Work

^{10b} But we urge you, brothers & sisters, to do so MORE & MORE, ¹¹ and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend /mind to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, ¹² so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.

I am sure you have heard the phrase, usually in a rather negative manner “*Mind your own business*”. Well, this is the verse that it that it most likely comes from. The unique thing is that it is not primarily designed to keep OTHERS out of YOUR business, but a positive exhortation to MIND or TAKE CARE of YOUR OWN business. It is a call to integrity, honesty, excellence and faithfulness in your work and business affairs. We are to be hard workers who are honest, people of integrity and excellence. Christians should be the best in all areas of life! One of my mottos, which comes from an old hymn is “*Give of Your Best to the Master*”! When we do, our lives become a living testimony to God.

So, I ask you “**Are you Giving of Your Best!**”

Our Goal: To Be More Like Jesus & Walk in a Manner Worthy of God. This will be accomplished as we...

- **Walk More & More in Sanctification, Godliness & Holiness**
- **Walk More & More in Love For One Another**
- **Walk More & More in Integrity, Honesty and Excellence of Work**