

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
Wednesday Sermon

Date: April 15, 2020

Text: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

Scripture Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-18

Subject: Believer's Walk and Sanctification

This letter was written from Corinth, in AD 54, shortly after Paul's departure from Thessalonica (Acts 16,17) and is the earliest of his letters.

Let us remember one of the main purposes of this letter. It is to confirm and strengthen the faith of this Thessalonian Church concerning the doctrines already taught them when Paul was with them.

1 Thessalonians 4:1 (KJV) *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.*

Not only did the apostle pray that we increase more and more in love toward one another – and that we might be established in holiness before God, even our Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but furthermore >

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.

– Established in holiness! Increase in love toward one another! But that you would abound more and more in your walk pleasing God in the manner which you received of us. And what is our walk? We have entered in through the strait gate and are now walking on the narrow way which leads unto life. We cannot allow those who entered the wide gate and are walking the broad way to destruction to trip us up in our walk. More and more, walk right! Please God in all our walk.

1 Thessalonians 4:2 (KJV) *For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.*

Paul, Timotheos, and Silvanus (Silas) had given them the commandments which came by the Lord Jesus. Not merely the Ten Commandments, but commandments which are from the New Covenant. Not merely outward praying – but prayer in our closet! Not outward fasting – but the anointing of our head so we appear not to be fasting. Not to abstain from actual participation in adultery, but from a lingering look which causes us to commit adultery in our hearts. To place our light on a candlestick so that all in the house may have light. Plus, these dozens and dozens more of the commands of the Lord Jesus Christ, our savior, Lord, and example of how to walk.

1 Thessalonians 4:3 (KJV) *For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:*

Verses 3 through 6 are all one sentence. The subject is God's will for our sanctification (being set apart from the world and unto God). In this verse, Paul begins to the saints' abstinence from fornication. Fornication is a huge word which encompasses all manner of sexual sins outside the honorable bed of marriage. The devil uses this tool to tempt all of us: the world says it is OK if we do it; our flesh wants to indulge in it. The current plague of smutty pictures, stories and movies is designed to capture us by appealing to the lust of our flesh.

1 Thessalonians 4:4 (KJV) *That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;*

The LORD wants every one of us to know how to possess our vessels (bodies) in being set apart from the world and set apart unto God – and to live honorably. That says that it is dishonorable to live in a way that presents opportunities to indulge the lusts of

our flesh. The rather, brethren, we are commanded to: “...walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” (**Romans 16:13-14**).

What is chambering? According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Chambering is: Sexual indulgence, lewdness, luxury, effeminate (being used of sodomites). What is wantonness? According to the same source, wantonness is: Lascivious, unchaste, effeminacy, foppish (foolish) affection, excessive appetite, unbridled luxury.

God’s children are warned again and again about the sin of fornication.

Ephesians 5:3 (KJV) But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

1 Thessalonians 4:5 (KJV) *Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:*

Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: -- What is concupiscence? The OED says this is the coveting of carnal things and things of the world; especially libidinous desire, sexual appetite, lust. Paul speaks of the Gentiles which know not God. I believe he is speaking of all Gentiles, but mainly those who once inhabited the land of Palestine before Israel came. The bible tells us in clear, unmistakable language how they lived; how them defiled themselves and how they defiled even the land where they lived so that God cast them out of it. They knew not God, so what were they like?

Leviticus 18:1-30 (KJV) *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I am the LORD your God. 3 After the doings of the land*

*of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances. **4** Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God. **5** Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD.*

Verses 6 through 18 explain in detail who those are next of kin whose nakedness are not to be uncovered.

19 *Also thou shalt not approach unto a woman to uncover her nakedness, as long as she is put apart for her uncleanness.*

20 *Moreover thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbour's wife, to defile thyself with her. **21** And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD. **22** Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.*

23 *Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion.*

Please notice the consequences of fornication even in this life. It defiles the person! It defiles the land in which they live!

24 ***Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: **25** And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants. **26** Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among***

you: 27 (For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled;) **28 That the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you. 29** For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people. **30** Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God.

1 Thessalonians 4:6 (KJV) 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.

That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: -- These terms "go beyond and defraud" sould like trade, business, and such like, but we are bound to the context. The context speaks of fornication, lasciviousness, chambering, wantonness, and fleshly defilement. The business referred to, is not trade, but the subject of chastity or uncleanness the apostle is speaking of, both before and after; and the phrases used either design the act of adultery, coveting a brother's wife, and lying with her, and such like; and so a defrauding and wronging of him by defiling his bed. It also speaks of the practices of sodomites which is an unnatural lust and desire in men after men, and copulation with them – but not only men, but women with women – in a word, homosexuality. Today these refer to themselves as "gay," but there is nothing gay about them.

Because that the LORD is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. -- The person that commits these things the Lord avenges, either in this life, by the hand of the

civil magistrate, who is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath on him that does evil;

- or by a violent death, as in the case of Zimri and Cozbi, and twenty four thousand more at the same time;
- or by some awful judgment from heaven, as in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah;
- or in the world to come.

Consider Zimri and Cozbi:

Numbers 25:6-8 (KJV) *And, behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 7 And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand; 8 And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel.*

Numbers 25:14-15 (KJV) *Now the name of the Israelite that was slain, even that was slain with the Midianitish woman, was Zimri, the son of Salu, a prince of a chief house among the Simeonites. 15 And the name of the Midianitish woman that was slain was Cozbi, the daughter of Zur; he was head over a people, and of a chief house in Midian.*

We all know the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, do we not? Or, do we? I believe we need to have our holy minds stirred up concerning this by way of remembrance.

Genesis 19:1-26 (KJV) *And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot*

*seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground; **2** And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. **3** And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat. **4** But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter: **5** And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them. **6** And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, **7** And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. **8** Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof. **9** And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door. **10** But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. **11** And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door. **12** And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place: **13** For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face*

*of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it. **14** And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.*

Verses 15-26 explain the judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah and Lot's escape from them.

1 Thessalonians 4:7 (KJV) *For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.*

The word uncleanness is associated with all manner of sexual sins. We are not called to that. Do we have sexual desires? Yes, we all do when we begin to mature. What does the LORD say about this?

1 Corinthians 7:1-5 (KJV) *Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. 2 Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. 3 Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. 4 The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. 5 Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.*

1 Corinthians 7:7-9 (KJV) *For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. 8 I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. 9 But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.*

Jesus taught us that there are undoubtedly few who can live by themselves outside of marriage. The Lord had been teaching his followers about marriage and divorce – then we read this:

Matthew 19:10-12 (KJV) *His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. **11** But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. **12** For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.*

1 Thessalonians 4:8 (KJV) *He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.*

He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit. – He therefore (considering what has brought before us) that despiseth... What does that mean? It means to look down on; to set at naught; to disregard. It means to treat with contempt with words or actions.

Thus the man who does such regarding what we have seen before us, does not to man, but God. And God hath also given unto his holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit sealed us with his presence after we believed, did he not?

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 (KJV) *Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; **22** Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.*

Ephesians 1:13-14 (KJV) *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that*

*holy Spirit of promise, **14** Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*

The Holy Spirit lives in the bodies of every one of us who are believers in Christ Jesus – and the Holy Spirit will abide with us forever. Yes our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. He is with us 24 hours of every day that we live. He never leaves. He is there to teach us the truth of the scriptures; to comfort us and lead us according to the scriptures; and to help us by praying for us according to the will of God. Why is that? Because we do not know how to pray as we ought. What again is the subject we are speaking of? We are talking about a person who despises what we have studied, right? That person does not despise men, but God who gave us this word. We are taught of the LORD to not grieve the Holy Spirit whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption? Will not the Holy Spirit, who is God, be grieved if we despise God's word regarding this important matter? How can we expect to walk in holiness and maintain our sanctification (being set apart from the world and unto God)? I speak unto wise men – consider what I say from God's Holy Word.

God bless you, brothers and sisters. Consider these words and suffer the word of exhortation. God willing, we shall take up verses 9 through 18 next time. Amen.