

## WORSHIPING ON THE LORD'S DAY

April 24, 2016

*Worship, as God intended, is a supernatural event. As we enter into this service of worship, we cross the threshold of the secular to the sacred, from the common to the uncommon, from the profane to the holy. Prepare yourself therefore for this most holy convocation!*

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Prelude

Worship Theme

God is Sovereign

Proverbs 16:1, 4, 9, 33: "The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord... The Lord has made everything for its own purpose, even the wicked for the day of evil... The mind of man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps... The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord."

**God Calls us to Worship Before the Cross** Ps. 72:8-9a

+We Adore Him

Hymn #166, "Wondrous King, All Glorious"

We Confess Our Sin

O Lord, we are a shell full of dust. In ourselves, we are no rare object of value. We have nothing and are nothing. When You would guide us, we control ourselves. When You would be sovereign, we rule ourselves. When you would take care of us, we suffice ourselves. When we should submit to Your providence, we follow our will. When we should study, love, honor, and trust You, we serve ourselves. We fault and correct Your laws to suit ourselves. Instead of You, we look to man's approval.

Lord, it is our chief goal to have an undistracted heart, devoted completely to You. Convince us that we cannot be our own god or restore ourselves to You. Help us to see that grace does this through Your loving discipline, for when our god is attention, You cast us lower, when riches are our idol, You wing them away, when pleasure is our all, You turn it into bitterness.

Take away our roving eyes, curious ears, greedy appetites, lustful hearts; show us that none of these things can heal a wounded conscience, or support a tottering frame, or uphold a departing spirit. Oh Lord, take us to the cross and leave us there. Amen!

We Thank Him For His Forgiveness

Hymn #128, "God Moves In A Mysterious Way"

**God Calls us to Worship Thru Dedication** Ps. 72:10-12

We Give Him Our Offering & Concerns

We Give Him Ourselves

Hymn #108, "Whate'er My God Ordains Is Right"

**God Calls us to Worship Thru Fellowship** Ps. 72:16

We Read His Word

Sermon

\*We Partake Of The Lord's Supper

Hymn #295, "Crown Him With Many Crowns"

**God Blesses us in the Benediction**

Welcome and Announcements

Postlude

(Containers have been placed at the front for communion cups and small trash)

+You are invited to raise your hands during the prayer of adoration.

\*Visitors, please see note below on the Lord's Supper.

## Excellence in the Ministry, Pt. 3a

1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

Study Notes for April 24, 2016

**I. Introduction:** Nature Dictates Taste/Desire (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17; Phil. 2:13; Rom. 7:22-23a)

### II. Excellence in the Ministry, 1 Thes. 4:1-12.

#### A. As it Relates to God: Devotion, vv. 1-8.

1. The Foundation, vv. 1-2.
2. The Calling, v. 3.

**For this is the will of God, your sanctification...:**

#### A Big Deal!!!

It is rare in Scripture that God is so black and white when it comes to His agenda for the child of God. In fact, in only five other places in the NT does God specifically say, “*This is my will/agenda for you!*” We see it in Jn. 6:40a; Eph. 5:17-18; 1 Thes. 5:18; 1 Pet. 3:17; 2:13-15a)...

#### The Calling

The word in the Greek is *ἁγιασμός* (*hagiasmos*) which is used in the LXX to translate the Hebrew *קִדְשׁ* (*qedesh*). This is a major word in the OT referencing *anything that is different on account of its association with God...*

Because that which is associated with God is holy, it is NOT used in an ordinary way (cf. 2 Tim. 2:20; 1 Pet. 1:15-16)!

What practically does this mean? It speaks of a behavior dictated by one’s position. We “are to be holy in all [our] behavior”! Why? Because God is holy and we are His!

#### ***That is, that you abstain from sexual immorality***

The word for “abstain” is *ἀπέχω* (*apechō*) which speaks of complete and total separation. Because we have been separated unto God we necessarily are to be completely and totally separated from the sinful things of this life—specifically “sexual immorality.”

The word for “sexual immorality” is *πορνεία* (*porneia*) from which we get the word pornography. It speaks of any and all *illicit* sexual thoughts, passions, desires, and actions both in and outside of marriage. God created the man/woman relationship; as such it is holy (Heb. 13:4).

#### 3. The Tools in our Devotion, vv. 4-6a.

##### a. A Body Directed by the Mind, v. 4.

#### Interpretive Challenges in this Verse

-possess: the word is *κτάομαι* (*ктаομαι*) and does NOT carry the connotation of “possess” in the Bible (however, it does carry that nuance in the secular literature of the day). It generally means “acquire” or “gain.”

C. S. Lewis described it this way, speaking of Eustace who is now a dragon gazing upon another dragon that just died, “He took a long drink and then (I know this sounds shocking, but it isn’t if you think it over) he ate nearly all the dead dragon. He was halfway through it before he realized what he was doing; for, you see, though his mind was the mind of Eustace, his tastes and his digestion were dragonish. And there is nothing a dragon likes so well as fresh dragon.” (*Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, Kindle edition)

It ought to be a Big Deal to us as well... Richard Baxter wrote, “It is a palpable error in those ministers that make such disproportion between their preaching and their living, that they will study hard to preach exactly and study little or not at all to live exactly. All the week long is little enough how to speak two hours; and yet one hour seems too much to study how to live all the week.” (*The Reformed Pastor*, p. 162)

Kittel wrote, “The old Greek term *hágos* denotes an object of awe, the adjective *hagés* means ‘clean,’ and the verb *házō* has the sense ‘to shrink from.’” (*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, pp. 14–15)

Leon Morris put it this way, “‘Your sanctification’ (NASB) points to the process of which ‘holiness’ is the completed state. From the moment anyone believes, he is set apart for God, set apart to be ‘holy’; in New Testament language he is a ‘saint’... This does not mean that he is morally perfect, but that he is given over to God to do his will. Thus a process is begun in which the old ways and the old habits are increasingly done away and replaced with new ways that fit the service of God. This is a long and necessary process, and much of the New Testament is taken up with instruction as to how it may be furthered.” (*1 and 2 Thessalonians*, TNTC, p. 80)

-vessel: σκεῦος (*skeuos*); in the context this could refer to (1) a person's wife (which corresponds quite nicely with the *natural* translation of the previous word “acquire”; in fact, it is because of the previous word “acquire” that ancient Bible scholars argue that Paul here must be talking about a person's wife [you don't “acquire” your body]), (2) a person's body (which is the preferred translation of the word σκεῦος [*skeuos*]). Yet here is the problem: if the previous word is translated as “acquire” it doesn't make sense to translate σκεῦος (*skeuos*) as “vessel.” Through righteous living you don't “acquire your body”- you were born with it!

Which is the correct translation? While each view has its adherents, the position taking this as a person's wife is the *minority view* today with very, very few takers. It all boils down to a simple question: Why the code language? Why wouldn't Paul just say “wife” if that's what he meant here?

In the words of Gordon Fee, “Why use an otherwise unknown metaphor for what could have been said plainly, if either of these were the issue?” ( <i>The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians</i> . NICNT. p. 149)
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### The Calling/Tool

The first tool in our war against moral impurity is actively controlling our bodies- dictating how they are used, what they do, and that to which we commit them! In fact, notice Paul's choice of wording...

-know: οἶδα (*oida*): speaks of **a fullness of knowledge**. The word is NOT a relational knowing and so NOT a progressive one. RATHER, it speaks to a mastery of knowing (and so references a completeness of knowing, cf. Mt. 6:8; Rom. 2:2).

In light of this distinction, what is the call here? It is to οἶδα (*oida*)/“know with mastery” and so to master the control one's body!

Do you understand what this means? It presupposes a life in which our minds are in complete control of our bodies! It presupposes a growing discipline on the part of the child of God whereby he exerts mastery over his body!

### Examples: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 & Great Athletes

#### **\*Where We Live**

1. Understand that when it comes to our bodies, discipline and self-control are systemic virtues (cf. Gal. 5:22-23a)!
2. So what is involved in “buffeting our bodies” that they might serve us? How is it that we “know how to possess our own vessels”? Much of the answer is found in the remainder of 1 Thes. 4:4...
  - a. Realize first and foremost that your body is the Lord's body (that is the first nuance of the term “sanctification”); it has been claimed by God for His purpose. As such, your hands are His hands; your eyes are His eyes; your feet, His feet; etc.
  - b. Next ask the question: “If Christ were in my shoes, would He use His body as I use my body- we are talking here about ‘honor’? Would He gaze upon that which I gaze upon? Would He delight in what I delight in? Etc.”
  - c. Thirdly, if there is any divergence in how you are living and how Christ would live, then with The Foundation (vv. 1-2) clearly in mind, make the necessary changes to align your living with Christ's. This will involve “buffeting your body”!!!
  - d. Don't down play the significance of any context when it comes to disciplining your body. Again, discipline is systemic!
  - e. As “self-control” is a fruit of the Spirit AND as the fruit of the Spirit will only come as you and I submit ourselves to the mind of the Spirit which is the word of God, if we are going to cultivate a life of “self-control” we necessarily will need to be (1) in the word and (2) submitting to the word!
  - f. Finally, don't do this in a vacuum. Get involved in a relationship of accountability where a brother or sister is praying for you, rooting for you, encouraging you, and holding you accountable!