

“The Essence of Sexual Purity”

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

- **DOING LIFE WITH GOD IS THE KEY TO SEXUAL PURITY.**

Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. 1 Thessalonians 4:1 (English Standard Version)

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, . . . Colossians 2:6 (ESV)

. . . pray without ceasing, . . . 1 Thessalonians 5:17 (ESV)

- **STAYING IN PROCESS IS A NECESSARY PART OF SEXUAL PURITY.**

For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. ³For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; . . . 1 Thessalonians 4:2-3 (ESV)

Sanctification = the process by which God conforms a believer’s life and character to the life and character of Jesus Christ

Three Stages of Sanctification

- At salvation – a **definite break** from the ruling power and love of sin

So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin . . . ¹⁴Sin is no longer your master . . . Romans 6:11a, 14a (New Living Translation)

- Throughout **the Christian life** – becoming progressively more and more like Jesus (See 2 Corinthians 3:18)

Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. Romans 6:19b (New International Version)

- **At death** – completed (See Hebrews 12:23)

- **VICTORY IN THE AREA OF SEXUAL PURITY IS POSSIBLE.**

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness

and honor, ⁵not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; . . . ⁷For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-5, 7 (ESV)

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. 1 John 5:3 (ESV)

- **SEXUAL SIN IS DESTRUCTIVE ON MANY LEVELS.**

It is God’s will that you should . . . avoid sexual immorality . . . ⁶that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. ⁷For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. ⁸Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you. 1 Thessalonians 4:3 (NIV) vv. 6-8 (ESV)

- It involves wronging someone and taking advantage of them.
- It separates believers from God.
- It produces consequences from God.

- **SELF-CONTROL IS A VITAL PART OF SEXUAL PURITY.**

For this is the will of God . . . that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, ⁵not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 (ESV)

. . . Let the Spirit direct your lives, and you will not satisfy the desires of the human nature . . . ²²But the Spirit produces . . . ²³ . . . self-control. Galatians 5:16b, 22a, 23a (Good News Bible)

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶and to knowledge, self-control . . . 2 Peter 1:5-6a (NIV)

Elements of Self-Control

- Controlling thoughts

Be careful how you think; your life is shaped by your thoughts. Proverbs 4:23 (GNB)

- Controlling actions