

The World is Watching

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

Believers are encouraged and challenged to lead daily lives that win the respect of non-believers. Our view of eternity should not distract us from a commitment to excellence in influence today. This passage gives us three ways to have a lifestyle that is conducive to positive influence.

Now about your love for one another we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. ¹⁰And in fact, you do love all of God's family throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more, ¹¹and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, ¹²so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.
1 Thessalonians 4:9-12 (New International Version)

What do non-believers see in other Christians? What do those who are far from Christ see in *you*?

- **LET THE WORLD SEE OUR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER.**

Now about your love for one another we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. ¹⁰ And in fact, you do love all of God's family throughout Macedonia. 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10a (NIV)

Am I demonstrating a growing love for other Christians? (See Matthew 25:31-46)

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” John 13:34-35 (NIV)

May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. 1 Thessalonians 3:12 (NIV)

- What does the world see in how I am showing love for my brothers and sisters in Christ?

Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more, . . .
1 Thessalonians 4:10b (NIV)

- **LET THE WORLD SEE OUR LIVING AT PEACE WITH OTHERS.**

. . . and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business . . . 1 Thessalonians 4:11a-b (NIV)

Have I ever thought about how my reactions to every day life and its struggles speak to the world about my faith?

- We cannot possibly maintain a positive testimony toward those in the faith – much less those outside of the faith – if a spirit of restlessness and panic dominates our lives.

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.
Romans 12:18 (NIV)

- **LET THE WORLD SEE US DEMONSTRATING INTEGRITY.**

. . . and work with your hands, just as we told you, ¹²so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.
1 Thessalonians 4:11b-12 (NIV)

How am I leveraging my relationships at work and at school to reflect my faith in Christ?

Believers:

- Conduct yourselves with wisdom. (See Colossians 4:5-6)
- See every contact with non-believers as a God-planned opportunity.
- Your life and your words may be the only sermon a non-believer hears.
- Treat all people with dignity and sensitivity. Focus on listening and being a positive example versus making it a priority to change someone as your personal project.

Non-Believers:

- Don't be turned off from faith in Christ by poor examples.
- Explore the faith yourself – read the Bible, ask questions, meditate on its words and test its statements with an open mind and an open heart.
- Allow Jesus Christ into your heart. Admit that He is God; believe that He died for your sins and rose in power over death; confess your sins. Receive God's free gift of love for you.

Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. John 17:3 (NIV)

We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. 1 John 5:20 (NIV)