

For this is the will of God, your sanctification, that you abstain from sexual immorality, that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor. (1 Thessalonians 4:3)

I. Living G Rated in an X-Rated World (vv.1-8)

- a. The gospel of Jesus Christ does not simply teach us what to believe, but it regulates our behavior and shows us "how to live in order to please God."
- b. Remember God never commands us to do anything without directions. He gives us "how to do it."
- c. Unfortunately, we have been desensitized in our culture. A confused culture should not direct the church and our understanding of sexual relationships.
- d. Why did Paul teach several churches on the issue of sexual immorality and purity?
- e. God wants us to live to please Him in a sanctified lifestyle (*sanctified means set apart for a purpose*).
 1. Live righteously, excel, and increase (*abound more and more*) (vv.1-2)
 2. God desires our continued sanctification (v.3a)
 3. Abstain from sexual immorality (v.3b)
 4. Possess your *vessel* (your body and/or spouse's) in **sanctification** and in **honor** (vv. 4-5)
 5. Don't take advantage of a brother (a *brother* either has a mother or a sister)
- f. To ignore God's warning about sexual sin grieves the Spirit and disrupts purpose (vv.6-8)

II. Sex is God's Idea With Boundaries

- a. Biblically speaking, moral sex is an exclusive activity between one man and one woman *within* a covenant marriage.
- b. "Sexual immorality" is *porneia* in Greek and we get the English word pornography.
- c. This word is also translated as "whoredom," "fornication," and "idolatry." It means "a surrendering of sexual purity", in regards to premarital sexual relations.
- d. God is very specific about sexual immorality in Leviticus 18 also read 1 Corinthians 5
- e. Remember Lot, David, Samson, Judah, and others...(experienced disrupted purposes)
- f. Sex is an exclusive package that involves the look, the thoughts, the desire and the act. It is not a single act.
- g. If you cannot righteously finish the package then you should not start building that package in your mind. God has called us to be holy in all that we do, say and think.
- h. Boundaries for the bedroom (Heb 13:4) and boundaries for life (Eph 5:3).

III. Thoughts and Considerations for Action

- a. It's never **too late** to do the right thing in God's sight.
- b. Can I use my body as I please if I do not hurt anyone?
- c. How do you view the female gender? Paul's answer, "*older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.*" (1 Tim 5:2)
- d. What safeguards should a Christian use when talking to a person of the opposite sex?