

## Plea for Purity

### 1 Thessalonians 4

*<sup>1</sup> Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God; <sup>2</sup> for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus. <sup>3</sup> For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; <sup>4</sup> that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, <sup>5</sup> not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; <sup>6</sup> that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. <sup>7</sup> For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. <sup>8</sup> Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.*

1. A life of genuine purity recognizes the Lordship of Jesus Christ. (vs.2)
  - Do you recognize that Jesus is Lord of your life?
  - When you have to make decisions, do you stop and ask what would God want me to do, or do you just do what you want?
  - Do you ever read and study God's word to find out exactly what Jesus demands of us?
  - Those who are serious about living pure before God will recognize His Lordship.
2. A life of genuine purity is not satisfied with just getting by (vs.1)
  - Regarding the area of personal purity, are you happy just getting by, or do you pursue holiness and righteousness with all your heart?
  - Do you see purity as a line that you can go racing up to... trying to do as much as possible without feeling guilty?
  - Or is your heart's desire to flee as far as you can from sin and compromise, in order to be as close to God as you can be?
  - Purity isn't a line; its the direction of our heart away from sin in full pursuit of the knowledge and holiness of God .
3. A life of genuine purity disciplines itself to keep natural desires under control. (vs.4-5)
  - By His power, are you able to subdue & conquer those natural, unholy desires that we all have?
  - Would you consider yourself in control of your actions and behavior, or do you find yourself too often loosing control?
  - The key of course is knowing God in a personal, intimate relationship through Jesus Christ.
  - No man (or woman) has the power to conquer his own sinful nature without the grace and power of God working in his/her life.

- God has provided the body of Christ to aid us in this walk, “iron sharpens iron”. Do you have a fellow believer a ministry partner who is running the race to confess to, to hold you accountable? Are you being honest with that person?
- As Gal.5:22 states, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy,... and self-control."

4. A life of genuine purity demonstrates genuine love for others. (vs.6)

- First, how do you define love and is it the proper definition?
- Do you see love as a mental illness or condition of the heart that removes responsibility for our choices and actions? (Ex: "I was madly in love, I just couldn't control myself.")
- Or do you have a Biblical definition of love? Which the Bible defines as a choice to be kind to others and to seek their well-being even above our own, regardless of what they do.
- Second, if you genuinely love others, how will that effect the way you treat them?
  - Example: A guy who genuinely loved a young lady would not pressure her to have sex.
  - Likewise: A girl who genuinely loved a young man would not wear seductive and alluring clothing, that is going to make him stumble b/c of temptation.
- Is genuine love demonstrated in your relationships?

5. A life of genuine purity reveals a true commitment to Christ. (vs.8)

- The Spirit of God was crystal clear in the passage, that the things he was writing was coming from the Lord Jesus Himself.
- It was and is today God's will for His people to be pure, separated, and holy in all of their relationships; especially with the opposite sex outside the covenant of marriage.
- Based on this passage, does your life reflect a genuine commitment to Christ?
- If so, Great!
- If not, the Bible says "if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)
- Do you need cleansing today?
- God is waiting to hear from you.

May God help all of us to seek to live lives of genuine purity!