

Title: How Can I Please my Heavenly Father?

Text: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

Date: October 22, 2017

Background. Paul is getting very practical about how the believer should aim to live a life that pleases God by the power of the Holy Spirit. Since Christ saved the Thessalonians, they must now live in accordance with God's Word.

Main Idea. Paul reiterates a point that he has already introduced: two key ways believers can please the Lord is by walking in holiness (vv 3-8), and walking in love (vv 9-12).

Key word study: *sanctification* (v 3). It is God's will that we become sanctified! This is the process of our being made holy. The Holy Spirit works in us and empowers us to resemble the person of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:29).

Possible Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think so many adult Christians struggle with apathy/complacency? Paul begins 4:1 with a strong exhortation to keep growing, to do even more in the faith. Why do some reach adulthood and put their spiritual lives on autopilot?
2. Notice the link between *knowing* God's will and *doing* God's will in 4:1-2. Can you explain why this is important? Do Christians that you know consciously think about the will of God for their lives in common, everyday situations? On a daily basis?
3. Why do you think Paul begins this series of exhortations with the topic of sexual immorality?
4. How would you explain the concept of sanctification to a teenager or young adult today?
5. What does Paul mean by *abstaining*, or *keeping away* from sexual immorality in 4:3? What does that look like in our contemporary culture today?

6. How does sexual promiscuity *transgress against and take advantage* of a Christian brother or sister (4:6)?
7. What should our real motivation be for keeping the commandments of God?
8. Given Paul's commendation of the way the Thessalonians love one another, why does he tell them to love one another even more? What are some ways in which you can practice this?
9. How can you tell if the members of a church genuinely love one another? What happens when love is absent?
10. What does leading a "quiet life" mean? What does Paul mean by "minding our own business?"