

Recap of 6/28/20 (1 Thessalonians 4:1-8):

1. Chapter 4 starts the second major division of the Book of Thessalonians. In chapters 1-3, Paul looks at his history with the church, commends them for standing firm, explains his delay in returning, and discusses the motives for his ministry. In chapters 4 and 5, Paul deal with “what is lacking” (3:10). In 4:1-12, after an introduction (vv. 1,2) he deals with various aspects of Christian living: purity (vv. 3-8), love (vv. 9-10), and responsible living (vv. 11-12). The key to this section is that believers should live in such a way as to please God.
2. The word “finally” in vs. 1 doesn’t signal the end of the book but, rather, introduces the final main section of the book, exhortations concerning practical Christian living, the rapture, the Second Coming, leadership, and miscellaneous imperatives.
3. The motivation for right living is love for God, the desire to please Him. The Christian life is not “a set of rules to be obeyed, a list of prohibitions to be avoided.” It’s not a list of do’s and don’ts. The Christian life is love for God working itself out in our daily experiences. These are not just Paul’s thoughts on the matter, but he speaks with the authority of Jesus Christ (vs. 2).
4. The first practical issue Paul deals with is that of the need for purity. It could be outlined this way:
 - sexual immorality displease God vv. 3-6a
 - sexual immorality has serious consequences vv. 6b-7
 - sexual immorality violated God’s provision vs. 8
5. “The Christian message of holy living was new to that culture, and it was not easy for these young believers to fight the temptations around them.” (Wiersbe)
6. Barclay assesses the ancient atmosphere this way: in Rome, morality was dead; in Greece, immorality was blatant; the Church, however, was the champion of purity and the guardian of the home.
7. Commenting on our culture today, Richards writes: “Our society places great emphasis on sex. Sex is confused with love, and many view sex simply as a source of casual pleasure.”