

## **1 Thessalonians 4:1-12**

- Intro:
- There are a lot of churches, or houses of worship, places where we go
- To feel encouraged and strengthened,
- Where we can feel the love of like-minded people.
- Sometimes it happens, and sometimes it doesn't.
- And when we don't experience that warm feeling, we feel alone.
- There are churches where people will be there raising their arms in praise,
- Trying to reach God, but their arms never seem to go sideways,
- To those around them, who need the feel their touch.
- Over the years, on vacations, and when I was searching for a Church,
- I would walk into a church, and not have one person say hello to me.
- And as a result, I couldn't wait to leave.
- And I'm not talking about Mega Churches either.
- But when we find the right Church, where we are surrounded by love,
- It can make all the difference in the world.
- As human beings, living in a difficult and foreboding world,
- We often times walk in having various pressing issues on our minds.
- And not everyone knows the struggles that we are facing at that moment,
- But how wonderful it is, when we walk in, we are greeted in love.
- It might be a handshake, a hug, or a kiss, but we can truly feel
- The love of a brother and sister, who like us,
- Was purchased by the blood of our Savior.
- We can be uplifted by our brothers and sisters in Christ, and realize that
- We are in fact not alone, but that we part are a family,
- That will voluntarily share in the burdens of each other.
- Isn't that what families are supposed to do?
- We sit down and gather together, and we sing hymns one to another,
- And when the music speaks to us, it can be a sermon of its own.
- We can share our praises, our burdens, and we listen to God's Word.
- Sometimes we might immediately feel the comfort or the Word,

- And at other times not at that moment,
- But, we can be assured, that the Word of God never comes to us void.
- It eventually will bring the fruit that the Lord requires of us.
- Paul not only wrote bold letters that affected the Christian faith,
- He was also a great encourager as well, and was evidenced when he went
- To Thessalonica, where He visited young churches, that were displaying
- Many characteristics of a vibrant Church, and he was excited about that.
- And being a Pastor and teacher as well, he wanted to make sure
- That they remained a Genuine, Dynamic, & Contagious church.
- He not encouraged them to stay on the right track, but also provided his
- Wisdom, to help guide them to stay out of harm's way,
- So the church would continue to grow.
- The gospel of Jesus is powerful. It transforms His people
- And impacts the church. It motivates us. We get excited about what
- Jesus has done in our lives, and we want to share it.
- We want to proclaim it. - We want to pronounce it
- And the Holy Spirit motivates and encourages each one of us
- To press on with our lives and rely on God for everything, to seek
- His perfect will, and to be receptive to where He leads us.

**Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. <sup>2</sup> For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. <sup>3</sup> For this is the will of God, your sanctification:<sup>1</sup> that you abstain from sexual immorality; <sup>4</sup> that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, <sup>5</sup> not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; <sup>6</sup> that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. <sup>7</sup> For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. <sup>8</sup> Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.**

- <sup>9</sup> Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one

another,<sup>10</sup> for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more,<sup>11</sup> and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you,<sup>12</sup> so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

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- The gospel of Jesus Christ transforms our position.
- When we put our faith and trust in Jesus Christ, as Lord and Savior,
- We received His saving grace, which improved our standing.
- We are no longer lost, we have been found. We have gone from being
- An orphan, to becoming an adopted Child of the King.
- We have been given peace by virtue of having a relationship with God,
- And when we come together in the house of worship,
- We should be thriving to be part of a fellowship of believers that is:
- Genuine, Dynamic, and Contagious.
- **Genuine** - means that our church is the real deal. Its where we hear
- The Holy Word of God, and are ready and adamant to stand on it.
- A genuine church is one that is relevant for all the people
- **Dynamic**, - means that there is life in the body of our church.
- It's a place where we want to come to worship, where the
- Fruits of the Spirit are alive and active, both individually and collectively.
- We can see the love of God's people for one another, it is where,
- We can feel joy and peace, and all the other fruits of the Spirit.
- And **Contagious** as well, meaning that people love coming,
- And in their excitement will bring others there as well.
- In the letter to the Thessalonians, Paul taught us that there are
- 3 major components necessary for a good church,
- And those are 1. **Purity**, 2. **Enduring Hope**, and 3. **Love**
- **Purity**: 1 Thessalonians 4:3 says, "It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; <sup>4</sup> that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, <sup>5</sup> not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God;

**<sup>6</sup>and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister.**

- God wants the church to be sexually pure. Over the years, I have seen
- Many who come looking to seek and serve God, but when they meet
- Someone, it sometimes all goes out the window. Like David, who pondered
- Too long when he saw Bathsheba, his motive temporarily changed,
- From being a man of God, to being a man of the flesh.
- We should strive to be a body of believers that have pure motives
- In the way that we live our lives, being of high character and integrity.
- We should have pure motives in all that we do, to walk circumspectly
- And obediently, truly seeking to please God.
- We need to learn what pleases Him, and then act in this manner.
- **An Enduring Hope:**
- William Barclay said. "A man can endure anything as long as he has hope, for then he is walking not in to the night, but to the dawn.
- God's promises about tomorrow give us hope for the future, not only when
- Life is clicking on all cylinders, but also when are in our darkest hours.
- We need to hold on the enduring hope that comes with faith in Christ.
- The clock continues to tick, and all of us have to endure the effects
- Of our physical aging. No one can stop the hands of time but, we the good
- News is that we all can have the promise of eternal life.
- For those of us who have made the decision to follow Christ, we have
- The promise that we will pass from death to life.
- And the third component is **Love:** , which Paul considered the most vital.
- Love Matters in our church, Love matters in every aspect of our lives.
- A genuine love for others is reflected by how we live our lives.
- We can proclaim to others that we are Christians,
- But it's another thing to live that way, and to LOVE that way as well.
- God isn't necessarily looking for us to be perfect,
- But He is looking for us to be godly, and to demonstrate with our lives
- That we belong to the family of God, as His adopted sons and daughters.
- Isn't that how we want our children and grandchildren to act?
- To act in a way to proves that we are part of our family. And our church

- Family should be seen as a positive influence in our communities.
- **1 Thess. 4:9-12 - <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> And 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, <sup>11</sup> and 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, <sup>12</sup> so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.**
- How we respond to God's word directly influences how we treat others.
- **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.**
- Unfortunately, the world at times shows more love for others,
- Than God's people do - Example: Salvation Army – At least for me
- And Church infighting and splits occur far too often.
- Instead of knowing Christians by their love, sometimes the world
- Recognizes Christians by the way they fight.
- The Church at Thessalonica didn't have this, and Paul wanted it to
- Stay that way, so verse 10, Paul issued them a challenge, to love even more
- **Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more**
- Paul raises the bar on love. How can we tell that a love is genuine?
- It will be obvious; everyone would be able to know that we love them.
- It will be limitless – There is no limit on how much we can love.
- Mark 12:30 -
- And love should have no boundaries. God wants us to love everyone.
- Not just the loveable, but those who appear un-loveable.
- When we exhibit genuine love, our love shows, it goes, and it grows.
- As born again Christians we have Christ in our lives, and the Holy Spirit
- Is indwelled inside our hearts, we have become a new creation.
- **2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation, old things pass away, and all things are become new.**
- And in Romans 5:5, he makes this clear, **God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.**

- Are we are struggling to love others? If so, we need to search our hearts.
- Is God's Spirit dwelling in us? If not, what's going on with us?
- What do we need to do to get back on track?
- Is there sin in our life? Is there something we need to confess?
- Are we spending enough time in prayer?
- Is there dust on our bible? Is there dust on the Holy word?
- Are we communicating with our spouses, our families, and our friends,
- Are we harboring any ill will or thoughts about one another?
- Are we are drifting apart?
- In **2 Cor. 13:5**, Paul issued a challenge to the Corinthians
- One that we should take part in as well
- **Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith**
- Our capacity to love others reveals a lot about what is in our hearts.
- <sup>10</sup> **And in fact, you do love all of God's family throughout Macedonia.**
- This is loving so genuinely, that you want to share the gospel to others
- Not just in your inner circle, but with everyone in this world. (Tom)
- The local church was never meant to be an island.
- Everybody has to be a part of it, everyone needs to feel love,
- And to genuinely give others our love, never talking ill of another brother.
- **Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more**
- Love isn't a daily checklist.
- It's an ongoing activity.
- It's a way of life.
- Jesus provides the greatest example of ongoing selfless love
- He displayed it every day that He had lived to His dying breath.

**But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, <sup>11</sup> and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, <sup>12</sup> so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be**

- Paul is encouraging others to live productive and useful lives, Lives that
- Are restful and quiet, lives that are void of anger, conflict, and hostility.
- God's view of ambition is different than that of the world

- His view is for us to live in a way that projects a quiet confidence in Him.
- He wants our quiet confidence in Him to be a witness to the world.
- He doesn't want us to take advantage of others. (Climbing the ladder)
- When he talks about us working with our own hands, He is reminding us
- That we have a practical faith, a faith and love goes beyond Sunday.
- A love that goes into the community during the week.
- To live our life, not shirking our responsibilities.
- Rather, we honor God by meeting them in a diligent manner- Col 3:23
- To work, not being dependent on anyone, so to not be a drain on others.
- It is to be independent, relying on God, to do our work the best that we can
- To be diligent and independent, so that we can serve and help others.
- And to live purposely with love, to be sensitive with how
- We live with outsiders.
- Our life and our love is a platform that demonstrates our faith
- And a platform in which we can share the saving gospel with others
- Again, we are entering the mission field every day in our lives
- And we need to do it with love.