

Immorality is running rampant in our world today. Can you see it? What God has declared as abominations, man is calling good and right. Sin that used to be hidden in brought out into the open and even flaunted. The world is making flags and carrying them as banners of pride to celebrate sexual perversion. Churches have embraced this idea and they no longer call immoral lifestyles sin for that would be offensive. Adultery and fornication (any sexual act outside of the parameters of God's standard) is everywhere, including in the church. These things should not be! There are those who are standing on the Word of God and proclaiming sin as sin with a message that judgment will fall on those who practice such things. For those who cling to God's truths and call such actions sin, they have been labeled outlaws, criminals, and enemies of world peace and acceptance. Speaking out against immorality is landing people in jail. What is going on in our world?

This is nothing new. Paul tells the people of Thessalonica that they are to stay away from the sexual immorality that was accepted in their culture. God's will was their sanctification, that they should be set apart from the filth of the world. The call is the same for the church today. God's will is that we abstain from sexual immorality, and if we reject that, we are rejecting God. We also can't accept this lifestyle, but need to warn people that judgment will come upon those who practice sin such as this.

Today truth is definitely "out of season" but we have been called to speak truth. Let's see what I Thessalonians 4 can teach us, so we can boldly live out the truth.

DAY ONE

Prayerfully complete a thorough chapter study of I Thessalonians 4. If you need guidance, the steps to completing a chapter study can be found in lesson 2 on pages 15-17.

DAY TWO

1. I Thessalonians 4:1-8 deals with the problem of lustful passion sweeping the world. Read this passage and answer the following questions.

- a. What do you learn about a Christian's sexual behavior from this passage?

- b. Is this Paul's personal view on sex or is it God's? Explain your answer.
- c. What happens if we disobey God's will in the matter?
2. How do you think I Thessalonians 4:6 fits into the passage of sexual immorality? Take some time to think this through. When you have come to your own conclusions as to how this relates to the passage, you could then check the commentaries on this verse and see what they have to say. Do you agree or disagree with their conclusions and why?
3. Read I Thessalonians 5:23. How does this verse support the thought process of I Thessalonians 4:1-8?
4. Read the following verses and record what they say about sexual purity.
- a. Exodus 20:14
- b. Hebrews 13:4

5. Using whatever study tools you have, let's take a bit of time to define some terms. Record what you learn about each one, noting how they differ from each other.

a. Adultery

b. Fornication

c. Harlotry

d. Prostitution

e. Incest

f. Homosexuality

g. Sodomy

h. Bestiality

6. In Matthew 5:27-32, Jesus addresses the heart of the problem of adultery. The word “look” in verse 28 is in the present tense which means that it is a continuous, habitual action. According to this passage, where does adultery begin? Does the act of sexual intercourse have to occur for someone to be guilty of adultery? Explain.

7. Look at your definition of incest. Is that considered immoral by God? Read the following verses and record what you learn about God’s perspective of incest.
 - a. Leviticus 18:6-17

 - b. Leviticus 20:11-12, 17, 19-21

 - c. I Corinthians 5:1-5, 9-13

 - d. What conclusions can you draw from these Scriptures?

8. Now let’s see what God’s Word says about homosexuality. There are those even within the church today that say this is an acceptable lifestyle in God’s eyes.
 - a. Leviticus 18:22; 20:13

b. Genesis 19:4-11; 18:20

c. I Corinthians 6:9-11

d. Romans 1:26-27

e. How does God feel about homosexuality?

9. What about bestiality? Would that also be considered immoral? Look at the following verses.

a. Leviticus 18:23

b. Leviticus 20:15-16

c. Conclusion:

10. Each person will one day stand and be judged according to God's Word. For believers, we will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ and give an account of our works and what we did to bring glory and honor to our King. For the unbelievers, they will stand before the Great White Throne to be judged for their rejection of God's Son and His Word. The standard used as a measuring rod will be the Word of God. What will happen to those who lived a lifestyle of immorality? Read Revelation 21:8 and record your answer.

DAY THREE

As we see in our society today, sexual immorality and promiscuity seems to be the norm. This was also the case in the society where the early church began. It was rampant not only in the society, but it was a big part of pagan worship. These sexual acts were thought to bring the blessings of their fertility gods. Now here comes Paul telling them that according to the one true God, the sexual act was to be between a husband and wife alone and all else was sin. Do you see how the teaching of God's Word was turning their lives upside down?

Let's watch and learn as Paul handles this confrontation between what the world deems as acceptable and what God says is right.

1. Read I Corinthians 6:12-7:3 carefully and prayerfully. Paul is going to make a masterful case, anticipating the objections and justifications of sexual liberty. When you are done reading the passage, answer the following questions.
 - a. According to verses 12, what was Paul anticipating the Corinthians would use as a defense for sexual freedom?

 - b. How did Paul answer this objection in the next several verses?

- c. What happens when someone joins themselves to a harlot or prostitute according to verses 15-16? Compare these verses with I Corinthians 6:16 and Genesis 2:24.
- d. Read through I Corinthians 6:12-20 and look for the two commands that God gives in verses 18-20. List them below.
- e. What does immorality do to the man and to the Lord according to I Corinthians 6:18-20? Think through this carefully because the application of these statements are far reaching!
- f. Now we move over to I Corinthians 7:1-3. What is Paul's practical solution for the problem of immorality? How will this help?
- g. To sum this up, read I Corinthians 6:12-7:3 one more time and answer these questions. Are our bodies our own? Do we have the right to satisfy them in any way we desire? Why or why not?

2. Let's look at some other passages. Read Proverbs 2:10-19 and answer the following questions.
 - a. What guards a man from getting caught in the trap of a strange woman (an adulteress)?

 - b. What does the strange woman forget?

 - c. What is the end result of getting involved with such a woman?

3. Now read Proverbs 5:15-23.
 - a. Who is being addressed in this passage?

 - b. What is God saying in verses 15-18?

 - c. Where should the man satisfy his sexual needs?

 - d. How does Proverbs 5:18-19 compare with I Corinthians 7:1-5?

 - e. Going back to I Corinthians 7:1-5, what obligation do spouses have to each other? If a believer refuses to meet the sexual desires of their mate, what are they doing? Are they accountable to God for that decision and how may their life be affected by their actions?

- f. Proverbs 5:20-23 addresses the issue of seeking sexual satisfaction outside of the marriage bed. Will God know it? What will God do? What will happen to the one who seeks satisfaction outside of the marriage relationship?
4. There is one more passage to look at today. Read Proverbs 6:20-7:27 and fill out the chart that is on the next page. As you read through the verses remember God's command for sexual purity, being sanctified — set apart from the dirt and filth of this world. God is not trying to spoil our fun, He is protecting His children from the harm and destruction brought on by the evil pull of the lustful flesh. Jeremiah 29:11 says, *"For I know the plans that I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope."*

Oh, that we can see, understand, and remember that God has our welfare at heart because He loves us! Satan desires our destruction, but yet he is so good at deceiving us into believing that God is holding out on us. If we just feed those desires of the flesh, then we could truly be happy. Don't listen, my friend. Satan is a liar and has been from the beginning.

Strange Women and Men Lacking Sense

<p>Characteristics of a Strange Woman</p>		<p>Characteristics of a Man Lacking Sense</p>		<p>Tactics of a Strange Woman</p>		<p>God's Instructions to the Man</p>		<p>The Dumb Man's Destiny</p>	
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DAY FOUR AND DAY FIVE

Today you are going to look at three different accounts of people who were tempted in the area of sexual immorality. Carefully read through each of these accounts. Record what you learn and then look for practical applications for your own life. God recorded these events for your benefit that you might learn from them. In some accounts those involved had victory — learn how you can have victory as well. In other instances they fell to temptation — learn how to avoid their sin. What could they have done differently? Where did they go wrong? At the end of each example, as part of the practical application, write out a prayer that starts with God says that I . . . and ends with therefore, I will stand before God today and declare that I will . . .

There are several blank pages that follow that can serve as a place to record you notes, applications, and prayers. Use your own paper if necessary to complete this assignment. Study well. We need to hear God's Word on this issue!

1. Genesis 39 - Joseph and Potiphar's wife
2. II Samuel 11-12 - David and Bathsheba
3. II Samuel 13 - Amnon and Tamar

See what your commentaries have to say about I Thessalonians 4:1-8. Please don't go beyond that. You will finish the chapter next week in your study and you don't want to take away your opportunity to learn for yourself by sitting at the feet of God Himself.

I Thessalonians

Lesson 8, Chapter 4

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