

You Are Not Your Own!

1 Thessalonians 3.11-4.8

We begin at the end of chapter 3 because it serves as a hinge that connects what the writers just finished saying to the idea of living blameless and holy, the topic of chapter 4. In the process, we get into the sensitive topic of sexuality. So be prepared to encounter some ideas that you won't get in the world around you!

Pastor Eric

Understanding God as Father

The last verses of chapter 3 emphasize that God is both the *sovereign Lord* and *our intimate Father*. How does holding those two truths together shape the way you relate to him? How does viewing God as a *good Father* change the way you hear his commands or moral instructions in Scripture?

Where have you seen God's commands turn out to be protective or life-giving rather than restrictive?

Pleasing God vs. Legalism

What is the difference between trying to earn God's love through rule-keeping and seeking to please him as his child? Why do you think "pleasing God" is such an important motivation in the Christian life?

Why do you think modern culture bristles at moral boundaries? Do you ever feel that tension?

Sanctification: What We're Called To

How would you explain *sanctification* in your own words? How can sanctification be viewed as the process of becoming more like Jesus?

Why do you think sanctification is described as God's will in 4.3? What encouragement does that give you? In what ways have you seen sanctification as a gradual process in your own life?

What We're Called From

Do you agree with the statement that the biblical norm for sexual expression is *faithfulness in heterosexual marriage, celibacy in singleness*? Be prepared to defend your response.

Why do you think sexual ethics are so central to the Bible's teaching? How might sexual sin hinder sanctification, both spiritually and relationally?

The Body and Responsibility

How does the Bible's assertion that we are whole beings (body and spirit) challenge common cultural messages about "doing whatever you want with your body?" What does it practically look like to "learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable" (4.4)?

Verse 6 warns against wronging or exploiting others. How does biblical sexual morality protect not only ourselves but also others, especially the vulnerable?

End by praying 1 Thessalonians 5.23-24 over yourself, your family, and your Life Group.