

# 1 THESSALONIANS

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Lesson 5: Living to Please God

1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 & Romans Chapter 12

This lesson will be as different as any that I have prepared. As you will see, the emphasis is on living a life that is pleasing to God, and how we can do that through Christ.

Pasted below is a reading of scripture that combines 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 and Romans Chapter 12 into a single reading. (I've done nothing with the text other than to have one follow the other, and I've removed the verse numbers.) I have chosen the text from the Living Bible version of God's Holy Word, as I believe it best conveys the truths that we are to learn in this lesson. As you will observe through these two passages, Paul tells us very specifically how to live a life pleasing to God.

Please read the following text completely then do the exercise below. With the leadership of the Holy Spirit, you will discover from this study life-changing truths that will help you to live a life pleasing to God - and to live that life with a "peace that passes all understanding".

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## ***1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 and Romans Chapter 12***

Finally, dear brothers and sisters, we urge you in the name of the Lord Jesus to live in a way that pleases God, as we have taught you. You are doing this already, and we encourage you to do so more and more. For you remember what we taught you in the name of the Lord Jesus. God wants you to be holy, so you should keep clear of all sexual sin. Then each of you will control your body and live in holiness and honor-- not in lustful passion as the pagans do, in their ignorance of God and his ways.

Never cheat a Christian brother in this matter by taking his wife, for the Lord avenges all such sins, as we have solemnly warned you before. God has called us to be holy, not to live impure lives. Anyone who refuses to live by these rules is not disobeying human rules but is rejecting God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you. But I don't need to write to you about the Christian love that should be shown among God's people. For God himself has taught you to love one another. Indeed, your love is already strong toward all the Christians in all of Macedonia. Even so, dear brothers and sisters, we beg you to love them more and more.

This should be your ambition: to live a quiet life, minding your own business and working with your hands, just as we commanded you before. As a result, people who are not Christians will respect the way you live, and you will not need to depend on others to meet your financial needs.

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice -- the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask? Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is.

As God's messenger, I give each of you this warning: Be honest in your estimate of yourselves, measuring your value by how much faith God has given you. Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are all parts of his one body, and each of us has different work to do. And since we are all one body in Christ, we belong to each other, and each of us needs all the others. God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out when you have faith that God is speaking through you. If your gift is that of serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, do a good job of teaching. If your gift is to encourage others, do

it! If you have money, share it generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

Don't just pretend that you love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Stand on the side of the good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. Never be lazy in your work, but serve the Lord enthusiastically. Be glad for all God is planning for you. Be patient in trouble, and always be prayerful. When God's children are in need, be the one to help them out. And get into the habit of inviting guests home for dinner or, if they need lodging, for the night. If people persecute you because you are a Christian, don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. When others are happy, be happy with them. If they are sad, share their sorrow. Live in harmony with each other. Don't try to act important, but enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all! Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. Do your part to live in peace with everyone, as much as possible. Dear friends, never avenge yourselves. Leave that to God. For it is written, "I will take vengeance; I will repay those who deserve it," says the Lord. Instead, do what the Scriptures say: "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink, and they will be ashamed of what they have done to you." Don't let evil get the best of you, but conquer evil by doing good.

(If you are able you should print this text and use a highlighter or colored marker as it will help you in this study.)

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*Now re-read the above text, underlining/highlighting the words listed below, then note below each specific thing you are told to do or not do as it relates to living the Christian life.*

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1. Be...
2. Do...
3. Live...
4. Love...
5. Give...
6. Know...
7. Work...
8. Pray...
9. Don't...

In Christ, **Wes**