

Doing Things Right in Matters of the Heart

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

This message is derived from John Ensor's excellent book and message, *Doing Things Right in Matters of the Heart*, Crossway books.

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8 (ESV)

¹ Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to live and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. ² For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. ³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, ⁵ not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶ 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. ⁷ For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. ⁸ Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

Abstain from sexual immorality and know how to control your own body in holiness and honor.

1. The reality of having a relationship with God is that He has called us to purity.

Titus 2:11-14 (ESV)

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³ waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

2. The authenticity of our conversion is in question.

Ephesians 4:17-21 (ESV)

¹⁷ Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. ¹⁹ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. ²⁰ But that is not the way you learned Christ!— ²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus,

3. It is a matter of brotherly love.

- Sexual immorality hurts others.
- Worldly dating is divorce practice.
- We are called to love and protect one another.

4. It is a matter of God's will.

God takes is personally when we harm one another in sexual immorality.

Application

1. Are you tempted in this area, and – if so – what are some of the sources of this temptation?
2. How has God granted you grace in this area? Specifically, what practices and safeguards has he led you to put into place to combat these temptations?
3. Is God calling you to repent in this area? If so, how?
4. How can you help others in this area?