

Title: A QUIET LIFE OF PURITY AND LOVE, 1 THESSALONIANS 4:1 – 12
(Chatham, NJ; 11/05/17, AM) [Pc – Exegesis]

Theme: Paul exhorts the church to be sexually pure, to continue loving one another, and to live quiet lives of self-sufficiency.

Purpose: To remind today's church that the same exhortation applies to us.

Introduction:

1. This church has a strong faith, and Paul urges them to live it in specific ways: there is always a moral, behavioral component to being a Christian.
2. Since the scribes and Pharisees provide the negative examples of faith, let's see if we can't provide some internal mechanisms of these exhortations by looking at what Jesus says about them.
3. What the apostle says to the church in Thessalonica is threefold: live a life of sexual purity, keep on loving each other as brothers, and live quietly by tending to your own affairs.
4. None of these things are new either to them or us, 1-2.

Sexual Purity, 3 – 8

- A. Sanctification: to be made holy
 1. The next step beyond justification
 2. A necessary extension of discipleship
 3. Repentance demands that we grow in sanctification
 4. It means to become more like God in behavior
- B. Abstain from sexual immorality: one of the first areas where sanctification is needed
 1. Control your body in holiness and honor
 2. Not in passionate lust "like the Gentiles who do not know God" – The Key?
 3. God has called us in holiness and for impurity
 4. God avenges such transgressions, 6
 5. Disregarding this disregards God, 8
- C. The porn problem
 1. A sin of the body, 1 Corinthians 6:18-20
 2. Yet it begins in the heart, Mt. 5:27-28
 3. Mt. 23:25-28, the scribes and Pharisees failed to account for sinful impulses; the things that truly make us unclean, Mt. 15:18-20
 4. Even the Old Testament pointed to this, Proverbs 5 & 6:25-29, 32
 5. The control of our sexual impulses is one of the first steps in sanctification
 6. Sometimes the people who criticize us as Puritans or prudes are the same one who have demonstrated a complete lack of impulse control: the free love mantra of the 60s and the Playboy mentality has damaged way too many of us

Brotherly Love, 9 – 10

- A. Already doing so
 1. They haven't limited their love but extended it to others in Macedonia
 2. Brotherly love is affectionate, endearing friendship
 3. 1 Peter 3:8 associates it with sympathy, a tender heart, and a humble mind
 4. Paul urges them to keep on loving one another, 10
- B. Concern for others seems foreign to the Pharisees
 1. The scribes tie heavy burdens on others, but won't lift a finger to carry them, Mt. 23:4
 2. There is a self-centered approach

3. They also neglect mercy, Mt. 23:23, one of the weightier matters of the law and one that demonstrates concern for others
4. Jesus tells them, "Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'" Mt. 9:13
5. The Gospel demands thinking of others:
 - Gal. 6:2, bear one another's burdens
 - 1 John 3:16, love in word and deed
 - James 2:15, provide for those in need
 - Philippians 2:4, consider others better than yourself
6. Brotherly love binds our hearts in order to do these things

Three Lifestyle Choices, 11 – 12

- A. Aspire to these:
 1. Live quietly: no need to be ostentatious (remember the Amish and Mennonites) and certainly this is not meant as a withdrawal from the community at large
 2. Mind your own affairs (notice 2 Thess. 3:11), cf. 1 Tim. 2:2, prayers for leaders
 3. Work with your hands? Cf. 2 Thess. 3:7-12, sometimes he urges this so that they can have enough to share with those in need, Acts 20:35
 4. "As we instructed you"
- B. The result
 1. Live properly before outsiders
 2. Even in quietness our lives speak
 3. Be dependent on no one (2 Thess. 3:10-12): earn your own living

Conclusions:

1. When you think you haven't done enough, think of these simple admonitions.
2. There is enough here to constitute full-time work.