

<p>A</p>	<p><u>Overview</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From this point in the letter, Paul turns to encouraging and exhorting the new converts in Thessalonica to follow the examples of the apostles, “as you received from us how you should conduct yourselves” (4:1). Timothy’s report, though positive and encouraging overall, has led Paul to believe that there were certain problems that needed to be addressed, “to remedy the deficiencies of your faith” (3:10), especially sexual purity and brotherly love. To please God, they must conduct themselves accordingly because, “this is the will of God, your holiness, that you refrain from immorality” (4:3). 	<p>4:1-12</p> <p>CCSS 84</p>
<p>B</p>	<p><u>How One Should Conduct Oneself To Please God</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul “earnestly ask and exhort” the Thessalonians to “conduct themselves as you have received from us ... to please God”, and “do so even more”. Further, he explains that what he’s going to say are the “instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus Christ”. Then, Paul boldly proclaims the main theme of this chapter: “This is the will of God, your holiness: that you refrain from immorality”. We are urged to follow the moral law not simply out of obedience to the Creator’s authority, but that such law is the very means through which we may be more like God and live out the very nature of the Creator, His goodness. Teachings from Vatican II. 	<p>4:1-3</p> <p>4:1-2, CCSS</p> <p>4:3</p> <p>SN1</p> <p>SN2, Mt 5:48, Ex 19:6 Rev 21:2</p>
<p>C</p>	<p><u>Refrain from Sexual Immorality</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “... that each one of you knows how to control your own body in holiness and honour” – in the original text, “body” implies “vessel”. This means that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit; a vessel to receive the Spirit, therefore, must be kept pure and holy. “The Theology of the Body” teaches the importance of recognizing God’s plan through one’s body, and that we should try to fulfill this 	<p>4:4-8</p> <p>4:4 CCSS, 1Cor 6:19</p> <p>SN3</p>

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	<p>plan with our body. The Sacrament of Marriage calls for a married life of holiness and purity, revealing that the unity between Christ and the Church on earth is an important part of God’s plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Not in lustful passion” – Any differences between “lust” and desire? How to prevent “love” turning into “lust”? • “like the Gentiles who do not know God” – the Gentile Thessalonians of the time did value holiness and sexual ethics, perhaps Paul was targeting the immoral culture of the Greco-Roman world, particularly extra-marital activities, interference and harming of females belonging to the lower social status. • Lustful passion doesn’t only harm women but also “wrongs or exploits a brother”; harming the parents, the husband’s family, as well as offending God; “for the Lord is an avenger in all these things”. God will carry out justice, judge sinful deeds, and redress things that are evil and unjust. The “Lord” who will execute justice is Jesus. To Paul, these crimes are as serious as “disregard[ing] God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you”. 	<p>Tobit 8:5-7</p> <p>4:5 CCSS p 92</p> <p>1Tim 4:1, 1Peter 4:5</p>
<p>D</p>	<p><u>Love and Work</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already established previously in 2:8-9, “so deeply do we care for you”, Paul continues to remind the Thessalonians to “remember our labour and toil, ... we worked day and night, so that we might not burden any of you while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God”, encouraging them to live an industrious and responsible life through his own example. • Paul tells them to “aspire to live a tranquil life, to mind your own affairs, and to work with your own hands”, exemplifying “brotherly love”. This love should go beyond Thessalonica but to “all the brothers throughout Macedonia” because the Church is universal. Christians are called to live an industrious and responsible life so that the non-Christian majority in society may not reject them. 	<p>4:9-12</p>

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Special Notes:

1. Absolute moral norms must be grounded in something other than personal whim, social convention, or biological evolution. They must, in fact, find their justification in the deepest structures of reality, which is another way of saying in the very being of God.
(Robert Barron, *Redeeming the Time*, Word on Fire, 2022, p.20.)
2. (LG39) The Church, whose mystery is being set forth by this Sacred Synod, is believed to be indefectibly holy. Indeed Christ, the Son of God, who with the Father and the Spirit is praised as “uniquely holy loved the Church as His bride, delivering Himself up for her. He did this that He might sanctify her (Cf Eph. 5, 25-26.). He united her to Himself as His own body and brought it to perfection by the gift of the Holy Spirit for God’s glory. Therefore in the Church, everyone whether belonging to the hierarchy, or being cared for by it, is called to holiness, according to the saying of the Apostle: “For this is the will of God, your sanctification”(1 Thess. 4, 3; Eph.).
3. [St. JP II] finds ‘the most important point of the whole text [of Ephesians 5], in some sense its keystone’ in verses 31:32 – ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, and I mean in reference to Christ and the church.’ As John Paul II tells us, the one flesh union of spouses and the mystical union of Christ and the Church are so intimately related that St. Paul brings them together ‘making of them the single great sign, that is, a great sacrament.’
(Christopher West, *At the Heart of the Gospel*, Image Books, 2012, p. 108)