



10/23/26

*On this week's episode of Chosen and Cherished, we continued our look into Philippians and endeavored to answer the question, "What is the evidence that we truly believe that we're children of God Himself, the Father of Lights?" If you'd like to listen to the show, here's the link... <https://us.list-manage.com/GyGFR8mi8pB?e=8c70dbf813&c2id=06eebe8196fec725f7444d4a960354d1>*

*Blessings,  
Jonna*

*1 Thessalonians 4:1-8*

*Today we begin the next focus of our series, Kingdom Outpost ~ "Holy Pursuit." I know from 1 Peter 1:15-16 that God's purpose for His people is that would be holy like Him. He's holy. He wants us to be like Him. Hebrews 12:10 says that He disciplines us, meaning that He trains us, SO THAT we might "share His holiness." The question I need to ask myself is, "Am I on the same plan as the Lord?" Am I cooperating with Him as He trains me to share His holiness? 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8 will help me understand how to cooperate with God in His plan to make me holy. Let me not be confused... I cannot be holy without God. In fact, I won't even DESIRE to be holy without God. O Lord, please open my heart to see where I'm not on the holiness plan with You, and help me to pursue You as You make me holy.*

*Vs. 1-2 ~ "Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus."*

*To pursue holiness with the Lord I need to walk according to His word. Paul said, "We gave you instructions THROUGH the Lord Jesus." And, "I urge you IN the Lord Jesus." These were not words made up by Paul. These were from the Lord. Paul spoke with God given authority as the Holy Spirit led him. I have to be really careful that I hold everything up to the magnifying lens of God's word, that I never put the words of man over the word of God and I never put my feelings or opinions over the word of God.*

*Paul is one of the people the Holy Spirit used to put on paper/parchment what He wanted. "For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21). It is imperative that I align myself with God's word so that I recognize the counterfeit. It's NOT imperative that I study the counterfeit. I just need to know what's authentic.*

*One question I can always be asking as I pursue the Lord is, "Am I walking in a way that pleases the Lord?" AND... as I do, seek to do so more and more. Why more and more? Because the more I walk with the Lord seeking to please Him, the more aware I become of things that do please Him and don't please Him.*

*I praise the Lord that holiness in Him is a process. He's not watching my every move to tell me how bad I'm failing. He's so patient and merciful. He moves me from one degree of glory to the next... one degree of holiness to the next... more and more. It is both a position in Christ AND a process. Hebrews 10:14 says, "For by a single offering He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified." Because of Jesus, I am in the legal position of holiness before Him... and He is now sanctifying me in His holiness step by step. The beautiful thing is, He's not worried! He already knows that I will get there. The more I walk with Him and seek to please Him the quicker the process will go... the more joy I get to experience.*

*Vs. 3-6 ~ What does this holy pursuit look like? "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; 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."*

*God's WILL, His purpose for me IS that I am sanctified. One part of that sanctification process is sexual purity. Sexual immorality does not please God. Sexual immorality, any sexual act that is not between a husband and wife as a celebration of their oneness, does not please God. The WORLD (the Gentiles... unbelievers) teaches, "My body, my choice." But the world has no interest in doing what pleases God.*

*The world teaches me to do what looks good, feels good, and shows me off. That is the antithesis of what God teaches. 1 John 2:17 says "the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever." Whose plan am I on?*

*God's plan is that I control my body in holiness and honor and not pursue the "passion of lust" like those who don't know God. I also see that if I pursue the passion of lust... my body, my choice... I am necessarily going beyond God's will and taking advantage of my brother, even if I do it in the name of love.*

*The holiness of God is a selfless calling. The world teaches us to lift self up. The world is passing away. It promises satisfaction and delivers pain.*

*Praise God that in His call for us to be holy and blameless, He makes room for repentance. As*

*Tim preached last Sunday, blameless does not mean perfect (as holiness does), but it means that we are seeking to do what pleases God and REPENT when we don't. When we're seeking to please God, we're not arguing that we are free in Christ and He'll forgive us, so we can do what we want. We're saying, "God, with all that You've done for me, let me never trample Your grace and mercy by continuing to sin against You, but let me turn from the sin BECAUSE of Your grace and mercy."*

*Here's the scary thing that I don't think we like to pay attention to... God is an AVENGER of the trampling of His will. Who has all authority? God does. To confess Jesus as Lord is to say, "Lord, You're in charge!" It is not to just say, "Yeah, I know Jesus is Lord of everything out there." It's to say, "And He's in charge of my feelings, my desires, and my choices. Lord, I choose to be obedient to You even when my feelings want to take me another direction." My feelings don't determine God's will. God determines God's will and He reveals it to me through His word.*

*Vs. 7-8 ~ And Here's the crux of the matter... "For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives His Holy Spirit to you."*

*It is not a man who is saying that God wants me to be holy like He is. It is God HIMSELF who calls me to be holy. God IS holy, He calls me IN His holiness, and He calls me TO His holiness. God has NOT called me to impurity. That's what the world offers. And what the world offers is a deceptive lie that seeks to destroy me.*

*Why does God want me to be Holy? Because everything about Him is holy. His love is holy. His goodness is holy. His power is holy. His joy is holy. His peace is holy. He wants me to be holy because that's when I get to experience the fullness of my relationship with Him where true pleasure and joy are found. God is a cheerful giver, a generous giver. He does not call me to holiness in order to withhold good, but to lavish me with good.*

*Whoever disregards God's word is not rejecting the word of man but the word of God. Let me never think His word is not necessary. I need His word. He adds at the end, "who gives His Holy Spirit to you." The Holy Spirit is the greatest gift that comes after salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus to all who confess Him as Lord. The Holy Spirit seals me for my eternal inheritance with the Lord. AND while I'm walking on this earth, He empowers me to please God, He pours the love of God into my heart, He transforms me to be holy like Jesus. I do not have to figure this holy pursuit out on my own. I do not have to muscle it. In fact, I can't muscle it! The Holy Spirit is my helper and teacher and comforter.*

*So Lord, please help me not to quench Your Spirit or ignore Your Spirit. But help me to walk in the Spirit, with the Spirit, by the power of the Spirit. He IS with me. Let me never forget. Help me to pursue You in holiness and honor because You're worthy.*