



September 28, 2025

Series: Week 4

Pastor Josh

www.lebefree.org

Live to Please God - 1 Thessalonians 4:1-14

"Live in a Way that Pleases God" (v. 1) ...

This raises a few very important questions that we must answer:

1.) "Who is God?" 2.) "Who are we?" 3.) "How should we live?"

-If we are processing those three key questions through a Biblical framework, then it will lead us to live radically different lives from the rest of the world. (See QR Code on back for link to the "EFCA Statement of Faith.")

-What we are going to see as we study today's passage, is that our God not only calls us to live in a way that pleases Him, but He provides us everything that we need in order to accomplish this mission.

...Practice Self-Control (v. 3-8)

-“sexual sin” in verse 3 is the Greek word “porneia,” which is a junk-drawer category for all sexual practices outside of the context for which it was created and intended.

We must believe what God says to be true about sex.

- God created sex to be a beautiful gift for a man and a woman united in marriage. (Genesis 1:18-25)
- Sex is intended to strengthen, unify, protect, and encourage the love of husband and wife. (Song of Songs)
- Sex can also bring forth children, ideally into a home built on love and commitment to God and family. (Genesis 1:28)

We must be honest that the temptation is real.

- To see other people as only bodies, instead of as beloved image-bearers of God.
- To pursue “no-strings attached” pleasure without relational commitment.
- To choose fantasy to escape reality.

We must understand that there is help and healing awaiting, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Consider:

- Remember, for those of you who are “In Christ,” you are not defined by your sin; you are a new creation. (2 Cor 5:17)
- Remember to keep the focus on the work that you must do, not on the changes others must make. (Matt. 7:3-5)
- Remember to see others as valuable image-bearers of God, pursue justice and defense of the oppressed. (Gen. 1:26-27)
- Remember that the Holy Spirit is your Encourager, Counselor, and Helper along the way. (1 Thess 4:8)
- Remember the value of accountability and friendships with other believers, gaining strength and sharpening together. (Proverbs 27:17)

...Practice Loving One Another (v. 9-12)

The Gospel of Jesus teaches us how to love. (Ephesians 3:17-18)

Measuring the “width, length, height” of Jesus’ love:

- Jesus loved all people. (John 3:16)
- Sent the disciples to bring the loving Gospel to all nations (Matthew 28:19), to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8)
- Jesus loved His friends, and His enemies. (Matthew 5:43-48)

Measuring the “depth” of Jesus’ love:

- Jesus’ love was sacrificial. (John 15:13)
- Jesus’ love was unconditional. (1 John 4:8, 19, Romans 8:35-39)

As we learn to love like Jesus... (1 Thess. 4:11)

- 1.) *“Live a quiet life...”*
 - marked by humble confidence, not needing to brag, demand the spotlight, or look for arguments.
- 2.) *“...minding your own business...”*
 - marked by honorable conversations, despising gossip, and awareness of personal need for growth.
- 3.) *“...and working with your hands...”*
 - marked by working diligently at all productive, purposeful tasks put before us.

Consider:

- Who are the real people in your life that you are intentionally loving like Jesus would?
- How “wide, long, high, and deep” is your love? Where do you draw the boundaries of who is in and who’s out? Is your love shallow?

...Practice Grieving with Hope (v. 13-14)

Grieving is okay. Jesus did it. (John 11)

- Jesus weeps with you, listens to your processing, lovingly reminds you of His power, presence, and victory.
- Lazarus’ resurrection was a foreshadowing of Jesus ultimate defeat of death through His resurrection.

Belief in Jesus’ resurrection is the key to our hope.

- Jesus was the “firstborn from among the dead” (Colossians 1:18), “The first fruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1 Cor. 15:20)
- Through Him alone, we can experience resurrection after death as He did. (John 11:25, “I am the resurrection and the life,” 1 Cor. 15:53-57, “perishable must put on the imperishable”)
- His resurrection body was our prototype (not bound by time, space, still able to eat, be touched). (John 20-21)

This hope allows us to:

- 1.) Not fear our own death.
- 2.) Have faith that we will see our “believing” (v 14) loved ones again.
- 3.) Regarding our loved ones who we are unsure of their belief...
 - ... we can trust God as the provider of continual truth, love, and invitation to the living...
 - ... and the righteous, wise, and sovereign Judge of the dead.
- 4.) Surrender unanswered questions into God’s completely capable hands.

Consider:

- Have you experienced grief? Do you believe that Jesus cares, is with you in the midst of it? Can you trust that His resurrection can provide the hope that you need?

Further Study:

- Take time this week to look over the “consider” questions. Ask them to yourself in the Lord’s presence and answer them truthfully. Then, perhaps sharing your answers with a friend can help you to apply any steps you hope to take.
- During September and October, join us in our study of 1 and 2 Thessalonians, by reading it for yourself! Invite a friend to join you and engage together in what you are learning along the way.
- Below, you can find the QR code link to the Evangelical Free Church of America’s Statement of Faith, which holds the “Theological Confessions” referred to today.

