

W @ K L J P r a J @ r J O u r n a l

DAILY BIBLE STUDIES

“A Life Pleasing to God”

1 Thessalonians 4:1-2

April 6 – April 12, 2008

Praise & Prayer	ADORATION Hallowed be Your name. (6:9)	AUTHORITY Your Kingdom come... (6:10)	APPEAL Give us this day... (6:11)	AQUITAL Forgive us our debts... (6:12)	ASSISTANCE Deliver us from evil. (6:13a)	ADMIRATION For Yours is the Kingdom... (6:13)	Lord's Day	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

THE LORD'S DAY –This week we return to our study in **1 Thessalonians** as we begin chapter **4**. To start of this chapter, the Apostle lays out some principles that should govern our behavior and which help us to live “**A Life Pleasing to God**”. We find by way of introduction in this week’s text a general call to excellent living before God which Lord willing will be followed up with some specific instructions and details on how this is carried out as we continue on in this text. Read **1 Thessalonians 4:1-2**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Ask the Lord to teach you from His Word this week.*

MONDAY –Verse **1** begins with “*Finally then, brethren...*” words that turn our thoughts to a discussion of some “remaining” things that we as believers are to be pursuing as goals in our everyday living. Paul continues with the words “*we urge and exhort...*” These two Greek words are defined as follows: “*urge*” (to ask, to request, to beg), and “*exhort*” (to call to one’s side for instruction, encouragement, admonition). In this particular passage, The Apostle is not hammering these people as a dictator in ruthless fashion but is rather lovingly and gently requesting of his “*brethren*” that they persevere in the following instructions. We must remember that God lays out His Divine instruction for both His glory and our good which are never in contradiction. Our Spiritual growth and Christ likeness is the ultimate goal. Read **Romans 8:28-30**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Father, thank You that You are concerned with me growing to be like your Son. Help me to understand this and to ask for Your help as well as to live in obedience to Your Word and Spirit.*

TUESDAY –As we mentioned yesterday, Paul lovingly requests that these people heed and obey this instruction. Although he is giving kind exhortation the following phrase, “*in the Lord Jesus*” makes it clear that it is in His name, and by His authority that these instructions are given. The Scripture is founded not in any man’s wisdom and authority but rather with the supreme authority of God Himself (“*the Lord*”).

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Jesus”) which requires implicit (unquestioning, complete) obedience. This phrase can also be seen as telling these “brethren” that they are in fact “in” the Lord Jesus and share His Divine life as His children. This fact is what enables us as children of God to be able to live lives pleasing to the Lord and growing in Him. As Scripture tells us, we, as believers have all we need through the indwelling Spirit of God to live Godly lives for His Glory. Read **2 Peter 1:1-4**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Dear God, thank You that we have been given all we need in The Lord Jesus to live Godly lives. Help us to rely on Your power through The Word and Holy Spirit to do this for Your glory.*

WEDNESDAY –Paul uses the phrase in **verse 1**, “...that you should abound more and more...” to express the progress that should be seen in the way we live; a way of life that he speaks of as being their “walk”. The Greek verb perisseuo “abound” means “to exceed a fixed number of measure, to be left over and above a certain number or measure”. He intimates they are already in the way as believers but that they should now press on and abound more and more with fruit that is pleasing to God. There should be an ever increasing abundance (overflow) of Godliness and Christ like character coming from the lives of God’s children. Oh how we need to be filled with the Word of God and Holy Spirit to accomplish this! Read **Philippians 3:12-16, Colossians 3:16-17**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *O Father, help me to overflow with fruit that pleases You. Teach me and guide me in Your way and cultivate in my heart a hunger for Your Word.*

THURSDAY –Matthew Henry comments on our passage: “The arguments with which the apostle enforces his exhortation. (1.) They had been informed of their duty. They knew their Master’s will, and could not plead ignorance as an excuse. Now as faith, so knowledge is dead without practice. They had received of those who had converted them to Christianity, or been taught of them, *how they ought to walk*. Observe, The design of the gospel is to teach men not only what they should believe, but also how they ought to live; not so much to fill men’s minds with notions as to regulate their temper and behavior. The apostle taught them how to walk, not how to talk. To talk well without living well will never bring us to heaven: for the character of those who are in Christ Jesus is this: *They walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*” Read **Romans 6:4, 8:1, 2 Corinthians 5:7, Galatians 6:16, Ephesians 4:1**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Jesus, help me to walk as You walked. I understand that I will always fight this sinful flesh until I see You and am glorified but may I live a life of obedience and not hypocrisy for Your glory. Amen.*

FRIDAY –Another phrase we need to look at in this text is one which summarizes the entire two verses of our text. It is the phrase, “...and to please God.” We can see right on the surface of this phrase our obligation and chief duty; that is we are here to “please God”. In this passage we understand that these Thessalonians as well as all true believers find what we need to do in order to please God from Holy Scripture or as Paul said in the following verse, “...for you know what commandments we gave you...” This phrase literally could be read, “strive to please”. Much of Holy Scripture is directed at specific instruction on how one is to please God and we must be about the business of obeying these various commands if we are to in fact, please Him. The following verses give us just a few of these specifics that we are to be doing to please Him: **Psalm 32:5, Psalm 27:8, Ephesians 4:1-3, 1 Timothy 6:6-8**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Go to God today in prayer and ask Him to forgive you and cleanse you from known sin and ask Him to help you cultivate a mindset that is always thinking of His glory and ask Him for the strength to do what pleases Him.*

SATURDAY –We end this week looking at **verse 2** of our text which again informs us that ignorance is not a viable excuse in matters of how we live. Paul reminds these people that they “know” the “commandments” they were given. As we saw earlier in the week, the Scripture is not man’s word or just the Apostles ideas but instead the very Word and commandment of God which Paul stresses by adding, “...we gave you through the Lord Jesus.” Remember that Jesus told these men (His Apostles) they were to be commissioned to go and be about the business of “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (**Matthew 20:28**). The Apostles were not out teaching commandments of their own; but rather the very commands of God Himself through the Words of Jesus Christ. We have no excuse as children of God who have the very revelation of God Himself through the written Word not to be living and obeying these commands. Read **Matthew 7:21-23, John 15:14-17, 1 John 2:3-5**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *May our prayer and life’s desire be that of St. Augustine when he prayed, “Give what Thou dost command, and command what Thou wilt.”*