

PLEA FOR ABOUNDING SANCTIFICATION (VV. 1–2)

- **Context shift**
 - Paul moves from concern for the Thessalonians to direct exhortation.
 - Core appeal: “walk and to please God” – to do so abundantly.
- **Received instruction**
 - They had already been taught “how ye ought to walk.”
 - Not a new path, but a continuation of what Paul delivered.
 - “As ye have received of us” anchors sanctification in Pauline teaching.
 - Not imagination or Israel’s law, but Paul’s instruction.
 - Cross-reference: 1 Corinthians 11:1 – “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.”
- **Commandments of Christ**
 - Verse 2 clarifies: Paul’s words are not opinions, but “commandments... by the Lord Jesus.”
 - Question: earthly ministry of Jesus or revelation from risen Christ?
 - Context favors the latter:
 - Thessalonians were not disciples during Jesus’ earthly ministry.
 - Their only source was Paul’s revelation from the risen Christ.
 - Cross-references:
 - Galatians 1:11–12 – gospel received “by revelation of Jesus Christ.”
 - 1 Corinthians 14:37 – Paul’s writings are “the commandments of the Lord.”
- **Application**
 - This passage belongs in the BLUE doctrinal category (Body of Christ).
 - Our walk/ability to please God comes through Pauline revelation, not kingdom law.
 - Thessalonians—and we—are called to abound in this distinctive walk.

GOD’S WILL: HOLINESS EXPRESSED IN SEXUAL PURITY (VV. 3–8)

1 THESSALONIANS 4:3–5 – BLUE

- **Clear statement of God’s will**
 - “This is the will of God, even your sanctification.”
 - HAGIASMOS = quality of life set apart, not covenantal sainthood.
- **Definition of sanctification**
 - Positive: “possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.”
 - Body treated with dignity, not indulgence.
 - Negative: avoid “lust of concupiscence” (EPITHYMIA = overpowering craving).
 - Root meanings: EPI (upon, toward) + THYMOS (desire, passion).
 - Broader biblical usage includes all lustful dominance.
 - Contrast: Gentiles “which know not God” live in unrestrained lust.
 - Paul points to pagan society as negative example.

1 THESSALONIANS 4:6 – BLUE

- **Warning against trespass**
 - “No man go beyond and defraud his brother.”
 - “Go beyond” = stepping into another’s territory.
 - “Defraud” = overreach, take what is not one’s own.
- **Textual note**
 - KJV: “in ANY matter” (italicized) vs. margin “in the matter.”
 - Greek definite article present – ambiguity between specific (sexual sin) and general (all dealings).
- **Reason given**
 - “The Lord is the avenger of all such.”
 - Sexual sin: marriage/sexuality belongs to God.

- Any matter: God defends His people from exploitation.
- Avenging in age of grace: indirect through consequence, exposure, providence (Galatians 6:7).
- **Reminder**
 - Thessalonians had already been forewarned.

1 THESSALONIANS 4:7 – BLUE

- **Framed by God's call**
 - Not covenantal election of Israel, but expectation/summons.
 - Examples:
 - Galatians 5:13 – called unto liberty.
 - Ephesians 4:1 – worthy walk of the calling.
 - Call = expectation of conduct, not national election.
- **Expectation**
 - Not uncleanness but holiness.
 - Focus on behavior, not identity.
 - Grace does not lower standards but calls to holiness.

1 THESSALONIANS 4:8 – BLUE

- **Serious warning**
 - Rejecting holiness = despising God, not man.
 - Paul's instruction is God's revealed will.
- **Spirit given**
 - God "hath also given unto us his holy Spirit."
 - Apostolic age: Spirit empowered revelatory/miraculous gifts.
 - Current age: Spirit seals believers, sanctifies (Ephesians 1:13; 1 Corinthians 6:11).
- **Capitalization note (KJV)**
 - "His holy Spirit" (not capitalized) emphasizes gift/operation rather than the Person.
 - "Holy Spirit" (capitalized) = the third Person of the Trinity (Luke 11:13).
 - "Holy Spirit" (lowercase HOLY only, e.g. Ephesians 4:30) = Spirit's work/gift given.
 - "holy spirit" (lowercase both, e.g. Psalm 51:11) = spirit of a particular occasion described as holy.