Purity for the Sake of the Gospel

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang. Thank you for joining us.!

And even as we finish up here for evening service, they will just be beginning to serve and minister at Hope is Alive, so we are thankful for that. Last Sunday night, while Marsh and I were driving to western Oklahoma, I was preaching at the Great Plains Association for their churches there.
We got there, and they were finishing up the first part, and then between the first part, there was to be a dinner, and then after the dinner was me. And some of you may have heard the rumors, they're not true, but that I'm a bit of a picky eater.
And one of the things that really is a nightmare situation for me is to be at a place where I'm eating potluck. It's a nightmare. I'm okay not to eat it. I can wait until I get home. The nightmare is if I really have to eat it.
And so we got there, and they announced that we were going to eat before I was preaching, and I said, Marcy, what are we going to do? And she's so sweet to go with me everywhere I go to preach, but I'm not going to take her anymore because she said, well, Michael, it would be really rude if you don't eat.
[1:31] You're going to eat. And I was like, well, who asked you? Who invited you? So driving through the storm was fine, but, boy, potlucks are not my thing.

But the Lord in his kindness, the potluck was hamburgers and potato chips. That is a heavenly potluck. You can keep your, what's the things I don't like?
Casseroles, that's the word. Yeah. Keep your casseroles for all that is holy. The Lord blessed me with hamburgers.
And I was going to do what I always do, just get the food and move it around my plate a little bit and act like I've done something, squish it together and quickly throw it away. But the storm was no problem.
We did pull over to the side of the road at one point. We literally could not see the edge of the truck. We literally could not see what was in front of us. And so we pulled over and let the storm go by.
[2:33] And on the other side of that, everything was perfectly clear and perfectly fine. The storm that was brewing that I didn't know about was the potluck. But the Lord calmed the storm.

He calmed the storm. So the meat was a little red. The meat was a little red. Marcy looked at me and she said, do you think this is cooked enough? I said, you're going to eat it. Don't be rude. Two can play this game.
You're eating every bit of that burger. And to reward our faithfulness, somebody had brought in an ice cream little thing, like soft serve, you do your own ice cream.
It is what heaven will be. It is. It is. 1 Thessalonians 4. It's been a few weeks since we've been here. We had Family Matters and then I was out last week.
And it's good to return here to 1 Thessalonians 4. Let me just remind you a little bit of what's going on here in this letter.
[3:32] Paul has been to the city, established a church, taught them. He was run out. And he has received a report back that they're doing well. And he is wanting to continue to teach them and encourage them.

And so we get this letter that we know as 1 Thessalonians. And it's interesting because he was not here for a long time. And he was just beginning to teach them the important parts of doctrine the church needs to know.
And we're looking today at 1 Thessalonians 4, 1 to 8. Lord willing, next week, 9 to 12. And the very next thing at the end of chapter 4, he is getting to events with eschatology, the last times.

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Things leading to the return of the Lord and what that will be like, what the day of the Lord is all about. Things that we sometimes tend to think aren't that important are things that he felt necessary to remind them of, which means he had already initially taught them these things.
It's really a fascinating reminder of the importance of all of the doctrine that we get from Scripture. They are all important, and we don't want to neglect any of them.
[4:44] And so in the next few weeks, we'll be getting to events of eschatology and the last times and the trumpet of God and what that means, that the dead in Christ will rise, all those kinds of events.

But before we get there, we go now as we begin chapter 4, looking at purity for the sake of the gospel. That the way that we live is done not simply to be moral, but for the sake of the gospel.
1 Thessalonians 4, starting in verse 1, says, Finally then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you receive 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. 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. And in these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you, for God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness.
[6:21] Therefore, whoever disregards this disregards not man, but God who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

Purity, holiness, sanctification for the sake of the gospel. Notice first in verses 1 and 2, the progress of spiritual growth.
The progress of spiritual growth. Finally then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus. Now, just let me stop for just a moment. A lot of times, people, when they think of the Apostle Paul, people love his boldness, his directness.
Those are true and good things. But don't miss this. There is certainly a tender-hearted, compassionate side that must be there.
Finally, brothers, we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus. Now, this isn't about piling on legalistic rules.
[7:30] This is about saying, love the Lord, submit to the Holy Spirit, and follow through in what the Lord has called us to do. We're asking you this.

We're urging you this because it's for your good. To urge them. That word means to come along someone and encourage them.
For all of you who teach, this is an important word to have, not just as your vocabulary, but as a part of your ministry, to come alongside and encourage someone.
That we're not just simply teaching things and leaving people on their own to figure it out, but faithful disciple makers and faithful teachers and shepherds want to come alongside and encourage them. He's not speaking in a harsh way or a condemning way. He's speaking gently because these are people who love the Lord, are growing in their faith, and he desires to come alongside them and encourage them to help them.
[8:38] Sometimes when people teach, it's easy to get very frustrated because you're teaching things and people nod in agreement, and then they go and live a completely different way, and it can get frustrating.

It can get frustrating when there's people that you've invested, and many of you know what this is like. You disciple someone, you spend time with somebody, and then they just kind of wander away. It gets frustrating.
But this is a good reminder. Even just the way he speaks to them, I'm urging you, I'm coming alongside you, and I'm encouraging you with this. I'm not just pointing the way he says, I'm walking with you.
I've got my arm around you. I think this is a helpful word just by way of application for parents to remember, that godly, faithful parenting isn't just about lecturing.
It's about putting your arm around them and encouraging them and walking with them. Urge them. Encourage them.

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[9:42] And all of this is done, in verse 1, in the Lord Jesus. This isn't just about morality. This is about the gospel.

That's why I say it's purity for the sake of the gospel. This isn't just simply about teaching people to be moral, or civil, or respectful, though those things are good.
This is about teaching people in the Lord Jesus. All of it for his namesake, for his glory. I urge you, in the Lord Jesus, that as you receive from us, how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing.
So what Jeff read for us from Ephesians 4 is exactly the same idea here as 1 Thessalonians 4, that we are to walk a certain way. To walk in the scripture is to live, to put it into practice.
He says, you've received from us how you ought to walk, how you ought to live. Keep doing those things. And as it's come up several times in this New Testament letter, don't let your life get complicated.
[10:53] What are the kinds of things that God would have us to do? How are Christians to live? We're to study the scriptures. We're to obey the word. We're to be in prayer.

We're to gather with God's people. John said something. I don't know if he said it in both services or just one of them, but it was a really helpful insight this morning that so many times we may ask someone to pray for us, but we've not prayed ourselves.
Or we may voice or make mention of a prayer need for ourselves to someone else, but we ourselves have not even yet gone to the Lord in prayer with that. These are the simple things that we know that just so often we talk about but don't actually put into practice.
And so what Paul says to them is you've received how you ought to walk. Keep doing that. Keep living that way.
Keep your life simple. Just do what the Lord calls us to do. He says that you're to walk this way and to please God just as you are doing, that you do so more and more.
[12:02] This is the progress of spiritual growth, that you take the basics of the scripture and you keep doing them more and more. So, on one hand, the Christian life doesn't change that much.

Because when you are first taught the elementary truths of scripture, we're taught to be in the word and to pray and to be faithful to give and to gather with God's people in worship.
And in some ways, the Christian life just doesn't change that much. But what should change is the progress that we're making, that we're becoming more and more like Christ, that we are obeying what we read more and more, that we're doing out of delight what we used to be commanded to do.
This is part of how spiritual growth works. There are certainly parts of our life as Christians where we do just have to live according to discipline.
That's true. But the more that you love the Lord and delight in honoring and obeying the Lord, the more it becomes a joy and the desire of your heart to do these things.
[13:19] And so, just evaluate your own heart. If you say, I will read my Bible on days I feel like it, and on days I don't feel like it, I won't, then you're going to live according to the flesh, not how the Lord has called us to live.

Yet, out of that discipline of reading His Word every day, you will desire to do it more and more. When you pray, you ought to have the discipline in your life of prayer, and you need to carve out time that's set aside to pray so that you can faithfully do that.
And what you will find is the more time you spend in prayer, the more you will desire to be with the Lord in prayer. But when you've become prayerless, it is quite difficult to re-engage in prayer.
And the progress of the spiritual life is that we just keep doing the simple things over and over, and you do so more and more. I think you see this in churches.
I think sometimes you can see churches or pastors, sometimes, sadly, who just get bored may not be the right word, but get kind of bored with it.
[14:30] We just study every week. We just preach every week. We just keep calling people to Scripture every week. Well, what else can we do? And they try to kind of over-innovate, and they get more interested in what they can do than what Scripture's called us to do.

But faithful ministry is just doing the simple things. You just do them more and more and more. Delight in His Word more. Delight in His presence more. Love God's people more. Serve His people more.
And just keep doing what you've been taught and trained to do. Verse 2 says, For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

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This is a helpful reminder that we don't just simply do what somebody else tells us to do. We do what someone else instructs us to do when it's in the Lord Jesus.
I mean, I say this all the time, and I'll say it every time that I can, that you don't need to do what I say or what our pastors say just because we said so. If we're instructing you in the Word, and it's according to the Lord Jesus, then it's for your good to follow.
[15:40] But you don't follow us just because it's our job title. Our opinion doesn't carry any magic persuasion to it. If we're just standing up and telling you to do this and do that because we said so, that's as far from what the Bible calls a pastor and shepherd to be as you can imagine.

You follow your spiritual leaders, according to verse 2, when they give you instructions in the Lord Jesus. When it's in the Word. When you can open your Bible and say, help me understand this, and then someone who has studied and able to help you, you say, that makes sense to me because I see that in the text.
And if that's what the Word of God says, I want to obey that. And your spiritual leaders then compel you and urge you and encourage you to walk in obedience to that, not because they said so, because they're just helping you understand what the Lord has already said.
That's the progress of spiritual growth. Verse 3 gives us the promise of sanctification. Sanctification is the process of being conformed to the image of Christ, becoming more and more like Him.
And here's the promise of sanctification. Verse 3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification. Here is a succinct statement of what we can authoritatively say is God's will for you.
[17:09] It's your sanctification. And so many times, particularly, not exclusively, particularly college students will become very interested in trying to find out what is God's will for my life.

And I get it because they're trying to decide where do I go to college and trying to decide what should I major in and who should I marry and where am I going to live and what kind of job should I take and all these kinds of things and you're making major life decisions.
So it makes sense that at that stage of life that you're thinking about what is God's will for my life.
And then, around 45 or 50, people kind of go through that again.
What am I going to do the rest of my life? Do I really want to do this? Do I really want to be this for the rest of my life? Do I really want to do this? But in the truest sense, in the truest sense, God's will for your life is not some hidden, secret, cosmic treasure hunt that you've got to go find, uncover the clue somewhere.
If somebody says to you, I wonder what God's will for my life is, you can tell them that you know what it is.
[18:27] And they're going to say, well, how do you know? And you're going to say, because 1 Thessalonians tells me. This is the will of God. It is your sanctification.

God's will for you is that you become holy, that you honor the Lord, that you walk according to His ways.
That's God's will for your life. So when a college student comes to me and says, Michael, I'm trying to figure out, I need to know what God's will for my life is.
And I say, well, I can tell you what it is. They get kind of excited, thinking maybe I've got some divine insight from the Lord. I'm about to tell them something they didn't know. And I'll tell them, here's God's will for your life. Live according to the word.
And they'll say, that's great advice. What else you got for me? What am I going to major in? Who am I going to marry? And I'll say, I don't have any idea about those things. Because the truth is, you can honor the Lord as a school teacher and a surgeon.
[19:26] And you can honor the Lord owning your own business or being a football coach. You can pursue sanctification at home and in the office.

Your vocation is not unimportant, but your vocation is not necessary in order for you to know and do the will of God.
Micah 6, 8 in the Old Testament says the exact same thing in a different way. He has told you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God.
That's His will for you. Do what's right, love people, and walk humbly with the Lord.
And if you want to go to med school, do those things as a physician. And if you want to be a teacher, do those things, and go teach children.

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[20:41] And if you want to sell real estate, do those things, get your license, and sell real estate. Don't overcomplicate your life.

His will for you is your sanctification. Your career matters, your life choices matter, but those things don't define who you are before the Lord.
His will for you is that you love Him, that you love each other, that you do what is right, and that you are becoming more and more like Jesus. That's His will for your life.
I'll never forget meeting with a young man, this was a long time ago, and he sat in my office, and he said, I just, I don't know what to do, I feel so confused.
And I said, what's the problem? And he said, well, I know for sure that I'm supposed to marry so and so. He said, the Lord's made it very clear to me I'm supposed to marry her.
[21:42] And I said, well, okay, you got me kind of nervous by your language, but whatever, I'll engage you here. How do you know? And he said, well, the Lord's just made it clear I know that's who I'm supposed to marry. I said, well, in that case, what's the problem?

And he said, well, I asked her out and she keeps saying no. And I said, well, I'm not sure it's God's will for you to marry her. He said, well, how can you say that?
I said, well, because I think her liking you is an important part of the marriage process. Unless you got a lot of money I don't know about, I don't see what's turning this thing around. What he wanted to get mystical.
Look, the life of a Christian is not being a mystic. The life of a Christian is being in the word and being prayerful, trusting the providence of God and understanding that your career, while it's not insignificant, that's not God's ultimate will for you.
When your teenagers come up to you one day, parents, and say, I don't know what God's will for my life is, don't be annoying to them. Understand what they mean.
[22:47] Help them think through things related to college or not and degrees and education. Help them understand things about their skills and how they might make a living in the future.

But as you help them with that, do help them understand that ultimately, God's will for them does not rise and fall on a degree, a major, or a paycheck.
God's will for their life is their sanctification. So when your teenager comes to you, your college student comes to you and says, I wish I knew what God's will for my life is, take them to 1 Thessalonians 4, verse 3, and say, good news, this is the will of God for you.
It's your sanctification. Become more and more like Christ. And while you're doing that, if you're interested in this job path, go down it.
If you don't like it, do something else. Whatever you're doing, just make sure you're becoming more and more like Christ. that you're living like Him.
[23:57] Don't make life complicated. Don't make life mystical. And help the young people in your life to understand that their job and their career matters, but it just matters because it's a way for them to bring glory to the Lord.

This is the will of God for you, your sanctification. Or, take them up to chapter 3, verse 13. that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father.
So when someone says, I wonder what God's will for my life is, there's a good verse. His will for your life is that you become holy before the Lord. Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.
If you want to teach school, go be the best school teacher in the world. Don't be a decent school teacher. Be the best school teacher. It's for the glory of God. Show your students through your love, through your passion, through your work ethic, that Christ is worthy of it all.
If you want to open your own business, open your own business. Do it for the glory of God and be the very best at it you can be. If you wait tables at a restaurant, be the best waiter you can be.
[25:15] You're not just waiting tables. You're serving people. And you're doing all things for the glory of God. And if you can be a light to the people you work with and the people you interact with and you can become more like Christ, then that is God's will for your life.

It doesn't matter so much what your vocation is or how you spend your time. What matters is what is your heart longing to do? The promise of God is that His will for you is your sanctification.
You can live a life set apart for His holiness, married or single, making a lot of money or just a little bit of money. The important part is that you're seeking to become like Jesus.

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He says, this is the will of God, your sanctification, that you abstain from sexual immorality. that our becoming like Christ, our sanctification, gets worked out and expressed in every part of our life. God is working in you and you are to obey the leadership of the Spirit and that is His will for you. in the church, if you have an opportunity to teach fourth grade Sunday school and you think that would be a fun way to serve and you think you could do a good job, you think you could enjoy it, teach fourth grade Sunday school and be the best fourth grade Sunday school the planet's ever had. [26:57] And at the end of the year, if it's been a blessing to you and you feel like you're serving with relative ease and effectiveness, do it again.

And if you say, I didn't really like that. Did the best I could, but I don't really feel like that was the place for me. It's okay. You don't have to teach fourth grade Sunday school forever.
Try something else. Take a year and sing in the choir. What's God's will for my life? Just His will for your life is that you serve Him and love Him, obey Him and become more like Christ.
That's His will for your life and if you want to join the choir, sing in the choir, you don't have to sing in the choir the rest of your life. Try it out. They may kick you out. Who knows? Give it a shot.
You think to yourself, boy, I'd like to really share the gospel I wonder if there's a way that I could be trained and get more involved in sharing the gospel. Go do that. God's will for your life isn't some cosmic treasure hunt that He's hiding clues and it's just up to you to guess right or wrong. [28:08] You just say to yourself, how can I live like Jesus? How can I serve people? How can I make an impact for the sake of the gospel and what doors are opened up to me to do this?

And go walk through them. And if a particular way that you're serving is not fulfilling and not a blessing, you don't feel like that really is in line with your spiritual gifts, then try a different way.
Try teaching three-year-olds. Try teaching seventh graders. Try being a greeter. Get our prayer list and pray every single week on purpose, on design for the prayer needs that come in.
Be a part of a discipleship group and make meaningful connections with a smaller group where you're able to help them. Men, be a part of the Men's Institute.
It's not forever. It's two years. See if that's something that would help you to encourage you, to teach you, to train you. My point is that the will of God for your life is really pretty simple and that is that you become more like Him and that more and more you obey His will for you.
[29:29] But if you say His will for my life is limited to my vocation, then what happens when you retire? Well, you just lost God's will for your life if that's the way you viewed your job.

Or if you think God's will for your life is just that you are a wife, what happens if the Lord's will for you isn't to be married? Did you just lose God's will for your life?
No, this is the will of God, your sanctification. Or we can look at Philippians 2, 12 and 13 that says, Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now not only is in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling for it is God who works in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure.
Whatever your job is, whatever your vocation is, be the best at it you can be for the glory of God and remember, ultimately, God's will for your life is that you honor Him in all things.
Serve Him, you're loving each other, and you're walking in humility with the Lord. And if you're in sales, do it to the best of your ability. And if you're an entrepreneur, do it to the best of your ability. [30:49] Whatever it is you do, honor the Lord with your life as an act of worship lived out to Him, but remember, His will for your life is not simply about a title, a degree, a major, a university, a vocation, or a paycheck.

It's that you become more like Jesus. That's the promise of sanctification. Now, the spiritual growth of verses 1 and 2, the sanctification of verse 3, verse 3, is going to have to be lived out in the real world.
It's not enough to just be in a sanctuary with an open Bible and say, okay, this makes sense. I want to more and more honor the Lord.
I want to become more and more like Christ. We're going to have to take these truths we affirm and go outside the doors of the church and live these things out in the real world. That's verses 3 to 8, the peril of sexual sin.
The peril of sexual sin. Now, at first glance, this seems like a strange pivot. Verse 2, you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus, for this is the will of God, your sanctification, that you abstain from sexual immorality.

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[32:11] At first, that seems like a bit of a strange, like, did we miss something? Did I turn an extra page? How do we go from sanctification to sexual immorality? But I think as we understand the context, it becomes clear.

His will for you is not simply tied to some vocation or job title or status you have in the community. It's that you would obey the Lord in every part of your life, in all parts of temptation, that you would say to yourself, how would somebody walking with the Lord respond to this?
So he gives you a very specific example. One of the ways that we are to please God, that's verse 1, that we are to follow His instructions, verse 2, that we are to live out our sanctification, that's verse 3, is that we would abstain from sexual immorality.
The word here can describe any kind of sexual sin. 1 Peter 2, 11 says, Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh which wage war against your soul. The word here for the sexual sin can refer to what would in our culture be known as pornography or fornication or adultery or homosexuality.
[33:36] Any kind of sexual sin is what we as God's people are to abstain from, to avoid, to have nothing to do with it. If you want to mark that, turn with me for just a brief moment to 1 Corinthians 6.

1 Corinthians 6. I just want you to see a similar theme in a different New Testament letter here. Verse 9, Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?
Do not be deceived. Neither the sexual immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.
And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.
I show you this because I want you to see how point 1 and 2 interact with point 3. That we avoid the peril of sexual immorality by seeking the Spirit's help in our sanctification.
[34:58] Because, he says in 1 Corinthians 6, such were some of you. There are those who are part of the body of Christ who were sexually immoral, who were idolaters, who were thieves, who were drunkards.

Such were some of you. What changed? Salvation. What changed?
Is you were washed. You were justified. The Spirit of God took up residence in your life.
And now you're a whole new man. You're a whole new woman. Live according to the Spirit, not the flesh.
our society is obsessed with this mentality of how worldly can we be and still get into heaven.
[36:14] How sinful can we be and still slide by. The New Testament says that's not how a believer lives. Such were some of you.

Now the good news for that is that tells us that the gospel of Jesus Christ is big enough to reach down to change the heart of the thief and of the immoral and of the drunkard.
God's grace is powerful to save one who is absolutely steeped in sin, but the grace of God that saves you does not leave you the same.
Such were some of you. But sanctification is this process of becoming more and more like Christ.
And so whenever you hear somebody giving their quote unquote testimony and their testimony seems to be glorying in their sin and their past, I'm going to tell you, I can't judge the guy's heart or motive if he's a believer, and I'm just going to tell you that's not the way the New Testament talks about salvation.
[37:25] You don't glory in your past sin, you glory in the change grace has made for you. Such were some of you.

Look at verse 18, chapter 6, verse 18, flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.
Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.
As a school teacher, as a retired person, as a business owner, as someone who does IT, as someone who is a coach, as someone who is a nurse, use whatever gifts God's given you to make a difference in the world.
People need health care. People need education. People need how to learn trades. vehicles. People need vehicles.

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[38:43] People need houses. Use your life to make a difference in people. Impact people. Help things run better. That's wonderful. Just understand that ultimately God's will for your life is not about your paycheck.

It's remember you were bought with a price, so bring glory to Him whatever you do. Back to 1 Thessalonians 4.
Verse 4, 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.
No one transgressed and wronged his brother in this matter because the Lord is an avenger in all things as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you.
I just saw the other day someone had either sent this to me either in an article or maybe in a sermon clip. I can't remember. I just saw the other day someone who was responding to somebody who had shared the gospel and their response was only God can judge me.
[39:55] To which the response was that ought to terrify you. God will judge you. If you're taking comfort in the fact that only God is your judge, understand this, a person may judge you, that can only go so far.

When the Lord judges someone caught in their sin that's unrepentant, what he will do with that person is far more severe than what a person could do to you that judges you.
If you're taking comfort in saying, well, only God will be my judge, listen, the Lord will judge sin. With that in mind, we remind ourselves here in verse 6, Paul says, the Lord is an avenger of these things.
As we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you, we warn you to embrace the gospel, to believe the gospel and to walk according to the gospel.
Verse 7, for God has not called us for impurity but in holiness. Therefore, whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God who gives his spirit to you.
[41:11] In other words, we tell people the truth because this is what God has called us to and when somebody says, well, who are you to tell me how to live? Your answer is verse 8, you're not disregarding me, you're disregarding the word of God.

We want to live a life that honors the Lord. Purity. Not simply so that people will like us or so that we'll be respectable people.
It's more than that. It's for the sake of the gospel. It's letting the grace of Jesus Christ and the transformation it's made be put on display for all the world to see.
You might wonder even in your own life what is God's will for you. Here it is. Be sanctified. Be sanctified.
Live like Jesus this week. If you go to the office tomorrow, live like Jesus in whatever office you're going to. Be the best at it you can be for the glory of God.
[42:24] If you're going to school tomorrow, go to school tomorrow as the best you can be for the glory of God. If you're married or single, children or no children, God's will for your life is that you become more and more like his son.

And whatever you do to make a living and whatever you do to help make a difference in lives with other people, do it for the glory of God. But as you do that, keep in mind his will for you is that you become like Jesus.
And that can't just be something we talk about verses 4 to 8. We've got to go actually put it in practice. And where you're tempted, you've got to say, how would someone who honors the Lord deal with this temptation?
I want us to close this way. I want to invite you to turn to 1 John 2 as we close. 1 John 2.
And I want to ask you just right where you're sitting, just silently to read to yourself verses 15 to 17.
And then I want you to pray that this week that you would take 1 Thessalonians 4, 1 John 2, 15 to 17, and that you would live these things out, whatever your vocation, whatever your life stage, that you, for the glory of God, according to his will, would seek to be like Christ, not like the world, doing whatever it is you're doing, that you would remember, his will for your life this week is to live in a way that shows the gospel has changed you.
[44:18] We invite you to read 1 John 2, 15 to 17, take a moment just to pray by yourself, and then I will close us by voicing a prayer, and we'll be dismissed in a moment. first of all.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

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Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Bye-bye. Thanks. Bye-bye.
Bye-bye. Bye-bye. Bye-bye. Bye-bye. Bye-bye. Bye-bye. Bye-bye. Bye-bye. Bye-bye. Bye-bye. Bye-bye. Bye-bye. Thank you.
Thank you.
Lord, it is our desire tonight that we would take the things that we have studied tonight and put them into practice. We can become so quick to define ourselves by what we do, or by who is in our family, by where we live.
[46:16] Lord, help us to be reminded that your will for our life ultimately is just that we would walk according to holiness. Lord, you've given each believer spiritual gifts to make a difference for the church and the kingdom.

And those can be lived out and expressed in so many different ways, but the goal is our sanctification and the building up of the body of Christ.
I pray that we would sense even a newfound freedom tonight in this text, a freedom to try new things, a freedom to explore the gifts you've given us, a freedom to serve in various ways, knowing that sometimes it may work really well and other times it may not.
But the goal ultimately is not to fulfill an organizational chart. The goal is not ultimately to have a title in any way. Our goal is just to be like Christ.
To love you. To love people. And to walk in holiness and humility.
[47:31] As we do that, we pray for strength to fight against temptation. And that our quest for sanctification would not be simply tied to study and reading away from the real world, but it would be put into practice right in the very midst of temptation in the world.

And that while we may remember who we were and may even feel remorse for what we have done, we are grateful that by grace we can say, but that's who we were.
It's not who we are. Because your grace has changed us. And transformed us. May we walk in the victory that your salvation has given to us.
In Christ's name. Amen. God bless you friends. You're dismissed. God bless you friends.
God bless you guys. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you.
[48:51] God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you.

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