

EXCEL AT WALKING WITH GOD!

Paul opens our lesson text with a challenge to all Spiritually Advancing Believers, those covered in (Heb.5:13-14).

He challenges those Believers moving from milk to meat Categorical Bible Doctrine, challenging them to **EXCEL AT WALKING WITH GOD.**

(1 Thess.4:1) “Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us instructions as to how you ought to walk and please God just as you actually do walk that you excel still more.”

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Five aspects of Paul’s doctrinal instructions regarding how to walk to please God, and to excel in that walk in Phase II, the Christian Way of Life.</u></p>

1. Paul’s teaching outline is always interesting.

Our present lesson passage is a good example. The way Paul connects an important doctrine to their cultural living is unique.

- **Paul’s reminder** of why walking to please God was important to them, personally and culturally. (1 Thess.4:1)
- **Paul’s doctrinal answer** was to walk in Experiential Sanctification. (1 Thess.4:2-3a).
- **Paul’s reasoning for further teaching** on Experiential Sanctification was the believer’s battle with the illicit sexual behavior of the Greek culture. (1 Thess.4:3b-5) (the devil’s old phallic cult).

2. Four questions for us to consider and receive (paralambano/ a.a.ind.2pl) in our text (1 Thess.4:1-5).

- How does a believer walk to please God?
- What is the stated Will of God?
- What is the pertinent doctrine? (1 Thess.4:1-3a)
- How does a believer excel in it? (1 Thess.4:3b-5)

3. In our last lesson we introduced you to three phases of New Covenant Sanctification.

- **Phase I:**
 - **Positional Sanctification:**
 - **Salvation**
 - (1 Cor.15:3-4; Rom.1:16; Eph.2:8-9; 2 Thess.2:13-15; Rom.8:11; 15:16; 1 Cor.6:11).
- **Phase II:**
 - **Experiential Sanctification:**
 - **The Christian Way of Life**
 - (1 Thess.3:13; 4:1-5, 7; 2 Cor.7:1).
- **Phase III:**
 - **Ultimate Sanctification:**
 - **The Believer in Eternity**
 - (1 Thess.5:23; 2 Thess.1:10; Heb.12:14).

4. **The Church Age Believer walks, in every aspect of his/ her life, under Experiential Sanctification.**

Walking to please and honor God before the world and in the Angelic Conflict, the invisible spiritual war of (Eph.6:10-17).

In our lesson text, Paul shows the warfare between the flesh, engaged in cultural norms and standards, which conflict with Experiential Sanctification (1 Thess.4:3-5).

(1 Thess.4:3) **“For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain (apecho/ p.m.infin) from (apo+ablative of separation) sexual immorality (tes porneia) [fornication/ illicit sexual behavior]”.**

NOTE: The definite article (tes) with porneia refers to all different categories of illicit sexual behavior of a culture. Examples would be things such as sex outside marriage; adultery; homosexual; lesbianism; bestiality; pederasty; incest; and sodomy.

5. **Paul is not teaching on morality!**

He is teaching on **Experiential Sanctification** which is the doctrinal answer for such cultural types of sexual sins (God’s Will) (1 Thess.4:3).

The key doctrine associated textually to **Experiential Sanctification** would be **walking by means of the indwelling Holy Spirit, rather than by means of the old sin nature.**

Read and Study:

- (Gal.5:16-17)
- (Gal.5:18-21)
- (Gal.5: 22-25)
- (1 Cor.6:9-11)
- (1 Cor.18-7:2)
- (Eph.4:30)
- (Eph.1:13-14)

In conclusion:

(1 Thess.4:4-5) **“That each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God.”**

(2 Cor.4:7) **“But we have this treasure in **earthen vessels**, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves.”**