

What do you think?

- What is the first commandment?



**“You shall have no
other gods before Me.”**

- What does that tell us about mankind?

What do you think?

- The greatest commandment?

“You shall love the Lord your God

with all your heart,

and with all your soul,

and with all your mind,

and with all your strength.”



What do you think?

- It all comes down to this:



**“choose for yourselves today
whom you will serve”**

Josh. 24:15

*Paul's Letter to the
Church at Thessalonica*



I Thessalonians

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E





God's Will: Holiness

1 Thess. 4:3-8

Prolegomena

- Paul is not writing to condemn
 - There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1)
- Paul is writing to encourage holiness from this point forward
 - Put off the old man, put on the new man (Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:1-17)



1 Thess. 4:3-8

Regarding God's Will:

1. Three Charges (3-6a)
2. Three Reasons (6b-8)



Charge #1

- Abstain from sexual immorality
 - Immorality: *anything* apart from a spouse
 - Deed of the flesh (Gal. 5:19; Col. 3:5)
 - Abstain: *to keep oneself from*
 - Acts 15:20, 29; 1 Pet. 2:11-12
 - This is *serious*: 1 Corinthians 5



Charge #2

- Know how to possess your vessel
 - Know how: *understand*
 - Intuitive knowledge (v. *experiential*)
 - Implies instruction and discipline
 - *Listen and learn to pursue holiness*



Charge #2

- Know how to possess your vessel
 - *To acquire or to possess?*
 - Vessel: wife, body, or ???
 - My understanding: *to know how to control your own bodies in holiness*



Charge #2

- Control your own body
 - In sanctification (holiness)
 - Dedication, separation, consecration
 - 'Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing' (Rom. 12:1)
 - 1 Cor. 6:12-20



Charge #2

- Control your own body
 - In honor
 - Using your body for selfish indulgence dishonors your body and the God who made it and redeemed it (1 Cor. 6:18-20)



Charge #2

- Control your own body
 - Not in *lustful passion*: surrender to the mastery of sinful lust
 - Like the Gentiles who do not know God
 - Rom. 1:18-32
 - Don't act like an unbeliever!



Charge #3

- Don't transgress and defraud
 - Don't cross the line and take what doesn't belong to you
 - If it is not your lawful spouse then you are wronging someone



Reason #1 (6b)

- The Lord is avenger in all these
 - Avenger: *one who exacts legal justice*
 - GOD WILL SPANK YOU!!! (see Heb. 13:4)
 - Eschatological: You will stand before a holy God and give an accounting for everything you've done (2 Cor. 5:9-10)
 - *Solemn warning*



Reason #2 (7)

- God has called us in sanctification
 - Not for the purpose of moral impurity
 - Immorality is inconsistent with God's calling (2:12; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 10:8; Eph. 5:3-5; Col. 3:5; 1 Pet. 4:1-6)
 - Because it is inconsistent with His character (Deut. 32:4; Hab. 1:13)



Reason #3 (8)

- It is a rejection of God
 - These are not *man-made rules, religion, legalism, or self-righteousness*
 - These are the expectations of a holy God who put His Holy Spirit in us
 - The Trinity is working to make us holy
 - We need to be on-board (3-5a)



“Yeah, but...”

- “It’s not my fault.”
 - Then whose fault is it?
 - Fault implies consent
 - Was 1 Thess. written to Satan?



Whose Fault Is It?

1. Does God have a lot of knowledge or infinite knowledge?
2. Does God have a lot of power or infinite power?
3. Does God have some wisdom or infinite wisdom?
4. Does God have some love or infinite love?

Whose Fault Is It?

5. If God has infinite knowledge, does He know what Satan is doing?
6. If God has infinite power, is He capable of stopping Satan?
7. Does God always stop Satan?

Whose Fault Is It?

- So, if God knows what Satan is doing and is capable of stopping him but chooses not to (even though He loves us), then who are you *really* blaming? (see Gen. 3:12)
- Only two choices: you or God
 - James 1:13-15; 1 Cor. 10:13

“Yeah, but...”

- “I can’t help myself.”

- If that’s true, then God is a liar (1 Cor. 10:13)

- Maybe God *gave you over*

- Ps. 81:8-16; Rom. 1:21-32

- You cannot serve two masters

- Repent and walk in God’s ways (Ps. 81:13)



So What?

- You are not alone!
 - No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man (1 Cor. 10:13)
 - God has given us this Body to help
- You need to own it, confess it, forsake it
- Then walk in God's ways (holiness & love)



“If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”



Josh. 24:15