

1Thessalonians 12-04-06b

We pick up our study now in 1 Thessalonians 4, verses 1 and 2. Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus. It's interesting to me to look at chapter 3, verse 11 through chapter 4, verse 2 and see how many times the Lord Jesus is mentioned. May our God and Father Himself and our Lord Jesus Christ direct our way to you.

May the Lord make you abound at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Finally, we urge and exhort you in the Lord Jesus Christ that you should abound more and more. Now, what do you suppose the Greek word is here in verse 1 when Paul says, Finally then, and this is *loipos* in Greek.

It means literally as for the rest or the remainder, what remains. And this is finally is a little bit misleading. Sometimes you find this in the middle of a letter, finally, and then there's three more chapters.

But it means with respect to the topic under discussion, you know, summing up or in conclusion of this either major or minor section. But it's a connective idea that looks back and says, the culmination of what I have just said is this. That's really what *loipos* means.

What remains to be said on this subject is this. That's probably a good colloquial way to phrase it. What remains to be said on the subject is this.

But of course, it doesn't have the flow and the beauty that finally then has. But what Paul has left to say on this subject is this. Brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord.

Urge and exhort. Besiege here is the same word that we get hortatory. We talk about a hortatory conjunction.

It's something that is it's the root of exhort. You exhort is to hort out, to encourage. And an arrow tau here is the notion of strongly urging, encouraging, requesting.

It's translated besiege. We really plead with you and we exhort you. And exhort here is *parakaleo*, the same ministry that the Holy Spirit has.

The one who is alongside for encouragement, assistance, pulling for you, guiding you, helping. We request of you, we ask of you, we besiege of you, we urge you, we encourage you, and we *parakaleo* you. We do what the Holy Spirit does in terms of reminding you of realities, bringing your mind and your attention, your meditations onto these important truths in the Lord Jesus.

All of this is in the sphere of Christ. It makes no sense apart from Him. It has no meaning without Him.

It wouldn't be possible if it were not for Him. And as we celebrate this Easter weekend, this Resurrection Sunday coming up, we're in that period where the Lord Jesus was in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. And to contemplate what He did and why He did it is an exemplification of what Paul is talking about here.

The Lord Jesus went way above and beyond the minimum. He totally satisfied, completed, and fulfilled those parts of the Father's plan that He was called upon, but He did more. God the Father didn't say, now one of these days I want you to stand up there and weep over Jerusalem, or I want you to look out and have compassion on the multitudes.

That was the Lord Jesus in the midst of doing the Father's will and purpose, having those emotions and those expressions of love for others on His own. He was not just compliant, He was very dedicated and invested in the plan and purpose of the Father personally. And that's how we should be.

Not just doing it because we should or we know we ought to, but because we believe in it, we understand it, we are for it, and we're anxious to throw ourselves into it 110%. I'm not talking about spirituality by works, I'm talking about totally availing ourselves of every drop of the grace of God that the Lord Jesus Christ secured for us on the cross, wasting none of it, none of it falling to the ground, none of it falling short, none of it being left unclaimed. If the Lord Jesus bought us this opportunity, what we can do is exploit it to the maximum extent it's within our power to do.

Why would we do any less? What else have we got going that's more important? So He says, finally brethren, or in conclusion, or let me sum this up and get to my final point, we urge and exhort, we beseech and we encourage in the Lord Jesus, even as you received. This is paralambano. We've talked about this sometimes in the past, but you know, lambano is a simple word that means to receive.

Paralambano is, you know what para means, it means alongside. Parallel, two lines that are beside each other. Paraclete, somebody that's called alongside.

Well, paralambano means not just to receive, but it has the idea of taking to yourself, embracing a thing. You didn't just receive it, you clutched it. You grabbed it to yourself.

You held it to your side the way a mother does her infant. You're not just, you know, you hand a baby to some people and they hold it like they think it's going to leak. And there's other people that take it and they just swarm all over it.

They embrace it. They're enthusiastically doing this. And paralambano is much stronger than lambano.

And he says, we're giving you this encouragement that you should, in the Lord Jesus, and notice the word order is different. In your English, it says that you should abound more and more just as

you received. But Paul puts this first.

And so this is the way the ideas strike you. This is the order that they strike you. We beseech you and we exhort you in the Lord Jesus, even as you embraced when you heard it the first time, you know, this, this ought to be sounding familiar, Paul says, because you embraced it from us.

How you must walk and please God. This is debt. He, this is to be bound.

This is the root verb from which the word for, for bonds comes from. When you talk about them, the demon possessed man, and it says they put him in bonds and he would break them. Desmos.

Paul said, I would, that all men, whereas me, except for these bonds, these does Desmo, these chains. Well, this is daddy. And sometimes they'll translate it.

It behooves you, but this is a requirement. We are bound. We are required.

This is a must do. So you receive from us how you must walk. And that's why you've got the infinitive here.

You've got the, the present infinitive, Perry, Patane, Perry, Pateo, Pateo. That's the pitter patter of your feet. Perry is around, walk around, walk around is your lifestyle, your pattern of life.

You're going through your days. You understood, you received, you accepted. It is a good connotative translation.

You accepted from us how you must circulate in your life, how you must Perry, Pateo, and please God, RS gain. These are both infinitives, how you must walk and please, not just walk, walk and please their, their coordinate, their parallel. These infinitives sit at the same level, joined by Kai Perry, Patane, Kai, RS gain, live and please.

That's what the living is for. They're not, it's not a separate thing. Living without pleasing God is meaningless.

You must live and please God in order that Hina purpose clause in order that you should Perry, Sue. Oh, more same verb, Perry, Sue. Oh, what it, now, which one was it that meant to overflow and which one was it that meant to keep the excess inventory? Play a nod.

Zoe is the action word. Get that flow going and have it exceed. That's the, that's the action.

The Perry, Sue. Oh, is, is to be possessed of an excess. I've got more money than I know what to do with.

And if you believe that I've got more sheep than I can house, I've got more grain than I can put in my barn. I've got more. Uh, there's an old gospel song.

So many blessings. I can't count them. Uh, super abundance.

And, and it's, it's, it's a, it's a constant status. It's not a process. Play a nod.

Zoe is a process. Perry, Sue. Oh, is a status.

I am abundant and super abundant. So he says, you heard from us and I'm encouraging you to do this just as you received it before to walk and please God in order that you have an even greater super fluidity and even greater super abundance, something that you hang onto and you'll have it when you go to the judgment. This is in another metaphor, your gold, your silver, your precious stones.

How much of that do you want? It's one rock enough giant sky blotting pile of wood, hay, and stubble. And down there somewhere in the midst, you've got a, a two carat diamond. Or would you like to have a little bit more? Would you like there to be a pretty nice size pile of rubies and you know, smokey topazes and so on? Hopefully not too smoky, but that you should maintain this access to an even greater extent that you have even more treasure laid up in heaven.

You know, treasure is not what you're living on. Treasure is what you've got in reserve, right? Verse two for this is the will of God is how it reads in English. This is the will of God.

This is the will of God, your sanctification, that you should abstain from sexual immorality in the Greek. It says, for, you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. Oh, I skipped a thing here in the English, didn't I? For, you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

Commandments here is par Angalos. You know what Angalos is? Angalos is a messenger. Angalea is the message.

The you Angalea is the good message or the gospel. Well, this is par Angalos. What do you suppose a par Angalea actually would be? What would par Angalea be? Well, if par alambano means to take to yourself and accept and embrace, what would a par Angalea be? It's a message that you should take to yourself and bring alongside and embrace.

Accept with positive intentions, right? So they are injunctions. They are instructions. This is information that you find important and that you plan to act on par Angalea and you know the par Angaleas we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

Once again, in the Lord Jesus, by the Lord Jesus, through the Lord Jesus, for the Lord Jesus be presented with the Lord Jesus before God, the father. This is a Christo centric activity. It is not a self aggrandizing effort.

It isn't for us. We're not just trying to make a good investment for ourselves. This is in, by, with, and for the Lord Jesus Christ.

He has done the most for us. This is something we can do in response for verse three. This is the will of God, your sanctification.

This is the the lemma of God, your hagi Asma's, not your hug. You assume a, your hagi Asma's. What's the difference? How do you assume a, this is the standing.

This is the, the declaration. This is the status that is sort of momentarily judged. It's kind of like the, the relationship between, uh, pay, pay rods.

Oh, and, uh, Perry Suo. Uh, you have a process and then you have the result of the process. How do you assume a is more the result? How do you ask mass? This is, this is the getting there.

This is your daily life that results in you having a reputation or a judgment or a standing. So this is the will of God, your sanctification, the sanctification of you. Literally, ha hagi Asma's mom.

This is the will of God. The sanctification of you is a literal word for word translation to abstain yourself, to abstain you from poor Naya, abstain you from poor Naya. Uh, echo is to have or to hold up.

Echo is to have or to hold away from. We're back to the dripping baby. You keep it at a arm's length.

You, that's over there. Op echo to hold from, to push away, to keep at a distance from, and you have oppa once again. So you've got kind of a double distance here.

You've got op echo oppa poor Naya. You're holding out from, from poor Naya. What is poor Naya? It's translated fornication and your English here.

It says sexual immorality and we've done a word study in this before and I'm only going to refer to it rather than repeat it. Poor Naya is the breaking of faith. What is sexual immorality? You have sinned against someone to whom you owe loyalty.

Doesn't matter if you've met them yet or not. If you're a young man or a young woman and you engage in fornication, you are sinning against the future person. You are damaging yourself.

You are experiencing yourself. You are changing yourself in an area that belongs to your future spouse. And that is a pledge in prospect.

You know you're going to meet them unless you're one of those rare, rare individuals that has a gift of celibacy. Highly, highly unlikely. You should assume until you know better that you don't have that gift.

And this means, and even if you do have that gift, now your pledge is to God. Now you can think like a nun. I'm dedicating myself to the Lord Jesus personally.

I don't have any intermediary shepherd, any intermediate husband, any intermediate authority. The Lord Jesus has chosen to remove the middle man and I'm directly accountable to him. So much the better.

Or if you're a man and no woman comes into view and you wind up in your 30s or your 40s, whatever, well, look, what kind of a man are you? Are you just going to go deflowering the women that potentially belong to some other guy? Because, hey, I'm not breaking a pledge. I'm never going to get married. I mean, it's all nonsense.

This is pornia. It is the disruption of God's order. It is the breaking of faith with God's people.

You make a promise. I will be true. I plight you my truth.

I pledge you my truth. Well, where is your truth if you've already frittered it away? Well, I'm not talking about history now. I'm talking about in prospect.

I'm talking about young people that have still got their life before them, those of us that might have peccadilloes in the past. Thank God for the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. We wake up with a clean slate.

We can't undo the past, but we can certainly do something about the future. But you should hold away away pornia, not just in the area of physical relations. This is a convenient target, and it is commonly used for this category, but there are many other categories.

If you are a faithless employee, if you embezzle or you cheat your employer out of work because you fritter away time, you surf the Internet when you ought to be indexing or filing or typing or programming or whatever it is you do, answering phones and cultivating contacts or whatever your job is. If you're doing something else, and you're letting your employer pay you for that, when you know if they were looking over your shoulder and say, what are you doing? What am I? I'm paying you for this. That is pornia.

Maya. That is the breaking of faith. You are trusted, and you're breaking that trust.

This is why Jesus said, if a woman passes by and a guy lusts after her in his heart, he has committed adultery. Why? Because if he is saying, well, if circumstances were different, if I thought I could get away with it, boy, I'd really make hay while the sun shines here. You have broken faith.

Where is your wife in these thoughts? You've broken faith. It doesn't matter whether any physical action follows. You've mentally broken faith with your wife.

Be she present, past or future. You break faith. You break faith with God, that you would willingly violate the divine design to satisfy your personal desires.

This is a case of playonazo in your passions. My passions have overwhelmed my better judgment and my sense of right and wrong, and the standards that God has tried to implant in my corrupt and unregenerate soul. I should be better than this.

I'm treading on the upward way. New heights I'm gaining every day. Oh, no.

Since it's in my head, it doesn't hurt anybody. I can fantasize. No, you can't.

You break faith. It's pornaya. Pornaya is breaking of faith, and sexual immorality is only one of many categories, and it is a dangerous thing for us to let ourselves off the hook and say, well, I haven't done fornication or adultery lately, so I'm good to go.

No, you're not. Why do you think Paul is talking to these beloved Thessalonians who have demonstrated their love, demonstrated their faith, demonstrated their hope, demonstrated their perseverance under fire, and he says, look, let me just remind you, in summary, as I come to the point of my argument here, you remember what I told you, that it is the will of God that you abstain from breaking faith. You see how it flows out of love toward one another? If you love someone, you do not break their trust.

You do not violate their confidence. You don't deceive them. You don't do them despot when they're not looking.

That's not love. If you love someone, you don't do that to them. You don't humiliate them.

You don't embarrass them. You don't belittle them. You don't shove them aside in favor of some momentary stimulation.

That's not love. That is pornia. Don't let people wave a lexicon in your face and limit pornia to sexual immorality.

It's not. And if you remember the detailed word study we did on this, and we'll do it again one of these days, you know that this is the case throughout the New Testament. Pornia is a general term for violating legitimate trust and confidence.

And it is in all different areas of life. So, this is the will of God, your sanctification, your practical holiness, that you do not live as an untrustworthy person, as an unfaithful person, as a covenant breaker. That each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor.

And this is where Paul gets accused of sexism because he appears to be talking to men. He is addressing men specifically. He doesn't say you all.

This is addressed to the men. And the vessel that he's talking about is, in another place, described as giving honor to the wife as the weaker vessel. Not weaker.

Remember we went through that. The more prized and delicate and to be carefully handled vessel. I've got my clay bowl that I eat my Cheerios in.

And then I've got my 1874 Haviland China from my great-great-grandmother bowl. Now, which one is worth more? The Haviland China bowl is the weaker vessel. It is the more delicate, more valuable, more prized, more handle with care bowl.

That's the sense of the weaker vessel. And here Paul says that vessel, your beautiful China vase, your Meissen porcelain thing of beauty, should be possessed in sanctification and honor. You don't sully it.

You don't shove it off and break it. You don't dishonor it. And you don't defile it in the passion of lust.

And this is the pathology of epithumia. This is pathos. This is where we get the word pathos or pathology or pathogen.

This is in its root meaning. It is a passion. And epithumia is a very strong desire, in the passion of strong desire.

And we have urges and we have instincts that overtake us. And they're a part of our nature. We have drives.

We have interests. We have an acquisitive streak. We long for certain things.

People remember excitement when they were dating or they remember the thrill of various things. And it's enticing. It's alluring.

Sin wouldn't be a problem if it wasn't so much fun, if it wasn't so interesting. And we have been given the tools. We're never tested above what we're able to bear.

And no matter how compelling something might seem, we are not in the pathos epithumias, the passion of extreme desire. By the way, epithumia is not always negative. Paul says, I have longed to see you with a great longing.

He says, I've epithumia to see you with a great passion, with a great longing. And it's a positive thing. Here, it's negative.

Even as the ethne, the Gentiles, who do not know God. It's not just that they're Gentiles. It's they're Gentiles who do not know God.

The implication being, if you know God, you've got an alternative. You've got a recourse. You have a strength that those who do not know God have no access to.

You know better. You've got a refuge. Those nations, those ethne, those ethnic types who do not

know God.

Verse six. In order that, you would think from the English here, that no one should take advantage of and defraud. You'd think there might be hena here in the Greek, but there's not.

It just says, not to go beyond and to overreach. Not to go beyond and to overreach. You can think of this as sitting at the table.

You're trying to eat your food. You've got a beautiful meal there. But the gravy is on the other side of the person next to you.

And you just want to reach over there and grab it. Not worry about them. Not that they're trying to take a bite.

That you're dripping stuff in their plate or anything else. That you're elbowing them back from their meal. All you can see is gravy.

You must have gravy. And you just reach. You just reach over at their expense.

And any time we start, it's almost a definition of passion and illicit desire, is that in its fulfillment, you inevitably hurt somebody else. You cannot help it. The somebody else, if you're in isolation somewhere, you're Robinson Crusoe or Tom Hanks out there with Wilson on the Island or whatever.

It may just be the Lord God. It may be the Lord Jesus Christ who is there making your case and pleading on your behalf before God the Father, and then you embarrass Him by going off and doing these selfish, self-centered, illicit, unholy, unthought-out, unglorifying things. You shame the Lord Jesus Christ who purchased you, who is attempting to present you to the Father, and you just shame Him.

If the Lord Jesus could be embarrassed, He would be embarrassed at having to claim you as His own. And people say, well, I'm not hurting anybody. My mental life is my own.

I'm off here. Nobody's getting hurt. If there was a single human being in all of history that you would not want to hurt, who would it be? It would be the Lord Jesus Christ.

And you cannot not hurt the Lord Jesus Christ when you indulge epithumia or apathy. And by the way, again, it's not limited. We always seem to drift toward sexual immorality or lust because these are the words that are here.

You can be greatly desiring a plant at the nursery. You can be greatly desiring a tool down at Home Depot. You can be greatly desiring a guitar hang in a guitar center.

You can be greatly desiring fill in your pet category of fun things here. We have to be careful because we say, what's the harm? We've got a wonderful XYZ out here that I would really love to

have. We have to be careful because if we become overbalanced, if we overreach, if we end up spending what we shouldn't spend or taking time that we shouldn't take, if in the enjoyment and the fulfillment and the playing with this object of our desire subtracts from needful couple time, parent time, child time, family time, work time, meditation time, prayer time.

Oh, well, I don't have time for that because I've got to go over here and try out my new nine iron or whatever it might be. That's a problem. We have overreached.

We have screwed up the balance. We have messed up the plan and the purpose and the design. That's what these words mean.

To overreach. And by the way, you know what overreach is here or defraud? Pleonectane. What do we say about Pleonazo? Spillover? Superabound? Well, this is going too far.

It's fine to have hobbies. It's fine to have entertainment and enthusiasms. You can be passionate about your hobby, but there is a lip of that cup and if that gets out of the cup and starts soaking everything around it, it's gone too far.

You take it too far. It's too much. You've imbalanced.

And it's the word here to go beyond hyperbino and pleonectane. It's just the infinitive form. In the matter of his brother, somebody near you, fellow believer, your spouse, your family member, your friend, your co-worker, your brother, your neighbor, you wound them.

You injure them. If for no other reason, it may not be a personal slight or insult or breaking of faith, but even your example, even your effect, your inability to be a blessing with your spiritual gift because you are otherwise occupied and you're not sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit because you're consumed with thinking about this other thing. It takes us over.

And we've all experienced this. We all know what it's like to be just can't stop thinking about it. It's like being infatuated when you're a teenager.

Can't stop thinking about that person. Can't wait to see him. Can't concentrate in my Spanish class because here's this person sitting over there.

Ask you to translate. Can't do it. Mind is elsewhere.

So this is what Paul is saying. We've got to watch for this and we can't give ourselves a pass because it's only restricted to things of the body, things of the flesh. In the sexual and immorality type of realm, not at all.

Anything, any category of overwhelming, overweening interest and passion meets this criteria and Paul says don't do it. I told you. You know what we told you about this.

If you want to stand with the Lord Jesus Christ before God the Father, if you want to overflow in love, you can't be overflowing in your personal passions. We do well to overflow in one thing. We can't do it in two and so if you're going to overflow in love, you can't be overflowing in personal gratification.

Well, this is where we'll have to leave off for tonight. We'll resume our study in First Thessalonians chapter 4 verse 6 next week. We'll close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word and how directly and how clearly it addresses us in the circumstances of our life, the challenges that we face, the passions that we are subject to, both the opportunities and the tests that face us in a day. How clear and complete your guidance is for us, your provision is for us, the presence and power of your Spirit is for us. We pray that through these things God the Holy Spirit will keep the face of our Lord Jesus Christ clearly before us, the opportunities that he died to give us, the privileges that he intercedes on our behalf to bring to us.

We pray that these things will live and flame in our hearts and will motivate us and encourage us hour by hour, day by day to live the life to which we have been called in the short time that remains to us. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.