

1Thessalonians 12-04-20b

Let's pick up our study now in 1st Thessalonians chapter 4. Let's look at this next section, and I'm I'm consciously Trying to reinforce these ideas not only because it's been two weeks since we looked at them But because I think it's really important to maintain this context as we go forward into the last part of the chapter so The Gentiles who do not know God Do take advantage of and defraud their neighbors? And this is one of the distinctions of the body of Christ Here's a good question At least I think it's a good question. I think the Apostle Paul thinks it's a good question How do you know if you're fulfilling that first idea in chapter 4? Living your life in a way that pleases God one of the ways one of the evidences is Is negative it's what we are not doing We are not Injuring one another we are not defrauding one another cheating one another leaving somebody in the lurch Disrespecting dishonoring Dismissing ignoring Failing to look out for the interests of others We can look at ourselves we can look and say am I just really kind of taking advantage of someone in my family someone in my work environment someone in my Environment particularly in the realm of our Christian fellowship am I Failing to pay proper heed am I injurious Am I reaching over someone am I elbowing someone? If we are we are not Living in a way that pleases God. We are not walking as we have been taught and That is a thing that must be fixed.

There will be nothing in our cup.

There will be nothing in our vessel if we keep bumping into other people and spilling it.

So this is Paul's point.

The Lord is the avenger of all such any parent thinking about someone doing Injustice or harm to their child knows exactly what this means.

God in heaven has the angels of these little ones constantly before his face.

Remember the Lord Jesus talking about it: would be better for someone who harms one of these little ones if he had a millstone around his neck and was cast into the sea.

Why? Because God is the Avenger.

The Lord is the Avenger for those who? abuse disrespect disregard his own and that includes us if we are at fault.

The Avenger is going to come down on both feet with both feet on us as we also forewarned you and testified.

Paul says I have emphasized this to you in the past.

It is a warning.

It's not just guess what, you know you'll really have a better life and prosper more if you'll kind of be more considerate and try to do these things and and concentrate on keeping your own vessel upright.

Used to tell the girls when they were toddlers from the time they can understand English and they had those little sip cups top up.

Top up, you know.

Our little kids are and the people that make those don't help any they put those loopy handles on so little kids got it by the handle and it's already at a 45 when they set it down.

Most of the time it goes on over and we would say look top up put that thing top up.

You're going to spill it.

Well, this is the skew a this is the vessel and We've got our hands full literally keeping our own vessel.

Acquiring it having a vessel to carry those gold silver and precious stones in for God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness and Uncleanness is not just of the immorality type not just of the overt sin type it is Defined in this context in how we treat each other.

You become unclean by letting your Self-interest spill over and overreach and harm others.

Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man but God.

Remember in the first session tonight we talked about when when self gratification takes over it has three directions it Interrupts in The Godward direction your iniquities have separated between you and your God your sins hide his face and he doesn't hear right.

It messes us up in the vertical direction it defiles pollutes and Corrupts us we take on an identity we wear down our conscience we sear ourselves and our sensibilities and Sensitivities.

The more you do a thing the less sensitive you are to it.

The first time is shocking.

The second time it's mildly disturbing.

The third and fourth time is like oh well.

You know I've done.

I'll just do first John 1 9 later and pretty soon it The conscience can no longer react.

This by the way is the tactic that we have discussed when it comes to pushing Agendas in politics and in society.

You remember that idea of jamming.

What happened the first time they put a homosexual character in a TV show?

Shock and dismay letters to the editor incensed or boycott the program boycott the sponsors.

But now there's another character and another character and another reference and another Episode and another instance and another and another now you can have a whole show full of nothing.

But if I what they call it glee, I've never seen it, but sounds to me like that whole thing's just Full and overflowing with such characters and Nobody raises an eyebrow can't tell it from a dozen other programs.

We get inured we become accustomed.

You can't react.

This even happens in scary movies.

You know the first time the guys walking down the dark hallway They can the electricity is always off. They can never turn on a light It's always dark and mysterious and and suddenly a door slams everybody jumps well after they slammed the 13th or 14th door people Aren't jumping as much are they you get used to it you kind of? Adjust to it you accommodate We don't want to accommodate. We don't want our conscience to get accommodated to failure and to sin and to corruption It will spill over and infect and corrupt others He who rejects this does not reject man, but God It isn't just a matter of sinning against each other.

We sin against God we Turn God from a loving father into an Avenger and One who must you know that again children do this to their parents parents want to be loving they want to enfold they want to cradle they want to caress and comfort and encourage and provide and be all positive things and do everything in love and beatific visions of wonderful glowing golden Parenthood and the child lovingly looking up. I love you, and oh, I love you back, and it's all You know positive, but if the child becomes a little Miscreant juvenile delinquent willful rebellious sin of the high hand little mini tyrant well now dad changes from the loving beneficent Cradling parent into the Avenger go to your room. I will meet you there shortly You might as well turn around and bend over because Discipline is on its way the child converts the parent into a disciplinarian instead of a loving Benefactor the child does this the parent if they're any kind of decent parent Doesn't just go in there for no good reason the child's bad decisions turn the parent from loving to From operating in love to operating in justice, which justice is also operating in love So he who rejects us does not reject man, but God who has also given us his Holy Spirit Why does Paul bring that up at this point? Why does the Holy Spirit come up here? How do we know? That we have transgressed, how do we know? Not only Do we have the standards of the Word of God? But what is the what is one of the fundamental ministries of God the Holy Spirit Jesus said when the Holy Spirit comes? He will do what? convict Convict of Sin and righteousness and judgment he does it for everyone before we're saved after we're saved and This by the way is why I personally Don't have quite the understanding I once had of the whole Rebound 1st John 1 9 in fellowship out of fellowship.

You're totally in fellowship 100% and then out of fellowship You know the idea used to be taught and and understood that well when you're out of fellowship The God the Holy Spirit kind of goes away, and you're just sort of operating on your own You're in the dark the light has flipped off Not at all when we sin when we transgress when we are out of the will of God God the Holy Spirit is just as much with us But his ministry changes instead of the comforter. He is now the convictor he Afflicts our conscience he reminds us He tells us he brings the the Word of God to our minds, and we want to be sensitive we want to be responsive to that ministry and Do not despise the chastening of the Lord recognize that whom the Lord loves he chastens and scourges every son whom he receives and We know that no discipline is pleasant at the time, but afterward yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness That's what's going to go into that

vessel. We want to acquire and hold on to so that brings us to verse 9 but Concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another Romans 5:5 the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit Who was in the preceding verse? God the Holy Spirit.

What does God the Holy Spirit do not only does he convict he also? reminds us in that conviction of our Responsibility to one another if we naturally lack Sensitivity toward each other that's something God the Holy Spirit can supply can develop can create in us Some of us are just naturally Boorish we are naturally insensitive. We are not very good at empathy some of us just don't have that as a natural gift, but the presence of God's Holy Spirit Supplies that lack fills that need it's up to us to be sure that he has sway that he has the ability to work his Gracious ministry within us reminding us Shedding abroad in our heart God's love love that is based on Integrity and character rather than trying to find some meritorious feature of the object If God was looking for what's meritorious in us so that he could love us. How far would the love of God go? Well, they would not have written that song about the if the ocean was full of ink and every stalk was a quill You know, the love of God is so large that the the oceans would run dry trying to write it down Well, if God loved us based on who and what we are They couldn't write that song because God wouldn't love us at all we are unlovely God loves the unlovely because God is love and his love comes and is based on himself not us and His love is shed abroad in our hearts.

We can love each other Even when we are acting unlovely, even we are not really worthy of love. We can be the recipients of love Sacrificial towards self-beneficial toward others. We receive the benefit of that kind of love because God's love is Distributed in our midst by the Holy Spirit.

That's why God has given us his Holy Spirit and Therefore concerning brotherly love Paul says I don't have to write to you because God has taught you his spirit is in your midst he is Creating and teaching that love in your midst. That's the idea You're taught by God to love one another and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all of Macedonia Now, have you noticed that this Adolfo a Adelphos word keeps cropping up It's an interesting thing If you use like I do the New Treasury of Scripture knowledge, they have an interesting note a little bit earlier in this passage remember up above where it said That this is the will of God that you Your sanctification you should abstain from pornaya That each of you should know how to obtain or acquire his own vessel in sanctification and honor Not in passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God that no one should take advantage of and defraud who? His Adelphos his brother and And the New Treasury says this is the one case in the New Testament where Paul uses Adelphos to refer to humanity in general rather than the community of believers but this reminds me of the observation that the parable of the rich man and Lazarus is the one parable where Jesus uses a real name for the character and Well, what kind of a rule is that? I mean, you're just arbitrarily saying a thing It is arbitrary to say that this is somehow expanded to include all men Every place the Apostle Paul uses Adelphos or Adelphi It is the community of believers. That's what's in view and I don't see any reason.

I don't see any clue in the context To take this otherwise than than in the realm of believers and it continues on down Not take advantage of and defraud his brother Because though and this is confirmed when he says the Lord is the Avenger Now is it wrong to defraud an unbeliever? Is it wrong to defraud somebody? Of course, but that's not what's in this passage This passage is talking about in the fraternity of God in the fellowship of Christ in the body of Christ in the body

of Believers This is what he is talking about So now when he says concerning brotherly love Say we're still in that context concerning brotherly love. This is love within the community There is a different responsibility to those who are outside Doesn't mean we can just treat him despicably and with impunity, but it's different We have a higher calling Think of it this way We we think about our family bloods thicker than water, you know, you do things for your family Because they're your family and then You have those who are outside now. Should you treat people who aren't family just horribly and and idolize and Care for all the people in family We should be the same people all the time if we are compassionate and caring and loving and self-sacrificing toward our family We want to be that toward other people What's the difference? It is a matter of both degree and extent Right Most of our time And especially you think about the the ancient world where families didn't scatter all over the earth, but your primary Focus when you think about the target with the bullseye and the rings around it The rings near you in the center our family Outsiders are outside.

There's there's fewer occasions fewer contacts fewer opportunities if you master this among the Adelphi among the brethren Well, it's sort of an off 40 or II if I can do it here I'm going to be practiced and effective in doing it outside But it is also extent I am willing to do things for my neighbor I've got great neighbors on both sides of my house Really nice people happy to watch their houses hold their keys let in people who are going to do work when they're not there Look out for them if they're away but There is a level Where that operates that is not nearly to the extent that it does for my family my own kith and kin I will Go greatly beyond the call of duty for a number of reasons so it is it is The extent and the the number of opportunities is much greater. That's why this says concerning brotherly love Let's see if we can get this brotherly love thing down. This is where we spend most of our time Who is my neighbor who is my brother? Well? I it's who I come in contact with on a daily basis You have no need and and within the fellowship of the faith is specifically what's in view here you yourselves are taught by God to love one another and Here's the thing In the body there is a one another Dynamic right I can look out for your own interests more So than my own because you are looking out for my interests more than your own, right? It it works when everybody has that attitude because nobody gets left out, right? in the non brother world It's one way we have no expectation that God the Holy Spirit are setting the love of God in their hearts That almost by definition.

He's not and this is a one-way love this is an inviting love a Compassion love that is more unidirectional We cannot have an expectation in fact love your enemies do good to those who hate you pray for those who? Despitely use you it is a different dynamic. It's a different kind of love and it has a different purpose Its purpose is to draw Jesus said if I be lifted up, I will draw all men What is it that's lifted up the example of self-sacrifice the example of God's love that's what's lifted up that will draw men our love to outsiders our hospitality our charity our You know beneficial actions towards others living quietly working with our hands So not letting our good be spoken of as evil is designed to draw to shine the light in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation it has a different purpose than brotherly love which is Reciprocal which is designed to edify and hold together and energize the body, right? different purpose different dynamic different standard Different thought process different doctrines apply in brotherly love this discussion brotherly love Adolfo Adolfo Adolfo Adolfo all the way through here, so we don't mix these two things up. We recognize the difference Concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you yourselves are taught by God to love one another this is in the body reciprocation God the Holy Spirit energizing it activating it sanctifying it informing it

bringing the Word of God to bear Knowing when it should be compassionate love and when it should be tough love have have Compassion on some pulling them out of the fire hating the garment spotted by the flesh It's got a different different set of standards and indeed you do so toward all the brethren throughout Macedonia But we urge you brethren This is not accidental all of these Adolfo it's not accidental we urge you brethren that you increase more and more Same thing he said at the beginning of this chapter.

We urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more We do not Simply maintain a status quo. We don't say I have arrived. I have reached a comfortable plateau We push we advance we try to get better.

We try to do more Just because we've been a believer a long time been to hundreds maybe thousands of Bible classes got lots of notes lots of knowledge We don't we don't tread water. We don't just dog paddle around and say well I've got my nose above water. We want to advance we want to get better We want to abound more and more This is this week's Refrigerator magnet abound more and more don't settle Because we never stand still we're either advancing or we are falling away We don't just hover in our in our spiritual life so he says abound more and more that you aspire to lead a quiet life to mind your own business and to work with your own hands as We commanded you Now why is this in this context does it seem like kind of an odd term? He's talking about you know obtaining your vessel and sanctification and honor and Not being unclean but holy and then he says to Lead a quiet life mind your own business and work with your own hands Well if you think about that idea that you have a responsibility you have a vessel of your own that you are trying to acquire that you are trying to obtain and by implication trying to fill What are you not going to do? Busybody around on the other guy with his vessel You're not going to overreach you're not going to do things that make it difficult for him to obtain and fill his vessel With the water of life with the glory of God with gold silver and precious stones with whatever it is This is capacity.

This is opportunity a vessel is potential You got a big salad bowl. That's a potential meal got a big casserole. That's a potential meal You got a big cake pan.

You got a big cornbread pan. You got a big pie pan. That's potential.

I Don't want to just sit there with an empty pan. I want I want what that pan is designed to hold right? you know how to Obtain this pan and then go about using this vessel. Well Let the other guy lead his quiet life Let the other guy mind his business just as you lead your quiet life and you mind your business This is an exhortation to avoid mental attitude sins I'm not gonna be Thinking well, you know This is what he ought to be doing over there to not Gossip malign judge Discuss in an out-of-bounds way You know, one of the things about being brethren is we know a lot about each other.

Well that creates a responsibility I figure somebody wants people to know a thing. They'll tell them if they don't say it I probably shouldn't be saying it either, right? this is I got my hands full trying to create maintain and fill my own vessel. I'm not going to go Talking about how somebody else ought to be operating over there.

This is why it says lead a quiet life Not creating controversy not stirring up strife These six things that the lord hate yea seven are an abomination unto him Remember how that list ends he that sows discord among whom? Adolfo brethren What does paul chide the corinthians for I

hear that there are wars and divisions among you and it should not be so How can there be a war in division except that people are doing this? They're yapping Jaws are flapping When they ought to be doing this They ought to be just holding still quiet life Work with your own hands Don't be trying to get somebody else's hands to work Let me tell you what y'all be doing those hands over there. I see your hands kind of flapping it up Let me tell you what your hands are. No, no I got my own two hands.

I need to concentrate on keeping these hands sanctified doing the work that god has called me to do leading my quiet life This is the command paul says That you may walk properly toward those who are outside If you get this thing figured out with the brethren, you will walk properly toward those who are outside Your light will so shine before men. They will see your good works glorify your father who is in heaven You'll be a light shining in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation You will draw This is true evangelism It has been called lifestyle evangelism. Although many times That kind of crosses a line into play acting i'm going to perform a little Kabuki act here and try to get my neighbor to come to church No, we concentrate on living the life that god has called us to god will use it as he sees fit If he wants to use it as a witness if he wants that light to shine We concentrate on leading a quiet life working with our hands as we have been commanded And that will enable us to walk properly toward those who are outside And we will lack nothing Guess what? How does it how does psalm 23 end? My cup my vessel my skew us runneth over This is the good kind of running over this is not the Overreaching and the pushing aside and the elbowing of someone else this is Overflowing with blessing with with privilege with opportunity with the glory of god That's what the vessel is You lack nothing you're full to capacity Bob theme used to talk about the edification complex and you remember The fourth of the five floors after you get grace orientation mastery the details of life relaxed mental attitude.

What was the next one? Capacity for life capacity for love capacity for happiness. That's your vessel And God will fill it to overflowing When we are qualified we are sanctified We are honorable and we're not Elbowing the other guy and knocking his vessel out of his hand that's pornaya that is Breaking faith. We have an obligation to each other.

We have a commitment to each other not to harm each other Rather to look out for each other's interests. That's the one another in the body of christ now With that as background and in the 30 seconds that remains to me. We are at verse 13 Now and this is it's translated but here but this is a now adversative.

This is not a a but this is a now Now I do not want you to be ignorant brethren He already said, you know how to possess your vessel he already said we have commanded you we have told you brotherly love We've already told you he says these things, you know Now he's going to say here's something. I don't want you to be ignorant about implying right now. I'm not sure you know First part of this chapter.

Let me remind you of things, you know Now, let me tell you some things you may not know So I do not want you to be ignorant. He didn't say I do not want you to be ignorant about brotherly love Did he he says you know this? God the holy spirit is there teaching you this you don't have An ignorance about how to lead a quiet life and work with your own hands. We've commanded you this when we were there This is known information.

This is review Now that the review is complete Here's some information. Maybe you don't have and I don't want you to be ignorant of I do not want you to be ignorant brethren Adolfo That i've just been talking to about your commitment to one another your concern for one another your care for one another This concern extends to those who have died They have brotherly love they care for one another one of the expressions of that concern is uncle Bob just died And the lord isn't back My concern for him Is still present he's gone, but I still think about him and worry about him We kind of thought Jesus might be back and we were all going to go to glory Well, he has died others in our fellowship others of our brothers have died And our brotherly love extends to them. This is a healthy concern And it was it was a natural anytime.

Somebody we love is in trouble It stresses us. You can't help it If you're a parent your child is stressed you're stressed if you're a child and your parent is stressed health issues Economic issues, whatever might be you're stressed. Why? You love them your spouse They're stressed.

You're stressed Anybody we love family extended family close friends Anybody we love if they're in trouble We're troubled We weep with those that weep I do not want you to be ignorant brethren concerning those who have fallen asleep lest you sorrow as others who have no hope Now what did he just talk about in the first part of this chapter? Not in the passion of lust like the gentiles who do not know God We are different. We have resources. We have possessions.

We have standing we have potential we have God the Holy Spirit. We've got the word of God. We've got relationship with God.

We're in the Lord. Jesus Christ We are separate we are hagi azmoy we are sanctified ones We have been taken out of the kingdom of darkness and placed in the kingdom of the Son of His love We are different And he says now brethren concerning those who have fallen asleep You should not have the kind of sorrow that these who are outside Have in the same way that you shouldn't be overrun with the passions that they have You shouldn't be overrun with the grief that they have You're different You're in a different world If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with him those who sleep in Jesus This is one of the more interesting sentences you'll ever find in Greek What does it mean to bring with him? those who sleep I for next week if you want to Start kind of chewing on this Why doesn't it say Jesus fell asleep? It says we believe Jesus died And then he says we believe those who sleep in Jesus. Why doesn't he say if we believe that Jesus slept and rose again? Sounds odd to our ear, doesn't it? Well, why does it sound odd because it's always presented the same way in scripture Why is death applied to Jesus and sleep applied to believers? We believe Jesus died and rose again Even so God will bring with him those who sleep in Jesus Interesting, why didn't he say those who died in Jesus? Seems like it'd be a nice symmetry.

Jesus died and rose these who died will raise but he doesn't say die or raise He says those who sleep will be brought so I leave you that to To Digest and ponder until next week when we will go through the heart and the remainder of This part of chapter four, but let's close here in a word of prayer Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for the The clarity with which you have communicated to us. We thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit who further emphasizes and brings to our mind these great truths and and Things that are so important for us to remember as we live day by day.

We pray that We will be able to obtain and fill our vessel with Those things that reflect your glory those things that equip us and prepare us for service both now and in ages to come we pray that we will be sensitive to one another and remember that Failures on our part go well beyond just ourselves. They they affect others and most of all they interrupt our our fellowship and our uh Communication with you We pray that as we learn and grow and advance and push forward and abound more and more That the lord jesus will be glorified in everything. We say and do we pray these things in his name.

Amen