

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12
A Walk the Pleases God: Duties

1

Introduction

Every believer should be ambitious to please God. This passage gives four very practical ways that we can please God, four practical duties that must be obeyed.

1. Grow in love more and more (vv. 9–10).
2. Live a quiet life (v. 11).
3. Mind your own business (v. 11).
4. Work with your own hands (vv. 11–12).

2

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

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; ¹⁰ and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more; ¹¹ that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, ¹² that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and *that* you may lack nothing.

3

Grow in Love

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As a church we are to grow in love more and more. In the Greek the word love is not **agape**, but the word **philadelphia**.

Philadelphia means brotherly love, the very special love that exists between the brothers and sisters who cherish each other within a loving family.

It is the kind of love that binds a family together and shows concern and looks after the welfare of each other. It is the love where family joins hands with each other in a common purpose under one father.

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Paul says there is no need for him to write the Thessalonians to love each other as brothers. Nevertheless, he does. Why? If there is no need, why does he encourage them to love each other? There are two reasons.

1. **It was God who taught the Thessalonians to love each other.** Therefore, Paul was driven to follow God's lead and stir the people of God to continue to love each other as brothers. This was and still is an absolute essential for the church.

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Christian believers need each other in order to make it through the trials of this life. Living for Christ is not easy in a corrupt world that promotes pleasure that results in death. We all face temptation after temptation and trial after trial. We need the love of each other in order to stand against the temptation and to walk through the sufferings of life.

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The greatest threat to the church is internal strife and divisiveness. Nothing destroys the ministry of a church any quicker than criticism, grumbling, murmuring, gossiping, selfishness, cliquishness, and ambitiousness to have one's own way or to manipulate in an attempt to gain some position.

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2. There is always the need to grow in love more and more.

The Thessalonian believers were **noted for their love**, not only within their own church, but throughout the whole district or state of Macedonia. But they were not yet perfected in love. No person is; therefore, there is always the need to grow and abound in love more and more. There is never too much brotherly love within the church or the world. We must, therefore, grow more and more in love.

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Live a Quiet Life

1 Thessalonians 4:11

that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you.

The believer must aspire to be quiet. The word **aspire** means to be ambitious; to strive eagerly; to seek with all the energy a person has. The very meaning of the word aspire shows the importance of quietness. **We must seek to be quiet and learn to be quiet.** Remember the church at Thessalonica was facing two critical problems.

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1. It was **facing the problem of persecution**. Many in the city were mocking and abusing the believers because of their faith and commitment to Christ. Most of the believers were standing fast against the persecution, but some misunderstood how they were to show their loyalty to Christ. When a believer is rejected or persecuted, Christ says that he is to **quietly** shake the dust of the place off his feet, turn, and walk away (Mt. 10:14; Mk. 6:4). Note: **the whole thrust of the Lord's teaching in handling rejection and persecution is quietness, to leave the rejecters alone.**

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2. The church was also facing the problem of some type of criticism and divisiveness against Paul. Some were accusing Paul of everything ranging from immoral conduct to deceitful and self-seeking preaching.

The point is this: we are to live a quiet and peaceable life before each other. We are not to be critical and divisive toward each other. We are to walk in a quiet and meek spirit out in the world.

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Mind Your Own Business

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Mind your own business. Can you believe the Word of God says this? God actually tells us to mind our own business. Why? Because too many are busybodies and meddle in the affairs of others.

The person who meddles reveals their critical spirit as they criticize and attack the work of others. At the same time, they fail to see their own shortcomings and failures. They meddle in the affairs of others while failing to look after their own affairs like they should. It also declares their commitment to God is not what it should be as they criticize what God is doing in the lives of others.

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My wife used to have a quote by Elizabeth Elliot on our refrigerator. "**Few things in life are my business, mind your own business.**"

Instead of meddling in the lives of others, one need to become so occupied with the things of Christ that he has no time to meddle in the affairs of others. The exhortation is strong: "mind your own business." **Commit your time and energy to your own calling God has given you to do.**

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Work With Your Own Hands

1 Thessalonians 4:11b-12

and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you. ¹² that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and *that* you may lack nothing

Work with your own hands. The message of the gospel and of Christ's return to earth brought great hope to the Thessalonian believers. Some went too far. Some quit their jobs and gave away what they had in order to wait for Jesus' return. This forced them to live off others in order to survive. Their action had been most unwise. Therefore, Paul commanded them to **work with your own hands.** Two reasons are given for labor.

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1. We must labor in order to walk properly before outsiders, that is, before the world of unbelievers.

The word “**properly**” means to work in a commendable and respectful way. Believers are to set the standard for diligent, honest, and faithful work. We are to do ALL for the glory of God!

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2. We must labor in order to have enough to meet the necessities of life. People are to work to provide for their own necessities so that they may lack nothing. They should also work in order to have enough to give to those who cannot provide for their own needs (sick, widows, orphans...)

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So What ...

How you live in this world will make a difference for eternity. Our ability to function as a church and our individual impact on the world depends upon how we **surrender and yield our lives to Jesus.**

Do we trust Him? Are we able to fall into line behind what He is doing, or will we criticize the work of others? It is important that we all work together. Yes, we make mistakes, but let's treat others the way we want to be treated.

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So What ...

To recap...

We need to **live lives of moral purity** building up one another and not using one another.

We need to **endeavor to love others, just as God loves others.** Love covers a multitude of sin.

We need to **learn to be quiet.** We should not be directing attention to ourselves, but to Jesus.

We must learn to **mind our own business** and not attempt to be the quality control or supervisor in the work God has given to others. He did not give it to you.

We need to learn to **do our own work** and to do it with all diligence. We do so for the glory of Christ not ourselves.

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