

## **Rights and Wrongs of Loving and Living! Possible questions for discussion.**

After spending time in quiet or spoken prayer, and checking up that everyone is well... start a short discussion as follows....

1. Ask members of the group to name one thing about “the world today” [and life in modern society in general] which causes individuals real distress. Don’t let this become a long ‘rant’ but merely a list of the sorts of things. Keep a note of the issues people mention for prayer later. (9)
2. Spend a moment or two reflecting on any ‘moral’ issues which have been mentioned. Introduce the bible reading with a prayer, asking God to speak to each person in love to help us love right, and live well.

Open Bibles at **1 Thessalonians 4** and **read verses 1-8**

3. **Verses 1 and 2** show us that Paul has already been dealing with these matters in the life of the church at Thessalonica. It is a continuing conversation. What would lead you to believe that the church at Thessalonica had got the matters to be discussed “sorted” or not? How can a church community have mixed up morals and yet be a real church?
4. **Verse 3** uses the word sanctified (TNIV, NIV, ESV, KJV). This is a word meaning “made holy”, or made pure. Ask people to think (not aloud, probably) about whether they are “holy”, i.e. ask do they think their lives have become purer, less sinful, more Christ-like, since they became followers of Jesus? **Verse 7** sums up God’s wish: Ask people to answer (aloud, this time) is holiness a quality they want to pursue.
5. **Verses 4-6** list some of the impure practices that Christians at Thessalonica, presumably, had *once* been doing. Are these evident in society today? If yes, as the group to give some *general* examples of these behaviours.
6. Paul explains that rejecting this advice on moral behaviour is not just rejecting Paul’s opinion. Get members of the group to **read verse 8 aloud** in their different Bible versions. Does this sound like a serious warning from the Bible? Let a moment of awe/silence greet these powerful words.

We have looked at how *not* to live. We now study how we ought to live. If the above section has been a touch negative, use this next portion to brighten the mood!

7. **Read verses 9-12.** There is a danger that some followers of Jesus might think that *church* life is all that matters to God and that the *rest* of their life is not so important. How does this passage challenge that sort of view?
8. How can the way we work and provide for ourselves and families win respect? Does anyone in the group want to share how they have found it employment/unemployment difficult to handle? Dealing sensitively with such people, offer as a group to pray for every member in their current experience of working/not working outside/inside the home. (9)
9. Pray together for the church to find ways to address issues in society such as those in question one, and employment issues as in question eight. Ask God to show his love for the broken and damaged people around us and to help us become more holy, sanctified