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A1107 – February 13, 2011 – 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8
Excel Still More

Question: On Sunday you taught that “saints” in 1 Thessalonians 3:13 should be translated holy ones as referring to angels and referenced Zechariah 14:5 as support for this position. In reading Romans recently I came across Paul’s comments on saints in Romans 15:25 “... but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints.” And Romans 15:31 “... that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and *that* my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints;” The context here seems to indicate fellow believers, not angels.

Yes, I would agree with this conclusion. In those passages and many NT passages the Greek term refers to believers.

My research indicates that there are three words used for saints throughout the Bible. Then he goes on to list the words and their meanings. Can you explain why you believe that saints in 1 Thessalonians 3:13 refers to angels instead of believers?

Answer: Good question. First, it seems that Paul is alluding to Zech 14:5 and if *qadosh* refers to angels there then it would favor referring to angels in 1 Thess 3:13. Second, 1 Thess 3:13 says Christ comes back “with all His saints/holy ones.” For *all* of them to come back *with* Him they have to be with Him in heaven. No matter what one thinks about the timing of the rapture with respect to the Second Coming, Christ could not come back “with all His saints” since in none of these scenarios would He come back with millennial saints. Thus again favoring an angelic interpretation. Third, in the second letter to the Thessalonians, 2 Thess 1:7, Paul mentions “His mighty angels” and then three verses later he distinguishes “His saints” from “all who have believed,” thus leading us to think that “His saints” again refers to angels as

distinguished from believers. Fourth, since the term *hoi hagioi* (“the holy ones”) does not appear elsewhere in 1 or 2 Thess as a designation for believers (as it does in other letters, Eph, Rom, et. al), it is difficult to imagine how the Thessalonians themselves could have understood it in such a way.

Alright, let’s press on to 1 Thess 4. I’m glad for questions like this; someone doing some research and coming up with a question. I encourage questions. How are you going to learn if you don’t ask questions? That’s all I do all week is ask questions of the text and go find the answers.

1 Thess 4:1 and the topic today is sex. I didn’t write the text, God the Holy Spirit through Paul wrote the text. I just study and teach the text. And the text of God the Holy Spirit has a lot to say about sex because God created sex. He originally created it very good and then with the Fall certain abnormalities entered into sex and now it’s distorted and ruined in so many ways. It’s an area God knows man really messes up so we’ll talk about it. We can’t be prudish about it and one of these days we’re going to teach Song of Solomon, the most sexual book in the Bible, and we’re not going to teach it like all the prudish Christians have taught it, as a picture of Christ and the Church. It is not a picture of Christ and the Church at all. It is a picture of a man and how he courts a woman, how he marries this woman, what their first night of sex was like and how their sex life was a few years later. So we shouldn’t be silent or prudish about sex in the church because God wrote a whole book about it. And the other reason we can’t be silent or prudish about it is because if you don’t instruct your children about sex from a Scriptural viewpoint then the world is going to get to them first and they’re going to have a pagan view of sex and then for the rest of their lives they’re going to be fighting in this area. And until the church starts getting up front and personal about sex it’s not going to give young people a competing model to contrast with the pagan model.

Paul is going to mention sanctification directly a number of times in our passage. So let’s review the five aspects of sanctification. If you like acronyms and that kind of thing helps you remember then use PADME. She was a character in Star Wars and Spielberg did a masterful job presenting the pagan worldview of Hinduism in Star Wars. So it also reminds you what sanctification is about, being set apart from the world system. Under the P, P stands for Phases and we are set apart in three phases. Phase 1 is the past

tense, you have been sanctified. At the moment of faith alone in Christ alone you were set apart from the world system and placed in Christ. In other words, the moment before faith you were in Adam and the moment after you were in Christ. That is called positional sanctification. And it means you have been set free from the penalty of sin forever. There is therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Phase 2 is the present tense, you are being sanctified. From the moment of faith alone in Christ alone you are gradually being set apart from the world system. In other words, you are being conformed to the image of Christ. This is called experiential sanctification. And it's a process by which you are gradually set free from the power of sin in your life. Phase 3 is the future tense, you will be sanctified. When you receive a resurrection body you will be set free from the presence of sin altogether. So these are the three phases of sanctification. Which phase do you think Paul has in mind in verses 3, 4, 5 and 6? Phase 2, experiential sanctification. He wants them to be more and more set apart from the world system.

Next we have the A and the A stands for the Aim of sanctification. This is what we're aiming for, if you aim to live the Christian life you might want to know where the target is, otherwise you waste a lot of time shooting in the wrong direction, spinning your wheels. Let's clarify what the aim is not and then we'll clarify what the aim is. The aim is not to defeat Satan. Some Christians get carried away exorcising demons and they'll try to go head to head with Satan. Bad idea. Not only are we never told to exorcise demons or go head to head with Satan but we're told that Satan is very powerful and we are to put on the armor of God because he's going to attack us. We don't go looking to attack him. Don't worry, he'll find you. Just put on the armor of God with prayer and when he's around stand your ground, resist the devil and he will flee from you. So if that's not the aim what is the aim? To learn loyalty to God. And what this means is we are using the indirect approach. The indirect approach is what military tactician B. H. Liddell Hart developed back in the 1930's. His strategy was, rather than going into a head to head assault with the enemy, simply use indirect means to weaken your enemy. Cut off supply lines, blow up railroad tracks, and through this indirect approach gradually you will weaken and defeat your enemy. And that's what we're doing here in the Aim of Sanctification. The aim is to focus on learning loyalty to God through His word and gradually as a byproduct sin is defeated in your life.

Third we have the D and the D stands for Dimensions. If you like to think in terms of multiple dimensions then this aspect is for you. Sanctification is 2-dimensional which may not excite you too much, but one dimension is the existential present. We just mean by existential the moment-by-moment. You can look at sanctification second-by-second - am I in fellowship or out of fellowship, am I abiding or not abiding. But that's not enough. If you do that you're up and you're down and you're an emotional rollercoaster. So to bring stability you want to think of the second dimension, the long-term growth. And by this we mean actually taking stock of how far you've come in the Christian life. This is a source of encouragement to reflect on, especially when you're having a bad day. Why's that? Because when you're having a bad day you need some good news and the long-term growth dimension is good news because you're backing away from the bad day and now you're looking at a whole series of days, the last 5 or 10 years of days and you say, hey, I may be having a bad day, I may be in a slump, but I've come a long way, in fact you can use this in sports psychology to get an athlete out of a slump. It encourages you.

Then we have the M and the M stands for Means. The Means are also two; Law and Grace and we'll see both directly mentioned in the text today. Law is the will of God for your life, the commandments that God has given us as Christians to live by. If this is the only means a Christian sees then what's his tendency? Legalism. He's operation boot-strap and I'm going to live the Christian life and this is the person that drives you nuts because they do just like the Pharisees and create this special list of things you don't do and so if you go to the movies you're probably not even a real Christian; these are the fruit-inspectors. Always inspecting your fruit according to their special list. So you can't just have Law, Law left to itself is legalism. You have to have Grace. Grace is the enablement God gives you in the Holy Spirit to meet the standards of the Law. But let's look at this one alone. Let's say you hold to Grace as the Means with no Law. Then what is the tendency of this Christian? Antinomianism. No law and this person is going to abuse grace. I'm saved, I can do whatever I want, who cares, go out and raise hell, God will forgive me, that attitude. And that's just as wrong as the legalist. So both Law and Grace are the Means; not one or the other.

Finally, we have the E and the E stands for the Enemies. There are three enemies of sanctification; the world, the flesh and the devil. These are impediments, they slow you down, they are like obstacles on a race track and you just wish they would get out of the way but they're there and you have to deal with them. The world, that's the world system that is against God, it's paganism and it's generated by the fallen flesh and the devil. Then we have the flesh and the flesh is the sin nature that we all have, it doesn't get eradicated when you believe, you still have a sin nature. So this is an internal enemy, the sin nature is inside of you, the world system is outside of you. So enemy without and enemy within. Then we have the devil and he's a personal spirit being that commands the fallen angels, so he's another enemy outside of you that can influence you and deceive you and tempt you.

Alright, now let's see what aspects Paul picks up today starting in 4:1, **Finally then**, - in other words he's starting to wrap up the letter here, but sometimes it takes Paul awhile to wrap up. But we might say this is the beginning of the end. **Finally then, brethren, we request** and it's not just, would you please do this, it's an urgent request, **and exhort** and this is also a very strong appeal. All this is very strong and the reason it's strong is because Christ's coming is imminent, it can come at-any-moment. So he says **We urgently request and strongly appeal to you in the Lord Jesus, that as you receive from us instruction as to how you ought to walk,** How ought they to walk? End of verse 8, **God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.** Why does He give us the Holy Spirit? So we can walk by the Spirit. That's how they ought to walk, and that's how they were walking, fortunately. We should always walk by the Spirit and not by the flesh. This is one of the means of spiritual growth. Remember the Means of spiritual growth are two; both Law and Grace. You say, I see grace, oh yes we must walk by means of the Spirit, but where is law? Answer, verse 2, **for you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.** There's Law, there are commandments that we have been given in the New Testament epistles. Does God want you to obey those commandments? You bet He does. That's His will for your life. Christians say, what is God's will for My life? And they run around like a chicken with their head cut off trying to find out. It's not hard at all. 99.9% of what God wants you to do is revealed right in this book. They're the commandments. His will for you is to obey the commandments. Obey the commandments and He'll take care of the rest. Just do what this book says. You say I can't. Good, I'm glad you said

that, that's the right answer, that's why you need Grace. Grace in the person of the Holy Spirit who enables us to obey the commandments. See, we have to walk by means of Him. So we have Law and Grace. The Thessalonians were using both.

But notice the end of verse 1, what does Paul request and exhort them to do? **Excel still more. Excel still more.** What does he mean excel still more? He means walk by the Spirit more and more and more. Why? So you'll fulfill the lusts of the flesh less and less. It's very simple. The more you walk by means of the Spirit the less you fulfill the lusts of the flesh. And he's about to talk about some very serious lusts of the flesh that everybody struggles with, S-E-X.

So, **excel still more.** ²**For you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.** In other words this is not new instruction. Paul is repeating things he already told them. Verse 3, **For this is the will of God, your sanctification;** It is God's will that you be sanctified. And on the chart he's talking about phase 2, your experience, he's talking about you growing up as a Christian and there are certain Enemies to your sanctification: the world, the flesh and the devil and all three are involved in causing you problems in your sex life. They want to mess this area up because it affects marriage and family, two of the first three divine institutions. If Satan can wreck marriage and family he's basically wiped out your testimony for Christ. He's destroyed you, your spouse, your children, any extended family, grandparents, grandchildren; it affects everybody and so Satan aims at sex. It's a hot zone where Satan concentrates a lot of his efforts.

So let's look at the rest of verse 3, **For this is the will of God; your sanctification,** and now he begins to instruct in the realm of sexuality, **that you abstain from sexual immorality.** What is sexual immorality? It's the Greek word *porneia* from which we get porn, pornography and it's a very broad word. It's not the word for adultery. Adultery is the Greek word *moicheia* and it's not the same as *porneia*. Adultery is when you marry someone else. Let's say you married someone and then you divorced them and married someone else. When you re-married that is the adultery. You say, why is that adultery, I thought adultery was if you were married and you had sex with someone else. No, that is *porneia*, that is sexual immorality but that

is not adultery, not in the Bible at least. Adultery is when you re-marry. Here's why. From God's point of view if you re-marry while your prior spouse is living you're married to two people at the same time. So now you're one flesh with spouse 1 and you're one flesh with spouse 2 and God says, hey, you can't be married to more than one person. Now if spouse 1 dies that's one thing, but as long as spouse 1 is alive and you're marrying someone else, God says the way I look at you is you're committed to spouse 1 and now you're trying to be committed to spouse 2 and that won't work; you're one flesh with this person over here, how can you be one flesh with this other person? That's adultery, *moicheia*. This word *porneia* is much broader. It has three possible meanings. First, it can mean marrying a close relative and in Jewish culture that was a no, no. You could be married too closely and Lev 19 discusses that. Obviously because genetic defects of recessive traits can rear their ugly head and God is protecting them against that. Gentiles didn't actually follow that so in Acts 15 at the Council of Jerusalem they instruct Gentiles to avoid this kind of sexual immorality, don't marry too closely, respect the blood lines and so forth. Second, *porneia* can be used metaphorically for worshipping idols. That would be spiritual immorality and actually spiritual immorality and sexual immorality are closely linked as I'll show you but that's not the meaning here. The meaning of *porneia* here is the third sense, very, very broad, this will surprise those of you who think casual kissing, petting and so forth is fine, so long as you don't go too far, whatever that means. What Paul means by *porneia* here is "no sexual contact, verbally or physically, outside of a marriage contract." Let's repeat that and walk-through that because we live in a very sexually immoral culture. "Any sexual contact, verbal," let's stop with that word verbal. What do we mean verbal? We mean chat rooms, phone sex, romance novels that vividly describe sexual encounters. Paul says no, that'll wipe out your sanctification. So first, any sexual contact verbally, second, any "sexual contact physically." That should be obvious enough but let's elaborate. Any sexual contact physically. We mean lip-to-lip kissing, people say you must be crazy, I can't kiss another person until I'm married to them? Yeah, that's what I said. That's stealing, that's theft. God looks at you as stealing from that person's right spouse. And don't be stupid, I'm warning you now do not be stupid. If you think that you can just kiss a person and it will stop there well then you haven't been around the block. You may kiss them two or three times but then the third or fourth time you want to do more than kiss. And this is called the law of diminishing returns. It's taught in the book of Proverbs. And what the law of diminishing returns teaches is

that when you physically contact another person in a sexual way you get a hormonal high, it makes you feel good, it invigorates you; but after you do it three or four or five or 10 or 20 times you don't get that same feeling so you have to step it up a notch, then you get the same feeling and so you go through all the phases; kissing, touching, petting, rubbing, and before you know it you're in the sack and you're scratching your head, how did we get way over here? So, if you're smart you won't even kiss someone until you get married. It is sexual contact outside of the marriage contract and it will lead to other things. God knows how He built us and He's simply trying to protect us. He's telling us that the greatest sexual satisfaction occurs between two people who are pure in this sense, no sexual contact, verbal or physical, outside a marriage contract. What do we mean by that, "outside of a marriage contract." I don't mean getting your marriage license over at the County Clerk. I'm talking about the contractual agreement you make in wedding vows. I could care less whether you get that stupid marriage license, nobody before 1901 ever had one in our country and you don't have to have one today, there are ways around it. A hundred years ago they just got a family Bible, signed it and notified the county that Mr. so and so had married Miss so and so. Didn't need a license. Why do you need a license? To do something that the state says is illegal. In other words the state is saying that marriage is illegal unless you get our special marriage license. By the way, from the State's perspective you're not coming into a contract with the person you're marrying, you're coming into a contract with the State. You're a business venture which means that the State has a vested interest in the marriage and the kids that come out of the marriage, thus Child Protective Services and inheritance taxes and all the rest of it. I have to stop myself, this is a soap box for me, just know there are repercussions to this and they are far-reaching. What we are saying is that sexual contact whether it be verbal or physical should only take place inside the marriage contract. And the reason God does that is because that is the only place that it can have its fullest joy. Outside of that it's just not good for you. God made you to be with one individual of the opposite sex for your whole life. He did not construct human beings in such a way that they can be with multiple partners and find the fullest enjoyment of sex. He made each man to be with one woman and each woman to be with one man. And when we violate that construct, as Proverbs 5 teaches, it is to our own destruction.

So when he comes to verse 4, verse 3 is the negative, abstain from sexual immorality, verse 4 is the positive, **each of you honor his own vessel**. Not each of you knows how to possess his own vessel. **you know**, *eidenai*, is a Hebraism in this passage meaning, "To care for, to respect, to honor." He's saying, "each of you honor his own vessel." The other verb **possess** does not go with this expression. You can mark it out. It goes with the next expression. Each of you honor his own vessel, he's talking to husbands. What's the **vessel** he's supposed to honor? If your translation says "body" as in the NIV that's a wrong translation. It's not saying control your own body. There is no basis for translating the word behind vessel as "body." It refers to the wife. The wife is the weaker vessel and the husband is to honor his own wife. He's dedicated to her in every way. He's not dedicated to pornography, he's not dedicated to some other woman, he's dedicated to his wife.

Then he says **possess her in sanctification and value**. In other words, what he's saying here is she's your possession and she ought to be set apart. What's the basic idea of sanctification? Set apart. And your wife ought to be set apart, totally unique, no one else is competing for her position, she is totally set apart in your life. And then he says **possess her...in honor** but the word is value, he's saying put a high value on her, she has the highest value in your life and you ought to treat her as such.

Verse 5, **not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God**, in other words, now Paul is looking at the Thessalonians and the Thessalonians were Gentiles, they knew how the Gentiles operated. They were once Gentiles and now they're members of Christ and he says standard operating procedure among the Gentiles is to operate in lustful passion. What that means, it sounds like sex, is they're emotionally driven, they make decisions based on their emotions and one of those decisions is to have sex with temple prostitutes and he's saying don't make decisions based on emotions. Make decisions based on truth. And it's not that Gentiles don't know God in the cognitive sense, it's that they don't perceive Him correctly. Romans 1 tells us that all men know God through creation but that they suppress this truth that they know in unrighteousness and the result of this is it distorts their perception of Him. They know Him but they don't perceive Him properly. So we should not be like the Gentiles who are led by their emotions, they don't honor their wives at all, they don't set them apart, they don't value them, they pay money at the local temple to sleep with

prostitutes. That was part of Gentile culture. Everybody did it. Paul says don't do it.

Verse 6, **and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter**, that is, in the matter of sexual immorality. No man should commit sexual immorality because this is taking advantage of another man and stealing what is rightfully his. And this gets to the point that if you are with another man's wife or prospective wife in a sexually immoral way then this is stealing from the husband or prospective husband. That woman is his asset and you're stealing his asset. And God doesn't like it, God created one man for one woman and one woman for one man.

And if you go around stealing other people's assets Paul says at the end of verse 6, he's giving a reason why Christians shouldn't be involved in sexual immorality; **because the Lord is the avenger and all these things**, that is, the doctrine of divine discipline. If we transgress in the area of sexual immorality then God is going to discipline us. God is going to lower the paddle and spank our behinds. Remember, we have the Dimensions of Sanctification and one of those is the existential present. That's the any-given-moment I am in or out of fellowship. Let's say that I commit sexual immorality, like David. King David is easy to envision in this scenario because he did it, he called Bathsheba up to the palace, hey, check out my hot tub, I got a big screen TV, wanna sleep with me? And so she did, David sinned and got out of fellowship and if you remember what happened - David didn't do so good, sin messed with his mind and he didn't even realize he was sinning and he did some more sins. He reports in Ps 32 in a later reflection, that he was having physical ailments because he was out of fellowship. And those physical ailments were discipline. The Lord was disciplining him. Why? Why does God spank our behinds? Because he wants us to be convicted of our sin, confess our sin and be restored to fellowship. So there is a four step procedure that God uses when we get out of fellowship. Step one is discipline. God disciplines those whom He has chosen. And His discipline grows out of His love. Step two is conviction. We have to be convicted of our sin. David was finally convicted. If we're not convicted of our sin we can't do step three, which is confess our sin. Who's going to confess a sin they're not convinced they committed? Confession means acknowledging our sin as being against God and God only. We are not confessing our sin if we're only upset about the social stigma that it caused or the negative consequences of our actions. We

are confessing our sin only when we are admitting that we have violated God's standard of righteousness -that our sin was a rebellious act against the personal God. Finally, step four is we are restored to fellowship. Always, when we genuinely confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to restore us to fellowship. And so the Lord is the avenger in all these things, meaning He is our heavenly Father and He has a big paddle and He uses it to get our attention: hello, moron, wake up, confess your sin and be restored to fellowship.

Verse 7, **For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.**

Why do you think God called you to be a Christian? So you can live like a non-Christian? Yet this is what many Christians do. It's almost unbelievable how stupid they are. If God called us to be Christians then we ought to live like Christians. That's all this verse is saying.

Verse 8, and this is a logical conclusion, **So he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God who gives his Holy Spirit to you.** In other words he's acting autonomously. He's saying I don't want to hear it God, I've been saved by grace and that's my license to sin, I'm my own law and I'm going to do what I want to do. I'm going to fool around with whoever I want whenever I want and that's pretty much the attitude today in our culture.

Alright, so let's look at the Thessalonians culture and why this was such a temptation. Before we do look at all that Paul has said about them: remember 1 Thess 1:9, he never said this about any other church. What did he say? You turned to God from idols. That's an amazing statement. Everybody worshipped at the local temple. Everybody had sex at the local temple. So to turn against the temple was to turn against the culture. Paul was in Corinth when he wrote this and I guarantee you he couldn't say that about the Corinthians. They were all down at the local temple with the prostitutes. Corinth was the sex capital of the ancient world. So this is a magnificent testimony. Then what did he say in 3:5? "For this reason, when I could endure it no longer, I also sent to find out about your faith, for fear that the tempter might have tempted you, and our labor would be in vain." He says you're doing great but I know Satan is an enemy of your sanctification and he's out to tempt you and devour you. So they may have been doing well, but how you do this week doesn't determine how you do the next week. Then

what does Paul say after he gets the report back from Timothy that they hadn't fallen to the tempter? In 3:8 that they were doing what? Standing firm. "For now we really live, if you stand firm in the Lord." And they were standing firm. You say, well that's a pretty good report card. Yes it is. But is that where we stop? What does Paul pray for in 3:12? "And may the Lord cause you to increase and abound," a whole lot of "love for one another and for all people." More love. And what does he say at the end of 4:1? "That you excel still more." And what does he say again at the end of 4:10? "But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more." So there's more room to grow, they haven't quote "arrived." They're not spiritual masters. They could wreck the whole thing tomorrow. Doing good, yes, keep going, do more, walk by means of the Spirit more and more and you will fulfill the deeds of the flesh less and less. Excel still more!

Now, let's wrap up and make some application. Sexual immorality was a major temptation in Thessalonica and it's a major temptation in the United States of America. So first let's deal with Thessalonica and then we'll turn to the United States of America. In Thessalonica, as everywhere in Europe, Paul found himself surrounded by pagan culture, overtly pagan. And what this means is that the worship system revolved around nature. Always paganism revolves around the worship of nature. At Thessalonica they worshipped the Cabeiric gods; there were three or four depending on who you read. But it was a mystery religion that was given political sanction by the Roman Empire about the time Paul wrote this letter in AD51. And like all gods and goddesses of ancient Greece and Rome they were associated with nature forces. As Peter Jones says in his book *The God Of Sex: How Spirituality Defines Your Sexuality*, "The immoral gods of Mount Olympus were personifications of the forces of divine nature, in particular the fiery force of sexuality. Initiation into the powers of nature was the essence of pagan spirituality..." How do you think you were initiated? Through a temple prostitute. It was your first act of worship. "Some early church fathers saw the essential spiritual conflict as the confrontation between the God of the Bible and the goddess of unbridled, erotic sexuality, Aphrodite." In other words, he's pointing out that sex is the key spiritual battleground. The ancient pagan mind thought of reality as divided into compartments or spheres of nature. So for example you had the sky and certain gods and goddesses that managed the weather and storms in the sky, like Baal; Baal was a storm God. The point is they had nature broken up into compartments.

And what people did was assign gods and goddesses to the different nature forces in those compartments. And sex was a means of participating in the divine, nature was divine and since nature was divine then sex with anything and everything in nature was participation in the divine. Jones continues, "We face a similar conflict today.... It is ironic that in the much vaunted, highly evolved sophistication of contemporary culture, we are reaching back to the ancient world for its spirituality. As we embrace the spirituality associated with the mystery religions of the Greco-Roman empire, we also assume its expressions of unrestrained sexuality." What does he mean when he says "we are reaching back to the ancient world for its spirituality?" He means we are embracing nature worship in the environmental or green movement. The central thesis of the green movement is the same ancient thesis, namely, that nature is divine. And just as the ancient mystery religions had many gods and goddesses associated with nature leading to unrestrained sexuality, so the modern green religion has many gods and goddesses associated with nature leading to the same unrestrained sexuality.

Today we have, just to mention a few, things coming out of the green movement, which has been around since the late 1960s, it's not new. But think of this; an increase in pornography and ease of access to pornography, this produces unwanted pregnancies, but we have an answer for that: abortion and the destruction of motherhood. Along with that comes the destruction of the traditional family and the liberation of children from family, making them children of the State. But it goes even further than that with the normalization of homosexuality through the public education system. If this were not enough we could mention the legalization of gay marriage. Gay marriage will destroy marriage as we know it. Marriage is a divine institution. A stable society depends on stable marriages and families. Stable marriages and families mean monogamous marriages. Gay marriage will destroy marriage and family. Finally it will and has led to polygamy and polyamory. What lies beyond gay marriage is no marriage at all or marriage to everyone. Let me comment on polyamory because you may have never heard of it. Polyamory literally means "many loves," that is, more than two people in a long-term committed sexual relationship; heterosexual group marriages; homosexual group marriages; bisexual group marriages; and any other arrangement thinkable. This indeed is the cutting-edge view among scholars of family law. One Stanford professor writes, "Together these scholars represent what is arguably now the dominant perspective within the

discipline of family law [polyamory].” He’s just got through listing a whole series of scholars in the universities that are pumping this into the students. “They have plenty of followers and hold much of the power and initiative within their field. There may be other approaches to academic family law, but not that exceed the radicals influence.” And if you think this has not slipped into the churches you would be naïve. Disregarding 1 Thess 4:3-8 "Mainline churches are also receptive to polyamory. The WOW 2003 conference in Philadelphia, an ecumenical gathering for “sexually and gender inclusive Christians," celebrated the spiritual aspects of polyamory. "Having multiple sexual partners can be holy... There can be fidelity in threesomes. It can be just as sanctified as anything else if all parties are agreed." The conference was supported by groups within the Presbyterian Church (USA), Episcopal Divinity School, Chicago Theological Seminary (United Church of Christ), and Wesley Theological Seminary (United Methodist).”

Having said this, believe me, this is all religiously driven. This has to do with a new spirituality, a pagan spirituality couched in radical environmentalism that identifies God with nature and sex with participation in nature divine. As Lloyd Geering, a foremost pagan thinker states, "In the religion of the coming global society, the forces of nature, the process of evolution and the existence of life itself will be the objects of veneration." Inextricably woven into this new spirituality is a new sexuality, sex with anyone, anywhere, anytime. What is the church of Jesus Christ going to do about it? We have to speak up. We have to teach the S-E-X word in church lest our children are led down a path of destruction both spiritually and sexually.

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