

DAILY READINGS

Sunday	1 Thessalonians 4:1-8
Monday	Hebrews 4:14-5:10; Psalm 132:1-7; Proverbs 28:19-21
Tuesday	Hebrews 5:11-6:20; Psalm 132:8-18; Proverbs 28:22-24
Wednesday	Hebrews 7:1-28; Psalm 133-134; Proverbs 28:25-28
Thursday	Hebrews 8:1-13; Psalm 135:1-9; Proverbs 29:1-3
Friday	Hebrews 9:1-28; Psalm 135:10-21; Proverbs 29:4-6
Saturday	Hebrews 10:1-18; Psalm 136:1-7; Proverbs 29:7-9

DEVOTIONAL: READ 1 THESSALONIANS 4:1-8

As Paul encourages the Thessalonians in his letter, he reminds them to live their lives to please God. Specifically, he encourages them to seek holiness in their sexuality. To be holy means to be set apart. It is what marks a Christian as a follower of Christ and sets them apart from the surrounding culture. A holy life demonstrates God's supernatural power at work and glorifies Him.

God created and celebrates sex. He desires the best for His people and gave us a specific context to most fully enjoy this beautiful expression of intimacy. We are able to honor Him when we take part in sex the way He designed it. We are equally able to honor Him when we choose to resist engaging in ways that are contrary to His design.

We live in a very sexual culture, but this is not so different from the culture Paul

was writing to. While the call to holiness can seem exceedingly difficult, requiring us to seek forgiveness and move beyond the shame of our mistakes, God provides a believer everything needed to live a life of holiness. Just as Jesus died to give us freedom from the power of all sins, He is able to empower us to live a life of holiness. He has also given us the church to help support us.

If we trust in Jesus, God has forgiven us all of our past and future sins! He gives His people the Holy Spirit, who provides the power to overcome temptation. We are able to turn to God for strength in overcoming sin and forgiveness for our failures, knowing that He has enough grace for both! We are able to consider it a joy to honor Him in our sexuality and every aspect of our lives!

REFLECTION

What is God's design for sexuality? Why is it worth pursuing His design?

Take time to confess to God any sexual sins and ask God for forgiveness. Be specific. Ask Him to grant you the strength to overcome any temptation.

How can you seek to live a sexually holy life? Are there repetitive practices you need to address? Is there someone who can hold you accountable? Should you seek further help within the church for support?

DISCUSSION

What are the most important aspects of a healthy marriage?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for being the God of redemption and honor. Thank You for rescuing me from my old patterns of living, and continually changing me into the person You desire me to be. Lead me to honor You in all areas of my life, including my sexuality. Don't let me be a slave to my own passion or false idols, but make Your desires my desires. Keep me far from temptation and lead me away from lust, pornography, ungodly relationships, fantasy, and covetousness. Where I find myself being tempted, help me to seek help from others.

You are loving and forgiving. You have enough grace to cover all of my sin and shame. When I fail or think about my past sins, help me to see Your forgiveness. Help me to trust that Your grace is enough to cover my sins and give me the strength to resist them. Thank You that when You look at me, You see Jesus and His righteousness.

Thank You for Your redeeming grace that touches every aspect of my life, and that there is nothing Your healing touch cannot reach; there is nothing I can hide from You. Continue to show me how the grace of Jesus brings honor and holiness to my life. Amen.