



New Beginnings, Volume 7, 2008
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1 Thessalonians 4:1

“Finally dear brothers and sisters we urge you in the name of the Lord Jesus to live in a way that pleases God, as we have taught you. You are doing this already, and we encourage you to do so more and more.”

Perhaps the greatest challenge to any person of faith, particularly the Christian faith, is to live the values that the faith claims for its believers. While it is certainly easier to live out some of the tenets of faith than others, true authenticity can be achieved only when we seek to live out all of the core values of a faith as faithfully as we can. This is important for several reasons, but perhaps the most important of these reasons are that it speaks to our character and integrity. When the values we say we support are not lived out in our lives, it means at a very significant level, we are living a lie. When we are not honest with ourselves, how can we be perceived to be honest with others?

In our culture today, most people under the age of 40 do not believe in absolute truth anymore. There was a day when things/decision was either right or wrong. Today right or wrong for people under 40 is more often than not relative. Values are determined by circumstances not by dictate. As a result many choices which would have seemed to be poor choices two decades ago are now routinely accepted if it “seems good for the people making the choices”. Just one example of this is couples living together without taking the step of being married. When I was growing up in the 60’s and 70’s this was referred to derisively as “shacking up”. Parents, usually based on their religious and moral values were absolutely opposed to their child living with someone else in a

pseudo-committed relationship and often broke off family relationships if this kind of choice was persisted in. Today couples co-habiting is common. Not only is it common, many parents of today (while secretly not happy with their child’s choice) support their child and live in partner and try to tell themselves it OK. They want to believe it will someday lead to a real committed relationship in marriage. Tragically, these “live in” relationships are seldom ever committed relationships, few become solemnified through marriage and the divorce rate for co-habiting couples is twice as high as couples who remain out of an active sexual relationship before marriage.

This is just one area where the life decisions we make can have long term destructive consequences when they are not made on the basis of solid moral core values. The Christian is uniquely called to live a life that honors God. That means the values we reveal in the way we live reveal what our true character is. Most people outside the church are outside the church not because they don’t believe in God, it’s because the people inside the church do not live an authentic Christian witness with their lives.

Authentic Christian living not only leads to salvation; it is life affirming on this earth. Why not commit your life anew to God in Christ Jesus and the holy life Jesus calls us to?