

A Respectable Life

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

Because our culture is constantly feeding us an abundance of information—from our perpetual access to news and politics to our constant connection to our phones and social media—we should be reorienting ourselves daily around the countercultural, life-giving words of Scripture. Paul gives us three categories to be aware of as we pursue a Jesus-following life that is compelling to those around us: live a quiet life, mind your own business, and work with your hands.

Application

1. What is something you have heard from culture recently that made sense to your natural instincts/desires but was actually contrary to Scripture? How did you initially respond to it?
2. We are to *show* our love by actually doing things that show love and care. Why is it tempting to believe that just talking or “posting” about something is showing love? How can you tangibly show love this week? When is a time where you were shown love rather than just heard it or read about it?
3. In what ways is it a struggle for you to live a quiet life? What obstacles stand in the way of engaging in “small life things”?
4. Where is it most difficult for you to mind your own business in our culture of affluence—social media, phone, politics, the economy, health, news, or something else? Where might you be overly concerned with something that is not your responsibility?
5. Read Psalm 131. What does it look like for you to be in the moment and to rest? How can you move towards that in your everyday life? What is one thing you can put energy into so that you will put less energy into concerning yourself with things you can’t do anything about?
6. God never promised fulfillment through work; we work to have enough money to live and to be a blessing to others so that we have a platform for the gospel. In what ways are you seeking fulfillment through your work? How does that affect your relationships with people and your relationship with God?

Key Points

- If the culture tells you something that makes sense to your natural desires, call it into question because Scripture is countercultural.
- We function like priests in the world, mediating between God and man to show love, kindness, graciousness, truth, etc. to others as God loves us. He is living inside us and moving and working through us.
- We are to show love, not just “post” about it.
- We want to be deeper and more complex than we are on the surface. We should be always growing and deepening our knowledge and experience of God.
- If you are a natural creative, be wary of a hollow faith where you might be just expressing what God is doing instead of participating in it.
- We live in a culture of fame and being larger than life, always wanting to be heard and seen, yet Paul tells us to live a quiet life. It is exhausting trying to be important.
- We have enough going on around us to concern us without worrying about things we have no responsibility for or power over.
- Our addiction to our phones is an addiction to salt water—a thirst that can never be quenched.
- Work to support your life but recognize that work cannot support your soul.
- Jesus lived a compelling life and was rejected by both religious and nonreligious people. We work for the Lord’s approval, not man ([Colossians 3:22-24](#)).
- The goal is not to take cues from what the culture is doing but from Scripture as God rules and directs us.

Scripture References

[1 Peter 2:9](#)

[Psalm 131](#)

[Ephesians 4:28](#)

[Colossians 3:22-24](#)