

Thessalonians 4: 1-8

Matthew 25: 1-13

Today, in his letter to the Thessalonians, Paul puts strong emphasis on the word 'Holy.' The dictionary definition is, "Belonging or devoted to God." In passing on the Word of God, Paul identifies a weakness in the people's regard and use of intercourse. He says, "What God wants is for you all to be holy. He wants you to keep away from fornication (the voluntary use of sexual intercourse between an unmarried man and woman in using each other for their own personal gratification). "He (God) wants nobody at all ever to sin by taking advantage of a brother ( or sister) in these matters. We have been called by God to be holy, not to be immoral." Anyone who objects to this, " Is not objecting to a human authority, but to God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.

The desire for 'holiness' is reflected in Jesus' parable about the ten bridesmaids and the Kingdom of heaven. The bridesmaids had a specific task to do in supporting the bride at the wedding ceremony. They needed to 'stand ready' to fulfil their role. Five of the bridesmaids were sensible in making sure that they were prepared. In this case, having enough oil in their lamps. They were prepared for any eventuality. The other five were foolish in being unprepared and failing in the care and responsibility that they had been entrusted with.

When it came to the wedding celebration they were left outside, unable to enter.

God wants us to be Holy. To centre ourselves on him. To 'stand ready,' and to exercise the trust and responsibility he has given us through our baptism and the Holy Spirit.