

Message by Blake Williams  
June 20-21, 2009  
The Practice of Self-Control  
I Thessalonians 4:3-8

The summer preaching series will be focusing on the Spiritual Disciplines. The particular disciplines that we will be covering are:

Reading Scripture, Joy, Submission, Solitude,	Prayer, Worship, Earth-keeping, Confession,	Purity, Opportunity, Humility, Sharing Jesus.	Giving, Fasting, Community,
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Questions for Discussion:

1. Read the whole passage and reflect on it in its context (the surrounding verses from verse 1). What is the over-riding theme of this passage?
2. If you were making up a list of 'spiritual disciplines' would you have placed 'purity' on your list? Why or why not? Why do you think that 'purity' is a 'spiritual' discipline as opposed to a 'physical discipline'?
3. Pastor Johnson had mentioned that we must apply our will, our eye, our ear and our mind to the process of reading the Word. Is there a connection between that discipline and the discipline of Purity, or even of 'self-control'? How do you see that they are related? How might we apply the same (or similar) focus our desire to practice purity?
4. Blake W. mentioned a different working definition for 'sexual immorality' during the sermon: "Sexual immorality is anything related to sexual intimacy – behavior, thoughts or desires – that is used for the purpose of self – gratification."  
How is it that we get this so mixed up? What might we do/pray for that could change us in this area?
5. Many of us have grown up with a distorted view of sexuality, whether it was a self-centered viewpoint or some other broken perspective on intimacy. How can we pray together for this aspect of our lives? Is it possible that this is an area in which 'iron sharpens iron' and a 'three-stranded cord' best represents our approach to purity? In other words, is it possible that God wants us to hold each other up in prayer as we walk together towards greater purity and self-control? Make some steps that will help you grow in this area – either self-control and/or purity.