

New Testament Letter: 1 Thessalonians Intro – 1:1

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Date: AD 51

Purpose: To restore relations with the Thessalonian Christians after persecution separated Paul and his colleagues from the congregation.

Reading 1 Thessalonians: When St Paul describes his apostolic care for the new congregation at Thessalonica, he uses expressions of parental love (2:7–8, 11–12). Paul feels the strain of separation from his “children” in the Lord as the result of persecution, which has driven him from Thessalonica (Ac 17). As a result, Paul writes an earnest, fatherly letter of instruction that beautifully illustrates Law discipline and Gospel care.

Luther on 1 Thessalonians: ...in the first two chapters he praises them because they received the gospel from him with such earnestness that they remained steadfast in it despite suffering and persecution, and became a beautiful example of faith to all congregations everywhere...

In chapter 3 he shows his care and [attentiveness] that this labor of his and their praiseworthy beginning not be brought to nothing by the devil and his apostles through the doctrines of men. For this reason he sent Timothy to them beforehand to make sure about this....

In chapter 4 he exhorts them to guard against sin and to do good to one another. He also answers a question which they had presented to him through Timothy concerning the resurrection of the dead...

In chapter 5 he writes of the Last Day, how it shall come suddenly and quickly. He gives them some good directions for governing other people

and tells them what attitude they are to take toward the lives and teachings of others. (AE 35:386–87)

Challenges for Readers:

Intermediate State. An important description for understanding the state of believers after death and before the resurrection of the body is given in 4:13–15. Here, Paul refers to the state of death as sleep, a common expression for death that does not imply the doctrine of “soul sleep” (unconsciousness). The dead in Christ enjoy the rest, comfort, and bliss of God’s presence, though they will experience the fullness of eternal life only after the resurrection of their bodies on the Last Day.

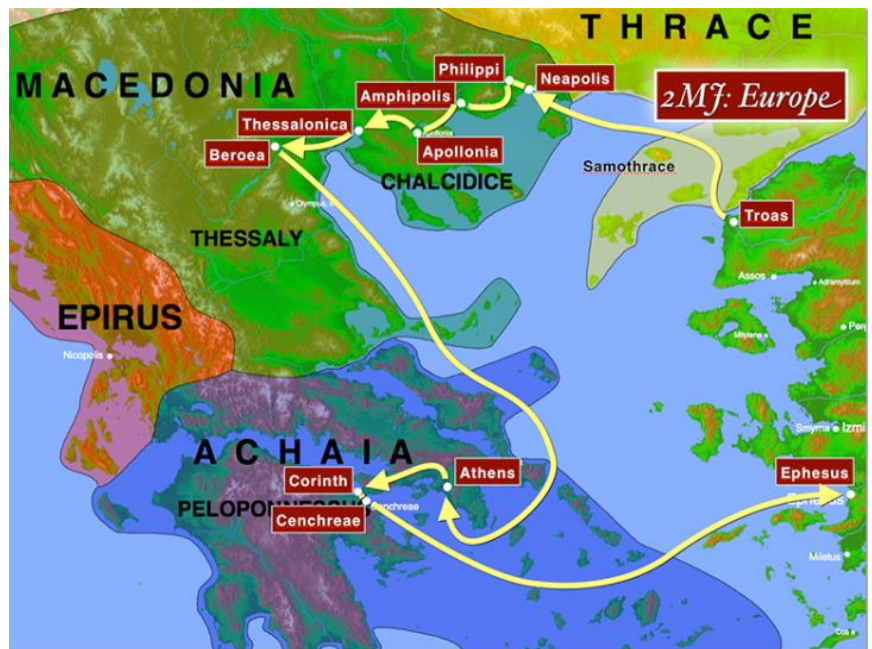
The “Rapture” Doctrine. Some evangelicals regard 4:17 as a description of a secret return of Christ, which will take place before Christ’s second coming in judgment (see note, 4:17). The passage actually describes the manner of Christ’s return in judgment, when He will raise the dead....

Blessings for Readers: Though Paul does describe the events of the Last Day, in response to confusion on this subject, he does not make the Last Day the overarching emphasis of the Letter. He calls the believers to live in the Gospel and to fulfill their calling in the joy of the Holy Spirit. He leaves us an example to follow: know the truths about Christ’s return but do not obsess about them.

As you read 1 Thessalonians, reflect on Paul’s pastoral concern for these new believers and also his thoughtful and comforting instruction. He shows great concern for their care and establishment in the Gospel, which is also what we need most today.

Outline:

- I. The Greeting (1:1)
- II. Thanksgiving for the Congregation at Thessalonica (1:2–3:13)
 - A. The Conversion of the Thessalonians (1:2–10)
 - B. Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica (2:1–12)
 - C. The Word under Persecution (2:13–16)
 - D. Separations and Reestablishing Contact (2:17–3:10)
 - E. Prayer (3:11–13)
- III. Exhortations (4:1–5:22)
 - A. Introduction (4:1–2)
 - B. On Marriage (4:3–8)
 - C. On Brotherly Love and Self-Sufficiency (4:9–12)
 - D. On Clarifying Concerns about the End Times (4:13–5:11)
 1. Those who have fallen asleep (4:13–18)
 2. The coming of the day of the Lord (5:1–11)
 - E. On Life in the Congregation (5:12–22)
 1. Pastoral care among the congregation (5:12–15)
 2. The evaluation of prophecy (5:16–22)
- IV. Conclusion (5:23–28)



ESV Bible 1 Thessalonians Introduction:

...Thessalonica (present-day Thessaloniki, Greece) was the capital of Roman Macedonia. It was on important trade routes. Paul... visited Thessalonica on his second missionary journey but was forced to flee because of Jewish opposition. He sent Timothy to work with the largely Gentile church there, and Timothy brought him good news of their faith (3:6). This is one of Paul's first letters, probably written about AD 50–51.

Greeting: 1:1

1. **Chapter 1:** Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.
 - a. *Silvanus, and Timothy.* Trusted junior co-workers who accompanied St Paul in the proclamation of the Gospel. Though

separated for a while, they were now reunited with Paul in Corinth.

- b. *Silvanus.* Aka Silas; leading member of the Church in Jerusalem; proclaimer of God's Word. After the Jerusalem Council, he accompanied Paul to Antioch to deliver the Council's decision (Ac 15, esp v 22). During their travels together, they met Timothy in Lystra.
- c. *Timothy.* Son of a Greek man and a Jewish woman (cf Ac 16:1). His mother had become a Christian a few years earlier when Paul and Barnabas preached in the city.
- d. As a good shepherd, Paul wants to keep in touch with the flock of God. Labor in God's kingdom is not a one-man job. We must not forget to visit and follow up with those who are in Christ Jesus.

New Testament Letter: 1 Thessalonians 1:2 – 2:16

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The Thessalonians' Faith and Example: 1:2-10

2. ²We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. // Let us strive for the same:
 - a. Work of faith – so may our faith, *which unites us to Christ*, result in doing work unto God's glory (Eph. 2:10; Matt. 5:16).
 - b. Labor of love – so may our love, *which first came from God to us*, show itself in actions taken according to the needs of others.
 - c. Steadfastness of hope – so may our hope, *which is rooted in the promises of God*, always be sure and unshakeable.
3. ⁴For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. // Whenever we share God's Word, let us **◆**be fully confident that God's Word is true (Psalm 119:160) and **◆**know that the Holy Spirit is working through that Word to accomplish what God desires (Isaiah 55:10-11). Therefore, *let us share the Word and leave the results in God's hands!*
4. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. // For some they – *by God's grace* – believe and yet their lives are not very difficult; however, for the Thessalonian believers, *they experienced much affliction and yet had joy in Jesus!*

5. ⁸For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. ⁹For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. // For some people who were not engaged in outwardly evil or non-Christian practices, there may not be a huge *outward* change in their lives when God gives them faith in Christ; however, for the Thessalonians, *their change was outward and evident to all!* Instead of worshiping idols, *they became focused on Jesus' return and their eternal deliverance through Him!*

Paul's Ministry to the Thessalonians: 2:1-16

1. **Chapter 2:** For you yourselves know, brothers [*my brothers in Christ*], that our coming to you was not in vain [*useless*]. ²But though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict.
 - a. It was in Philippi, *as recorded in Acts 16*, where Paul and Silas were wrongfully imprisoned; nevertheless, when they arrived in Thessalonica, they did not allow their past bad experience to discourage them; instead, *they spoke with boldness!*
 - b. When Paul and Silas were in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9), some believed, but the unbelievers caused a riot, so the believers sent them away by night to Berea.

2. Notice how Paul worked with the Thessalonians:
 - a. ³ For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive, ⁴ but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts. // He shared God's pure truth, not trying to please them *but trying to please God!* God's truth is beneficial for the one sharing and the one(s) receiving (John 8:31-32)!
 - b. ⁵ For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness. // Paul never tried to sweet talk them or get their money.
 - c. ⁶ Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ. // God should always get the glory, while we should only be His humble instruments – *regardless of our position, power, or influence.*
 - d. ⁷ But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. // As young children need tender care, *so do young believers in Christ!*
 - e. ⁸ So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us. // As loving parents are willing to do virtually anything for their children, *so Paul had the same attitude toward the believers in Thessalonica!*
3. ⁹ For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. // Paul was bi-vocational, so he preached the gospel basically for free (receiving offerings only

- when they were given to him), but he also made tents to supply his needs.
4. ¹⁰ You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers. // So Paul and Silas tried to model a proper life in Christ!
 5. ¹¹ For you know how, like a father with his children, ¹² we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory. // As Christians we care about the salvation of all, *but especially the salvation of our own children;* therefore, as a good father loves his children and wants their best, *so Paul and Silas wanted the same for those believers in Thessalonica!*
 6. ¹³ And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers. // Some receive the Bible as if it is nothing special and certainly not from God; however, the Thessalonians – *with God's blessing* – received what Paul and Silas taught as God's Word; *then the Spirit worked through that Word in their lives!*
 7. ¹⁴ For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews, ¹⁵ who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out, and displease God and oppose all mankind ¹⁶ by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they might be saved—so as always to fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them at last! // As believing Jews in Jerusalem were persecuted, *so also believing Gentiles in Thessalonica.* Persecution is not pleasant, but God does permit it and can use it to bless *those being persecuted and those who see how believers respond to their persecution.*

New Testament Letter: 1 Thessalonians 2:17 – 4:8

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Paul's Longing to See Them Again: 2:17 – 3:5

8. ¹⁷ But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face, ¹⁸ because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us. ¹⁹ For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? ²⁰ For you are our glory and joy.
- torn away*. That happened in connection with the persecution; Paul wanted to return, but it just didn't work out!
 - crown of boasting*. Just as an athlete rejoices and boasts in a prize, so Paul will rejoice when he sees the Thessalonians before the Lord.
1. **Chapter 3:** Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone, ² and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's coworker in the gospel of Christ, to establish and exhort you in your faith, ³ that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this. ⁴ For when we were with you, we kept telling you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction, just as it has come to pass, and just as you know.
- establish and exhort*. Whenever the Spirit enables someone to receive Christ as Savior; then they need someone to establish them firm in the basics of God's Word, such as the contents of Luther's *Small Catechism*. Such people also need to be exhorted, thus earnestly urged by advice and warning from God's Word; then, by God's power and work, those

- believers will not fall away – even when persecution is permitted into their lives!
- afflictions*. The Thessalonians were literally dragged before their city officials, suffering physically as well as psychologically.
 - destined*. ...Neither the apostles nor our Lord Jesus promised that following Him would be easy (compare John 16:33).
2. ⁵ For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain. // Paul tried to hold back, but finally, when he could bear it no longer – wanting to know the spiritual condition of the Thessalonians, sent Timothy. Regarding “in vain” – see 1Co 15:2).

Timothy's Encouraging Report: 3:6-13

3. ⁶ But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you— ⁷ for this reason, brothers, in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith.
- faith and love*. When faith is genuine (KAT) and in Christ; then it will show itself in love, which is the first fruit of the Spirit!
 - remember us kindly*. When the Spirit uses a particular person to bring us the bad news of sin and the good news of salvation unto conversion, how could we not remember such a person kindly?
 - comforted*. Once Paul received the good news that the Thessalonians were remaining in the faith, he was comforted!

4. ⁸ For now we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord. ⁹ For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, ¹⁰ as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith?
 - a. *now we live*. Paul, *in a sense*, was dying not knowing about the Thessalonians, so *the good news made him alive!*
 - b. *supply what is lacking*. Today, in America, and even here at BLC, I fear that many are lacking in their knowledge of God's Word; may the Spirit *make them hungry*, and move them to *come and grow*, and may we have the *proper resources and people* in place to feed their souls!
5. ¹¹ Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, ¹² and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, ¹³ so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. // As Paul concludes this chapter, *he still strongly desires to visit the Thessalonians*; in a similar way, as the Spirit uses us to bring God's Word to others for their salvation, *let us be motivated to go to them for their encouragement and growth!*
 - a. *abound in love*. A person's level of faith (*in Christ and God's promises*) will be similar to his level of peace (*thus assurance of God's forgiveness*) and love (*thus taking action according to the needs of others*). Therefore, as a person's love abounds (*love that is flowing from God having first loved them in Christ*), we can rejoice in that person's faith and peace!
 - b. *blameless in holiness*. Holy in word and action; the result of the Holy Spirit's work in a person's life through Word and Sacrament.
 - c. *all the saints*. They will come back with Jesus, as we will study in 4:13-18.

A Life Pleasing to God: 4:1-12

1. **Chapter 4:** Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. ² For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. // Faith and works, both are very *important and very different*:
 - a. Faith is God-given (1Co 1:30a) and Word-fed (Acts 20:32); saving faith is IN CHRIST – in who He is (*the Son of God*) (Mt. 16:16) and in what He has done (*taken away the sin of the world*) (John 1:29)!
 - b. Works are God-planned (Eph. 2:10) and Word-guided (Ps. 119:105); they express our love for God (John 14:15) and bring Him glory (Mt. 5:16)!
2. ³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, ⁵ not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶ that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you.
 - a. *your sanctification*. We were unholy and under God's wrath, *BUT He has made us holy in His sight through His Son*, which is HUGE and AMAZING; a proper response is to follow His will in His Word, controlling one's body in holiness and honor.
 - b. *wrong his brother*. Having an intimate relationship with someone else's wife or husband.
 - c. *avenger*. The anger and wrath of the Holy God will be on those who have not repented of their sin and are not covered by the blood of His Son (Col 3:5–6).
3. ⁷ For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. ⁸ Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you. // The Almighty God, *who made us and saved us*, calls us to receive His Word in a *most serious way* (see Isaiah 66:2).

New Testament Letter: 1 Thessalonians 4:9 – 5:11

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A Life Pleasing to God: 4:1-12 – Continued

4. ⁹ Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, ¹⁰ for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, ¹¹ and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, ¹² so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one.
- taught by God to love*: He taught us by giving His Son to take away our sins; when we think of our desperate need – *for forgiveness*, and God’s radical action – *to give His Son to be crucified*, those realities teach us much about how to love others! It is also vital – *as a branch*, to be united to Christ – *the vine* (see John 15:4-5).
 - be dependent on no one*: Paul urges them to live on the fruits of their physical labor.

The Coming of the Lord: 4:13-18 – The

Thessalonians expected Jesus to return *very soon*; then, when believers started to die, *the living believers became concerned that those who had died would be forgotten when Jesus came*. So in this section of Paul’s letter, *he calmed their fears as he explained what would happen*.

5. ¹³ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep [*who have died in Christ*], that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. // When death separates us from someone who is important to us, *it is normal and natural for us to grieve* (be sad, distressed). For those with no hope, *the separation is eternal*; for those with hope,

thus confident in God’s promises of eternal life, *the separation is temporary!*

6. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.
- Jesus died and rose again*: Wait! *Isn’t it so ridiculous to believe that*, and yet – *by God’s grace and His gift of faith* – we do!
 - God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep: When people die, *it sure seems like THE END*; however, *just as Jesus died and rose, so – through Jesus and His saving work* – God will bring with Jesus those who have died trusting in Jesus!
7. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. // Rather than the believers who died prior to Jesus’ return being forgotten about, *they will actually be ahead of those believers who are still alive!*
8. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.
- The two comings: “so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him” (Heb. 9:28 ESV).
 - The “second time” will not be a quiet, secret coming – *as some teach*; complete these noisy phrases:
 - with a _____ of command
 - with the _____ of an archangel
 - with the _____ of the trumpet of God

- c. *the dead in Christ*: First, Jesus will raise those who died with their faith in Him!
9. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. //
- a. *caught up*: The *Greek* means to seize or take away by force; we believe that will happen when Jesus returns – regarding all the believers living on earth at that time. However, there are others who teach that “caught up” or “rapture” (which means, caught up) refers to this: “Both living and dead Christians will be caught away and will return to Heaven with Christ. The rapture will remove Christians from Earth before Christ pours out His righteous judgment during the tribulation period.”¹
 - b. These words help us to better understand 4:17: “Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed” (1 Cor. 15:51-52 ESV).
10. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words. // Wow! Isn’t it encouraging to know that God has everything planned out perfectly in Christ! Yes, we will physically die, but then we will be with the Lord; and then, when Jesus returns, we will be raised and be with Him and all believers forevermore!

The Day of the Lord: 5:1-11

1. **Chapter 5:** Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. ² For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³ While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as

labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

- a. *the times and the seasons*: *times* is a period of time, for example, *from now until Jesus returns*; *seasons* is a point or a moment in time, for example, *when Jesus returns*.
 - b. *the day of the Lord*: Refers to the day of Jesus’ return. For those who know Jesus as Savior, *they are ready!* For those who study the Bible, *they will not be surprised!* For those who are rejecting Jesus, *His return will be completely unexpected!*
2. ⁴ But you are not in darkness [spiritual darkness], brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. ⁵ For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. // There is a huge difference between believers and unbelievers.
 3. ⁶ So then let us not sleep [living in spiritual darkness and sin], as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober [living in the light of God’s Word and saying no to sin].
 4. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. // Sin usually takes place under the cover of darkness, yet many today are without shame, thus sin is much more out in the open today.
 5. ⁸ But since we belong to the day [to Christ and what is right], let us be sober [self-controlled, clear-headed], having put on the breastplate of faith [trust in Jesus] and love [taking action for others], and for a helmet the hope of salvation [the certainty that we have eternal life].
 6. ⁹ For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep [dead or alive] we might live with him. // God has not destined some for condemnation; *He desires all to be saved!*
 7. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. // We are blessed now and forever through Jesus!

¹ <http://www.choosejesustoday.net/What%20is%20the%20Rapture.html>

New Testament Letter: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

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Final Instructions and Benediction: 5:12-28

8. ¹² We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, ¹³ and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.
- a. A similar passage: ^{ESV} **Hebrews 13:17** “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.”
- b. Admonish means *caution, advise, and encourage* from pastor to parishioners; how do you think the parishioners should respond? _____
9. ¹⁴ And we urge you, brothers, admonish [c. a. e.] the idle [literally the disorderly, unruly], encourage the fainthearted [discouraged], help [be devoted to] the weak, be patient with them all. ¹⁵ See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.
- a. Repaying evil for evil is expressing a lack of forgiveness, *which is a very serious matter*:
- i. ^{NIV} **Mark 11:25** “And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”
- ii. ^{NAS} **Matthew 6:14** “For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, then

your Father will not forgive your transgressions” (Matt. 6:14-15 NAS).

- b. Some results of offering forgiveness: ^{NAS} **Romans 12:20** “...if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.”
10. ¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
- a. *Rejoice always*: Why? Because _____
- b. *pray without ceasing*: How? Without ceasing can mean *always*, but it can also mean *with regular occurrence*. Let us rejoice that we always can talk to our heavenly Father, *through our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the help of the Holy Spirit*. Then in all times of joy and sadness, peace and war, encouragement and discouragement, health and illness, etc., *let us thank and ask according to our needs!*
- c. *give thanks*: Based on Romans 8:28, why should we give thanks in all circumstances? _____
11. ¹⁹ Do not quench [extinguish] the Spirit.
- a. How was the Spirit visible on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:3)? _____
- b. How do we *quench the Spirit*? Through **any behavior that grieves [saddens] the Holy Spirit, such as idleness and immorality.**

12. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies, ²¹ but test everything; hold fast what is good. ²² Abstain from every form of evil.

a. *prophecies*: Prophets in both the OT and NT exhorted and spoke God's will for their specific situation and for the future. God calls all believers *to not dislike*, but rather *to embrace* His Holy Word!

b. *test*: Is it from God? Is it good? Is it evil? How can we answer all such questions?

13. ²³ Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

a. The God of Peace sent the Prince of Peace in order to make peace between Himself and all sinners. Sin broke the peace, *the relationship*; therefore, Jesus, *having taken away the sin of the world*, has restored the peace!

b. *sanctify you completely*: Sanctify means *to make holy*.

i. When God made us alive in Christ (Eph. 2:4-5), *He made us holy in His sight*.

ii. As we live as believers, we are called to grow in knowing and living God's Word; the results should be less sin and a more God-honoring life – *so a greater degree of actual holiness*, and yet still tainted by much sin, which will always be true in this life.

iii. When we die in Christ or He returns; then we will be actually holy and continue in that state for all eternity.

c. *he will surely do it*:

i. **God has called us and is calling us through His Word. The initiative is from Him.**

ii. ^{ESV} **Philippians 1:6** "And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."

14. ²⁵ Brothers, pray for us. ²⁶ Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss. ²⁷ I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers. ²⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

a. *pray for us*: Paul reveals humility by requesting the intercession of others on his behalf. Whenever we have a need for prayer, we can ask a fellow-believer to pray, get on the church prayer list, and be prayed for by those on our prayer chain.

b. *holy kiss*. Common way of sharing the peace of the Lord in that culture... What is common in our culture? _____

c. *read to all*: God's Word is for all believers; therefore:

i. Why do you think some who are regular in attending Divine Service do not attend Bible class? _____

ii. What are your thoughts on this Sunday morning schedule – *which would give more people the opportunity to attend Bible Class and also including a more uplifting and unifying Divine Service?*

1. Bible Class 8 – 9

2. Divine Service 9:15 – 10:30

3. Bible Class & Sunday School 10:45

That concludes 1 Thessalonians!