

- I. Intro - Recap
 - A. Paul finishes out the letter with many brief rapid exhortations
 - 1. Somewhat choppy but “build”
 - a) In many ways summarize what Paul has written earlier
 - 2. Flowing out of the context of eschatology
 - a) Eschatology informs and heightens how we’re to live NOW
 - (1) Due to its certainty
- II. “We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.” -1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 ESV
 - A. **WHAT:** Asking to do 2 things:
 - 1. Respect...
 - 2. Esteem...
 - a) Who? and Why?
 - B. **WHO:** All these descriptions are speaking of [primarily] one group: **Elders**
 - 1. *Presbyteros-episkopos*
 - a) *Poimen* is the function
 - C. **WHY:** Because of their work
 - 1. We see this function as those who 1) labor among you 2) over you in the Lord 3) admonish you
 - a) “Labor among you”
 - (a) Nothing wrong with respecting and esteeming other Christian teachers BUT not at the expense of those who actually with give an account to God for you
 - (b) Megachurch model “shielding” lead pastor
 - (i) “But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. 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. ’ -1 Thessalonians 2:7-8”
 - b) Authority is “in the Lord”
 - (1) Elder’s authority is derivative
 - (a) It comes from the Lord and is only existent when it is in conformity to the Lord’s standards
 - (i) “And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.” -1 Peter 5:4
 - (b) It is a real authority which exists in harmony with the “assembly’s” authority
 - c) Admonish
 - (1) Warn or reprimand harshly

- (a) As Steve touched on last week about the rarity of discussing impending judgment as part of the Gospel message
 - (i) The NT (especially Hebrews) is filled with warning passages
 - 2. When functioning properly it is “servant leadership”
 - D. “Be at Peace...”
 - 1. Completing the thought from “being admonished” to not fight back. But to receive the correction
 - a) Also reciprocal
 - (1) “shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.” -1 Peter 5:2-3 ESV”
- III. “And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.” -1 Thessalonians 5:14 ESV
 - A. We don’t see “one another” here but these could be classified as them
 - 1. Admonish the idle
 - a) Laziness is a Sin
 - (1) “Like vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to those who send him.” Proverbs 10:26
 - (2) “The sluggard buries his hand in the dish and will not even bring it back to his mouth.” -Proverbs 19:24
 - (3) “The desire of the sluggard kills him, for his hands refuse to labor.” -Proverbs 21:25
 - b) BT of work
 - (1) As image-bearers we were created with a responsibility to work
 - (a) Our work is wearisome and toil because of Genesis 3
 - c) “and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one. ’ - 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12
 - (1) “So that...” purpose or result??
 - 2. Encourage the faint hearted
 - a) Whether from persecution (1 Thess 3) or from worrying about those who had died (1 Thess 4)
 - b) ‘a bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench...’ -Matthew 12:20 (cf Isaiah 42)
 - (1) We are reflecting the care and compassion of Messiah Jesus who was gentle and lowly in heart
 - (a) **Action Step in Discussion Questions**

3. Help the weak
 - a) May refer to weak from suffering persecution; weak from anxiety over the Day of the Lord or could refer to an immature believer with a weaker conscience
 - b) **“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. ’**
-Galatians 6:2”

(1) The Law of Christ is a law of love

(a) Action Step in Discussion Questions

4. Patient with all
 - a) We are NOT omnipotent and the above will take varying amounts of time and energy
 - b) Discernment
 - (1) Is a brother/sister idle or faint-hearted/weak?

IV. **“See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.”** -1 Thessalonians 5:15 ESV

A. Ends do not justify the means

1. God does not give a “free pass” for evil done in the name of “justice” if you have been wronged
 - a) **“Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.’** -Romans 12:19-21”
2. Ancient Faith CSB quote
 - a) When asked what does this verse mean Abba Poemen responded: **Passions work in four stages—first, in the heart; secondly, in the face; thirdly, in words; and fourthly, it is essential not to render evil for evil in deeds. If you can purify your heart, passion will not come into your expression; but if it comes into your face, take care not to speak; but if you do speak, cut the conversation short in case you render evil for evil.**
3. Do Good 1) To One Another 2) to Everyone
 - a) **“So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. ’** -Galatians 6:10”

V. **“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”** -1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 ESV

A. Rejoice Always...

1. Christians should be a people characterized by joy
 - a) **“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ’** -1 Thessalonians 4:13”

- 2. Joy is grounded in biblical hope understanding the certainty of God's promises
- B. Pray [continually/repeatedly]
 - 1. This doesn't mean every second of every day, but that regularly, consistently we are pursuing fellowship with our Triune God (praying to the Father, in the Son, by the Spirit) in prayer
 - a) Priestly role
 - b) Living "Coram Deo"
- C. Giving Thanks
 - 1. James 1:2 mentions we should "count it all joy" in trials
 - 2. We give thanks in every circumstance because we know "all things work together for the good..."
- VI. 'Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.' -1 Thessalonians 5:19-22
 - A. Quench: "put out; extinguish"
 - 1. Context seems to imply to next few statements qualify what "quenching" the Spirit looks like to Paul
 - B. Prophecy
 - 1. What is Prophecy
 - a) Has within it prediction BUT is much more
 - b) Foundational role in early church
 - 2. Test Everything!
 - C. "...Good"
 - 1. What aligns with the Gospel and Scripture
 - D. "...Evil"
 - 1. The Holiness of "God's Temple" matters immensely
 - a) Read Leviticus
 - 2. "For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you." -1 Thessalonians 4:7-8"
- VII. '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. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.' -1 Thessalonians 5:23-24
 - A. v22 - the command to abstain immediately followed by God sanctifying
 - B. "Spirit, soul, body"
 - 1. Paul stressing our entire selves physical, spiritual
 - a) Whole Human Nature
 - C. "...he will surely do it"
 - 1. "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." -Philippians 1:6 ESV"
- VIII. ' Brothers, pray for us. Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss. I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.' -1 Thessalonians 5:25-28