



1 Thessalonians

Cover to Cover Series
Scott Drexel





Thessalonica



- Acts 17:2 – “As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures.”

Thessalonica



Thessalonica

- Acts 17:4, “Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women.”





Acts 17:5-15

1 Thessalonians Intro

- Author: Paul
- Date: ~51 AD



1 Thessalonians Intro

- God-focused
 - 97 references to Godhead in 89 verses
- Fellowship-focused
 - 28 references to brother/sister in 89 verses
- Two greatest commands:
 - Love God
 - Love others

Prayer of Thanksgiving (1 Thess 1:1-10)

- 1 Thess 1:1 – “Paul, Silas, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
Grace and peace to you.”
 - Paul always says grace → peace

Prayer of Thanksgiving (1 Thess 1:1-10)

- Grace = “unmerited favor”
- Justice – get the good/bad you deserve
- Mercy – not getting the bad you deserve
- Grace – get the good you don’t deserve

Prayer of Thanksgiving (1 Thess 1:1-10)

- Grace is a free gift from God
 - Not earned
 - Not deserved
 - Encompasses spiritual blessings
 - Forgiveness
 - Salvation
 - Redemption

Prayer of Thanksgiving (1 Thess 1:1-10)

- Peace is Greek version of Hebrew Shalom
 - Wholeness
 - Well-being
 - Reconciliation with God
- Can't have true peace without God's grace
 - Order should always be grace → peace

Prayer of Thanksgiving (1 Thess 1:1-10)

- 1 Thess 1:3 – “We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Prayer of Thanksgiving (1 Thess 1:1-10)

- 1 Thess 1:3 – “We remember before our God and Father your work produced by **faith**, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - Faith is not just believing or acknowledging
 - James 2:19: even the demons believe in God



- Faith in Greek is “pistis”
 1. Belief: intellectual acceptance
 - Abraham believed God’s call
 - Jesus is the **Christ**
 2. Trust: God will keep his promises
 - Abraham trusted God to keep his promises
 - Jesus is our **Savior**
 3. Faithful Obedience: includes repentance
 - Abraham left Ur and was willing to sacrifice Isaac
 - Jesus is **Lord**

Prayer of Thanksgiving (1 Thess 1:1-10)

- 1 Thess 1:3 – “We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your **labor prompted by love**, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - Love is not just kindness without expectations of reciprocations or rewards

Prayer of Thanksgiving (1 Thess 1:1-10)

- William Tyndale –
“denotes laborious toil
and unceasing hardship
borne for love’s sake.”
 - Agape
 - Loves whether it is
deserved or not
 - Seeks to give rather
than receive
 - Jesus’ love motivates
service



Prayer of Thanksgiving (1 Thess 1:1-10)

- 1 Thess 1:3 – “We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - Hope today means optimism or vague wish
 - Biblical hope = confident expectation



OKLAHOMA 34 TEXAS 27 4th 23 07 3rd



HOPE



Prayer of Thanksgiving (1 Thess 1:1-10)

- 1 Thess 1:6 – “You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.”
 - Right away
 - Young church (only a year old)
 - All the way
 - Imitated Paul and the Lord completely
 - With a joyful happy heart
 - Welcomed the gospel with joy

Prayer of Thanksgiving (1 Thess 1:1-10)

- 1 Thess 1:7 – “And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.”
 - All of Greece
 - Macedonia is northern Greece
 - Achaia is southern Greece
 - Only had three weeks of training!

Prayer of Thanksgiving (1 Thess 1:1-10)

- 1 Thess 1:9 – “They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God”
 - Mostly Gentiles
 - “Turned from Idols” versus “Jesus is Messiah”
 - Repentant lifestyle
 - From: sins, fear, laziness, half-heartedness, desire to be comfortable, compromise, guilt, shame
 - To: God, hope, faith, love, Spirit’s will for our lives

Prayer of Thanksgiving (1 Thess 1:1-10)

- 1 Thess 1:9 – “They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God”
 - Giving up idols was HUGE
 - Losing status, friends, livelihood
 - N. T. Wright: “It would be like asking people in a modern city to give up using motor cars, computers and telephones.”
 - The church not only **accepted** the message, they **became** the message

Nature of Paul's Ministry (1 Thess 2:1-12)

- Travelling philosophers
 - Teach in exchange for room and board
 - Make a living
 - Increase status in society
- People accused Paul of the same tactics
 - Paul explains why this is not true

Nature of Paul's Ministry (1 Thess 2:1-12)

- Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control

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Nature of Paul's Ministry (1 Thess 2:1-12)

- Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control
- Taught with **patience** in suffering
 - 1 Thess 2:2 – “We had previously suffered and been treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you His gospel in the face of strong opposition.”
 - Acts 16:23-24 - “severely flogged,” “thrown into prison,” and had their “feet fastened in the stocks.”

Nature of Paul's Ministry (1 Thess 2:1-12)

- Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control
- Taught with God's authority and kindness
 - 1 Thess 2:4 – “we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel”
 - 1 Thess 2:5 – “we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed”
 - 1 Thess 2:6 – “We were not looking for praise from people, not from you or anyone else”

Nature of Paul's Ministry (1 Thess 2:1-12)

- Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control
- Taught with **gentleness**
 - 1 Thess 2:7-8 – “Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.”

Nature of Paul's Ministry (1 Thess 2:1-12)

- Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control
- Taught with **self-control**
 - 1 Thess 2:9 – “Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.”
 - Acts 18:3 – Paul worked as a tentmaker

Nature of Paul's Ministry (1 Thess 2:1-12)

- Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control
- Taught with **goodness**
 - 1 Thess 2:10 – “You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed.”
 - 1 Thess 2:11-12 – “We dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God”

Paul's Concern for Thessalonians (1 Thess 2:17-3:13)

- 1 Thess 2:17-18
 - Satan blocked Paul from returning
 - Nobody questioned this statement!
- Everyone knew Satan is real
 - Satan actively prowls like a lion (1 Peter 5:8)
- “The greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist.”
 - French poet Charles Baudelaire (1800s)

Paul's Concern for Thessalonians (1 Thess 2:17-3:13)

- 1 Thess 3:2-5
 - Timothy sent to strengthen and encourage
- 1 Thess 3:3
 - Paul knew church was destined for trials
 - Christians didn't participate in pagan activities
 - Blamed for all sorts of natural disasters
- 1 Thess 3:5 – “I was afraid that in some way the tempter had tempted you and that our labors might have been in vain.”

Paul's Concern for Thessalonians (1 Thess 2:17-3:13)

- Timothy's returned with good news!
- 1 Thess 3:6 – “But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has brought good news about your faith and love.”
 - 1 Thess 3:8 – “For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord.”

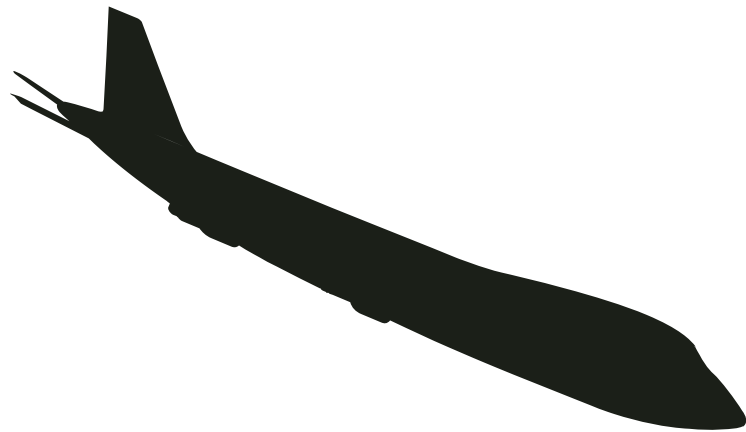
Paul's Concern for Thessalonians (1 Thess 2:17-3:13)

- 1 Thess 3:11-13 – “Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you. May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.”

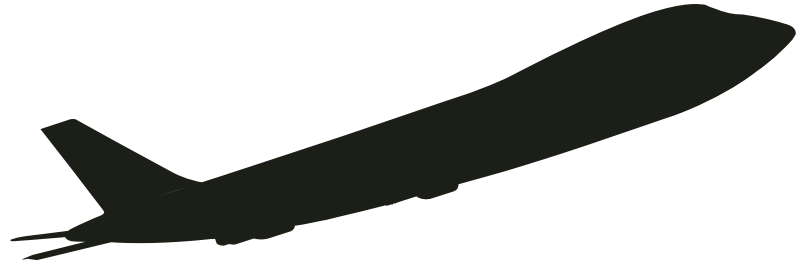
Exhortation to Christian Living (1 Thess 4:1-12)

- 1 Thess 4:1 – “As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more.”
 - A Christian’s walk is like an airplane

**No power →
plane will fall**



**A lot of power →
plane will rise**



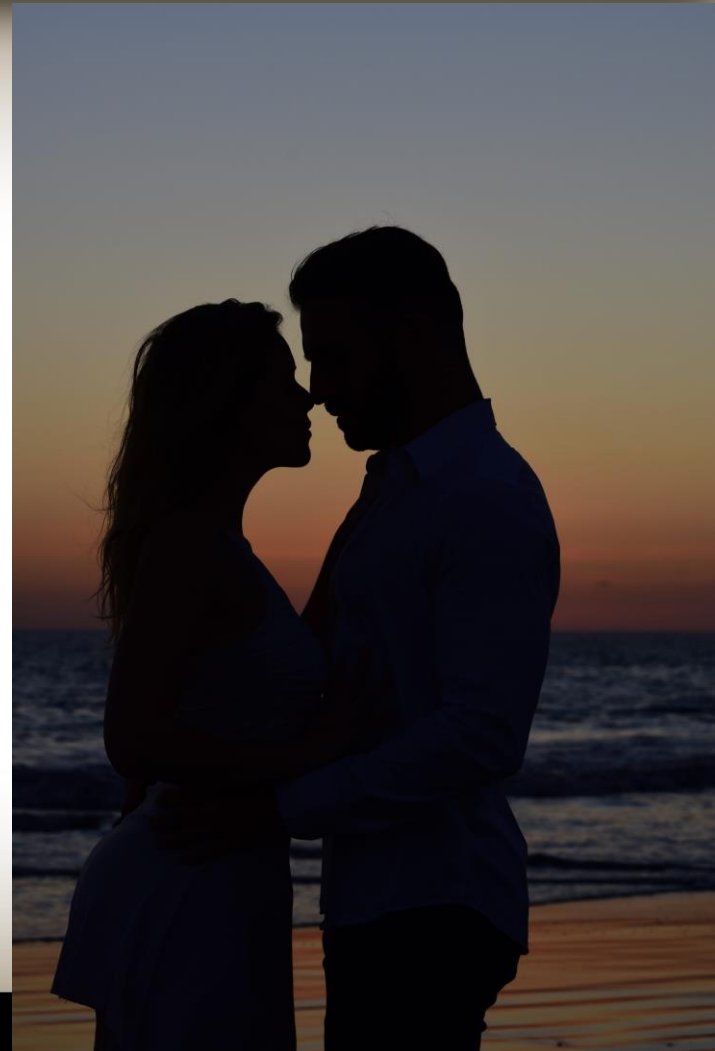
**Some power →
plane will stay level**



Exhortation to Christian Living (1 Thess 4:1-12)

1. Sexual purity

- 1 Thess 4:3-5 – “It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God.”



Exhortation to Christian Living (1 Thess 4:1-12)

- Sexual immorality
 - Greek: porneia
 - Any illicit sexual activity involving:
 1. Anyone who is not your spouse
 2. Homosexuality
 3. Bestiality
 - Sex was created by God to be only between a married man and woman

Exhortation to Christian Living (1 Thess 4:1-12)

- Sexual immorality
 - Part of 1st century culture
 - N.T. Wright: “Pagan temples regularly doubled as brothels, and sexual practices of all sorts were at least tolerated if not actively encouraged within the society as a whole.”

Exhortation to Christian Living (1 Thess 4:1-12)

- Barna Institute report among ages 13-24
 - 32% say pornography is usually or always wrong
 - 56% say not recycling is usually or always wrong



Exhortation to Christian Living (1 Thess 4:1-12)

- Sexual immorality
 - God takes this very seriously
 - 1 Thess 4:6b – “The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins.”
 - 1 Thess 4:8 – “Anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God”

Exhortation to Christian Living (1 Thess 4:1-12)

2. Love each other

- 1 Thess 4:9b-10 – “you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. And in fact, you do love all of God’s family throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more.”
 - Taught by God – only occurrence of this word
 - Emphasizes importance of prayer and reading scripture
 - Enables God to instruct us to live with love
 - They loved everyone in their region of Macedonia

Exhortation to Christian Living (1 Thess 4:1-12)

3. Public Witness

- 1 Thess 4:11-12 – “Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.”
 - Quiet life – live with less drama and worry
 - Mind your own business – Stop gossiping
 - Work with your hands – support themselves

Concerning the End Times (1 Thess 4:13-5:11)

- Eschatology = study of the end times
- Greek culture believed that people go to Hades when they die
 - Once there, people couldn't leave
- Jesus rose from the dead and will return
 - Some in Thessalonica had died
 - Were they trapped and left out???

Concerning the End Times (1 Thess 4:13-5:11)

- 1 Thess 4:13 – “Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope.”
 - Sleep was a euphemism for death in the Bible



Concerning the End Times

(1 Thess 4:13-5:11)

- 1 Thess 4:14 – “For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.”
 - Jesus was resurrected
 - His followers will be resurrected too
 - Everyone has hope!

Concerning the End Times

(1 Thess 4:13-5:11)

- 1 Thess 4:15 – “According to the Lord’s word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.”
 - People alive when Jesus returns will not enter Christ’s kingdom before those who died

Concerning the End Times (1 Thess 4:13-5:11)

- 1 Thess 4:16 – “For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.”
 - Christ’s return will be announced
 - Christians who are already dead will be resurrected

Concerning the End Times

(1 Thess 4:13-5:11)

- 1 Thess 4:17 – “After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.”
 - Christians who are still living will have their bodies changed from perishable to imperishable (1 Cor 15:51-53)

Concerning the End Times

(1 Thess 4:13-5:11)

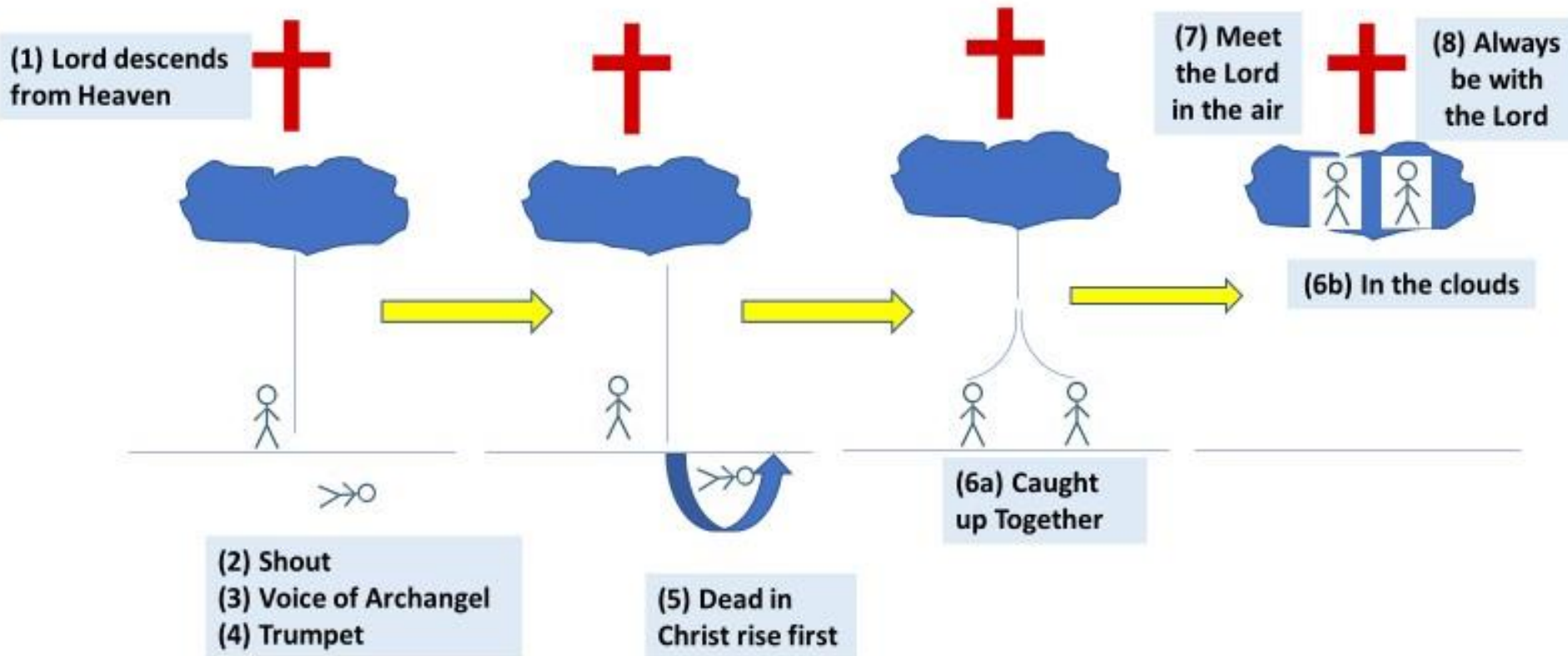
- 1 Thess 4:17 – “After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to **meet** the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.”
 - Join those resurrected in the air and Jesus
 - Apantesis = delegation welcoming dignitary
 - Meet outside the city and escort them back
 - Believers live with Jesus forever in New Heaven and New Earth (Isa 65:17, 2 Pet 3:13, Rev 21:1)

Concerning the End Times (1 Thess 4:13-5:11)

- 1 Thess 4:18 – “Therefore encourage one another with these words.”
 - ALL followers of Christ will live in His kingdom
 - Those still alive
 - Those recently deceased
 - Those who have been dead thousands of years
 - Everyone should be encouraged by this fact

Concerning the End Times (1 Thess 4:13-5:11)

THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS 1 THESSALONIANS 4:14-17



Concerning the End Times

(1 Thess 4:13-5:11)

- 1 Thess 5:1-2 – “Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.”
 - Day of the Lord: many have happened
 - OT: God judges wicked and/or delivers righteous
 - NT: final judgement/deliverance at Second Coming
 - Thief in the night
 - There will not be any warning
 - It could happen at any time

Concerning the End Times (1 Thess 4:13-5:11)

- 1 Thess 5:3 – “While people are saying, “Peace and safety,” destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.”
 - Peace and safety
 - False sense of security
 - Those not in Christ will be destroyed
 - Labor pains
 - There’s no stopping it

Concerning the End Times

(1 Thess 4:13-5:11)

- Compares and contrasts those in the light with those in the dark
 - 1 Thess 5:8 – “be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet”
 - 1 Thess 5:10 – “He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.”
 - Followers of Christ will be with Him in the end

Closing Remarks

(1 Thess 5:12-28)

- Summary of concerns for the new church
- Recognize and listen to church leaders
 - 1 Thess 5:12-13 – “Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.”

Closing Remarks

(1 Thess 5:12-28)

- 1 Thess 5:14-15: Admonitions to have better interpersonal relationships
 - Don't be "idle and disruptive"
 - Do "encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone"
 - Don't "pay back wrong for wrong"
 - Do "always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else"

Closing Remarks

(1 Thess 5:12-28)

- 1 Thess 5:16-22: Description of life of faith
 - Do “rejoice always,” “pray continually,” “give thanks in all circumstances”
 - Keeps us grounded
 - Provides meaning regardless of circumstances
 - Don’t “quench the Spirit,” “treat prophecies with contempt”
 - Quench = stop prematurely
 - Actions are contrary to or inhibit the Holy Spirit
 - Prophets relay God’s word to others

Closing Remarks

(1 Thess 5:12-28)

- 1 Thess 5:16-22: Description of life of faith
 - Do “test all prophecies,” “hold on to what is good,” “reject every kind of evil”
 - Examine prophecies against scripture
 - Embrace whatever aligns to God’s Word
 - Discard everything contrary to God’s Word

Closing Remarks

(1 Thess 5:12-28)

- 1 Thess 5:23-24 – “May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.”