



We are called to live in community together
with patience, forgiveness, and selfless love
1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

- Honor those who work hard. Live in peace with one another.
- Now that Paul had addressed the Thessalonians' questions about the Second Coming of Christ, he moves on to how to live in Christian community.
- They shouldn't sit around and wait for His return. They needed to live.
- The first thing Paul asked the Thessalonians to do was to honor their leaders, who were doing the Lord's work.
- Paul emphasized that good leaders should be honored and held in high respect.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

- When you have a good leader (one who is following the Lord, teaching sound doctrine, and leading the church in godly ways), it is key to the health of the church community that their leadership is respected and followed.
- This includes respecting authority when they “admonish you” (verse 12).
- As long as their admonition is in accordance with Scripture, instead of fighting against it, the proper way to live in Christian community is to be thankful for the correction, because it is part of their role in teaching and training you to become more like Jesus (2 Timothy 3:16).

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

- The second thing Paul asked them to do was to be at peace among themselves, as one unified community.
- Part of that was following their leaders with respect and honor, but the other part was the way they treated one another.
- Living together in peace and harmony calls for humility and selfless love, putting others' needs ahead of our own.
- The church is supposed to be a body of believers who all work together to carry out Christ's purposes in the world.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

- The first church in Jerusalem is a great example.
- We read that they were completely “of one heart and mind” (Acts 4:32).
- The outside world was attracted to it, and the Lord added to their number daily (Acts 2:47).
- People saw the community of the church – their unity, their full and sacrificial love for one another, their generosity in sharing in common, and the peace and harmony in which they lived.

1 Thessalonians 5:14

- Admonish and correct those who are idle, but with patience and love.
- Notice that verse 14 contains four imperative verbs for living in peace together in community: *admonish, encourage, help, be patient.*
- Paul focuses on two types of people who weren't providing for themselves (the "idle" and the "weak") and two ways of dealing with them.
- The weak could not provide for themselves; the community was called to help them.
- The idle would not provide for themselves; the community was to admonish them, because their idleness was a bad witness to the world.

1 Thessalonians 5:14

- Paul concluded, “Be patient with all,” even those who were sinning by their idleness and needed to be admonished.
- A Christian community who are reflecting the image of God to one another and the outside world should be characterized by patience for one another.
- Another command is to encourage the fainthearted, which literally means the “low-souled” person.
- Encourage those who don’t think they have much to offer the community.

1 Thessalonians 5:15

- Forgive each other and always strive to do what is good for others.
- In the Old Testament, God told the Israelites not to take their own revenge.
- Revenge belongs to the Lord (Deuteronomy 32:35), and Paul quoted that verse in Romans 12:19.
- Repaying evil only accomplishes more evil.
- Holding on to anger instead of forgiving that person and letting the offense go only makes you feel worse.

1 Thessalonians 5:15

- Unforgiveness eats you from the inside. But forgiveness sets you free.
- Doing good to those who have harmed you and praying for those who persecute you is a difficult spiritual discipline, but it heals your soul of any pain or suffering they have caused you (Matthew 5:44; Romans 12:18–21).
- When Peter asked Jesus how many times he had to forgive someone who sinned against him, he said, “Up to seven times?” Most rabbis at the time said to forgive three times, so Peter was going above and beyond that.
- But Jesus answered, “Seventy times seven times.”

1 Thessalonians 5:15

- God is a God of forgiveness, grace and love.
- Believers who have the Holy Spirit dwelling in their hearts will have a heart of forgiveness.
- When you understand how much God has forgiven you, you will forgive others. You will become a person of forgiveness and of grace.
- That is part of being a new creation, of your new identity in Christ.
- The God of forgiveness lives in you.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

- Rejoice, pray, and give thanks in all circumstances.
- These are three simple, but all-consuming demands: rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances.
- These three things – joy, prayer, and thanksgiving – should be the constant attitude of those who trust in Christ because we have no reason to not be joyful or give thanks – even when things are hard.
- Prayer is our lifeline to the Father.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

- This section was most likely written this way to be easy to memorize.
- Verse 14 gives instructions about how to live together in community.
- Verse 15 is about forgiveness.
- Verses 16–22 had a liturgical use in a worship service.
- This structure and the alliteration of the “p” sound at the beginning of each line in verses 16–22 (seen in the Greek) mean those verses were a passage that was probably recited together regularly in worship.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

- These three imperatives are all described as “the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (verse 18).
- We often talk about “God’s will for us” as if it’s about what career He wants us to have, where He wants us to live, or whom He wants us to marry.
- Those are important choices, but no matter what we choose about those things, His will for us is our sanctification – to abide in Him, keep His commands, and love one another (John 15).

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

- What is God's will for us?
- Rejoicing, praying, and giving thanks in every circumstance.
- Loving God and loving others at all times – no matter what career, relationship or situation we are in.
- We know God's will when we offer ourselves as a living sacrifice and allow Him to transform our minds (Romans 12:1–2), that we can understand what the Lord's will is when we walk with Christ in His wisdom (Ephesians 5:15–17), and that the will of God is serving Christ (Ephesians 6:6–7).

1 Thessalonians 5:19-22

- Test all the messages you hear. Hold on to what is good.
- This section is all connected to having discernment when it comes to “prophecies” that we hear.
- The context and the grammar of “hold fast to what is good” and “abstain from every form of evil” point to their being connected to the command to test the prophecies, meaning when you test the prophecies, hold fast to the good prophecies and abstain from the evil ones.

1 Thessalonians 5:19-22

- This takes discernment and wisdom.
- But “abstain from all kinds of evil” expands the meaning beyond just good and evil teaching to apply this generally to all things.
- The verb “quench” is related to quenching a fire, one of the most common symbols of the Holy Spirit in Scripture.
- The Spirit came upon the disciples as tongues of fire at Pentecost (Acts 2).
- Paul encouraged Timothy to “fan into flame” of the gift the Holy Spirit in him (2 Timothy 1:6).

1 Thessalonians 5:19-22

- The Greek word for “good” here is the same word used for a genuine (as opposed to counterfeit) coin.
- We use the same method to discern false teaching as we do to test counterfeit money. When experts are learning to spot a counterfeit, they don’t study the counterfeit. There are too many different kinds. They study the real thing so thoroughly that they can immediately spot a counterfeit.
- The same is true for recognizing false teaching. When we study God’s Word well, we can immediately tell when teaching doesn’t match it.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-28

- The God of peace can and will sanctify us no matter what happens.
- Paul closed this letter with the same kind of prayer from earlier in the letter, a “wish prayer” – because it is written in the optative mood (potential or wish) rather than the imperative (command).
- It is not a demand of God, but a hope that God would sanctify the Thessalonians completely. And yet, it’s not only a wish.
- It’s an expectant hope. They know “He will surely do it” (verse 24).

1 Thessalonians 5:23-28

- Paul closed the letter with:
 - a request for prayer (verse 25)
 - a greeting (verse 26)
 - a final doxology (verse 28) that repeats the same “grace” from the greeting of the letter.
- He asked that the letter be read to all the believers in Thessalonica so everyone could hear their instructions and teaching (verse 27).

Biblical Principles of Work

- Work is part of the created order.
- After God created human beings, He gave them dominion over the creation (Genesis 1:27-28). They were to be stewards of the land. They were to care for the garden and work the ground. Work was a natural part of God's order even before it was tainted by the fall (Genesis 3).
- The fall turned work into drudgery. The ground was cursed with thorns, and our livelihood comes with painful toll (Genesis 3:27). Work was not a curse, but the curse of the fall made work on earth today much more difficult.

Biblical Principles of Work

- Paul says in Ephesians 6:8 (NIV) says that we are to “Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do.”
- Paul emphasizes this again in Colossians 3:23, “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.”
- When we are working for an employer, we are working for the Lord.
- It is almost as if Jesus is standing behind your employer.

Biblical Principles of Work

- In addition to work, we should also provide for a time of rest.
- The law of the Sabbath (Ex. 20:8-11) and the other Old Testament provisions for feasts and rest demonstrate the importance of rest.
- In the New Testament also we see that Jesus set a pattern for rest (Mark 6:45-47; Luke 6:12) in His ministry.
- Believers are to work for the Lord and His Kingdom, but they must also avoid being workaholics and take time to rest.

Biblical Principles of Work

- The opposite of work isn't rest but is idleness.
- The Bible also warns us of the consequences of idleness.
- Proverbs 6:6 says, "Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise."
- Proverbs 12:11 says: "He who tills his land will have plenty of bread, but he who pursues worthless things lacks sense."
- Proverbs 13:4 says: "The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, But the soul of the diligent is made fat."

Biblical Principles of Work

- Work also helps us meet our own needs. Work allows us to exercise our gifts and abilities, whether we are paid or unpaid.
- God expects us to work and not be financial freeloaders.
- 2 Thessalonians 3:10 says, “If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat.”
- Work provides income that we can use to advance the Kingdom of God and spread the gospel to the world (1 Corinthians 9:9-12, 2 Corinthians 9:6-8, Galatians 6:6).

A BIBLICAL VIEW ON
WORK



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