

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

Paul closes this letter in the same manner as he does his other letters – with instructions how to live out the Christian life as a church family.

LET US RESPECT AND VALUE OUR SPIRITUAL LEADERS (5:12-13)

For those new to Grace, it is the Elders who exercise spiritual authority over the church family under the headship of Jesus. My biggest encouragement to all of us is to know the Elders are here to provide counsel and encouragement and welcome all of us to meet with them when the need arises.

Our deacons are here to provide assistance and counsel when we have financial and physical needs. Our staff lead key areas of ministry as do our ministry leaders.

LET US BE A CHURCH FAMILY THAT IS EASY TO LEAD (5:13)

We all know people you can never please. Things are never right; so and so does it better. “Why aren’t we doing XYZ like First Church of Perpetual Perfection is doing.”

We want to do things well within the means Jesus gives us. Our philosophy is simple: if you have a vision for a ministry we are not doing, the Elders are open to supporting that vision if you are willing to be the champion of that ministry and the ministry is in line with our mission to Love God, Love Others and Make Disciples.

We always want to improve and constantly ask ourselves how we can do better. We welcome feedback to that end.

LET US CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER (5:14-15)

Unfortunately in some churches, the pastors and staff are expected to do the things listed in verses 14 and 15 when, in fact, all of us are called to care for one another.

“Admonishing the idle” is correcting those who are able to work but choose not to and expect to live off others’ labors. Seems this became a problem in the Thessalonian church (2 Thess. 3:6-12). Thinking the *day of the Lord* and the *Rapture* were near at hand some believers may have wrongly concluded there was little reason to work. Whatever the reason for their idleness, fellow believers should come alongside and firmly tell their idle kin to get back to work!

The “fainthearted” are the discouraged; the “weak” are those lacking physical strength because of illness or age. Whatever be the need – emotional or physical – we should seek to meet it as a loving family.

LET US DEVELOP AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE (5:16-18)

Joy and rejoicing are not based on our circumstances but upon meditating upon the many good things God has done, is doing, and will do for us in Christ.

Praying without ceasing means praying continually which includes praising God for Who He is, confessing sin and being restored in fellowship, thanking God for all He had done and all that He is going to do, praying for others and praying for ourselves.

Rejoicing always and praying constantly contribute greatly to developing an attitude of gratitude – giving thanks in all circumstances. Starting from the perspective we deserve nothing certainly helps in developing an attitude of gratitude when we see how richly blessed we are in Christ.

LET US THOUGHTFULLY EVALUATE NEW IDEAS CLAIMING TO BE FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT (5:19-21)

Prophecy is one of the nineteen grace-gifts given by the Holy Spirit to believers for the purpose of building up the Church (1 Corinthians 12-14). The unique characteristic of *prophecy* is the ability to directly receive new revelation from God. The first century Apostles and Prophets laid the foundation of the Church (Ephesians 2:19-21) primarily by revealing God’s Word for the Church.

It appears the Thessalonians were not excited about prophets or prophecies. They were quenching the Holy Spirit by despising prophets and prophecies. They may have been misled by false prophets and, as a result, come to the conclusion that prophets and prophecies could not be trusted (2 Thess. 2:1-3).

Paul encouraged the Thessalonians not to be reactive, but to be thoughtful. They are to test each prophecy. What accords with the OT Scriptures and the teachings of Paul, they need to accept.

There is a related way in which these verses apply to us. From time to time, we bring to you interpretations that are different from the interpretations you have been taught. Please do not reject different interpretations simply because they are different; be willing to thoughtfully evaluate the evidence for the different interpretation. If we are true to the text, please accept the new interpretation. If we've missed it, please help us see where.

LET US LIVE ACCORDING TO GOD'S WILL (5:22)

PAUL'S BLESSING UPON HIS DEARLY LOVED CHILDREN (5:23-28)

GRACE NEWS AND NEEDS

Membership Class, Starts **TODAY** Sunday, March 24th – April 21st, 10:00AM, Modular, No signup, just come.

Good Friday Service, Friday, March 29th, 6:30PM.

Ramona Pregnancy Care Clinic *Walk for Life*: Signups to Walk and/or Sponsor on Patio.

Business Meeting: Sunday, April 28th, 4:00PM, Childcare provided. Everyone Welcome!

VOM Needs for March: *Dental Floss*