

1ST THESSALONIANS

Sermon Series Notes



“An Ideal Church Environment” (I Thessalonians 5:12-18)

Danny Hodges – NT3492

I. A CLOSE LOOK AT THESE INSTRUCTIONS

A. Respect Those Over You In The Lord

- * Who admonish you, that is to instruct and encourage you regarding proper behavior and belief (doctrine and practice).
- * While this would technically include parents, it seems to refer here especially to elders, pastors, and leaders in the local church.
- * We live in a culture where independence is the main mantra, and making sure our rights are not violated. But independence is certainly not to be the mantra for the Christian, and denying ourselves and taking up our cross kind of messes up this whole demanding our rights idea.
- * See Rom.14:7-8; Heb.13:17
- * Even for those of us who know it is not biblical to live independently, our flesh nature still leads us in that direction. Examples: Korah's rebellion; II John, Diotrephes, who loved to be first, etc.

B. Live In Peace With Each Other

- * Behave in a way to promote harmony.
- * See I Timothy 2:1-2
- * Peace only happens when God ordained leadership leads, and those under that leadership honor and submit appropriately.

* Prov.17:1 Better a dry crust with peace and quiet than a house full of feasting, with strife.

C. Warn Those Who Are Idle

* In introducing this section, Paul chooses a verb commonly used in ancient letters to request action to be taken on a matter. It was used in official letters when kings and those in authority wanted to express a more friendly, less heavy-handed tone, because the one writing the letter had confidence that their appeal would be acted upon.

* The word Paul uses here has two possible meanings/applications. The first describes soldiers who would not keep step or follow commands. These are people who are resistant to guidance, and who refuse to submit to the authorities God has placed over them. The second refers to students or workers who simply were not doing their work. II Thessalonians 3:6-13 will help us on this point. These are not people just sitting around doing nothing. They are busy, but they are not busy in things that build up the church. They are not busy in what God has called them to (Eph.2:10; 4:16). So the first type of person may get involved and yet once involved not keep in step by submitting to the authority over them. The second type of person just attends services but never does anything to build up the body.

* Our responsibility is to warn people like this. Obviously, these are people we have some kind of personal interaction with. What are we to do if they do not heed our warning? See II Thess.3:14-15. You are not to hang out with people in the church who are not submitted to the leadership God has placed over them, or who simply attend church but are not plugged-in in ways that build up the church.

D. Encourage The Timid

* KJV = “feeble-minded.” Or those who are vacillating.

* On this one, II Timothy 1:3-8 will come to our aid. Even those already involved in fruitful ministry can have a tendency to be “timid.” Believe it or not, I need continual encouragement in my ministry, because I tend toward timidity.

* Examples of those that God called who had to deal with “timidity?” Moses (see Gen.3&4); Jeremiah (Jer.1:6); Barak (Judges 4:8-9); Gideon (Judges 6:15).

E. Help the Weak

* The Greek word literally means to transport or carry them. I immediately think of the song “He Ain’t Heavy, He’s My Brother.”

* Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37); I John 3:17-18; Acts 2:44-45; 4:34.

F. Be Patient With Everyone

* Why “everyone?” Because every person has the capacity/potential to try your patience at some point (the pastor/elder/leader, the independent, one who is idle, timid, weak, impatient!)

1. bearing pains or trials calmly or without complaint
2. manifesting forbearance under provocation or strain
3. not hasty or impetuous
4. steadfast despite opposition, difficulty, or adversity

G. Don't Pay Wrong For Wrong, But Try To be Kind To “Everybody”

* See Luke 6:35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

* Refer to “How To Stop A Fight”

H. Be Joyful Always, Pray Continually, Give Thanks in All Circumstances (see Phil.4:4-7)

I. Don't Put Out The Spirit's Fire

* God is attempting to do something supernatural in each one of our lives through His Holy Spirit: Respect/submission to God ordained authority, a life in peace with other brothers and sisters in Christ, concern enough for brothers and sisters who are idle (unsubmissive or simply not plugged-in) to warn them, and if they do not heed our warning, stop associating with them, encouraging the timid, helping the weak, being patient with everyone, not paying back wrong for wrong, filled with joy and thankfulness.

* Some of us may be thinking, “That sounds like heaven!” no it's not heaven. Heaven is actually better, because there will be no need for such exhortations as these (heaven will be perfect!). But while it is not heaven, it is “The Ideal Church Environment.” But is it really possible? YES, as long as we do not miss one last exhortation in our text.

J. Don't Treat Prophecies With Contempt

* This refers to a Spirit inspired message intended to strengthen, encourage, or comfort a believer (I Cor.14:3; Acts 2:17-18; 19:6; 21:9). It may be given in a public meeting of the church, or at times it may occur outside the formal church meeting. It is not usually a prediction of future of events, although it can be (John 11:51). Why would anyone despise prophesying? Sometimes it is simply so bizarre that it is obviously not from the Lord. Or perhaps its not bizarre but nevertheless false (See II Thess.2:2). Another reason is that the person is not willing to respond in God's will to the message being spoken. They either regard it as unworthy of notice or consideration, or they have an emotional response ranging from strong dislike to loathing.

* I Kings 22: ⁸The king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, "There is still one prophet through whom we can inquire of the LORD, but I hate him because he never prophesies anything good about me, but always bad. He is Micaiah son of Imlah."

* When God tires to ignite a fire in us, some people quench the Spirit, while others grieve the Holy Spirit. We grieve the Spirit when we do what the Spirit is telling us not to do, and we quench the Spirit when we don't do what He's encouraging us to do.

CONCLUSION

* What's God's Word specifically for you today? Are you in submission to authority God has placed over you? Is there peace/harmony between you and your brothers and sisters in Christ? A brother or sister you need to lovingly warn because he or she is idle (unruly/unsubmissive or just not plugged-in), is timid (vacillating), needs encouragement, who is weak but you could help carry through this difficult time, one you just need to be patient with so you do not pay back wrong for the wrong they've done to you, taking it instead to God in prayer, giving thanks by faith, and letting Him fill you with joy through the Holy Spirit.

* After stooping and washing His disciples feet, then encouraging them to wash one another's feet, Jesus said...

John 13:17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed ***if you do them.***