

DAILY LIFE IN A VIBRANT CHURCH: Study Guide for I Thessalonians 5:12-28. For Nov. 29,1998

Paul concludes his correspondence with a series of exhortations. Put together, it forms a summary of many concerns relating to how the believers live out the faith they have received. Try to space out your study so as to have a good opportunity to think through applications in the variety of areas.

1. **PASTORS:** (vs. 12-13): Respect the office!

Three admonitions are given to tell how we should relate to those in spiritual authority over us.

- A. _____ B. _____ C. _____

Why do you think each is important? Is this difficult for you? Why or why not?

2. **PEOPLE:** (vs. 14-15): Respond appropriately!

Different people need different responses. Match the appropriate response to the right group.

Idle ____, timid ____, weak ____, everyone ____, wrongdoers ____, everyone else/outsideers ____

- a. be kind b. encourage c. warn d. be patient e. help f. forgive (no retribution)

Reflect on your current relationships. Which **one** command do you sense Christ calling you to apply and with whom?

3. **PROBLEMS:** (vs. 16-18): Develop an attitude of Joy and practice prayer and thanksgiving!

A. What do you see as the key to always cultivating an attitude of **JOY**?

B. What is the significance of Paul using the word “in” not “for” in vs. 18? (see Rom. 8:28-29)

C. Identify **one** action step you will attempt this week to obey these instructions (vs. 16-18).

4. **PROPHECY:** (vs. 19-22) Receive it -- with reason!

The gift of prophecy was the ability to receive and communicate direct revelations from God (I Cor. 13:8). These revelations could refer to future events (Acts 11:28), but often dealt with the present (Acts 13:2).

A. What warnings does Paul give to those who would be resistant to prophecies?

B. What safeguards does Paul give to those who would accept prophecies uncritically?

C. Even if we don't see the exercise of the “gift of prophecy” as defined above, how can these warnings and safeguards apply to us in the church?

5. **PRAYER:** (vs. 22-25) God is faithful to completely sanctify us!

A. What is the basis for Paul's confidence in this prayer?

B. What specifically does Paul pray for the Thessalonians?

C. How can this prayer (and Paul's request) help you learn to intercede for other Christians?

6. **PARTING:** (vs. 26-28) Say it with GRACE!

How do you normally say good-bye to friends? What can you learn from Paul's example?