

A Few Basics for Blessing

Sunday, August 4, 2024 ▪ Brad Manley

Our responsibility to _____. (vv. 12-13)

Our responsibility to _____. (vv. 14-15)

Our responsibility to _____. (vv. 16-28)

1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

¹² We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, ¹³ and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. ¹⁴ And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. ¹⁵ See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies, ²¹ but test everything; hold fast what is good. ²² Abstain from every form of evil.

²³ Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

²⁵ Brothers, pray for us. ²⁶ Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss. ²⁷ I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers. ²⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. (ESV)

Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions

Open: What's been some helpful advice you've heard for getting along with other people?

Read & Discuss: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

1. Why do you think it might be important in the life of the church that leaders be both recognized and esteemed (vv. 12-13)? Notice that the basis of this appreciation is "because of their work" (v. 13). Why would it be significant that leaders be esteemed because of their work rather than because of their title or status? What does this exhortation suggest about how leaders should be chosen?
2. There will always be a wide variety of needs in the church. Note that everyone in the church, not just leaders, is given responsibility to minister to people with these challenges (vv. 14-15). Why would this be a more effective way to meet needs in the church? Why do you think patience is prescribed for every situation (v. 14)?
3. Vengeance, or repaying evil for evil, is forbidden here (v. 15) regardless of who is involved. How is vengeance always corrosive to the person who practices it and the community in which it occurs?
4. Much like his repeated exhortations to the Philippians (Philippians 4:4), Paul tells the Thessalonians to rejoice always (v. 16). We normally don't think of emotions as something that can be commanded. Yet these words from Paul suggest that he is calling these believers to make a choice! How do you think one would go about making a choice to rejoice?
5. By encouraging the Thessalonians to pray without ceasing (v. 17), he could not have meant for them to stop all other activities. What do you think Paul was actually asking them to do? In what ways do you try to practice this kind of prayer?
6. How does faith in the sovereign control of God over all things help you to give thanks to God in all circumstances (v. 18). Describe to your group a time when you were able to express gratitude to God in the midst of difficult circumstances.
7. Paul warns against quenching the Holy Spirit (v. 19). It is likely he intends this exhortation to be connected to the next phrase, "do not despise prophecies" (v. 20). How might these two be connected? Why do you think it would be important not to despise prophecies? How does verse 21 provide a necessary counterbalance to verses 19 and 20?
8. In 3:13 and 4:4, 7, Paul reminds the Thessalonians of God's call to holiness. Here in 5:22, he expresses it in practical terms: "Abstain from every form of evil." What are some of the ways we justify exposing ourselves to evil? What steps could you take to strengthen your resolve to avoid evil?

Application: From this passage, what are one or two specific ways you're challenged to, by God's grace, work towards getting along better with others? What specifically will you do to grow in that area?

Pray: Pray we would be people who delight blessing others within our church community.