

1 Thess. 5:12-28

12 Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. **13** Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. **14** And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone. **15** Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else. **16** Rejoice always, **17** pray continually, **18** give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. **19** Do not quench the Spirit. **20** Do not treat prophecies with contempt **21** but test them all; hold on to what is good, **22** reject every kind of evil. **23** May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. **24** The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it. **25** Brothers and sisters, pray for us. **26** Greet all God's people with a holy kiss. **27** I charge you before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers and sisters. **28** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Discussion Questions

0. Can you think of a time when something that someone said to you or about you that made you feel very affirmed or confident in yourself on a deep level?

Leader Tip: Try to dig deeper than surface level compliments of "I like your hair", "I like your outfit", "you're good at this/that" statements.

1. When you lack confidence in yourself, how does that affect your belief that you can do something well? How does that change when someone encourages your abilities?

Leader Tip: All throughout 1 Thess, Paul has encouraged and blessed the Thessalonians for how well they have been doing. Along with that, he has identified hard things that could come up and warned them to watch out for them. This is Paul showing the love of Christ. He is affirming what they are doing well, and encouraging them to watch out for things that can trip them up.

2. Read Ch. 5:12-14. What are these verses giving a clear picture of? [Encouragement]

3. Read v. 15-18. Paul warns them to look out for _____? Verse 18 says the phrase “God’s will”. What does he say God’s will is?

Theological Thought: Any time we see “God’s will” we should be joyful for the clarification, since this seems like something as Christians, we are constantly searching for.

4. Read v. 19-22. What does it mean to quench (stifle or suppress) the Spirit? How serious is it that Paul says we should avoid EVERY kind of evil?
5. Read v. 23-28. Paul once again circles back to encouragement. What does this say about the importance of believers encouraging other believers in a genuine way?
6. Do you have friends or family in your life that you could encourage? (again try to lead to genuine/deep encouragement)

Theological Thought: Andy Mineo (a Christian Rapper) said in an interview that people always assume that since he is a fairly good rapper, that he hears that all the time, or he doesn’t need to hear it, but he says he still needs to hear that, because we are people who quickly forget about what the Lord has done for us and who he has made us to be.

7. In Ephesians 4:29, Paul says: “Let no unwholesome talk come out of your mouth, but only what is good for building each other up...”

Pray that the Lord would help you see opportunities to encourage others and not tear them down, and pray for the boldness to say those things when the Lord puts it on your heart.