

1 Thessalonians 5:12-28 Christian Community

Review: Paul wants us to avoid two problems associated with Christ's second coming:

1. Being idle, thinking that since He may come any day, we might as well stop living our normal lives.
2. Being obsessed and worrying about Christ's second coming.

Paul's focus is not on knowing WHEN Christ will return but on BEING the kind of people who are ready for Christ's return. Alert. Aware. Secure.

Paul's Instructions For Living This Kind Of Life:

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| 1. Respect those who work hard among you | 9. Be joyful always |
| 2. Live in peace | 10. Pray continually |
| 3. Warn the idle | 11. Give thanks in all circumstances |
| 4. Encourage the timid | 12. Don't put out the Spirit's fire; Don't treat prophecies with contempt |
| 5. Help the weak | 13. Test everything |
| 6. Be patient with everyone | 14. Hold on to the good |
| 7. Make sure no body pays back wrong for wrong | 15. Avoid every kind of evil |
| 8. Always try to be kind | |

This takes us back to Paul's original description of the growing Christian from chapter 1:

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| 1 Thes 1:9b-10, People who are: | 1 Thes 1:3, People for whom: |
| Turning to God from idols | Their work is produced by faith |
| Serving the living and true God | Their labor is prompted by love |
| Waiting for His Son from heaven | Their endurance is inspired by hope |

In your groups, categorize the above 15 items:

Faith * Work Turn	Love * Labor Serve	Hope * Endure Wait
Warn the idle Help the weak Make sure no body pays back wrong for wrong Don't put out the Spirit's fire; Don't treat prophecies with contempt Test everything Avoid every kind of evil	Respect Live in peace Encourage the timid Always try to be kind	Be patient with everyone Be joyful always Pray continually Give thanks in all circumstances Hold on to the good

Memory Verses: 1 Thes 1:4-6

Christian Community Includes

1. **Leadership** 5:12,13

- a. Work hard
- b. Have Authority (“over”) RESPECT/AFFECTION
- c. Admonish- warn against bad behavior
Col 1:28; 3:16

2. **Fellowship** 5:14,15

- a. Specific Focus To Help:
 - i. The idle
 - ii. The timid/faint hearted PATIENCE
 - iii. The weak
- b. General Behavior:
 - i. To one another
 - ii. To everyone KINDNESS

3. **Worship** 5:16-22, 27

- a. *Extreme* Behaviors
 - i. Be joyful always 1 Pet 1:6,7; James 1:2-4
 - ii. Pray continually
 - iii. Give thanks in all circumstances
- b. Scripture/Spirit-Centered Thoughts and Words
 - i. Don’t put out the Spirit’s fire. Warm, encouraging use of gifts ...
 - ii. Don’t despise prophesy. Speak God’s mind and will.
 - iii. Have this letter read. (v. 27)
 - iv. Test everything.
 - v. Hold on to the good.
 - vi. Avoid every kind of evil.

4. **Dependence** 1 Thes 5:23-28

God is ultimately the one who sanctifies us.

This includes our whole being.

This process is based on God’s character and peace.

This is in view of Christ’s second coming.

- Why do pastors and laypeople sometimes find it difficult to live in peace with each other?
- Paul could have written, “Don’t pay back wrong for wrong.” Instead he wrote, “Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong.” What is implied in his command?
- After making many authoritative statements, Paul asks the Thessalonians to pray for him. What does Paul’s request tell you about his spirit?

- What sort of people (or problems of people) make you impatient?
Who in your church fellowship needs your support and patience?