

I Thessalonians 5:12 - And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

1. Paul now starts to conclude his first epistle to the Thessalonians. He gives sound, practical advice to the believer's attitude and behavior toward their leaders and each other.
 

\*Most enjoy the things of the church, music, fellowship, and spirit but often lose interest in applying truth to their behavior.
2. [beseech you, brethren,] Paul is imploring, asking them earnestly, as brothers and sisters in Christ. He uses the term "brethren" 105 times in other epistles and 28 times in I & II Thessalonians.
 

\*Paul saw the local church of believers as a family.

3. As a family needs leadership, so does the local church. We are indeed all one in Christ (Galatians 3:28), but it is also true that Christ is the Head and has given gifts to His churches to exercise His will through the Word.

Ephesians 4:11-15 - And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; Eph. 4:12 - For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Eph. 4:13 - Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: Eph. 4:14 - That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; Eph. 4:15 - But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

Hebrews 13:17 - Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.

\*\*God works in individual hearts to give themselves to the ministry. We live in a day of disrespect toward authority, which often carries over into the church. Though all are equal in Christ, the church is not a democracy. That is wrong and unscriptural. God has an order for the church to function (I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, I Timothy 3:8-15, Titus 1:5).

4. Here Paul wants them to know the position of church leaders.
  - a. Of course, this is not referring to proud, full-of-self dictators. It is those who do their best to stand before the congregation presiding, teaching, leading, and being the best testimony they can be before the people.
 

I Peter 5:2-3 - Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; I Peter 5:3 - Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

II Corinthians 1:24 - Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

Acts 20:28 - Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.
  - b. How did they get there? Sometimes it is hard to explain.
 

I Timothy 3:1 - This *is* a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

Philippians 2:13 - For it *is* God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

5. Paul wants them to know the duties of church leaders.

- a. [which labour among you,] It means to work hard, to toil that he becomes weary. He is to stand before the church to speak the truth in love, to lead no matter the **per**sonal cost, physically and emotionally.

\*This is one reason they are to be respected and listened to.

Colossians 1:29 - Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

I Corinthians 15:58 - Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

- b. If a good leader, they will [admonish] you. It has the thought to warn, to put into your mind. It is the pastor's responsibility to give biblical thoughts to help believers know what is **scri**pturally right and wrong.

\*To do this is weary for some and a **bur**den to teach. It takes hard studying, even to the point of exhaustion. The work is to finally be confident in what the verses teach. You have to **dig**!

Proverbs 2:1-5 - My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; Prov. 2:2 - So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* apply thine heart to understanding; Prov. 2:3 - Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, *and* liftest up thy voice for understanding; Prov. 2:4 - If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as *for* hid treasures; Prov. 2:5 - Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

I Thessalonians 5:13 - And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves.

\*Paul wants them to know the respect due to their leader.

1. Due to the nature of the church, the leaders of the church should be **app**reciated by those who benefit from their ministry.

\*The leader(s) should never be considered better than anyone else. Yet his **work** should have a special honor with love and his sharing of biblical truth.

I Timothy 5:17 - Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

2. Paul wants them to know the true response of respect [and be at peace among yourselves.]

- a. One of the best ways to show respect to a leader is to avoid **caus**ing problems in the congregation. The congregation will not have peace and order when there is no respect for authority. Unruly, disrespectful conduct only breeds chaos and **div**ision!

- b. I have witnessed some grace believers who are not very graceful. If they do not agree with you, they first tell you, and then others in the congregation. It seems that they get so puffed up with their Bible knowledge that they **thin**k they know more than the church's leaders, thus turning them off!

\*Church is **not** about who knows more but about trying to help others to take the next step in their journey for God. It is about many spiritual truths and especially a foundation of rightly dividing. It is up to them (the individual), the believers, how deep they **des**ire to go.

- c. Some get upset that we do not teach "rightly dividing" lessons in every service. But as a pastor, I know our people need the truth about life, **sol**ving problems, marriage, suffering through storms, etc.

Acts 20:26-27 - Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I *am* pure from the blood of all *men*.  
Acts 20:27 - For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

Note: If I need help and growth (and I do) in my teachings, do not criticize me or explain to others how much more mature you are than me.

\*What you do is ask me if I need help understanding the truth, **pray** for me, and show some spiritual **mat**urity on your part!

- d. Remember, the church is Christ's, and we are His team. If you cannot handle what we are doing, know that we love you in Christ, and for His and the church's sake, please **lea**ve quietly! Peace!

I Thessalonians 5:14 - Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all *men*.

1. [warn them that are unruly,]
  - a. As a congregation, grace teaches us to acknowledge those out of order and out of step with the church, thus creating friction within the church. They have little respect for the church's leaders and are out of line. **Tell** them!
  - b. In a church, while encouraging individual development, each one **sti**ll needs to follow the same things as everybody else. If there are no rules or standards, there would be confusion, chaos, and church splits. That is **dis**order.
2. [warn] If the "unruly" insist on walking their own way, the opposite of the church's, they should be **con**fronted. They should be informed how their behavior harms the overall assembly, **hur**ts the cause of Christ, and removes the well-deserved peace.
3. Some grace believers are sure they are right, but many godly believing leaders disagree. That **sho**uld cause the unruly ones to pause.
  - a. \*I don't always agree with everything said by Jordan, Stam, Berean, and others. They are **gre**at believers, wise, and **mo**re mature than I am. I will agree to disagree and always show them **res**pect. I feel that I owe them so much because of what they have taught me!
  - b. Within biblical understanding, there must be space for **diff**erences (salvation-grace-No!) To cause division within the Body church because we think differently! Example: one is more mature on a subject than another, like when the church began or are the 12 in Christ's Body, Paul says here to warn them that there can be danger in that.
4. [comfort the feebleminded,]
  - a. This does not refer to one mentally challenged. It refers to a small soul, to be fainthearted, to lose heart, they feel like giving up, **qui**ttng because of the difficulties they are going through. They do not have the toughness to endure hardness.  
  
\*They do not think in **fai**th or strength correctly. At this point, they do not have a renewed mind.
  - b. Paul says we need to go alongside of them to comfort through encouragement and to **cha**llenge them to hang in there.

Romans 12:2 - And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

II Corinthians 10:4-5 - (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) II Cor. 10:5 - Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

\*There are mental attitude sins (wrong thinking) that can **destroy** our faith!

\*\*Sound doctrine - teaching is to change our thinking so that we know what God is doing and **how** we are to handle life's problems in a **bib**lical way.