

Paul concludes his letter to the Thessalonians with some final commands and a closing prayer. His advice is practical, and his prayer echoes his assurance of Jesus' return.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

Final Instructions

I. COMPARING OUR STORIES

MY EXPERIENCE...

YOUR EXPERIENCE...

Parting words are important words. It's often said that people remember the first and last things someone shares with them. Whether in the context of leaving for a long trip, a child's departure from home for college, or the sober passing of a loved one, we tend to remember the final words shared with someone special.

II. CONSIDERING OUR STRUGGLES

WHAT are the benefits to receiving clear, direct instructions?

As a Christian, sometimes God gives us principles and other times He shares clear commands. **WHY** do you think He gives us both?

HOW necessary are leaders in the church?

IS there a distinction between how you view church leaders, brothers and sisters in the body, and outsiders? **EXPLAIN** your response.

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OBSERVATION

Who does Paul ask his readers to respect?

Why does Paul call those in Thessalonica to esteem those of whom he speaks (vs. 13)?

In vs. 14-18, list all the verbs Paul commands his readers to *do*.

What does Paul tell those reading his letter NOT to do, according to vs. 20-22?

What do you *observe* about Paul's prayer offered in vs. 23?

Who does Paul say will do what he has just prayed for (vs. 24)?

As he concludes this section, what observations can you make from the final four verses?

INTERPRETATION

What does it mean to respect and esteem someone? Why would Paul call his audience to treat those this way who are "over you in the Lord", according to vs. 12-13?

What is Paul's purpose in addressing the idle, fainthearted, and weak in vs. 14? How are we called to treat each of these?

Why does Paul call his readers to be "patient with them all", in vs. 14?

Why does he make a distinction between "one another" and "everyone" in vs. 15?

What does it look like to "rejoice always" and "be thankful in all circumstances" (as opposed to thankful *for* all circumstances)?

What does it mean to "quench" the Spirit? Are there spirit's we ought to "quench"? Consider Galatians 5:25 and 1 John 4:1 for insight.

What does Paul mean when he asks the Lord to "sanctify completely" the Thessalonians? Who does he say is responsible for this (vs. 23-24), and why is it important to remember?

APPLICATION

Which of the imperatives in this passage speaks the most to your conscience?

What's one step you can take to obey the command God gives you?