

Horizontal, Vertical, *Everywhere*: 1 Thess 5:12-28

Sunday, November 26, 2023
Covenant Church
Pastor Zack Phillips

1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

12 But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; 13 esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. 14 And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. 15 See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. 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 the words of prophets, 21 but test everything; hold fast to what is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil.

23 May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

25 Beloved, pray for us.

26 Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. 27 I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all of them.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Outline of our passage: Final Admonitions (5:12-28)

[A] Relationships with other people (12-15)

[1] With church leaders (12-13)

¹² But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; ¹³ esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.

[2] With community members (14-15a)

¹⁴ And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. ¹⁵ See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another

[3] With everyone (15b)

and to all.

[B] Relationship with God (16-22)

[1] With God (16-18)

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.

[2] *With the Spirit (19-22)*

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

[C] Final Words

²³ May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

²⁵ Beloved, pray for us.

²⁶ Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. ²⁷ I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all of them.

²⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

I. Do Not Repay Evil for Evil

Rom 12:17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all.

1 Pet 3:9a Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called—that you might inherit a blessing.

Prov 20:22 Do not say, “I will repay evil”; wait for the LORD, and he will help you.

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Matt 5:43–44a “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...”

Luke 6:27–28 “But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you...”

Prov 25:21 If your enemies are hungry, give them bread to eat; and if they are thirsty, give them water to drink...

Leslee Goodman, “Linda Biehl: Radical Forgiveness,” available at <https://moonmagazineeditor.medium.com/linda-biehl-radical-forgiveness-the-moon-magazine-eaf287fff04>

II. Rejoice, Pray, Give Thanks

What does “pray without ceasing” mean? Brother Lawrence? Augustine?¹ *The Way of a Pilgrim*? Corporate?

III. Horizontal, Vertical, *Everything*

Question: What is one thing that God may have said to you through this sermon?

¹ Augustine, *Exposition on the Book of Psalms* 38.13; trans. A. Cleveland Coxe, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers 8 (New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1888): 107.