

1 Thessalonians 5.12-15

Church? How do we structure the church? Should it have any structure?

27 x's in letters to Thess. Paul calls them "brothers" / 5 x's in these verses

If God is our Father - then we are brothers and sisters in Him

Missy to Indians of Canada - called God "Our Father"

Chief said, "Father" gives us great comfort - we feared Great Spirit

Is He our Father? Yes! And your Father? Yes!

THEN WE ARE BROTHERS!

4.10 - love as brothers more and more

4.11 - encourage one another]

5.11 - build each other up

The Church

vs. 12 - 13 Leaders / vs. 14 - 15 Members / vs. 16 - 28 Worship

CHURCH LEADERS -

Throughout History of Church has been extremes of Exalting Leaders or Exalting the Laity

Balance - We are all one in X (Gal 3.28) / God has given Leaders (Eph 4)

Jesus is the Chief Shepherd and He has appointed Under Shepherds

Synagogue Model - Rule by the Elders / Apostolic Example - Appoint Elders

How can we recognize them?

1) "Among You" - Jesus became man - he experienced our life's struggle

The Leader should relate to the situation of His people / Sympathize

Importance of Living in their Home Area / Danger of Foreign Support

2) “Work Hard” - Leader does not only work a few hours on Sundays
pouring
Word chosen here by Paul - Hard, manual labor / Muscles bulging, sweat

Hard Work - preparing sermons, visiting members, praying, counseling

Colossians 1.29 - “Striving with all the energy which Christ gives to us”

Paul Worked as Tent-maker / Worldly Job for Financial Support

3) “Over you in the Lord” - God places them in authority

Command here is to RESPECT - meaning God has put them in their position

Too many churches the people try to tear down their leaders, not build up.

IN THE LORD - emphasize their place as sinners who are forgiven in Christ

NO SUCH THING AS A PERFECT LEADER - should admit sin & repent

IN THE LORD - how was Jesus over us? - By washing feet, dying on cross

Biblical Leadership is SERVANT LEADERSHIP - greatest is the servant

4) “Admonish You” - warn against bad behavior and its consequences

We are happy when our leaders compliment and praise us / THIS IS EASY

Someone hears a criticism, “Who doe he think he is?” - LEADER IN LORD
THEY ARE OUR BROTHERS - BUT THEY ARE OUR BIG BROTHERS

What should the people’s attitude be toward their leaders?

1) “Respect them” v. 12 - This means an acknowledgment of POSITION

They have been put in their position by God- THEY ARE
ACCOUNTABLE

2) “Hold them in highest regard in love” v. 13 acknowledge their PERSON

Love covers a multitude of sins - Love oils the machinery of working Church

Love because of their Work - Difficult to care for diverse group of sinners

3) “Live in Peace” v. 13 - Are you maintaining the Peace of Christ’s Body?

Is what you are doing and saying promoting unity / building others up?

Easy to become an agent of destruction and division in our Disagreements

WE MAY DISAGREE - BUT WE SHOULD NOT BE DISAGREEABLE

Difficult Balance - Can the Pastor make friends with his members?

Ex. Tim and Mary came for the whole day and would not leave! Criticized.

Do not want to act too aloof - far away // But cannot be at their same level

CHURCH MEMBERS -

v. 14 Paul continues to direct his words to ALL the church members

There are leaders and pastors in the church / Pastoral work is everyone’s duty

Ex - Leaders as coach to develop players / Multiply not Monopolize Ministry

Three Specific Groups which need Brotherly Care:

1) Idle - failing to do their work (4.11-12)

2) Timid - anxious, worried, fearful (5.13 - 18)

3) Weak - find it difficult to control themselves (4.3-8)

HELP - hold on to them, cling on to them, put your arm around them

BE PATIENT W/ THEM - easy to lose your control, God is at work in them
Phil 1.6 - God will continue the good work until completion

v. 15 - Paul teaches how everyone should behave in the Church

NEGATIVE - do not take revenge

POSITIVE - show kindness to everyone // Jesus' Sermon on Mount

If you think that people will be kind to you in ministry - YOU ARE
WRONG

YOU ARE MINISTER OF LIGHT- PEOPLE HATE LIGHT- EVIL DEEDS

MEN LOVE DARKNESS MORE THAN LIGHT / DEEDS ARE EVIL

PEOPLE HATE THE MESSAGE - KILL THE MESSENGER

Church people are proud, jealous, mistrusting, self-seeking, and evil - ME!!!

RESPONSE - Kill them with Kindness

Put burning coals on their heads - NOT LIGHT HAIR ON FIRE

HAD NO MATCHES - used small burning coal - keep it going

v. MAKE SURE THAT NOBODY - e.g. make it the earnest business of all

Church is a place of service, love, forgiveness, and support

LOVE, JOY, PEACE, AND PATIENCE - signs of a healthy church