

Reflecting on 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22 (Part 1) September 27, 2020

Introduction: As Paul pens this section, he is nearing the end of his letter to the Thessalonians. As he does in other letters, Paul uses this final section of verses to cram in a bunch of “rapid-fire” challenges and instruction.

This section (1 Thess 5:12-22) falls into three sets of commands, and this week, we examine the first, which deals with relationships within the Christian Community. In 1 Thessalonians 5:12-15, Paul presents a roadmap for how relationships should look. Here are the three “navigation points” we identify in this passage:

1. Respect and esteem highly your spiritual leaders and their ministry. (12-13a)
2. Patiently disciple those who struggle. (14)
3. Live at peace, avoid revenge, and do good to each other. (13b, 15)

The Big Idea of verses 12-15 is: *The church community should reflect Christ-like humility and grace in every relationship.*

Up for Discussion:

1. Which of the three “navigation points,” stands out to you as most important? Explain your answer.

2. Take a moment to read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 out loud. How do these verses inform us about the role of leadership in our lives? How does the role of leaders in this text correspond with the description of leaders in Hebrews 13:17?

3. What barriers might exist in churches like ours that would keep the members from showing respect and esteem to its leaders?

4. What are some ways you can respect and highly esteem the leaders of Calvary Baptist?

5. Read verse 14 aloud. In this verse, Paul provides four ways to help the struggling brother or sister. Which of these commands comes most naturally to you and which is most difficult?

- Admonish the idle
- Encourage the fainthearted (discouraged)
- Help (hold onto) the weak
- Be patient with them all

6. Paul urges us in verse 15 not to take revenge. Why is revenge our natural reaction when someone wrongs us? According to Romans 12:19, Whose job is it to get revenge?

7. This section includes an admonition to live in peace with one another (vss. 13, 15). What are some steps you can take to live in peace with other believers at Calvary Baptist? How does “do[ing] good to one another” contribute to the peace we are commanded to have?