

I Thessalonians 5:12-28 – 3 December 2023

“Divine Service”

Introduction

*In Chap 1: Paul commended them for their immediate, expressions of faith, love & hope in their new life

*In Chap 2: Paul more focused on the sincerity of our interactions in serving the world the Gospel

*In Chap 3 into 4: Paul spoke regarding the depth of their Christian life & service (establish, grow, abound)

*In Chap 4 into 5: Paul presented his main point to bring them comfort regarding their friends that died

*Now Paul ends the book, as he often does, with a view toward our relationships

*As the priests in the tabernacle had a ‘divine service’ (Heb 9), so too we have a divine service (Rom 12:1)

Today, we’ll see 4 groups of people toward which we express our “divine service” & just how to do it

#1: We express our divine service toward Church Leaders (Chap 5:12-13)

Read Vs 12-13

1. 3 things for handling our leaders w/i the church
 - a. #1 - Recognize them
 - i. Leaders are recognized for the work they're doing for Jesus (*"Which labor among you"*)
 - ii. Leaders are recognized as the one's *"over you"* that guard your soul
 - iii. Leaders are recognized as the one 'putting godly things into your mind' (*"admonish"*)
 - b. #2 - Esteem them
 - i. We esteem leaders by showing them love
 - ii. We don't esteem b/c of their personality or title, but b/c of their great efforts for Jesus
 - iii. Read I Tim 5:17– Care for them at all levels
 - c. #3 - Be at peace with them
 - i. Need to work at this b/c a leader's job is to comfort the hurting & to hurt the comfortable!
 - ii. Read II Tim 1:6 – Leader's job to stir up *like a fire* the gifts within everyone

- iii. If fighting to esteem self, there's war; but if fighting to esteem others, there's peace

#2: We express our divine service toward All Others (Chap 5:14-15)

Read Vs 14-15

1. *We exhort you*
 - a. Like a football coach “calling a player near” to give them personal advice on sideline
2. *Warn the unruly*
 - a. *Warn* is the same as admonish from vs 12
 - b. Put new thoughts in mind of insubordinate
 - c. Even w/ the rebellious, we're trying to help
3. *Comfort the feeble minded, fainthearted, little spirited*
 - a. Those young in their faith will need lots of encouragement and building up – expect it
4. *Support the weak* who are without strength
 - a. Weak can also be translated sick

- b. We all have times when we're falling down that the church comes along to *hold us up*
- 5. *Be patient to all people*
 - a. Why should we be patient to all people?
 - b. Read II Pet 3:9–B/c God was patience for us
- 6. *Don't revenge evil committed against you*
 - a. Read Rom 12:19 – God will rid the evil; we should just be concerned about doing good
 - b. Don't worry about turning off the darkness; just work on turning on the light

#3: We express our divine service toward Yourself (Chap 5:16-22)

Read Vs 16-18

- 1. These verses aren't based on daily circumstances of the Christian but rather on our eternal condition
 - a. Rejoicing isn't based on happenings like happiness is, but based on condition of our souls
 - i. Gloominess isn't spiritual or sign of holiness

- b. Prayer isn't based on circumstantial needs, but on our eternal desire for relationship w/ God
 - i. Is our life always open to the Lord?
 - c. Thankfulness isn't based on our temporary possessions but on our eternal treasure where moth & rust cannot corrupt
2. Live constantly in light of our eternal condition

Read Vs 19

- 1. We do this by ignoring the prompting of the Spirit as we walk thru life (I John 2:20)
- 2. Often b/c we begin to think we know better, in the flesh (Gal 3:1-3)
- 3. This grieves the heart of God (Eph 4:30)

Read Vs 20

- 1. II Pet 1:20 says no prophecy comes from self
- 2. Proclaiming of God's Word can be hard to receive b/c the flesh within us hates it

Read Vs 21

1. Filter everything we hear thru God's Word
 - a. We bring in some info, we throw out some info & we let go of the unknown rest of it also

Read Vs 22

1. Don't allow distractions for others to have to waste time thinking about
 - a. Why "cut the fine line" when it just makes us talk about needless issues rather than Jesus
2. If it "appears" to be in your life, then others think it is
 - a. "Possession is 9/10 of the law"

#4: We express our divine service toward The Lord (Chap 5:23-28)

Read Vs 23-24

1. Yield to the Spirit of God & allow Him to continue His work of changing & sanctifying us
2. Notice this work happens at all levels of being
 - a. 1 level effects all other levels of our being

3. Notice in vs 24 this work isn't dependent on us
 - a. Read Phil 1:6—He completes what He starts

Read Vs 25

1. Depend on God, even if you think it's easy
 - a. In Phil 3:4 Paul says he was something in the flesh yet knew it was nothing
 - b. Israel tried conquering AI after Jericho & it didn't work b/c God wasn't in it...at that time

Read Vs 26

1. Paul ends 4 letters w/ this statement & Peter 1
2. Paul wants them to know of his affection
 - a. Even as it is now, there was a separation between sexes in this regard
 - b. Notice the need for it to be a holy kiss
 - c. This vs isn't in a vacuum but is used with the whole of God's Word...like vs 22

Read Vs 27-28

1. Continue learning of the Lord & walk in grace for each other

Conclusion

How are you doing w/ your divine service? Is it a joy?

- 1. How's your relationship w/ Church Leaders**
 - a. You'll know them as the ones laboring amongst you for the Lord
 - i. If they're good at it, you'll never know it
 - b. Do you recognize, esteem & live at peace with them?
- 2. How's your relationship w/ others**
 - a. Are you engaged w/ exhorting & comforting others with patience?
 - b. Let Jesus sort out the things that go wrong
- 3. How're you growing within yourself**
 - a. Are you living based on circumstances or based on your eternal condition of redemption
- 4. How's your worship of God**
 - a. Depend on God, draw near and allow Him to complete His good work in you!