

1 Thessalonians 5:12-28 Hope in Action

**In verses 11-28 Paul gives 21 duties for all believers!
We might call it Paul's 21 gun salute!**

There are 19 imperatives (commands) and 2 infinitives (very strong admonitions) in these 21 duties!

Verse 11

- 1 *Encourage one another!* This word is often translated "exhort" or "urge" or "comfort" as in 4:18.
- 2 *Build up one another!* This word is used of building or restoring a house.

Verses 12-13 contain the only two duties that are not imperatives in the Greek. Probably because true appreciation and esteem have to be earned.

We request of you – They are not commands but strongly encouraged!

- 3 *Appreciate those who diligently labor among you...*
- 4 *Esteem them very highly in love because of their work.*

Verse 13 From this point on all are imperatives (commands).

- 5 *Live in peace with one another.*

Verse 14

- 6 *Admonish the unruly.* This word is only used here in the New Testament. It is used of a soldier who is out of ranks or disorderly. It can also mean idle or lazy.
- 7 *Encourage the fainthearted.* This word is only used here in the New Testament. It carries the idea of discouragement.
- 8 *Help the weak.* This is the same word Paul uses in 1 Corinthians 9:22 to refer to new or immature believers.
- 9 *Be patient with all men.*

Verse 15

- 10 *See that no one repays evil for evil.*
- 11 *Seek after that which is good for one another and all men.*

Verses 16 - 17

- 12 *Rejoice always.* The word order in the Greek is "Always rejoice" emphasizing the constant attitude of rejoicing we should have. This is the shortest verse in the Greek Bible.
- 13 *Pray without ceasing.* Have a constant attitude of prayer.

Verses 18-20

- 14 *In everything give thanks.* Notice it does not say be thankful but commands the actual giving of thanks.
- 15 *Do not quench the Spirit.* The picture is one of throwing water on a fire. It quenches the work of the Spirit.
- 16 *Do not despise prophetic utterances.* The prophetic gift was necessary in the foundation of the church (Ephesians 2:20). Now we have the written Word of God.

Verses 21-22

- 17 *Examine everything carefully.* In context this probably refers to the prophetic utterances just mentioned.

18 *Hold fast to that which is good.*

19 *Abstain from every form of evil.*

Verses 23-24

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely – Paul spoke of their sanctification in 4:3, 4, and 7. Here the word “Himself” is first in the Greek sentence for emphasis. This is a work that God must do in every believer. To be holy (set apart for God) requires God’s enablement. The good news is that our sanctification is God’s will (4:3).

Spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame – Paul is thinking about our total person. Our thinking and actions must be unified.

At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ – In 3:13 Paul has already mentioned this idea in 3:13. Paul’s desire is that all his spiritual children stand before Jesus at the Bema seat “without blame”.

Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass-

God gives us every resource we need to be blameless at His coming. Paul is not promising or guaranteeing success because we have to avail ourselves of all that God has given but the resources are there and it is God’s will that we are sanctified entirely.

Verses 25-26

20 *Pray for us.*

21 *Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.*

Verses 27-28

I adjure you by the Lord to have this letter read to all the brethren – Paul knew the importance of his letter and intended it to be read aloud to the whole church.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you – Paul begins the letter with grace and ends it with grace. This is a common and favorite benediction of Paul. He ends every letter he writes by mentioning God’s grace.