**Live Above Reproach**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**1 Thessalonians 5:22-28**

**Wednesday Evening**

**November 3, 2021**

**1 Thessalonians 5:22-28**

22 Abstain from every form of evil. 23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.

25 Brethren, pray for us. 26 Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss. 27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren. 28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

**22 Abstain from every form of evil.**

Saints, the separation is real and important: believers must “hold on to what is good” and at the same time keep away from every kind of evil. Paul did not mean that believers must literally withdraw from the world, for to do so would mean that they could not shed the light of Christ so that more might come to him.

Believers can, however, make sure that they don’t give evil a foothold by avoiding tempting situations and concentrating on obeying God.

**Romans 12:9-16**

9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. 10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; 11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;

12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; 13 distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

**Proverbs 11:27**

He who earnestly seeks good finds favor, But trouble will come to him who seeks evil.

**Proverbs 17:13**

Whoever rewards evil for good, Evil will not depart from his house.

**Proverbs 19:23**

The fear of the LORD leads to life, And he who has it will abide in satisfaction; He will not be visited with evil.

**23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Saints, Paul described God as the God of peace. Jesus had told his disciples that he would give them peace.

**John 14:27**

"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

**John 16:33**

"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

Saints, the end result of the Holy Spirit’s work in believers’ lives is deep and lasting peace. Unlike worldly peace, which is usually defined as the absence of conflict, this peace is confident assurance in any circumstance; with Christ’s peace, no believer needs to fear the present or the future.

Paul prayed that God would work in the believers’ lives to make them holy. As God takes up residence within a believer, he begins the process of “sanctification”—the change that he makes in each believer’s life.

Saints, in order to be made holy in every way, God will need to work in all areas of a person’s life—the whole spirit and soul and body. This expression is Paul’s way of saying that God must be involved in every aspect of a believer’s life. As believers live in God’s presence, he will keep them blameless for Christ’s return.

**1 Peter 1:13-16**

13 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance;

15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

**Hebrews 12:1-2**

1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

**24 He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.**

Saints, the Thessalonians could count on these promises because God is faithful. God created the world, and he has faithfully ordered it and kept it since the creation. Because God is faithful, believers can count on him to fulfill his promises to them.

If God can oversee the forces of nature, surely he can see his people through the trials they face. Trusting in God’s faithfulness day by day gives confidence in his great promises for the future. What he has promised, he will do.

**Deuteronomy 32:4**

"He is the Rock. His work is perfect. Everything he does is just and fair. He is faithful, without sin."

**Psalm 71:21-22**

21 You shall increase my greatness, And comfort me on every side. 22 Also with the lute I will praise you--And Your faithfulness, O my God! To You I will sing with the harp, O Holy One of Israel.

**1 John 1:9-10**

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

**25 Brethren, pray for us.**

**Ephesians 6:18-20**

18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints-- 19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

**Colossians 4:2-6**

2 Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; 3 meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, 4 that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

5 Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. 6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.

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

Saints, Paul asked that the believers greet each other in Christian love to help break down the divisions in this church. He wanted his readers to express their love and unity to one another.

**John 13:34-35**

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

**1 John 4:7-9**

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

**Romans 16:16**

"Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you."

**27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren.**

Saints, Paul’s wording here is very strong; I command you in the name of the Lord, means something like, “I put you on oath before the Lord.” Paul did not write merely to the leaders; he had written to everyone, so all the Christians needed to hear every word of it.

For every Christian to hear this letter, it had to be read in a public meeting. Paul wanted to make sure that everyone had the opportunity to hear his message because he was answering important questions and offering needed encouragement.

**Romans 1:16-17**

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

**2 Timothy 4:1-5**

1 I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

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

Saints, as Paul began this letter, so he ended it. Paul’s final prayer was for the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to be with them. Paul often ended his letters this way, asking his readers to continue to experience God’s undeserved kindness and love every day of their lives, and then to pass along that grace to others.

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

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**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name!**