

## 1 Thessalonians 5 - The Waiting Room – part 4

1 Thessalonians 5:6—We are pursuing the answers to the question of “[what do we do while we wait on the what God has for us.](#)”

--For that answer, we are consulting the “[waiting book](#)” of the New Testament,

1 Thessalonians—waiting for the Lord to come; waiting for the Lord to change the circumstances, waiting for the Lord to change us.

We saw last time the first things we need to do while we wait are:

V. 6 –Don’t sleep through this, this will require all of us working and doing what we can.

V. 6 – Stay off the juice of emotions and distractions and be sober in what we say and do—Self-controlled—it’s a mind game before its anything else.

--Are you self-controlled?—ie. nothing is controlling you; there are no “have-tos” in your life? (not including meds, disciplines, prayer, bible); are you “losing your mind” over certain things?

V. 8 – Be properly clothed – this is not a dinner party, it’s a battle, and the battle isn’t for a comfortable church with a good preacher, but a church that if focused on the world and it’s lostness.

--We come to church, we study the Bible, we give, we serve—Why? So we can have better lives? NO! So that we can be better equipped to reach a world that is dying without a Savior.

--Properly dressed in Faith and Love and Hope in a Savior who will reward us – if we are dressed like that, the right people will be glad to be a part of what’s going on here.

### 1. Adding more to our checklist of what to do while we wait:

#### 1 Thessalonians 5:8-13

--Remember, though we belong to this church – this isn’t **our** church; that is, it is not here to please us, not here to serve us, not here ultimately for us—it’s His, it is for His service, His “comfort”, His wishes, His agenda!

--It is His to call all the shots and make all the decisions and ours to join and accommodate ourselves to His system and His ways

One of the aspects that we accommodate ourselves to is Jesus’ system of leadership—God is big on chain of command—you don’t have to question how Jesus will be leading your church; He will be doing it through His leaders that He has raised up.

--If you want to wreck this church, go around and or disrespect the roles of the leaders here.

--It says we are to hold them in high esteem because of their work, because of the position that God has placed them in within the body.

--This is very strict: notice that it doesn’t say do this if you like them or if you agree with them.

--Again, God works through the system of leadership that He has established, and He will judge leaders who don’t do right.

--God will not call you to account for what they do but what you do.

--Respect leadership—expect that God will be leading this church through them.

--Pray for your leadership—They aren’t perfect, they have a lot on them, leading the right way is never easy or simple; we are in a major transition for this church the future is at stake and they know it.

### 2. Live at peace with one another V. 13.

--That’s straight forward but it is not simple. This church has a problem: people attend here!

--James 4:1-4 – “[Why are we fighting and at odds?](#)” it’s not because there are a lot changes taking place, or because we are out of our comfort zone, or because we are feeling bad—It is because of our selfishness.

--If we get all concerned about ourselves and what we want and don't want, and allow our feelings to make decisions for us, this will take over.

--It happens on the playground every day; it will happen here if we are not mature and surrendered to the Lord.

--Peace is a fruit of the Spirit's control: **Galatians 5:22-23**

--Peace is one of the few things that sets us apart as belonging to God

Anybody can throw up a building and parking lot, and hold meetings where we sing and somebody lectures us...but can we be submitted to the Spirit of God as demonstrated through our peaceful fellowship?

--If we make it about ourselves, our light will go out—who would want to be a part of that? —and that's all that matters.

--A constant question that we need to ask: Does this matter or affect our commission to make disciples?

Anybody can be unkind and unloving and selfish, but can we surrender to the control of the Spirit so that He can guide our hearts and minds?

--He cares about the direction of this church far more than any of us do.

While elaborating on loving one's neighbor, apologist Michael Ramsden spoke of a colleague who while in Asia asked his audience to close their eyes and imagine peace. After a few seconds the audience was invited to share their mental pictures of peace. One person described a field with flowers and beautiful trees. Another person spoke of snow-capped mountains and an incredible alpine landscape. Still another described the scene of a beautiful, still lake.

After everyone described their mental picture of peace there was one thing common in them all—there were *no people in them*. Ramsden commented, "**Isn't it interesting, when asked to imagine peace the first thing we do is to eliminate all the people?**"

If we are disturbed in anyway right now about what is going on here, that disturbance is directly related to people, what they are or aren't doing; are or are not saying.

--Everyone here believes in their heart of hearts that things would go better in this world and in this church if everyone else would just do what they said--am I right?

--People are our biggest asset and also our biggest problem.

### **This is nothing new:**

#### **Philippians 4:1-7; 9**

There is sort of an elephant in the room at first church Philippi: two ladies who have served faithfully there are at odds.

1. He doesn't mention the issue at all only the conflict – the issue matters little, what does matter is the conflict—the world is watching us!

--Whatever the issue is not near as important as the fact of the conflict.

--If we were to hear their issue right now, it would sound like this: "I don't like how she treated me and then I confronted her but not in my best form. So, she took offense and now we aren't talking, but she should be the first to come to me because she treated me bad to begin with."

--Does it matter now? and it didn't really then either—what matters is what the world sees—*it is their eyes we need to be concerned about.*

2. He gives a short cut to resolving conflict among ourselves—**VV. 4-5**

--"the Lord is near" – In light of the Lord's return does what you have against whoever matter much?

To live above with saints we love,  
O, that will be glory.

But to live below with saints we know,  
Well, that's another story.

(I added a line)

To live below with saints we know.  
That, too can be a wonderful story.