

Living as Brothers and Sisters

1 Thessalonians 5.12-22

In this penultimate section of 1 Thessalonians, we get a whirlwind tour of how to live as brothers and sisters. This is clearly of critical importance to the writers, but during the sermon, we zipped through the details. So take some time to look at them more carefully, but make sure you get to the integral work of the Holy Spirit.

Pastor Eric

Church as Family

The passage repeatedly addresses believers as “brothers and sisters.” What does it mean for the church to function as a family rather than just an organization? How has the church been a family for you?

In your experience, what are some strengths and challenges of living out church life as a spiritual family?

Relationship with Church Leaders

According to the passage, what responsibilities do church leaders have toward the congregation? What attitudes or actions are believers called to have toward their leaders? Why do you think this reciprocal relationship matters?

What are practical ways a church can “hold leaders in the highest regard in love because of their work” without placing them on unhealthy pedestals?

Mutual Care Among Believers

The text calls everyone to participate in pastoral care, warning the idle, encouraging the discouraged, helping the weak, and being patient with everyone. Which of these do you find most natural, and which is not? Why?

What might it look like to lovingly warn someone who is idle or disruptive while still showing patience and grace?

The Three Spiritual Practices

The passage calls believers to rejoice always, pray continually, and give thanks in all circumstances. Why do you think these are grouped together?

What helps you maintain joy and gratitude during difficult circumstances? What are some practical ways to cultivate a lifestyle of continual prayer throughout the day?

The Work of the Holy Spirit

The passage warns believers not to “quench the Spirit.” What are some ways Christians silence or ignore the Spirit’s work? Why is the Spirit’s work necessary for the church family to operate the way God designed it?

Does it make sense to you that the health of church relationships is tied to each person’s walk with God? In what way is that true? Which practices mentioned at the end of the sermon (biblical, devotional, connectional, and missional) do you most need to strengthen right now to “fan the flame” of the Spirit in your life? Are there other ways to “fan the flame” of the Spirit?