

Through and Through

1 Thessalonians 5.22-28

Well, this is it for 1 Thessalonians (for now). So as you approach these final questions to prepare you for your Life Group, you may want to re-read the whole letter, all in one sitting. The reason is that several themes from earlier in the letter are repeated here. Overall, I hope that you've not only gained some *information* from our study, but that you've developed fresh *understanding*, and that it has resulted in a new way of *living*.

Pastor Eric

Information

Hazard a guess as to what these writers are trying to get at as they close out their letter. What themes from earlier in the letter do you find repeated here, and why might that matter to how you interpret this?

What do you understand a "wish-prayer" to be? Snoop around Paul's other letters to see if you can find something similar. What does a "wish-prayer" reveal about their priorities?

What does the phrase "sanctified through and through" suggest about the scope of transformation God desires? How do you think that relates to the spirit, soul, and body being "kept blameless" in verse 24?

Understanding

How would you explain "sanctification" in your own words based on what you've learned? Is there a practical difference between being transformed into the image of Jesus and sanctification? How does the idea of God as the "God of peace (*shalom*)" shape your understanding of what sanctification aims to achieve?

What is the connection between being declared "blameless" now (being *justified*) and becoming "blameless" over time (*sanctified*)? Why is it important to hold both truths together—that we are already righteous in Christ and still being transformed?

What does it mean that this process is rooted in God's faithfulness rather than our effort alone?

Living

In what areas of your life do you sense God is currently "chiseling away" or refining you? Are there areas where you've been settling for surface-level change instead of "through and through" transformation?

Which is more challenging for you personally: trusting God's promise to change you, or taking responsibility to participate in the process? Why? If you tilt toward one more than the other, are there tangible decisions or actions you can take to bring that back into balance?

What practical steps (Scripture, prayer, community, mission) help you "stay near the fire" of the Holy Spirit, who specifically generates sanctification in us?

How does knowing that "He will do it" give you hope, or challenge you, to live differently this week?