

**Text:** 1 Thessalonians 5:12-24

**Meaning:** Paul gives final instructions to the Thessalonians

**Big Idea:** Instructions before departing

**Objective:** I want the hearers to prepare for departure

**Theme:**

### PREPARING TO DEPART

Paul has just finished talking to the Thessalonian believers about the rapture, their flight to Heaven to be with Jesus, now he concludes with some direct straight forward instructions to prepare for their departure

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome onboard American Airlines Flight 716 with nonstop service from Nashville to New York. We ask that you please fasten your seatbelts at this time and secure all baggage underneath your seat or in the overhead compartments. We also ask that your seats and table trays are in the upright position for take-off. Please turn off all personal electronic devices, including laptops and cell phones. Smoking is prohibited for the duration of the flight. Also, at this time we would like to welcome our American Airlines Advantage Elite members. You are more important than all the other riff raff on this flight so if you need anything at all just lift your hand and we will shower you with gifts, snacks, and attention.

Then comes to safety instructions. FASTENING THE SEATBELT, SECURING THE OXYGEN MASK, LOCATING THE EXITS AND THE LIFE RAFTS.

**Chapter 5** – Paul gives 15 imperatives in 10 verses, so 15 direct commands in just 10 verses.

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<sup>1</sup> D. Michael Martin, [1, 2 Thessalonians](#), vol. 33, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 170.

## HOW DO WE PREPARE TO DEPART?

### READ 1 THESSALONIANS 5:12-24

Paul is writing here to the church at Thessalonica and these instructions focus mainly on life within the body of Christ. The Christian assembly in Thessalonica was, and every church now is, a complex entity including a great variety of personalities. There are leaders and followers (vv. 12–13), those who are weak in the faith and those who are strong (vv. 14–15), the optimists and the pessimists (vv. 16–18), the cynical and the gullible (vv. 19–22). These and others must coexist and be unified in the church. We must learn how to love one another and work with one another for the encouraging and the building up of each other in the faith (4:9, 18; 5:11).<sup>1</sup>

AS THE OLD SONG SAYS – SOON AND VERY SOON WE ARE GOING TO SEE THE KING! NO MORE CRYING THERE! NO MORE DYING THERE! WE ARE GOING TO SEE THE KING!

### How do we prepare for that day?

**First, Paul says....**

#### **1. TRUST SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP (v. 12-13)**

The first two verses are addressed as a request not a command. Paul here doesn't want to sound self-serving when he talks about the need for the body to respect her leaders. Nevertheless, it was important enough for him to address directly.

## **V. 12 – The Job Description of a Pastor – Labor, Lead, Love**

**Labor** – Hard work with difficulty and trouble

**Lead** – Over you speaks of setting the course

**Love** – Admonish is the love of a father correcting both belief and behavior

There also is an implication here that the congregation must not allow itself to be MISLED by those claiming falsely to lead in the name of the Lord.<sup>2</sup> Leadership in the church MATTERS, and those who do so must lead by example first and teaching second knowing that there is a STRICTER JUDGMENT for those in leadership, as it says in James 3:1

**AIRPLANE ILLUSTRATION** – JESUS IS THE PILOT! It's His plane. Pastors are the STEWARDS of the plane. But like a good steward, there are times where we give instruction. Turbulent winds are about – please grab a seat and put your seatbelt on. The first thing the steward announces on the plane is WHERE THE PLANE IS GOING. Jesus sets the destination – the stewards announce that destination – and we all take the flight with Jesus. We don't get to say – WELL, I WOULD RATHER GO TO MIAMI THAN NEW YORK.

## **2. TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FELLOWSHIP (v. 14-15)**

Admonish the IDLE

Encourage the FAINTHEARTED

Help the WEAK

Be PATIENT with ALL

Don't get REVENGE, but DO GOOD TO EVERYONE

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<sup>2</sup> D. Michael Martin, [1, 2 Thessalonians](#), vol. 33, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 174.

The fellowship is more important than my personal feelings. Our feelings matter, and we can share those feelings with brothers and sisters we trust that will pray for us and counsel us. But may we never forget that family of God is more important than my personal opinions or sensitivities.

## **3. TURN YOUR HEART TO WORSHIP (v. 16-19)**

REJOICE ALWAYS -

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING -

GIVE THANKS IN ALL THINGS -

DO NOT QUENCH THE SPIRIT -

## **4. TEST EVERYTHING FOR STEWARDSHIP (v. 20-22)**

TEST EVERYTHING – School tests measure our aptitude of a given subject, have I learned it or not. In order to study for the test where do you look? THE TEXT BOOK. The BIBLE is our TEXT BOOK.