

“How Then Should We Live?”
1 Thessalonians 5:12-28
8/24/25
Message 10

Introduction

- Title Of The Message: “How Then Should We Live?”

- **The Title –**

- **Is Take from Francis Schaeffer**

- Who wrote a great book with that title

- How Should We Then Live?

- **In his book**

- He analyzes the rise and decline of Western culture through the lens of Christian worldview
 - Arguing that a society's philosophical and cultural shifts are deeply rooted in its fundamental beliefs about reality.
 - Schaeffer contends that Western civilization, once rooted in Christian absolutes, has gradually shifted towards humanism, leading to moral relativism and ultimately, societal decay
 - He traces this decline through history, examining the fall of Rome, the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Enlightenment, highlighting how each era's worldview impacted its art, philosophy, and societal structures.

- **He Instructs US**

- A Biblical Worldview Matters
 - Without it The Decline of a culture is certain
 - He warns of The Dangers of Humanism

- The Need for Absolute Truth
- Call to Action
 - The book encourages Christians to engage with culture thoughtfully and courageously
 - Offering a biblical perspective on contemporary issues and advocating for a worldview that honors God and provides meaning

• **Now Our Context Today is**

- **I light of the SAME WORLD PROBLEM & SOON RETURN of Christ –**
 - HOW THEN SHOULD WE LIVE?!
- **This is what Paul has just laid out for the Thessalonians in this great BOOK**
 - Quick Review the entire Book
 - Giving God Thanks For You All
 - 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5 / Acts 16-17
 - You Became A Great Examples
 - 1 Thessalonians 1:6-10
 - A Model For Ministry
 - 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12
 - Received The Word Of God
 - 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20

- Established In THE Faith
 - 1 Thessalonians 3:1-13
- How To Walk & Please God
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12
- The Comfort Of The Rapture Part 1 & 2
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- Pre-Tribulation Harpazo
 - Revelation 4 & 5
- The DAY Of The LORD
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

• **Paul Lays Out 4 Practical Ways On - How Then Should We Live**

- The Appreciation For Spiritual Leaders vv. 12-13
- The Attitude We Have Towards Others vv. 14-15
- The Godly Actions We're To Live By vv. 16-22
- The Admonition Paul Gives vv. 23-28

The Appreciation For Spiritual Leaders vv. 12-13

• **First: Paul "URGES..." v. 12a**

1 Thessalonians 5:12 (NKJV)

***12 And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you,
and are over you in the Lord and admonish you,***

- **1. Urge**
 - Greek: Erōtáō
 - Means:

- Contracted / To ask, inquire!
- This isn't a casual suggestion
 - Paul HOPES that they will ACT on what he is about to instruct
 - It's URGENT – that's why he “urges...”
- **2. Paul is Urging**
 - This young church which was **STRUGGLING** in a few areas
 - Remember
 - They were a GOOD Church / Great Example
 - YET they had a few ISSUES that needed to be fixed
 - **Application - No matter HOW STRONG a church IS...**
 - There will always be a FEW Problems
 - WHY –
 - Just Like Every FAMILY has PROBLEMS
 - Just LIKE Every Church Will have Problems
 - Because People – Sinners Under the Same Roof
 - **SO - PAUL URGES –**
 - We will see what that is

• **Second: “Brethren” v. 12b**

1 Thessalonians 5:12 (NKJV)

12 And we urge you, **brethren**, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you,

○ **1. Brethren**

- Greek: **adelphós**
- Means: Denoting UNITY
 - A fellowship of life based on identity of origin...
 - Members of the same family
 - (Matt. 1:2; Luke 3:1, 19; 6:14)
 - Members of the same tribe, countrymen, and so forth
 - (Acts 3:22; 7:23; Rom. 9:3).
 - One of the same nature, a fellow man was regarded as a brother
 - (Matt. 5:22–24, 47)
 - A fellowship of love equivalent to or bringing with it a community of life
 - (Matt. 12:50; Mark 3:35; 10:29, 30; Acts 12:17).
- It was Paul's favorite name for Believers - BRETHREN
 - He used it at least 60 times in his letters
 - He used it 27 times In Thessalonians
- Paul saw the local church as a FAMILY

- Each member was born again by the Spirit of God and were part of God's family
- A FOREVER FAMILY

○ **2. Application**

▪ **It is tragic when believers neglect or ignore the local church**

- No family is Perfect, and no local church is Perfect
 - BUT We need each other!!!

▪ **A Christian needs a church family**

- To GROW
- Develop Gifts
- Serve God
- JUST Your being here is a blessing to others

• **Third: To Recognize Those Who Labor Among You... v. 12c**

1 Thessalonians 5:12 (NKJV)

12 And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you,

○ **1. Paul Urges Them - Recognize those who labor among you**

- Christians are to recognize their leaders / pastors
 - This little church was disrespecting leaders (Elders / Pastors)
 - Thus is the reason for the instructions

○ **2. How Are We To Recognize Them For The Work They Do**

- 3 things
- **1. Labors Among You v. 12a**
 - **Pastors are to LABOR**
 - No ROOM For LAZINESS in the Ministry
 - If a pastor is not willing to work
 - Pretty much 6 days a week
 - With No real START or END time during the day
 - NO 9-5 in the ministry
 - Then there will be a problem
 - Despite popular opinion...
 - A pastor doesn't just work a few hours on Sunday...
 - Most pastor I know work 50-70 hrs. a week
 - YES – God said we ALL should have a Sabbath
 - BUT Pastors attitude is to be available as best he can
 - Pastors Wives must also be ready for THIS CALL
 - Many missed Birthdays, Anniversaries, Holidays, Etc...
 - What Are HIS Priority

- 1. Equip The Saints FEED The Sheep - Prayer and Study

Ephesians 4:11–12 (NKJV)

11 *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,
12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,*

- Acts 6:1–4 – Given continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”
- 2. Discipleship
 - Includes Teaching, Praying, for meeting with, fellowship, Hospital Visits, Etc...
 - Be with Sheep
- 3. Counseling / Comforting
 - A pastor is not God he can't be in 2 places at the same time
 - He may not be able to be where you want him because he is with someone else
 - And everyone thinks their situation is the priority
 - BUT they have no idea what the other persons are going through!

▪ **2. Over You In The Lord v. 12b**

Hebrews 13:17 (NKJV)

17 *Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.*

- **When you pick a local CHURCH to attend –**

- You are also pick a PASTOR to help you grow
 - Who is NOW ACCOUNTABLE to God for you

- **What does this look like**

- The is not Lording over which the Bible says not to do
- It's the role of an Under-Shepherd / Overseer who watches over the church and sheep
- Guides, Comforts, and Challenges you in the Word of God

- **3. The Warnings & Instruction They Give v. 12c**

- And Admonish you
 - Greek; Nouthetéo
 - Means: To warn, admonish, exhort
 - To caution or reproof gently”
- A pastor MUST have the authority to speak God's truth in love to YOU
 - Correction if he sees you getting off course
- Sadly - In today's church members don't want to hear this
 - Example:
 - CCA Person in Ministry Living with Girlfriend
 - After encouraging him in the Word – He left / would not stop living in SIN

- Pastor Taught correctly on Homosexuality
 - Asked by board members to repent
- I could go on all day
 - Let me say this
 - PLEASE hear this
 - When this happens, the person leaving will make up all kinds of stories as to why they are leaving NONE of them will be completely truthful they will attempt to bring down the pastor and or church as they go
 - FOR the most part as a pastor I will not deal with the issue PUBLICLY – yes with the Board but NOT with the whole church
 - In an effort to see the HS work in that persons life and hopes that one day they may get it and return
- **3. Application**
 - **A COMMON Problem in churches today!!!**
 - A lack of
 - Respect
 - Recognize
 - Appreciate
 - For those that lead in the church

- **So why do we need to be urged to Respect, Recognize and Appreciate**
 - Being a Pastor comes at a Cost!!! OR at least SHOULD
 - Most pastors will tell you this is the hardest thing they have ever done
 - Not just the stress and toll not just on themselves BUT on their families is overwhelming
 - Listen to these statistics
 - Drop-out rate for pastors is astronomical?
 - A lot of pastors leave the ministry for good each month, citing burnout or contention in their churches.
 - 80 percent of pastors (and 84 percent of pastors' spouses) are discouraged in their roles
 - For every 20 pastors who go into ministry, only one retires from the ministry.
 - Reason for the burnout / stress
 - Criticism and Conflict.
 - Unrealistic expectations.
 - Committees and Administration.
 - Little family time.
 - Unreliable volunteers.
 - Loneliness
 - Business meetings.

- Power families.
- Member apathy.
- Broken homes
- Hypocrisy.
- Budgets.
- BUT The GREATEST Stress on a Pastor
 - Spiritual WARFARE
 - He wears a target on his back
 - Satan knows if he can take the pastor down many will follow
 - Overwhelming Responsibility
 - Hebrews 13:17 – Responsible
 - Acts 20:26–27 – The Blood of ALL Men

James 3:1 (NKJV)

1 My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

- This is why Paul “urges” the church to show their pastor a little love.

• **Fourth: How To Recognize v. 13**

- **1. Esteem them very highly in love v. 13a**

1 Thessalonians 5:13 (NKJV)

13 and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves.

- **Christians are to esteem their leaders**

- To esteem them very highly in love.
 - They should do this for their WORK'S Sake
 - They don't deserve esteem because of their title, or because of their personality
 - But because of their labor on behalf of God's people.

- **Application**

- If a Christian can't esteem and love their pastor
- They should PRAY –
 - Ask God for the right heart
 - Or Ask God to send them some place else
- **2. Be at peace among yourselves v. 13b**

1 Thessalonians 5:13 (NKJV)

13 and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves.

- **Nothing has changed**

- A congregation being told to BE AT PEACE
- Part-Time – Full-Time Ministry WELL over 30 years
 - One of the Biggest struggle UNITY in the church

- **Want to encourage a pastor**

- Love and serve each other
- Stop Fighting with one another

- NO Gossip
- Encourage and build each other up!

The Attitude We Have Towards Others vv. 14-15

• First: Exhort Some v. 14a

1 Thessalonians 5:14 (NKJV)

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.

- **1. Warn them that are unruly**
 - Greek: átaktos
 - Means: Unruly - “Not arranged or disciplined”
 - It was used of a soldier who was always going his own way rather than marching in line with the others
 - The unruly were those who were out of step with the God’s direction
 - **Application**
 - KNOW this
 - Not every person in a church may be at church for the same reasons you are
 - MOST are here to
 - Grow, learn, walk closer to Jesus and others
 - Others may be here for personal gain
 - Pick up clients

- Pick up a spouse
- Enjoy the benefits of the Body of Christ – but never give – ONLY TAKE
- Some see the Lord moving in a church
 - Want to come in and start finding members for their own church
 - May even get a hold of the pastor's email list and ask people for money... to support that work...
 - Then they will head up the road only a few miles and start a church – splitting apart the church they left...
- So Be Careful
 - That you let an unruly person bend your ear with grumbling or gossip
 - If there's a legitimate issue
 - There's a biblical way to handle it
- A Pastor MUST protect the FLOCK

Romans 16:17–18 (NKJV)

17 Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.

18 For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

• Second: Encourage Others v. 14b

1 Thessalonians 5:14 (NKJV)

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.

- **1. Comfort the Fainthearted**

- Greek - oligópsuchos
- Means: Little souls or Small-souled
 - These are the
 - Worried, discouraged and fearful
- We must teach the “fainthearted”
 - That the trials of life will help to enlarge them and make them stronger in the faith
 - We must encourage them to grow and stand on their own

- **Third: Enable Some v. 14c**

1 Thessalonians 5:14 (NKJV)

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, **uphold the weak**, be patient with all.

- **1. Uphold the Weak**

- Greek: Asthenés
- **Means: Those without strength**
 - Weak in the faith
 - NOT grown strong in the Lord.
 - Perhaps new in the Lord or someone who hasn't grown much
- **A leader is to**

- This is what Discipleship is all about
- One to One – Help you get grounded – Built up

• **Fourth: Endure All v. 14d**

1 Thessalonians 5:14 (NKJV)

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, **be patient with all.**

○ **1. Be Patient with ALL**

- Wronged by the dishonesty of others
- Wronged by the words of others
- Wronged by the attitudes of others
- Wronged by the deeds of others

○ **2. Application - BE Longsuffering**

1 Corinthians 13:4 (NKJV)

4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;

Colossians 3:12–14 (NKJV)

12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;

13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.

14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

- To be of a long spirit, not to lose heart

• **Fifth: Emphasize Good v. 15**

○ **1. No one renders evil...pursue that is good v. 15a**

1 Thessalonians 5:15 (NKJV)

15 See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.

- Our world is all about exchanging evil for evil.
 - Hit me and I'll hit you back
 - Eye for an eye and many teeth for a tooth
 - This is what makes the world go round... evil is a chain reaction.

Romans 12:17–21 (NKJV)

17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.

18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.

20 Therefore “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.”

21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

The Godly Actions We're to Live By vv. 16-22

• **First: Rejoice Always v. 16**

1 Thessalonians 5:16 (NKJV)

16 Rejoice always,

- **1. How? Because HE is Always with you!!!**
 - **Even in life's darkest moments – even in the most painful situations**
 - Happiness is based on circumstances, but joy comes from God.
 - Great Examples:
 - I think of Paul and Silas in the Philippian jail.

- Joy vs. Happiness
 - Explain
- Our deepest joys are found in our heaviest trials.
 - I love God's promise in Hebrews 13:5, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."
 - God is always with us. That's why we can "Rejoice always."

• **Second: Pray Without Ceasing v. 17**

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NKJV)
17 pray without ceasing,

○ **1. What Does this Mean**

- In other words, maintain an open-ended conversation with God.
- But here Paul is commanding "constant prayer."
- All throughout the day – under the surface of our lives – we can carry on a uninterrupted dialogue with God.

• **Third: Be Thankful v. 18**

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NKJV)
18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

○ **1. What does it SAY**

▪ **In EVERYTHING**

- Greek: Pas
- Means: ALL Includes the idea of oneness, a totality or the whole,

- *Smith; Everything means everything. That isn't easy to do. In fact that is impossible to do, unless I know and acknowledge that God is in control of my life and of the things that transpire in my life. My life is in His hands. Nothing happens to me but what God allows it to happen to me. Nothing can happen to me, except God allows it to happen. And if God allows it to happen to me, He has a good purpose for it. For all things are working together for good to those who love God and are the called according to His purpose. And God loves me supremely!"*

▪ **DO you TRUST GOD**

- TRUST Him in every Circumstances in YOUR LIFE
- He has a perfect Plan
- Submitted to the Struggle RIGHT Away as FAST as I Can
 - So I don't miss His plan because you are you are wallowing in self-pity...
- **KNOW that IN Christ We are not a VICTIM BUT VICTORIOUS**

• **Fourth: Do not quench the Spirit v. 19**

1 Thessalonians 5:19 (NKJV)
19 Do not quench the Spirit.

○ **1. Quench**

- **Means: To extinguish, stifle - the power or energy of something**
 - We have the power of the Spirit –

- But we can sin against the Holy Spirit and shoot ourselves in the foot
- **How do we hinder the Holy Spirit and limit His work**
 - Sin
 - Compromise
 - Not trusting the Lord
 - Rejecting Him
 - Doing things in our flesh

• **Fifth: Do not despise prophecies v. 20**

1 Thessalonians 5:20 (NKJV)

20 Do not despise prophecies.

- **1. It's talking about the Word of God...spoken or written**
 - **NT primarily – forth telling vs. fore-telling like in the OT**
 - Declaring the word – Sermon exhortation
 - Word from a friend
 - Word from the Lord
 - **DON'T Despise that – resist / ignore – get annoyed by**
 - When you harden your heart to the Lord and His word.

• **Sixth: “Test all things; hold fast that which is good” v. 21**

1 Thessalonians 5:21 (NKJV)

21 Test all things; hold fast what is good.

- **1. TEST it – then Hold FAST**

Acts 17:11 (NKJV)

11 These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

• **Seventh “abstain from all appearance of evil” v. 22**

1 Thessalonians 5:22 (NKJV)

22 Abstain from every form of evil.

○ **1. Abstain**

- Greek: **apéchō** –
- Means: To hold off from, as a ship from the shore, to avert, restrain
- STAY AWAY
 - From every way in which sin seduces and attracts us!
 - Even Appearance Example: Lunch with a woman at work...
 - We need to stay away from it all

The Admonition Paul Gives vv. 23-28

• **First: Paul closes his letter with a benediction vv. 23-24**

1 Thessalonians 5:23–24 (NKJV)

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.

○ **1. Sanctify**

- Greek: hagiázō

- Means: To make holy, sanctify. / To make clean, render pure
- **2. Spirit, Soul, and Body**
 - 3 Fold Nature of Man
- **3. Preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**
 - One day we'll stand before Jesus and be declared "blameless."
- **4. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.**
 - Understand, what God starts in you, He intends to finish!

• **Second: Brethren, pray for us**

1 Thessalonians 5:25–28 (NKJV)

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.

- **1. Pray For US**
 - Paul Asked for Prayer – Pray For Pastors to be faithful and bold
- **2. Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss**
 - JB Phillips renders it, "Give a handshake all around"
 - Try a "holy kiss" on some guys, and could get punched in the kisser
- **3. I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren**
 - We've Done that!!!
- **4. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.**

- It's ALL about GRACE

Closing

- Keep Following Jesus!