

FAITH BIBLE FELLOWSHIP of Fairfield Glade

Pastor David M. Evangelista ~ 3.29.09 ~ Studies in 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

"All Things New Series" ~ "It's all In the Family."

Paul's favorite name for believers was "brothers." He used it at least 60 times in his letters. In the two Thessalonians' epistles, he used it 27 times. Paul saw the local church as a family—each member was born again by the Spirit of God and possessed God's nature. His desire was to make the local church families more spiritual to the glory of God. He emphasized:

1. **Family Leadership**
2. **Family Partnership**
3. **Family Worship**

(All within the framework of the local church).

"Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13. Without leadership, a family falls apart. The father is the head of the home; the mother stands with him in love and cooperation. (This is the biblical pattern).

What responsibilities do the brothers and sisters have toward their spiritual leaders?

1.) Accept them. They are God's gifts to the church. They are not dictators, but leaders and examples. As they follow the Lord, we must follow them.

2.) Appreciate them. It is not easy to serve as spiritual leaders. The battles and burdens of leadership are many, and sometimes the encouragements are few.

3.) We are to love them. As brothers, the leaders are "among us" and as leaders they are over us in the Lord. This could be a very strained relationship apart from true Christian love which overlooks weakness and magnifies strengths.

4. We are to obey them. *"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden." Hebrews 13:7. When God's servant, led by God's Spirit, calls us to obey God's word, then we must obey, unless it is obvious that the leaders are out of God's will.*

Family Partnership *(See 1 Thessalonians 5:14-16).* Family members are taught to minister to each other. For instance, the older members are to teach younger members according to: *Titus 2:3-5.* In this section, Paul named some special family members who needed *personal* help.

Note in 1 Thessalonians 5:14: *"And we urge you brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone."* If we do not have rules and standards in the family, we have chaos! Some of the above are "quitters" in the church family. But, instead of scolding them from a distance, we must get close to them and speak tenderly and help them all we can. Often they show no appreciation, but we must always serve in love and be ready to forgive *(See Romans 12:17-21).* If our motive is to be a servant for Jesus' sake, we will never be disappointed *(See 2 Corinthians 4:5).* God wants His family to be happy and that means that each member must contribute to the joy!

Family Worship *(See 1 Thessalonians 5:17-28).* Worship is the most important activity of a local church family! Paul named various elements that make up the worship ministry of the church;

The first of which is **prayer**. It was a high and holy experience when the church united in prayer.

The second is **praise** and **thanksgiving**, which is also a vital element of worship.

The third being the **Word of God** (see *1 Thessalonians 5:17-21*). Apart from God's word we have no certain revelation from the Lord. There may be emotion and even commotion in a church meeting, but unless there is spiritual truth, the Holy Spirit is not at work. It is important that we permit the Spirit of God to teach us the Word of God when we meet to worship.

The fourth is **Godly living**. (See *1 Thessalonians 5:22-24*). The purpose of worship is that we might become more like Christ in character and conduct! Paul emphasized balance in Christian living: "*Abstain from all appearance of evil and the very God of peace sanctify you.*"

Finally, **Christian fellowship**. (See *1 Thessalonians 5:25-28*). Paul ended this epistle with another reminder that the **Word of God** is the important thing in the local church. God's word must govern our conduct and guide our lives!

My challenge to you: We are to read the Word personally but we also need to hear the word in the fellowship of the local church—for the one experience helps balance the other!