

## 1 Thessalonians 5: 9-13a

### “We are family”

#### I.) Intro.

#### II.) Vs. 9-11 Not Appointed to Wrath

#### III.) Vs. 12-13a Keys to a Healthy Church

##### I.) Intro.

Every year around our nation local, state and national leaders do a “*state of the union*” message where the leader speaks of the accomplishments and success of the past year as well as what they hope to accomplish in the new year. Paul’s closing is his “*state of the Church*” address for the newly birthed church in Thessalonica. One of his favorite words in this letter is the word that he uses for the church, 17 times in five chapters Paul refers to these believers as “*brethren*”, or brothers. **It appears as though Paul thinks of this young church as a family.** Even though he and his leadership was forced to leave this newly birthed church only weeks after its conception, he clearly expected its members to function as God ordained. His departure created some unique challenges the greatest was...**who was going to lead this young group.** When I was young my folks would leave my older brothers in charge, which meant instant chaos. They would no sooner walk out the door then we would start fighting. Someone would not want to do his share, while others would not want to submit to their older sibling. That is what this section is all about. Paul puts in order the family unit as a parent would calling back to see how the family is doing. But first he wants to remind them they are all part of the same family.

## II.) Vs. 9-11 Not Appointed To Wrath

Vs. 9 There is a vital truth that we need to realize: **We are on the winning side!** But least we miss understand this we are there not because we are essential to the team's success, no we are on the winning side because Christ has already made us winners!

Paul wanted this young church to know that their security is certain. **They were not appointed to the time of the "Day of the Lord"**. Instead they had obtained salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ! Dear ones our appointment with wrath, though still deserving, has been canceled. God's righteous anger towards our sin has been taken care of when we put our faith in Jesus who took God's wrath for our sins!

Vs. 10 Further more Paul tells them that neither life not death can alter this FACT, if we die prior to the rapture or we are changed in a twinkling of an eye we are going to the reunion party the likes of which the world has never seen before and it will go on for eternity!

Vs. 11 Having stated this FACT Paul declares that we should be building each other up with this truth. I admit that I enjoy watching sports especially improbable comebacks, watching the Griz play this year has been extremely satisfying as practically every game has come down to a last second win. It amazes me to see how one player or one play can change the course of a game. Saints, that's what the body of Christ ought to be doing with each other. When it looks like all is lost and we are down to our last play, come along side your teammate and encourage them in the truth that they have already WON has Jesus will soon be returning for us! I have noticed that it is far easier and less stressful watching a game when I already know that we have won, ill regardless of how poorly they have played. Knowing the outcome is encouraging!

### III.) Vs. 12-13a The Key to a Healthy Church

Vs. 12 In every church there is a leadership structure that is in place and even in this church which was only a few months old Paul had already set up a leadership structure. It is interesting to notice the chief characteristic of those that Paul had placed in leadership was that they had “*labored among you*”. Those that serve in positions of authority are those that work and it is the responsibility of the body of Christ to support those who are doing the work. I’m sure that it must have been difficult at times to submit to those who had gotten saved the same time, those who they knew were as flawed as they were. Yet Paul still outlines **three things** that the church should do with regards to the leadership that Christ has placed over them.

- 1.) Vs. 12 **RECOGNIZE**: The word in the original carries the idea of “**honor or respect**”. Paul tells them that they need to know and respect those who because of their position are over them. Some of the church was struggling with respecting the folks that God had placed over them. Verse 13 makes it clear that their respect and honor was to be based upon their work among them. And that work was based upon their character, as Paul lists **three duties of good leadership based upon godly character**.

- a.) **Labor among you**: This word “labor” literally means to “*feel fatigue to work to the point of being weary*”. These leaders were sold out servants for the benefit of the believers in Thessalonica. So Paul says, “*Honor those who by their character give so much of themselves on behalf of you.*” They

were not leaders like many in the world today that expected that their *position to grant them prestige and privilege*. Far too many political “*civil servants*” are neither civil or servants! But the church is different as those that will be called the greatest of all will be the servants of all. So they are to be respected because of their sacrifice and service!

- b.) **Over you in the Lord:** The word means “*to be placed before you like a superintendent of a household as to lead others.*” **Notice that they are over you but it is in the Lord?** Paul mentions that they had been placed over the body only after he mentions that they were servants among them. In the world those that are over people often not the people that labored among them for others benefit to the point that they are worn out. The body ought to honor those folks in leadership that have demonstrated their position by their service.
- c.) **Admonish you:** The word means to, “*put in mind*”. *Another characteristic of Church leadership beyond their service is seen in their responsibility to warn others in the church if they were out of line.* They had the tough job of having to confront fellow believers if they were not living as they ought. Nothing is more challenging than to have to confront a fellow believer about an attitude or action that is harmful to themselves and church life. To not confront lovingly is to show that the church

doesn't care! This must be done through the Word of God that reveals that the attitude or action is not right.

- 2.) Vs. 13 **ESTEEM**: The word means to “*go over in your mind all the qualities of a person and to an admiration in the Lord of them*”. They were to value them “*very highly*” for their works sake. The truth is that any church that functions well does so because of the leadership! God has placed in positions of leadership people that make this church healthy in Christ. They serve with nothing to gain as if they had nothing to lose! If you can't admire those that God has placed over you in church then either your heart needs to change or you need to change where you fellowship.

Saints we can all find reasons why we don't like a particular church and reasons why you shouldn't make a certain church your home church.

- a.) A lot of those reasons are based upon **personal** preferences....*you want a church where they do only Hymns .... You want a church that only does contemporary music.* S
- b.) Some of those reasons are **doctrinal**....you want a church that believes exactly the same way that you do with regards to the “non-essentials” of the faith.
- c.) Others, are **cultural**.....you need to be in a church where you understand the language....or the culture needs to be in a way that will facilitate spiritual maturity.

But with that said the importance of finding a local fellowship must have as its end not a place where you can COME...but rather a place that encourages you to GO! Based upon the New Testament letters the early church was designed to equip believers to GO and utilize the gifts and talents to reach a hurting and dying world with the great news that Jesus can transform lives.

- I'm certain that we are not a fellowship that pleases everyone that comes
- I'm certain that we will do things and say things that not everyone will agree with all the time.
- I'm certain that those that lead this fellowship have two great loves and demonstrate it every day: The Lord, and His people!