

LIFE WITHIN THE ASSEMBLY (VV. 12–22)

RESPECT FOR SPIRITUAL LEADERS (VV. 12–13)

1 THESSALONIANS 5:12 – GREEN

- Practical instructions for life within the assembly (vv. 12–22).
- These fit a Jewish assembly context but can apply in principle to the Body of Christ.
- Warning: avoid turning such exhortations into a new legal system.
- “Know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you”:
 - Likely one group, not three.
 - “Over you” (PROISTĒMI) and “admonish you” (NOUTHETEŌ) describe recognized leaders.
 - In Judaism, rabbis interpreted Torah with binding force (halakhah).
 - In the Body of Christ, authority is not positional; all members have equal standing (see 2 Corinthians 1:24; 1 Corinthians 3:5–7).
- “Know them” (OIDA):
 - Implies perceptive recognition, not mere awareness.
 - Suggests mutual understanding and respect.
 - Implies a duty for pastors to communicate their thought process clearly.
 - In Paul’s model, leadership functions through mutual respect, not subordination.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:13 – GREEN

- “Esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake.”
 - “Esteem” (HĒGEISTHAI): deliberate recognition of value.
 - Respect comes from love and gratitude, not authority or flattery.
- “And be at peace among yourselves”:
 - May function as the manner of carrying out vv. 12–13.
 - Read together: believers should recognize leaders, esteem them, and thus live in peace.
- The peace principle spans both covenants:
 - Kingdom: Mark 9:50; Matthew 5:9.
 - Circumcision apostles: 1 Peter 3:11.
 - Grace: Romans 12:18.
- Harmony within the assembly reflects mature godliness, not dispensational law.

RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE ASSEMBLY (VV. 14–15)

1 THESSALONIANS 5:14 – GREEN

- Broader exhortation to how believers treat one another.
- “Warn them that are unruly” (ATAKTOS):
 - “Disorderly,” “out of rank,” not necessarily immoral but disruptive.
 - To be WARNED (NOUTHETEŌ)—same term as v. 12.
- “Comfort the feebleminded” (OLIGOPSUCHOS):
 - Literally “small-souled.”
 - Describes the timid or discouraged; they need comfort, not correction.
- “Support the weak” (ASTHENĒS):
 - Likely physical frailty.
 - ANTECHOMAI: to hold up or cling to—active assistance.
- Summary:
 - Three groups: the disorderly (warn), the faint-hearted (comfort), the weak (support).

- Such care preserves peace (v. 13) and sustains assembly harmony.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:15 – GREEN

- “See that none render evil for evil unto any man.”
 - Rooted in Torah morality (Leviticus 19:18; Proverbs 20:22; 24:29).
 - Reiterated by Jesus (Matthew 5:39, 44).
- Expanded application: “unto any man.”
 - Universal ethical command, transcending dispensations.
- “Ever follow that which is good.”
 - Positive pursuit of goodness, not mere avoidance of evil.
 - Similar teaching in Romans 12:17.
- Retaliation is excluded under law, kingdom, or grace alike.

PERSONAL CONDUCT AND SPIRITUAL DISPOSITION (VV. 16–22)

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16–22 – GREEN

- Series of behavioral exhortations—brief, practical, memorable.
- Common in Paul’s closing sections (Romans 12; Philippians 4; Colossians 3).

1. REJOICE EVERMORE

- A settled joy rooted in faith and gratitude, not emotion.
- A determination of the will to remain confident in every circumstance.

2. PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

- PROSEUCHOMAI: standard term for prayer.
- Not unbroken talking but continual practice—an ongoing reflex of dependence.

3. IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS

- EUCHARISTEŌ: “good grace.”
- Not “thankful for everything” but “gracious within everything.”
- The believer’s response should display “good graces” in all situations.

4. QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT

- Imagery: extinguishing a flame.
- In that period, the Spirit’s activity was manifest through miraculous gifts (CHARISMA).
- Suppressing or rejecting these manifestations equated to quenching.
- Contextually transitional—fitting the early church age.

5. DESPISE NOT PROPHECYINGS

- Prophecy was still active revelation.
- To despise such was to disregard God’s Word.
- Today, since Scripture is complete, the direct application is not doctrinal.
- The principle—respect for God’s Word—remains timeless.

6. PROVE ALL THINGS; HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD

- DOKIMAZŌ: to test or assay for genuineness.
- Measure every claim by God’s revelation.
- “Chew the meat and spit the bones”—discernment is vital.

7. ABSTAIN FROM ALL APPEARANCE OF EVIL

- EIDOS: form or visible pattern.
- Avoid not only evil acts but their visible likeness.
- Conduct should have no resemblance to evil forms or systems.
- Collectively, these form a pattern of:
 - Inward joy
 - Continual communion
 - Gracious endurance
 - Discernment
 - Visible holiness
- Though directed to a Jewish assembly, these virtues transcend dispensations and model godly order.