

Introduction and Review

- are you feeling peaceful these days?
- hear this story of an individual who was not at peace!



1 Thessalonians 5:23-28 (ESV)

²³ Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

²⁴ He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

²⁵ Brothers, pray for us.

²⁶ Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss.

²⁷ I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers.

²⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

- we can have _____ with the God of Peace and this can be seen here at the end of 1 Thessalonians

- in these last few verses there is some amazing theology that we can glean and learn from in order to _____ directly to our life and to our present situation!

- we have spent several sermons on the exhortations in 1 Thessalonians _____

- Paul has exhorted us on _____, sexual purity, _____, encouragement, respect in the local congregation, prayer and how to discern _____

- Paul concludes this teaching the same way as he started this section, with prayer for God to work His power so that we can be transformed for His glory!

Outline:

1) (5:23-24) Final _____

2) (5:25-27) Final Commands

3) (5:28) Final Blessing

1) (5:23-24) Final Prayer

(5:23a) Now may the God of _____ himself sanctify you completely,

- now the ESV translates as “now” but it also can be translated as “but”

- so Paul is now concluding this book with a prayer and some final commands!

- do you see how he describes the Lord here?

- He is the God of _____!

- God is peace because the Lord possesses peace and the Lord gives _____

- if you can remember, Paul starts out many of his letters with the “peace greeting”

1 Thessalonians 1:1 – grace and peace to you

Colossians 1:2 To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

- this peace refers to the reconciliation that only the Lord can bring between _____ humanity and Himself, a holy God

- humanity has not been peaceful since the _____ in the Bible

- we see the hostility between Cain and Abel

- we see the lack of peace when God looks upon the wickedness in people in Genesis _____

- and when we _____ forward to right now what do we see with humanity?

- we see riots, anger, bitterness, selfishness and the like

- Most importantly God can give us peace through Jesus Christ _____

- we know that our _____ has created _____ between us and God

- hear what the Lord says He will do when people reject Him!

Deuteronomy 31:17-18 Then my anger will be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and _____ my face from them, and they will be devoured. And many evils

and troubles will come upon them, so that they will say in that day, 'Have not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?' ¹⁸ And I will surely hide my face in that day because of all the _____ that they have done, because they have turned to other gods.

- but because God is peace He provides everlasting peace for _____ in Jesus Christ
- Jesus Christ takes our sin upon Himself and _____ the punishment so that we can have peace with God
- our _____, as a believer in Christ moves us from one of anger towards and from God to peace with God!
- praise the Lord for the wonderful work of Christ, in whom we can be _____ from sin's destruction!
- Paul prays that they would be sanctified or made completely _____
- Paul knows that only the grace of Christ can do this _____ of sanctification and holiness
- because if we are left to our own, it will never get done, the _____ and work of Christ sanctifies us
- therefore we need to _____ God to do this work in us!
- this sanctification process is the Christian becoming more like Jesus
- so we progress is holiness, meaning we continue to put to _____ and put off the sin and put on godly characteristics and the _____ of the Holy Spirit
- for instance if someone cuts you off and gives you the highway salute on the way to church, you could retaliate in a number of ungodly ways
- but being _____ with the Spirit you just let it go and pray for this person
- this purposeful response is a work of the God of Peace!

(5:23b) and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- just as the grace of Christ _____ us, the grace of Christ _____ us blameless

Ephesians 5:27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

- but the grace of Christ also preserves us till the _____ of Christ Jesus
- in Christ you are being kept and preserved by the grace of Christ

(5:24) He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

- the Lord in His grace _____ people and elects them in Christ
- God demonstrates His sovereignty in our _____, meaning that our salvation depends upon God's will!

- Paul has already mentioned this _____ in 1 Thessalonians

1 Thessalonians 1:4 For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has _____ you,

1 Thessalonians 2:12 we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who _____ you into his own kingdom and glory.

1 Thessalonians 4:7 For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness.

1 Thessalonians 5:9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

- I mention these scriptures not to get into a theological debate, because people want to debate everything, but so that you know that you are _____ by nothing that you have done, but by the _____ of Christ alone

- may no one listening think “I am a Christian because I did XYZ”

- but I am a Christian because of the _____ of Christ done for me and by the GRACE of Christ given to me

- the Lord who calls us is faithful, He will _____ this work!

- this is a glorious _____, this is a glorious hope!

- our salvation does _____ depend upon us and our work but on the work of the Lord Jesus

- the Lord is not going to abandon His work half way through, His work will be _____

- I remember when I was on Pelee Island, there was an absolutely huge house that was started but was abandoned, imagine you start building a mansion and never finish it --- sad

- the Lord is not like an incompetent construction worker that never finishes a job

- the Lord starts His _____ and completes His job!

- you cannot help but think about the wonderful promise in the book of Philippians

Philippians 1:6 And I am sure of this, that he who _____ good work in you will bring it to completion at the _____ of Jesus Christ.

2) (5:25-27) Final Commands

Paul gives 3 Final commands in Thessalonians

(5:25) Brothers, pray for us.

- do you see what Paul calls them one last time? “_____”

- Paul uses this phrase to remind them that they belong to the _____ of God, and the _____ of God

- Paul is asking His spiritual family, or the family of God, to pray for them

- Paul exhorts them to _____ several times in this book

3:12-13 – pray for growing love and growing holiness

5:16-18 – a call to _____ without ceasing and for thankfulness in all things

5:23 – a prayer for complete _____ in the Lord

- and now Paul calls them to pray for him!
- this shows _____ in the life of Paul
- sometimes when we read Acts we think that Paul is almost invincible
- but here, with this prayer request, we see that Paul is not depending upon his intellect or his knowledge or his personal _____ but the Lord
- as strong and mighty as you might think Paul is, he _____ upon the Lord and here we see that even Paul needs _____ grace from the Lord
- for example, Paul asks for prayer for his missionary efforts from the Ephesians

Ephesians 6:19 and (pray) also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the _____,

- therefore pray for your _____ leadership, I know that most of you do, but they need prayer!
- therefore pray that they would grow in _____, pray that they would lead in the wisdom of Christ and His Word!

(5:26) Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss.

- this command is given several times in the New Testament
- Romans 16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.
- 1 Corinthians 16:20 All the brothers send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.
- 2 Corinthians 13:12 Greet one another with a holy _____.
- 1 Peter 5:14 Greet one another with the kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

- now this is not a practice that most of us have ever seen before
- likely this holy kiss refers to the act of reconciliation not just a friendly _____
- Paul has already talked about the tension in the congregation in 1 Thessalonians 5:12-15
- here Paul is _____ the congregation to be at peace among themselves
- some think that Covid restrictions cannot allow this _____ to be followed
- but you do not need to _____ someone in order to bring about reconciliation
- furthermore you do not need to get _____ to someone to offer a friendly greeting

(5:27) I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers.

- Paul puts this church under oath before the Lord

- Paul wants this letter to be _____ to all the brothers
- some think that Paul was concerned that people would try and censor this _____ because of the exhortation section and not let the whole church read it
- Paul wants this _____ to know that this letter is very important
- it could have also been a circular letter meaning that this _____ was to be read not only to the Thessalonian church but also to the churches in the area of Thessalonica

- we see another reference to a circular letter (meaning to be read by churches other than the one to which it is addressed) in the book of Colossians

Colossians 4:16 And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also _____ the letter from Laodicea.

3) (5:28) Final Blessing

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

- this letter started out with grace and peace

1 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: _____ to you and peace.

- and now the letter ends in _____ and the reminder that God is a God of _____

- Paul ends this letter similarly to how he ends other letters with a _____ or an anticipation of the grace of God to be with them

- Paul ends the _____ letter of Thessalonians the same way

2 Thessalonians 3:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

- this is the same as the book of Philippians

Philippians 4:23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

- but what is the _____ that Paul prays will be with them? What is this grace all about?

- the basic definition of grace is unmerited _____ given by God to people who do _____ deserve it

- or we could say, the _____ of God is shown to people who are not _____ and do not even _____ this goodness

- what we _____ deserve is _____ and punishment for our sin, just like when someone breaks the Canadian law they deserve justice!

- the _____ that we deserve from God is eternal punishment away from God's pleasing presence

- but Grace tells us that even though we are _____ of favor God _____ this good to us anyway!

- just like the song "This is Amazing Grace" -- *"this is amazing grace, this is unfailing love, that you would take my place and _____ my cross!"*

- Paul describes this grace in very clear terms in _____ Corinthians to this church

2 Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord _____ Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became _____, so that you by his poverty might become _____.

- Jesus, although He is God, came to _____ and He served sinful people by taking the punishment and the consequences of the sins of the people of God
- Jesus bore the justice that we ought to _____ because we sin, we _____ against God and we break God's commands
- but by the act of Jesus becoming _____, mainly His death, we are given the ability to become _____, this richness is His grace, His favor, His _____, and His forgiveness

- we also know that we are _____ by grace, that God calls us and elects us according to His grace

Galatians 1:6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel--

- we are also justified by grace or made _____ with God by faith
- grace is something that we can only receive through _____, we cannot earn it!

Ephesians 2:5-8 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ-- by grace you have been saved-- ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable _____ of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through _____. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

Application

1) Pay Attention To The Word Of God

- Paul wanted to make sure that this _____, which is the Word of God, was read and paid attention to!
- if Paul put us under an oath would you have broken that oath?
- do we have this desire to _____ the voice of God?
- do we take the time to spend in the _____ of God?
- I remember I met a person who was going to become a youth pastor and he confessed to me that he had not read his Bible all semester
- this person had lots of _____ to read His Bible
- this was not a matter of time but of _____
- we need to be a people who devote ourselves to _____ EVERY DAY!
- Paul wanted these Christians to read and _____ Thessalonians, the Lord wants us to do this with all _____ books!

Psalms 119:14 In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches.

Psalms 119:72 The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

Psalms 119:127 Therefore I love your commandments above gold, above fine gold.

2) Look at the Lord

- although this _____ is at the conclusion of the book it should not be disregarded
- here in this passage we see the very _____ of God!
- God Himself is _____
- how does God give us peace on _____?

Luke 2:14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

God is peace!

- God gives us peace through the person and work of the Lord _____
- Jesus Christ gives us this _____ with God
- we see people who are in absolute confusion and despair because they do not _____ the God of Peace!

God is faithful!

- we can cling to this _____
- the promises of God are _____ and He will fulfill them!

God is gracious!

- we see this _____ fulfilled in the person and work of the Lord Jesus!
- do you _____ this God of peace, this God who is faithful and this _____ is who is gracious?
- if you do praise the Lord for _____ calling and grace in your life!
- let us _____ and praise the Lord for His greatness and grace
- if you _____ know the Lord and are unsettled and you are not at peace, look to the person of the Lord Jesus!
- see the peace that Jesus brings _____ you and God
- your sin has alienated you from God, but _____ brings reconciliation!
- God is _____, no matter how bad you think you have sinned there is mercy in Christ
- many people think they are too far gone to come to the Lord, you are _____!
- Paul, who wrote this letter, was responsible for the approval of the murder of Christians
- the Lord is peace, the Lord is _____ and He is also gracious and He gives this grace and mercy to people who do _____ deserve it!
- _____ to Christ and experience peace and grace
- _____ in His work on the Cross alone for your peace and mercy!