

Body Life

1 Thess 5:12-28



Background: Christians are not just individuals in relation to God but part of God's family. We belong to a community that stretches through time and space: one holy, catholic and apostolic church. We should also belong to a local group of God's people, a local church. Paul wrote his letters to specific communities or their leaders. In the final section of 1 Thessalonians he gives some instruction for the believers meeting together as a gathered community. At PBCC we are unable to gather in person, but are seeking to still be a gathered community through livestreamed services and Zoom meetings. We are seeking to maintain Body Life as a local expression of the Body of Christ.

Sermon Text: 1 Thess 5:12-28 (NIV)

¹² Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. ¹³ Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. ¹⁴ And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone. ¹⁵ Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray continually, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not treat prophecies with contempt ²¹ but test them all; hold on to what is good, ²² reject every kind of evil.

²³ May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

²⁵ Brothers and sisters, pray for us. ²⁶ Greet all God's people with a holy kiss. ²⁷ I charge you before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers and sisters.

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

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. As you reflect on the sermon, what stands out to you most?
- b. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- c. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?

2. Sermon questions (pick 3)

- a. Do you have a strong feeling of being part of the “family” of God, both the universal family and the particular family? Why or why not?
- b. Here is the tagline quote from the Oakland church: “We are people who don’t belong together, gathered around Jesus, for the sake of those who don’t belong.” We can learn to belong together. In what way can you learn to belong together more? In what way can PBCC help?
- c. Horizontal Relationships: Among other things, Paul encouraged the Thessalonians to live at peace with one another and be patient with one another. Which one would you like to learn how to do better? Make that request part of your prayers and keep a journal for the times the Spirit moves you in this way.
- d. Vertical Relationship: The Thessalonians were “paying attention to their vertical relationship with God.” They did this by rejoicing, praying and giving thanks. Are you paying attention to your relationship with God during this pandemic? Why or why not?
- e. This text is full of exhortations from Paul. Of all the exhortations, which one would you like the Spirit to work in your life?
 - Caring for the “little people”
 - Peace with everyone (inside and outside the church)
 - Patience with everyone (inside and outside the church)
 - Overcoming evil with good
 - Rejoicing
 - Praying
 - Giving thanks