

Intro.**1 Thes. 5:12-28**

- A. When someone tells me they are going to treat me *like family* there is a special, warm, affectionate picture that comes in my mind.
 - 1. It's a picture of being comfortable & being able to just be myself.
 - 2. It is the chance to *make myself at home* (understanding proper respect to one I'm visiting is due).
- B. One of Paul's most affectionate & favorite word's for *believers in Christ* was “*brethren.*” (60 x's)
 - 1. Paul saw the Christ's church as a family, born of God **1 Pt. 1:22-25** & possessing His nature (**2 Pt. 1:3f**)
 - 2. Family provides & protects & nourishes family members & friends.
- C. What are three essentials for a happy, thriving family? (text)

Discuss.**I. Every Family Needs GOOD LEADERSHIP. 1 Thes. 5:12-13**

- A. God has provided for leadership in the family.
 - 1. Husband & father is *head* of the household, the wife & mother standing with him in love & cooperation.
 - 2. Children who respect God's order for the family will love, honor and obey their parents **Eph. 5:25; 6:1**
 - a. Martin Gross (*The Psychological Society*) tells of 60,000 guidance workers & 7,000 school psychologists in Am. public education who many times must function as surrogate parents in giving advice.
 - b. Many young people need proper guidance, but no one can replace a loving, faithful father or mother.
- B. Similar leadership is needed in God's family, so God sets *bishops* (overseers) to lead the church.
 - 1. These leaders are sometimes referred to as *elders, pastors/shepherds* (**Eph. 4:11**)
 - 2. Like godly fathers, *elders* guide God's family towards a heavenly home, & brothers & sisters in that family should love, honor & submit to their leadership, *for they watch for our souls*, **Heb. 13:17**
 - a. We need to **accept** them as examples & leaders, which means we follow their lead.
 - b. Should **appreciate** them (know, understand, recognize, esteem). They are not to be taken for granted.
 - c. **Love** them as brothers who care about us & are dedicated to the Lord. (Obedience is implied.)
 - 3. Respect for good God-given leadership is *PEACE in the church* (or family)!

II. Families Are A PARTNERSHIP. 1 Thes. 5:14-16

- A. Our society seems to be rediscovering (too late) that families need to be together. (TV ads)
 - 1. Families that seldom spend time together eating, working & playing together usually experience disaster
 - 2. Bonding can only come about when time is spent together in different activities.
 - 3. We watch with amazement the quick development of a younger child who mimics older siblings.
 - 4. Hearts fill with pride when we see good character traits in children that were 1st in Dad & Mom.
- B. In God's family, church members experience & observe a similar partnership & commoroderary.
 - 1. Older members teach the younger, & encourage them, especially in times of difficulty, **Tit. 2:3-5**
 - 2. Notice some special needs in God's family to which church leaders minister (c. **Eph. 4:12**)—
 - a. **5:14** *warn the unruly*= careless, out of line – some degree of order & cooperation is necessary
 - b. *Comfort the faint hearted* = gently encourage, *uphold the weak* (Don't let go; they might fall.)
 - c. *Be patient towards all*, is required in any family, or group of people.
 - d. **5:15f** Watch your motives! ⇨ Pursue what is good for everyone! *Joyfulness* takes burden out of work
 - 3. Love, joy, patience & peace = *fruit of the Spirit* **Gal. 5:22**, developed as we submit to Spirit of Christ.
- C. Partnership is vital to healthy development of the home & the church. Each is a helper or a hinderer.

III. Families Need To WORSHIP GOD (together). 1 Thes. 5:17-28

- A. It is very healthy for families to worship God together.
 - 1. There are examples of good, functional Bible families that worshipped God together (Cornelius).
 - 2. Disfunctional families => Eli & sons, Solomon who compromised convictions & worshipped idols.
- B. Conversation between Jesus & Samaritan woman in Jn. 4 set the parameters for appropriate worship. **Jn. 4:21-24** (c. **Ecc. 12:13**) Not entertainment, or what pleases men, but *in truth*, according to His will.
 - 1. Includes *prayer*, (vs. 17) **Ac. 4:23-31** is just of many examples of Christians praying to God.
 - 2. *Praise* & thanksgiving is typical of N. T. worship (vs. 18). Songs of praise express our love & gratitude to God (c. **Eph. 5:19 & Col. 3:16**).

3. Worship also includes *prophecies* (i.e., the speaking forth of God's word), **vs. 19-21**
 - a. God's will has been delivered once for all (**Jude 3**), & it completes us (**2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pt.1:3**)
 - b. While Divine revelation as now ceased (c. **1 Cor. 13:8-10**) God's word abides forever, **1 Pt. 1:25**
4. One purpose of worship is to motivate us to be more godly & Christ-like, **Heb. 10:24-26**, so Paul admonishes us in **1 Thes. 5:22**
5. The whole of worship includes the idea of fellowship with God & one another, as in **5:25-28**.

Concl.

- A. In vs. **11** of our text, Paul speaks of *comforting* and *edifying* one another in God's family.
- B. In vs. **27** he reminds us that our life, our example may be the only Bible that many ever read.
 1. When people look at you & your spiritual life, what do they see?
 2.what has the Heavenly Father seen today in you?
 - a. A child who loves & obeys Him, always seeking to please Him.
 - b. A cooperative member of the family of God.
 - c. Or one who is a stranger, who He would love to adopt into His family, but who is refusing to submit to His holy will & become one of His.
 - d. Does he see one who has been away from Him & unfaithful, but who is running, coming home?