

I Thessalonians

Chapter 5:12-28

¹² But we **ask** you, brothers and sisters, to **recognize** those who **diligently labor** among you and are in **leadership** over you in the Lord, and **give** you **instruction**,¹³ and that you regard them **very highly** in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.

Ask > (Precept Austin) (*erotao* = ask, inquire) means to ask for, usually with implication of an underlying question. The verb does not carry the note of an authoritative command but rather that of a friend making an urgent appeal to a friend.

The writers at Precept Austin relay four times the Lord Jesus uses the same word in His prayer to the Father on our behalf:

John 14:16 > ¹⁶ I will **ask** the Father, and He will give you another Helper, so that He may be with you forever;

John 17:9 > ⁹ I **ask** on their behalf; I do not **ask** on behalf of the world, but on the behalf of those whom You have given Me, because they are Yours;

John 17:15 > ⁵ I am not **asking** You to take them out of the world, but to keep them away from the evil one.

John 17:20 > ²⁰ "I am not **asking** on behalf of these alone, but also for those who believe in Me through their word,

Recognize > (Strong's) *oida* > to have seen or perceived, to know

(Vincent) > Recognize them for what they are, and as entitled to respect because of their office.

Diligently labor > (Strong's) to grow weary, toil

Leadership > (MacArthur) literally means "to stand before" and conveys the notion of authoritatively presiding, leading, or directing.

Give ... instruction > (What a wonderful word! Take a look!) (Precept Austin) (*noutheteo* from *noús* = mind + *tithemi* = place) literally means to place in the mind and so to warn or give notice to beforehand especially of danger or evil. The idea is to lay it on the mind or heart of the person, with the stress being on influencing not only the intellect, but also the will, emotions and disposition.

Very highly > (Strong's) beyond measure, exceedingly

¹⁴ *We urge you, brothers and sisters, **admonish** the **unruly**, encourage the **fainthearted**, **help** the **weak**, be patient with everyone.* ¹⁵ ***See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek what is good for one another and for all people.***

(MacArthur) (In verses 14-15) He (Paul) identified five types of struggling sheep that the healthy sheep needed to deal with:

- The Wayward (*unruly*), who needed to get back in line;
- The Worried (*fainthearted*), who needed to have more courage, faith, boldness, and confidence;
- The Weak (*weak*), who needed to be more disciplined in holiness;
- The Wearisome (*patient with everyone*), who needed to keep pace in obedience;
- The Wicked (*no one repays another with evil ...*), who needed to behave righteously.

Admonish > Interesting! This is the same word we saw earlier > (*noutheteo* from *noús* = mind + *títhemi* = place) literally means to place in the mind and so to warn or give notice to beforehand especially of danger or evil. The idea is to lay it on the mind or heart of the person, with the stress being on influencing not only the intellect, but also the will, emotions and disposition.

Unruly > (Strong's) *ataktos* > out of order, out of place (from *a* > not + *tasso* > to draw up in order, arrange)

(MacArthur) Paul identified the wayward by the term unruly (*ataktos*), which in extrabiblical Greek often occurred in a military context and referred to a soldier who was out of rank and behaved in a disorderly, insubordinate manner.

Fainthearted > (HELPS) *oligopsuchos* > fainthearted (from *oligos* > little in quantity + *psyche* > soul)

Help > (Walvoord) The Greek word *antecheste*, translated "help," means "to hold yourself over against, to hold on to, cling to, hold up." The stronger sheep are to hold up the weaker ones.

(Vincent) The primary sense is, keeping one's self directly opposite to another so as to sustain him. (My knee surgery)

Weak > (Strong's) *asthenes* > without strength, weak (from *a* > not + *sthenoo* > to strengthen)

See that no one repays evil ... > This was Paul's consistent personal attitude throughout First and Second Corinthians. He kept that door of their repentance firmly open throughout both books and constantly provided them with ways to grow and mature.

Wuest translates the end of this sentence > *but always be striving for that which is beneficial for one another and for all men.*

¹⁶ Rejoice **always**, ¹⁷ pray **without ceasing**, ¹⁸ **in everything** give thanks; for this is the **will of God** for you in Christ Jesus.

Always > (Strong's) at all times

Without ceasing > (Strong's) incessantly

(Precept Austin) Greek writers used the adverb translated "without ceasing" to describe a hacking cough

Interesting information! > (Precept Austin) Out of approximately 667 recorded prayers in the Bible, there are about 454 recorded answers.

(Precept Austin) Jesus told His disciples to... (**Matthew 7:7-8**)

- **"Ask** (present imperative = command to keep on asking), and it shall be given to you;
- **Seek** (present imperative = command to keep on seeking), and you shall find;
- **Knock** (present imperative = command to keep on knocking), and it shall be opened to you.
- For everyone who **Asks** (present tense = as their habitual practice) receives,
- and he who **Seeks** (present tense = as their habitual practice) finds,
- and to him who **Knocks** (present tense = as their habitual practice) it shall be opened.

In everything > (HELPS) *en pas* > *in each, every* (Notice that the word used is "in" ... not "for")

Will of God > This is the literal translation of the Greek

(Walvoord) Three exhortations are grouped together in verses 16-18. It is not as clear in the English as it is in the Greek New Testament. Verse 18 says, "for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you," and it seems clear from the Greek that these three commands—"rejoice," "pray," and "give thanks"—are summed up as a unit, as combining the will of God.

(Wuest) *Always be rejoicing. Be praying unceasingly. In everything be giving thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

¹⁹ Do not **quench** the Spirit, ²⁰ do not **utterly reject prophecies**, ²¹ but **examine** everything; **hold firmly** to that which is good, ²² **abstain** from every **form** of evil.

Quench > (Strong's) a primary verb > extinguish, quench

(Robertson) (The Greek grammar) means to stop doing it or not to have the habit of doing it. It is a bold figure. Some of them were trying to put out the fire of the Holy Spirit, probably the special gifts of the Holy Spirit

(Precept Austin) The Greek grammar) suggests that the recipients are being told to stop doing something they have already begun

(Wuest) *Stop stifling and suppressing the Spirit.*

Utterly reject > (Strong's) to despise, treat with contempt

(Robertson) Same construction, stop counting as nothing

Prophecies > (Vine) Though much of the Old Testament prophecy was purely predictive, prophecy is not necessarily, nor even primarily, = foretelling. It is the declaration of that which cannot be known by natural means, Matthew 26:68, it is the forth-telling of the will of God, whether with reference to the past, the present, or the future. The relation between Aaron and Moses illustrates the relation between the prophet and God, Exodus 4:16; 7:1 ... With the completion of the canon of Scripture prophecy apparently passed away. In his measure the teacher has taken the place of the prophet, cp. the significant change in 2Peter 2:1. The difference is that, whereas the message of the prophet was a direct revelation of the mind of God for the occasion, the message of the teacher is gathered from the completed revelation contained in the Scriptures.

Examine > (Strong's) *dokimazo* > to test, by implication to approve

(Utley) The word (*dokimazō*) implies "to test with a view toward approval"

(Wuest) *Stop counting as nothing divine revelations given in the local assembly by the one who receives them, but be putting all things to the test for the purpose of approving them, and finding that they meet the requirements, put your approval upon them.*

Hold firmly > (Strong's) *katecho* > *kata* > down + *echo* > to hold > to hold fast, hold back, hold down

(Wuest) *Be constantly holding fast that which is good.*

Abstain > (Strong's) *apecho* > This word has the same source word as above > *echo* > to hold. But the prefix is *apo* > off, or away. Therefore > *hold back, keep off, to be away, be distant*

Form > (Precept Austin) (*eidos* from *eído* = see) literally means that which is seen or what is visible and then the external appearance (shape and structure) of something as it appears to someone. (Every *kind* of evil is the way in which almost all translations understand the text)

(Precept Austin) There are only 5 uses of *eidos* in the NT...

Luke 3:22 > ²² and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in **bodily form** like a dove, and a voice came from heaven: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well pleased."

Luke 9:29 > ²⁹ And while He was praying, the **appearance** of His face became different, and His clothing became white and gleaming.

John 5:37 > ³⁷ And the Father who sent Me, He has testified about Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His **form**.

2 Corinthians 5:7 > for we walk by faith, not by **sight**

1 Thessalonians 5:22 > abstain from every **form** of evil

²³ **Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.** ²⁴ **Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will do it.**

Now > (Precept Austin) marks a transition from the previous commands to a short but spiritually rich prayer

(Frame) it is as "if Paul had said: "I have exhorted you to ethical consecration and to the things that make for peace, but God himself is the only power that can make the exhortation effective."

Peace > (Strong's) *eirene* > one, peace, quietness, rest

(HELPS) properly, *wholeness*, i.e. when all essential parts are joined together

Sanctify > (Strong's) *hagiazō* > to make holy, consecrate, sanctify

(Vincent) The primary idea of the word is *separation*. Hence ἅγιος, the standard word for *holy* in the Septuagint is, primarily, *set apart*.

(Wuest) *hagiazō* does not mean... merely "to set apart," but in the case of the pagan word, "to set apart for the gods," and in the case of the Christian word "to set apart for God."

Entirely > (Strong's) complete, perfect (later in Strong's) complete to the end, i.e. Absolutely perfect -- wholly.

(HELPS) derived from *hólos*, "whole" and *télos*, "end-purpose") – properly, *wholly* (holistically), "fully-layered" (all levels present)

(Precept Austin) (This word) is used only here in the NT and means complete to the end, i.e. absolutely perfect, wholly complete, completely-entirely!

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely > A very simple question is answered in this verse. "Would you like the peace that the Lord gives?" Live a life that is set apart for Him.

(Wuest) *Now, may the God of peace himself consecrate you, every part of each one of you, to His worship and service*

Spirit ... Soul ... Body > (Pyne) The "spirit" is the part of us that enables us to communicate with God. The "soul" makes us conscious of ourselves. The "body" is the physical part that expresses the inner person.

Interesting comment from Utley > Humans do not have a soul—they are a soul (cf. **Gen. 2:7**).

Gen. 2:7 > ⁷ *Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living person.*

Person > (Strong's) *nephesh* > a soul, living being, life, self, person, desire, passion, appetite, emotion

(Utley) The Hebrew word *nephesh* (see immediately above) is used of both mankind and the animals in Genesis (cf. Gen. 1:24; 2:19), while "spirit" (*ruah*) is used uniquely of mankind (the breath of life).

Kept > (Strong's) to watch over, to guard

Complete > (Strong's) complete, entire

(HELPS) from *hólos*, "whole" and *kléros*, "a lot, cast to better discern God's preferred-will") – properly, "all that is included (apportioned) through divine lot."

(Precept Austin) (*holokleros* from *holos* = all, the whole [holos gives us *holograph*, a 360-degree, three-dimensional depiction of an object] + *kleros* = part, share, lot, allotment or all that has fallen by lot) literally is the "whole lot" and thus means having the entire allotment, complete in all its parts and in no part wanting or unsound.

(Wuest) *and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved in their entirety blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will do it > (Wuest) *Faithful is He who gives you the divine summons, who also will do it.*

²⁵ **Brothers and sisters, pray for us.** ²⁶ **Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss.**

Pray for us > (Constable) Paul believed that intercessory prayer would move God to do things that He would not do otherwise

(Utley) Prayer somehow releases the power of God for effective ministry. The sovereign God has chosen to limit Himself in some areas to the prayers of His children (cf. James 4:2). What a responsibility this puts on each one of us as Christians to pray!

(Hiebert) The ministry of prayer is the most important service that the Church of Christ can engage in.

For > (Hiebert) The preposition rendered "for" literally means "around, about" and pictures the prayers of the readers as surrounding the writers and their work.

²⁷ **I put you under oath by the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers and sisters.**

Put you under oath > (Vincent) This strong appeal may perhaps be explained by a suspicion on Paul's part that a wrong use might be made of his name and authority (see **2 Thessalonians 2:2**), so that it was important that his views should be made known to all. Lightfoot refers to **2 Thessalonians 3:17**, as showing a similar feeling in his anxiety to authenticate his letter.

II Thessalonians 2:2 > ² *that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit, or a message, or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.*

II Thessalonians 3:17 > ¹⁷ *I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand, and this is a distinguishing mark in every letter; this is the way I write.*

²⁸ **May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.**