

### 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

In the NIV bible there is a sub-heading for this section, "Final Instructions." It is kind of like those last minute things you say just before you leave. Usually a rapid-fire collection of statements that comes straight from the heart. This list in 1 Thessalonians is a classic list. Straight from the heart of Paul to a church he loves.

You could get discouraged reading this list thinking to yourself "I could never do all that!" However Paul's last words give encouragement, strength and a way forward. "The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it."

Living out the Christian life is more about **allowing** the Lord to transform you than you **trying** to meet a list of standards and behaviours.

As we explore this section together, allow the Holy Spirit to deeply challenge you and also to encourage you that He wants to work in your life to help you become more like Jesus!

Bless,  
Nick

#### Getting to know you

What do you enjoy most in life?

What do you think God enjoys most?

What observations would you make about any differences in these two lists?

#### Into the Bible

Why do you think there is to be respect for leaders? What do the following verses tell us about the role of leaders in the church?

Hebrews 13:17

Acts 20:28-31

Ephesians 4:11-16

1 Thessalonians 5:14-15 gives very straightforward commands outlining how to live in peace with one another. Put these into your own words and think of real life examples where these are worked out. Can you think of examples where Jesus did these things?

- Warn the idle
- Encourage the timid
- Help the weak
- Be patient with everyone

- Don't pay back wrong for wrong
- Always be kind

Verse 16-22 gives another great list of commands for living out God's will. Again go through each command, put into your own words and then apply real life examples to how this works.

- Be joyful always
- Pray continually
- Give thanks always
- Don't put out the Spirit's fire
- Don't treat prophecy with contempt
- Test everything and hold onto the good
- Avoid every kind of evil

## Application

These are challenging lists. It is great that it is God who is the one who does this. The question is, how does He do this? How can we 'prepare the way' for the Lord to work in our lives?

Reference the following verses to obtain a picture of God's work in our life.

John 17:17

2 Thess 2:13

2 Peter 1:3-9

Philippians 1:3-11

Is there an area of your life where you need to prepare the way for God to 'arrive' in a profound way? In light of the verses above, how can you do this? What could your life group do to support you?

## Going Beyond

John the Baptist was a Holy Spirit-filled man – from birth! (See Luke 1:39-45). He was empowered by God for a special mission – to prepare the way for the coming ministry of Jesus the Messiah by calling people to turn away from their sins and be forgiven. His job was to condition people's hearts for Jesus' message and ministry of salvation. And yet in Matthew 11:11 Jesus says "he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." What does that mean? Study the "kingdom of heaven" and what it means to be a subject, and in what ways we might be "greater than John".