

Lessons From I Thessalonians

Prayer Love Study

(I Th 5:25-27)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Afternoon,
 - a. Greeting...
2. Series of “Lessons From I Thessalonians.”
 - a. Last week we examine “Worship Caretaking.”
 - i. **I Th 5:16-22** “Rejoice always...22 Abstain from every form of evil.”¹
 - b. This week we are going to examine “Prayer Love Study.”
 - i. **I Th 5:25-27** “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.”
3. As Paul continues to instruct our Thessalonian brethren he ends with three expectations for them.
 - a. That they pray for their brethren.
 - b. That they love their brethren.
 - c. That they study with the brethren.
4. With these things in mind let us examine the lessons therein.

I. Pray For The Brethren

- A. As Paul finishes his first letter he asks the brethren to pray for them
 1. Here we have Paul an apostle of the Lord asking for the prayers of brethren that are babes in Christ.
 - i. Considering what James teaches us we see the trust Paul had in his brethren there in Thessalonica.
 - a. **Ja 5:16** “...The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” (NKJV)
 - ii. We also see the great lesson on humility he is teaching showing that even he an apostle needs their prayers.
 - a. This wouldn’t be the only time Paul asks for their prayers.
 1. **II Th 3:1** “Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you”
- B. As Christians we should make it our goal to pray for our brethren continuously
 1. A constant reminder throughout Scripture is the need for prayer.
 - i. **I Th 5:17** “Pray without ceasing.”
 2. Another constant expectation is praying for one another.
 - i. **Ja 5:16** “Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.”

¹ All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

Lessons From I Thessalonians

- C. As Christians we should not be found shy asking for prayers either
 - 1. I am always confused by people who don't ask for the prayers of the brethren.
 - i. If Paul asked for prayers should not we as well?
 - 2. I think some have it that it would be an inconvenience.
 - i. Praying for another brother or sister should never feel like an inconvenience.
 - 3. I think others have thought that their situation "does not rise" to the level of difficulty to warrant asking prayers.
 - i. They usually think along these lines, "my procedure or situation is not that serious the brethren should spend time praying for those in greater need."
 - ii. We must make sure as a people of God there is never too small a reason to pray for someone.
- D. Thus...
 - 1. We must be willing to not only pray for the brethren but ask for prayers from the brethren.

II. Love The Brethren

- A. After asking the brethren to pray for Him, Paul asked them to "show" their love to one another by greeting each other with a holy kiss
 - 1. Paul wanted each brother and sister to know that the other loved them.
 - 2. What better way to do so than each time they met to greet each other as holy, righteous, brothers and sisters.
- B. As Christians today we should make it our goal to make "every" brother and sister feel we love them
 - 1. First meets can tell us a lot concerning how the other feels about us at that moment.
 - i. We all have put our hand out to find the other person cold and/or uncaring toward the gesture.
 - 2. We must strive with all our heart not to have this first impression.
 - i. **I Pt 2:17** "Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor."
 - ii. **I Pt 1:22** "Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart"
- C. Thus...
 - 1. We must be willing to not only desire the love of the brethren but also be loving toward the brethren.

Lessons From I Thessalonians

III. Study With The Brethren

- A. Paul requires of the brethren to make an oath to have the letter read to all the brethren
 1. The word for “charge” or “adjure” is the word for oath.
 - i. “to adjure, put under oath, solemnly entreat” (Thayer, J. H. (1889). A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: being Grimm’s Wilke’s Clavis Novi Testamenti. New York: Harper & Brothers.)
 - ii. “to demand that a person take an oath as to the truth of what is said or as to the certainty that one will carry out the request or command” (Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains. New York: United Bible Societies.)
 - iii. “to force to take an oath, to administer an oath” (Strong, J. (2001). Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.)
 2. The point is that place and oath on the brethren there in Thessalonica.
 - i. **I Th 5:27** “I put you under oath before the Lord...”
- B. How does that harmonize with what Jesus & James said about oaths
 1. Remember what Jesus said...
 - i. **Mt 5:34-37** “But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.”
 2. Remember what James wrote...
 - i. **Ja 5:12** “But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.”
 3. What to keep in mind.
 - i. Jesus and James are dealing with a situation that had become common practice with the Jews and Gentiles.
 - a. The Jews had a hierarchy system of oath taking.
 1. If they swore by the temple they were not bound to keep the oath but if they swore by the gold on the temple they were.
 2. If they swore by the altar they were not bound but if by the gift on the altar they were bound.
 - b. Gentiles had this same type of mentality it appears.
 1. It is like what we used to do as kids, “I promise this or that” then “my fingers were crossed.”

Lessons From I Thessalonians

- ii. Both Jesus and James are not saying people cannot take an oath i.e. make a promise what they are saying is that you better keep it.
 - a. **Mt 23:16-22** “Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’ 17 You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred? 18 And you say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath.’ 19 You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? 20 So whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. 21 And whoever swears by the temple swears by it and by him who dwells in it. 22 And whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it.
- C. As Christians we “should” make an oath or promise to make studying God’s Word with the brethren a priority
 - 1. I cannot for the life of me understand why anyone would purposefully not come to Bible class and study with the brethren.
 - i. We see Paul here feel it was of such a importance that he put the Thessalonian brethren under oath to do so.
- D. Thus...
 - 1. We must be willing to place studying with the brethren as an upmost priority.

CONCLUSION

- 1. Brethren let us never shy away from one another by...
 - a. Praying for each other or asking for prayers for ourselves.
 - b. Loving each other, actively showing this even in our greeting to one another.
 - c. Studying with each other.
- 2. Question: Are you willing to put your brother or sister first and follow the expectation Paul had for the Thessalonian brethren?
- 3. Invitation
 - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
 - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Have Faith In Jesus **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
 - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
 - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**