

SERIES TITLE: ANTICIPATING CHRIST'S RETURN

PART SEVEN: TRANSFORMS OUR ATTITUDES

TEXT: 1 THESSALONIANS 5:12-28

INTRODUCTION.

The church in Thessalonica was started by the Apostle Paul. Although many believed (Acts 17) Paul had to run for his life from an angry mob. Concerned about the young church, Paul sent Timothy to find out. Timothy reported that the church was doing well, but was under a lot of pressure. There were some moral problems, and confusion about the return of Christ. So Paul wrote this first letter of encouragement and instruction. Repeatedly he tells them how to live in light of the coming Christ.

DISCUSSION.

Is the return of Jesus something you think about more often or less often as you get older? Why?

EXAMINATION.

- There are 17 instructions in these verses. They describe how anticipating Christ's return should transform our attitude of: Spiritual Leadership (vv.12-13); Relationships (vv.14-15); and Worship (vv.16-22).
- vv.12-13 Who are the people Paul is talking about and why should we respect them?
- vv.14-15 How would these commands impact your relationships with others?
- Which of these do you find the most difficult and why?
- vv.16-22 Since all these verbs are plural, they refer to what our corporate gatherings should be like.
- How well do our worship services reflect these characteristics?
- Where do we fall short?
- When it comes to the Spirit and prophecy, how do we "test everything"?
- vv.23-24 How does this prayer encourage us about preparing for Christ's return?

APPLICATION.

- Which do you find to be the greatest challenge and why:
 - Your attitude toward Leadership?
 - Relationships?
 - Worship?
- How could you do a better job of warning the idle, encouraging the disheartened, or helping the weak?
- How does the promised return of Christ help us not to pay back wrong for wrong, and to be kind to each other?
- How can you guard against putting out the Spirit's fire in someone's life?
- Fact: What is a key truth that you understood from this passage?
- React: What did you feel?
- Act: What are you going to do?