

“PREDICTIONS ARE VERY HARD ...ESPECIALLY ABOUT THE FUTURE”  
Yogi Berra

# Living in Expectation of the Coming Rapture

1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

WHAT DO OTHERS SEE IN THE WAY YOU LIVE?

and

ARE THEY ASKING WHY YOU LIVE THIS WAY?

To which you can reply...

I AM GETTING READY TO MEET THE LORD IN THE AIR.

Last week we closed with 19 points on  
**what makes a Christ-Glorifying local church.**

The study of Prophecy is always designed to have an impact on how we live our lives in preparation for what is prophesied and in this case we are concentrating on The Rapture.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 deals with our witness in regard to our leadership and authority.

12 **But** (note the flow from verse 11) **Therefore** (because of the coming Rapture..) **encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.** (Now in verse 12, Paul continues his exhortation but changes to a new and important subject for any local church.)

**But we request** (The Present tense means we keep on asking this of you) **of you, brethren,** (believers) **that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you,**

**That you appreciate** (and you will note in the margin of the NASB they inserted) **“to know”** This word has been variously translated in bibles: *acknowledge, honor, respect, appreciate, to give recognition, and to know.*

So what is Paul asking them to do here?

**They are to know the Pastors work; “in order to recognize their Pastor’s value”**

- <sup>1</sup> to you personally**
- <sup>2</sup> to the Local Church**
- <sup>3</sup> to the Body of Christ**

And, therefore, appreciate them and their work.

This of course assumes that your pastor is doing his work in his study and teaching.

Now while the next phrase is directed to those in a local church it describes to the Pastor-Teacher what he should be doing.

**that you *know* those who diligently labor among you**

(there is no word for *diligently*.. we have the Present Participle of the verb meaning LABOR to the point of fatigue, to be worn out.

Unfortunately when most people think of these words they think in terms of physical labor.

Most people do not think you can become fatigued by studying—  
Except, of course for a teenager in high school!

Most pastors think this refers to (hospital visits, counseling, running all the committees in the church, etc.) But that is not what the WORD OF GOD has in view:

### 1 Timothy 5:17

17 **The elders who rule well** (according to the THE WORD OF GOD) **are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard** (NASB has translated this one word by at least two words; *DILIGENTLY LABOR* and here *WORK HARD*) **at reaching** (or KJ) ***in word and teaching.*** (And in order to *work hard*) **to preach in word and to teach** (effectively, truthfully you have to labor to fatigue in) **studying the WORD OF GOD**

### 2 Timothy 2:15

15 **Study to show thyself approved unto God** (not self or mankind) **a workman** (in proclaiming the gospel and in teaching the WORD OF GOD) **that needeth not to be ashamed** (at the Judgment Seat of Christ) **rightly dividing the Word of truth.**

The Pastor-Teacher of the local church is to labor to the point of exhaustion by studying for hours in preparation for teaching accurately the THE WORD OF GOD. **The respect for their authority** is not something of them personally, they are no better than other mature believers. It is their Spiritual gift given to them by God the Holy Spirit with no respect of persons.

12 **But we request of you, brethren, 1<sup>st</sup> that you appreciate those who diligently labor (Present Participle) among you, and 2<sup>nd</sup> have charge over you in the Lord** (Present Passive Participle.)

**The Participle** notes his continual responsibilities. **The Passive voice** means that he receives this authority not of himself but from God. And people, if you do not respect the authority of the Pastor-Teacher where you attend, then it is certainly time for you to move and grow under another Pastor-Teacher. *This is because it is difficult to grow under a Pastor-Teacher whom you do not respect their authority in all areas of the Local Church, and also as soon as there are problems you will immediately be against him and want him out.*

Note what is added here with his authority **and have charge over you...in the Lord**. This means his authority is given to him, not by man but by the Lord. This authority is not given to a board of deacons or some group of elders—it is given to the Pastor-Teacher of that Local Church

3<sup>rd</sup> **and give you instruction,** (Again, the Present Participle describing his function and responsibility before the Lord. The word means that in both his teaching and in leading the local church he is to) **warn, admonish and exhort:**

WARN AS TO DANGERS,  
ADMONISH AS TO PRACTICE and  
EXHORT AS TO PERSEVERANCE.

## Principle of verse 12:

The authority of the Pastor-Teacher of the local church is to have his leadership recognized, known by all. This is one of the requirements for membership in a New Testament church. Authority is set up and recognized by God... in marriage (*the husband*), in a nation (*those in office*) and in the Local Church (*the Pastor-Teacher*).

### AUTHORITY MUST BE TAUGHT TO CHILDREN.

Today parents set themselves above the teacher and the principal. There was a day when both parents and principal recognized the authority of the teacher, but this is no longer the case in most schools.

And therefore too many young people grow up  
not respecting authority in marriage,  
school,  
police  
or in the local church.

Verse 13 continues in the discussion of the Pastor-Teacher...

13 **and that you esteem them very highly** (not only are you to esteem them, but you are to esteem them) **very highly**

This does not mean you are to worship him, or think him as perfect, one who can do no wrong. This wrong praise of a pastor has caused many a problems in Church-History. This means you are to have a very high regard for the teaching and leadership of your pastor.

**in love** (that is in Spiritual Love, in the leading and empowerment of the Holy Spirit—in Spiritual Love means you are in prayer for him and you are observant of his needs...loves sees need!)

**Because** (reason for the special love's respect)

**of their work** (that is their study and teaching of the WORD OF GOD. Not because they are fine speakers or are charismatic in personality but because of their study and teaching of the WORD OF GOD.)

Next Paul adds a rather interesting remark that seems to be out of place in these two verses:

**Live in peace with One Another** (actually this should be translated as in the King James) **among yourselves.**

## **Live in peace**

There are two ways you can live in peace with others in your assembly.

Firstly: by the self-discipline of your flesh nature.  
This is not pleasing to God.

Secondly: as a fruit of the Holy Spirit—  
meaning you are living in Holy Spirit by Faith and His peace flows through you.

Paul has referred to how we **live** twice before:

in 3:8 **..live by standing fast in the Lord** and then

in 5:10 how we live with the Lord, both now and for all eternity future.

In 4:11 we should make it our ambition to live a **quiet life**. Here it beckons us to live in peace in the assembly. To show you how else believers live together look at Galatians 5:15...  
**bite and devour One Another** (gossip, take verbal shots at One Another)

and in 5:26 **boasting, challenging One Another, envying One Another.**

So, the local church is not that different than living in a family—you must be FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT at all times and guarding your thoughts and your tongue and actions.

## **Live in peace with yourselves.**

Hebrews 13:17

17 Obey your leaders and submit *to them*, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

While verses 12-13 concerned the members and their relationship with the pastoral authority, verses 14-15 is concerned with pastoral leadership.

14 **We urge you,** (in reference to the congregation, Paul asked or beckoned them, but now with the pastors Paul uses that beautiful word he has already used, *parakaleo* (used of the Holy Spirit) here for the Pastor under the power and leading of the Holy Spirit Paul urges them; it has a stronger force than what he said to the members in asking them.

**We urge you brethren,** pastor leadership.

*Paul now list six responsibilities of the Pastor:*

- |    |                                                                                 |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) | <i>admonish the unruly,</i>                                                     |
| 2) | <i>encourage the fainthearted,</i>                                              |
| 3) | <i>help the weak,</i>                                                           |
| 4) | <i>be patient with everyone.</i>                                                |
| 5) | <i>See that no one repays another with evil for evil,</i>                       |
| 6) | <i>always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people.</i> |
- But

1) **Admonish the unruly**

The root of *ADMONISH* comes from the word *MIND*: admonish means to put sound doctrine into the minds of those who are *UNRULY* those who are acting, speaking in the assembly in a way that is contrary to *keeping the peace* in regards to One Another.

2) **Encourage the fainthearted**

No one is to judge another believer... but especially the Pastor is not to judge:

**encourage** to speak to them in such a way so as to

encourage them; we have already seen how Paul did this to many in Thessalonica (2:11)

**the fainthearted** this word appears only here in the New Testament and is another word that is translated in various ways in Bible translations: *DISHEARTENED; TIMID, FEEBLEMINDED, DISCOURAGED, FEEBLE SOULS*  
The Greek word comes from the root: *psuche*—the soul, + small or little;

Every pastor needs to remember this one, you spend a great deal of time teaching on how to live in the Holy Spirit, be strong in the Lord, take courage, etc.

But people there are always going to be those who are weak in regard to life itself, and the really difficulty here is that they may be this way regardless of how much doctrine they take in, they just simply cannot grab hold of walking in the Holy Spirit and living by the WORD OF GOD.

These need to be encouraged, not judged or maligned.

Too often, however, these are prone to be psychopaths, always wishing they were dead, always occupied with themselves.

---

3) **help the weak,**

Not all believers are in the same stage of growth. The Greek word means to help or to support; those weak in doctrine; those new and weak into Christianity. Again, don't judge them, don't bully them..., help them, encourage them.

Also involved in this word *weak* is included those who are

---



addictive: to drugs, alcohol, sex, pornography, gambling and any category of sin you want to talk about.

The Pastor must be 'shock-proof' and able to help the weak... Those Weak in body... Those Weak in spirit.

---

4) **be patient with everyone,**

This is our word we studied in Spiritual Love:

*LONGSUFFERING* Remember there are two words translated patience: *makrothumia* our word and *hupomone*—this one means patience in regards to circumstances and things; while our word means patience in regards to people.

Both of these are supplied to you by Holy Spirit when you put your Faith in the Holy Spirit for His help in your life. And the pastor is to be longsuffering with everyone in the assembly; this could be a new believer or even one who has been there for a long time.

---

5) **See that no one repays another with evil for evil,**

**Two wrongs do not make a right!**

With this one we have some problems.

Up to now the Pastor-Teacher has been relating to one believer, but now there is a problem in the assembly between two believers.

So the **QUESTION** arises

“How is the pastor to see to it that no one believer renders another believer evil or wrong for wrong?”

The answer to this question is dependent on what Paul first said about the congregation and the Pastor-Teacher. You

highly respect his person and his teaching and his authority.

Then when an issue comes up between two believers (husband/wife; family members, or friends and associates in the church or where only the one who comes to the pastor comes to this church.) The Pastor's ability to fulfill this requirement depends on the respect of the members of the church.

There are several passages that are pertinent to his fulfilling his responsibility.

1. You want to serve the Living and True God...verse 1:9 and you serve Him in your dealings with One Another.
2. From verse 2:12 you desire to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord and this includes your dealing with One Another.
3. You accept and believe the Bible as the the WORD OF GOD—verse 2:13 and when it says something is wrong...**IT IS WRONG**, because God says it is wrong.
4. Spiritual Love for One Another—verse 3:12; and, people, this love will be tested—*nothing will make greater demands on your life, than to love as JESUS CHRIST loves you!*
5. That you walk (live) in a manner that is pleasing to God. verse 4:1.
6. That you are sanctified by God to abstain from things that offend God. verse 4:3.
7. That you do not defraud another believer verse. 4:6.
8. The believer is to place justice in the hands of God and not retaliate, not seek revenge—Vengeance is in the hands of God. verse 4:6.
9. That we are called for the purpose of sanctification before Him, not before mankind. verse 4:7.
10. Behave properly before God with all others. verse 4:12.

---

11. Respect the authority and teaching of the Pastor.

All of these are **THE FOUNDATION upon which the pastor will be able to help** in issues between believers (a very difficult task) (but if he has properly taught all these things then believers will listen.)

If they refuse to abide by the WORD OF GOD, the Pastor cannot help at all! If you don't believe the WORD OF GOD, then do not come to the Pastor!

- 
- 6) **But always seek after** (pursue) **that which is good for one another** (believers; in their spiritual lives) **and for all people.**  
(Unbelievers in their hearing the truth of the Gospel.)

Now Paul directs his closing remarks to everyone in the local church in their relationship with God. Verses 16-23: Rejoice, pray, give thanks.

## 16 **Rejoice always;—at all times**

This is the shortest verse in the Greek New Testament (*Jesus Wept* is three words in the Greek) and even though this is the shortest verse, it is one of the most difficult to understand and impossible to fulfill in the flesh and demands the Holy Spirit.

This is most difficult for many:

How can you rejoice when bad things happen?

Death, illness, separation in marriage, financial collapse?

## How can you rejoice?

The word translated *rejoice* refers to *inner happiness, inner peace.*

1. This inner-happiness does not depend on outward circumstances in life.
2. The believer is not to be up and down like a teenage girl, up and down with the tide of events day in and day out. God has provided for the believer not to be an emotional wreck or live as an emotional yo-yo.

3. JESUS CHRIST desires that every believer has His joy in him and that his joy be full.  
John 15:11 “These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full.”
4. God has provided every believer with the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and it is when we are FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT, empowered by the Holy Spirit that we can actually experience inner-happiness at all times.
5. The most important doctrine or activity for the believer is to know how to be FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT. This inner-Happiness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit Galatians 5:22
6. We are FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT and, therefore, can experience inner-Happiness at all times, by grace through Faith— Faith in the Holy Spirit results in the Filling of Holy Spirit. And the more of the WORD OF GOD you have in your soul, the more inner-Happiness, the Holy Spirit can give you a more FULL JOY that JESUS CHRIST desires for you.
7. This inner-Happiness is centered our being occupied with JESUS CHRIST, not with the circumstances of life:

Philippians 4:4

**Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!**

- 17 **pray without ceasing;** I love this, we combine this with – constantly being FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT by Faith; WE LIVE BY FAITH.

**QUESTION:**

***HOW CAN WE PRAY WITHOUT CEASING,  
AND GET OTHER THINGS DONE?***

**QUESTION:**

***HOW CAN WE WALK BY FAITH IN THE HOLY SPIRIT AND  
GET OTHER THINGS DONE?***

My first answer:

*ASK SOMEONE WHO HAS JUST FALLEN IN LOVE.*

That person is on their mind without ceasing, yet they get other things accomplished.

As you go through the responsibilities of the day, we should be constantly in Faith in the Holy Spirit and when as things happen throughout the hour we take it to the Lord in Prayer. This Greek word was used in secular Greek to refer to one with a hacking cough—not cough continually but coughing all day long.—This should be our prayer life.

18 Here is our third fellowship with God.

**in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.**

**In everything give thanks** (This goes along with verse 16)  
**rejoice always**

**QUESTION:**

*HOW CAN YOU GIVE THANKS WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN?*

and

*HOW CAN YOU REJOICE WITH BAD THINGS HAPPEN?*

- 1 As you grow in your spiritual life—in the Knowledge of JESUS CHRIST you become more and more oriented to the true fact that God is in control.
- 2 You believe that God can work all things to Good—He is that kind of God.
  - 1 You know we are not to Question God, about anything He does or allows to happen on earth.
  - 2 So when anything happens, and you are oriented to just TRUSTING GOD, you can give thanks that His plan is working

- out and you can actually have inner-Happiness in your God.
- 3 for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. This looks at all three of these as our daily fellowship with God, because of our fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ:

## *Rejoice, Pray and Give Thanks*

Try this just for a day, all day, and you will experience something new and dynamic in your life.

**Verses 19-22 emphasize our relationship with the Holy Spirit.**

19 **Do not quench the Spirit;**  
 In Ephesians 4:30 we are not to **grieve the Holy Spirit**

1.	Both of these involve the absence of Faith.
2.	Both involve a purposeful decision not to be in Filled with the Holy Spirit.
3.	To quench the Holy Spirit is to extinguish His ministry in you, His leading of you, His teaching you, etc. And you do this when you make a purposeful decision to satisfy the flesh.
4.	To grieve the Holy Spirit when you make a conscious decision to reject His leading—and go your own way.
5.	Illustration: The husband comes home from work and his wife reaches out her hand to make an amorous gesture toward him and he pushes away her hand and goes on about his business...this will cause her to quickly quench back her hand. You have just quenched her. Or she has some wonderful plans for an evening together and you just shut her off—you have no interest—you have just grieve her!

6.	So we quench the Holy Spirit when we refuse to be FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT, when you refuse to walk by Faith.
7.	We grieve the Holy Spirit when we refuse His leading in some area of our lives... learning THE WORD OF GOD, saying something encouraging to another believer, etc.

Verse 20 concerns the love of Prophecy.

20 **do not despise prophetic utterances.**  
Or simply **despise not prophecy**

This is just another reason why I love you people and am thankful to our Heavenly Father for you; that you do not despise prophecy and on the other hand are interested in prophecy.

You might be surprised at the number of people who do not want to even hear any teaching on prophecy. They do not want to deal with it. To them it does not apply to them but as we have well seen in 1 Thessalonians that this study on prophecy is packed with living our daily lives in light of prophecy.

Revelation 19:10

10 **Then I (John) fell at his feet to worship him.** (the angel who had been teaching John) **But he said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant (of our God and His Son) of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. (You do not worship me, you worship God) For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."**

That is that the essence of prophecy is to give teaching of Jesus. If you think about it all prophecy leads to the glory of JESUS CHRIST...and this of course includes The Rapture of the Church, where Jesus draws us to Himself so that He does not allow us to go through The Tribulation.

Add to this Revelation 1:3

3 **Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.**

2 Peter 1:21

21 **for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.**  
So the heart of all prophecy is the witness of the Glory of JESUS CHRIST.

1 Thessalonians 5:21 is so important and vital to every Christian today

21 **But examine** (put to the test) **everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good;** (what does this refer?)

First: The important definite article is omitted:

**hold fast the good**

What is “The Good?”

The Good is the Word of God... The Bible.

Hebrews 6:5

5 **and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,** (tasted means to believe the Good Word of God)

1 Thessalonians 5:21 **but examine everything hold fast the good**

**What does this mean?**

***We are to test things by the WORD OF GOD.***

The Bible or the WORD OF GOD is our final and full authority.



WE ARE TO TEST EVOLUTION BY THE WORD OF GOD,  
AND IF IT COUNTERS THE WORD OF GOD, WE REJECT IT.

WE ARE TO TEST MORALITY BY THE WORD OF GOD,  
NOT BY THE TRADITIONS OF MAN OR OF ANY JUDICIAL SYSTEM,  
BUT BY HIS WORD  
AND IT IF DOES NOT LINE UP WITH THE WORD OF GOD  
WE REJECT IT, AS FOR OUR PERSONAL MORAL LIVING.

The first decision that we have to make is what do we think of the Bible,  
the WORD OF GOD.

If you do not accept it as final authority; as the final truth  
then that is the end of discussion.

Again this is exactly why Satan had to remove the bible out of our Judicial  
System and out of our Educational system and out of our homes and he is  
working at getting it removed from churches as the final and full and  
truthful authority.

22 **abstain from every form of evil.**

That is keep yourself from;  
to abstain or refrain.

**From every form of evil**

The King James correctly says to abstain from

**all appearance of evil**

Let's start off with the understanding that there is a difference between  
EVIL and SIN. The worst EVIL on earth is a perversion or distortion of the  
Gospel on how to be saved. And the worst appearance of EVIL TO GOD is  
religion, legalism—it is EVIL before God that you think you can earn or  
deserve something from God, starting with Salvation and including  
Spirituality to Blessings in Life.

By your religion, by your legalism you are telling the world this is what kind of God He is, you are bearing false witness of God and of JESUS CHRIST.

We have learned about JESUS CHRIST we have learned about the congregation, we have learned about the Pastor-Teacher; now we learn about God the Father.

Verses 23-24

## **MADE COMPLETE AND SANCTIFIED FOR The Rapture**

### 23 **Now may the God of peace**

This refers to His Salvation title.

This, of course, refers to God who provided for Himself peace with all mankind by sending His Son to die on the cross and break down the barrier between God and man. We enter this peace by Faith in JESUS CHRIST Remember there is the Peace of God—which refers to our position with Him because of the work of JESUS CHRIST and our faith in JESUS CHRIST as Savior; and there is the Peace from God—This is peace we have when we are FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT; we enter this peace by Faith in the Holy Spirit—fruit of the Spirit is peace

**Himself** GOD the Father personally works these things out in us **sanctify you entirely;** this is a refer to experiential sanctification—where God called us to sanctification (verse 4:7) to be sanctified by God means to be set apart from all other humans and angels as belonging to God and for God’s service.

**and may your spirit and soul and body** the believer is trichotomous while the unbeliever is made up of only body and soul (dichotomous). But the moment we believe in JESUS CHRIST as Savior among the 34 things God does for us is to give each one of us A HUMAN SPIRIT, so that the Holy Spirit, whom He also gives to us, can pour in all those things that pertain to God.

**be preserved complete,** body, soul and Spirit

**without blame** being whole in Him

**at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

***RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH.***

***We learn more about God the Father.***

24 **Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.**

This is the future tense and it refers to our eternal Salvation. Here is our hope, our confidence, our joy. THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD. God is faithful because God is immutable, Sovereign, Omnipotent and Eternality and He keeps His word, Faithful to His word because He is absolute Righteousness.

**He calls us** Through the work of His Son and ministry of His Spirit. **He will bring to pass** The Rapture and all that He has promised in His Word. He will bring about your Salvation when you believe in His son and He will bring about your sanctification when you trust His Spirit and He will bring to pass your Resurrection at The Rapture ...this is the God you can trust.

25 **Brethren, (believers in Thessalonica) pray for us.**

I hope this does not offend anyone but only the believer, FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT, can offer legitimate prayers that God will answer.

The only prayer the unbeliever can offer is the prayer of belief in JESUS CHRIST. By application this refers to pastors and missionaries and all those in service of our Lord...

26 **Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.**

'holy kiss' is distinguished from passionate or romantic or affectionate kiss. It introduces the principle of Christian fellowship. This is comparable to handshaking. I find it amusing that some preachers make 'confession' of 1 John 1:9 the center of the Christian life, when that occurs only in one place; but they do not emphasize at all *greeting one another with a holy kiss* and yet this occurs 5 times in the New Testament.

27 **I adjure you** (or charge you) **by the Lord to have this letter read to all the brethren.**

See that word **read** well... this word means much more than just to read. It means to perceive accurately.

This word means that the WORD OF GOD is to be exegeted by men who are gifted of God; it is in the passive voice, which means the WORD OF GOD receives being exegeted, study by men FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

28 **The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you**

This means that all grace from God comes through or by His beloved Son, Jesus the Christ.

**be with you** is a challenge to live by Faith in the Holy Spirit.

*People we are to learn prophecy,  
to learn how and why we should live as we do each day.*

*We should live anticipating Meeting the Lord in the Air.*

*I love each one of you and give thanks that you care  
about all that can be learned from the Word of God.*

*I greet you with a 'holy kiss'!*