

CLOSING REMARKS
(1 Thessalonians 5:23-28)

I. Paul's prayer for them (vs. 23).

- A. Paul, in closing, prays to the God of peace.
 - 1. This is not world peace because we know Jesus did not come to bring peace but a sword, or division over Him.
 - 2. This is the peace that one has with God knowing his/her sins are forgiven and that all is right with God.
- B. He prays that they would be wholly sanctified.
 - 1. Sanctification carries two meanings.
 - a. One is that they are pure from sin.
 - b. The other is that they be set apart for a purpose.
 - 2. It is most likely that both meanings are in play here.
 - a. Paul wants for them to be completely free from the defilements of sin.
 - b. Paul also wants them to be set apart for God's use in spreading the gospel and being a servant.
 - 3. God does this through His word (John 17:17).
 - a. If we read, study and apply God's word, it will cause us to be sanctified.
 - b. It will help us avoid sin and be useful in the kingdom.
 - 4. It is God doing this in the sense that it is by His inspired word that it is done.
- C. He then prays that God would keep them blameless until the coming of Christ.
 - 1. This carries the idea of being free from fault.
 - 2. When one stays with God's word after being sanctified then that person will be free from fault because he/she will repent when sin is committed.
 - 3. Paul wanted them to be saved and that would happen if they remained with God.
 - 4. God's power of forgiveness would keep them blameless and the same is true for us.

II. Paul's promise (vs. 24).

- A. Paul's promise is that God is faithful and will do everything He has promised to do for them.
- B. God began the process of their sanctification by calling them.
 - 1. Second Thessalonians tells us how they were called, which was by the gospel.
 - 2. This is the same way men and women are called by God today.

3. Therefore, we should realize that all that Paul is saying concerning the Thessalonians is applicable to us as well.
- C. When God calls someone through His word and they answer the call by faithful obedience, God is going to see the process through until the end.
1. The word “faithful” carries the idea of “worthy to be believed.”
 2. We know God is worthy because He has shown Himself to be through the ages.
- D. This verse is very similar to Philippians 1:6.
- E. If God begins something He finishes it as well.
- F. As long as we do our part through faith, God will do His through His righteousness and holiness.
1. God always honors His commitments.
 2. We need to make sure we are honoring our commitment we made to Him when we answered His call.

III. **Paul’s petitions (vs. 25-28).**

- A. Paul petitions them to pray for him and those that traveled with him in his missionary work.
1. Many times in the book of Acts we read the words “we”, “us” and other plural pronouns.
 2. All of these have reference to those who traveled with Paul.
 3. This group needed the prayers of Christians because their travels were filled with danger.
 4. Not only that, Paul wanted the spiritual strength one gets from the prayers of others to keep him on task.
 5. There is not a preacher, elder or worker in the church of whom I am aware that does not want prayers offered for them.
 6. It is great spiritual encouragement when others pray for you.
- B. Paul wanted them to be loving to one another.
1. The kiss about which Paul wrote was like our handshake or hug is today.
 2. It was simply a show of love for one who is a fellow Christian.
 3. It is a sad thing to go to a sister congregation and be hardly greeted by anyone.
 4. That congregation is not honoring this apostolic petition.
 5. We need to be loving and kind and it will encourage others to be loving and kind in return.
- C. Paul wanted this letter read before all of them.
1. Paul knew that what he was giving them in this letter, all of them needed.

2. This letter is one of encouragement and support.
3. There is not a Christian then or now that did not or does not need these things.

D. From this we ought to see what a congregation needs.

1. It doesn't need today's latest self-help book.
2. It does not need today's hottest philosophy book.
3. It does not need some creed book.
4. It does not need someone's uninspired opinions.
5. It needs the word of God read to them and explained.

E. When these things are done, the grace of Jesus would always be with them.

1. They needed grace, the unmerited favor of Jesus, and we do as well.
2. If we are going to be saved, it will be by the grace of God and our faithfulness to Him.
3. Thus, we need to be praying for one another, loving toward one another and reading God's word with and to one another.