

W @ K L J P r a J @ r J O U r n a l

**DAILY BIBLE STUDIES**

*“Piety from the Pews”*

**1 Thessalonians 5:14-15**

**September 14 – September 20, 2008**

Praise & Prayer	ADORATION Hallowed be Your name. (6:9)	AUTHORITY Your Kingdom come... (6:10)	APPEAL Give us this day... (6:11)	AQUITTAL Forgive us our debts... (6:12)	ASSISTANCE Deliver us from evil. (6:13a)	ADMIRATION For Yours is the Kingdom... (6:13)	Lord's Day	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

**THE LORD'S DAY** – Last week we saw from our text how the people in the body of Christ and specifically the local body (local church) are to act toward those who serve and work and are “*over them in the Lord*” as their pastors. This week we will look at how the people of God are to act toward others in a lesson we entitled “*Piety from the Pews*”. The definition of “*Piety*” is as follows from the Random House Dictionary: “reverence for God or devout fulfillment of religious obligations.” I pray that you would be challenged to live with genuine piety as God has commanded you as a member of His body. Read **1 Thessalonians 5:14-15**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer: Ask God to teach you from His Word this week.*

**MONDAY** –After addressing the relationship of Pastors and the people in the previous verses we read in **verse 14**, “*Now we exhort you, brethren...*” This is a statement which broadens out to include the entire church assembly not just to the ministers of this particular congregation. All Christians are to follow these forthcoming commands, and those who come under the teaching of the previously mentioned leaders of the local church are commanded to live this way. So many professing Christians today want to live without any restraints, responsibility, or without coming under any God ordained authority. The Scripture is clear that there is to be an understanding and respect for leadership and a certain *Piety* that is expressed in the behavior of those who claim to be in the family of God. A preoccupation with self and one’s own desires is completely antithetical to these commands from Sacred Scripture. Read **Philippians 2:1-4**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer: Ask the Lord to help you to not be consumed with selfishness but rather to “esteem others better than yourself”.*

**TUESDAY** –After noticing this upcoming instruction is for all of those who belong to the “*ekklesia*” (church, assembly), we read of the first command on this list stated as, “*...warn those who are unruly...*” All of the commands listed in **verse 14** are in the “Present Imperative Active” in the Greek. These are imperatives, not just declarations. Believers are here told they are to “warn the unruly”. *Ataktos*, the Greek word for “*unruly*”, is literally defined as “disorderly, out of ranks (often so of soldiers). It covers those who are acting disorderly, and are insubordinate. It includes those who do not perform their duties or follow through on their responsibilities. It is not limited only to those who shirk their

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duties and are passive but it also refers to those who have a rebellious attitude. These are the people who are “out of step” with the direction of the church. John MacArthur states, “Such are those who fail to serve the church with their spiritual gifts (**1 Corinthians 12:7, 14:12-13**), give the church a portion of their wealth (**1 Corinthians 16:2, 2 Corinthians 8:7, 9:6-12**), or support the churches leadership (**1 Timothy 5:17, Hebrews 13:7, 17**).” These people are to be “warned” and not only by the Pastor. As Albert Barnes comments, “It is the duty of every church member, as well as of the ministers of the gospel, affectionately to admonish those whom they know to be living contrary to the requirements of the gospel. One reason why there is so little piety in the church, and why so many professors of religion go astray, is that the great mass of church members feel no responsibility on this subject. They suppose that it is the duty *only* of the officers of the church to admonish an erring brother, and hence many become careless and cold and worldly, and no one utters a kind word to them to recall them to a holy walk with God.”

*What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* Lord, give me courage to examine and confess my own sin first and then also to warn those who are unruly within Your professed church.

**WEDNESDAY** –A different form of conduct is now to be pursued as pertaining to the second command and the second group of people we as believers deal with. The Scripture says, “...comfort the fainthearted...” Unlike the “unruly” that resist and reject authority and Biblical counsel and wisdom, these people who need “comfort” (to speak to, address one, whether by way of admonition and incentive, or to calm and console, encourage) are weak and needy and need consolation. The text identifies them as “fainthearted” also translated “feebleminded”. The Greek word comes from a word which means “small, little, and few”. The “fainthearted” according to Gill are, “such as are not able to bear the loss of near and dear relations; are ready to stagger under the cross, and at the reproaches and persecutions of the world; and are almost overset with the temptations of Satan; and are borne down and discouraged with the corruptions of their hearts, speak a comfortable word to them, encourage them with the doctrines of grace, and the promises of the Gospel.” These folks are in need of someone coming alongside of them and offering them a calming word and an example of courage and confidence. Read **Isaiah 40:1, 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, Hebrews 12:12-13**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* Ask God to help you be a comfort and encouragement to the faint of heart. Remember your words as well as example are to comfort.

**THURSDAY** –“...uphold the weak...” is the next command of Holy Scripture concerning our way of life with others. This command in its context appears to be addressing those who are spiritually weak. Their faith may be weak or small and needs to be strengthened in the Lord. This word can be translated sick, feeble, or without strength. The Apostle here “urges” those believers in Thessalonica to “uphold” or help the weak. We are to be there to provide strength and help to those

whose faith is feeble. Strong believers are to come alongside weaker brothers and sisters and help them. God The Holy Spirit has given us this example. Read **Ezekiel 34:16, Romans 14:1, 15:1-3, Galatians 6:1-2**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* Father, help me to uphold the weak and to help them to learn and to grow stronger in the faith as You have commanded.

**FRIDAY** –One of the most difficult things to exemplify in life is found in the phrase of **verse 14** where the command is given to, “...be patient with all.” After we have followed the other commands listed in our text we still may find that true believers are not responding as quickly as we would like or in the manner we would like. This calls for great patience. The Greek word used here can also mean, “not to lose heart, to persevere”. As Calvin comments, “He recommends, however, *patience towards all*, for severity must be tempered with some degree of lenity, even in dealing with the *unruly*. This *patience*, however, is, properly speaking, contrasted with a feeling of irksomeness, for nothing are we more prone to than to feel wearied out when we set ourselves to cure the diseases of our brethren... Thus, if by admonishing or reproving, we do not immediately do the good that is to be desired, we lose all hope of future success.” Read **Psalms 86:15, Ephesians 4:1-3, Colossians 3:12-13**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* Father, help me to be longsuffering as You are toward me and to not lose heart with my brothers and sisters as they grow in You.

**SATURDAY** –**Verse 15** contains the final word of exhortation for us to see this week. It begins by specifically speaking to the matter of avenging ourselves against others who do evil to us. Remember this in its context is being addressed to believers and their relationship with each other. Just because someone is a Christian it does not rule out the fact they can be very hurtful and mean. Barnes says, “This law is positive, and is universally binding. The moment we feel ourselves acting from a desire to “return evil for evil,” that moment we are acting wrong. It may be right to defend our lives, and the lives of our friends; to seek the protection of the law for our persons, reputation, or property, against those who would wrong us; to repel the assaults of calumniators and slanderers; but in no case should the motive be to do them wrong for the evil which they have done us.” The point, as Barnes point out, is the matter of our attitude and motive in seeking to do harm and hurt toward someone rather than pursue “good” for both them and ourselves. This rule of living is paramount inside the fellowship of believers but spills out into our relationships with all men including the heathen. Read **Galatians 6:10, Ephesians 4:32**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* Father, we leave all vengeance to You. Help us forgive.