

Study Guide 5

“Wrapping Up”

Goal: To understand the content and purposes of 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

1. *To become familiar with the content and purpose of 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28*
2. *To consider what verses function as the Conclusion in 1 Thessalonians*
3. *To finish (for now) the process of highlighting key words and phrases*

Goal: To examine the overall shape, setting, and purposes of the letter

1. *To consider the overall shape of the letter and how the sections relate to each other*
2. *To consider the historical setting of the letter*
3. *To summarize the main points and purposes of the letter*
4. *To think through how to apply the principles of 1 Thessalonians to our lives*

1. Find/Explore the Conclusion (1 Thess 5:12-28).

What verses (chapter and verses) serve as the Conclusion to 1 Thessalonians?

It's obvious that the prayer of 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 forms part of the Conclusion to the book of 1 Thessalonians, transitioning from the Middle/Body of the letter to the end (as prayers do in the letters of Paul). So, in your own work of considering the shape of 1 Thessalonians, if you designate 5:23-28 as the Conclusion, you would certainly be right from a technical (“epistolary”) point of view. Your overall (3-part) shape might, then, look something like this:

Introduction: 1:1-10

Middle: 2:1-5:22 (2:1-3:13; 4:1-5:22)

Conclusion: 5:23-28

On the other hand, from a speaking or rhetorical point of view, you might consider including 5:12-22 as part of the Conclusion because of the brief, “wrapping up” nature of the exhortations. (The style and pace certainly changes.) The powerful image of light/day vs. darkness/night as an appeal for the Thessalonians to keep living for God (the main theme); with brief mention of “the armor of God”; incorporating the three key themes of faith, love, and hope (from the beginning: 1:3) creates such an impressive culmination that I'm inclined to see it as the “conclusion” of the Middle/Body, with the final exhortations forming a sort of bridge or transition to the technical conclusion of the letter. That's why I included the possibility of seeing 5:12-22 as part of the Conclusion. Not much difference. Then it would look like this:

Introduction: 1:1-10

Middle: 2:1-5:11 (2:1-3:13; 4:1-5:11)

Conclusion: 5:12-28

Effective speeches or letters often smooth the transitions so that it's not always easy to draw hard-and-fast divisions between the sections. Most would probably take 5:23-28 to be the conclusion of

the Middle/Body and officially start the Conclusion at 5:23. The main thing is that you are working in the text so that you have an opinion about it (and the difference between the two is minimal).

Extra, Extra . . .

In a sense, we may have 3 types of conclusions back to back: (1) 5:6-11 as the conclusion of the 2nd Coming section (4:13-5:11), (2) 5:12-22 as the conclusion of the Body/Middle of the letter (1:2-5:22) or at least the second half of the Middle (4:1-5:22), and (3) 5:23-28 as the conclusion of the letter as a whole (especially as a “letter”). This illustrates how “conclusions”—wrapping up, summarizing material—can occur at the paragraph, section, and document levels, and thus help to punctuate and define the “shape” of a Bible book.

Exhortations: 5:12-22

Why do you think this final exhortation section begins with a “Petition” for the church to know and highly regard its leaders? Along with the exhortation to be at peace among themselves? Why the mention of the leaders “labor” or hard work? Does this connect with a theme in the letter (hint: it becomes more prominent in 2 Thessalonians)?

How do the exhortations of 5:12-22 relate to previous themes of the letter and to the situation of the Thessalonian Christians (like their suffering, for example, and concern over certain questions of teaching/doctrine)? Consider also how each of these final exhortations relates to the life (love and community) of the church and the Christian lifestyle in general (since Paul wants them to live by the things he had taught them more and more).

Concluding Prayer: 5:23-24

What are the key themes summarized by Paul in the concluding prayer? Why did he pick these ideas? How do they relate to the book as a whole?

Final Words: 5:25-28

Why do you think Paul asks the Thessalonians to pray for him/“us”? Does such a request have any impact on his ongoing relationship with the community? Note also the emphasis on community (“holy kiss”) and Paul’s insistence that the letter to be read to everyone.

2. Highlight Key Words and Phrases.

See at the end below.

Expert’s Corner

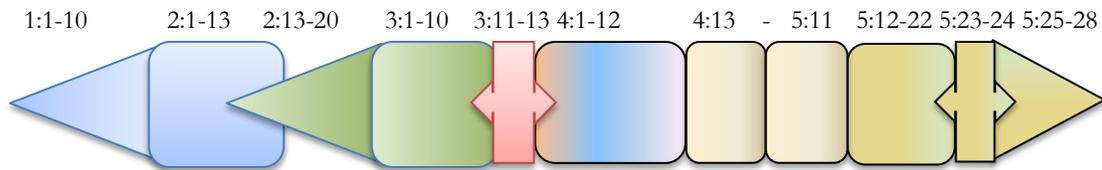
Key Questions Review

1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

- On what basis might someone see 5:12-22 as part of the Conclusion of 1 Thessalonians? Or should 5:12-22 be seen as the conclusion of the Middle, with the prayer of 5:23-24 functioning as the beginning of the Conclusion?
- How do the exhortations of 5:12-22 relate to the overall themes and purposes of the letter?
- Summarize the content and purposes of the concluding prayer of 5:22-23?
- Why do you think Paul wants the letter to be read to all the Thessalonian Christians?

3. Make a Map/Outline of 1 Thessalonians.

How would you outline the overall shape of 1 Thessalonians? Make a map (= create an outline) of the major sections (if you haven’t already). Include descriptive summaries of the content and purpose of the sections.



Instead of just an identification of the sections, give each section a title or description that captures some of the content and/or purpose of the section.

- 1:1-10: _____
- 2:1-13: _____
- 2:13-20: _____
- 3:1-10: _____
- 3:11-13: _____
- 4:1-12: _____
- 4:13-18: _____
- 5:1-11: _____
- 5:12-22: _____
- 5:23-24: _____
- 5:25-28: _____

See Study Guide 4 for an example of a “map” (outline) of 1 Thessalonians.

4. Tune in—as much as possible—to the historical setting.

That's Rule #6 of the “Ten Rules of Good Bible Reading.” Here's some information about the meaning of the “historical setting” or “context” from *Rediscovering the Books of God* (pp. 27-28):

The literary and historical contexts work together to create the (book-level) context of a Bible book. The historical context is the actual surroundings (to use our defining term) that caused the book to be written. Though the authors are sometimes unnamed and so technically anonymous, the books that made their way into the Bible were written by devoted followers of God in order to communicate teachings and convictions about God to a group or groups of people. They are, therefore, not works of fiction in the modern sense (stories describing imaginary people and events), but concern real ideas and teachings about God delivered to a set of people at a particular point and time in history. The contents of the books thus deal with particular persons, beliefs, events, and actions within the community to which the books were written. (Paul's letters are sometimes called “occasional documents” to highlight the cutting-edge, real-life contexts of their production.) The books reflect the dynamic faith of the authors and of the audiences. The historical context refers to everything involved in the life of the author and the audience that surrounds and informs the writing and receiving of the book.

Scholars sometime refer to the historical context as the “setting” of the book—the “setting in life” from a popular German phrase (*Sitz im Leben*). What are the historical ingredients that merged together to create the book? This includes such basic things as the author, the audience, the reason for writing, and the content of the book as part of the actual historical exchange. Though it begins to delve into the literary context, these ideas are sometimes expressed with a series of questions starting with the letter W:

Who wrote it? Whom was it written to?

When (and where) was it written?

What does it say?

Why was it written? What does the author hope to accomplish?

These are the types of things we often read in commentaries or other study guides when we want to learn something about the *background* of a Bible book.

What clues are contained in the book of 1Thessalonians that help to reveal the historical context of the letter?

- **Who wrote it? (1:1; Chapters 1-3)**
- **Whom was it written to? (1:1, Chapters 1-3)**
- **When and where was it written? (3:1, 6; compare Acts 17-18)**
- **Why was it written? What are the circumstances that prompted Paul to write the letter?**
- **Describe the situation in the Thessalonian church and the purposes of Paul's letter in light of and for that situation.**

The picture of a very young church, planted and pastored (now from a distance) by Paul is clear from the content of the letter. That Paul has been separated from them, unable to return, and had

become greatly concerned about their well-being, especially since they had begun to suffer more intensely for their faith provides a fairly detailed picture of the historical context.

In combination with the specific exhortations of the letter, the reference to the purpose of Timothy's visit in 3:2 ("... to establish and exhort you in your faith, that no one be shaken by these afflictions") and Paul's prayer (3:10) "that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith" provide a general sense of the overall purpose of the letter—the letter becoming, in a sense, a replacement for Paul's presence and a continuation of his purpose in sending Timothy to them.

The picture of the historical context of 1 Thessalonians gained from the book itself can be supplemented by the descriptions of Paul's missionary activities in the Bible book of Acts, especially Acts 17:1-10 (notice also the mention in Acts 18:5 of Silas and Timothy arriving from Macedonia when Paul was in Corinth and compare that to 1 Thessalonians 3:6), as well as Paul's second letter to the same church. Unlike many other books in the Bible, we have additional information about the setting of 1 Thessalonians from 2 Thessalonians, since it was written by the same persons (Paul, Silas, and Timothy) in a relatively short span of time. In an unusual, but extremely helpful way, the Introduction to 2 Thessalonians (1:3-12) provides a great summary of the content and purposes of 1 Thessalonians (and thus helps to confirm our reading). (We'll look more at that in the study of 2 Thessalonians.)

5. Summarize 1 Thessalonians.

There are several ways you could do this. I suggest two possibilities: one from the book *Inkblotitis*, and a shorter method found on the Library of God website (www.LibraryofGod.com). First, the shorter method.

Create a title that captures the primary message/purpose of 1 Thessalonians, and then list the top 3-5 points/purposes of 1 Thessalonians (create a bullet-point summary).

Or . . . create a Digest of 1 Thessalonians (see below).

The PRAISE Method: Bullet-Point Summary or Snapshot

As part of the PRAISE method of Bible reading, described on the *6 Bible Study Steps* page of the Library of God website,

- Step 1: Pray
- Step 2: Read
- Step 3: Analyze
- Step 4: Interpret
- Step 5: Summarize
- Step 6: Exercise

Step # 5 is to make a list of the top 3-5 points or purposes of the book (= a bullet-point summary).

Some of my thoughts (and you should do this for yourself):

Title

More and More: Serving God while Waiting for Jesus—in Spite of Suffering

Alternative Title (Providing a Bullet-Point Snapshot)

Growing in God: in Faith, in Love, in Hope, and in Encouragement

If we expand this, it provides a nice inkblot-zapping context that you can use quickly to “weigh” a verse cited from the book of 1 Thessalonians (as it will help to jog your memory of the book-level context):

Growing in God:

. . . in Faith

- in the good news of Jesus
- the teachings of Jesus
- and the faithfulness of God

. . . in Love

- in marriage
- in community
- in lifestyle

. . . in Hope

- in the 2nd coming of Jesus
- the resurrection and reunion with Christ
- and in the final judgment of God

. . . and in Encouragement

- in the face of suffering
- for each other within a community of faith

3-5 Point Summary

1. God want us **to keep growing** always and increasing in faith, love, and hope: “to be sanctified,” strengthened in heart so that we will be blameless and holy in his presence when Jesus comes.
2. God wants us **to grow in faith** by receiving the good news of Jesus; holding fast to the fundamental values, teachings, and purposes of Christ; as we encourage each other to live for God—in spite of inevitable opposition and suffering.
3. God want us **to grow in love** by building strong and faithful marriages; by loving, encouraging, and protecting each other; and by working hard to provide for our families and live honorable and respectable lives.
4. God want us **to grow in hope** by continuing to learn the values and teachings of Christ, and by living in light of (the expectation) of Christ’s return and the resurrection of those we love.

5. God want us **to encourage and strengthen each other** and **to endure** inevitable **hardship and suffering** through faith, love, and hope in Christ.

Bullet Point Summary/Snapshot—in Other Words:

- God wants Christians to keep on growing (in faith, in love, in hope) as we seek to live worthy of his calling.
- God wants Christians to build great marriages, loving communities of faith, and live/work with enthusiasm and honor.
- God wants Christians to stand strong in the face of opposition and suffering for our faith.
- God wants Christians to understand and live in light of the 2nd coming of Christ.
- God wants Christians to be in the business of encouraging and strengthening each other.
- God wants Christians to respect their leaders, help each other, and work together to live up to the calling of God in Christ.

Additional Messages/Points:

- God wants communities of faith to grow in their ability to stand on their own (faith/understanding, leadership, family, love/community, lifestyle/work, and encouragement). In other words, to build and be the church.
- Paul and his team provide a great example of the devotion, character, passion, and purpose of planting and pastoring a new church. In short, Paul provides a model of pastoral care.

Condensed Summary

Keep on Growing

... in faith (believing/accepting the gospel, holding to the values and teachings of Christ)

... in love (building great marriages, loving communities, and pursuing honorable work)

... in hope (dealing with opposition and suffering, living in light of the coming of Jesus)

Strengthening, Helping, and Encouraging Each Other

... as we live for God

... while we wait for Jesus

In Spite of Intense Suffering

Building a Devotional Digest

Rule #8 of the “Ten Rules” says, “Digest your experiences in the word” (for more on what this means, see *Rediscovering the Books of God*, pp. 141-45; pp. 213-18 provide an example from the book of Philemon). Here’s a guide for how you might create a “devotional digest” (a sort of condensed book-level context):

Building a Devotional Digest of Bible Books

Title or Subtitle

Give the book a title (instead of its Bible name) that you believe captures the essence of its message and purpose.

Purpose

What is the primary purpose of the book?

What result or action did it seek from the original readers?

What other actions did the book seek from the audience?

Message

What is the major message of the book?

What idea(s) or teaching does it convey?

What are other key points or messages?

Themes

What are the key words and themes of the book?

Is there a verse or set of verses that seem to capture the essence or core of the book?

Shape/Map

How is the content shaped?

What are the major sections?

How do they fit together and function in relation to each other?

Summary

Summarize the main ideas and primary purposes of the book in a short paragraph.

Theology

What does the book teach us about God (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit)?

Kingdom

What does the book teach us about living for God in the kingdom of God?

6. Apply what you've learned.

Rule #9 of good Bible reading is to “Live what you learn.” In one sense, this is the most important rule—the goal of all the others—since change in heart and character is a key reason we seek God through scripture. Once we've learned the major points of a book of God—what God wants to say to us—then don't we want to do it?!

Use your summary of the most important points/purposes of 1 Thessalonians to list and consider the ways God wants to change you through the messages of this book.

Spiritual Growth/Sanctification

Is “sanctification”—to live worthy of the calling of God, to be presented blameless before God—your #1 goal in life? What are you doing to keep growing always? How *do* we as Christians grow? (We sometimes refer to this as “discipleship.”) 1 Thessalonians teaches us that spiritual growth begins with learning, receiving, and holding on to what’s true and right. A fundamental part of Christian growth will, therefore, be focused on learning (hearing from God in scripture and being encouraged by one another) and then on living by the values that we learn. Growth means learning to see more clearly and acting more frequently and consistently in light of that knowledge. One application of 1 Thessalonians is to prioritize spiritual growth: to seek God in the books of God and make it your purpose to live by what you learn.

Faith, Love, Hope

Applying 1 Thessalonians means growing in fundamental values of the gospel of Christ: faith, love, and hope. Did you notice that various actions come from these values and attitudes? “*Work* of faith,” “*labor* of love,” “*endurance* of hope”? Thus, when we grow in the big three, it changes how we live.

What is faith? Where does it come from? How can faith be strengthened and increased? 1 Thessalonians portrays faith as receiving the message of the good news of Jesus, growing in the understanding of what it means to be a follower of Jesus, and standing strong when faced with opposition and suffering.

What is love? Where does it come from? How can love be strengthened and increased? 1 Thessalonians develops love in regard to marriage/family (“in sanctification and honor”), the community of faith (loving, encouraging, and helping each other), and living/working with devotion and passion. Paul’s relationship with the Thessalonian Christians also displays the purpose and passion of Christian love.

What is hope? Where does it come from? How can hope be strengthened and increased? 1 Thessalonians connects hope especially with the second coming of Jesus and what that means for our ultimate salvation—in light of opposition and suffering for our faith. (2 Thessalonians has more to say on this topic.)

Encouraging One Another

Encouraging and strengthening each other is a major theme of 1 Thessalonians. It was Timothy’s purpose in going to see them and Paul’s purpose in writing the letter. Several times, Paul explicitly exhorts them to do this for each other. Who doesn’t need encouraging? So, what are you doing to give . . . and receive encouragement? There is clear implication here of the need to be an active part of a community of faith.

Opposition and Suffering

In 1 Thessalonians, Paul says that suffering is an anticipated and inevitable destiny of being a Christian—Christianity is that counter-cultural. What does that say about our brand of Christianity today? Are we living distinctive (“holy”) enough lives that we experience opposition from the culture? Persecution? This is, I believe, one of the greatest challenges of 1 Thessalonians. Do we suffer for our faith? If not, why not?

Extra, Extra . . .

Most of the time, *knowing* how to apply the teachings (values and actions) of scripture is easy—it’s consistently *doing* them that’s difficult. There are times, however, when knowing how and what to apply can be more complicated. To help with this, I like to use a little tool called “the triangle of application.” To see more on the triangle, check out the section on Rule # 9 in *Rediscovering the Books of God*, pp. 146-53; and, for an example of digesting and applying the messages of a Bible book, see pp.213-29 on Philemon.

Sample Highlighting

1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,
To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

²We give thanks to God always for all of you,

constantly mentioning you in our prayers,

³remembering before our God and Father your **work of faith** and **labor of love** and **steadfastness of hope** in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father.

⁴For we know [= knowing], brothers **loved** by God, that he has **chosen** you, ⁵because our **gospel came** to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we **proved to be** among you for your sake. ⁶And you **became** imitators of us and of the Lord, for you **received the word** in **much affliction**, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you **became** an example to all the **believers** in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For not only has **the word of the Lord** sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but **your faith** in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. ⁹For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols [1] to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰and [2] **wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come**.

2 For you yourselves know, brethren, that our **coming** to you **was** not in **vain**, ²but after we had already **suffered and been mistreated** in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you **the gospel of God** amid much **opposition**. ³For our exhortation does not *come* from error or impurity or by way of deceit; ⁴but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with **the gospel**, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts. ⁵For we never **came** with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness— ⁶nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. ⁷But we **proved to be** gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. ⁸Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only **the gospel of God** but also **our own lives**, because you had **become** very dear to us.

⁹ For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. ¹⁰ You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; ¹¹ just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, ¹² so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

¹³ And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers. ¹⁴ For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews, ¹⁵ who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out, and displease God and oppose all mankind ¹⁶ by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they might be saved—so as always to fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them at last!

¹⁷ But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face, ¹⁸ because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us. ¹⁹ For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? ²⁰ For you are our glory and joy.

3 Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone, ² and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's coworker in the gospel of Christ, to establish and exhort you in your faith, ³ that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this. ⁴ For when we were with you, we kept telling you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction, just as it has come to pass, and just as you know. ⁵ For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain.

⁶ But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you—⁷ for this reason, brothers, in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith. ⁸ For now we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord. ⁹ For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, ¹⁰ as we pray most earnestly night

and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith?

¹¹ Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, ¹² and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, ¹³ so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness **before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.**

4 Finally, then, brothers, [1] we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. ² For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. ³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, ⁵ not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶ that no one trans and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. ⁷ For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. ⁸ Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

⁹ Now [2] concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, ¹⁰ for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, ¹¹ and [3] to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, ¹² so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one.

¹³ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

5 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves are fully aware that **the day of the Lord** will come like a thief in the **night**.³ While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. ⁴But you are not in **darkness**, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. ⁵For you are all children of **light**, children of the **day**. We are not of the **night** or of the **darkness**. ⁶So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. ⁷For those who sleep, sleep at **night**, and those who get drunk, are drunk at **night**. ⁸But since we belong to the **day**, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of **faith** and **love**, and for a helmet the **hope** of salvation. ⁹For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

¹²We ask you, brothers, to respect those who **labor** among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, ¹³and to esteem them very highly in **love** because of their **work**. Be at peace among yourselves. ¹⁴And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. ¹⁵See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. ¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise prophecies, ²¹but test everything; hold fast what is good. ²²Abstain from every form of evil.

²³Now may the God of peace himself **sanctify** you completely, **and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.** ²⁴He who **calls** you is **faithful**; he will surely do it.

²⁵Brothers, pray for us.

²⁶Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss.

²⁷I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers.

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