



Purley Baptist Church

Discipleship Guide 31st May 2020

1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

This Week's BIG IDEA: It's because the church is a family that there should be a loyalty to each other, a certain commitment to go forward together and to work through difficulties. Before Paul signs off his letter to the Thessalonians he has 4 major requests for the church as they go forward together as a family: (1) Love your leaders vv.12-13, (2) Love partnership with each other vv. 14-15, (3) Love God's ways vv.16-18 and, (4) Love the Spirit's work among you vv.19-22.

CONNECT IN: Here's some ice breaker questions you might want to use this week

- The greatest compliment I ever received was ...
- Tell us about your best friend
- Tell us about your favorite film or book.

CONNECT UP: Fix your eyes on God and give him an opportunity to speak to you through his Word

Starter... How has the church been your family?

Read the passage

- 1) The phrase 'brothers and sisters' occurs five times in this passage – How does this 'family' metaphor provide a helpful foundation for our understanding of the church?
- 2) According to vv. 12-15, what are: (a) the responsibilities of leaders to the congregation, (b) the responsibilities of the congregation towards leaders, and (c) the responsibilities of members of the congregation towards each other?
- 3) Read verses 16-18. If whatever's in our cup spills out when 'life trips us up', what would you say is in your cup at the moment? If it's God's will that our cup will be filled with rejoicing, prayer and thanksgiving how can we ensure this happens?
- 4) Based on what Paul says in this passage, reflect on the strengths of Purley Baptist and the areas where there is room for improvement.

CONNECT OUT as a group to serve the world around you

- Spend some time praying through the exhortations in this passage, turning them into requests to God for own church community as we seek to serve the world around us.

As you come to the end 1 Thessalonians, share with each other one thing to thank God for, and one thing to ask God for. Then pray them out.

Heartbeat

This week, as changes to lockdown continue to be implemented, let us pray:

- For our **government**. For wisdom, integrity, resilience and unity.
- For **schools**, as they look to open slowly. For protection and for the children returning. For teachers managing the changes to their work environment.
- For our **communities**-common sense and care in managing the new lockdown criteria. Protection from further spread of the virus.
- For the **Food Hub**, as they continue to provide essentials to people in need. Thank God for the donations given, and the volunteers. Pray for ongoing provision, and that their clients would be encouraged, and see the kindness and generosity of Jesus through the work of the Hub.
- For **CAP** (Christians against poverty). For wisdom as they work out how to continue their ministry in the current circumstances.
- For **local businesses**. Bring to mind those shops you used to go to, pause and picture them in your head. Recall the shop front, the staff you may know. Name them before God and pray God will bless them, help and provide for them as they look to sustain their businesses.
- For our **church family**. You may find it helpful to use this verse to guide your prayers: Psalm 31:24 'be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord'