

## **Paul's Concluding Matters**

1 Thess. 5:23-28

Lesson 5d

**1 Thess. 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

1. "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely"
  - a. Paul used the words "God of peace" in other writings. (Rom. 15:33; 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 4:9; 2 Thess. 3:16).
  - b. God is the source of true and genuine and lasting peace.
  - c. One can never have peace until he/she is at peace with God.
  - d. "Sanctify" is from "hagiazō" [hah gee **ah** zoh] means "to set apart." McCord translates "completely set you apart."
2. "and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete"
  - a. This phrase is very difficult.
  - b. Man is usually presented as being a dual being having a body and a "soul" or "spirit."
  - c. The word "spirit" comes from the Hebrew "ruach" and the Greek "pneuma" [**pn**yoo mah]. The word "spirit" can have a variety of meanings depending on the context.
    - 1) God the Father. (Jn. 4:24).
    - 2) The Holy Spirit. (Matt. 3:16; 28:19).
    - 3) Jesus. (1 Cor. 15:45). Lit. "the last Adam [Jesus] a life-giving spirit."
    - 4) Angels. (Heb. 1:14).
    - 5) Mental attitude. (Prov. 14:29; 16:18; Matt. 5:3).
    - 6) Men and animals (Eccles. 3:9, 21).
    - 7) Demons (Lk. 9:39; Mk. 5:2).
    - 8) Movement of air, the wind (Gen. 8:1; Exod. 10:13; 1 Kgs. 19:1; Jn. 3:8; Heb. 1:7).
    - 9) Breathe of mouth (2 Thess. 2:8; Psalms. 33:6).
    - 10) Breathe of life (Gen. 6:17; Rev. 11:11).

- c. The word “spirit” can also refer to the immortal part of man. (Eccles. 12:7; Lk. 23:46; Jn. 3:5-7; Acts 7:59; 1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Cor. 7:34; 2 Cor. 7:1; Gal. 6:18; 2 Tim. 4:22; Heb. 12:9,23; Jas. 2:26; Phile. 1:25).

Eccles. 12:7 then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.

Lk. 23:46 And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, *into Your hands I commit My spirit.*" Having said this, He breathed His last.

Jn. 3:5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and **the** Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Jn. 3:6 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of **the** Spirit is spirit.

Jn. 3:7 "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

Acts 7:59 They went on stoning Stephen as he called on *the Lord* and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

1 Cor. 5:5 *I have decided* to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

1 Cor. 7:34 and his interests are divided. The woman who is unmarried, and the virgin, is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may **be holy both in body and spirit**; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how she may please her husband.

2 Cor. 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Gal. 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen

2 Tim. 4:22 The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

Heb. 12:9 Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?

Heb. 12:23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,

Jas. 2:26 For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

Phile. 1:25 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

- d. The word “soul” comes from the Hebrew word “nephesh” and the Greek “psuche” [psoo **kay**]. “Soul” can have a variety of meanings depending on context.

1) Breathe of life (Acts 20:10).

2) Animal life. (Gen. 1:20, 24, 30; Rev. 8:9).

3) God (Matt. 12:18; Heb. 10:38).

- “Soul” does not mean God is flesh and blood (Matt. 16:19), but has the idea of God’s heart or mind.
- His righteous feeling or attitude is pleased or not pleased.

4) Heart (Eph. 6:6). Doing the will of God from the “soul” has the meaning of “heart.”

5) Feelings (Exod. 23:9).

6) Corpse, a dead body (Num. 6:6).

7) Human beings (including body and spirit). (Gen. 2:7; Matt. 2:20; 6:25; 20:28; Acts 2:41; Rom. 13:1).

- e. The word “soul” can also be used to refer to the immortal part of man. (Matt. 10:28; Mk. 8:36; Jas. 1:21; 1 Pet. 1:9; Heb. 10:39; 13:17; 6:19; Rev. 6:9; 1 Pet. 1:22; 2:11; Jas. 5:19, 20; 3 Jn. 1:2; Rev. 20:4).

Matt. 10:28 "Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Mk. 8:36 "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? See also Mark 8:37.

Heb. 6:19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil,

Heb. 10:39 But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

Heb. 13:17 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.

Jas. 1:21 Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and *all* that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.

Jas. 5:19 My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back,

Jas. 5:20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins

1 Pet. 1:9 obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

1 Pet. 4:19 Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

3 Jn. 3:2 Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.

Rev. 20:4 Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

- e. Here are some possible meanings of this three-fold division.

- 1) Some believe Paul did not intend that a big distinction be made of these words he used to describe the whole man. There is overlapping in the words found in the great commandment. (Matt. 22:37).
- 2) Others believe the word “spirit” designates the immortal part of man, but “soul” is used to designate the life force that animates the body. When God formed man out of the dust of earth, He breathes into him the breathed of life and man became a living, breathing creature. (Gen. 2:7).

3) Some hold the word “soul” is used here as the seat of human emotions and feelings as the word is sometimes used.

3. “without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”

- a. With God’s blessings he wants them to live in such a way that they be found without blame at Christ’s coming.
- b. Paul gave the these instructions on how to be faithful. (Gal. 5:16, 22-23).
- c. Peter gave these instructions on how to be found blameless. (2 Pet. 1:5-11).
- d. John is a very precise way revealed what is required to be found blameless at Christ’s coming. (1 Jn. 1:7, 9).

**1 Thess. 5:24 Faithful [dependable, trustworthy] is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.**

- NIV has “and he will do it” – Lit “who indeed will do [it]”
1. God who calls men through the gospel is absolutely faithful. (2 Thess. 1:8, 9).
  2. God will not fail us. (1 Cor. 10:13; Heb. 13:5; Jas. 4:7).
  3. One will be blameless when Christ comes again if he/she will by new birth become a part of God’s family and seek His will.

**1 Thess. 5:25 Brethren, pray for us**

1. Prayer is powerful.
2. Paul coveted the prayers of these saints and all brothers.

**1 Thess. 5:26 Greet all the brethren with a holy [sacred] kiss.**

1. The “holy kiss” is mentioned several times in the New Testament.
  - a. “Holy” is from “hagios” [**hah** gee ahs] meaning “holy, sacred.”
  - b. It is used several times in the New Testament in reference to the word “kiss.” (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Pet. 5:14).

Rom. 16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

1 Cor. 16:20 All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

2 Cor. 13:12 Greet one another with a holy kiss.

1 Pet. 5:14 Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace be to you all who are in Christ.

2. Greeting others with a kiss was customary in those days. It was not a custom originating with Christians.
3. Paul appears to be asking them to “greet all the brethren with a holy kiss” in his behalf as he was unable to do that personally.

- a. “All” is significant.
  - b. There was to be no distinctions or respecters of persons.
4. “Holy kiss” designates it was a kiss expressing Christian love - not a kiss of passion.
  5. Greeting one another with a kiss is still practiced in some countries apart from any association with Christianity.
    - a. It was and is, in these places, merely a way of greeting.
    - b. It may or may not denote love and affection for the person or persons.
  6. In those countries Christians may also follow this custom with greeting one another especially when they meet together and when they encounter one another at other times.
  7. It is certainly not wrong to greet one another with a holy kiss, but this will likely not be welcomed by most outside the brotherhood and by most people one does not know very well who are believers.
  8. The firm hand shake, a hug are other warm ways of greeting one another are ways of welcoming and showing love, respect and affection.
  9. It is questionable Paul was making this a universal commandment applying in every situation in all ages.

**Note:**

1. The kiss of Judas rather than being “a holy kiss” was a kiss of betrayal and treachery. (Mk. 14:44).
2. The critics and enemies of Christ failed to give Him a kiss of greeting. (Lk. 7:45).
3. Jesus praised the sinful woman for her conduct of kissing his feet over and over again. (Lk. 7:45).

**1 Thess. 5:27 I adjure you by the Lord to have this letter read to all the brethren** [brothers and sisters].

1. Paul again used the word “all.” See 1 Thess. 5:26.
2. This was not a private letter, but Paul wanted it “read to all the brethren.”
3. It was very important that every member hear the words of this letter from Paul.
  - a. He used the words “I adjure you.”
  - b. This comes from the word “enorkizo” [eh nahr **kee** zoh] meaning “to adjure, charge, to put under oath.”
  - c. The NIV has “charge” and the NRSV has “I solemnly command.”
  - d. McCord “I am putting you under oath before the Lord.”
4. It was his strong desire that “all” hear his words of praise, encouragement and instruction.
5. One should keep in mind that each member did not have a copy of the scriptures and none would have a copy of this letter.

- a. Many books of the New Testament had not been written at this early date.
- b. There were very limited copies of the books or letters of the New Testament in about A.D. 50 to 52.
- c. Copies of this epistle would emerge and be circulated over a period of time.
- d. Many Christians could not read based on the number of illiterate people at that time.

**1 Thess. 5:28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.**

- 1. Paul concludes by expressing a desire that “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ” be with each one of them.
  - a. Paul often used this language. (Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 16:23; 2 Cor. 13:13; Gal. 6:18; Phil. 4:23; 2 Thess. 3:18; Phile. 1:25).
  - b. Many scriptures speak of God’s grace. (Tit. 2:11; Heb. 2:9; 1 Pet. 5:12; Acts 11:23; 2 Cor. 1:2; 6:1; Eph. 2:8).
- 2. He dearly loved these brothers and sisters and wanted the unmerited favor of Jesus to be with all of them.

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