

Jeff Lingerfelt
PO Box 12131, SC 29211
803-467-7634
Jeff.lingerfelt@capitolcom.org

LEADERSHIP DURING DIFFICULT DAYS

1THESSALONIANS 5:13

"APPRECIATE THOSE & ESTEEM THEM"

But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, ¹³ ***and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.*** ¹⁴ *We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.* ¹⁵ *See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people.* ¹⁶ *Rejoice always;* ¹⁷ *pray without ceasing;* ¹⁸ *in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.* ¹⁹ *Do not quench the Spirit;* ²⁰ *do not despise prophetic utterances.* ²¹ *But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good;* ²² *abstain from*

"PITHY PARADIGM" Guzik - *Esteem others better than himself rebukes much of the world's concept of self esteem; the idea that we should - and must - carry with us an attitude of confident superiority in every situation, and that this is the foundation for a healthy human personality. While we recognize the intrinsic value of every human life, we can't deny that the low self-esteem of some is justified, and based in reality - when we are in rebellion against God, it is fitting for us to have a low self-esteem. As we esteem others better, we will naturally have a concern for their needs and concerns; this sort of outward looking mentality naturally leads to a unity among the people of God If I am considering you above me, and you are considering me above you, a marvelous thing happens: we have a community where everyone is looked up to, and no one is looked down on. (Philippians 2:3ff; John 13:3-15)*

Our text instructs us that we are to 1) appreciate those and 2) esteem them because of their work.

In the New Testament we have two distinct uses of the word **esteem**; (*hēgeisthai*) can mean to lead, be a leader, ruler or governor. It also carry the idea of engaging in an intellectual process so as to think, regard or reckon. This process pictures one giving careful thought to something and not making a quick decision. The depiction is that of one leading his or her mind through a reasoning process to arrive at a conclusion. Paul is calling for all believers to make a conscious judgment of their leaders after deliberate weighing of the facts (eg, their diligent labor even to the point of exhaustion among the saints). Esteeming carries the idea of engaging the mind through a thought process.

Very highly means more than, overflowing all bounds, surpassing, superabundantly, beyond measure,

exceedingly, quite beyond all measure. It describes an extraordinary degree, involving a considerable excess over what would be expected.

Vincent writes that... *Their esteem for their superintendents is not to rest only on personal attachment or respect for their position, but on intelligent and sympathetic appreciation of their work. It is a good and much-needed lesson for the modern congregation no less than for the Thessalonian church.*

All this is accomplished in the sphere of love, an *agape* love that also gives to the point of exhaustion. I like the way Hiebert states this...

Whenever love does not dominate, the admonitions of the leaders, however much they may be deserved by the members, will always tend to provoke resentment against those giving the admonition. If they are to have cordial relations between leaders and members, love must prevail. When they have genuine love they will not merely tolerate the admonitions of their leaders but will graciously accept them.

This attitude is reciprocal-a two way street that says the other is more important than myself. Biblical love gives, to the point, where others are esteemed beyond the realm of self interest.

It is the position that must be held in high regard. Yes, many in leadership position fail and have character issues, but the position must be honored. because God installed both the church leader and our national leader.

This is seen in the political climate of today. As we have just experienced this past week the transition of leadership on a national level of the office of President. The transfer of one leader to another has brought the depravity of man to the streets of our nation, resulting in rioting, trespassing, vandalization, and mob led violence, because some do not like the character of the new president nor hold high esteem for the position.

Much could be said, but how much better it would be if the office of president was respected and held in high regard?

We all are to "live in peace with one another." This is a command. It is imperative that Christians live out this passage. Living in peace and harmony is the opposite of war. To live at peace brings about a state of freedom from disturbance, whether outwardly, as of a nation from war or enemies or inwardly, as in the current context, within the congregation of saints.

Romans 14:19 *So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.*

2 Corinthians 13:11 *Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. (Jeremiah 29:7)*

When believers live at peace the implication is that there is spiritual health, well-being, and prosperity. Peace contrasts with strife and thus denotes the absence or end of strife.

Why is this command necessary and so important? **MacDonald** observes that...The exhortation "be at peace among yourselves" is no incidental insertion. The number one problem among Christians everywhere is the problem of getting along with each other (people in general). Every believer has enough of the flesh in him to divide and wreck any local church. Only as empowered by the Spirit can we develop the love, brokenness, forbearance, kindness, tender-heartedness, and forgiveness that are indispensable for peace. A

particular threat to peace which Paul may be warning against is the formation of cliques around human leaders. (**MacDonald, W & Farstad, A. Believer's Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson or Logos**)

Keathley adds that God gives...*a harvest of peace when believers sow and water their minds with the Word. But Satan, the agent of disunity and strife, seeks to sow fear and anger in order to reap a harvest of discord through hurt feelings, failure to forgive, and selfish ambition. This happens when Christians refuse to operate on the principles and promises of the Word. (Grace and Peace)*

Philippians 4:7 *And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Stop and think of the words from **Romans 8:1** *"Now there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."* That is true and lasting peace from the Prince of Peace!

Do you know the Prince of Peace?

If you were to die today, do you have the assurance you would go to heaven?

If you were asked by Christ, "why I should allow you into heaven, what would you say?"

These are serious and thought provoking questions that must be answered.

LEGISLATIVE BIBLE STUDY

Blatt Rm. 317—Wednesday, 8:30am

Prayer Request-jeff.lingerfelt@capitolcom.org