

**All Ear****I. Slide#1 Announce:**

- A. Harvest Festival - Baked Goods (office b4 4pm; after in info booth). Bring neighbor kids. 5:30-8:30pm
- B. WRAP - White Ribbons in basket in back - *all week*.
- C. Burma Team - Dr. Les, Julie & Christie.

**II. Intro:**

- A. As Jesus saved *the best wine for last*, so Paul does the same here.
- B. **Obedience story** - A **missionary translator** was struggling to find a word for '*obedience*' in the native language. As he returned home from the village one day, he whistled for his dog and it came running to him at full speed. An **old native**, who was watching, said admiringly in the native tongue, 'Your dog is all ear.' Immediately the missionary knew that the word *obedience* should be translated 'all ear'.
  - 1. Slide#2 Paul wants the Thessalonians & CM to be 'all ear'.
  - 2. He wants the **watchfulness** and **soberness** of the preceding verses to become part of their/our everyday lives.
  - 3. He wants them/us to **practice** what he has been **preaching**.
    - a) With this in mind he passes on some brief directions, saying much in just a few words.
- C. Title: *All Ear*
- D. Slide#3 Outline: Love your leaders; Love one another; Love God's Will; Love the Spirit's Fire; Love God's Faithfulness.

**III. Slide#4 LOVE YOUR LEADERS (12,13)**

- A. The church family must have spiritual leadership.
- B. Keep in mind this should be **leadership not dictatorship**.
  - 1. The **leader** sets the example, pays the price, & seeks to help others in Christian love.
  - 2. The **dictator** uses law, not love; **he does not lead, he drives**; and his motives are selfish, *even if* he thinks he is working for the good of the church.
- C. So, why do they deserve your love?
- D. Slide#5 **THEY WORK HARD AMONG YOU** (12a)
  - 1. This ought to come by the leaders **reputation** of the **quality** of their work, **not** from any other cause, **for their works sake**. To work w/effort both bodily & mental labor.
  - 2. This **doesn't** mean to **esteem** them w/a **title**...*although* I do like, "*Most-holy-honorable-reverend!*"
- E. Slide#6 **THEY ARE OVER YOU IN THE LORD** (12b)

1. **God** has appointed them to be your leaders, which is reason enough to respect them...and you should **follow them** says the writer of Hebrews...
  - a) **Slide#7a Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.** Heb.13:7
  - b) **Slide#7b Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.** Heb.13:17
    - (1) **Isn't the submission to someone older, someone more knowledgeable, the 1st sign a maturity?**
      - (a) When you move from **knowing everything** to **being eager to learn** from someone...who's been down **the road of life** a little farther than you.

F. **Slide#8 THEY ADMONISH YOU** (12c)

1. They urge you, both privately and publicly, to obey God by giving you much-needed encouragement, **but also reproof** and **reproach** when necessary.
2. This unfortunately is where some folks find it easier *just to leave*...when they are being *"warned"* by leadership. [esp over our women & children]

#### IV. **Slide#9 LOVE ONE ANOTHER (14,15)**

- A. It is not enough to have church **leadership**; **there must also be partnership**, with each member doing his or her share of the work.
  1. Each Christian is a steward of a spiritual gift, and we must use that gift for the **good of others** and the **glory of the Lord**.
  2. Paul specifies certain kinds of Christians who need special help:
- B. **Slide#10 WARN THOSE WHO ARE UNRULY** (14a)
  1. **A military term signifying the soldier who does not keep in proper rank** [LKGNT]. **Thus**, anything *out of order*.
    - a) **How is a soldier treated who wont keep in rank?** An insubordinate.
- C. **Slide#11 ENCOURAGE THE FAINTHEARTED** (14b)
  1. The **fainthearted**, those worried about their dead relatives and friends **and** about their own salvation, **must not be despised**, **but** comforted and encouraged.
- D. **Slide#12 HOLD UP THE WEAK** (14c)
  1. Maybe those struggling with *instability, insecurity, inability*.
  2. The **spiritually immature** who are tempted to lapse into immorality must not be abandoned, **but** given all the necessary **spiritual and moral** assistance to help them stand strong for Christ.
  3. **Uphold them** - **Cling** to them - **pay them special care & attention**.

- a) In *Newsweek* [Feb. 7, 1983, p. 13.] A California woman wrote, "No matter how bad the pain is, it's never so bad that suicide is the only answer. Suicide doesn't end pain. It only lays it on the broken shoulders of the survivors." And she ends her story. "By the way: to all the doctors, nurses and psychiatrists who forced me to live when I didn't want to - **thank you** for keeping breath in my lungs and my heart beating and encouraging hope in me when I didn't have any hope."
- b) Slide#13 Some yokes are made heavier on one side than the other. Then, an older strong oxen was paired with a young weaker oxen. *His yoke is easy & burden light.*
- (1) Can you help shoulder the heavy side upon your shoulder for a while?

E. Slide#14 BE PATIENT W/EVERYONE (14c,15)

1. The word **patience** means to hold out for a long time before taking action.
  2. Paul wants the Thessalonians to be longsuffering towards those **in the church** and those who are **outsiders**, even if they are mistreating them.
  3. They must not reject anyone. **Bear and forbear is his command.**
- F. (15a) How foolish is **Revenge**? - If we take revenge, we are as foolish as the man who drove his brand new car into an old parked car. When the police asked him to explain his actions, he replied by saying that both cars belonged to him and he was taking revenge on his old car for giving him so much trouble.
- G. (15b) What should our reaction be if we are mistreated? Don't imitate the cranky old woman whose neighbors forgot to ask her to their picnic. On the morning of the event they suddenly realized their affront and sent a small boy to her house with a special invitation. 'It's too late now,' she snapped, 'I've already prayed for rain!'

V. Slide#15 LOVE GODS WILL (16-18)

- A. *Rejoice, pray, & give thanks* sound like ordinary admonitions; but when you add the **adverbs**, you have a real challenge: *Rejoice evermore; pray w/out ceasing; in everything give thanks.*
1. The Christian who walks with the Lord and keeps in constant communion with Him **will see** many reasons for **rejoicing and thanksgiving** all day long.
- B. Slide#16 BE JOYFUL ALWAYS (16)
- C. **Rejoice always** - This is actually the *shortest verse* in the bible (in orig GK) [2 words/14 letters; vs. Jesus wept 3 words/16 letters]
1. Joy was one of the marks of primitive Christianity, which amazed the heathen world and attracted men to Christ. Paul is concerned that the **joy** of the Thessalonians might be strangled by **suffering**, so he urges them to **rejoice** not in what was happening to them, **but** in their **Savior** and all that He has done for them.
- D. Slide#17 PRAY CONTINUALLY (17)
1. They pray best **together** who also pray **alone**.
  2. **Pray without ceasing** does not mean a constant mumbling of prayers (Mt.6:7).

- a) True prayer is the **attitude** of the heart, the **desire** of the heart.
- b) When our hearts desire what God desires, we are praying all day long as the Spirit intercedes **for us and in us**.
- 3. Other ways this word was used outside of the NT: The uninterrupted necessary payment of taxes. The continual service of an official. A continual uninterrupted cough.
  - a) Like a hacking cough...you may not be always coughing **though** the tendency to cough is always there. *So we will not always be audibly praying yet always have the **attitude of praying in our heart & life**.* Ryrie
- 4. Spurgeon said, As your **tempted** w/o ceasing, **pray** w/o ceasing.
- 5. *Prayer is not an exercise, it is the life of the saint.* Oswald Chambers
- E. Slide#18 **GIVE THANKS IN EVERYTHING** (18)
  - 1. Slide#19 If you face the sun your shadow always falls behind you. If you turn around...it'll always be in front of you.
  - 2. **In everything** – give thanks **in** the midst of any situation **or** circumstance.
- F. **This is the will of God** - refers to all 3 (rejoice, pray, be thankful).

## VI. Slide#20 **LOVE THE SPIRIT'S FIRE (19-22)**

- A. Slide#21 **Quench** - to put out a fire. Like in Mrk 9:47,48 **to be cast into hell fire; where Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.** (put out)
  - 1. Appropriately affixed to the H.S. (cloven tongues of fire)
- B. Slide#22 Never become attached to anything that continues to **hurt** the heart of God.
  - 1. This says, **stop doing something your presently doing.**
  - 2. **What are you presently doing that is smoldering the H.S.'s fire in your life?**
  - 3. **When we criticize or discourage others, we throw cold water on their inner fire.**
  - 4. **Are you grieving the H.S. this evening w/a cold heart? A rebellious frame of mind? A flippant complacency?**
- C. (20) **How were the Thes. bel's doing this?** By despising prophecies.
- D. (21) **Test** - Paul immediately balances it w/don't accept everything. **Prove it. Test it.**
  - 1. Slide#23 Early church writers attribute a saying to Christ, *"become approved money changers"*. Dr. F.F.Bruce
    - a) Referring to those who were occupied in **changing various currencies &** were constantly **looking for** counterfeit coins.
  - 2. **Remember, if 40 million people believe in a dumb idea...it's still a dumb idea. Test!**
- E. (22) **Every form** (**every kind/species/class**) – (not **appearance** like KJV says. *It can include that*)
  - 1. **Note contrast to good** in previous vs. **So, stay away from all of it, all evil.**

- F. The danger was that the believers would *go overboard* in: (a) not listening to any prophecy or, (b) the other extreme, *quench the Spirit* by rejecting His revelations.

## VII. Slide#24 LOVE GODS FAITHFULNESS (23-28)

- A. Slide#25 GODS SANCTIFICATION (23,24)
- B. Now the exhortation to complete holiness(23), on the assured help of God(24).
- Slide#26a Sanctification is not something Jesus puts inside of us, it is Himself inside of us. *Christ in you, the hope of glory. He is faithful* (24).
- C. Completely - *through and through*. The whole man in every part. He does not want any part of their being to fall short of entire consecration to God.
- Slide#26b The Puritan Joseph Caryl put it this way, Perfect holiness is **the aim** of the saints on earth, and it is **the reward** of the saints in heaven.
  - When **every** part of our lives, inward and outward, lies under the sanctifying grace and power of God, we shall be **preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord JC**.
  - The cost of sanctification? Absolutely everything in us *which is not of God*.
  - Are you prepared to accept Paul's prayer here for you?
    - All of who you are** (sp, soul, & body) to be blameless.
- D. **But remember**, our certainty is *wrapped up in God*, who will complete what he has begun. Our sanctification and preservation are guaranteed in him.
- E. Slide#27 PAULS EXHORTATION (25-28)
- F. Paul & his fellow missionaries knew they needed *a little help from their friends*, so they exhort the Thessalonians to pray for them. *Uphold us before the throne of grace*.
- Thomas Watson** underlined the effectiveness of prayer when he said, *The angel fetched Peter out of prison, but it was prayer that fetched the angel*.
  - Paul needed a support group! [*the epitome of pride...I can live my Christianity on my own*]
- G. (26) Greet...w/a holy kiss – *Single men before you highlight this in your girlfriends bible, know this...it was man to man, woman to woman*. Custom (kiss on the cheek) still used today.
- H. (27) Charge - strong language to read this letter aloud.
- I. (28) Grace - God's unmerited favor in Christ.
- Slide#28 At the entrance of a coal mine, a man spied a beautiful **white flower** growing out of the black earth. "How can it blossom in such purity and radiance in this dirty mine?" he asked. "Throw some coal dust on it and see for yourself," one replied. When he did, he was surprised that the *fine, sooty particles slid right off* the snowy petals, leaving the plant just as lovely and unstained as before. Its surface was **so smooth** that the grit and grime could not adhere to it.

- a) **Just as** that flower could not control its habitat, **so we** cannot help it that we have to live in a world filled with evil.
- b) **But God's grace** can keep us so **clean and unspotted** that though we touch every side, it will *not* **cling to us**.