

Elevated Esteem
February 21, 2010
1Thessalonians 5:12-28

If you hold something/someone in high esteem, what are you doing with it? What is your opinion about it? Is this action more than respect, or just another word for it?

When you were in high school, whom did you respect above everyone else, and why?

- Parent?
- Teacher
- Grandparent?
- Coach?
- Neighbor?
- Preacher?
- Political leader?
- Other?

Now that you're an adult, what causes you to respect others?

What is it that helps you feel respected by others?

1. 1Thess 5:12-13. Do you have someone at WCC whom you hold in high regard because of the work they do? Have you told them? If not, why not? Why would Paul connect *live in peace with each other* to the act of giving respect?

2. vs. 14. Do you know someone who is idle, who is not at work in/for the Kingdom? How would you *warn* them, and what would you *warn* them about? Of these four suggestions, which one is the most difficult, and which one is the easiest? Why? Is there someone with whom it is difficult to be patient? What do you need to change your attitude?

3. vs. 15. Do you know anyone who does not respond well to kindness? Is there someone with whom you'd like to get even? What would it mean for you to forgive this person? **Rom 12:18 Philippians 2:3-5**

4. vs. 16-18. Short verses with big implications, no? Is there something happening in your life right now that is hard? Is there something in it for which you can thank God? What is the importance of the words *in all circumstances*? Who can *be joyful always*, really? Who can *pray continually*, really?

5. vs 19-22. What kinds of things or behaviors could extinguish the Spirit's fire in you? In your church? How do you avoid evil, when sometimes it comes to find you? How do you *test everything*? **Acts 17:11**

6. vs. 23-24. What does it mean that God will *sanctify you, through and through*? How are you kept *blameless*? What makes it hard to believe that we really are *blameless*? How does vs. 24 help our weak faith?

7. vs. 25-27. What is there about these ideas that we cannot do? Are these actions difficult?

8. vs. 28. Can you offer this greeting or farewell to any other Christian? Is there someone to whom you could not offer this greeting? Why?

When was the last time you felt you really received recognition from your peers for something you did really well? What did that recognition mean to you?

When was the last time someone comforted you when you were discouraged? What did that experience do for your relationship with them?

How apt are you to “test” something someone tells you?

How does being patient with someone show esteem for them?

Of all the lessons in today’s text, which is the hardest for you?

- Esteeming leaders
- Being at peace with others
- Comforting the discouraged
- Not seeking revenge
- Being always joyful
- Praying constantly
- Giving thanks
- Not stifling the Spirit
- Testing everything
- Clinging to the good
- Avoiding every evil

What is the one action you can take to implement these traits in your life?