

“...and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. **Live in peace with one another.**”
1 Thessalonians 5:13

Stop Fighting!

Live in Peace with One Another – 1 Thessalonians 5:13

I had three brothers. My mom did not know what peace was.

There was always one of us picking on another until we got to that breaking point and then came the fighting. I remember books being thrown at each other and a lot of pushing and shoving. My parents were always able to get to us before we did any real damage to each other. I wish I could say that same for the house.

Even when we played we fought. It was never a peaceful playtime. One of us was the good guy and one of us was the bad guy. We had tanks and action figures with guns. We built forts and bases from which to attack our enemies. Everywhere was a battle ground and everything was a weapon.

Peace and quiet. Do we know what that is?

Describe the last time you had a time of peace with no interruptions. What did you do?

For many of us, these times are few and far between. When you add people to my world then it makes peace even harder. If I lived on an island by myself, I would still not have peace, as I would find something to argue with myself about.

Paul calls us to live in peace with one another. Stop fighting!

Church would seem to be a place to find people who love each other and never fight with each other, but that is the farthest from the truth. Unfortunately, we fight in the church and try to justify it as our convictions or Biblical stance when most arguments are as a result of personality differences and personal opinions. We let ourselves get in the way of fellowshiping with others.

Do you have a grievance against a brother in the church? Describe why you feel that way.

How have you tried to live at peace with that brother?

In 1 Thessalonians 5:13, “live in peace” is an imperative, a command. Some would suggest that it is directed to the congregation in reference to the leaders in the previous verses. The congregation should submit peacefully to the leaders. Paul gave it as a command to all. The leaders are to live in peace with the people and the vice versa.

“...so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.”

1 Corinthians 12:25

“Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus.”

Romans 15:5

How would you define “living in peace”?

The sense of the word carries with it the idea of oneness, quietness, or rest. Have you ever seen a show where two siblings or people are fighting, so they take some tape and mark off the middle of the room? This is an effort to make peace between the two feuding people. They tell each other to stay on their own side and even though they may not talk to each other, that is not peace.

Peace is not just putting up with each other. Notice Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 12:25. He explains peace as having no divisions, and it is having the same care for each other. Another way of saying it is “having the same mind”.

Like I said, I have a hard time living at peace with myself. There is no way that I am going to be able to live at peace with that brother that can be so annoying.

Why is it sometimes so hard to have peace in the church?

It boils down to our own personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It is hard to be at peace with ourselves and others if we are not at peace with God. Paul expresses this in Romans 15:5. It is God who gives us the ability to live at peace. Remember the fruit of the Spirit? Love, Joy, PEACE. It is God who gives us the perseverance and strength through the Holy Spirit to accomplish this task.

James explains why we have such a hard time living in peace. He says in chapter four, verse one that the source of the quarrels and conflicts is from our own self-centeredness. I must point the finger at myself when it comes to conflict.

Only the Holy Spirit can bring us to the point of peace, but it needs to start now. A great resource is Peacemakers written by Ken Sande. It is all about resolving conflict and living at peace.

Remember that this is a command, but God give us the ability to follow this command.

So, stop fighting and live in peace with one another.

What do you need to do in response to this lesson?
