

## ***What is a Healthy Church Member***

### **Mark 9 Study Guide**

A Healthy Church Member is a Humble Follower

**1 Thessalonians 5:12-13** *We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, <sup>13</sup> and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.*

1) Read all of 1 Thessalonians 5 to understand the context of verses 12-13.

- a) What impact should knowledge of the coming Day of the Lord have on our daily conduct? How do Paul's commands in verse 11 ("encourage one another and build one another up") relate to his discussion of the Day of the Lord?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b) Note that verses 14 to 28 are all addressed to the "brothers" (verse 14). All the occurrences of the word "you" are plural. These are all, therefore, corporate commands, including verses 23 and 24. What, then, is Paul saying to the church as a whole? What picture of the church as a whole is he painting?

2) Now consider verses 12-13 in that context.

- a) Paul commands the Thessalonians to respect their leaders. We don't normally command people to do things that they do of their own accord; the very fact that Paul commands them to respect their leaders implies that some are not respecting them. What reason does verse 12 suggest for why they might be tempted not to respect their leaders? What other reasons might also be involved? Consider 2 Timothy 4:2-4 in your answer. Why is respect for leaders so important?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b) In verse 13, "Esteem them very highly in love" is an exceptionally strong statement; the Greek word translated by the ESV as "very highly" means "quite beyond all measure," so we could render it, "infinitely highly." What reason does Paul give for the church to esteem the leaders so highly?

c) What is the link between the first and second commands in verse 13?

3) Consider all of 1 Thessalonians 5, with an emphasis on verses 12 and 13. Why are church leaders important? How do respect and esteem for the leaders work toward enabling the church to become what God intends it to be?

4) Now read Thabiti's chapter on the healthy church member as a humble follower.

a) What four *attitudes* toward leaders does he highlight?

b) Consider your past involvement with different churches. Describe a time when church members (including yourself!) exhibited these attitudes and thus helped the church, or failed to exhibit these attitudes and harmed the church. What lessons can you draw from this experience for your being a healthier church member in the future?

c) What five *actions* toward leaders does Thabiti highlight?

d) From your own experience, tell of a time when you acted, or failed to act, in one of these ways. What was the result?

e) Given this chapter and our study of 1 Thessalonians 5, what areas of attitude or action do you need to improve to be a healthier church member?