**Sermon Title: The Picture of a Consistent Completeness**

**Sermon Text: 1 Thessalonians 5:23-28**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to the endgame of complete sanctification.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 3 closing aspects of a Christian filled church.**

**Introduction:** Since Paul had just established “high” standards, he expressed through a Prayer, Greeting, and Blessing his wish that God would enable his readers to attain the completeness God had in store for them.

**I. The prayer regarding God sanctifying the believer completely. Vv.23-25**

**II. The greeting of all brothers and sisters lovingly. Vv.26-27**

**III. The blessing, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you strongly. V.28**

**I. The prayer regarding God sanctifying the believer completely. Vv.23-25**

 In order to encourage his readers and listeners, Paul points them to God’s ability to produce peace. God is the ultimate source of the believer’s peace with Him and with each other. Paul is emphatic in affirming that God Himself is the ultimate source of the believer’s sanctification. (**3:11; 4:3**)

 **Romans 15:33** Now the God of peace *be* with you all. Amen.

 **Romans 16:20** And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

 **2 Corinthians 13:11** Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

 **Philippians 4:9** The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

 Peace in this context is almost synonymous with Christian salvation.

 **Acts 10:36** "The word which *God* sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ-- He is Lord of all—

 **Romans 2:10** but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

 **Romans 5:1** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

 **Romans 8:6** For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.

 **Romans 14:17** for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

 A. The prayer for **complete** sanctification. V.23a

 Sanctification is to occur in every area of the believer’s life. It is to be completely or through and through or entirely, so that believers reach the full end or goal “for which they are saved.” (**Ephesians 4:11-16**)

 **James 1:4** But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

 B. The prayer for sanctification of the whole man. V.23b

 1. Man is described as having two parts in Scripture, body and spirit.

 **James 2:26** For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. **2 Corinthians 7:1** Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

 2. Man is described in Scripture as body and soul.

 **Matthew 10:28** "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

 3. Man is described as to have heart, mind, conscience, and other parts.

 The Spirit is the most unique part of man that enables him to communicate with God.

 The soul is the part of man that makes him aware of himself, it is the seat of his personality.

 The body is the physical part through which the inner person expresses himself and by which he is immediately recognized.

 C. The prayer for sanctification of preserved **blamelessness**. V.23c

 He prayed that they would be preserved blameless (amemptos – with no legitimate grounds for accusation that are true). **2:10** Blameless in their inner lives, personal lives, and in their social lives. This is to be done in light of the soon coming return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

 1. This is based on the God who calls. V.24a

 2. The God who calls is faithful. V.24b

 **Philippians 1:6** being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ;

 **Galatians 3:3** Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?

 3. This God is able to complete the sanctification. V.24c

 D. The prayer for the **leadership** sanctification. V.25

 Paul understands that his success and perseverance in ministry is dependent on the prayers of believers.

 **2 Corinthians 3:5** Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as *being* from ourselves, but our sufficiency *is* from God,

**II. The greeting of all brothers and sisters lovingly. Vv.26-27**

 J.B. Phillips paraphrased this verse for 20th Century English readers, “Give a handshake all around among the brotherhood.”

 A. Greet one another with holy Christian love. V.26

 B. Guarantee **obedience** among the holy Christian community. V.27

 This exhortation strongly urges that this letter be read to all the brethren. Paul puts his readers and hearers under oath (enoekizo hymas) “I charge you” to do this, implying that God would discipline them if they disobeyed.

 The normal Greek word for “read” (anagnosthenai) implies that the Scriptures should be read aloud to the church. (**Acts 15:21**)

 **Luke 4:16** So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.

 **Acts 13:15** And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, "Men *and* brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on." **Acts 13:27** "For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled *them* in condemning *Him*.

 **2 Corinthians 3:14-15** But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the *veil* is taken away in Christ. **15** But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart.

 **1 Timothy 4:13** Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

**III. The blessing, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you strongly. V.28**

 (**Ephesians 1:1-10; Titus 2:11-16**)

 **Romans 16:20** And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

 **Galatians 6:18** Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

 **Ephesians 6:24** Grace *be* with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.