

“Peace Among Yourselves”

1 Thess. 5:13

Introduction:

- A. Paul calls for *congregational* peace.
 - 1. Written to a local church (1:1).
 - 2. Helps the work of elders. (5:12,13).
- B. Brethren need such peace today.
 - 1. To bring order out of chaos — daily hear of strife.
 - 2. To reinforce our message to the world. (Cf. John 17:20,21).
 - 3. To benefit from the inherent strength in unity. (Cf. Gen. 11:6-8; Acts 23:6-10).
- C. Let us explore some foundations for congregational peace.

Discussion:

- I. *General Indifference Keeps the Peace in Many Congregations.***
 - A. “At peace” because too dead to fight — Like a corpse.
 - B. “At peace” because not really concerned about purity. (Cf. Jas. 3:17).
 - C. “At peace” because consider nothing important enough to contend for. (Cf. Jude 3).
 - D. “At peace” because too indifferent to study the religious issues.
- II. *Moral Weakness Keeps the Peace in Many Congregations.***
 - A. Afraid to oppose a “Diotrephes.” (Cf. 2 John 9-10).
 - B. Afraid to stand against false teachers (cf. Gal. 2:4-5; 11-14).
 - C. Afraid to exercise scriptural discipline. (Cf. Tit. 3:10; 1 Tim. 5:20).
 - D. Afraid to “reprove and rebuke” (2 Tim. 4:1-4).
- III. *Spiritual Strength Keeps the Peace in Many Congregations.***
 - A. Strong enough to rely on revelation over human wisdom. (Cf. Matt. 16:13-17).
 - B. Strong enough to have and support strong leadership. (Cf. Heb. 13:7).
 - C. Strong enough to deal with those who cause divisions contrary to doctrine. (Rom. 16:17-18).
 - D. Strong enough bear with others. (Rom. 14:19-15:6; Eph. 4:1-3).
 - E. Strong enough to keep self under control: Tongue (Jas. 1:26); Temper.

Conclusion:

- A. Let us be at peace: not from indifference, not from weakness, but strength.