



# 7 SENTENCES




Therefore, encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

**1 THESSALONIANS 5:11**

# APPRECIATE THE WORKERS

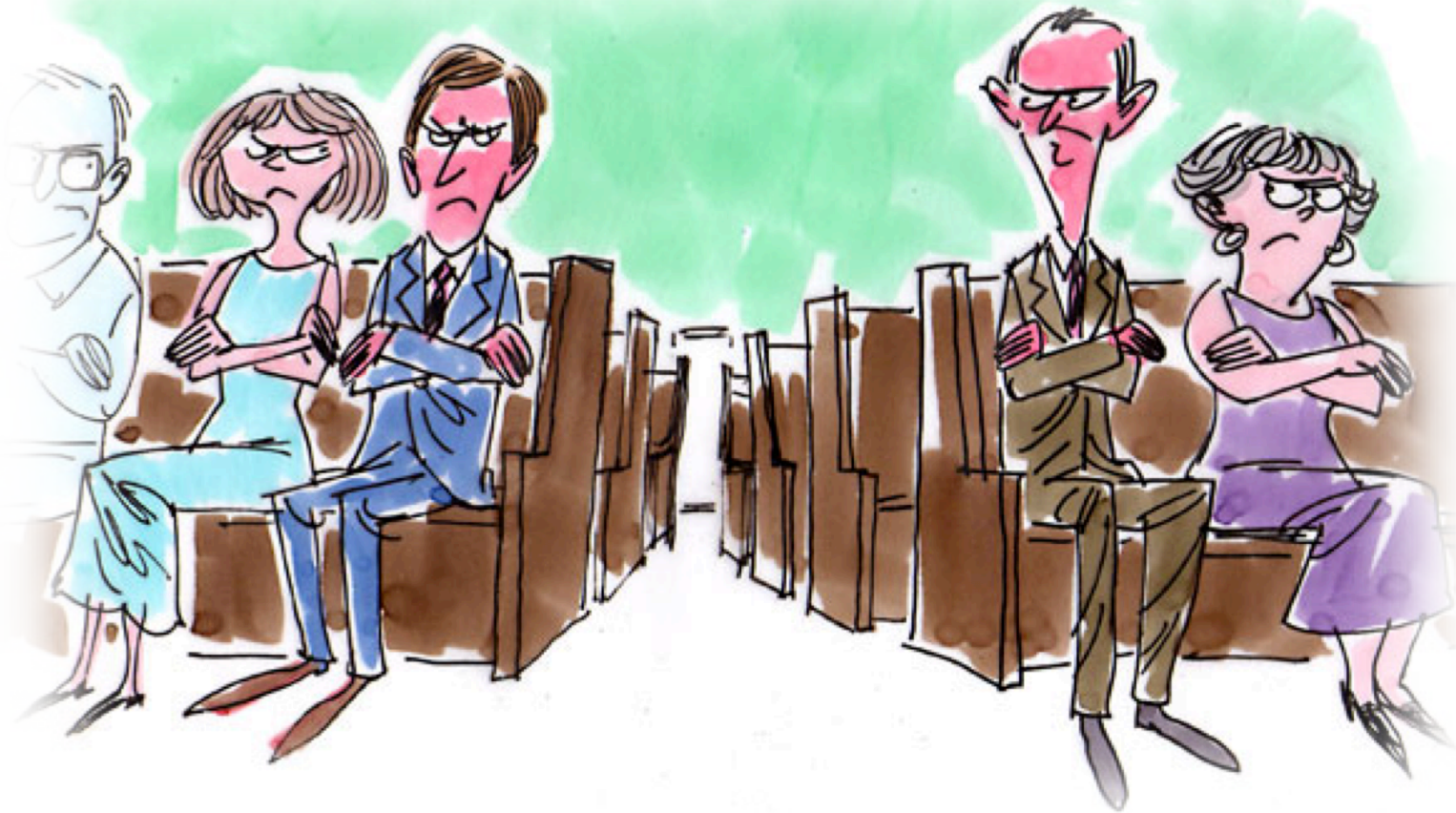
- These verses are not contingent on the superficial quality of a teacher's work, but on his effort and diligence. However, there is a built-in challenge to the teacher/laborer to not make this order more difficult than it has to be. Not all people should teach (James 3:1), so it is a special job they do.
- Don't take good teaching for granted. One day you might be pressed in to service yourself!
- Even the best church workers need encouragement (1 Thess. 3:1ff, Philemon 7, 20, 2 Cor. 7:5-6, 11:28).



**Live in peace with one another**  
**– Romans 12:3ff**

# DO HARD THINGS

- Be careful not to busy yourself with easy, low-impact tasks – things that certainly need doing, but never push you, stretch you, or challenge you.
- The real test of a congregation's vitality is in the willingness of its members to get their hands dirty in each other's lives. The things described in these verses are rarely easy, but can mean the difference between a soul who perseveres and one who gives up.
- Stop seeing "church" as a place of comfortable indifference or anonymity.



# SEEK AFTER THAT WHICH IS GOOD

Vengeance divides. It embitters. It never delivers on a promised resolution. So, are you willing to forgive, move on, and put others ahead of yourself? This is what defines us as a distinctive people (1 Pet. 3:9, Matt. 5:44, Rom. 12:17ff).

# ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT

- "Rejoice always" – If you cannot find something to rejoice over, then you're not looking hard enough. God even suggests rejoicing over your trials (James 1:2ff).
- "Rejoice, pray, give thanks" – This is the same sequence found in Philippians 4:4-7. Notice that this is "God's will for you in Christ Jesus." It is not an option, which means that rejoicing is not always a matter of emotion. In fact, your attitude and your current emotional state might be at odds (Ecc. 7:3).

# DON'T QUENCH THE SPIRIT

- In its infancy, the church was granted special gifts, such as prophecy. Paul is encouraging them to welcome these gifts and be open to whatever lessons needed to be learned. Prophecy, in particular, was considered the highest of all gifts (1 Cor. 14:1, 5).
- We must not try to extinguish the Spirit's work today by despising the very prophetic utterances that define and dictate God's will through the word, especially if we find the message uncomfortable or inconvenient.



**Examine everything carefully;  
hold fast to that which is good;  
abstain from every form of evil.**

Examine or "test", as in 1 John 4:1. In the context, this means to take what is actually God's word and keep it with all fidelity, and to absolutely abstain from that which is contrary. "Every form" is literal – there is to be no compromise with evil.