

# **Communion With God**

**4-23-23**

1 Thessalonians 5:16–22 (ESV)

<sup>16</sup> Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup> give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. <sup>19</sup> Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Do not despise prophecies, <sup>21</sup> but test everything; hold fast what is good. <sup>22</sup> Abstain from every form of evil.

**Last week we looked at the Church Dynamics in verses 12-15. Since it is impossible to totally comply with these instructions apart from a personal communion with God, Paul turns to the believer's inner life which is necessary succeed.**

- Rejoice always

**This means “Be joyful always”. For many of us our Spiritual walk ends right here. However, we have much to rejoice about. As believers we are chosen by God, our sins forgiven through Christ, and we have a home in heaven. And rejoicing about our personal relationship with God, we:**

- Pray without ceasing

**As believers we are encouraged to boldly go before the throne of God. Prayer acknowledges our complete dependence upon God and the utter dependability of God in all circumstances. This implies a constant attitude of prayer, which grows out of an attitude of our dependence on God. Prayer is the only way to cultivate a joyful attitude. No joy in our life means that there is very little prayer in our life.**

**We must lift our heart to God in the name of Jesus, in every circumstance. Joyfully going before the throne of God who chose us and loves us, we:**

- Give thanks in all circumstances

**Before the throne of God, we should give thanks in all circumstances. **The thanks are not for the circumstances but for the fact that in all circumstances, God is presence.****

Romans 8:28 (ESV)

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

**To be able to give thanks in all circumstances **presupposes a recognition** of God's sovereignty, that in all these circumstances God is working for the good of those who love him. The failure to give thanks is a mark of human sinfulness. It is evidence of not trusting God. We must recognize that in all circumstances, because:**

- This is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

**We are rejoicing, praying, and giving thanks, **because God is doing a great work in us around us and through us.** Therefore, we give thanks. We often will not see all the things God is doing, but we must always be faithful and thankful. We know God is at work and trust Jesus will empower, strengthen, and guide us through the Holy Spirit.**

**Therefore, we:**

- Do not quench the Spirit

**Literally, “do not extinguish the Spirit.” Do not put out the Spirit’s fire! Rejoicing, we keep our inner life hot.**

2 Timothy 1:6 (ESV)

For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands,

**When we seek the things of God, we fan into flame the Spirit. Rejoicing, we keep the inner life hot. The book of Ephesians reveals attitudes that quench the Holy Spirit.**

Ephesians 4:30–31 (ESV)

<sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

**Bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor (crying out over a controversy), slander, and malice grieves the Holy Spirit and puts out the Spirit’s fire. If our inner life is contaminated by these attitudes, fulfillment of God’s will in outward matters is impossible. For the believer the evidence of quenching the Spirit is no power! However, with the Holy Spirit fire in full flame we:**

- Do not despise prophecies

**Paul forbids repression of the gift of prophecy. The prophetic gift should be shared in a decent and orderly fashion for edification of the body of Christ.**

**Leon Price had a powerful prophetic gift who ministered to our church. He wrote a book on the subject available on the back table. Please pick one up. NT prophesies are not to be despised "but" they are to be evaluated.**

- But test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.

**Brothers and Sisters, we rejoice always, but everything is to be tested. Hold fast to what is good and abstain from evil. We rejoice because we understand that God is at work in us, around us, and directing us.**

Isaiah 48:17 (NIV)

I am the LORD your God,  
who teaches you what is best for you,  
who directs you in the way you should go.

**Our Communion with God will be evidenced by Rejoicing!**

Philippians 4:4 (ESV)

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.