

# Be Consistent

1 Thes 5:16-22

## Points to Consider

1. Constantly rejoice, pray, and give thanks
2. Delight in God's influence
3. Distinguish good from evil

## Constantly rejoice, pray, and give thanks

### Rejoice always

**2 Cor 6:3-10** *We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed. 4 But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, 5 in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings; 6 by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love, 7 by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, 8 by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; 9 as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and yet not killed; 10 as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.* NKJV

Paul, who was often persecuted, **regularly** told people to rejoice.

Even when Paul was sorrowful, he still **rejoiced**.

It's easy for us to minimize the good in our lives while making a big deal out of the bad things that happen to us.

Paul could encourage them to rejoice because those who had already died had **not** lost out on the reward and those still alive will meet the Lord in the air.

### Pray without ceasing

**Phil 4:4-7** *Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* NKJV

Constant prayer keeps anxiety **down** and joy up.

**Mark 13:32-37** *"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is. 34 It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch. 35 Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming — in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning — 36 lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. 37 And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"* NKJV

Since we don't know when the Lord will return, we need to watch and pray.

**Matt 26:40-41** *Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." NKJV*

We should watch and pray so we don't enter into **temptation**.

### **In everything give thanks**

**Philippians 4:6** *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;*

**Eph 5:17-21** *Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, 20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 submitting to one another in the fear of God. NKJV*

We are to give thanks **always** for all things.

Christians should have a thankful **heart**. We should recognize the incredible gifts God gives us now and long for the better gifts He has promised to give us in the future.

**Luke 10:17-21** *The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." 18 He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. 20 However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." 21 At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. NIV*

The reason we can rejoice regardless of our earthly situation is because our names are written in **heaven**.

Jesus could even praise God that He **hid** the truth from the wise and learned and revealed it to little children.

**1 Tim 2:1-5** *Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. NKJV*

We should give thanks for **all** men.

## **Delight in God's influence**

**1 Thes 5:19** *Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise prophecies.*

### **Do not quench the Spirit**

We shouldn't do anything to stop the Spirit's **influence** in our lives.

**Acts 4:8-12** *Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: 9 If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, 10 let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified,*

*whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. 11 This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' 12 Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." NKJV*

**Acts 4:18-22** *So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. 20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." 21 So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, because of the people, since they all glorified God for what had been done. 22 For the man was over forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed. NKJV*

Sometimes the Spirit working in our lives will cause us **pain**.

The apostles often suffered hardship because they spoke the things the Spirit directed them to speak.

Likewise, when we preach and teach what the Spirit has communicated through God's word, we can suffer persecution.

We should not quench the Spirit's influence in our lives to **abstain** from sexual immorality.

**Gal 5:22-26** *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. NKJV*

We should not quench the Spirit's influence in our lives to bear the **fruit** of the Spirit.

**Conceit** and envy will quench the Spirit's influence in our lives.

### **Do not despise prophecies**

Prophecy is much more than telling the future. It is speaking God's **truth**.

**1 Cor 14:1-5** *Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. 2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. 3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. 4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. 5 I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification. NKJV*

In the first century Christians seemed to **elevate** the spiritual gifts of speaking in tongues and the working of miracles over the gift of prophecy.

Paul states that if you could only have one spiritual gift, you should desire **prophecy** because it edifies, exhorts, and comforts people.

**1 Cor 1:20-25** *Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22 For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. NKJV*

**Rom 10:14** *How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?* NKJV

Miracles and tongues were temporary, the preaching of the gospel has always been God's plan to communicate His plan to save souls.

## Distinguish good from evil

**1 Thess 5:21-22** *Test all things; hold fast what is good. 22 Abstain from every form of evil.* NKJV

In context Paul is telling them to test the things people are teaching them to see if they truly do come from God.

**Acts 17:10-14** *Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11 These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. 12 Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men. 13 But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was preached by Paul at Berea, they came there also and stirred up the crowds.* NKJV

The only way to know something is true or not is if it can be found in God's word.

**1 Cor 14:36-40** *Or did the word of God come originally from you? Or was it you only that it reached? 37 If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord. 38 But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant. 39 Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues. 40 Let all things be done decently and in order.* NKJV

Believing something different than the truth that was delivered by the apostles would be failing to test all things and cling to the good while abstaining from the evil.