

Seven Biblical Resolutions for 2024 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies. ²¹ Test all things; hold fast what is good. ²² Abstain from every form of evil. 1 Thessalonians 5:16–22 (NKJV)

I. *Rejoice always* –

¹⁶ Rejoice always, 1 Thessalonians 5:16

1. *This does not mean we cannot feel or express pain of sorrow –*

A. *Jesus did without sin –*

⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “**Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?**” that is, “**My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?**” Matthew 27:46 (NKJV)

B. *Jesus also taught –*

⁴ **Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.** Matthew 5:4 (NKJV)

2. *Yet we are to COUNT all our pains and trials JOY -*

² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, James 1:2 (NKJV)

A. *This is because we KNOW our trials and difficulties have a good purpose –*

... ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. James 1:3 (NKJV)

B. *That is, they have the BEST purpose, because they make us more like Jesus –*

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. ²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Romans 8:28–29 (NKJV)

3. *If we are true Christians, everything we experience in this life, good or bad, happy or sad has this purpose of making us more like Jesus ---*

Our rejoicing ¹⁶ Rejoice always, 1 Thessalonians 5:16 *is a rejoicing in the LORD –*

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Philippians 4:4 (NKJV)

This is a worthy New Year’s Resolution for 2024 ...

II. *Pray without ceasing* -

¹⁷ pray without ceasing, 1 Thessalonians 5:17

1. *We need to pray without ceasing because our need for God and His enabling are constant!*

2. *How do we do this?*

A. *Regular, planned times of prayer, as an individual, with significant others, during the church's prayer meetings!*

⁶ But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. Matthew 6:6 (NKJV)

- *The unified prayers of God's gathered people are powerful, earth-shaking -*

³¹ And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:31 (NKJV)

B. *A prayerful mindset / practicing God's presence / talking, praying to God while you're driving, or doing other things! In Nehemiah 1:4-11 we read of Nehemiah's regular fervent prayer! In Nehemiah 2:4 when he is in service of the king, and the king is questioning him, he prays a quick, most likely silent prayer to God -*

⁴ Then the king said to me, "What do you request?" So I prayed to the God of heaven. Nehemiah 2:4 (NKJV)

C. *Praying before you go to SLEEP, or while you sleep –*

⁵ At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask! What shall I give you?" ⁶ And Solomon said: "You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father, because he walked before You in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with You; You have continued this great kindness for him, and You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as *it is* this day. ⁷ Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, but I *am* a little child; I do not know *how* to go out or come in. ⁸ And Your servant *is* in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. ⁹ Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?" 1 Kings 3:5–9 (NKJV)

D. *Starting your morning with prayer –*

To the Chief Musician. With Flutes. A Psalm of David. ¹ Give ear to my words, O LORD, Consider my meditation. ² Give heed to the voice of my cry, My King and my God, For to You I will pray.

³ My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; In the morning I will direct *it* to You, And I will look up. Psalm 5:1-3 (NKJV)

*"The way to rejoice evermore is to pray without ceasing. We should rejoice more if we prayed more."
Matthew Henry*

III. *In everything give thanks –*

¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

1. *This is similar in reason to rejoice always, we are to give thanks in everything, because God is in control of everything, and if we are His, His control is for our good – Romans 8:28-29.*

2. *The wonderful example of this is Betsy Ten Boom thanking God for LICE ...*

IV. *Don't Quench but Seek God's Spirit -*

¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. 1 Thessalonians 5:19

There is a Christian movie out right now called "Cessationist"

1. *This movie is about the Gifts of God's Holy Spirit and the emphasis seems to be on the gifts of "miracles" and "tongues" –*

A. *Paul speaking to the Corinthians says, 2 Corinthians 12:12 (NKJV)*

¹² Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

*Paul was the last of the apostles according to Scriptural qualifications, he did miracles, healed sick and even raised the dead these miracles he calls **the signs of an apostle** because they distinguished him as an apostle from other Christians who may have TRUE, REAL Christian believers but not apostles!*

B. *Additionally, other gifts called sign gifts, specifically tongues & prophecy were connected to the apostolic age, because revelatory. Now we have a completed Bible so these no longer have their purpose of confirming a word and so many believe these gifts have CEASED and those that do are called **Cessationists***

Now, some of these who are extreme seem to deny any MINISTRY of God's Spirit at all today, this seems dangerous to me –

2. *We are supposed to pray for God's Spirit –*

⁹ "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ¹¹ If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" Luke 11:9–13 (NKJV)

3. *We are supposed to be FILLED with God's Spirit –*

¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, Ephesians 5:18 (NKJV)

I believe "quench not the Spirit" here has very little to do with miracles or tongues but more with a quenching of the Spirit in general, Paul speaks of ¹¹ not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; Romans 12:11 (NKJV)

These words imply MOTION and EMOTION ... an excitement about God, inspired by God's Holy Spirit, don't QUENCH THAT!

V. Don't despise God's Word –

²⁰ Do not despise prophecies. 1 Thessalonians 5:20

⁹ One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer is an abomination. Proverbs 28:9 (NKJV)

It is sweeter than honey, more precious than gold, treat it as such or you are despising it -

¹⁰ More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Psalm 19:10 (NKJV) *Hear, Read, Study, Meditate, Memorize!*

VI. Test ... ²¹ Test all things; hold fast what is good. 1 Thessalonians 5:21

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. Acts 17:11 (NKJV)

VII. Abstain from every form of evil –

²² Abstain from every form of evil. 1 Thessalonians 5: 22

1 Thessalonians 5:22 (KJV 1900) ²² Abstain from all appearance of evil.

I believe what is spoken here is similar to Psalm 1, there are certain things we should AVOID –

1 Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; Psalm 1:1 (NKJV)

⁹ Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Romans 12:9 (NKJV)

² But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. Psalm 1:2 (NKJV)

- 1. The best way to abstain from what is evil, to abhor it, is to CLING to the GOOD ----*
- 2. Where is our strength to do such things?*

VIII. Our strength is in God, trust in Him, He will do it –

²³ Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it. 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24 (NKJV)

“The God of Peace” “Himself” He does this work “completely” ²⁴ “Who also will do it. 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24 (NKJV)

W. S. C. - Question 35 What is sanctification? Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, (2 Thessalonians 2:13) whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, (Ephesians 4:23–24) and are enabled more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness. (Romans 6:4,6, & 8:1)