

Commands Regarding Attitude, Actions and Living in the Spirit
1 Thessalonians 5:16-22

Introduction

In this last section of 1 Thessalonians, Paul gives a series of succinct encouragements and commands to them about how to excel still more in their walk with the Lord and love for one another (1 Thess. 4:1,10). He addresses topics specific to both church life and personal spiritual life.

At the end of January we covered 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 and the need to appreciate and esteem those who were diligently laboring in ministry among them. It is the work, not the office, that bring about such high regard. It is not uncommon to find people who have an official church positions that are either lazy or unqualified, and to also find people without any official position that are busy in ministry. It is the latter that are to be appreciated and esteemed.

Last week we looked at 1 Thessalonians 5:13-15 in which Paul commanded them to live in peace - the tranquility that comes from being in harmony and unity with one another - and gave 6 commands on how such peace could be established and kept. ¹⁴ *"We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone. ¹⁵ See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people."* Those who depart from a proper walk with the Lord are to be admonished. Such people need someone who will lovingly confront and instruct them in the truth so that they will walk in righteousness. Those who are fainthearted need to be encouraged. The spiritually immature need someone what will come alongside them to point them to God's character and promises so that their trust in God will increase. The weak need to be helped by those who will uphold them to keep them from stumbling back into sin. All of these will take patience to do because people are often slow to learn. You have to be forbearing and keep at it without becoming upset. In doing so, you do what is needed to bring about true unity and harmony in the body and therefore peace. That peace would be quickly disrupted if revenge is sought which would be contrary to godliness anyway. Returning evil for evil only compounds evil. Christians are to live in the opposite manner of always seeking after that which is morally good toward not only other Christians, but all people.

This morning we will examine the eight succinct commands Paul gives in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-22 which cover two general areas. The first three in verses 16-18 relate to attitude and communion with God. ¹⁶ *Rejoice always;* ¹⁷ *pray without ceasing;* ¹⁸ *in everything give thanks for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.* The last five in verses 19-22 are related to living in the Spirit. ¹⁹ *"Do not quench the Spirit;* ²⁰ *do not despise prophetic utterances. ²¹ But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good;* ²² *abstain from every form of evil."*

Rejoice Always - 1 Thessalonians 5:16

The first command, actually places the adverb before the verb giving it emphasis. This verse would be more literally translated as *"always you rejoice."* Always (πάντοτε / pantote), at all times, on every occasion, makes this a universal command to believers that removes the exceptions that we as humans would otherwise quickly invoke. We are to always rejoice without exception. That would be an irrational command if rejoicing was the equivalent of happiness and dependent upon circumstances for there are many, many circumstance that are legitimate causes of sadness. The Thessalonians had experienced the normal sad things of life including death of loved ones. They were also experiencing persecution for their faith in Christ. How then could they always rejoice?

David gave a good sermon a couple of weeks ago pointing out the difference between happiness based on circumstances and joy based in the character of God and His promises. Circumstances are always changing and happiness is based on whether the situation is considered favorable or unfavorable. Joy transcends happiness so that it can be present even when the situation itself is sad. For example, Paul points out in 2 Corinthians 8:1-2 that *the grace of God [had] been given to the churches of Macedonia*, which would have included the Thessalonians, so that though they were in a “*great deal of affliction*,” they had an “*abundance of joy*” that resulted in them giving liberally though they were also in deep poverty. Their joy was bound to the grace of God which they had received and not their circumstances of affliction and poverty. Interesting enough, the verb here for rejoice, *χαίρω* / *chairó*, is related to the word for grace (*χάρις* / *charis*). The ability to rejoice is tied to walking in God’s grace.

This is a command, so it is not optional for us as believers in Christ. We are to rejoice. But how is that to be done in practical life? First, understand that you can rejoice and still be sorrowful. Paul even states in 2 Corinthians 6:10 that they were “*as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing*,” and in Romans 12:15 he instructs Christians to “*rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep*.” Rejoicing will have an emotional component, but it neither masks nor removes other emotions or the expression of them. What then does Paul mean by this command and how is it carried out?

As already noted, Paul ties rejoicing with God’s grace. It is a response to circumstances that takes into account God’s work within the situation with a view to God’s ultimate work in salvation and the promise of Jesus’ return. That is why Paul could carry a theme of rejoicing throughout Philippians though he was in jail and others were purposely trying to cause him distress. He could see God’s hand at work in the midst of his circumstances (Phil. 1:12-14) and his hope in Christ transcended the situation so that for him, “*to live is Christ and to die is gain*” (Phil. 2:21). He would rejoice no matter which direction his imprisonment took.

Paul makes a similar argument in 2 Corinthians 6 as he recounts some of the things he had in serving Christ including afflictions, hardships, distresses, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, sleeplessness and hunger. Paul’s reaction to all of these is that because he had received the grace of God in salvation, he sought to be a commended servant of God by responding in purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, the word of truth, the power of God and by the weapons of righteousness.

To summarize, first, the command to always rejoice, as well as the rest we will talk about today, is built on the fact that you have received the grace of God in salvation. You cannot obey this or any of the other commands unless you are a true Christian. Second, faith in Christ gives you a different perspective and purpose in life. You can see things from God’s eternal perspective and live for His glory instead of living for your own selfish desires according to a temporal, human outlook. These enable you to have an attitude toward life that is directed by seeing God’s hand at work in your life and living accordingly instead of being controlled by circumstances.

Christians always rejoice because God is always at work and His promises are always true and fulfilled.

Pray Without Ceasing - 1 Thessalonians 5:17

And as in Philippians 4:4 in which Paul also commands them to *Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice*, this is closely tied to prayer and thanksgiving which are the second and third commands in this passage. The command here is to “*pray without ceasing*,” or more literally, “*without intermission, you pray*.”

The word translated here as “without ceasing,” “constantly,” and “unceasingly,” *ἀδιαλείπτως* / *adiáleiptōs*, is a negation of its root word which means to fail through lack or falling short. From that came the idea of continuous activity. The command here is to not fall short in prayer. This is not prayer that never stops, for that is impossible for humans since we are limited and also need to do things such as sleep, and if prayer was our only activity, we could not accomplish the other things God commands us

to do. The idea here is constantly reoccurring prayer. This is an attitude of constant prayer that transitions to actual prayer at any time and any place so that there is not a lack of praying. It is great to have a regular time and place for prayer, but never put prayer off until it is convenient. If you can't pray out loud, then pray in your mind and heart as soon as the Spirit of inspires you or a situation arises that needs prayer.

The particular word for prayer here, προσεύχομαι / proseuchomai is the general term for prayer, and it is always used in reference to God. It is to speak with God, and as pointed out in Philippians 4:6, it includes elements of supplication, thanksgiving and requests. It signifies a worshipful approach to God that includes reverence and adoration. Nicoll says that it “*emphasizes prayer as an act of worship or devotion.*” You can bring anything to God in prayer, but you do need to come to Him with respect and a right attitude. God is still God. He is the eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and sovereign Creator. He is not a benevolent grandpa or a magic genie who is supposed to give you whatever you want.

In Everything Give Thanks - 1 Thessalonians 5:18

The next command is directly related to the second because giving thanks to God is an element of proper prayer. Paul makes this clear in Philippians 4:6, “*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*”

Giving thanks, εὐχαριστέω / eucharisteō, is to express gratitude for grace received. The word for grace, χάρις / charis, is a root stem for this verb. It is thanks given to God for physical and spiritual provision, for people and Himself. This is an element of worship that is part of true prayer for it is the overflow of having a proper understanding of God's position, character, and recognition of His work. It is that understanding and recognition that enables both rejoicing in the Lord and the ability to rest in His peace as pointed out in Philippians 4:7. Those who do not give thanks reveal a heart of self-centeredness and selfishness. God does not listen to the prayers of such people for that is sin and God will not hear those who regard wickedness in their hearts (Psalm 66:18). They will also lack peace since peace is dependent on having confidence in God's character and promises which requires humility, a trait absent in the self-centered.

The word translated as everything or all, πᾶς / pas, refers to the “*totality of any object, collection or extension*” (Louw-Nida). So like “always” in verse 16, this eliminates exceptions since nothing is left out. Please note that the verse does not say to give thanks for everything, but it does say to give thanks in everything. You cannot give thanks for things that are contrary to God's stated will, but you can give thanks even when going through circumstances that are contrary to God's stated will.

For example, God has given many commands about how people are to treat one another including prohibitions against murder, adultery, stealing, false witness and coveting. He has also given prescriptions about what people are to do such as be kind, be honest, and love your neighbor as yourself. You do not give thanks for either people that violate God's commands or the sins committed, but you do give thanks in the midst of suffering because of the sins of others or even living in a sin cursed world. I do not give thanks for SARS-CoV-2, but I did give thanks even while being sick with COVID-19. I do not give thanks for people that steal from me, but I do give thanks even when I am cheated. I do not give thanks for corrupt government, but I do give thanks even though wrongly restricted by such regimes. Paul did not give thanks for suffering persecution, but he did give thanks while suffering persecution. We are to do the same. That is giving thanks in everything.

God's Will - 1 Thessalonians 5:18b

Paul attaches to this command the statement, “*for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*” The context here applies this to all three commands and not just the last. Every command of God is His stated will, and all three of these commands appear in many other Scriptures.

The emphasis here is to make sure that the readers know that these commands originate from God and not Paul. God's desire is for every Christian to always rejoice, continually pray and in everything give thanks. These three are very connected anyway, for those who continually pray with thanksgiving in everything will always rejoice. Seeing life from God's perspective and walking in it results in a proper attitude.

The next commands all have a relationship to walking properly with the Holy Spirit, for a believer that is doing that will naturally and easily carry out each of these commands.

Do not Quench the Spirit - 1 Thessalonians 5:19

The context here makes it easy to determine that the Spirit you are not to quench is the Holy Spirit starting with the fact that it is the Spirit and not just spirit. The command given to not quench Him is directly related to the Holy Spirit because of the references to fire associated with Him going back to the comment by John the Baptist in Matthew 3:11 that Jesus was the one that would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. In Acts 2:3-4 that prophecy was fulfilled when there appeared over each of those in the Upper Room "*tongues of fire*" when the Holy Spirit filled each of them. The word "quench" σβέννυμι / sbennumi means to "*extinguish a fire.*" In this context, it is used figuratively and so means to suppress or stifle the activity of the Holy Spirit. But what does that mean?

Obviously man is incapable of either extinguishing or controlling the Holy Spirit. Jesus even made that point to Nicodemus in John 3:8. However, man is capable of resisting the work of the Spirit by unbelief as Stephen pointed out in Acts 7:51. In that case it was stiff-necked unbelievers, but Christians can also be both ignorant and stubborn and either can keep them from paying attention to or yielding to the ministry of the Spirit in their lives, and the influence of such people can suppress the work of the Spirit in the lives of others.

What is the work of the Holy Spirit? It is multifaceted, but in the life of a believer it begins with conviction concerning sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:8). The Holy Spirit also quickens or makes alive the spirit of the unbeliever so that they can repent and believe in Christ to be saved (Ephesians 2:5). His ministry continues in the life of a believer in bringing about sanctification through adoption as a child of God (Romans 8:15-17), so that He assists and intercedes in our prayers (Romans 8:26-27). He indwells the believer (Romans 8:9) teaching us the things of God (1 Cor. 2:10-13; 1 John 2:27) and leads us into righteousness and away from sin (Romans 8:10-13). He pours out the love of God within our hearts (Romans 5:5) and gifts us individually to serve the Lord so that the whole body can be built up (1 Corinthians 12, Eph. 4:11-16). The Holy Spirit seals us as a pledge of God's faithfulness to fulfill His promises to us.

Again, the Holy Spirit Himself cannot be extinguished, but His ministry to the believer can be suppressed in many ways. The first is being ignorant of what God has said. Neglect of personal devotions and Bible study will suppress the Holy Spirit's ministry in you. Second would be heresy or aberration in understanding or applying the Scriptures to life. This is a danger for those that rely more on what others have said about what is in the Bible than in reading and studying the Bible for themselves, or at least in comparing what a teacher may say with what God has said in His word. Third would be placing greater value on the approval of men than the approval of God as Jesus warned in John 12:42. This was a major problem for the Pharisees and it remains so today for all that fall into this same trap. Fourth, Failure to deal with sin, and even worse, stumbling and then being stubborn in sin not only stifles the Spirit's work in your life, it could also lead to being chastened by God as warned in Hebrews 12. And last in my list this morning, being resistance to the Spirit's leading will quench the Spirit's fire that should be burning in you. And keep in mind that what you do will have an effect on others and we are not to be a cause of stumbling to others (1 Cor. 8:9).

The Holy Spirit will continue His work for the promise of Philippians 1:6 is still true, "*He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.*" However, in stifling His work,

that will mean slower progress in righteousness, and again as I already pointed out, it could also include God's chastening as described in Hebrews 12:4-11.

Paul's command here is to not do anything that would hinder the Spirit's work in you or in others.

Do not Despise Prophecy - 1 Thessalonians 5:20

This next command is related to the Holy Spirit because prophecy is one of the gifts that He gives to believers (Romans 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:10). Prophecy is declaration inspired by God. It can encompass stating the actions and purposes of God and include both reproving and admonishing the wicked and also comforting the afflicted. It can also be a revelation of hidden things concerning either the present or the future. Prophecy is used to describe both forth-telling and fore-telling. Context will show if it is a declaration of what God has already said or a new revelation from God. At the time of 1 Thessalonians, those giving prophecy could be involved in any of these types of prophecy. Normal preaching and teaching involved declaring what God had already said. An example of that is simply proclaiming the gospel message. Since the canon was not yet closed, there could also be new revelation from God concerning directions given to a particular people at a particular time. The letters from the various apostles to the churches included this kind of prophecy and may also be what Paul was referencing in 1 Corinthians 14:24. There was also revelation given concerning future events in both of Paul's letters to the Thessalonians, 1 Corinthians 15 and also in the book of revelation given to the apostle John.

Paul states here that prophecy is not to be despised. The word for despise here, ἐξουθενέω / exoutheneō, is also translated as "lightly esteem" and "treat with contempt." The idea is to make something of no account, to treat it as worthless or of no value.

It does not appear that the Thessalonians despised the proclamation of the Scriptures since Paul commended them for their reception of the gospel and obvious conversion after hearing it (1 Thess. 1:6,9). They had received the teaching of Paul and the missionaries for what it really is, the word of God (1 Thess. 2:13). At the same time, in Acts 17:11 Paul commends the Bereans for being more noble minded than the Thessalonians because they had received the word with eagerness, but they also examined the Scriptures daily to see if what was being said was so. The Thessalonians did lack in their diligence to know and search the Scriptures for themselves.

In our own time, a major problem in churches is how little regard is actually given to the Scriptures as the word of God by both preachers and those in the pews. In some churches there is flagrant disregard and the attention is put on the wisdom of man. It is not as obvious in other churches, but it is subverted by explaining away authorship and clear statements of the text according to ideas of higher criticism. I would include with this allegorical interpretation which destroys the ability of the common man to understand the Bible. No wonder such churches are spiritually weak, fractured and subject to the winds of heretical doctrine.

Since the apostolic gifts were in operation at that time including revelation from God in prophecy, Paul's command here would certainly include that idea. While there is no indication that the Thessalonians were fractured and abusing Spiritual gifts as did the Corinthians, Paul is writing this from Corinth, and they were Greeks, so there are several possible problems Paul is addressing here. One is that they were giving preference to philosophy. That was a danger Paul had to warn about in Colossians 2:8. Another danger was the one that occurred in Corinth in which speaking in tongues was given more prestige than prophecy even though prophecy was of greater value to the church (1 Corinthians 14). A third possible danger is related to the correction Paul had to make in 2 Thessalonians about the speculation of some regarding the return of Christ. An abuse of prophecy by mixing it with such speculation could easily cause those who were more discerning to react against this gift.

Whatever the particular issue, Paul is clear that he did not want them to disregard the exercise of the gift of prophecy. You don't regard a gift as of no value even if some do abuse it. Instead, you do what Paul commands next.

Examine Everything Carefully - 1 Thessalonians 5:21

This verse would be more literally translated as *“but all things test for genuineness.”* It is a separate command, but directly related to the previous though an expansion of the principle. It is not just prophecy that is to be examined, but everything.

The word for examine here, δοκιμάζω / dokimazō, also translated as test and prove, is *“to try to learn the genuineness of something by examination and testing, often through actual use”* (Louw-Nida). It was used in a lot of contexts ranging from testing metals to assay their purity (1 Peter 1:7), to testing the ability new oxen (Luke 14:19), to each man’s spiritual work (1 Cor. 3:13) and faith (2 Cor. 13:5). In this context it is testing everything that would affect your spiritual life which would include prophecy.

At that time there were those who had a spiritual gift of discerning of spirits (1 Cor. 12:10) which would have been much needed before the close of the canon and completion of the Scriptures. But this command is given to all and not just those with this special gift. As already pointed out from Acts 17:11, the Bereans tested what Paul said against the Scriptures. That is still the first line of defense. 1 John 4:1 warns *“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”* That directly relates to what should be done with all prophecy instead of despising it.

How do you test the spirits? Doctrine and manner of life. 1 John 4:2-3 goes on to state,² *“By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; ³ and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.”* Doctrine is what the Bereans were checking about Paul. Did what Paul say match what was taught in the Scriptures? Jesus told us in Matthew 7:15-20 that we would be able to identify false prophets by their fruit. Were they righteous or not? 2 Peter 2 gives more explicit examples of the characteristics that reveal people to be false teachers. This includes being sensual, greedy, exploiters, maligners of truth, indulgent of the flesh, self-willed, those who despise authority, lustful, arrogant and worldly. I will also add that sensitivity to the Holy Spirit will also help you greatly in this. It is common for genuine Christians to sense that something is wrong with a teacher or a particular teaching even if they cannot pinpoint exactly what it is at the time. That is part of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in your life. When you sense that, don’t ignore it, but press on to find out what may be wrong.

Be both diligent and wary. Don’t believe religious leaders because they have a title or position or degrees however prestigious they may be. Test everything and everyone against the truth and run away from those who are worldly. Godly teachers will walk in righteousness. And though you can be more relaxed with those who have proven themselves over many years to be true and righteous, even then, examine carefully what is taught, because even the best teachers can have off weeks and can error in their own areas of weakness. The last two commands are related to this testing

Hold Fast to that which is Good - 1 Thessalonians 5:21

This is a separate command, but it is directly related to testing. When you find that what is tested is good, then hold onto it. Good here, καλός / kalos, is that which is of positive moral quality and therefore valuable. It is what is true, right and honorable. It is according to God’s word and leads you into righteousness.

To hold fast, κατέχω / katechō, is to continue to believe and act in accordance with that belief. Paul uses this same word in 1 Corinthians 11:2 and 15:2 for holding fast to the word he had preached to them and the traditions he had passed on to the Corinthians. That would actually match the sense here. When what you have examined passes the test, then hold fast to it.

I have met many people over the years that are fickle in what they believe, don’t be one of them. Scripture warns about people who will find teachers to tickle their ears. That is a quest to satisfy selfishness. Their beliefs will change to pursue that selfishness. Others set themselves up to be

persuaded by false teachers to switch to new beliefs because they do not bother to test for truth and godliness. They are lazy and trust people instead of digging into the Bible for themselves.

Abstain from Every Form of Evil - 1 Thessalonians 5:22

There are two opposite commands to the two opposite possible conclusions from testing. This is the second one. If you test something and find it is good, you hold onto it. If it turns out to be evil, then you abstain from it.

Evil here, *πονηρός* / *ponāros*, is the contrast to good. It is that which pertains to negative moral qualities and therefore is worthless. It is what is false, wrong and dishonorable. It is contrary to or a perversion of God's word and it leads you into sin. Evil here is modified by the word form, *εἶδος* / *eidōs*, also translated as kind and appearance. It has two usages. It can refer to that which is exposed to view or what is visible, which is why it is translated as appearance in some versions. It is also used to refer to form, kind or manner, which fits this context better.

It would be impossible to refrain from everything that could possibly appear evil to all people. In part because what is done outwardly is often only a glimpse that does not reveal either all that is being done or the motive. That would also be impossible in part for *"to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled"* (Titus 1:15). But evil can take many forms. That is what Paul is commanding us to avoid.

I make this point mainly because there are those who would use this verse to try to gain power over others in dictating what they cannot do because they will claim the right to judge if something is an "appearance of evil." It is God that judges whether something is evil or not, and in practice in the church, guidance on this is to be given by the Biblically qualified Elders as they point out what the Scriptures teach about a particular subject.

When something is not good, then it is in the camp of a kind of evil. We are to abstain, *ἀπέχω* / *apechō*, from it. This is more than just non-involvement for the word means to be away from it, hold it back, keep it off, prevent it from happening and is the middle tense meaning there is action that is also taking place. After something is tested there will be two choices. It will be good and therefore you hold it fast, or it will be evil and therefore you hold it off. You actively stay away from it.

While that is impossible for the natural man, it is possible for the Christian because *those who walk by the Spirit will not carry out the desires of the flesh* (Galatians 5:16).

Conclusions

Christians are different because God has changed us giving us a relationship with Himself and a different understanding of the purpose of life. The combination creates the desire to continually pray with thanksgiving in all situations and rejoice in what God is doing. He sends His Spirit to indwell us, so we do not want to stifle in anyway His ministry in us. We rely on Him to lead and guide us giving us discernment to test all things by His word including prophecy. We value all the gifts God gives His people, but we test to see what is true and hold fast to what is good that passes the test and abstain from what is evil and fails. Are those characteristics growing in your life? If so, praise the Lord. If not, what needs to change?

Sermon Notes - February 28, 2021
Commands Regarding Attitude, Actions and Living in the Spirit - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-22

Introduction

Rejoice Always - 1 Thessalonians 5:16

Always (πάντοτε / pantote), at all times, on every occasion

Happiness vs. Rejoicing (χαίρω / chairó)

Rejoice even when sorrowful (2 Cor. 6:10; Rom. 12:15).

Rejoice even when persecuted (Philippians)

Rejoicing in all circumstances (2 Cor. 6)

The command to rejoice is dependent upon first receiving God's _____ in salvation

Faith in Christ gives you a different perspective and _____ in life

Pray Without Ceasing - 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Without ceasing, (ἀδιαλείπτως / adialeiptōs), not failing through lack - don't _____ in prayer

Prayer, προσεύχομαι / proseuchomai, is the general term for speaking with _____. It has many elements

In Everything Give Thanks - 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Giving thanks, εὐχαριστέω / eucharisteō, is built from the word for _____ (χάρις / charis)

Those who do not give thanks reveal a _____ of self-centeredness and selfishness

In everything (πάς / pas = all / totality of) not _____ everything.

God's Will - 1 Thessalonians 5:18b

All _____ commands are connected and are God's will, for any command of God is His stated will

Do not Quench the Spirit - 1 Thessalonians 5:19

Quench, σβέννυμι / sbennumi, = "extinguish a fire" and in this context, to "_____ or stifle"

The Holy Spirit _____ be extinguished, but His work can be suppressed (Acts 7:51)

The Holy Spirit's work in people is multifaceted

Ways in which the Holy Spirit's work can be suppressed: 1) _____ of personal devotions & Bible study.

2) Heresy & aberration. 3) Seeking the approval of _____ instead of God. 4) Failure to _____ from sin

5) Being _____ to the Holy Spirit's leading

The Holy Spirit will complete His work (Phil. 1:6), but that may include _____ (Hebrews 12:4-11)

Do not Despise Prophecy - 1 Thessalonians 5:20

Prophecy: declarations inspired by God. It can include both forth-telling & fore-telling old or _____ revelation

Do not despise (ἐξουθενέω / exoutheneō), _____ with contempt, as worthless, of no value

They did not despise the proclamation of Scriptures (1 Thess. 1:6,9; 2:13) though not _____ as Bereans

Many churches are failing today primarily because they do have _____ regard for the Scriptures
Apostolic gifts were operating then, so this includes those giving _____ revelation from God
They could despise prophecy by emphasis on _____ (Col. 2:8), giving greater _____ to
speaking in tongues (1 Cor. 14), _____ by speculation leading to a negative reaction

Examine Everything Carefully - 1 Thessalonians 5:21

Examine, δοκιμάζω / dokimazō, is to learn the genuineness of something by examination and _____
Discerning of spirits (1 Cor. 12:10), would help, but the command is to _____ - 1 John 4:1
Test by examining doctrine (Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:23) & _____ of life (Matt. 7:15-20; 2 Peter 2)
Be diligent and wary - test _____ and everyone. Even good Bible teachers can err

Hold Fast to that which is Good - 1 Thessalonians 5:21

Good, καλός / kalos, is that which is of _____ moral quality & therefore valuable. True, right, honorable
Hold fast, κατέχω / katechō, is to continue to _____ in accordance with that belief

Abstain from Every Form of Evil - 1 Thessalonians 5:22

A _____ of opposite responses to what is tested: Hold fast to the good, abstain (hold off) from the evil
Form / appearance, εἶδος / eidos, in this context is every manner / type / _____ of evil
What is impossible for the natural man is possible for the Christian walking in the _____ (Gal. 5:16)

Conclusions

Christians are different because we are _____ by the Holy Spirit who indwells & leads us

KIDS KORNER – Parents, you are responsible to apply God’s Word to your children’s lives. Here is some help. Young Children – draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. Older Children – count how many times the Holy Spirit is mentioned. Talk with your parents about the importance of the Holy Spirit’s work in enabling you to live as a Christian.

THINK ABOUT IT – Questions to consider in understanding the sermon and its application. What is the importance of 1 Thessalonians 5:14-15 for the church to develop and maintain peace? What does it mean to always rejoice? What is the difference between joy and happiness? What is the relationship of rejoicing and grace? What does it mean to pray without ceasing? How can that be done in practice? What is the relationship between thanksgiving, prayer and grace? What does a lack of thanksgiving reveal about someone? How can you be thankful in the midst of difficult circumstances or suffering from evil? How do we know what is God’s will? What does it mean to “quench the Spirit” and why should that be avoided? How do people suppress the Spirit’s work? Can the Spirit be extinguished or His work stopped? Explain. What was the gift of prophecy and its possible expressions during the apostolic period? What is its expression today? How / why would people then despise prophecy? How do people despise it today? What does it mean to examine everything carefully? What is the relationship of this command to despising prophecy and quenching the spirit? In what ways are you to “test the spirits” (1 John 4:1)? What is good? How do you hold fast to it? What is evil and how do you abstain to it? What is the relationship of these two commands to the previous three? Why should this command be translated as form / kind / type / manner of evil instead of appearance of evil? How are you doing at obeying these eight commands? What can enable you to keep them? If there are areas that are lacking, what do you need to do to improve?