

BOOK OF 1 THESSALONIANS
“HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD”
1 THESSALONIANS 5:21b

Introduction

The question we posed to you last week was this:

“How Can We Know What Is Of God And What Is Not Of God?”

We said that a proper response to things we encounter with regard to that question actually involves three steps for believers to carry out:

1. Ascertain – Prove All Things

We said the word “Prove” here is translated from a word that means “test”. In other words we are to use godly discernment (in judging or ascertaining what is of God and what is not of God)!

Quite simply, we saw how we should seek out the answer from the Scriptures! But we gave you a 4-fold test!

- A. THE SAVIOUR TEST: Is what is being taught and is what is being said honoring, glorifying and uplifting the name of our Lord Jesus Christ?**
- B. THE SCRIPTURE TEST: Is this that I am hearing consistent with not only part, but consistent with the totality of the written revelation of God?**
- C. THE SPIRIT TEST: Is this teaching in concert with the express desires and ministry of the Holy Spirit, whose intended purpose is to in all things glorify the Lord Jesus?**
- D. THE SAINT TEST: What have other great men and women of God said about this? If you are the only person to interpret a passage in a certain way, you might be right, but you're probably not!**

Now we want to see the second and third steps after we have discerned what is of God and what is not of God:

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2. Adhere – Hold Fast That Which Is Good

3. Avoid – Abstain From All Appearance Of Evil

ADHERE–“HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD!”

Cf. Romans 12:9 ...Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

Three things I want us to see here:

- 1. Holding Fast To That Which Is Good Means Holding Fast To God!
- 2. Holding Fast To God Means Both An Ongoing Evaluation Of Self And Confession Of Sin To Maintain Fellowship With Him!
- 3. Holding Fast To God And That Which Is Good Results In A Constant, Close Fellowship With God Which In Turn Brings An Ever Increasing Sensitivity To Sin In Our Lives!

Let's take these one at a time:

I. HOLDING FAST TO THAT WHICH IS GOOD MEANS HOLDING FAST TO GOD! (Philippians 4:8)

The Bible lists an index of good characteristics in things to pursue and dwell upon here! These are godly characteristics!

True = *true, as not concealing*

Honest = *venerable, that is, honorable*

Just = *equitable (in character or act); by implication holy*

Pure = *clean*

Lovely = *friendly towards, that is, acceptable*

Good Report = *well spoken of, that is, reputable*

Virtue = *valor or excellence*

Praise = *a commendable or laudable thing*

Look at the context of this first up in **verse 1-7** and then down in **verse 9!**

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- A. We Need To Stand Fast In The Lord! (Vs 1)**
We need to abide in Christ Jesus! *John 15:4-7*
- B. We Need To Rejoice In The Lord Always! (Vs 4)**
That word “*always*” comes from the Greek word *aei* (ah-eye) meaning *continued duration*; “*ever*”; *regularly*; and it *implies to do so earnestly!*
- C. We Need Live In The Consciousness Of The Lord Or Rather The Manifest Presence Of The Lord! (Vs 5)**
“*The Lord is at hand*” = “*The Lord is near*”
- If we are living life with the knowledge that “*the Lord is near*” do you think that might make us more aware of the character of the things we involve ourselves in?
- Do you think it might cause us to pause when it comes to doing something that might be questionable?
- Do you think that with the conscious knowledge that “*the Lord is near*” we might act and react any differently?
- D. We Need To Have The Peace Of God! (Vs 6-7)**
How? By acknowledging the God of peace Who is with us!
- E. We Need To Walk In The Things That Have God All Over Them! (Vs 8)**
- F. We Need To Walk In The Things We Know To Be Godly That We Have Learned And Received From, Heard In, And Seen In Those Who Are Godly! (Vs 9)**
The Apostle Paul used himself as that kind of example!
What do we learn and what have we received from Paul?
What do we hear and what do we see from what we know?

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HOLDING FAST TO THAT WHICH IS GOOD MEANS HOLDING FAST TO GOD!

- II. HOLDING FAST TO GOD MEANS BOTH AN ONGOING EVALUATION OF SELF AND CONFESSION OF SIN IN OUR LIVES TO MAINTAIN FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM! (1 JOHN 1)**
- A. Walking With God— Having Fellowship With Him— Involves Ongoing Cleansing From Sin! (1 John 1:5-8)**
- B. This Cleansing From Sin Involves An Honest, Continuing Evaluation Of Our Lives In Light Of The Word! (Vs 7)**
James 1:25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.
- C. This Cleansing From Sin Involves Continuing Confession Of Sin As It Is Revealed To Us! (1 John 1:9)**
confession = “say the same thing.”
- III. HOLDING FAST TO GOD AND THAT WHICH IS GOOD RESULTS IN A CONSTANT, CLOSE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD WHICH IN TURN BRINGS AN EVER INCREASING SENSITIVITY TO SIN IN OUR LIVES!**
1. That was the story of Isaiah! (**Isaiah 6**)
 2. That was the story of Paul!
 - a. From a self-righteous Pharisee!
 - b. To a repentant sinner!
 3. That will also be our case as we walk with God!

Conclusion

Are you “*proving all things*” with godly, Scriptural discernment?
Are you “*holding fast that which is good*”?