

## 1Thessalonians, Chapter Five, Lesson Four

GOD'S GIFT OF SANCTIFICATION 1Thessalonians 5:19-28

### STIMULATE

\*\* Last week's study introduced us to "**God's Gift of Excellence**" which we are learning about in the twenty exhortations given to the Thessalonians at the conclusion of this marvelous epistle. We have studied together the first twelve of those exhortations and I challenged you to spend some time reviewing that impressive list. Which of these twelve exhortations did He use to prompt you to live your life using "**God's Gift of Excellence**"?

1) appreciate 2) esteem 3) live in peace 4) admonish the unruly 5) encourage the faint  
6) help the weak 7) patient with all 8) don't repay evil with evil  
9) seek good for all men 10) rejoice 11) pray 12) give thanks to God!

### MOTIVATE

\*\* Today we will draw our five month study of 1Thessalonians to a close. We have seen the reoccurring theme to "excel still more" throughout this epistle. As Paul closes out his letter, he still has eight more exhortations to share with his readers that they might live an excellent life. He not only instructs us on what we are to do for the glory of God, but he shows us how we can do it! Let's read our passage and learn about "**God's Gift of Sanctification**".

Read passage (V.19-22) (V.23-24) (V.25-28)

Opening Prayer

### *God's Gift of Sanctification*

### INVESTIGATE

**V.19** \*\* As Paul opens our study for today, he gives us exhortation number thirteen. Who is the object of his concern?

The Holy Spirit!

**13)** "Do not quench the Spirit..."

\*\* How does the apostle protect the glory of God's Holy Spirit in us?

By instructing us to not "quench" Him. shennumi - lit. means "to extinguish"  
cf. Ephesians 4:30, Ephesians 5:18 and Galatians 5:16

\*\* How could a Christian do that?

By ignoring His instruction and failing to live out all of these twenty exhortations with which Paul is closing out his letter to these Thessalonians. We in effect limit His power in our lives or "quench" the work He is doing in us, through our sinful disobedience and ingratitude.

All see:

Matthew 13:54-58 - "because of their unbelief"

Luke 17:11-19 - "unbelieving lepers"

**V.20** \*\* The next exhortation, number fourteen in our list, is also in the negative form. What is it?

**14)** "...do not despise prophetic utterances."

\*\* To what is that referring?

OT/Early Church Prophets: Ephesians 2:19-20, Acts 11:27-28, 13:1, 15:32, 21:10-11

The gift of prophecy (lit. - to speak forth) Romans 12:6 and (All see) 1Corinthians 14:20-25

\*\* Now back in 1Thessalonians 5:20 - remembering the context of the last chapter and a half of Paul's instruction, to what do you think these prophetic utterances might have been referring?

End time events and instruction for living a godly life. Because they did not yet have the completed Scriptures, much of their instruction came through those with this prophetic gift.

**V.21** \*\* In verse 21, how does exhortation number fifteen on our list relate to the one we have just seen?

By using the connector "but", Paul is saying that we have an obligation to be overtly careful.

**15)** "...examine everything carefully..." While not despising the truth, we are to be careful that it is the truth! cf. Revelation 2:2 and 1John 4:1

\*\* What do we use to determine what is true?

The word of God itself! We either verify what has been said by the use of another supportive passage, or we dig deeper into the original language to help us gain a better understanding.  
cf. Acts 17:10-11

\*\* Still here in verse 21, what does exhortation number sixteen tell us to do with God's precious truth?

**16)** "...hold fast to that which is good..." As soon as we get the test results, we are to cling to it for our very lives! cf. Romans 12:9 and Luke 11:28

**V.22** \*\* If we are successful in our attempts to cling to that which is good, this next exhortation will be easier. What is Paul's next command?

**17)** "...abstain from every form of evil." Obviously, if we are in God's word and holding fast to its truth in our lives, the natural fruit of that kind of life would be to stay away from evil.  
cf. 1Thessalonians 4:3, 2Tim.2:19, 1Peter 2:11

**V.23** \*\* As Paul comes up for air in the middle of giving us these wonderful exhortations, he bursts forth with prayer on behalf of these Thessalonians. As he does, Paul displays for us "**God's Gift of Sanctification**" which will enable us to perform all that he has instructed us to do. Let's look closer at this prayer, what is it that Paul wants God to do for us?

"...sanctify you entirely..." cf. 1Thessalonians 4:3 again

**\*\*** Because we have "**God's Gift of Sanctification**", what is the impact upon our future?

"...[our] spirit and soul and body [are] preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

**\*\*** What does that mean? Do we have three parts to us?

No - The commentator William Hendriksen devotes five pages of small print to explain six different theories which are held among "Bible scholars".

The bottom line, grammatically and contextually speaking, is that Paul is driving home the ability of God to save the whole man.

The use of spirit (pneuma) and soul (psuche) is best understood as describing the same immaterial substance.

**spirit** - as it relates to God

**soul** - as it relates to man, the seat of sensations, affections and desires

The "body" is simply the container. cf. Matthew 10:28 (both soul and body in hell)

Luke 1:46-47 (Mary - using both terms)

Romans 8:10 (body and spirit - separate)

**\*\*** Because of "**God's Gift of Sanctification**" our entire beings are going to be preserved complete, but not just that - what else?

"...without blame..." Christ is going to do this for us, that He might be glorified all the more.  
cf. Ephesians 5:26-27

**V.24 \*\*** This is wonderful and at the same time, amazing news. How do we know this will truly take place?

"Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass." It does not depend upon us, but on our gracious God who saved us in the first place. cf. Philippians 1:6

**V.25 \*\*** With that wonderful interlude behind us, Paul now returns to finish his final three exhortations. What is number eighteen in our list?

**18)** "...pray for us." Notice the term of endearment placed before this exhortation. Paul is depending upon their common love for one another to bolster up their prayer life on his behalf. cf. 1Thessalonians 5:17

**V.26 \*\*** While that last exhortation would have us love our leaders and pray for them, what does the next one say about how we treat each other?

**19)** "Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss" - Paul is describing the Biblically sound practice of greeting one another in the love of Christ. The common practice of the day is hereby improved upon and sanctified with the addition of the word holy.

This is talking about genuine love, expressed in an honest and sincere form - common to the everyday practice within the culture.

cf. Romans 16:16, 1Corinthians 16:20, 2Corinthians 13:12

Acts 20:36-38 (Paul and the Ephesian Elders)

Matthew 26:48-49 (Judas - by negative contrast)

**V.27** \*\* The last of these twenty exhortations comes here for us in verse 27, how important do you think it is from Paul's perspective?

Paul says, "I adjure you..." enorkizo lit. "to charge, bind or command earnestly and solemnly!"

\*\* Alright then, its important. What is our last exhortation?

**20)** "...have this letter read to all the brethren."

\*\* How many people are to know the word of God according to that command?

"...all the brethren." If you are a Christian, you are to study the word of God!

**V.28** \*\* Having given them so much to learn and apply to their life, what does Paul know that they are going to need if they hope to bring glory to God?

They (and we) are going to need His grace! Paul knew that God's grace was sufficient and would help them live out their lives for His glory sake! cf. 2Corinthians 12:9

## **EXTRICATE**

\*\* Like last week, let's review the eight exhortations we have learned and see how God's word has impacted our hearts.

- 13) do not quench the Spirit
- 14) do not despise prophetic utterances
- 15) examine everything carefully
- 16) hold fast to that which is good
- 17) abstain from every form of evil
- 18) pray for us (spiritual leaders)
- 19) greet all the brethren with a holy kiss
- 20) have this letter read to all the brethren

## **DELINEATE**

\*\* Take a moment a review that list right now. Is there an area of your life to which this study in God's precious word has addressed?

## **EVALUATE**

\*\* If so, how can you most effectively remember to apply what the Spirit of Christ has taught you?

Let me suggest three possibilities:

- 1) Share your convictions with someone soon and ask them to hold you accountable to what you know to be "good".

2) Write it down on a card or paper and place it prominently in your daily path.

3) Put it on your prayer list and ask God to help you each day with the strength you will need to obey Him by His grace.

## **ACTIVATE**

\*\* To close out our study of 1Thessalonians, I would like to ask you to offer a word of prayer.

We should be thankful to our Lord Jesus Christ for "**God's Gift of Sanctification**" and the best way to express that gratitude is to commit our hearts to obeying His word.

Closing prayer