

Living God-Centered Lives
1 Thessalonians 5:16-22

Introduction: With this study we wrap up our journey through 1 Thessalonians. In these final verses, Paul essentially gives us a primer on our relationship with God. At the heart of what Paul is saying here is that God is to be the main thing in our lives. He is not to be just one aspect of our lives rather He is to be the very center of our lives. The commands that Paul gives suggest very clearly that we are to pursue God-centered lives through a continual conversation with him (vv. 16-18) and through giving Him full freedom to work in our midst (vv. 19-22).

Opening Discussion: How would you respond to the statement: “Most days I live out a continual conversation with God”?

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

1. How can you rejoice when things are not going well for you?
2. What does it mean to pray without ceasing? What might this look like in everyday life?

Steve said:

“In everything give thanks.” We don’t have to thank God **for** everything, but we do need to thank God **in** everything. In every circumstance we need to express our gratitude to God for what He has done or is doing. You might think that those who seem to have the best/easiest circumstances might give more thanks than others. But that’s not necessarily true. It turns out that those who are most clued in to what God is doing around them give thanks more than others. Thankfulness isn’t really tied to circumstances; thankfulness is really tied to noticing what God has been doing around you.

3. What is the difference between thanking God **for** everything as opposed to thanking God **in** everything?
4. If “those who are most clued in to what God is doing around them give thanks more than others,” how can we stay clued into what God is doing?

5. How would you describe your level of desire to live this kind of life where you are in continual conversation with God?

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22

6. What instructions does Paul give regarding the Holy Spirit?
7. What does it mean to “quench the Spirit” (v. 19)?
8. Despising prophetic utterances is one way Paul says that we might quench the Spirit (v. 19). How does Paul say we should handle a prophetic utterance (vv. 21-22)?
9. In what ways do we sometimes quench the Spirit?

Steve mentioned two ways in which we can quench the Spirit. One way is through unbelief and the other is . . .

. . . through our patterns of disobedience. It's not God says, “You're messing up so I'm not going work in your life anymore.” It's more the case that when we intentionally walk down a path of disobedience in some area of our lives we are saying to God, “I don't want what you have to offer me. I prefer my anger/lust/jealousy/pride/sloth to Your ways.” **We** are quenching the Spirit by our lifestyle. Can you identify patterns of disobedience in your life that you know are quenching the Spirit in your life? If you're genuinely humbled by your sin, the good news is that “A broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.”

10. Can you identify patterns of disobedience in your life that is quenching the Spirit in your life?
11. Which of these short, direct commands that we looked at today do you most need to remember this week?