



Daily Verse and Comment

[1 Thessalonians 5:16-18](#)

(16) Rejoice evermore. (17) Pray without ceasing. (18) In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

King James Version

Paul addresses [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18](#) directly to us, and its commands can greatly affect our attitudes during trials so that we make the best use of them without getting down on life: “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of [God](#) in Christ [Jesus](#) for you.” These are quite challenging! But since God commands them of us, they are things that He will enable us to accomplish. Therefore, they are not impossible tasks.

These are attitudes and actions that we can control. Other scriptures reveal that God permits us to be saddened or disappointed about what is happening. For example, the gospels say that Jesus sorrowed about various things. Here, Paul's concern is that, in our relationship with God—as the mention of prayer establishes—we will not remain depressed for an extended time because of our [contact with God](#). We should be able to come out of our funks. If we do not, it is because we are too focused on ourselves.

These commands guard against allowing ourselves to sink from an upbeat, positive, and hopeful attitude of a child of God to a discouraged and self-centered one. How? By doing spiritual work directly in relation to God, holding onto God in the midst of all circumstances in life. Peter writes that if God is our hope, He will lift us up ([1 Peter 5:6-7](#)).

[1 Timothy 6:6-8](#) reminds us of an important reality: “Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into [this world](#), and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.” This passage's central issue concerns wealth. Great

discontentment and discouragement are generated through [coveting](#) wealth. However, the attitude of a reasoned, faith-based contentment, regardless of economic circumstances, causes great spiritual gain.

Within a relationship with God, this faith-based attitude greatly assists in enabling a Christian to live an “over the sun” life. In a converted person's mind, because he is living such a life, God is the Central Figure, and he accepts whatever life throws his way. A Christian with that focus works his way through his trials, overcoming the pulls toward self-centeredness because he knows God is with him.

Without God being the beacon that provides guidance and encouragement, a person can much more easily drift into an easily discouraged, discontented, covetous, “life is down on me,” self-centered existence. When that happens, spiritual progress grinds to a halt.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Ecclesiastes and Christian Living \(Part Three\): Time](#)

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[Discouragement](#)

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