

**SEVEN SOUL-STRENGTHENING COMMANDS**  
**(1 Thessalonians 5:16-22)**

**I. Rejoice evermore.**

- A. The tense in which the word rejoice indicates that this is to be done now and forever.
  - 1. This is a characteristic of a true Christian.
  - 2. He/she is one who is able to be glad in situations throughout life.
- B. This is not something that comes natural is it?
- C. Many like to gripe and complain instead of finding the silver lining.
- D. We are to rejoice in good times and bad because the place of rejoicing is in the Lord (Philippians 4:4).
  - 1. Because we are in Christ we can rejoice.
  - 2. No matter how bad things may get, if one is in Christ there is reason to be glad.
- E. The Bible openly affirms that Christians can and must rejoice in negative circumstances as well as positive circumstances.
  - 1. We are to rejoice in persecution (Matthew 5:11-12).
  - 2. We are to rejoice at the return of Christians who had wandered off (Luke 15).
  - 3. We are to rejoice with brethren who are rejoicing (Romans 12:15).
  - 4. We are to rejoice when partaking in the same sufferings as Jesus (1 Peter 4:13).
- F. We might ask how we can acquire and strengthen this ability.
  - 1. We can become those who rejoice in all things when we study God's word.
  - 2. We will do this when we spend time with God's people.
  - 3. We will do this when we evangelize.
  - 4. We learn to do this and are strengthened in it when we sing songs of praise to God.
- G. We are of all people most blessed and this should cause rejoicing.

**II. Pray without ceasing.**

- A. Prayer is a wonderful gift that the Christian has at his/her disposal.
  - 1. At any time we can have the ear of God.
  - 2. We can bring any request right to His holy abode.
- B. The command is not to be in a constant state of prayer.
  - 1. We have to work, we have to do many things that don't allow for prayer.
  - 2. However, we can be able at any time to offer up a prayer to God.
- C. There is no set times of prayer.
  - 1. Muslims have set time for prayers but there is no authority for such in the New Testament.
  - 2. There is nothing wrong with planning parts of the day to be set aside for prayer, but it isn't a command.
  - 3. This is something that one can do at any time, in any place.
  - 4. Though they have outlawed prayer in schools, one can still pray in

their mind at any moment.

5. Prayer is something that can be done in the most private or public of places.
- D. There are so many events, people and situations for which we need to pray that we should be able to pray at a moment's notice.

### III. **Give thanks in everything.**

- A. Being unthankful was a sin the Gentile world committed (Romans 1:21).
- B. Paul told Timothy this was a sign of the great falling away that would take place (2 Timothy 3:2).
- C. There is so much from the hand of God for which we should offer thanks.
1. He gave His Son.
  2. He gave us this earth.
  3. He gave us the Bible.
  4. He gave us the health we enjoy.
  5. Every good and perfect gift is from Him (James 1:17).
- D. It is God's will that we be thankful in Christ.
- E. There is something for which we can be thankful in all things.
1. If we have a car wreck, at least we lived.
  2. If we lose a job, at least we didn't lose our spouse.
  3. There is always something for which to be thankful.
- F. We need to express that thanks to God for those gifts and good things that happen to us and for the bad things not being as bad as they could be.
- G. This takes great work and maturity, but it is something for which we must strive.

### IV. **Quench not the Spirit.**

- A. The Spirit resides in us through the teaching of Jesus.
- B. If we want to grow and mature, we must never do anything that will dampen or put out the Spirit's influence in our life.
- C. How do we put out a regular fire?
1. We can use water to put it out.
  2. We can use something to cover it.
  3. We can stop supplying fuel to it.
- D. Many times new converts come out hot and on fire to please God and help the church grow and we pour cold water on their efforts.
- E. Sometimes we put so many things above our call from God to be His servants that the fire gets put out.
- F. Many times we simply stop studying the Holy Spirit's teachings, thus not giving any fuel to the fire.
- G. We need to be fire stokers and fire starters not firemen.
- H. This is something we can do in our lives and the lives of others.

### V. **Despise not prophesyings.**

- A. This is believed to refer to preaching, or the presentation of God's message.
- B. We know that prophesy as a miracle ended with the miraculous.
- C. However, we are still to hear God's word in the form of preaching.
1. We can dampen the message of preachers by failing to uphold

- them.
- 2. We can hinder the work of preaching by failing to adhere to the preaching that is done.
- 3. We can hinder preaching by teaching another message.
- D. Rather, we are to emphasize godly teaching and preaching, never underrating it and placing emphasis elsewhere when it comes to getting God's message out to a lost world.

**VI. Test all things and hold to that which is good.**

- A. Everything we hear, we are to test against God's word.
- B. Don't believe it because I told you or someone else did.
  - 1. John was inspired to tell us to try the spirits (1 John 4:1).
  - 2. This is our duty today.
- C. When we find something that is good, cling to it and don't let it go.
- D. That which is good is that which helps us know more and grow.

**VII. Abstain from all appearance of evil.**

- A. We know to stay away from those things that are sinful and we usually don't have a problem with that.
- B. However, this tells us that if we think it might be evil, that there might be something spiritually hurtful, stay away from it.
- C. If something is in a grey area, something that is found offensive by some, stay away from it.
  - 1. If I'm doing something I believe is okay but others around me do not, then stay away from it.
  - 2. Anything that could hinder my influence as a Christian, whether rightly or wrongly, must be avoided.
- D. Anything that can be considered evil must be avoided.