

What To Do About Everything

HBC 10/28/20

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Resources Concerning 2020 Election

Albert Mohler's *Daily Briefing* podcast October 27:

<https://albertmohler.com/2020/10/28/briefing-10-28-20>

and the print version article:

<https://albertmohler.com/2020/10/26/christians-conscience-and-the-looming-2020-election>

Wayne Grudem's response to John Piper's recommendations:

<https://www.christianpost.com/voices/a-response-to-my-friend-john-piper-about-voting-for-trump.html>

Pastor Gary Hamrick's Election Day Sermon

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=HFIV7O_esA4&app=desktop
(sermon begins at 22 minute mark)

There is no better advice anywhere on earth than what is in this passage: ***What To Do About Everything***. Every circumstance you will ever encounter falls under the three commands from God in this passage:

I. **Rejoice Always** (16)

1 Thessalonians 5:16: *Rejoice always*;

Always translates correctly an adverb that literally means *on all occasions and at all sorts of times*. ***Rejoice*** is a concept often misunderstood by Christians, with the result that many feel guilty most of the time when they think about this verse, because they think they're failing to have the right feelings. The problem comes when you think of ***rejoice*** as a matter of feelings you feel. ***It's impossible to sustain ANY feeling perpetually***.

To ***rejoice*** as you are ordered by this verse to do all the time is an ***attitude***, not a feeling. It's the way you should consistently approach circumstances at every moment. How can you ***not*** rejoice when you consider:

Jesus' incarnation
Jesus' death on your behalf
Jesus' power
Jesus' presence with the Father in restored glory
Jesus' presence with you
Jesus' ultimate triumph over sin, Satan and death

You heard the gospel
You believed
You have salvation
Your citizenship is in heaven
You have freedom in Christ
You have hope
You have eternal rewards awaiting you
You share heaven's joy when others are saved
You can proclaim the good news
You can rejoice in trials, persecution and suffering
You stand in God's grace
You have fellowship with other Christians

. . . to mention just **18 constant reasons** you have for rejoicing!

Joy, as portrayed in the New Testament is not an emotion; it's a **characteristic of a Christian**. It is produced constantly by the Holy Spirit unless you quench the work of the Holy Spirit within you. It is not affected by circumstances no matter how painful they are.

Galatians 5:22: *But the fruit of the Spirit is . . . joy, . . .*

You can **rejoice always** in every situation **because God is good** and you know Him. Therefore your view of the world is different from those who have no hope. When rejoicing is difficult for you, it isn't your **circumstances** that need to change nearly as much as **you** need to change your focus. You need to focus your attention on God in the midst of your circumstances. **Rejoice always because God is good, all the time.**

II. Pray Without Ceasing (17)

1 Thessalonians 5:17: *pray without ceasing*;

Without ceasing is one word in Greek, an adverb that means "without omitting any occasion, without an intermission." It doesn't necessarily mean "unbroken activity." The point of this passage is not to tell you **how** to pray, it's to tell you that there is **no circumstance** whatsoever **when prayer is not appropriate**.

Hebrews 13:5-6: *Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you," so that we confidently say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What shall man do to me?"*

Praying without ceasing keeps you constantly attached to the truth of God's goodness, His sufficiency and His faithfulness. **Pray without ceasing** is not a burden. It's liberating! You **can** and you **should** tell God everything and anything on your heart at any time and all the time. It's a natural thing to do for a Christian.

III. In Everything Give Thanks (18)

1 Thessalonians 5:18: . . . *in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

In everything means *in every circumstance*. The preposition translated *in* connotes "in the sphere of." The true meaning of this is that you give thanks ***in the midst of*** every circumstance of life—even the lousy, painful and unrighteous times. Be thankful. You give thanks ***for all things*** (Ephesians 5:20) in the sense that you give thanks for things past, things present, things anticipated, the expected and the unexpected, the things withheld as well as the things received.

You can be thankful in the midst of ***any*** circumstance in a number of ways . . .

***Your faith is being proven
You have an opportunity to glorify God
God will use the outcome of the situation for His glory***

Romans 8:28: *And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*

1 Thessalonians 5:18: . . . *in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

For this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. You can certainly take this with the command to ***give thanks***. Grammatically, though, it's better to take it with ***all of 16-18***.

If you aren't rejoicing, praying and giving thanks as a pattern of your life ***you are voluntarily putting yourself outside the will of God***. There is a lot of misery in many lives that is totally unnecessary and ultimately self-inflicted because of a simple failure to take God's word seriously at this point. If you won't do these things, ***you are your own problem!***

Rejoice always because God is good

Pray without ceasing because God is faithful

In everything give thanks because God is sovereign

This is God's will for you in Christ Jesus!