

1 Thessalonians 5:15-18

See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Reading today's devotional verses they are things that we have all done as Christians. I mean come on, don't you **give thanks** especially today, which is Thanksgiving Day. Haven't you **prayed** or **rejoiced** or **pursued what is good**?

It's good that we have, but the bad thing is that we choose when we will. If you read it again it says words like **always** and **without ceasing** and **in everything**, these all mean all the time, even the one that says **see that no one renders evil for evil to anyone**; All meaning to do it **all** the time, not just during certain circumstances.

Yet how many only rejoice when something great happens, "Hey I got a raise or a new car, or I got married let's **rejoice**."

Or, "I really need help with this, I need to **pray**, even though I don't pray at other times"

How about, "It's Thanksgiving, so let's give **thanks**, but I don't really do it any other time."

You see, the word of God is not a pick and choose the things you want to do, when you want to do them. No, it's instructions to live by everyday, and in all situations. I know about having hard time, I have had both great times in my life and hard times and also average everyday times. But in those hard times I can **rejoice**, not because of the circumstance, but because I know that God is with me in it and that He will get me through it, even though it may be tough and I don't like it.

Prayer should be part of a daily thing, just like talking to your spouse or kids or your coworkers is a daily thing. How much more important is God than them all? If He is, shouldn't you be talking to Him more than them?

See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, I know this can be a tough one with the way the world is. Some jerk cuts you off on the freeway and your praise turns into profanity. But if we are to be different than the world, then shouldn't our response to those who are mean and evil be different.

I know sometimes it's hard to do these things all the time and in all situations, and in our humanly flesh we can't do them. But we all love to quote this next verse, which if you think about it, applies to us being able to do these things spoken of in today's devotional verses. And we can only do them **all** the time through the power of the Holy Spirit, and Christ Jesus Who strengthens us!

† **Philippians 4:13** *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

✠ *I can rejoice always in all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

✠ *I can pray without ceasing in all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

✠ *I can give thanks for everything through Christ who strengthens me.*

✠ *I can pursue what is good for all through Christ who strengthens me.*

✠ *I can even not render evil for evil to anyone through Christ who strengthens me.*