

## LESSON 17 1 Thessalonians 5:17: Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances. By Royce Hutain

What a wonderful, impactful triad! Pray without ceasing, rejoice always, give thanks in all circumstances.

First, pray without ceasing. How do we do that? This means living with God in our hearts and our minds. Saturate yourself with the word. There has never been a time, never a circumstance, never an aspect of our life that we should not be in **constant communication**. Lift your whole day to the Lord. John MacArthur said, “I think of praying at all times as living in continual God-consciousness where everything we see and experience becomes a kind of prayer, lived in deep awareness of, and surrendered to, our heavenly Father.” Do we have a spirit of dependence that is repeated, frequent and steadfast? C.H. Spurgeon reminds us “If you want that splendid power in prayer, you must remain in loving, living, lasting, constant, conscious, practical abiding union with the Lord.”

Secondly, rejoice always. Psalm 32: 11 states, “Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, ye righteous; And shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.” Chuck Swindoll echoes that. “Joy is a choice. It is a matter of attitude that stems from one's confidence in God- that He is at work, that He is in full control, that He is in the midst of whatever has happened, is happening and will happen. Either we fix our minds on that and determine to laugh again, or we wail and whine our way through life. We determine which way we will go”. Prayer is the doorway to joy.

Thirdly, thanksgiving. In **all** circumstances. Really? Yes! Chip Ingram says “An attitude of thanksgiving is the clearest indication that the heart recognizes the unmerited love of God. John Piper made a very salient point: “If you experience gratitude as a burden, you don't know gratitude, because true gratitude is not an exertion of the will; it's an overflow of being treated better than you deserve. A.W. Pink tells us, “Yes, give thanks for all things for as it has been well said, ‘Our disappointments are but His appointments.’”

So, rejoice always, be thankful in all circumstances and pray without ceasing and you will be a contented Christian. Remember Philippians 4:6: “Do not be anxious about anything but in every situation by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”