

*Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV)*

## **Stay Focus**

**What has your attention? What has your focus?** I'm not sure what you mean. **What is occupying your thoughts?** Can you be a little more specific? **Are your thoughts set solely on the things of this life? Is your perspective entirely earthly? You do realize that this life is fleeting? You are just passing through this life. You are here today. You will be gone tomorrow. Your life on this earth will go by like a blink of an eye or a snap of your fingers.** Are these thoughts supposed to help me in some way? Am I supposed to be encouraged by these thoughts? I thought that my current circumstances were bad enough. Now, the brevity of my life is getting added on to my dismal circumstances. This does seem like too much weight to bear. **Think again.**

**You are missing the point. This life is like a mist or a vapor that will quickly pass away. You might even say that this life is like a mirage. What you see now seems so real. What is before you will soon disappear. This life is not all that there is. You have so much more to look forward. You are thinking earthly thoughts from an earthly perspective. You could be thinking heavenly thoughts from a heavenly perspective. Thinking heavenly thoughts would entirely change your perspective.** How so? **You have eternal life to look forward to. The pain and suffering of this temporary life is nothing compared to the joy and splendor that you will experience forever in heaven.** That is a game changer for my thoughts. **Yes, it is.**

**Your future in heaven should also be a game change for your actions.** How so? **Time is short. There is much work for you to do in this life. The harvest is plentiful. The workers are few. I want you to bear an abundance of fruit for my kingdom.** How so? **You can go where I send you. You can do what I ask of you. You can be a bright and shining light for me in the world. I can use you to draw others to me.** That's what I want. That is my desire and hope and prayer. **I am sure of that. I can see that in you. You will shine brighter and bear more fruit for me if you stay focused and remain joyful, pray continually and give thanks in all circumstances.** That, I will do. **That will be very good.**

*Lord, thank you that you have given me so much for which I can be thankful. As I go through difficult circumstances I will keep my heart and mind focused on the life I have with you now and forever. Help me to be joyful, prayerful and thankful as I follow you. Amen*

**Character** *God's Will*  
Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.  
NIV 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**Character** *Will Of God*  
Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.  
ESV 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**Character** *God's Will*  
Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.  
NLT 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**Character** *Will Of God*  
Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.  
NKJV 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**Character** *Will Of God*  
Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.  
NRSV 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**Character** *Way God Wants You...To Live*  
Be cheerful no matter what; pray all the time; thank God no matter what happens. This is the way God wants you who belong to Christ Jesus to live.  
MSG 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**Character** *Will Of God*  
Be happy [in your faith] *and* rejoice *and* be glad-hearted continually (always); Be unceasing in prayer [praying perseveringly]; Thank [God] in everything [no matter what the circumstances may be, be thankful and give thanks], for this is the will of God for you [who are] in Christ Jesus [the Revealer and Mediator of that will].  
AMP 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**Character** *God's Will*  
See that no one pays back evil for evil, but always try to do good to each other and to everyone else. Always be joyful. Always keep on praying. No matter what happens, always be thankful, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.  
TLB 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**Character** *God's Will*  
Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.  
NASB 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**Character** *What God Wants For You*  
Always be joyful. Pray continually, and give thanks whatever happens. That is what God wants for you in Christ Jesus.  
NCV 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

# God's Will

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Week \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Character** – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**In Context:** *Read 1 Thessalonians 5*

**Begin With Prayer:**

***Here I am Lord. I Am Listening.***

**Meditating On God's Word:** ***(What is God speaking to your heart?)***

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**Considering The Words:** ***(What words speak to your heart?)***

Be joyful always; | pray continually; | give thanks | in all | circumstances, | for this is | God's will | for you | in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**Praying The Scripture:**

***(What prayer from your heart will you write?)***

Lord, thank you that you have given me so much for which I can be thankful. As I go through difficult circumstances I will keep my heart and mind focused on the life I have with you now and forever. Help me to be joyful, prayerful and thankful as I follow you. Amen

**What It Means:**

***(What questions speak to your heart?)*** *(Suggested questions for small group discussion are in bold)*

When have you been in a circumstance in which it was difficult to keep on giving thanks?

How has praying in a difficult circumstance changed your perspective and helped you to remain joyful?

How has God used difficult circumstances to develop fruit in and through your life?

**What do you have in Christ that is able to make you joyful no matter what is your current circumstance?**

How are you praying in and through the difficult circumstances of life?

**How have difficult circumstances developed and deepened your prayer life?**

**What prayers would you like to start praying to God right now?**

**Living It Out:**

***(What action step is God guiding your heart to take?)***

Make it the pattern of your life to be joyful always, pray continually and give thanks in all circumstances.

**Seeing It Happen:**

***(What are you trusting God for in your heart?)***

Have faith that God will help you to be joyful always, pray continually and give thanks in all circumstances.

**Get Ready To Share:**

***(What can you share with others from your heart?)***

Share with another person or your small group how you are giving thanks in all circumstances.

**Close With Prayer:**

***Quiet Yourself Before The Lord***

*Pause And Offer Prayers Of...*

*With An Attitude Of Faith Listen To What The Lord Wants To Say To You*

Adoration... \_\_\_\_\_

Thanksgiving... \_\_\_\_\_

Confession... \_\_\_\_\_

Intercession... \_\_\_\_\_

Petition... \_\_\_\_\_

**Journal**

*As You Quiet Yourself Before The Lord*

**What Do You Want To Say To Me Lord?**

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**What Prayers Are You Praying Today?**

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**Prayer Of Blessing**

*(What Prayer Of Blessing Can You Pray For Another?)*

*May you be joyful always, pray continually and give thanks in all circumstances.*

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**Prayer To Carry**

*(What Prayer Would You Like To Carry Throughout Your Day?)*

*Lord, I will be joyful always, pray continually and give thanks in all circumstances.*

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**What Do You Want To Remember About Today?**

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**A Question To Ask God**

*(What Would You Like To Ask God?)*

*Lord, how can I be joyful always, pray continually and give thanks in all circumstances today?*

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