

# It's All In The Family

PART 2



**EVERY**

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NEW MERCIES CHRISTIAN CHURCH | JOHN 4: 28-30

Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 186–190.

# 1 Thessalonians 5:17–28 (NKJV)

17 pray without ceasing,

18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

19 Do not quench the Spirit.

20 Do not despise prophecies.

21 Test all things; hold fast what is good.

22 Abstain from every form of evil.

23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**It's All In The Family** (1 Thes. 5:17-28)

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24 He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.

25 Brethren, pray for us.

26 Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.

27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.  
Amen.

**It's All In The Family** (1 Thes. 5:17-28)

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# Family Worship

*(1 Thes. 5:17–28)*

- Worship is the most important activity of a local church family. Ministry must flow out of worship, otherwise it becomes busy activity without power and without heart.
- There may be “results,” but they will not glorify God or really last. Many church services lack an emphasis on true worship and are more like religious entertainments, catering to the appetites of the congregation.

**It's All In The Family** *(1 Thes. 5:17-28)*

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# Family Worship

*(1 Thes. 5:17–28)*

- Paul named the various elements that make up the worship ministry of the church.

**It's All In The Family** *(1 Thes. 5:17-28)*

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# Prayer Was Important In The Early Church (vs. 17)

## 1 Corinthians 11:1–6 (NKJV)

1 Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.

2 Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you.

3 But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

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# Prayer Was Important In The Early Church (vs. 17)

4 Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head.

5 But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved.

6 For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered.

## Acts 1:13–14 (NKJV)

13 And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James.

14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.



## **Acts 4:23** (NKJV)

And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them.

- It was a high and holy experience when the church united in prayer.

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- Today we “*call someone to lead in prayer,*” and we have no idea whether that believer is even in fellowship with God. In some churches, there are two or three people who monopolize the prayer meeting.
- If we are led by the Spirit (*Jude 20*), we will experience unity and freedom in our praying, and God will answer.

## **Jude 20** (NKJV)

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

- *“Pray without ceasing”* does not mean we must always be mumbling prayers. The word means “constantly recurring,” not continuously occurring.
- We are to *“keep the receiver off the hook”* and be in touch with God so that our praying is part of a long conversation that is not broken.
- God knows the desires of the heart, and He responds to those desires even when our voice is silent.

## **Psalm 37:4** (NKJV)

Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

## **Psalm 10:17** (NKJV)

LORD, You have heard the desire of the humble; You will prepare their heart; You will cause Your ear to hear,

## **Psalm 21:2** (NKJV)

You have given him his heart's desire, And have not withheld the request of his lips. Selah

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# Praise

(v. 18)

- Thanksgiving is also a vital element of worship.
- We use “*psalms and hymns and spiritual songs*” (Eph. 5:19) to express our love and gratitude to the Lord.

## **Ephesians 5:19** (NKJV)

speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

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- As we grow in our application of the Word of God, we must also grow in our expression of praise, for the two go together.

## **Colossians 3:16** (NKJV)

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

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- If a local church is “*growing in grace*” the members will want to learn new hymns in order to give praise to God.
- If the heart and head do not keep pace with each other, Christian worship becomes either juvenile or hypocritical.

# The Word of God

(vv. 19–21)

- Apart from God's Word, we have no certain revelation from the Lord. Worship that ignores the Bible is not spiritual.
- There may be emotion—and even commotion—but unless there is spiritual truth, the Holy Spirit is not at work.
- The three admonitions in these verses go together and help us understand how the Holy Spirit works in Christian worship.

**It's All In The Family** (1 Thes. 5:17-28)

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- The early church did not have a completed Bible as we do. The Holy Spirit gave the gift of prophecy to certain members of the church and would speak the message through them.
- Today we preach the truth mediately by means of the Bible. Early prophets preached the truth immediately as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

- Their spiritual knowledge was given to them by the Spirit, and often they spoke in a tongue. This is why the three gifts of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge are grouped together in 1 Corinthians 13.
- There are dangers in this kind of ministry, because Satan (or the flesh) could seek to counterfeit a message from God, and thus lead the church astray.
- If the church restrained the speakers, they might be guilty of quenching the Spirit.

- If they believed all that was spoken, they might be obeying false spirits. The answer was to *“prove all things.”*
- There must be a discerning of the spirits.
- Paul gave specific rules for this.

## **1 Corinthians 12:10** (NKJV)

to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

# 1 John 4:1–4 (NKJV)

1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

2 By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,

3 and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

4 You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

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# 1 Corinthians 14:29–33 (NKJV)

29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge.

30 But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent.

31 For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.

32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33 For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

- Today, we have a completed revelation in the Word of God and there is no need for prophets.
- The Apostles and prophets helped lay the foundation of the church.

## **Ephesians 2:20** (NKJV)

having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,

- The only “*prophetic ministry*” we have is in the preaching and teaching of the Word of God.

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- In using the word quench, Paul pictured the Spirit of God as fire.

## **Isaiah 4:4** (NKJV)

When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning,

## **Acts 2:3** (NKJV)

Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.

## **Revelation 4:5** (NKJV)

And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

- Fire speaks of purity, power, light, warmth, and *(if necessary)* destruction.



- When the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives and churches, we have a warmth of love in our hearts, light for our minds, and energy for our wills.
- He “*melts us together*” so that there is harmony and cooperation; and He purifies us so that we put away sin.
- The fire of the Spirit must not go out on the altar of our hearts; we must maintain that devotion to Christ that motivates and energizes our lives.

- “Stir up the gift of God which is in thee,” Paul wrote to Timothy, and the verb means “stir the fire again into life.”

## **2 Timothy 1:6** (NKJV)

Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

- Apparently Timothy had been neglecting this gift and had to be reminded.

## **1 Timothy 4:14** (NKJV)

Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.

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- The believer, and the local assembly, must avoid extremes: the legalist and formalist would put the fire out, while the fanatic would permit the fire to burn everything up.
- It is important that we permit the Spirit of God to teach us the Word of God when we meet to worship.
- “*Sharing*” is good if you have something relevant to share from the Word; but I have listened to some “*sharing meetings*” that were not only unspiritual, but anti-spiritual.

- “Apt to teach” requires that we be “*apt to learn.*” Beware of a false spirit that can lead you and your church astray.
- Follow the Word of God and prove all things.

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# Godly Living

(vv. 22–24)

- The purpose of worship is that we might become more like Christ in character and conduct.
- William Temple, a late Archbishop of Canterbury:  
*“For to worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open up the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God.”*

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- Paul emphasized balance in Christian living: the negative—*“Abstain from all appearance of evil”* and the positive—*“And the very God of peace sanctify you.”*
- Some churches only preach the negative, and this leads to lives and ministries that are out of balance.

- *Sanctify* simply means “*set apart for God’s exclusive use.*” There is *positional* sanctification; we have once and for all been set apart for God.

## **Hebrews 10:10 (NKJV)**

By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

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- There is also *practical* sanctification, a daily dealing with our sins and a growth in holiness.

## **2 Corinthians 7:1 (NKJV)**

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

**It's All In The Family** (1 Thes. 5:17-28)

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- All of this will culminate in perfect sanctification, when we see Christ and become eternally like Him.

## 1 John 3:2 (NKJV)

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

- Expecting to see Jesus Christ is a great motivation for holy living.

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# Christian Fellowship

(vv. 25–28)

- After the corporate worship is ended, the saints minister to one another. They greet one another and seek to encourage.
- I have been in churches where the congregation escaped like rats leaving a sinking ship.
- Fellowship is a part of worship.

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- The “*holy kiss*” was not a sensual thing. Usually the men kissed the men, and the women kissed the women.
- Often when ministering on mission fields, I have had the saints greet me in this way; and I have never been offended or suspicious.
- J.B. Phillips in his paraphrase solves the problem by saying, “*Give a handshake all around among the brotherhood.*”

## **Romans 16:16** (NKJV)

Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you.

## **1 Corinthians 16:20** (NKJV)

All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

## **1 Peter 5:14** (NKJV)

Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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- Paul ended with another reminder that the Word of God is the important thing in the local church.
- The Word must govern our conduct and guide our lives.
- We are to read the Word personally, but we also need to hear the Word in the fellowship of the local church, for the one experience helps balance the other.