

Reflecting on 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22 (Part 3)

October 18, 2020

Introduction: As Paul ends 1 Thessalonians, he offers a cluster of commands. The first set of commands deals with relationship within the Christian Community. The second set in verses 16-18 creates a portrait of the Christian disposition. The third set explain how to allow God's Word to change us. Here are the three steps to being transformed by God's truth:

1. Do not extinguish the Spirit's work. (19)
2. Do not disregard God's Word when it is spoken. (20)
3. Carefully evaluate everything you hear. (21-22)

We summarize the text with the following Big Idea: *God transforms those people who have open hearts to the Spirit's work and to God's Word with all spiritual discernment.*

Questions From the Message:

1. These four short verses (vv 19-22) challenge believers to be changed by God's Word. What was your biggest take-home point from the text/message?

2. What was "prophecy" in the New Testament period and how did it function within the first century church? How is it similar to and different from preaching?

3. The message today identifies three avenues through which God might speak to us: the Word of God (directly), the preaching of God's Word, and the exhortation from other believers. Which of these avenues is most easy to disregard? Why?

Questions From Your Study:

4. What are some of the ministries of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer? (See John 14:26; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:26, 15:13; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 4:30; and any other text you'd like to add.)

5. How can Christians suppress the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives? What makes this so dangerous? How can listening to sound preaching and spiritual discernment encourage your sensitivity to the Spirit's work?

6. Spiritual discernment is an important skill that every believer needs to develop. Why is it important to develop discernment when it comes to evaluating the spiritual things you hear and read? (See 1 John 4:1, Philippians 1:9-10; Romans 12:2 for some possible answers.)

7. What do you think is the biggest source of false teaching that influences the church today? What are some good ways to ensure false church doesn't influence our church?