

***“The Goal Of God’s Goodness!”***  
***1 Thessalonians 5:19-22***

**Introduction:**

1. Last Week, We Looked At The “Christian’s Chase!”
  - “Ever Follow That Which Is Good!” (5:15)
    - And Because God Is The Highest Good, There Are Three Ways To Do That:
    - By Rejoicing In The Lord!
    - By Praying To The Lord!
    - By Giving Thanks To The Lord!
2. What Happens When You **Follow** After The Goodness Of God?
  - You Will **Find** The Goodness Of God!
    - Deuteronomy 4:29 - “But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul!”
    - Matthew 7:7-8 - “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: / For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened!”
    - **IE:** Not Like The Greyhound, Racing After That Elusive Rabbit – But Never Catches It!
      - But, Every Wonder What Would Happen If The Greyhound Ever Did Catch The “Rabbit”? What Could He Do With It?
  - When You Follow After The Goodness Of God – The Goodness Of God Will Follow After You!
    - Psalm 23:6 - “Surely Goodness And Mercy Shall Follow Me All The Days Of My Life: And I Will Dwell In The House Of The Lord Forever!”
  - But, As You Experience God’s Goodness To You:
    - What Are You Going To Do With It? How Are You Going To Respond? Don’t Be Like The Greyhound & Do Nothing!

**1. *Embrace That Which Is Good From God’s Witness!***

- 5:19 - “Quench Not The Spirit!”
- Do Not Stifle His Fire! **IE:** Remember Smokey Bear? “Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires!” - Same Thing In The Christian Life!
  - Do Not “Quench” The Spirit! Because:
  - Everything About The Holy Spirit’s Fire Is Good!
    - His Nature As God! His Influence In The World! His Work In The Christian!
      - His Conviction / Illumination / Fruit!
      - It’s All Good!
    - He Is, After All, The Gospel Gift Of Jesus Christ! He Speaks To Us & Teaches Us About Christ!
  - When The Holy Spirit Of God Is At Work In Your Life – Or Even In Someone Else’s Life – Don’t “Quench” Him & His Work!
    - Don’t Put It Out!
    - His Work Is The Flame Of Revival’s Fire, That Will Bring Forth Light / Heat / Purification / Energy / Consuming Focus & Passion For The Lord!
      - This Is All Good! All For Your Good!
      - Don’t Put It Out!
    - Acts 2:3 - The Symbol Of The Power Of The Holy Spirit Upon The Disciples Was “Cloven Tongues Like As Of Fire!”
      - Don’t Be A Spiritual “Fire-Extinguisher!”
      - We Need These Kinds Of Fires!
  - You Quench The Spirit:
    - By Not Listening – When He Is Teaching!
    - By Not Repenting – When He Is Convicting!
    - By Not Washing – When He Is Cleansing!
    - By Doubting – When He Is Comforting!
  - But Do Stoke His Fire!

- If There Is No Fuel, There Can Be No Fire!
- Apply Yourself To The Process That God Uses To Transform Your Life!
  - The Word Of God!
  - Prayer To God!
  - The People Of God – The Church!
  - Worship! Service! Witness!
- This Is How You Should Respond To The Goodness Of God!

## 2. ***Expect That Which Is Good From God's Word!***

- 5:20 - “Despise Not Prophesyings!”
  - Part Of What Is Necessary To “Stoke The Fire” Of The Holy Spirit Is The Word Of God!
- Do Not Refuse His Word!
  - To Refuse His Word Is To “Despise . . . Prophesyings!”
    - “Despise” - To Look Down Upon! To Take Down From Its God-Given Place! It Tells Of Our Savior!
      - It Is What They Did To Jesus! Luke 23:11 - “And Herod with his men of war ***set him at nought***, and mocked him!”
      - And When You “Despise” His Word – You Are Still Despising Him!
      - Psalm 138:2 - “For thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name!”
    - “Prophesyings” - The Public Declaration & Proclamation Of The Mind & Will Of God Through His Word!
      - For The Purpose Of Edification / Exhortation / Comfort - 1 Corinthians 14:3-4
      - “But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort!”
    - The Preaching & Teaching Of God’s Word Is Done For You – For Your Benefit!
      - “Despise Not Prophesyings!”
  - You Despise Prophesyings:
    - By Not Being Present For The Proclamation Of God’s Word!
    - By Not Being Prepared For The Proclamation Of God’s Word!
    - By Not Being Persuaded By The Proclamation Of God’s Word!
- But Do Receive His Word!
  - Through Feeding On It!
  - Through Following It!
- This Is How You Should Respond To The Goodness Of God!

## 3. ***Examine That Which Is Good By God's Wisdom!***

- 5:21 - “Prove All Things; Hold Fast To That Which Is Good!”
- Check Into The Truth!
  - “Prove” - Discern!
    - You Need To Be Able To Discern That Which Is Preached & Taught!
    - Not Talking About Being Critical – But Careful!
    - To Prove Is To Examine – Put To The Test!
  - The Truth Of The Word!
    - 1 John 4:1 - “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world!”
    - Bereans - Acts 17:11 - “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so!”
  - How Can You Do This?
    - Through The Word Of God!
    - By The Spirit Of God!
    - Why It Is So Important To “Quench Not The Spirit” & To “Despise Not Prophesyings!”
- Cling To The Truth!
  - “Hold Fast To That Which Is Good!”
  - When You Discern What Comes From The Lord:

- Authentic / Genuine!
- Do Not Let It Go! **IE**: Treasure! \$20 Bill!
- Hebrews 2:1 - "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip!"
- This Is How You Should Respond To The Goodness Of God!

**4. Express That Which Is Good Through Your Walk!**

- 5:22 - "Abstain From All Appearance Of Evil!"
  - When You "Hold Fast To That Which Is Good" – It Will Transform Your Life! Walking After The Steps Of Christ! "In His Steps" (Charles Sheldon) - WWJD
- Walk In Cleanness!
  - "Abstain!"
  - Because God Is Holy, He Has Called You To Be Holy!
    - 1 Peter 1:15-16 - "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; / Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy!"
  - Call To Purity!
    - Requires An "Abstaining" From That Which Is Evil!
    - Proverbs 4:14-15 - "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. / Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away!"
- Walk In Carefulness!"
  - Abstaining From That Which Is Evil Seems Obvious!
    - But: "Abstain From All Appearance Of Evil!"
      - The Very Appearance Of It!
      - It May Not Be A "Wrong" Thing – But It Might Be At The Wrong Time / The Wrong Way / The Wrong Place / The Wrong Reasons / The Wrong People!
    - It Can Impact Your Usefulness / Witness For The Lord!
      - 1 Corinthians 10:23-24 - "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient (Proper / Appropriate): all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. / Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth!"

- **IE**: April 21<sup>st</sup> AP News Story - "SIDNEY, Ohio (AP) - Another round and amen! Beer was on tap and a mechanical bull inspired the sermon as a new church held its inaugural service in a western Ohio bar. / The Country Rock Church drew about 100 people to Sunday night's meeting at the Pub Lounge in Sidney, 35 miles north of Dayton. / The barroom church is an offshoot of Sidney United First Methodist Church, whose head pastor says he's been looking for creative ways to reach people in unconventional places. / The church's Web site for its new branch advertises "Top regional bands, pizza, wings, rowdy fun & a short message." / The Rev. Chris Heckaman says people really seemed to enjoy themselves so he expects the Country Rock Church will meet weekly. / Heckaman's sermon compared staying on the bar's mechanical bull to learning how to get along in life!"

- This Is **Not** How You Respond To The Goodness Of God!

**Conclusion:**

1. But In Cleanness & Carefulness – This Is How You Should Respond To The Goodness Of God!
  - God's Witness / Word / Wisdom / Your Walk With God – Are All Part Of His Grace & Goodness To You!
  - Given Through Jesus Christ!
2. Why Do We:
  - Quench His Good Spirit?
  - Despise His Good Word?
  - Ignore His Good Wisdom?
  - Disobey His Good Commands?
3. The Goal Of God's Goodness Is For You To Respond Properly!
  - Have You? Are You?

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