



Spirit-filled living is seen in practical obedience.

Christian Life Center, A Foursquare Church | CLCRiverside.org | 951-689-6785

Introduction | 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24.

- 1. Paul's first letter to the Thessalonian church** (50–51 AD) was written to a newly established, excited congregation facing real persecution, yet alive with the expectation of Christ's return. The expectation of His return seems to have diminished in many Christian circles.
 - In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Paul comforted the church concerning the believers who had already died, reminding them that the LORD's coming was still imminent and glorious! That portion of Scripture has been a confusing issue to many believers throughout the Church age. (John 21:20-25)
- 2. In chapter 5, Paul shifts the focus.** He moves from explaining *what* will happen at Christ's return to addressing *how* believers are called to live in the meantime. In other words, if Jesus is indeed coming soon, then our lives should reflect that reality.
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 *Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the LORD will come like a thief in the night...*
 - 2 Peter 3:10–12 *But the day of the LORD will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the Day of God and speed its coming.*

Three main themes | Spirit-filled living is seen in practical obedience.

- 1. A grateful lifestyle** | 16-18 *Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*
 - Not only does a thankful attitude position our spirit to receive from God, but it also aligns with His desire that we come into His presence with joy and a heart full of gratitude.
 - Scan the QR code to read the previous sermon on A Grateful Heart.
- 2. Understanding prophecies** | 19-22 *Do not quench (put out the fire of) the Spirit. Do not treat prophecies with contempt (disrespect, scorn, or a sense that something is not worthy of consideration) but test them all; hold on to what is good, reject every kind of evil.*



- We are not to quench the Holy Spirit. The word literally means to extinguish a fire, to stifle, suppress, or hinder. Believers can halt His activity in their own lives through unbelief, disobedience, resistance, or neglect.

A few scriptures where the Spirit is a fire: Exodus 13:21 (Pillar of fire); Jeremiah 23:29; Malachi 3:2–3 (A refiner); Matthew 3:11 (Baptism of fire); Acts 2:3–4 (Initial Spirit baptism); Romans 12:11 (Fervent in Spirit. Fervent is to bubble over with heat, to be hot or burning); Hebrews 12:29 (God is a consuming fire that does not just illuminate... it burns away, purges anything that is opposed to God's holiness).

- We must also guard against treating God's Word or the prophetic with contempt... as unimportant or beneath our attention.
- God's Word challenges us to verify prophetic words to see if they truly carry God's voice. This is the tension—remaining open to the Spirit while practicing Biblical and spiritual discernment. What passes the test, keep. What fails, reject. In these last days, with deception increasing, this isn't optional; it's essential!

Matthew 24:4–5, 11, 24 ...*For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.* (1 Timothy 4:1)



Scan the QR Code to learn how to discern prophecies.

- **Summary** | Paul equips us to live confidently in the Spirit without being swept away by deception: refusing anything that contradicts God's Word. We cannot put out (ignore) what God is igniting, nor can we accept every voice that claims to speak for Him. Hold fast to what is true, reject what is false, and keep the flame of the Spirit burning as we prepare for Christ's soon return.

3. **He will finish what He began** | 23-24 *May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.*

- Galatians 3:2-3 *I (Paul) would like to learn just one thing from you (the Galatian believers): Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law (religious works/circumcision), or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh?*
- The flesh may be able to imitate spirituality, but it cannot produce spiritual change! We were born again of the Spirit and empowered by the Spirit. What God births (begins) by the Spirit can *only* be completed by the Spirit. Whenever we drift into self-reliance, we halt (stop) our spiritual growth. When we return to dependence on the Spirit (in every area!), we step back into the flow of the Holy Spirit's transforming power.
- As we live in a society that is quickly fulfilling Christ's prophetic warnings in Matthew 24, whether Christ returns or we step into eternity, we cannot survive on human strength and wisdom (or on the "wisdom and guidance" by the coming saturation of all forms of AI). We **must** continue to rely on the Spirit's power in every area of life.

Our prayer | Titus 2:12-13 *The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation and teaching us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives while we wait for the blessed Hope—the appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who redeemed and purified a people eager to do what is good.*

Known For My Glory

This is a relevant word given to Christian Life Center in 2001 through Leslie Keegel, former National Foursquare Leader for Sri Lanka and President of the Foursquare Global Council.



Springs have begun to break forth in this place, and they will flow like a river—bringing cleansing and refreshing. This river will cause life to flourish. Vegetation will grow, health will be restored, and prosperity will come. The river will not only flow out of you, but out of this sanctuary; it will move like a mighty river into your community.

There will be a move of My Spirit. Fix your eyes on Me. Hunger and thirst for My righteousness, for My Spirit, and for My Word. Life will surge forth beyond your greatest dreams, and multitudes will come, falling on their faces before Me.

This place shall be known for My Glory. This place shall be marked by My Presence—for I will pour out My Spirit, says the LORD—and you shall be known as a people of My Presence.

Isaiah 58:10-14