

# SERMON TRANSCRIPT

DATE

August 7, 2022

SPEAKER

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SERIES

People Of The Kingdom

PART

12

TITLE

Not Quenching, But Discerning

SCRIPTURE

1 Thessalonians 5:19-22



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Good morning to you, Providence. It's good to see you. My name's Dave, one of the pastors here and have the joy of teaching you this morning. If you joined us online, we say good morning to you as well. If you have your Bibles, let's take them and open them to 1 Thessalonians Chapter 5. If you don't have a Bible, maybe you're new to Christianity, we're grateful you're here. There's some in the chair there in front of you. You can grab that. That's a gift and take that and we'd love for you to have that.

1 Thessalonians Chapter 5. So here's what I want to do. I want to walk us through just a quick recap to be reminded of just where we're at, the privilege that we have this word. So if you think with me for just a second, the map I showed as we kicked off this series in the summer was pretty remarkable of where Paul, there's a man named Paul, Apostle Paul. He was radically changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ. And he went from persecuting Christians to actually preaching the gospel. And he would go from city to city, village to village. And so imagine with me for a moment, Paul coming from the Middle East over into modern day Turkey, which is this area.

He was at Ephesus. He would plant a church there and then he would write a letter back to them. That would be the book that we have called Ephesians. Then he made his way up and around, over into what we would know as Europe into the northern part of Greece, which is Philippi. And Philippi, there he would preach. He would actually end up getting arrested and put in prison in Rome. And then he would write a letter back to the church at Philippi, which is our letter Philippians. The people who lived at Philippi are called the Philippians.

And then he made his way from Philippi over to Thessalonica. He's going to eventually make his way down to Athens and over to Corinth. But when he was in Thessalonica, he's preaching the gospel, this good news of a man who has come from God, He's claims to be the son of God. He died for our sins, was buried, rose from the dead to never taste death again. And as he's preaching this message, people believed. They turned from their sin. They're a pretty influential city, it's a port city on the Aegean Sea, and so tons of travel, people in and out. And as he's there he reasoned with some of the Jews in the synagogue at first to help them understand their Old Testament actually pointed to Jesus. And then for the Gentiles, the others that were in the city, they had no affiliation whatsoever with God, he would preach to them.

And as he made his way down, he actually got kicked out of Thessalonica because they were mad at him for preaching the gospel. He made his way to Berea. They actually came after him, some people from Thessalonica, they didn't like what he was doing. And then he makes his way all the way down to Athens. When he is in Athens, he's got a travel buddy with him, his name's Timothy. And Timothy he takes and sends back up to Thessalonica just to check on him. They're new, it's a young church plant, they're new to faith. And as he sends them back up, he makes his way over to Corinth. But then Timothy comes back and again, there's no Southwest Airlines. Hello, it's like a month of walking just to check on people and then another month probably back down. And when he comes back, he says, you won't believe how God is moving in this church, in this church plant in Thessalonica.

And so in a response to that, Paul writes this letter, as we know Thessalonians. And we have it. It's a miracle from God that we have it. And what he does is he commends their faith. He doesn't necessarily correct any doctrine or anything, because they're just believing. They're trusting. They've turned from idols. They're following God. It's like a miracle what God's doing in this church. And so as he writes this, Chapters Four and Five, a few weeks ago, we really kind of leaned into looking at how heaven is coming for those who are in Christ and the joy of that and then to be able to see with hope the future. But then he comes in Chapter Five and he gets really practical. He's going to back down to earth, in a sense. And he gives 13 imperatives from Verse 12 to the end of the chapter.

And so before we dive into those imperatives, let me just make sure that we ground these imperatives in gospel language. Now what I mean by that, if you know anything about indicatives and imperatives, they're pretty significant. The indicative indicates something. It's not telling you to do something. It's just indicating something that's been done. And then the imperative tells you to do something. It's a command. And so the way Paul has written most of his letters in the New Testament, he always starts the first few chapters off with indicatives, telling you what God has done. And then the imperative comes. So when you think about these 13, we're going to look at five imperatives in four verses, but I want to make sure they're grounded in what God has already done.

And what I mean by that, in Chapter One, 1 Thessalonians Chapter One, Verse Four, we read an indicative, the idea of just Paul's indicating, he's just telling them something not to do, but truth. And he says, "For we know you are loved by God and that He has chosen you because the gospel came to you in power." So he's told them in Chapter One, "Hey, you're loved by God. You're chosen by God. Now in light of that live this way." So the difference in Christianity and all world religions is they always tell you the imperatives always come first. Do this and don't do that and then maybe at the end of the game, God will love you. He will accept. He may even choose you. And the difference with Christianity, God has already done everything in Christ. He sent Christ to live the life we couldn't live and died the death that we deserve and was buried and rose from the dead. And so that's how much He loved you for God. So God loved the world that He gave his son. Indicative. And then he says, "I've chosen you. Now in light of that, in light of that, then live this way." And that's what we're going to look at this morning. So let me pray for us and ask for help, because I need it and you'll need it to listen to me. So let's go. Father. We love You. Thank You for Your grace. Thank You for Your mercy. Thank You for Your kindness. Thank You for this word that You have preserved, You have kept, and we have it today. So God, as we read it, may it read us, and as we get in it, may it get in us, and would You once again, transform us, not just inform us, but transform us, we pray. In Jesus name. Amen.

So Chapter five, Verse 19, here we go. "Do not quench the spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything. Hold fast to what is good. Abstain from every form of evil. Do not quench the spirit, do not prophecies, but test everything. Hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil."

So what does God want? I think He desires for His people, for these Thessalonians, for us at Providence, for

the churches in this city, for the Christians in this world, I think He desires for us to show and shine Jesus by the way we live before we actually share Jesus. That we would give credit to the message, that the way we live. I just returned from the middle of Europe for two weeks with a team of 27 people. We went to the Czech Republic and as we're there in Czech Republic, we're partnering with a church planter. There's a few of them there and a few leaders and elders in the church there that we're just partnering with to help what God is already doing there.

If you know anything about Czech Republic it's an interesting country. 99% atheistic in its worldview. Communism fell in '89 and slowly since then churches are being planted and God's doing a work, but it's a hard ground to break through. When you say, "God loves you." They're like, "Who's God." When you say, "The Bible says." "What is the Bible? Who is that? What is that?" And so there's a lot of work that they're doing and we love partnering with them. And so as we go as a team, it's significant for our team to have great unity, to be encouraging with each other, to display in a sense, the very person of who God is before we actually share. And so there's a lot of love, encouragement. And as we're there this year, one student returned, he's been there since I think middle school, but his name is Fonda.

He's about six foot 10. He wasn't that tall when he came, but he grew. And this young man, God's doing a work in his life. It's exciting to see. But he just finished up playing at a university and then he signed a three year contract to play there in Europe for a professional team. And so it's kind of cool to have professional players come back to do the camp, but here's what's interesting. It's not the basketball probably that he comes back for, but it's the relationships. When we first started coming and partnering with this church planter there and doing this basketball camp, all the campers would say, over and over, every time we arrived, "Y'all have such positive energy. We don't know what it is about you, but there's a positive energy." And we're like, "Well, that's the Holy Spirit of God working."

But then we have to break down who the Holy Spirit is because again, there's no concepts of some of these theological terms. And God's really using the team and using the church plant. And all of our coming together during this week, we actually had one guy that we met this year, that during COVID we heard about God drawing him to Himself. He's one of the top saxophone players in the whole country. And he plays in church on Sunday, but he had a concert on the Friday night that we were there. And so our entire team after camp went in to the markets square there and just supported him and encouraged him. And he's just a phenomenal musician, but it was amazing. He would come off the stage and rally all around our whole team and play. And we were just having a blast.

And after the night was over, we got word that the vice mayor of the city was at this concert. And he was asking this man, Martin, who were all those kind of strange people that were dancing and having fun, but they weren't drunk like everybody else in the city was. He couldn't put it together. And, and he said, "So, what are they like? Who are they?" And he said, "Man, it's just the joy of the Lord and the spirit of God that's in them, that they come to bring love to us and encourage us." And, like, "They're like Christians?" And he's like,

“Yeah.” And he’s like, “Well, maybe I should come to your church and check this out. I don’t have a category for that.”

And this is what God does with his spirit. As followers of Jesus, we serve as an advance sign of His kingdom when we walk in step with the spirit. The kingdom of God, it’s been inaugurated, it’s come, but it’s not fully arrived. And this is what happens, as we serve, we’re telling something by the way we live. Ultimately we want to share the gospel with our mouth, we want to use words, but we’re telling people something. A lot of times, when people aren’t willing to listen, they’re always watching. And God uses that to build a foundation of credit to be able to speak life into people and show this advance sign of His kingdom coming as kingdom people live here on Earth.

So here’s a question for us. How do kingdom people practically live? Just how? Three things this morning. Let me show you the first one. The first one is this. Kingdom people take seriously the spirit of God and the word of God. Kingdom people take seriously the spirit of God and the word of God. Notice in Verse 19, the first thing he says is, “Do not quench the spirit, do not quench the spirit.” So let’s do a little bit of work. This is third service, you’ve had like seven cups of coffee. And so here’s what we’re going to do. We’re taxiing. We came through TSA, and I’m still in travel mode, and seat belts are on and we’re going to go airborne here in just a second. So just hang on with us, because I want to give you quite a few passages I’d encourage you to write down, read, study.

Now we’re going to do a series in the fall on the Holy Spirit. I’m super excited. Pastor Brian going to walk us through that. But today I want to just give like a glimpse of what this Holy Spirit, He’s not an it. He’s the third person of the Trinity. And He’s come with intentionality and purpose. So here we go, John 14. John 14:16, there on the screen. This is Jesus talking to His disciples, His life’s winding out. It’s like John 13 to 20, it slows way down. It’s one night around the Passover meal, right before He’s arrested, right before He goes to the cross the next day. And this is what he says. He says, “He will give you another helper to be with you forever. Even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells in you, with you, and will be in you.”

So He’s going to give another, He will give you another, God’s going to give, the Father’s going to give another and He’s called a helper to be with you forever and He’s going to dwell with you and be in you. So this is some categories that starting to shift for His disciples. He says, “But the helper, the Holy Spirit,” John 14:26, “the helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to you remembrance all that I have said to you.” So he’s going to help you. He’s the Holy Spirit of God, the third person in the Trinity. Genesis One says, “Let us make man and woman in our image.” Father, Son, Spirit.

John 15:26, “When the helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the spirit of truth, who goes out from the Father, He will testify about me.” John 16:7. He says, “I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away.” So let’s hit pause for one second. If I’m in the circle with Jesus teaching and He says, “It’s to

your advantage that I go,” I’ll be like, “Time out.” I would stand up, probably. I’d be, “Time out, hold up. To my advantage that you stay, and that you’re with me.” And he goes, “No, I tell you, it’s to your advantage that I go for if I do not go away, the helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send Him to you. When the spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into the truth.” And He, John 16:14, “He will glorify Me.”

So here’s what’s happening. So the spirit of God, the Holy Spirit of God, when you get to a point when you hear the message of the gospel and you in your heart admit that you are a sinner and believe on Christ and commit your life to Him, the Bible says the spirit of God comes and lives inside of you. He comes and takes up residency inside of you. He’s a helper. He guides you. He testifies about me. He guides you into truth. He leads you into truth. And he, His role, is to glorify Me. That means Jesus is speaking. So Jesus is saying “He, the spirit, will glorify Me.” And so this purpose of the spirit of God is not to receive credit from man and woman that follow us. It’s to be the spirit of God enables us to make much of Jesus. This is the role of the spirit of God.

1 Corinthians Six says, “Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God. You are not your own. You are bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies.” He doesn’t live in a temple in the Middle East. He lives in you. If you’ve come to faith in Christ, He has come and taken up residency and lives inside you. He gives you a new heart. It’s called regeneration. He doesn’t patch the heart. He doesn’t bandaid the heart. He gives you a new heart. Galatians 5:16 says, “Walk by the spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.” So walking by the spirit, not quenching the spirit.

Galatians 5:22, it’s a fascinating text. It says, “The fruit of the spirit,” doesn’t say, in it’s original language of the Greek language, it’s not plural. It’s singular. It’s not fruits of the spirit. It’s the fruit of the spirit. He’s a person that comes and lives with you and in you. “The fruit of the spirit is love and joy and peace and patience and kindness and goodness and gentleness and faithfulness and self-control.” And so oftentimes people say, “I need to grow in or get more gentleness or more love and joy.” No, you need more of the spirit of God. It’s a person who then manifests these things in you. Romans Chapter 8 has 22 references to the spirit of God. And so if this is who the spirit is, and what the spirit does, then let’s get back to our text in 1 Thessalonians. How can you and I quench the spirit? And the word quench, it means to dampen, to stifle, to bring low, to try to extinguish a flame, in a sense. There’s an amazing picture throughout the scriptures of the Bible writers of trying to illustrate the spirit of God. And sometimes they’ll use illustrations and word pictures of fire. It looks like light. It looks like fire. And he’s saying, “Listen, don’t extinguish this fire. Don’t don’t dampen this fire.” Acts Two is the first flame emoji. I know you think your phone has it, but actually Acts Two is the first flame emoji where even the writer, Luke, trying to describe when the spirit of God fell, that it was like flames over their head. There was this illumination that God was doing by the outpouring of His spirit.

And he says, “Listen, don’t quench the spirit.” Those who are loved and chosen? Followers of Christ? In other words, don’t put a wet blanket of envy or jealousy or pride or lust or lying or selfishness over the flame. This

is what he's saying. "Don't put the wet blanket of these things the enemy wants you to adhere to. Don't don't quench the spirit." You think about a campfire. As a campfire burns and it's bright and it gives way of light and you stir it up a little bit, you add new logs to it, and the flame gets hotter and brighter. And this is similar in walking together as a church family. As we stir up one another and pray for each other, encourage one another, that the light of Christ in us could get brighter and the light that shines the brightest at home shines the farthest away.

And this is what we want. We want people in our city to know Christ, and we want people in this world to know Christ. And yet, for so many walking around today, they probably reflect not a campfire, but like a pilot light, that's just barely flickering, just barely flickering, because they've got the wet blanket of envy and jealousy and pride and all kinds of stuff that's quenching. They're hanging on to things, not extending forgiveness, knowing that they've been forgiven, and it quenches, it quenches, the spirit of God.

Listen, you could have the nicest and fastest car in the city and if you don't have any gas in it, you're not going anywhere. What's in it affects where it goes. You put diesel in a car that has unleaded, it's not going to go well. And He's made you for Himself to come and live in. You think for a moment with me for just a minute. Let's just go there. Just think about this morning. This room looked, with the lights out, like your heart before Christ.

Think with me for just a moment, stay with me, don't go to sleep, stay with me for just a moment. Just think. This is a picture of your heart apart from Christ. Until the spirit of God, when you hear the spirit of God, comes and what the spirit of God does, it illuminates, it brightens, it lightens. It starts to light up that which is dark in your heart. And as you grow in the word, and as you get in the word, and as you begin to study the word, the spirit of God begins to get brighter in a sense, and brighter in a sense. And you're able to see more and more and more of who He is. He illuminates your eyes. He opens your eyes to see, with clarity, the reality of your sin, the greatness of Christ. This is what the spirit of God does. And he says, "Don't quench the spirit." Then he says in Verse 20. He says, "Kingdom people they take serious the spirit of God, the word of God." He says, "Don't despise prophecies." Verse 20. He says it just like that. Do, not quench the spirit and do not despise prophecies. So let's do a little work here. What is this going on here? This is not the idea of foretelling some future activity of God. Rather, what I believe is happening is Paul is saying, "Don't despise, don't look down, don't reject the forth-telling message of God, the preaching of the gospel. Don't neglect. Don't reject. Don't disrespect the word of God."

For the context, though, for Paul, he's not passing through Thessalonica and leaving New Testament Bibles, because he's writing the New Testament. He's not leaving them. It's taking place, what he's doing. And so when he says, "Don't despise this message of the gospel, don't add to it, don't take from it," he's probably helping the Jewish people in the town to use the Old Testament, to point to them, and then his experience and the news of what Christ has done for those Gentiles outside of the synagogues to say, "This is what Christ has done. This is who He is." Now I do think there's gifts in the sense of people having a spontaneous word

of encouragement to other believers. But usually I like for those, when they come, to have a address attached to them from a chapter and a verse, because for us in this context, we do have the Bible. We do have it's canonized, its closed. It's the final authority from God to His people. And this is what we submit to. This is what we sit under and this is what we stand upon. And this is what we preach.

And what a timely word from Thessalonians, "Do not despise this word," in a day and time when studies show, I just read this week, that in the last eight years, that the number has gone from 25% to 35% of those who don't read the Bible at all in any given year. And for those who only read the Bible in a week's time, like one day, a week is at 14%. Just think about if you didn't eat food for seven days and only one day you did. I wouldn't want to be around you. Yes, listen, there's a famine in the land. I remember one of my profs. I love this prof. He was a sweet brother. He's passed on to be with God in heaven. And he walked with God for a number of years. And he always said this. He would walk around before we kind of started class and he would just say this statement over and over. He says, "If you are all about the Bible and not the spirit, you're going to dry up." He says, "If you're all about the spirit and not the Bible, you're going to blow up." He says, "But if you walk in the spirit and read the Bible, you'll grow up." And it's like, "Man, I'm in a seminary class. This is gold. I can grasp what that means."

So let's take serious the spirit of God and the word of God. But second, the kingdom people, they test specifically what is said about the God of the word. They test specifically what is said. He says in verse 21, look at it. He says, "Test everything." So test everything, hold fast to what is good, abstain from every form of evil. So test, test everything. So in other words, what's he's saying? He's saying, "Let's make sure that it's in alignment with the word of God, that which is said about God." What you say, what you hear, does it align? Listen, does it align with the holiness of His character and the righteousness of His wrath and the glory of His son and the greatness of His grace and the majesty of His mercy?

Most churches, sadly, most churches are so afraid of offending people that they've offended God and they're not preaching the Bible anymore. Listen, they only want to talk, listen to me, they only want to talk about His love and not His wrath. But you'll never know the depth of His love if you don't understand the reality of His wrath. You'll never know. You'll never be able. He's just the big man upstairs. But when He who has taken upon himself to clothe Himself and come and live a perfect life, the standard that's required to be made right with the holy God, and then go to a cross and offer Himself up willingly, and then to drink the very wrath of God that's rightly due you and I upon Himself, every last drop of it? This is the love of Christ.

This is the love of Christ. And church after church is abandoning the Bible and this message of the gospel. It's not good news unless you understand the bad news. In Europe, when we were there, we went to different cities and when we walked through Prague, the maid city there in Czech Republic, it was church after church that has turned into a museum. You walk in, beautiful architect, but no Bible, no preaching of the word. And right in the middle of this city, think about this, right in the middle of this city is this statue. It's a massive statue. And the main guy that's standing there is a guy by the name of John Hus. And John Hus was a follower



of Jesus and a huge proponent of God's word. He was influenced greatly by John Wycliffe who lived in the late 1300s.

As he began to read and understand what Wycliffe was saying about the Bible, Wycliffe had translated the Bible from Latin into English so everyone could have access to the word of God. He ends up being martyred for his stance on the scriptures, his stance on communion, his stance on what the scripture takes. They said, "Listen, we'll give you an opportunity to recant and renounce everything that you believe." And he goes, "I can't do that. This is the truth." And so they imprisoned him for six months and then they take some of his books and writings and they burn most of those. And then they burn him at the stake and kill him. They're so angry at John Wycliffe because of his influence on John Hus, that some 40 years after Wycliffe's death, they dug up his bones and burned them and threw them in the river.

And what is fascinating about men, women, who gave their life for Christ is at the bottom there's a writing across, I mean, this is the center of Prague, at the center square, thousands of people daily come by. They just get pictures taken. And I'm just like, "I want to stand on top of his head and start preaching." I'm like, "Do you know who this guy is? Do you know what he stood for? And that you're in a country that's 99% atheistic in its worldview. And yet since '89, the fall of communism, church plants can plant here. The Bible's openly preached there. Yes, they're mocked, and yes, they're ridiculed and made fun of, and it's hard." But the writing across the statue at the bottom is this. "Is great as the truth and it prevails. Great is the truth and it prevails." Listen, just an hour away from this statue in the town that we were in working we baptized two individuals who were atheistic in their worldview, who had come out of that studying this word. They were studying the Bible, listening to the word as it was preached, and God radically saved them. And it's a bold statement to be baptized. To make that stance, to make that declaration that, I'm following Jesus. Not being baptized to be saved, but because I am saved, I want to be baptized." In the town that we were working in, the church planter, They've opened up a Bible museum with Bibles from the 1400s, 1500s, 1600s. Amazing literature and schools have heard about this. And they're coming. They're coming to see all of this incredible work. And then our church plant partner says, "Oh, let me tell you the message of this Bible." And he's sharing the gospel to hundreds and hundreds, week in and week out.

Listen, 2 Timothy says this in 2:9, Paul says, "I'm suffering. I'm bound with chains as a criminal. " This is his last letter, right before he would die. He says, "But the word of God is not bound." Did y'all hear that? "The word of God is not bound." It is going forth in countries, even though they're closed, we hear of churches underground doing a great work. Pastor Brian and Pastor Phil, they're in remote parts of the world even this week, underground churches. The Bible is going forth with great power. Listen in the US, what's going on here? 4,500 churches in 2019 closed. That's 86 a week. 50 in the Wake County area are declining or dying. And they're abandoning the Bible as fast as they can, just giving things, maybe like what people want to hear. Paul writes that, "They're itching ears. They're raising up teachers to just scratch them, some self-help."

We don't need self-help. We need to understand who Christ is and what He's accomplished. One writer says it

like this, Walter Kaiser. He says, "It's no secret that Christ's church is not at all in good health in many places of the world. She has been fed junk food. All kinds of artificial preservatives, and all sorts of unnatural substitutes have been served up to her. And as a result, theological and biblical malnutrition has afflicted the very generation that has taken such giant steps to make sure its physical health is not damaged by using foods or products that are harmful to their physical bodies. Simultaneously, a worldwide spiritual famine, resulting from the absence of any genuine proclamation of the word of God, continues to run wild in most quarters of the church." Listen, kingdom people, they test with specificity, "What is said about God in totality?"

Kingdom people, third and last, quickly, we'll land the plane. Kingdom people turn swiftly and adhere to what is good and abstain from evil. They turn swiftly and they adhere to what is good and they abstain from what is evil Notice Verse 21 and 22. He says, "Hold fast, hold fast to what is good, abstain from what is evil." And what I think Paul is doing, I think he's saying, "Listen, when you don't quench the spirit and you don't despise the word and you test what's said about God, you're able to see very clearly what to hang onto and what to let go, what to lean into and what to let go." He says, "Hold fast to that which is good." And the reason, the reason you can hold fast, to that which is good is because God is holding fast to you. Verse 24 says it. We'll pick it up next week, but he says, "He who called you as faithful, He will surely do it."

He will do it. Listen, when you're filled with the spirit and walking in the spirit, it's like a rock climber that holds on for dear life to that ledge when they find it and they their hand and they dig in and they hang on for dear life. And, listen, when it comes to sin, listen, don't try to manage sin. It'll manage you. Sin always promises more than it's willing to give. It always costs you more than you want to pay. And it always keeps you there longer than you want to stay. It's always knocking at the door of your heart. The Bible says to flee from it, to abstain from it, to run from it. Don't give it a foothold. You remember siblings, when you had siblings, and the older would always beat up the younger, and so you'd be running away from and the older always just put their foot, they just put their foot in the door.

And I see siblings laughing at each other. The door is there. And it's just the rubber on both sides of the shoe, it holds the door and you're trying to keep it, and the older sibling just kind of laid back, because they know you're going to get worn down, and then they blow the door open. And then they punch you and beat you up. All he wants, all the enemy wants, to your heart is a foothold. That's all he's trying to do, is if he can just get a crack open in there and wear you down and you think you can manage it. Quench the spirit, quenches the spirit. He says, don't give it a foothold. Listen, Romans 13 says it like this. You know. You know the time, the hour has come, Paul, writing to the church at Rome. You know the time. The hour has come to wake up from your sleep. He's not talking about nighttime. He's not talking about a nap. He's talking spiritual alertness, awareness. Listen, listen, he says. "It's time to wake up, put on Christ and make no provision for the flesh to gratify its desires."

He say, "You know the time." There's a couple words in the Greek language for time. One is the word for like minutes. It's just telling you each minute, it's this time of day. And there's another word for time that's used

actually here in this passage, that is it's the right opportune time. It's the opportune time to take advantage of this. It's the opportune time to live. It's an era. It's a season to live for Christ.

I remember when I played basketball in college, way back in the day when the knees worked, and I remember before the game we would huddle up and one of the boys from, I remember specifically from Michigan, we would all put our arms around each other and we'd start rocking a little bit. And he would always ask the question. He would always ask the question, say, "What time is it?" And I never said, "Oh, it's 7:15, bro." I didn't say that. He'd say, "What time is it?" And we'd say, "It's game time." He's say, "Now, what time is it?" We'd say, "It's game time." And what Paul is saying, listen, church, church, "It's game time to wake up."

Not quench the spirit, not despise the word of God. It's time. The world's on fire. It's looking everywhere for hope. The spirit of God lives in you because you're loved and chosen. He set His affections on you. Listen, hold fast to what is good. Abstain, make no provision. Do you know, this is like a miracle. Do you know that I have come up with a game plan of wisdom where I can guarantee you 100%, 100, the math has been done, 100%. I can guarantee you, there's a way, I've found a way for you to never get bit by a shark.

I know. Settle in. You're 11:00 service. Come on, wake up. All right? It's not rocket science. There's a way for you to never get bit by the shark. You know what it is? Don't go in the ocean. Brilliant. Just absolute brilliance. Yeah. Make no provision, make no provision. Just let the spirit search your heart. Where are you making a provision for the enemy to get a foothold? Because he wants to bite you. He's a roaring lion seeking to take you out. We don't think in those terms. You got a latte in your hand right now, you're sitting on a padded chair, AC's working, thank God. Christian life. He's trying to get a foothold in your heart on envy and jealousy, pride and lust and lying and move you just a pilot light that doesn't give light to anything.

Listen, if you want to hold fast, and if you do hold fast, God will do great things. But if you don't, if you manage and just live like this with a pilot light on, the Christian life becomes like climbing Mount Everest with roller blades on.

It's impossible, apart from the spirit of God, working in you. So as we close, a few encouragements and application. Let's be sensitive to the work of the spirit. Let's be sensitive to what the spirit of God is doing in your life. Let's be serious about reading the Bible. Let's be serious, if you don't have a Bible reading plan, we have one out there we give you, want to encourage you with that. Take that and start and stay in the word. And let's surrender your life to Jesus. If you've never surrendered your life, if you've never been born again, if you've never had the spirit of God come into your heart, I pray today it would do that.

You can admit that you need Him. You can believe on Him. Confess, let us know, and we'll walk with you. But today, today, maybe this is the day. You've never surrendered your life. Maybe the spirit of God's been around you, but not in you and you want to follow Him. I'd encourage you today to do that. And listen. One

of the things that we hold fast to here at Providence is the Lord's supper, because it reminds us of everything that He accomplished that we couldn't. And so here's what I want to do. I want to just take a few minutes to ask you to bow your heads and let's pray. And just in silence there, maybe pray. Maybe you want to trust Christ today. I just encourage you to trust Christ, to say, "Christ, I believe on You. I need You. Forgive me of my sins, come in to my heart right now." And He'll do that.

Or maybe today, you've quenched the spirit of God and you want to want to ask for forgiveness. In Acts Four, He says, "Times of refreshing come when you repent." And so wherever you may be today, right now, just take a few minutes and let's just pray and seek God and His spirit, the feeling of His spirit. And then I'll lead us in supper in a second.

Father in heaven, we are grateful for Your kindness to us. We're grateful for Your word. We're grateful for Your instruction. And as we come to this table, God, we want to be quick to say thank you. We want to be abounding in thanksgiving. We want to say thank you for the provision that You've made through the death, burial, and resurrection of Your Son, through His body being broken and His blood being spilled. And so we say thank You for this bread and thank You for this cup, because it helps us to remember all that Christ has done. And it also gives us hope that He's going to return again. And so we ask for Your blessing on this meal together and we pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Well, that night as they came together to celebrate Passover, and we'd encourage you this morning that if you haven't trusted Christ, to not take this meal, but if you have, you are bearing testimony and witness to what God has done. And that night as they're celebrating Passover of God's deliverance from physical bondage from the Egyptian slavery that they had put them into, it was amazing celebration for hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years of what God had done. And it was really a crescendo of leading to all that Christ was as the Passover lamb. He would lead us out of spiritual bondage and out of slavery to sin.

And He's there the night before He is crucified. He's like, "This bread and this cup is actually My body. It's a portrait. It's a picture of My body that will be crucified for you, broken for you. And so as often as you come together and as often as you eat and often as you remember, rejoice, knowing that I did this for you because I love you." And so eat with remembrance.

And in the same way, again a sweet sound, the tops coming off. Praise God. So many are remembering this morning. He said, "This is the cup of the new covenant. And it's a cup that represents My blood that's going to be spilled for sin." Without the shedding of blood there's no forgiveness of sin, and so he said specifically, "That this cup is a picture of My blood." So as often as you gather and as often as you drink and as often as you take, do it in remembrance of what He's accomplished. Let's drink with joy

Father, we pray now and we say thank you again. We ask that Your grace and Your mercy would strengthen

us and that we would go throughout the week remembering all that You have done, reflecting on all that You have done, repenting, keeping short sin accounts with You, first and foremost, and pray God, that You would strengthen our hearts for the week ahead. We love You and we thank You for this time and we pray all of this in the great and the strong and the good and the righteous name of King Jesus Himself. Amen and amen.



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