

## How to Stay Faithful? By Trey Sullins

Life is full of processes. There is a process for how you get ready in the morning. There is a process for how you change the oil in your car. Nearly everything has a process. When it comes to the word of God, it too is full of processes. God provided us with a process for how to become one of His people, how to repent, and so many other things. God even provided us with a process for how we can stay faithful to Him. A part of one of these processes is found in 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 where the Holy Spirit instructs the brethren on what they should do in order to stay right with God.

The Thessalonians are instructed to “test all things” (1 Thessalonians 5:21). Testing all things means that we as Christians should never be satisfied relying on what we think we know about God’s word. We must test and prove our knowledge and things that we learn in order to ensure that they exactly match God’s word! The word used here for “test” means to “prove,” and therefore, everything that we believe as Christians should be proved by the gospel. This very thing is what was done in Acts 17 when Paul came to the city of Berea. As Paul began preaching the Jews in the Synagogue, “they received the word with all readiness: Acts 17:11. Instead of rejecting Paul and the message, or ever trying to kill him, these Bereans searched the scriptures to find out if what Paul was saying was true. These were Jews who had the Old Law of Moses; when they heard about the Christ and the message of the gospel, they tested the things which they heard. If we have this approach to everything in life, then we will always be right with God.

The next part of the process is to “hold fast what is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21). After you find those things that are good, in other words those things that are right with God, then you hold fast to them. Holding fast means that you never let go of them. Imagine if you were in a river rushing towards a waterfall and you could not get out. Then reach out for a low hanging branch and begin to pull yourself out. If you were in this situation, you would certainly be holding fast to that branch, and with all your strength refusing to let go. There are so many different options on how we can live our lives, but there is only one option which will save our souls. To that option we must cling. In the parable of the sower, we find another example of holding fast. “But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience” (Luke 8:15). The seeds on good ground are the people who hear the word of God and realize its power unto salvation then never let it go!

The following step is to “abstain from every form of evil” (1 Thessalonians 5:22). After we understand what is good and hold fast to it, then we stay away from what is bad. The wording here gives the idea that we need to keep from these things even to the point of abhorring them. When you put it in context it makes a lot of sense. These evil things are the things which will destroy our soul’s eternity. In our world today so many people try their hardest to stay away from COVID with masks, distancing, and vaccines while at the same time pursuing the more dangerous sickness of sin! This can never be the case for the Christians, and the Christian should try to bring everyone else out of this mindset as well.

Praise God for the many processes that He provided for us which leads us right to Him. Without His plan we would be lost and have nowhere to turn for help. The challenge that now falls in our hands is to make sure that we abide by these paths and live them to the best of our abilities. Our

duty is to stay faithful to God. While the world tries to do that on their terms, the righteous must do that on God's terms. How do we stay faithful? By testing all things, holding fast to what is good, and abstaining from every form of evil.