

1 Thessalonians 5:16 says, "Rejoice always."

The shortest verse in the English Bible is John 11:35, "Jesus wept." However, in the Greek, John 11:35 has sixteen letters where 1 Thessalonians 5:16 has fourteen.

Bible Recall does not entertain the verses which are "empty" or *mutilated* by the suspect Nestle-Aland text. For example, it omits most of Luke 20:30, reducing it from "And the second took her as wife, and he died childless" to simply "And the second," with only twelve characters in the Greek. If the fictional Master Yoda from Star Wars would comment, he would likely say, "Irony, it is, considering the translation, making 'the second' the first." Nestle-Aland would have shorter verses still. By eliminating whole passages from the Bible, they would make these verses the shortest with zero Greek characters!

- Matthew 17:21; 18:11; 23:14
- Mark 7:16; 9:44; 9:46; 11:26; 15:28
- Luke 17:36; 23:17
- John 5:4
- Acts 8:37; 15:34; 24:7; 28:29
- Romans 16:24

Sometimes great lessons can be from succinct statements. "Rejoice always" is such a statement. Lasting joy is not found in things external, but in Christ Jesus who is eternal (Phil. 4:4). Paul links this joy with fervent prayer and finding reasons to be thankful "in everything" (1 Thess. 5:17, 18). When he suffered the loss of all things, he counted them rubbish for what he gained in Christ (Phil. 3:8). Joy, prayer, and thanksgiving are all decisions we choose on a daily basis. Happiness is a choice even as prayer and thanksgiving are.

--Steven J. Wallace