

1 THESSALONIANS 5:18

IN ALL
THINGS
GIVE THANKS
FOR THIS
IS THE
WILL OF
GOD



IPC HEBRON LOS ANGELES
Exists to Exalt, Edify, and Evangelize

From Pastor's Desk...

THANKFUL HEART: CELEBRATE GOD'S GOODNESS IN LIFE

One of the standing orders of the church as considered as, giving thanks to God in all circumstances reflects the will of God in our daily life (1Thess.5:18). The call to thanksgiving is very common in Paul's letters. The grumbling spirit was one of the besetting sins of the people of Israel in the Old Testament. Give thanks to God in everything must be qualified by its context. God abominates evil, and we cannot praise or thank him for what He abominates. When evil strikes, we can still be thankful for God's presence and for the good that He will accomplish through the distress. Our thanksgiving is to be for everything which is consistent with the loving Fatherhood of God and the self-revelation in Jesus Christ (Eph. 5:20).

Praise and thanksgiving are necessary ingredients in our relationship with God. Praise recognizes God for who He is. Thanksgiving recognizes Him for what He has done. Giving thanks is an act of worship, recognizing that despite difficult circumstances we may face from time to time, God's love and concern are unfailing. This theme is found throughout Psalms.

- Thank God for our deliverance from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love (Colo. 1:12-13). God has cancelled the debt which our sins incurred. The Lord Jesus Christ paid the penalty on the cross; it never needs to be paid again. The account is settled and closed, and God has not only forgiven, but He has removed our sins as far as the east is from the west (Ps. 103:12).

- Thank God for the Holy Spirit, the supernatural blessing. Where the Spirit reigns, there is gratitude to God (Eph. 5:20). It is not occasional, but continual. It's not only for pleasant things but for all things. Anyone can be thankful for sunshine; it takes the power of the Spirit to be thankful for storms in life.

- Thankful attitude of mind is beneficial for a healthy life. Worry, depression, and a complaining spirit are definitely harmful to one's health. A nation without faith cannot endure, because justice, goodness and peace cannot prevail without the glory of Almighty God. Abraham Lincoln asked Americans to set aside the last Thursday of November as a day of thanksgiving. It is an expression of gratitude for survival; gathering in unity for a common purpose; sharing our victories as well

as struggles. Let us turn to God with a thankful heart for everything at His hand.

Rev. Dr. K. P. Mathew
(Senior Pastor, IPC Hebron, Los Angeles)

Give Thanks

Br: Bejoy Mathew

In this month's theme, we read that Apostle Paul says to give thanks. With the western culture where we take words literally, we may just read it was saying thanks. But remember that we are reading a Book written in an eastern culture time period. Hence the various parables and stories in the scriptures to ensure the point comes across. When we read this verse with that in mind, Apostle Paul is trying to say: be grateful in all things. Now that is a big ask.

Being grateful does not come easily to us, even when everything is going well. When it does, it is often a fleeting feeling. This is primarily due to human hubris. We believe that everything “good” that we “got” is deserved and everything “bad” is thrust unwillingly on us. We need to understand that it is untenable to think that way. Life can change at a moment’s notice. Who would have thought that this year 2020 will be this way? In just a matter of a couple of days, all the lives around the world have dramatically changed.

We have experienced these pivoting moments in our lives as well. If we feel that we are in total control, then we won’t feel grateful. Why would I? I made it happen on my own. I do not need to thank anyone; it was all me. That is a worldly view. A true Christian believes that God is in control and we are

mere mortals in His ultimate plan. Once we are submissive to this fact, we will understand “It is not my will to be done, but yours be done”. Then we become grateful to wake up every day, to go to work, to do chores around the house, have a sound mind, to have naughty children etc.

How to practice being grateful every day? I would suggest that in our morning prayer, we start off by stating at least five things that we are truly grateful. This has the benefit of setting the mood for the day and more importantly having a Christian outlook on life every day.

Thanksgiving

Sis: Sherin Subin

Thank you is one of the first phrase that is introduced to us as a child. It is an integral part of our daily lives to say "Thank you" to others but when we come into the presence of God, our prayers are usually phrased "I need, why, please" etc. Have you ever wondered why we pray in such a manner?

In our daily lives, we're so consumed by our needs and worries, that we don't thank God for things we have. May it be physical, material or spiritual blessings; we need to acknowledge that everything comes from God. Since we cannot see God with our naked eyes, we often forget to thank God. It is our obligation as a child of God, to thank God for everything he has done for us. The sole reason for our existence is to worship and to have fellowship with God Almighty.

HOW SHOULD WE THANK GOD?

1. Through our prayers and praises
 - a. Our worship is thanksgiving to God.
 - b. Have a heart of gratitude by humbly recognizing and understanding God's blessings.
 - c. Praise God for all he has done and yet to do
 - d. Pray without ceasing and daily remember his countless blessings
2. Through our lives and actions
 - a. Be obedient to the word of God.
 - b. Enter God's courts with thanksgiving
 - c. Please God by leading an upright and faith filled life.
 - d. Magnify God by proclaiming his goodness to people around us (testimonies).

WHEN SHOULD WE THANK GOD?

In all circumstances: May it be joy, sorrow, triumph, loss, healing, sickness or adversity; always give thanks because it is the will of God. There are no situations in our life that Christ hasn't already faced. Hence it is written, "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."

HOW CAN WE LET GOD KNOW OF OUR NEEDS?

In Ephesians 6 it says, "With thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God." As we are entering a season of Thanksgiving, let us continue to offer sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to God through Jesus Christ. We must thank God for his salvation, steadfast love and mercy, his amazing grace and the blessed assurance of eternity he has given us. Above all, let us thank God, for he is worthy to be honored and praised.
