

## **GIVING THANKS IN EVERYTHING**

**WITH THANKSGIVING LESS THAN A WEEK AWAY, I WANT TO TALK TO YOU TONIGHT ABOUT “GIVING THANKS IN EVERYTHING.”**

**THE APOSTLE PAUL WRITES IN I THESSALONIANS 5:18, “IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS, FOR THIS IS GOD’S WILL FOR YOU IN CHRIST JESUS.” IT IS EVIDENT FROM THIS VERSE THAT GOD INTENDS FOR US TO BE THANKFUL IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES AT ALL TIMES.**

**IT IS EASY FOR US TO FOLLOW THIS COMMAND WHEN EVERYTHING IS GOING OUR WAY, I.E. GETTING A PROMOTION ON OUR JOB OR PURCHASING THAT HOME THAT WE’VE ALWAYS WANTED. BUT WHAT ABOUT WHEN A TIRE GOES FLAT ON THE INTERSTATE OR WHEN THE DOCTOR’S FACE REVEAL BAD NEWS BEFORE HE SAYS A WORD? SINCE EXPRESSING GRATITUDE AT SUCH TIMES SEEMS UNNATURAL, CIRCUMSTANCES CAN CAUSE US TO DOUBT THE TRUTH OF THAT VERSE. SO WHY DOES SCRIPTURE SAY GOD’S WILL IS THAT WE GIVE THANKS IN “EVERYTHING.”**

- (1) THANKING GOD IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES KEEPS US AWARE OF HIS PRESENCE. WHEN WE SAY, “THANK YOU, LORD, EVEN THOUGH I DON’T FEEL GRATEFUL,” WE ARE REMINDED THAT HE IS RIGHT THERE WITH US AND THAT OUR PROBLEMS ARE HIS AS WELL AS OURS. WE CAN TAKE OUR TROUBLES TO HIM AND SHARE OUR BURDENS WITH HIM. HE IS THERE TO LISTEN, COMFORT AND STRENGTHEN US.**
- (2) WHEN WE GIVE THANKS, WE ARE MOTIVATED TO DISCOVER GOD’S PURPOSE IN OUR PROBLEMS. IT IS OKAY TO SAY, “FATHER, I WOULD LIKE TO BE FREE FROM THIS ADVERSITY, BUT KNOWING YOU MUST HAVE A REASON, I THANK YOU.” AS THE ATTENTION IS FOCUSED ON WHAT HIS PURPOSE MIGHT BE, WE WILL FOCUS ON OUR CIRCUMSTANCES LESS. IT IS EASY TO DWELL ON OUR PROBLEMS. BUT BY THANKING GOD IN THE MIDST OF OUR DILEMNA, THE FAITHFULNESS AND POWER AND PERSON OF CHRIST BECOMES THE CENTER OF OUR ATTENTION.**
- (3) WHEN WE GIVE THANKS OUR FAITH AND TRUST BUILDS. TRUSTING GOD IS MOST DIFFICULT WHEN WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE REASONS FOR OUR PAIN OR AFFLICTION. WHEN WE DO NOT HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS, WE MUST TRUST GOD. GIVING THANKS IS THE HIGHEST EXPRESSION OF OUR TRUST.**

**(4) GIVING THANKS TO GOD IN ALL THINGS IS ESSENTIAL TO REJOICING. PAUL NOT ONLY TOLD THE THESSALONIANS TO GIVE THANKS IN ALL THINGS, BUT TO “REJOICE ALWAYS.” JOY IS A FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WHICH IS NURTURED BY THANKSGIVING.**

**(5) GIVING THANKS RENEWS THE INNER MAN. OUR EXTERNAL PROBLEMS MAY BE OVERWHELMING. THEY MAY PRODUCE GREAT STRAIN AND PRESSURE ON OUR EMOTIONS. BUT WHEN WE GIVE THANKS, SOMEHOW GOD RESTORES OUR INNER SELF. THANKSGIVING REFRESHES THE SOUL IN THE HARSHTEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES. THERE IS DIVINE ENERGY WHICH IS RELEASED THAT ENABLES US TO KEEP ON GOING, KEEP ON TRUSTING, KEEP ON HOPING.**

**BROTHERS, I AM AWARE IN THIS AUDIENCE TONIGHT THAT SOME OF YOU ARE ABLE TO TAKE WHAT I’VE TALKED ABOUT AND APPLY IT, WHILE OTHERS MAY FIND IT MORE DIFFICULT. THE KEY TO BEING ABLE TO GIVE THANKS IN EVERYTHING WILL DEPEND ON YOUR TRUST IN GOD.**

**HERE’S THREE QUESTIONS I WANT YOU TO ASK YOURSELF:**

**(1) DO I HAVE ANYTHING TO BE THANKFUL FOR?**

**(2) WHO DESERVES MY EXPRESSION OF THANKS?**

**(3) HOW CAN I SHOW GOD AND OTHERS THAT I AM THANKFUL?**

**AT LAST YEAR’S NOVEMBER MEETING I SPOKE ON “WHERE ARE THE NINE?” I RELATED THE STORY OF JESUS HEALING TEN LEPERS, BUT ONLY ONE CAME BACK TO THANK HIM FOR HIS HEALING. BROTHERS IT IS MY HEART’S DESIRE THAT EACH OF YOU WILL BE LIKE THE ONE WHO CAME BACK TO THANK JESUS... I REALIZE THAT EVERY BROTHER IN HERE MAY BE FACING SOME REAL CHALLENGES BUT I AM CONVINCED THAT NO MATTER HOW BAD THINGS ARE, THEY COULD BE WORST. AND FOR EVEN THAT LITTLE GLITTER OF HOPE YOU CAN SAY LORD, I THANK YOU.**

**BEGIN TODAY TO THANK GOD IN EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE. BY DOING SO YOU WILL DISCOVER NEW POWER AND HOPE. YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES MAY NOT CHANGE, BUT YOU WILL BE TRANSFORMED. YOUR JOY WILL INCREASE; YOUR LOVE WILL FLOW; YOUR INNER STRENGTH WILL FLOURISH.**

**GIVE THANKS IN ALL THINGS AND WATCH GOD WORK.**