

## THANKFULNESS

The months of November and December are a wonderful time of the year for many while others are burdened with overwhelming financial obligations, sickness, and loneliness brought on for a variety of reasons. The new season ushers in a change of climate and a slower pace yet many feel as if they are running even faster just to stay on the track that often seems to control their lives.

You might ask, why the dichotomy in life experiences? How can such differences be manifest in a church body that professes one mind, one focus, one lifestyle? It's obviously not that simple to say or think that ALL believers should think alike, "feel" alike, worship alike, make similar financial, personal and corporate decisions obtaining similar/common results. But scripture provides us with insight to this dilemma, this puzzle if you will, and provides us with some answers that can make a difference in the lives we live.

All true believers have grappled at one time or the other seeking to understand the Will of God for their lives. All true believers understand that God wants to complete the good work He has begun in their lives and is faithful to finish what He started. All true believers recognize that God's ways, thoughts, and plans are higher than our own and accordingly, read His Word as a blue print, a map, a guide for the steps we should take in carrying out even the most minute aspects of our lives. Yet many of us overlook one very important element that promises success in every believer's walk. Simply put, we forget to **BE THANKFUL**.

The bible tells that we are not to forget. I Thessalonians 5:18 tells us we are to "give thanks in **ALL** circumstances for this is God's Will for you in Christ Jesus." Think now about the negative view of that scripture. When we are negative about a matter, feeling sorry for ourselves about a circumstance that has occurred or not, focused and worrying on what **MIGHT** happen or what we don't have, we are effectively **OUT OF GOD'S WILL FOR OUR LIVES**.

This lack of thankfulness in **ALL** things can be credited to the precipitous slide in the lives of all believers, the church, in today's culture throughout the world. Romans 1:21-22 says, "For although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor **gave thanks to Him**, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools." Without an attitude of thankfulness, without an attitude of gratitude, we are clearly outside the Will of God for our lives and the blessings He wants to provide.

In 2 Timothy 3:1-5 we read, "But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, **ungrateful**, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God – having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them." This scripture refers to believers as well as non-believers.

The bible is clear. We need to be thankful. We need to have an attitude of gratitude. IN ALL THINGS we need to be thankful. Will such a change in our lives eliminate all the unfortunate circumstances that may be currently dragging us down? Absolutely... not. Those circumstances may be God's way of getting our attention. There may be growth in our lives that is to come out of those experiences. But developing an attitude of thankfulness can only improve the relationship that we have with our heavenly Father providing us with the joy and peace He promises that passes all (our) understanding.

An attitude of thankfulness is not just for this time of year. It should permeate our very being every day all year long. But as we look at the calendar, feel the change in temperature and prepare for the man-made designated holidays, let us remember to **be thankful TO HIM for all He has done**. After all, He died for us, saving us from our very selves, and gave us the opportunity to live a joyous life. The promise of eternity with Him is much more significant than this temporary life we live in this world.

Be thankful for Christ lives in you.