

LENEXA EDIFIER

“and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:32)

December 1, 2024

Understanding What to be Thankful For *in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)*

We are entering a portion of the year when people are drawn toward kindness and consideration of others. My concern and the goal of this writing is to remind us of the focus of our concern for both ourselves and others. Have we skimmed over the reading of this short verse and pronounce a general concept of thanksgiving that has no connection to what we are truly to be thankful for?

Let us look at the context of this verse and see what we are indeed for what we are to be thankful.

1. We are to be thankful for our leaders and mentors who labor among us, have charge over us and give us instruction.
2. We are to live in peace with one another, which implies a caring for each other such as Paul mentions in **Philippians 2:1-4**.
3. This is to be accomplished by admonishing the unruly, encouraging the fainthearted, helping the weak and showing patience to all.
4. Avoid vengeance against evil and seek the best for everyone.

Now, he comes to our verse which is a continuation of **Verses 16&17** telling us to Rejoice always, pray without ceasing and to be thankful for all these things because this is what God wants for us. He follows our verse with *Do not quench the Spirit; do not despise prophetic utterances. But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil. (1 Thessalonians 5:19-22)*.

Paul tells us there is a lifestyle God has chosen for His children (**1 John 3:1**). That lifestyle leads us to put spiritual concerns above all others here on earth (**See Colossians 3:1-4**). We are to be actively involved in spiritual activities as the focus, the main concern of our time here on earth (**Galatians 6:7,8**).

In order to do this we must have a daily reminder of just who we are and what we are about. That is

accomplished with daily prayer. *First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

(1 Timothy 2:1-4) And time spent in feeding on the word of God draws us closer to Him and the precepts He has chosen for our lives. *The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.*

(Psalm 19:7-8)

Much will be said and done in the name of Jesus over the next 30-40 days for the material needs of the homeless, the poor and those often neglected by society, and that is a good thing (**Matthew 25:31-46**). But Jesus did not come to the earth and die ignominiously on Calvary so we could all have an extra pair of shoes, or shoes at all. He died to provide a pathway of redemption from our sins (**Colossians 1:13,14**).

The world has a view of religion that is far afield from what is revealed by the Holy Spirit in the Bible. Jesus, the Master Teacher, who lived and died to teach us how to devote ourselves to carrying out the will of God, lived as a pauper, an itinerant teacher of God's will on this earth. Today, men who claim to be walking in His footsteps are some of the wealthiest men in society, living like kings as they promenade on television and radio spouting their misguided and erroneous version of the message of Jesus Christ.

Men and brethren, we are admonished by the apostle, who also suffered greatly for the cause of Christ, to give thanks always for these things he listed as everyday responsibilities we have as servants in the kingdom of Christ. We are not to be anxious about what we will wear, or eat. We need to understand that God has made

the lilies of the field more glorious in their appearance than the richest of all kings, Solomon himself. He will provide for the faithful to be able to sustain this life as we commit ourselves to the kingdom first and foremost trusting always in His love for us (**See Matthew 6:25-34**).

Be thankful to be useful and busy in the kingdom because you have a hope of an eternal inheritance.

Contemplating The Cross

David A Cox

*“Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there.” —
(Matthew 27:36).*

As Matthew describes the events surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus, he makes the statement in **Matthew 27:36** that describes the attitude the world had and maintains toward Christ and Him crucified. There are varied interests among the people who contemplate the suffering of Jesus. Due to the Passover, the city is filled with many people, and many are curious spectators. Some were close to the cross, and some were looking from afar. While some are mentioned by name, others are in groups, and they came to the crucifixion for different reasons to witness it. The spectators gathered to see the crucifixion of Jesus and the two criminals executed with Him. The attitudes of those gathered to witness the death of Jesus were very different. Let us consider the attitudes of those around the cross.

The Enemies. Among those watching were foes who had followed Him like wolves tracking their prey; they would never be satisfied until His blood was gone and His body was lifeless. These enemies of Jesus rejoiced at what appeared to be their greatest victory. Today, the enemies of the cross still watch the disciples of Christ and rejoice at the hardships and afflictions thrust upon them.

The Friends. Not every one that watched the awful scene of Jesus' crucifixion was an enemy; some were friends. The friends of Jesus were the smallest group in attendance on that day. It was a sad day for them. They were sympathetic friends who were not ashamed to be seen by others as those who loved Jesus. The multitudes who received healing from the Son of God were absent or would not stand with Jesus. The thousands whom Jesus had fed with loaves and fishes were not there. But a few devoted followers were

around on this occasion, and most seemed to be women.

The Spectators. Some spectators were indifferent about everything that was going on. It is probably a fact that the majority were neither friends nor foes, but just curious. They did not see this event as having real impact on them and their lives. But how wrong they were! Today, the majority of people fall into this category of people. They claim to be neither for Christ nor against Him. However, that is not true. Jesus said, *“He who is not with Me is against Me, he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad”* (**Matthew 12:30**).

What We Should See. As we look to Jesus on the cross, let us:

- See the dreadful nature and fruits of sin.
- See the amazing love of God to sinful men, a love that was so great *“that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life”* (**John 3:16**).
- See the examples of humility and patient love, as Jesus, the Son of God, *“endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God”* (**Hebrews 12:2**).

How do we contemplate the death of Jesus on the cross? As enemies? As friends who love Him? Or as careless, indifferent people? May we look to Him on the cross, consider Him, and let Him change us.

SOWING TO THE WIND

“For they sow wind, and they harvest a storm. The standing grain has no kernels; It yields no grain. If it were to yield, strangers would swallow it” (**Hosea 8:7**).

Self-reliant religion always brings disaster. A man-made calf always disappoints. A king chosen by popular vote will betray the trust of his electors. Seeking solace from foreigners will drive you to stronger allies. Cycles of unfaithfulness always result in a storm. Sowing to the wind can only produce a whirlwind. The trumpet has rung forth; the eagle (vulture?) circles overhead. Yet, God's people continued their journey to destruction.

Seeking an alternative to Jerusalem, King Jeroboam crafted his own shrines at Dan and Bethel, hoping to supplant God's throne. *“So, the king consulted, and*

made two golden calves, and he said to them, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold your gods, O Israel, that brought you up from the land of Egypt." He set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan" (1 Kings 12:28-30).

Hosea condemned these calves; Jehovah would not be joined to idols. *"The calf of Samaria"* would be destroyed; Israel would be punished. The Assyrians, God's agent of judgment, were close by. The supposed security of Mount Samaria was unfounded (**Amos 6:1**).

Political alliances and foreign policy aside, Hosea's greater lesson is that unfaithfulness to the Lord always brings ruin. The collective moral decay of God's people weakened their hearts and squashed their interest in obeying God. Individually, continuing a life of disobedience will spiral out of control. Just as invading armies would sweep the fields clean of grain, the devil will lie, cheat, flatter, and even quote scripture in his sinister desires to turn us away from God. The land of Israel continued in *"flagrant harlotry, forsaking the Lord" (1:2)*. Their hired lovers let them down.

The familiar words of George Santayana, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it," could apply to Israel. Building another calf recalls the early sin of God's people at Sinai (**Exodus 32**). **Psalms 106:19-20** says: *"They made a calf in Horeb and worshiped a cast metal image. So, they exchanged their glory for the image of an ox that eats grass."* Sadly, Israel continued to exchange God's glory for the inglorious glory of a man-made idol. One great danger of idolatry is that we become what we worship. No, we are not transformed corporally into a golden idol; more seriously, we cherish our idols in our hearts. Once enthroned, it is hard to get rid of them. *"Therefore speak to them and tell them, 'This is what the Lord God says: "Anyone of the house of Israel who sets up his idols in his heart, puts in front of his face the stumbling block of his wrongdoing, and then comes to the prophet, I the Lord will let Myself answer him in the matter in view of the multitude of his idols" (Ezekiel 14:4).* Israel became like a stubborn heifer (**10:11**).

The whirlwind of sin blinds. It fills our spiritual eyes with visions of success, riches, popularity, and status. Our eyes need to be wiped clean. And only Jesus can do that!

Randy Harshbarger

Soul Winner's Examination

- Yes No 1. I am presently, or have recently, discussed with a friend New Testament Christianity.
- Yes No 2. I have mailed out or given a tract to someone.
- Yes No 3. I have invited more than one to our services in the past month or so.
- Yes No 4. I have visited a new-comer to the congregation.
- Yes No 5. I have brought someone to one of our classes.
- Yes No 6. I have called and inquired about a brother or sister who has been absent from Bible classes.
- Yes No 7. I have made it a point to try and encourage a weaker brother or sister who is irregular in attendance.
- Yes No 8. I have entertained a friend or kin with the purpose of trying to interest them in the Lord's Church.
- Yes No 9. I have a prayer list of those I pray for that they might be saved.
- Yes No 10. I give at least 10% or more of my income to further the cause of Christ.
- Yes No 11. I write letters and send notes of cheer to those who need encouragement.
- Yes No 12. I try to set a goal of restoring a brother or sister with whom I have some influence and am always working with one special prospect in mind for baptism.
- Yes No 13. I firmly believe that to be saved I am committed to save others.

Review your "Yes" answers. Would you describe yourself as being "soul conscious?" Do you believe you are exerting as much influence for Jesus as He wants from His disciples? If you are satisfied with yourself, do you think Jesus is?

Review your "No" answers. Are there some ways you can begin today to do more for the Lord? Let us begin now to realize that the lost need to be saved and be about "Our Father's business!" -- (Author unknown)

Dear Readers, "Personal Evangelism" today wins more souls to Christ than any other known method. Try it. -- jdtant3@juno.com

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20)

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:00 Bible Study
Sunday A.M. 10:00 Assembled Worship
Sunday A.M. 10:50 Assembled Worship
Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

Visitors welcome

We conduct in home Bible Studies

We offer Correspondence Courses

OUR ADDRESS IS:

7845 Cottonwood Dr.
Lenexa, Kansas 66216
913-620-0563

Check out the following websites:
facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist
lenexachurchofchrist.org

Evangelist and Editor: Jim Stauffer

Elders:

Ron Peck
Jim Stauffer

Deacons:

Bill Miller
Troy Armstrong

NEWS AND NOTES:
PLEASE REMEMBER:
ALMA BAUMGARTNER, BROOKLYN BOYER,
DAVID AND JOANNE BECKLEY, WAYNE
MOODY, SHANE SCOTT, ELLIE GOLDSTON,
WINNIE RAWSON, GENE MCCLUNG, DALE
AND TRACY RICHARDSON, PAT MCLLOUD,
STEVE WIMP.

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS RON
PECK - 1 CORINTHIANS
WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS JIM
STAUFFER-ISAIAH

SERMON: A TICKET TO HEAVEN

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10