

Meditation: PRACTICING THANKSGIVING

*Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
– 1 Thessalonians 5:18*

God's salvation is meant to do far more than take care of our sin problem and guarantee us a place in Heaven. It is meant to revolutionize the way we live, especially in the area of thankfulness. Let's consider this verse as a lifelong assignment handed to us by God through the apostle Paul: "Give thanks in all circumstances."

In his letter to the Colossians, chapter 3, verses 15-17, Paul gives all sorts of directives for living the way God intends us to live. Notice the emphasis he places on thanksgiving:

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Thanksgiving is a discipline that can be perfected with practice. As good students, let's deliberately strive to give thanks in all circumstances until we reach the level we read about in James 1:2-4:

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.