

**11-12-17 Message**  
**HOW CAN WE GIVE THANKS IN EVERYTHING**

I Thessalonians 5:16 Rejoice evermore.

I Thessalonians 5:17 Pray without ceasing.

I Thessalonians 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

I Thessalonians 5:19 Quench not the Spirit.

I Thessalonians 5:20 Despise not prophesyings.

I Thessalonians 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

I Thessalonians 5:22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

I Thessalonians 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Today is what we call our Church Family Thanksgiving Sunday. We have a meal with our church family, not to conflict with your family Thanksgiving Holiday. However, let me remind you about a special communion service we have the Wednesday, the Eve of Thanksgiving. Jesus commanded us to partake of communion often in remembrance of Him. What better time to partake of the Lord's table than on the Eve of this great Holiday we call Thanksgiving.

At the Lord's table we give thanks to God for the greatest thing in our lives.. We give thanks and think back by way of remembrance on what Jesus did for us in his sacrificial death for our sins. So though today we are celebrating a church thanksgiving meal together, more important is the thanksgiving communion service that we will be celebrating together a few Wednesdays from now. Sad to say there probably will be far less people here for that service but let me remind you it is how we show thanks to Jesus by doing what he commanded us to do. HE SAID "DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME..."

This thanksgiving the number one thing we should be thankful for is what Jesus Christ has done for us. Without Christ we would be of all men most miserable. And I guess the reason so many people are miserable in this world and are doing miserable deeds is because they do not have Christ in their lives. I have never in my life seen people doing such horrific evil deeds. Senseless mass murders abound, moral decadence beyond description. On and on we can go. Why is the world lacking a spirit of thanksgiving?

Jesus put it this way.

John 3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

John 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Notice the Scripture says, that in our natural state we are under condemnation. We are sinners and as sinners we deserve the wrath of God. Jesus freed us from this condemnation and wrath that we deserve.

So when Jesus Christ purchased our salvation on the cross He paid the full price of our sin. What we deserved for violating God's law was satisfied in our Lord's work on the cross of Calvary.

If we understood just what that meant, how could we not be thankful to the Lord? That alone should be enough to fill us with thanksgiving. But there are many that are not thankful to God this thanksgiving.

Now think about it. Just based on what Jesus did for each of us today should be enough to give us plenty to be thankful for.

This morning I want to talk to you about how you can be thankful to the Lord in all things.

## **HOW CAN WE GIVE THANKS IN ALL THINGS**

Now consider our text this morning.

It is probably one of the greatest sweetest expressions of the kind of spirit that a true Christian should have in this present world.

Let's look at what it says,

I Thessalonians 5:16 Rejoice evermore.

I Thessalonians 5:17 Pray without ceasing.

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I Thessalonians 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now let us consider what Paul said and the statements that he makes within the context of declaring:

I Thessalonians 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

### **CONSIDER:**

#### ***1. I Thessalonians 5:16 Rejoice evermore.***

DO WE ALWAYS HAVE A SPIRIT OF REJOICING? Again, if you have everything that is important you should be able to rejoice.

The joy that the world gives is empty. Is there anything that can bring continual joy in this world.? The world is in a state of decay.

Today you might rejoice in that you bought a new car. Tomorrow, that car will be rusting and you will need a new one.

Can you rejoice evermore if you hit the lottery? Do you know that that one fellow (Stephen Paddock) that killed all those people in Las Vegas, won millions of dollars gambling, and was

still not happy. Do you think winning the lottery will cause you to rejoice? You think so, but it will not.

There is nothing in this world that can give you the ability to rejoice ever more!

The only way you can rejoice evermore is to have Jesus Christ in your life.

John 15:11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

So there is no way anyone can rejoice evermore without Christ.

Consider the next verse.

## ***2. I Thessalonians 5:17 Pray without ceasing.***

How can you pray without ceasing? What most people consider prayer it would be impossible to pray that way without ceasing.

Before I was saved, we were taught to pray by repeating words. Reciting things, Lord's prayer, Hail Mary, Rosaries. Now if this is prayer how can you pray without ceasing without being a recluse in a convent or something. This is not the kind of praying this passage has in mind.

Biblical prayer, is to be in a state of union or communication with God in your spirit.

Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Romans 8:27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

If Christ's spirit dwells in you, then in your Spirit there is constant communication with God.

I remember that when I was young my Grandfather, used to have a radio playing all night. I never could understand why he did that. All night it was on, and back then after a certain time it would just be noise because back then most stations stopped broadcasting after a certain hour. My Grandfather was not a Christian and I think it comforted him to have that sound all night long. But you know we have a spiritual radio station that comforts us which is far better than that noisy old radio. I think there is something deep down in side men that longs for a spiritual radio station to comfort them.

That missing station is the Holy Spirit of God.

To pray without ceasing is to be in constant communication with God by way of His Holy Spirit.

## ***3. I Thessalonians 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.***

Now this is the central text of our message since this is thanksgiving time.. But in order to give thanks for all things we need to understand the other truths that surrounds this verse. We will share what it means at the end of the message.

#### ***4. I Thessalonians 5:19 Quench not the Spirit.***

What does the word quench mean? It literally means to extinguish, or put out the fire. The Holy Spirit is likened to a fire in your heart and we should keep that fire burning.

If you quench the Spirit your communication with God will be disrupted and you will not experience the blessing of praying without ceasing.

What quenches the Spirit?

Sin will quench the Spirit of God.

What quenches the Spirit of God in you is the same thing that will grieve the Holy Spirit of God in you.

Ephesians 4:30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Ephesians 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

Ephesians 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Ephesians 5:1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

#### ***5. I Thessalonians 5:20 Despise not prophesyings.***

Prophesying and preaching are the same thing. Today there is no new prophecy, but we are just reiterating what has already been said.

Why would someone despise prophesying?

People despise things that don't set well with them.

Perfect example: Remember Ahab of Old when he didn't like the prophet Micaiah

In I Kings 22:7 and following we read that when Jehosophat asked is there was another prophet to ask advice of.. Ahab said there was one his name was Micaiah, but he despised the prophesying of Micaiah the prophet. Why did he despise it?

The Bible clearly tells us why.

I Kings 22:8 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.

Ahab said, he despised the prophesying of Micaiah, because he did not tell him what he wanted to hear. That is exactly what we have today, everyone wants to hear the message they want to hear they despise Prophesying.

Today prophesying is preaching the Bible, and telling it like it is with no respecter of persons. Let it fall where it will.

Peter put it this way.

II Peter 1:19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

II Peter 1:20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

II Peter 1:21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Prophesying today is none other than preaching and teaching the Scriptures.. There is no new revelation, but there are many applications. As the old expression goes, "IF THE SHOE FITS WEAR IT.. "

II Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

II Timothy 3:17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

Why did Ahab despise the prophesying of Micaiah? It was because he perceived that what he said did not show him in a very good light! Light exposes darkness. If there is sin in your life and the Bible corrects that sin, why are you surprised that when the preacher preaches what the Bible says, there are going to be people like Ahab that will dislike it. Maybe you don't like it for the same reason Ahab despised the prophesying of Micaiah!

Ahab despised Micaiah's preaching because it reproved him, it corrected him.. it was instructive .. it was trying to lead him in the way of righteousness. Micaiah's preaching was trying to bring Ahab to perfection. Ahab liked the way he was and did not want to be corrected. He did not want to repent of his sin. So he hated Micaiah, not he hated the Word of God. No he hated the Lord himself. How can you say you love God but you do not love His word?

You see there are a lot of people that want a preacher to just give a history lesson when he preaches. That is because they have the spirit of Ahab, which is a bad spirit.

Why is it surprising that people who despise prophesying or preaching lose a good spirit of thanksgiving?

Those who lose their Amen lose their thanksgiving also!

## **6. I Thessalonians 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.**

There are many people who just go with the flow of this world. That is wrong.

To prove all things means to examine it with the standards of Scripture.

There are a lot of people that think some things in this life do not need to be tested against Scripture. In other words what they think is that God does not care about your dress, your music, your activities, the little things of life. I mean what does God care about what you eat or what you drink or the details of life. There is only one problem with this contemporary idea, this new Christianity. The only problem with it is that it is wrong. Paul said so.

I Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

Just because some Christians do not live this way does not mean how they live is right. We are to prove all things. HOLD FAST TO THAT WHICH IS GOOD.

**7. *I Thessalonians 5:22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.***

Abstain from even the appearance of evil. In other words it may not be wrong but if it may appear to be wrong. If it is questionable abstain from doing it.

Why is it we live the I DON'T SEE ANYTHING WRONG WITH THAT LIFE.

Instead of, there are many that see it to be wrong and it is not worth appearing wrong, so I will give up my right to do that for the sake of my testimony.

Truth is what is more important your testimony or that little questionable thing you want to do in your life.

**8. *OUR GOAL SHOULD BE PERFECTION BEFORE THE LORD NOT EXCUSES.*  
*I Thessalonians 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

**9. *FINALLY, CONSIDER THE THEME VERSE OF THE MESSAGE IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS.***

***I Thessalonians 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.***

Now the message: How Can We Give Thanks In Everything?

Since this is our annual church thanksgiving service I thought it appropriate to speak on the subject of giving thanks. The questions is, how do you give thanks in all things when certainly there are many things in this life you don't feel you can give thanks for? In other words how in the world do you give thanks to God in a world that is haywire and out of control?

I Thessalonians 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

How can we give thanks in everything.

Imagine the Pilgrims who celebrated the first thanksgiving in this country. They traveled from England and that winter about 1/2 of them died and did not make it through the first year in the new land. After the first harvest, with there being 47 funerals that year, 47 freshly dug graves at Plymouth, they gave thanks to God! 47 of the 102 settlers died that first year.

Think of those poor people in Texas celebrating thanksgiving this year. Imagine 26 dead and 20 wounded. Yet this verse is relevant to them as well as to us all.

IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS. The only way you can do this is by believing that this is not all there is. This life is not all that there is! Also you are not giving thanks to men, or their sinful deeds but you are not letting the sin and sinners of this world detract from the glory of our Lord that deserves all praise and thanks.

The only way to give thanks is to believe by faith that the Lord is in control and going to work all things for good.

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Remember, there is absolutely nothing that can be done to you or that you can go through in this life that negates the goodness that the Lord has done for you.

What is the opposite of Thanks?

The opposite is to be angry, hateful, bitter, spiteful, proud, arrogant.

Why are people not thankful? People are not grateful because they they think they deserve more, or they deserve whatever blessings they have, or they are angry about what has happened to them. How does this change who the Lord is and the thanks he deserves for what he has done for you?

Like I preached last week.

DOES THE DISBELIEF OF SOME NEGATE THE FAITH OF GOD? NO NO NO!

Romans 3:3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

WE CAN SAY, DO EVIL THINGS THAT COME YOUR WAY NEGATE THE WORTHINESS OF GIVING THANKS TO GOD?

SO IN ALL THINGS GIVE THANKS.

What if some things happen in your life that are evil? Not all things that happen to us are good, so how can you thank God in these cases?

The verse does not say to give thanks for evil. It is saying don't let the evil things that happen to you keep you from thanking God.

I am not thankful for sickness, but I am thankful for the God who can see me through the dark times of sickness in my life.

I am not thankful for death, but I can thank God who has defeated death and someday will give us a resurrected body and re-union with loved ones who have gone before us.

I am not thankful for the horrific deed done to those poor people at the First Baptist Church in Texas, but I am thankful that God is able somehow to bring good out of a bad situation.

What horrible thing can be done to you or that you can go through that will negate the thank worthiness of God? NOTHING.

Romans 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Romans 8:36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Romans 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Romans 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

Romans 8:39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

So yes as a Christian, in all things we can give thanks.

In every circumstance of life we can give thanks.

Through every difficulty of this life we can give thanks.

If you are his child He wants you to have this joy, He wants you to have a spirit of thanksgiving. Why would you allow anything in this life rob you of that?

SO WE CAN SAY:

I Thessalonians 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.