Coronavirus Social Distancing Daily Devotion #13

Praise & Thanksgiving

**1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NASB)** 18  “*in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus*.”

Many years ago, I knew a man who was famous for making the statement, “We have a lot to be thankful for.” That statement made a huge impact in my life and still does today. There is not a day that goes by that I am not reminded about how important it is to be thankful.

The truth is our minds naturally focus on the negative. This varies from person to person in its intensity, but basically every human mind tends to be negative. That is due to our sinfulness. Sadly, as a result of negativity, the mind breeds many hurtful things. It causes people to be frustrated and irritated. It causes people to say things that are not uplifting and helpful. It causes us to do things and react to things and people in ways that are not good. It brings people down to a lower level instead of lifting people up to a level that is healthier.

Knowing about our sinful tendency to be negative, our Lord commands us to be thankful, to give thanks for the things that He has blessed us with and even for the things we don’t understand. He commands us to be thankful because He knows that is what is best for us. In fact, it is His will for us.

If you have ever wondered what God’s will for your life is, this is it partially. There are other statements in the Bible that speak directly to the will of God for our lives, but this one is the one we should focus on daily. You might be thinking that there are so many things to be negative about especially now as so many people are being affected by this virus. Businesses are suffering and lives are being lost. And anyone who is honest could agree with that. However, the Lord doesn’t want us to stay in an attitude of negativity. He wants us to enjoy and be blessed with the provision or provisions He gives.

As we are experiencing so much negativity right now, I want to encourage each of us to turn the negativity into thankfulness.

 To help your thoughts about what to be thankful for, I want to share a daily devotion I like to use, called, The Valley of Vision. This was written by some Puritans many years ago as a collection of writings to encourage people to focus on the joys of being a child of God.

This devotion is titled, “Praise and Thanksgiving. “ *O my God, Thou fairest, greatest, first of all objects, my heart admires, adores, loves thee, for my little vessel is as full as it can be, and I would pour out all that fullness before thee in ceaseless flow. When I think upon and converse with thee, ten thousand delightful thoughts spring up, then a thousand sources of pleasure are unsealed, ten thousand refreshing joys spread over my heart, crowding into every moment of happiness. I bless thee for the soul thou hast created, for adorning it, sanctifying it, though it is fixed in barren soil; for the body thou hast given me, for preserving its strength and vigor, for providing senses to enjoy delights, for the ease and freedom of my limbs, for hands, eyes, ears that do thy bidding; for thy royal bounty providing my daily support, for a full table and overflowing cup, for appetite, taste, sweetness, for social joys (even distant ones) of relatives and friends, for ability to serve others, for a heart that feels sorrows and necessities, for a mind to care for my fellow men, for opportunities of spreading happiness around, for loved ones in the joys of heaven, for my own expectation of seeing thee clearly. I love thee above the powers of language to express for what thou art to thy creatures. Increase my love, O my God, through time and eternity*.”

Beloved, I pray today you will be thankful for all you see and all you do not see. And if you cannot find anything to be thankful for, be thankful that your names are written in heaven and that you have a home waiting for you there. “We have a lot to be thankful for”, wouldn’t you agree?