

The Azimuth Institute

Directional Study Notes

11/26/15

Why Give Thanks?

Text: Psalm 35:18

Opening Illustration: Out West, a cowboy was driving down a dirt road, his dog riding in back of the pickup truck and his faithful horse in the trailer behind. He failed to negotiate a curve and had a terrible accident. Sometime later, a highway patrol officer came on the scene. An animal lover, he saw the horse first. He quickly realized the serious nature of its injuries; he drew his pistol and put the animal out of his misery. He walked around the accident and found the dog, also hurt critically. He couldn't bear to hear it whine in pain, so he ended the dog's suffering as well. Finally he located the cowboy --who suffered multiple fractures--off in the weeds. "Hey, are you okay?" the cop asked. The cowboy took one look at the smoking gun in the trooper's hand and quickly replied, "Never felt better!"

The psalmist said in Psalm 35:18, *"I will give you thanks in the great congregation: I will praise you among much people."*

The Bible encourages and commands the people of God to give thanks to Him.

There is something about the grateful heart that brings pleasure and satisfaction to the heart of God.

Cf. I Th. 5:18

This verse clearly tells us that it is the will of God that His people give thanks to Him.

It says, *"In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."*

I find the next verse very interesting.

Cf. v.19

The Three "G's"

Yet, so many people grumble, groan and gripe.

Illustration: Mark Twain once said, "Don't complain and talk about all your problems--80 percent of people don't care; the other 20 percent will think you deserve them."

In truth, to grumble, groan and gripe quenches Spirit of God.

The word “quench” means “to go out.”

That means that He cannot be as effective in our lives as He would want to be.

Ultimately Against God

Ultimately, all complaining is against God.

Cf. Num. 16:1-35

Present Progressive

Back to 1 Th. 5:18

Notice the word “give” in this verse.

It is in the “present progressive” tense which means that it should not be an occasional act, but a way of life.

In other words, giving God thanks is to be an ongoing and continual thing.

Four Reasons to Give Thanks

So, what are some reasons why are we to give thanks unto the Lord?

1. It Pleases the Lord (1 Thess.5:18).

1Th 5:18 *“in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”*

The practice of giving thanks to the Lord is clearly His divine will.

God is pleased when we do what He desires us to do in regard to any matter.

1 Samuel 15:22 *And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*

It delights God when we appreciate Him enough to give Him thanks.

2. It Proclaims Our Gratitude.

Cf. Luke 17:11-17

The sad thing is that only one of them came back to thank the Lord for the miracle of their cleansing.

One out of ten is 10 %.

Illustration: Why did only one cleansed leper return to thank Jesus? The following are nine suggested reasons why the nine did not return:

One waited to see if the cure was real.

One waited to see if it would last.

One said he would thank Jesus later.

One decided that he never really had leprosy anyway.

One said that he would have gotten better eventually anyway.

One gave the glory to the priests.

One said, "O, well, Jesus didn't really do anything."

One said, "Any rabbi could have done it."

One said, "I was already feeling better."

God forbid that God should give us so much and we not express our gratitude.

Side Note: I believe that something happens in our lives when we are not grateful.

Cf. Rom. 1:21-22

3. It Provokes Others.

I do not mean to "provoke" in a bad sense.

Heb. 10:24 says "*we are to consider one another and to provoke one another to love and good works.*"

The word "*provoke*" in that verse has the idea of inciting or stirring up others to do what is right.

When you are thankful it is contagious: it will catch on and others will be.

4. It Produces Contentment.

As we are thankful to God for what He has given us.

1 Tim 6:6 *Now godliness with contentment is great gain.*

Concluding Illustration: Scottish minister Alexander Whyte was known for his uplifting prayers in the pulpit. He always found something for which to be grateful. One Sunday morning the weather was so gloomy that one church member thought to himself, “Certainly the preacher won’t think of anything for which to thank the Lord on a wretched day like this.” Much to his surprise, however, Whyte began by praying, “We thank Thee, O God, that it is not always like this.”