

2020.11.29 Thanksgiving Sunday Sermon <Three Thanksgivings>

Psalm 118:28 - 29

²⁸ *You are my God, and I will praise you; you are my God, and I will exalt you.*

²⁹ *Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.*

1 Thessalonians 5:18

¹⁸ *give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

Happy Thanksgiving to everyone. 2020 has been a difficult and challenging year for all of us.

The Church of Thessalonians were also facing many difficulties and through Paul the Lord provided message shown on chapter 5. I hope the same message shown on 1 Thessalonians chapter 5 can encourage all of us today.

1. Give Thanks in Everything

- What does "give thanks in everything" mean? It means, give thanks for what you have right now. In average, humans breath 23,000 times in one day. What we fail to remember is that every breath we take should not be taken for granted.
- **Story of Working Mom**
When the alarm bell rings loudly in the morning, she is thankful that she is able to hear.
When the sun was shining towards the bed, she is thankful that she is able to see.
When she want to sleep-in few more minutes, she is thankful that she is able to stand on her two feet.
When every morning is like a war zone with kids, she is thankful she has a family.
When the breakfast may not be fancy, she is thankful that she has food on the table.
When her daily work can be tedious, she is thankful she has a job.
She is thankful for the life the Lord provided her.
- **Mathew 25:21**
²¹ *"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'*

Let us all be thankful to the Lord for what we have and what we may have been taking for granted. Even with a difficult and challenging year, let us all give thanks and look forward to the new year.

2. Give Thanks in All Circumstances

- There are different variations to this verse 18 , and the word "circumstances" can also translate into the "environment".
- The image shown on the screen is a painting of the first Thanksgiving the pilgrims had together in fall of 1621. *"We crossed the Atlantic and lost many friends. But God has given us more than we expected. Thank God for your grace and give you the first fruits."*

The environment for first pilgrims was challenging and difficult. They lost so many of their friends and families - at one point there were more grave sites than houses built. Similarly, we are faced with challenging environment where so many lives were taken due to the virus. However, just like the pilgrims gave thanks to the Lord... let us also give thanks even with the circumstances were are in right now.

- **Psalm 50:14 - 15**
¹⁴ *"Sacrifice thank offerings to God, fulfill your vows to the Most High,*
¹⁵ *and call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me."*

- The Lord sees us, and knows what we are currently going through. Just as the Lord was with Job, He is with us right now. Let us all give thanks and praise to the Lord even if we are faced with difficulties.
- **Story of Widow with Four Children after the Korean War**
 During this period, it was a challenge to put food on the table.
 When there was no rice, she found potatoes to feed the children and gave thanks to the Lord.
 When there were no potatoes, she found corns to feed the children and gave thanks to the Lord.
 When there were no corns, she found wheat and made porridge to feed the children and gave thanks to the Lord.
 When there were no wheat, she and her children fasted and gave thanks to the Lord.

3. Give Thanks in Christ Jesus

- As we look back to the 1 Thessalonians 5:18, it says "*give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*" In King James version, it says "in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for (concerning) you.

Give thanks because of Jesus Christ. If there is nothing to be thankful for right now in this circumstance, give thanks for Jesus who died on the cross for all of us and our sins.

- When we look at Philippians 4:4 and 4:6, the Lord sees and hears all of our prayers...He will not forget us. So give thanks to the Lord and Jesus.

Philippians 4:4

⁴ *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!*

Philippians 4:6

⁶ *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

- When we give thanks to the Lord and Jesus...He will provide us with peace.

Philippians 4:7

⁷ *And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

- When we give thanks to the Lord and Jesus...He will provide us with strength.

Philippians 4:13

¹³ *I can do all this through him who gives me strength.*

- When we give thanks to the Lord and Jesus...He will provide us with riches.

Philippians 4:19

¹⁹ *And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.*

- **Story of Father and Son**

The son had a school homework which was to complete a house chore for a week. He decided to polish his father's shoes every morning and receive \$1. In order to finish the homework and receive his allowance, he was very diligent. One morning, the son took full hour to polish the father's shoes. When the father gave \$1, the son said this time it is free. He told the father, I am thankful to have a father. As the father headed to work, his heart was filled with joy. I am sure Our Lord and Jesus Christ will feel the same way when we give thanks.

- **Story of Mr. K**

Mr. K never showed emotions to his family. One Sunday, he decided to say thank you to his wife. Once he arrived home, he held his wife's hands and said..."Thank you and I love you." When he said these words,

he couldn't even look at his wife's face. The wife responded..."What is wrong with you saying things you never say?"

If we want to find joy in life, let us continuously give thanks and make it a habit. Where ever we may be - when we wake up, while we work, as we head home...let us keep giving thanks as often as we can.

In Summary

1. Give thanks in what you have now
2. Give thanks in adversity
3. Give thanks in Christ Jesus

Prayer

*When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed, When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings name them one by one, And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.*