

Thankful For It All

(1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Introduction

A) In May 1940, the Nazis invaded the Netherlands. They imposed many restriction on the Dutch people. Among the Dutch was the Ten Boom family. They were Christians.

Casper Ten Boom was a devoted reader of the Old Testament and understood that the Jews were God's chosen people. After the Nazi invasion, the the Ten Booms eventually became involved in the Dutch underground hiding refugees.

In 1944, a Dutch informant told the Nazis about the Ten Booms' work. They were arrested and sent to prison. Corrie and Betsie Ten Boom were transferred to Nazi concentration camps finally landing in Ravensbruck, a women's labor camp in Germany. There they held worship services, after the hard days at work, using a Bible that they had managed to sneak in.

During the dark days of WWII, Corrie ten Boom was reminded by her sister Betsy to give thanks for the fleas in their Nazi prison barrack. Corrie initially refused. She couldn't find anything thankful for the irritating bites of fleas. Finally, Corrie decided to mutter her gratitude to God. Weeks passed as Corrie and Betsy conducted Bible studies without interruption from the SS guards. Months later Corrie discovered that the flea infestation was the tool God used to keep the execution guards from entering their barrack.

What she first considered to be an insufferable nuisance was actually God's instrument of protection. We can give thanks in all circumstances and at all times because God works all things together for our good and His glory.

B) The Bible says, "In everything give thanks" and that includes fleas.

C) Contextualize 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

D) The purpose of this message is to cause you to recognize that thanksgiving should be more than an annual event, but rather a daily activity.

I. The Scope of our Thanksgiving

Principle: *No matter your circumstance in life, you are to thank God for who he is and what he has done.*

- A) Thankful during the good and during the difficult
- B) Thankful during times of plenty and times of lack
- C) Thankful when you feel thankful and when you don't

II. The Development of a Thankful Spirit

Principles: *Thanksgiving is a spiritual attitude that must be cultivated regularly.*

- A) Thankful for salvation (2 Corinthians 4:15)
- B) Express thanks regularly (1 Corinthians 14:16)
- C) Live a spirit-filled life (Ephesians 5:18-20)
- D) Understand God's sovereign care (Romans 8:28)

Note: The potential for ungratefulness exists in every believer.

III. Thanksgiving And Our Spiritual Condition

Principle: *Judge your spirituality, not by outward activities, but inward attitudes of the heart.*

- A) Joy (5:16)
- B) Prayer (5:17)
- C) Thanksgiving (5:18)

IV. The Benefits of Thanks-living

- A) Soothes our spirit
- B) Adjusts our attitude (battles selfishness)
- C) Strengthens our testimony

Conclusion.

What should I do now?

- Determine to become intentionally thankful
- Determine to be thankful in ALL things
- Thank Him for His grace and your circumstance NOW.