

## Thanksgiving

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

We first meet the Thessalonians in Acts chapter 17 in which Paul and Silas share Christ, yet are persecuted and ran off. Paul later sends Timothy back to check on them. Timothy reports to Paul that the church there is thriving. Paul responds with a letter of thanksgiving filled with several prayers. In 1 Thessalonians Paul writes these prayers to the church and encourages them to continue in their Christ-Centered life. In 1 Thessalonians chapter 5, we see a prayer to instruct them in the hope of Christ. In verses 16-18, we see a great formula for thanksgiving.

**Rejoice in God's Mercies (1 Thess. 5 :16)** When are we to rejoice? Always! What are somethings that you can rejoice in? You may not be healthy, wealthy, or even wise, but if you're in Christ, you have everything! Psalm 113:1-9 "Praise the Lord! Praise, O servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord! Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and forevermore! From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the Lord is to be praised! The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens! Who is like the Lord our God, who is seated on high,"

**Request God's Movement (1 Thess. 5:17)** How often are we to pray? Constantly! Prayer is the instrument God has designed for our good and His pleasure! Verses 16 and 17 sound very much like the verses in Philippians 4:4-7 "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. 5 Let your reasonableness[d] be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

**Reflect Upon God's Miracles (1 Thess. 5:18)** How often are we to give thanks? In everything! Thank God in every circumstance! Even in the worst of times or the best of times, thank God! If gratitude for Christ is the mark of a true believer than the lack of gratitude is the mark of an unbeliever.

In Psalm 9:1-2, David reflected upon God's miracles through thanks. Listen to what he did. ***"I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds. 2 I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High."***

- a. Thanksgiving requires the whole heart (Psalms 9:1a) "I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart..."
- b. Thanksgiving recognizes God's blessings (Psalms 9:1b) "I will recount all of your wonderful deeds."
- c. Thanksgiving rejoices In God's Glory (Psalms 9:2) "I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High."

You either have thankfulness for God and His blessings, or you'll complain about what you do not have. You are either a microscope or a telescope! A. microscope takes something very small and makes it bigger! People are really small in comparison to God, yet we try to make ourselves seem bigger. We complain, gripe, and become depressed. When we make much of us, we give little or no praise to God and little or no praise to those around us! Those are the microscopes of life! We all know microscopes. B. The second person is a telescope. A telescope takes something big and draws it closer to see. You as a professing Christian are being watched. You can either draw people closer to the majesty of Christ by giving Him thanks, or push people away with your microscope by making much of yourself! Draw them in closer to Christ! Reflect on the bigness of God! Show Him, magnify him! Live a life of thanksgiving to God by:

Rejoicing in God's Mercies

Requesting God's Movement

Reflecting Upon God's Miracles