

In Everything Give Thanks

✘ A grateful heart is one of the characteristics of kingdom living. Unfortunately, giving thanks is one of the greatest deficits in the body of Christ.

In the first chapter of Romans, we find that God judged certain individuals because they did not acknowledge the God of heaven, nor were they grateful (see Rom. 1:21). God was angry with them because they continued to gripe about their surroundings and “lack” while choosing to remain distant from Him.

Complaining about ordinary (or extraordinary) problems in life is natural, especially when it upsets our ideal of comfort. Being uncomfortable causes us to insist on our own way, inferring that God doesn’t know what is best for us.

Certainly we must pray about such things and give the reins of our lives into His hands, but we must also assume a posture of gratefulness in the process, even when we don’t understand His ways. As the Lord spoke to the prophet Isaiah, “‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,’ declares the Lord” (Is. 55:8, NIV).

The way God thinks is way beyond our ability to grasp. Be that as it may, if we apply our hearts to wisdom and seek His face, the Holy Spirit will reveal the heart of God, for the Spirit searches the hearts and knows the deep things of God (see 1 Cor. 2:10).

A definite way to experience the blessing of God is to give thanks in all things. In 1 Thessalonians 5:18, Paul did not say, “For everything you must feel grateful.” That would be ridiculous and humanly impossible. But in every situation it is possible to choose an attitude of thanksgiving.

It is possible to rejoice in suffering for the sake of God’s

kingdom and count it all joy when we encounter various trials of faith (see James 1:2). Giving thanks is neither a denial mechanism nor an intended escape from reality.

We are seated with Christ in heavenly places and His plan is for us to look down upon our circumstances and no longer live under them (see Eph. 2:6). We must see things from God's point of view, changing our philosophy of life to fit the faith we confess. Our position is secured through the act of giving thanks to God through Christ Jesus.