



IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS

There are a number of times when bad things happen to you that you do not feel like giving thanks. For instance, when you get laid off, the Bible tells us that we are to give thanks. Another example would be if your house caught fire and everything was destroyed, we are to give thanks. Another example would be when you are falsely accused and thrown into prison, you are to give thanks.

All of these examples may seem extreme, but for many each of these have happened.

We sing a song taken from:

1 Thessalonians 5:16-20

- 16 Rejoice evermore.
- 17 Pray without ceasing.
- 18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.
- 19 Quench not the Spirit.
- 20 Despise not prophesyings.

Chorus

In everything give thanks:
 for this is the will of God
 In everything give thanks:
 for this is the will of God
 In everything give thanks:
 for this is the will of God
 In Christ Jesus concerning you.

Rejoice evermore
 for this is the will of God
 Rejoice evermore
 for this is the will of God
 Rejoice evermore

for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Pray without ceasing.
 for this is the will of God
 Pray without ceasing.
 for this is the will of God
 Pray without ceasing.
 for this is the will of God
 in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Quench not the Spirit
 for this is the will of God
 Quench not the Spirit
 for this is the will of God
 Quench not the Spirit
 for this is the will of God
 in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Despise not prophesyings
 for this is the will of God
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 for this is the will of God
 Despise not prophesyings
 for this is the will of God
 in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians so the saints would know how to handle adversity by giving thanks. The first century apostles knew all about adversity. They were imprisoned, beaten, boiled in oil, and even crucified. In all of this they continued to praise the Lord and give thanks.

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Acts 12:1-25

1 Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church.

2 And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

3 And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.)

4 And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.

5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

6 And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison.

7 And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.

8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

9 And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.

10 When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.

11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the LORD hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out

of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

12 And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.

13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda.

14 And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate.

15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel.

16 But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished.

17 But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.

18 Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter.

19 And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that they should be put to death. And he went down from Judaea to Caesarea, and there abode.

20 And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's country.

21 And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them.

22 And the people gave a shout, saying, It is

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the voice of a god, and not of a man.

23 And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.

24 But the word of God grew and multiplied.

25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.

When you read this, James the brother of John was already executed, and Herod was looking to do the same to Peter.

From Easton's 1897 Bible Dictionary [easton]:

Quaternion

a band of four soldiers. Peter was committed by Herod to the custody of four quaternions, i.e., one quaternion for each watch of the night (Acts 12:4). Thus every precaution was taken against his escape from prison. Two of each quaternion were in turn stationed at the door (12:6), and to two the apostle was chained according to Roman custom.

In this era of severe persecution, the apostles knew that if they gave thanks even in contrary circumstances, that the situation would not seem as bad. Peter thought the Lord's angel was a vision until he was actually out of jail. Imagine being chained between two guards and any movement would likely wake the guards.

Instead of crying and complaining about the situation, the apostles talked about joy when they fell into diverse temptations.

James 1:2

2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

James along with the other apostles considered it a privilege when they were attacked and abused by the world.

1 Peter 3:14-18

14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

17 For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

It is easy to exhibit praise when all is going well, but when contrary situations arise in the course of this life, that is the time when being thankful in all things really count. Jesus was convicted, tried, and condemned to death upon the cross for our sins. He took our place and punishment so when we are tried, we should thank him for his great grace.

Also every time Rita and I have had a trial, the Lord always provided a way and a better situation in the end. Jesus never failed us. When you give praise for the trials, there are marvelous methods that the Lord uses to bring you through.

The apostles knew what they were talking about when they said in everything give thanks.

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