

Living a Thankful Life

Colossians 3:15-17

Dr. Jim Cecy

Introduction:

"In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (I Thessalonians 5:18)

Regarding thankfulness in Colossians 1:3, 12; 2:7, 3:15, 16, 17; 4:2

A thankful life begins with a thankful heart — an attitude of gratitude!

Colossians 3:15-17 "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."

Key #1 Letting the Peace of Christ Rule in Us Daily

Colossians 3:15 "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body..."

What is the Peace of Christ?

1. It's the peace we find in the person of Jesus Christ.
Ephesians 2:14 "For He Himself is our peace..." (i.e. "The Prince of Peace")
2. It's the peace we receive when we trust in Christ.
Romans 5:1 "Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ..."
3. It's the peace the world can never offer.
John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful."
4. It's the peace we can never fully understand
Philippians 4:7 "And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
5. It's the peace that assures us that God is in control of the details of our lives.
Hebrews 3:5 "I will never desert you nor will I ever forsake you."
6. It's the peace we need to rule our lives.
Colossians 3:15 "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body..."
Greek: *brabeuo* = rule/act like a referee or umpire

The evidence of a heart filled with the peace of Christ is...THANKFULNESS (Colossians 3:15"...and be thankful.")

Key #2 Letting the Word of Christ Dwell in Us Richly

Colossians 3:16 "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another..."

The word of Christ is the direct revelations of God (i.e. Word of God)

2 Timothy 2:15 "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth."

Colossians 3:15 "richly dwell within us..." = "dwell" = Greek: *enoikeo* = to inhabit/make it's home in our hearts

Philippians 2:16 "...holding fast (Greek: *epecho* = retaining/taking hold of) the word of life..."

Psalms 119:11 "Your word I have TREASURED (Hebrew: hidden/covered up like a treasure) in my heart, that I may not sin against You."

When the Word of Christ is richly dwelling within us, it easily flows out from us!

Colossians 3:16 "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

The evidence of a heart filled with the Word of Christ is...THANKFULNESS

Colossians 3:16 "...with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness (Greek: charis = grace) in your hearts to God."

"...with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

The work of God deep within our lives should show up on the outside as we sing to God with thankfulness in our hearts.

"A heart in tune with God can't help but sing His praises."

Key #3 Letting the Character of Christ Influence Us Thoroughly

Colossians 3:17a "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."

"in the name of the Lord Jesus" = to act as His representative/serve as an ambassador/say and do what is consistent with Christ's character, values, authority and will...that which reflects his life and character.

Our Internal Rule of Life

Colossians 3:17 "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus..."

1 Corinthians 10:31 "Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

The evidence of a heart filled with the life of Christ is...THANKFULNESS

"...giving thanks through Him (i.e. the Lord Jesus Christ) to God the Father." Colossians 3:17

The fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) whose goal it is to make us like Jesus (2 Cor. 3:18) wants it to be a process that is bathed in gratefulness — a grateful love...a praise-filled joy...a thankful peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Concluding Challenge:

"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos into order, and confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow." ~Melody Beattie, May You Be Blessed

Our Life Goal

A prevailing thankfulness even in the midst of life's challenges

James 1:2 "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials..."

Colossians 3:17 "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father." (Colossians 3:17)

See you next time...

Prayer Requests:



Growth Group Homework

For the week of November 4, 2012

SERMON SERIES: COLOSSIANS
Message Title: "Living A Thankful Life"

Dr. Jim Cecy
November 4, 2012

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. This week Pastor Jim shared three keys to living a thankful life. Do you know anyone who oozes thankfulness? How has this person's attitude and demeanor impacted you?
2. When she was a teenager, Joni Eareckson Tada fractured her vertebrae diving into Chesapeake Bay, becoming paralyzed from the shoulders down. Years later she told a friend that she disciplined herself to "give thanks in all things" (1Thes. 5:18) until it became a reflex reaction. Do you think that expressing gratitude is a discipline? Please explain.

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DIGGING DEEPER

3. Read Romans 1:18-25. In verse 21, what is listed as the first step in the descent into foolish and futile thinking? Does this surprise you? What are some of the results of ingratitude mentioned in this passage?

4. It's easy to feel gratitude yet never get around to expressing it. Read the story of the ten lepers cleansed by Jesus in Luke 17:11-19. Why do you think nine of the men did not return to thank Jesus? Why do you think the Samaritan man did?

5. In the sermon we heard about the legend of two angels sent to earth to gather up the prayers of men. They found many requests, but very little thanksgiving. How would you describe the overall makeup of your prayers? Do you spend much time thanking God, even for the challenging circumstances in your life? (Phil. 4:4-7)

6. What does it mean to let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts (Col. 3:15)?

7. In Colossians 3:16, Paul talks about teaching one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. What is the importance of singing? (See also Eph. 5:19-20.)

TAKING IT HOME

8. In every situation of life we can choose to look at the positive or the negative. We can find a reason to be thankful, or we can find a reason to complain. How are you doing with God's command to "give thanks in all things?" What was the last difficult circumstance you thanked Him for?

9. What main point are you going to take away from the sermon this week?