

THE GIVING OF THANKS

2/3/14

Trials are good for us, but we understandably, still prefer the concept of blessing and receiving. When trouble strikes we all know how to pray and be diligent, but it is during the good times that our survival is determined... not during the bad. Far too much comfort with so little genuine needs, leaves many church members struggling to live up to their achievable potential... many are like huge trees that have never faced the reality of drought or wind... when tested they quickly wither and risk perishing. This world will fail, because those with the blessing will forget the source of their comfort and instead of giving thanks to God, they will break down the very structure and values that brought them their blessing in the first place.

The time at the end... **2TIM 3:1** This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. **2** For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, **unthankful, unholy**, This is the product of ungrateful and forgetful people, who enjoy the creation far more than the creator. They are rich in worldliness and poor in spirituality, even denying God in the process.

It is hard for the rich to be spiritually aware and safe. **MAR 10:23** And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that **have riches** enter into the kingdom of God! **24** And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that **trust in riches** to enter into the kingdom of God! **Let's define what it is to be rich...** In our western world, even the poor have far greater effective assets and benefits than nearly all the wealthy people of the past ever enjoyed. Consider the abundance of food and energy (heating, cooling, rapid access to almost all human essentials and luxuries), modern medicine and surgical abilities (hearing aids, glasses, prosthetics and an amazing array of assisting devices for nearly every human condition). Education and communication abilities unlike anything ever imagined even fifty years ago. Mobile phones, computers, worldwide connectability, satellite navigation, air travel and even the modern motor car have made us all richer in ability and opportunity, than almost all who have existed outside of the age of technology.

Why do we need God, when almost every human need or want can be attended to by technology or government agencies? This is what causes the failure of all successful generations... they forget how to call upon God and also forget how to give thanks for the blessings, that give them so much comfort in their lives. The history of biblical Israel is always filled such disasters. When in trouble they called on God and once blessed they gradually forgot to thank God... so it is today. **1TIM 6:9** But they that **will be rich (minded)** fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

Many prayers are not answered and many miss out on true blessing because they treat God and the church like a government service rather than a father and family... only calling on him when they need him rather than being continuous in thanksgiving. **JAM 4:3** Ye ask, and receive not, because ye **ask amiss**, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Interrupting our lives to call upon God is a failed way to live... we need to be living for God first of all and more than all... only interrupting that when no other options are available. **REV 3:17** Because thou sayest, I am **rich**, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: This is the prophesied status of those who fail to appreciate and practice thanksgiving... an essential and lifesaving act for those who live in comfortable times.

Examples of people who failed to remain thankful for what God had done for them... **LUK 8:14** And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and **riches** and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to perfection. The parable of the sower identifies the thankless... a lack of integrity. **LUK 17:17** And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine? **18** There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. **19** And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole. *One out of ten lepers came back to offer thanks (this was a real event, not a parable).*

Giving of thanks... **ACT 27:35** And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave **thanks** to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat. *During the storm in the ship.* Also **1COR 14:16** Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of **thanks**, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? *Using the gifts is a form of thanksgiving.* Also **2COR 9:11** Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us **thanksgiving** to God. **12** For the administration of this service (*giving seed to the sower v10*) not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many **thanksgivings** unto God; also opens our eyes to do the Lord's work, as they are actions of a thankful and giving heart.

First of all... **1TIM 2:1** I exhort therefore, that, **first of all**, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and **giving of thanks**, be made for all men; Also **COL 4:2** Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with **thanksgiving**;

We need to learn to give thanks and keep giving thanks regardless of our lifestyle or situation. Without God, we would have nothing: no food, no clothing, no friends, not even life itself... That is why the giving of thanks is one of the most essential disciplines any Christian can learn to master. Be thankful that you can even understand this presentation, let alone be given time and opportunity to exercise it. No matter what... Yet will I rejoice and give thanks in the Lord.