



I'm Forever Grateful

Pastor Larry Vriezelaar | November 22, 2020 | First Congregational Church

1 Thessalonians 5:18...*Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

The Lord says: *Give thanks to me, for I am good. My love endures forever.*

Each of us should set aside time to think about the many blessings God has provided for us. The gift of life...Everyday provisions...food and water, shelter, clothing, and so on. But the greatest gift of all is the everlasting life for everyone who knows Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Jesus says that *He is the light of the world.* His love for you will go on and on...throughout eternity.

Regardless of what is happening in your life Jesus is close to His followers. So, don't worry about whether or not you can sense His presence. Simply trust that He is with you and find comfort in His unfailing love.

God wants us to enjoy fully the good things He gives to us. The best way to do that is to live in the present, refusing to worry about tomorrow. Since you don't know what tomorrow will bring, make the most of what you have today; family...friends...talents...possessions.

The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Psalms 18:2

Having a thankful heart and thanking God awakens your heart and sharpens your mind, helping you enjoy God's presence. So, when you're feeling out of focus or out of touch with the Lord, make the effort to thank Him for something. There is always an abundance of things to choose from; eternal gifts such as salvation, grace, and faith...as well as ordinary, everyday blessings.

PRAYER:

In the U.S., we celebrate a day of thanksgiving once a year. But God wants us to be intentional about our thankfulness every day. He wants us to develop this spiritual habit, one that is reflected in the life of a radical believer.

I realize that a lot of people in life are spiritual zombies. Just going through the motions. Many are mindlessly sleepwalking through life. No real plans or goals. Spiritual Zombies don't really put their heart into what they are doing...just going through the motions.

People want to know God's will for their lives...It is always God's will no matter what happens in my life that I am to give thanks, not for my circumstances but in my circumstances? His will is, first and foremost, that we learn to give thanks.

Moaning, bickering, complaining just has to stop. I feel sorry for people like that. Life is not perfect...none of us are. God wants us to be... Forever Grateful:

This morning I want to give you 5 reasons giving thanks is always God's will.

If you are a moaner and a groaner, you're probably not going to like my message.

Start each day with a grateful heart. It will change your attitude...it will change your day.

We are told that the first 5 minutes of your day sets your mood for the rest of your day. If you start it with gratitude, you'll be healthier, you'll be happier, you'll be closer to God.

God, let me just think of who you are, what you've done, how much you've done for me.

GIVE THANKS...IT HONORS GOD.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations. Psalm 100:4-5

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights.... 1 Chron. 16:11-12

GIVE THANKS...IT HONORS GOD

1. GRATITUDE (thankfulness) HONORS GOD.
2. GRATITUDE CREATES FELLOWSHIP
3. GRATITUDE DEVELOPS MY FAITH.
4. GRATITUDE SERVES OTHERS.
5. GRATITUDE (thankfulness) IS A WITNESS TO UNBELIEVERS.