



Always Thankful - November/December 2024

Colossians 1:11-14

11 We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. May you be filled with joy, 12 always thanking the Father. He has enabled you to share in the inheritance that belongs to his people, who live in the light. 13 For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, 14 who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins.

Thanksgiving has always been my favorite holiday. Perhaps the best part is the fact that there are no gifts exchanged. There is a beautiful simplicity in sharing a meal and giving thanks together. Giving thanks is not a natural practice for many of us, yet it has the power to change our lives. God calls us to give thanks always-- even in difficult times. The challenge for this week is to practice being thankful by making a daily list of 5 things that you are grateful for.

Questions:

1. The Power of Gratitude: The sermon mentions a study where people who practiced gratitude felt happier, less depressed, and had better relationships. In your own experience, how has practicing gratitude—whether in good times or bad—impacted your well-being or relationships?

2. Gratitude in Hard Times: Paul's attitude towards his "thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:7-10) illustrates how we can give thanks even in difficulties. How can we cultivate a spirit of gratitude when facing challenges or hardship in our own lives?

3. The Role of Thanksgiving in Marriage: The sermon shares the idea that expressing gratitude, such as saying "thank you" for small acts, can fill emotional "buckets" in relationships. How do you think expressing gratitude in your relationships can improve communication and help resolve conflicts?

4. Cultural Pressures vs. Gratitude: The sermon contrasts the holiday season's materialism (Black Friday, gift-giving, consumerism) with the call to cultivate a heart of gratitude. How can we resist the pressure to "buy more" and instead focus on being thankful for what we already have, especially during the holiday season?

