

Thanking God Even When Things Go Bad

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (New International Version)

¹⁶Be joyful always; ¹⁷pray continually; ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

This Christmas of 2009, I do not feel particularly thankful. My family has been torn apart by a Church who called itself Christ-Centered... They threatened my wife if she did not leave me, that she would have her children taken away. They manipulated her, with fear, and then when she did leave me. They helped her parents take away the children. My wife has now come home, the children are in care of her parents. I am grieved at this because my wife describes her childhood and being one abuse after another.

My poor wife has tried so hard all her life to tell others about her parents abuse, but her parents have labeled her as a liar. So no one has ever, or will ever believe her. So my wife and I are without our children, and are fearful that they will take the child she is now carrying...

Mired in my own sadness, I just did not know what to do with my grief, for I feel at a loss over not being able to protect my family. Then as I wondered what Bible study to do this week, I really did not feel like doing a Bible study...

Then as I picked up my Bible, this study I had written over 7 years ago fell out.

Six Reasons to be thankful even when things go bad!

1. Keeps me continually aware of the presence of God.
2. Helps me to look for God's purpose
3. Helps me to be submissive to God
4. Keeps my focus on Him and helps me to see my dependence on God!
5. Give impact to my witness to others about Christ.
6. It energizes me in the midst of things that wear us out and tear us down.

There are truly more than six reasons to thank God when things go bad. Yet for me these six reasons remain prevalent. We are commanded in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 to:

1. Be joyful always (vs 16)
2. Pray continually (vs 17)
3. Be thankful always (vs 18)

When we do these things and are thankful. The bad around us will not defeat us. This will not allow resentment and hatred and revenge dominate our lives.

I am thankful for a wife who loves God more than she does me. I am thankful that this Christmas will not be spent alone and that at least we have each other. My wife tells me that it is her spiritual believe that "what God has brought together, let no man separate."(Matthew 19:6), was what brought her back into my arms. I am thankful for this! I am thankful for a wife who stood up for the truth, even when everyone else threatened her with harm and incarceration.

I am thankful for a loving God that will guide and protect us in these dark times. Thank you God

for helping me be thankful in this season of sadness!

This Christmas I am thankful...!

Are you?

Neo... December 22, 2009(based on a study written by me on December 2, 2002)