

THANKSGIVING TO OUR LORD

Philippians 4:4-9

INTRODUCTION: We live in a world of worry! The word “worry” means “to strangle.” What worry strangles is our peace of mind. Proverbs 23:7: Thanksgiving is not so much a matter of having material things as it is a state of mind. We need to learn to think God’s thoughts in order to stop worrying so much. The Bible teaches us that true thanksgiving begins in our hearts and that from that sense of thanksgiving God gives us the gift of His peace.

I. THE PROPER PLACE FOR REJOICING!

Philippians 4:4; James 1:2-8. These two verses are often misunderstood even by Christians. It is not pure joy for the trials, but for the fruit that comes from those trials when we chose to rejoice in the Lord always! We often lose our focus on our Lord when the storms of life hit us. How often did the apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit tell us we should rejoice? Philippians 4:4; Philippians 4:5; Philippians 4:6; Philippians 4:7. None of the promises found in these verses will be found in the life of a Christian who has not learned to have a rejoicing framework in their lives. As Christians we must stop focusing on all our worries and start focusing on what is excellent or praiseworthy: Philippians 4:8.

II. A PROPER PERSPECTIVE FOR REJOICING!

Paul told us to let our moderation be evident to all because our Lord is near: Philippians 1:5. Our Lord is not only nearby but coming again. As we chose to rejoice when the world is seemingly out of control others notice and want to know why. Philippians 4:6. Do you know that even our prayer requests are to be made with thanksgiving. It is not proper to come into the presence of God with any other attitude than an attitude of gratitude. Rejoicing and thankfulness create the proper framework for our faith to operate correctly in our lives. Rejoicing is the byproduct of being thankful. Thankful people are happy people and healthy people in every way. We are to focus our thoughts on the positive things of life, even when terrible things are happening around us: Philippians 4:8. Remember, our thanksgiving is not to be focused primarily on what is happening around us as it is to be focused on the promises of our God to us. Our response to the things that happen around us are to be centered on the goodness and the love of our God for us. Matthew 6:28-30. Colossians 3:1-2.

III. THE PROPER PEACE FOR RELIEF!

You seek our God does not want to give us the peace of this world that depends totally on what is happening in our lives right now! God wants to give you His peace, the kind of peace this world cannot take away from us. There really is a freedom in the soul of those who have learned to rejoice even in the midst of troubles. John 16:33: It is far more important to have peace internally than to have external peace. God’s kind of peace will act as a sentry to guard our hearts and minds against anxiety. Philippians 4:7. God’s peace gives us the freedom to continue to act in thankful ways even while we yet struggle against the trials of this life. Philippians 4:9: The apostle Paul is writing the book of Philippians from a Roman jail and the theme of the entire book is one of rejoicing. You see we want peace and harmony first and then we will be thankful. God says be thankful and you will gain peace and harmony. This isn’t “positive thinking” it is “positive living” that is being advocated here. We need to make thanksgiving our heart condition, not just a holiday celebration. Positive thinking denies the negative. Positive living overcomes the negative. Thanksgiving is a celebration of our faith.