

Giving thanks to God the Father at all times Reflection #59, August 13, 2009

I'm preparing to speak on Ephesians 5:15-20 this coming Sunday and find it challenging. Is St. Paul really encouraging us to be thankful **even for** difficult circumstances or is he rather instructing us to give thanks to God **even in** difficult and unpleasant situations? While I find it difficult to imagine being thankful for this tumor, I can find much in God's mercy and Grace to be thankful for which helps me to live faithfully in this situation. I was thinking of God's merciful provision for my needs last night before going to sleep and awoke in the night reviewing scripture passages with promises for which I have been grateful during this trying time. Here is a short review of the scripture which the Spirit brought to mind:

1 Peter 2:9-10 "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

John 15:16 "You did not choose me but I chose you, and I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last."

2nd Timothy 1:7 "For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice (fear) but rather a spirit of power and of love, and of self-discipline."

Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Colossians 1:27 "Christ in you the hope of glory"

John 14:20 "On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me and I in you."

Deut 31:8 "It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."

Exodus 33:14 "My presence will go with you and I will give you rest."

I hastily jotted down these verses before going back to sleep. In reviewing them this morning I am aware that they all seem to reassure me of God's presence with us no matter what the circumstances of our lives. This makes me grateful for what God has provided in my salvation through Jesus Christ and in my ongoing sanctification through His indwelling Spirit. For these truths I am indeed thankful to God the Father through His Son Jesus Christ and in my gratitude will trust Him to help me to be careful how I live making the most of the time as St. Paul encourages the Ephesians.

All scriptures above quoted from the New Revised Standard Version Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 2007

May God bless and keep you and enable us all to be thankful for His merciful provision for us as recorded in His Word.

Under the Mercy,

Howie