

Thx: The Gospel & a Grateful Life | October 1, 2017

Gratitude and the Gospel (Part Two)

Introduction

- Life is best lived when we're aware of the abundance of Christ.
- When faced with discontentment we might ask: what's driving me?
- If we live in fear that we'll be left behind or that there won't be enough we end up living in scarcity. This kills gratitude and generosity.
- But we believe in the abundance of God – so how do we bring that macro truth into everyday life?

1 Thessalonians 5: 17–18

- The background for this letter is found in Acts 17.
- The letter helps Paul reconnect with the Thessalonian church. He is thankful for and proud of them but also challenges them to grow.

1. Never Stop Praying

- Is this about an unceasing choice to constantly pray and do nothing but? Of course not.
- A few words that best express the original meaning of the language are: posture, awareness, alertness, opportunity.
- We are to never stop praying in that we aim to be keenly aware of and about God's activity and work.
- Prayer roots us in God, and roots us in truth.

2. Be Thankful in All Things

- We aren't to be thankful for all things, but in all things. God is sovereign and our trust in his goodness through all things is vital. God is known to be good because when things aren't as they should be he comes near.
- Thankfulness is in part about perspective.
- We can't entirely attach God's goodness simply to what we deem to be "pleasurable outcomes."

3. For this is God's Will for You Who Belong to Christ

- This is where our lives are oriented toward hope.
- We don't do this as hard labour but are under the awareness that we belong to Christ. Belonging to Christ shapes our perspective.

Discussion Questions:

1. What might it look like to "never stop praying" in your life? Share some ideas or examples. What should prayer look like?
2. What does it mean for "God to come near" in difficult circumstances? How have you seen, or heard of, him doing that? Share some stories or examples.
3. What did you learn about thankfulness in this sermon? What is the root of being thankful?