

“No Matter What”

For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith? Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints. 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Family, the apostle Paul was definitely feeling some "thanksgiving" vibes for the church at Thessalonica. Paul here writes to the Thessalonian believers how Timothy told the apostle about, "the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you" (1 Thessalonians 3:6b).

Paul goes on to say that in whatever distress or affliction he and his companions experienced, "For now we live, *if you are standing fast in the Lord*" (1 Thessalonians 3:8). That's what *did it* for Paul: he rejoiced over these believers who were transformed by the immovable truth of "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2b). This is truth only God can anchor in a person's heart! For all the competing narratives and clever arguments we may encounter, the world's wisdom is DOA (dead on arrival) in the face of the Holy Spirit's life-changing work through the power of God (see 1 Corinthians 2:3-5).

We see what Paul was thankful for and how his ultimate thanks were always tied to God. On another upcoming Thanksgiving Day, what are some of the things you're thankful for—family, home, a sense of wellbeing for the days ahead? These are blessings to be sure. But, perhaps, people, health, and home aren't happening for you right now. And maybe looking for a silver lining in the middle of half a dozen problems you can't fix doesn't leave you feeling very thankful at all.

In this case, you're not alone. This is the day-to-day struggle for countless millions who deal with problems they feel powerless to manage. In this, the apostle Paul has another valuable lesson for us, and it's tied to faith—faith in a God who can meet any and every need we have regardless of what's going on, or our power to fix it. "And my God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen" (Philippians 4:19-20).

This is faith that sees God's grace in all life's situations—no matter what we're facing. It's knowing that God is with us whether our plate is full or not. He sees our lack. He understands our cries for help. And so, it was for this reason Jesus came into this world. Therefore, family, let's embrace this year's Thanksgiving Day in a Christ-centered manner, ***always*** giving thanks for Him—for His care, His life, His death, and His

resurrection. For in Jesus, God has truly met all our needs—now and through eternity!

Have a blessed Thanksgiving!

Pastor Seehafer