Riverside Community Church

Thanksgiving
Pastor Derrick
October 8, 2023

Thanksgiving shapes our present in response to our past.

James 1:16-18 (NLT) - So don't be misled, my dear brothers and sisters. [17] Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow. [18] He chose to give birth to us by giving us his true word. And we, out of all creation, became his prized possession.

2 Corinthians 4:5-18 (NLT) - You see, we don't go around preaching about ourselves. We preach that Jesus Christ is Lord, and we ourselves are your servants for Jesus' sake. [6] For God, who said, "Let there be light in the darkness," has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ.

[7] We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves.

[8] We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. [9] We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed. [10] Through suffering, our bodies continue to share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies.

[11] Yes, we live under constant danger of death because we serve Jesus, so that the life of Jesus will be evident in our dying bodies. [12] So we live in the face of death, but this has resulted in eternal life for you.

[13] But we continue to preach because we have the same kind of faith the psalmist had when he said, "I believed in God, so I spoke." [14] We know that God, who raised the Lord Jesus, will also raise us with Jesus and present us to himself together with you. [15] All of this is for your benefit. And as God's grace reaches more and more people, there will be great thanksgiving, and God will receive more and more glory.

[16] That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. [17] For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! [18] So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.

Study Guide

1. We talked this week about how thanksgiving shapes our present in response to our past. That, by remembering what God has done and adopting a posture of thankfulness, we are actively shaping the present reality of our lives.
2. So let's do that. Take a moment to re-read James 1:16-18. All good things are from God. Every single one. Take some time to list with each other all of the good things that you have in your life. The things that bring life and light and joy to you.
3. When you think about those things how much do you believe that they are from God? If you believe they are, how active are you in framing them that way? How often do you remember that He is the one who gave them to you?
4. It is one thing to remember, but the true power of thankfulness rests in its ability to change things today. As you ponder the good things God has given you, what would a thankful response be? When it comes to your resources? Your family? Your abilities?
5. Take some time to discuss this with each other and how we can practice thankfulness every single day.