

THANKING GOD FOR “ALL THINGS.”

What? Well, the Bible does tell us, “In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” I Thes. 5:18.

This has to be a “faith exam”, yes? In all things? Really? If nothing else, this will expand your Thanksgiving Day list of things to be thankful for. We have much to be thankful for in our lives but when you add “all things” our list does really expand. We’re not likely to include our problems, our disappointments, our challenges, our failures, our losses, our stumbles, our betrayals and more in that Thanksgiving list.

So, why does He ask us to give thanks even for the “bad” things in our lives? Could it be so that we acknowledge nothing happens to us that God does not already know about? In Lamentations 3:38, “Is it not from the mouth of the Highest that both calamities and good things come?” And Isaiah 45:7, “I bring prosperity and create disaster.”

Many of us have a lucky rabbit’s foot view of our relationship with God. As long as we have our “lucky rabbit’s foot” nothing bad will happen to us. (However, the rabbit doesn’t feel so lucky with only three feet. 😊) Giving thanks in all things acknowledges that God has plans and purposes that we do not know anything about, and we trust Him to walk through these difficult times with us.

One part of our maturing relationship is also to acknowledge that many things we experience really have nothing to do with us. How can that be when we are right in the middle of hurt and disappointment? Remember our friend Joseph, sold into slavery then unjustly accused and put into prison and left. He was exactly where God wanted him to be. (Not fair we say when those things happen to us.) God doesn’t ask us if it is fair. He asks us to be faithful even in difficult situations – and give thanks!

Bad things happening is a little like our perspective on the difference between a knife and a scalpel. While the use of both may draw blood and both create pain, one can be used for hurting while the other for healing. And what looks like a knife to us may actually be a scalpel in God’s hand.

Three things you learn about giving thanks in all things: Sometimes you are asked to move mountains to show others that it can be done. Sometimes you are in difficult circumstances to be able to minister to others who are there with you and who need you.

And sometimes your “bad luck” is just a protection from having worse luck just around the corner.

Have a “blessed” Thanksgiving.