

“Enjoying Life With One Another”
June 26, 2016

Colossians 3:15 NLT- “And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.”

CORE- Here’s one of the most vital life choices we make:

- **We can either go thru life self-focused, easily offended, & angry—which manifests in slander, gossip, division, & dysfunction...OR...**
- **We can be grateful for & rejoice with the people we share life with—resulting in the life of Jesus being manifest among us!**

1. STAY IN THE JOY OF THE LORD

1 Thessalonians 5:16-17 NLT- “Always be joyful. Never stop praying.”

- **“Rejoicing”—*to thrive; to do well—the result of enjoying the company of another.* (NOTE: The “joy of the LORD” is “your strength”! ENJOY HIM!)**
- **He thoroughly ENJOYS you!**
 - **Dances over you, shouting for joy with “loud singing” (Zephaniah 3:17)!**
 - **Before He came: “He will deliver you from your enemies—empowering you to live without fear all of your days!” (Luke 1:74)**
 - **In His death: He saw you filled with joy! (Hebrews 12:2)**
 - **In fact, I want My joy to absolutely FILL you! (John 15:11)**
- **When you see something wrong in life—don’t lose your joy over it!**
- **In fact, joyfully turn it over to God in prayer!**

2. BE THANKFUL!

1 Thessalonians 5:18 NLT- “Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.”

- **“Thankful”—*to come under the influence of another.***
- **“We enter HIS GATES with thanksgiving” (Psalm 100:4)—thankfulness brings us into HIS world—causing us to see life from His perspective. (NOTE: “Enter” involves “gaining access to”)**
 - **When we pray with ATTITUDE (*i.e., impatient, frustrated, expecting nothing to change*) we MISS lots of answers to our prayers.**
 - **BUT when we pray with GRATITUDE—we get lots of opportunities to celebrate even the smallest breakthroughs!**

- Within His gates—we **think straight!**
 - When we do not “give thanks”—we become “futile in our speculations” (Romans 1:21 NIV)
 - Lit.- “*twisted imagination*” and “*distorted internal discussions*” and “*empty deductions/deliberations*”; a ***darkened mind***—inclined to ***only think the worst!***
- GRATITUDE frees us from the **deception of discontent.**
- We can only **RECEIVE (blessings, people)** to the level of our **GRATITUDE FOR THEM!!!** (i.e., why Paul’s letters always expressed gratitude for those he was writing to)
 - NOTE: “Appreciate” involves “seeing the value in” and results in something “increasing in value”!

3. **STOP GRUMBLING!**

In **John 6:70**, Jesus referred to Judas Iscariot as a “devil” (*diabolos*), which means “slanderer” or “malicious gossip.” Simply, it means “**one who is unable to keep their negative perspectives to themselves.**”

- It’s hard to **find fault** and **discover value** at the same time. (i.e., *Judas missed the Son of God in the flesh! It kept religious leaders from seeing Messiah & experiencing miracles! It kept Nazareth from receiving healing!*)
- It can keep us from our destiny. (i.e., *the crowd experienced the feeding of 5,000...then found fault with Jesus and stopped following Him!*)
- It can open us up to destruction (**1 Cor. 10:9-10- Israel “grumbled” and “were destroyed by the destroyer.” See John 10:10**)
 - Ultimately, **displeasure & ingratitude destroy relationships!**
 - “If I cannot *measure up* or if you cannot see *anything good in me*—I withdraw from you.” (i.e., relationship repellent)
 - Gratitude draws people closer—as they discover that, despite their imperfections, you receive them as gifts from God.

CONCLUSION-

Ultimately, a **joyful, grateful, non-complaining heart:**

- Sees the best part of every situation
- Sees problems as opportunities
- Sees struggles as refining tools
- Sees flawed people as overcomers in progress!