

Washington church of Christ

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Be Thankful for What God Gives...

We see in most all of Paul's writings his habit to encourage and praise those with whom he worked, and, he did not make an exception here. Even though the focus of the letter seems to be one of reproof he began by making several statements of thanksgiving for what God had done. It seems to me that his desire was that these brief words about what God had called them to become would be a great source of

encouragement as they dealt with the issue of addressing their shortcomings. And, we today can find encouragement in them as well.

Paul starts by reminding them of God's grace ... "I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus", (1 Corinthians 1:4 NKJV).

Grace has been defined as God's unmerited favor. So often in our sinful pride we try to earn God's favor, but this is impossible to do. And, eventually we must face the truth that "there is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). Behind our effort to try to impress God could be the feeling that God will not love us the way we are. And we often fall prey to that feeling because we live in a world of people who make us try to earn their love by conforming to their expectations for us. Since we tend to go through life auditioning for the love of others, it seems only natural that we would have to do the same thing with God. But the greatest discovery in life is that nothing in our minds or hearts or actions is hidden from God ... and He still loves us.

I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

(1 Corinthians 1:4-9 NKJV)

Order of Services

Sunday May 25, 2014

Song Leader	Dan Wydro
Prayer	Tom Dolan
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	David Osinski
Prayer for the Cup	Scott Thomas
Prayer for the Collection	Arnold Thompson
Assisting at the Table	Brian Jeffries
Scripture Reading	Patrick Wydro
Morning Closing Prayer	Bob Celentano
Evening Opening Prayer	Antonio Ruggiero
Announcements	Stan Thompson

Schedule of Weekly Services

Sunday Morning Bible Classes	9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Classes	7:30 pm
Thursday Morning Bible Study	11:00 am

Paul then, following a biblical tradition of speaking of the God-man relationship in terms of wealth or riches, spoke of their "spiritual riches" ... *"that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge,"* (1 Corinthians 1:5 NKJV).

Jesus spoke critically of the farmer who amassed material fortunes and was not *"rich toward God"* (Luke 12:21). The themes of spiritual bankruptcy and spiritual wealth are very prominent in the Bible ... and for good reason. Those to whom Paul wrote this letter lived in a society that produced great material wealth but that created spiritually bankrupt people. In a society that thinks of little else but making money and having fun there is a constant deterioration in the quality of life. The worth of self and of persons diminishes and the quality of relationships deteriorates. Soon the distinctions between right and wrong fade, values become distorted, and social pressure toward evil emerges. This was precisely the mood and pattern of life in first-century Corinth, but it is also a fairly accurate description of most cities in our world today.

So, Paul's encouragement to them was that in a world of such spiritual poverty Christ has enriched the lives of those who have accepted Him in obedience. I believe he wanted them to realize that measured against their former selves it was perfectly clear that Christ had enriched their lives. And so it should for us today ... the life that grasps the truth of God is rich.

The Apostle went on to speak of their great potential through God ... *"so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,"* (1 Corinthians 1:7 NKJV). I read here that Paul is trying to encourage them with the realization that God has held back no gift that would help them to *do* His work and *be* the church that He would have in Corinth. One of the great insights of the Scripture that we need be aware of, and confident in, is that God will provide, and in many ways has already given, us the *gifts* which we need to do His will. As, this same Apostle wrote to the church in Rome ... *"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?"* (Romans 8:31 NKJV).

Paul ends by reminding them of the ultimate hope they have in Jesus Christ ...

"who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:8-9 NKJV)

It might seem strange to find a reference to the Second Coming of Christ right here in his opening words in the greeting. But what Paul is trying to do is to set the problems which they now face in the context of eternity. He wants them to be *"blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (verse 8), and gives as the basis of hope, not their good works but the fact that *"God is faithful"* (verse 9). It's easy to get so bogged down in today's problems, issues, and failures that we lose sight of the ultimate victory we have in Christ.

If we are not careful, we may find ourselves in a position where we feel that our problems or issues are a lost cause, and there is no hope of ever overcoming them. But, we should never lose sight of the fact that the hope of the Christian is based on the activity of God and allows us to believe that whatever may be the circumstances there will come a day when life will overcome death, when love will overcome hate, when good will overcome evil, and the kingdom of God will triumph over the kingdoms of this world. It is the assurance of this future that allows us to live more triumphantly in the present.

Our Prayer List...

For Spiritual Responsiveness – All of our wayward members

For Physical Healing – Georgia DeLorenzo ... Barbara Rhinehart (Bill Duryea's sister) ... Everett Guyton

For Wisdom and Good Judgment – The Leaders of our congregation ... the leaders of our nation

For God's Care and Good Providence – Bertie Baxter ... Our young people away at college ... Our young people here at Washington ... our members who are traveling ... the men and women in military service ... our congregation.

The Evangelist and Teachers We Help Support – Jon Focht – Tim Bunting – Scott Smelser – Dan Wydro

EVENTS AND NOTES

UPCOMING EVENTS THAT WE ARE AWARE OF ARE ...

- ▲ WE ARE DISCUSSING THE POSSIBILITY OF HOSTING A BOOTH AT THE WARREN COUNTY FARMERS FAIR. ANYONE WILLING TO HELP MAN THE BOOTH SHOULD SEE TOM DOLAN.
- ▲ WE HAVE ANNOUNCED THAT A REVISION OF OUR CURRENT SCHEDULE OF SERVICES IS BEING DISCUSSED. WE ARE ASKING ALL MEMBERS CONVEY YOUR THOUGHTS ON THIS PROPOSAL TO RALPH RUGGIERO.
- ▲ THE NEXT MEN'S BUSINESS MEETING AND LADIES BIBLE STUDY IS SCHEDULED FOR SUNDAY, JUNE 1ST.
- ▲ CHECK OUT SCOTT SMELSER'S WEBSITE "3MINUTEBIBLESTUDY.COM".