



NEWS BULLETIN

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PASTOR'S NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE - CULTIVATING THANKFULNESS

Thankfulness is an important Christian quality. We see this in Colossians 1v15 where we get an almost throw-away command. Just three words. Three words penned by the apostle Paul. Three words that come from Christ. "And be thankful." In the surrounding verses Paul shows that we are to express our gratitude to God. We are to be thankful when we are singing (verse 16). We are to be thankful when we are speaking or doing anything (verse 17). And we are to be thankful when we are praying (chapter 4v2).



What this teaches us is that ingratitude is a sin. A sin that needs to be repented of. A sin that needs to be put to death. A sin that we should feel deep sorrow over.

As believers in Christ, we should be seeking to cultivate a heart of thankfulness. A heart of thankfulness that will flow over into our worship, prayer and service. A heart of thankfulness that feeds into our conversations, so that God is seen to be a generous giver. A heart of thankfulness that expresses gratitude to the people around us for the things they do, so that other people feel appreciated.

How do we cultivate this heart of thankfulness? It is by looking away from ourselves, and looking to what God has done for us. It is by not looking at what we don't have but looking at what we do have. That is implied in 2 Timothy 3v2ff, where Paul speaks of people in the last days becoming lovers of self, and lovers of money. What results is pride and ungratefulness. If we want to have hearts full of humility and thankfulness, then we need to look away from ourselves and the thing we think we have a right to own. We need to look at what God gives us by his grace and mercy.

So, Paul writes we are to be, "giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light." (Colossians 1:12, ESV). As we look at what God has done to save us from sin, and realise that his salvation is undeserved, we will find our hearts overflowing with gratitude to God. When we realise that he has united us to brothers and sisters who have also received God's mercy, we shall find our hearts overflowing with gratitude to God for the people in our church.

May we, this year, become a church that glorifies God, and appreciates each other by cultivating a heart of gratitude.

With much thankfulness to God for you all,

Pastor Tim