

at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

Therefore, *in Christ Jesus*, regardless of our circumstances, ***we can always live with an attitude of THANKSGIVING!***

**Conclusion:** So this Thanksgiving Day, *and every day forward*, let us:

- **Rejoice always in Jesus our Savior** – *regardless of our circumstances!*
- **Pray without ceasing** – *WHENEVER ✦ a need arises or ✦ a blessing is received!*
- **Give thanks in everything** – *confident that God ♥ loves us, ♥ has saved us, and ♥ is at work in our daily lives for our ultimate good!*

**And all God's people said:** *Amen!*

**This Week's Memory Verse** – *Choose one, two, or all three verses:*

<sup>NAS</sup> **1 Thessalonians 5:16** "Rejoice always; <sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing; <sup>18</sup> in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

**Scripture Memory Tips:**

1. Read the *context*.
2. Rightly understand the verse.
3. Learn the *reference* and the *first phrase*.
4. *Add a phrase*, repeat all you have learned.
5. Say the verse *out loud* as you memorize it.
6. Say the *reference*; the *verse*; the *reference*.
7. *Pray* about the verse.
8. *Apply* the verse to *your daily life*.
9. *Share* the verse with *others*.

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# "What Results in an *Attitude* of JOY and THANKSGIVING?"

Based on 1Thessalonians 5:16-18

*Thanksgiving Eve – 2010*

November 24 → 7:00

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ, tomorrow is our national day of *Thanksgiving!* **Here's a brief history:**

- **1620** – The year the Mayflower left Plymouth, England.
- **102** – The passengers on the Mayflower.
- **66** – The days it took to cross the Atlantic.
- **51** – The people who survived that first brutal winter.
- **1621** – The first year the colonists shared a *thanksgiving feast* with the Wampanoag Indians!
- **1863** – The year President Lincoln proclaimed a national Thanksgiving Day to be held each November.<sup>1</sup>

Tonight we turn our attention to Paul's letter to the **Christians** in Thessalonica. He wrote ✦ to encourage them – *as they faced persecution*, and ✦ to instruct them – *in godly living*. Then, *near the end of the letter*, Paul wrote: <sup>NAS</sup> **1 Thessalonians 5:16** "Rejoice always; <sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing; <sup>18</sup> in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." → What does that mean? → How does that apply to our daily Christian lives?

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.history.com/topics/thanksgiving>

1. <sup>NAS</sup> **1 Thessalonians 5:16 Rejoice always**: The word order in the Greek is “**always rejoice**,” but how is that possible, since life can be so tough sometimes!

- a. Those on the Mayflower had a long difficult trip; then, *during the first winter*, half of them died! Think about them; could they “**always rejoice**”?
- b. The answer for THEM *in their day* and US *in our day* is YES! *But how?* Because our source of joy is Jesus Christ – †our relationship with Him, †the forgiveness we have through Him, and †the life we have in Him! Therefore, *through Jesus*, we can always live with an *attitude* of JOY!

2. <sup>17</sup> **pray without ceasing**: The Greek says: “**constantly pray**.” *But what does that mean?* Pray all the time; always be ready to pray; OR pray throughout your life!

- a. If the Bible said to **continuously pray**, that would mean to pray 24/7, *without any interruption for anything* – but that is not the meaning.
- b. Instead, the Bible says to **constantly pray** or, we could say, **continually pray**. Those words mean to do something ***in an ongoing but intermittent manner***. *What does that mean?* Think for a moment: When is the word “intermittent” commonly used in today’s world? ...
  - i. Old cars tend to have continuous wipers; when they are turned on, they are always moving.
  - ii. But new cars tend to have constant, continual, intermittent wipers; they wipe and stop, wipe and stop, wipe and stop, wipe and stop.

Therefore, ***our praying should proceed throughout our lives like intermittent wipers!*** As we set our wipers to wipe WHENEVER needed, so we should pray WHENEVER †a need arises OR †a blessing is received!

3. <sup>18</sup> **in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus**: The Greek is very similar: “**in all things give thanks; for this [is] God’s will in Christ Jesus for you.**” *What does that mean?* **Whatever comes into our Christian lives – not including the problems we bring upon ourselves because of our sins – is God’s will for us!** These passages bring out that reality:

- a. <sup>NAS</sup> **Romans 8:28** “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.”
- b. <sup>NAS</sup> **James 1:2** “Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,<sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.<sup>4</sup> And let endurance have *its* perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”
- c. <sup>NIV</sup> **Hebrews 12:5** ...“My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,<sup>6</sup> because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes [literally scourges] everyone he accepts as a son.”<sup>7</sup> Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons....<sup>10</sup> Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness.<sup>11</sup> No discipline seems pleasant