

Thankfulness in a Thankless World

Troubling The Darkness - Week 6 (8-10-22)

- I. We can determine what troubles the darkness by observing the things that it attacks.
 - A. Why does the enemy try so hard to discourage us and keep us from being grateful?
 - 1. wants us to give up, lay down and quit, to think there is no hope, to forget that we have purpose and an end goal, to make us focus on the abundance of darkness in the world and forget that we are the light of the world.

1 Thes. 5:16-18

- II. Thankfulness is a choice
 - A. In many NT scriptures Thankfulness almost seems to be a commandment.
 - 1. 1 Thes. 5:18 - "... in everything give thanks..."
 - 2. Col. 3:15 - "In everything give thanks..."
 - 3. Eph. 5:20 - "...giving thanks always..."
 - 4. Phil. 4:6 - "...with thanksgiving let your requests be made known..."
 - B. If it is commanded and expected, then we must have the option to be thankful.
 - 1. The enemy wants to control and manipulate you to react in submission to your environment/thoughts/emotions. - Fear
 - a) Being Thankful in spite of the havoc that the darkness is trying to create, renders the darkness powerless in our life. It's literally how we can rise above the enemy and its attacks.
 - b) Like when people try to manipulate you and get you to react a certain way and you refuse to give in. You refuse to give them control.
 - 2. I may not feel happy right now, but I can still choose to be Thankful toward God!
 - 3. We are in this world but not of it - John 17:15-16
 - a) We are in the world but the world doesn't have to be in us!
 - b) Jesus gives peace unlike what the world gives.
 - (1) John 14:27 - The world thinks that you can only have peace when the problem is eliminated, but Jesus can give us peace even when the problem is still there.
 - (a) Peace in the middle of the storm.
 - 4. The enemy wants us to be double minded, unstable, to be tossed to and fro by the wind. - James 1:5-8
 - a) If the enemy can get us in doubt and fear, he knows that he has damaged our faith and blocked us from receiving what we need from God.
 - b) but when we choose to remain thankful to God, we remain in a spirit of faith
 - (1) 2 Corin. 4:13-18
 - (2) Numbers 14:22-24

III. Thankfulness Keeps Priorities in Check

- A. "One thing is needful..." - Luke 10:38-42
 - 1. The part that Mary chose, could never be taken away from her.

2. What's really needful is that we keep our focus where it matters.
- B. Paul and Silas - Acts 16:22-34
1. Their Praise amidst hard circumstances led not only to their freedom but also the eternal life for other people!
 2. They didn't allow their outer chains to bind their gratitude toward God
 - a) "...I suffer trouble, as an evildoer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound." - 2 Tim. 2:9
 3. Your thankfulness to God in all things is not just for you!
- C. Mark 4:35-41 Compared to Matt. 14:22-33
1. Mark 4:35-41
 - a) Jesus calmed the storm but they became even more fearful, not knowing who Jesus could be. - fearful and unsure
 - (1) Has your focus been on the storm or Jesus?
 - (2) Has fear blinded you to who Jesus really is?
 2. Matt. 14:22-33
 - a) Jesus didn't calm the storm at first.
 - (1) sometimes God calms the storm inside of us instead of the storm outside of us.
 - (a) It's the water that gets inside of the ship that sinks it.
 - b) Peter forgot about the storm what he focused on Jesus.
 - c) This time they all worship Jesus and know "of a truth" exactly who Jesus was.
 3. Their focus during the storm made all the difference once the storm was over.
 - a) All storms eventually come to an end. What we focus on during the storm determines how we come out of it.
 - b) My thankfulness in the middle of a storm is proof of my hope that God will continue to take care of me.
- D. Thankfulness toward God shows that I am trusting Him as my source.
1. God has always provided in the past, so I can choose to praise Him when things get difficult knowing that He will continue to provide for me in the future.
- E. Daniel 6:4-11
1. Let's choose to Thank God right in the face of our enemies schemes!