

Authentic Thanksgiving

Scripture Reading — Ephesians 5:15-20

Always [give] thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. — Ephesians 5:20

“I have no one to thank for my success but me! I wasn’t born with a silver spoon in my mouth. Whatever I have, I got it through my hard work and dedication!” Those were the words of an angry listener during our live call-in radio show in Moscow, as we were discussing thanksgiving.

I suspect his words ring true in many people’s hearts. In a culture of self-reliance it’s not unusual to recognize only our own contributions to our success. Sadly, in our pride we tend to forget not only the other people who have helped us along the way, but especially God himself!

Today’s verse teaches us three important truths about thanksgiving. First, God the Father is the one to whom we should be thankful. He is the source of our strength and intelligence. And being thankful to God means we should also acknowledge others whom he has guided to help us. Second, we should be thankful always and for every-thing. This can be really difficult. But in God’s strength we can be mindful of his love even in the midst of severe trials and struggles. That’s the only way to escape bitterness and self-pity. Third, our thanksgiving should be in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Only through him can we truly know our heavenly Father and his amazing love.

Prayer

Father, thank you for teaching us through your Word. Fill our hearts with thanks for your love, even in times of struggle. Give us wisdom to rely on Jesus alone for our salvation. In his name, Amen.

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