

Thanking God in All You Do

Scripture Reading — Acts 16:16-34

Whatever you do ... do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God ...
Colossians 3:17

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I've just returned from visiting a boy undergoing chemotherapy; it makes him horribly sick. Every February I am reminded of my father, who would have been 95 years old in February. He died at age 71.

How can we thank God for whatever we do? For visiting a very sick boy? For losing a father? Why does Paul urge Christians to thank God for whatever they do?

Recently a committed teenage girl confided to me, "So much seems to be going well. I get good grades; I like to study. I pray and read Scripture regularly. People see me as a leader in school and youth groups. But I often feel empty and alone. What should I do?"

I suggested that we read Acts 16 and Colossians 3:17. I asked her questions, based on these Scriptures: Where was the apostle Paul when he wrote these words? (In prison? again, just as in Acts 16.) Did he feel alone or empty? (Probably.) How could Paul still tell us to thank God for whatever we do?

I let her mull that last one over. But I believe that whatever Paul felt, he also remembered that God was with him in his emptiness and aloneness.

Don't thank God for emptiness and loneliness. But do thank God for being with you wherever you are, whatever you do? just as God is with the suffering boy in his cancer.

Prayer

Faithful God, when we feel empty, remind us that you are God over emptiness too, so that feeling empty is OK at times. Fill our emptiness with your fullness, we pray. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Christianity](#), [Discipleship](#), [Disciplines](#)

Written by James and Rose Dekker — <https://today.reframemedia.com/authors/james-and-rose-dekker>

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