

PRaise the Lord for

★ Ongoing faithful provision, particularly financially for Challenge. We do praise God for this, and for those who give consistently to the ministry

★ Our volunteers who come each month to help with the wrap and posting of Challenge. Without them the paper would not go out

★ The safe return of Carl from his recent trip to Queensland and New South Wales and for the number of meetings with pastors and churches. Also for the generosity of the Lord's people with accommodation.

★ Commitments coming from our prison work in USA. Second quarter saw 199 commitments to Christ which is wonderful

When asked, most Christians will respond by indicating that prayer SHOULD be a vital part of their devotional walk with God.

In practice, however, prayer is seen as almost a last resort. What tends to occur is that prayer-less Christians pray in times of urgent need some disaster has happened, some seemingly insurmountable problem that seems to have no solution other than turning to God in desperate prayer. What happens aside from these times of desperate need, is that, we come to God with an endless shopping list of prayer requests.

This leads me to another aspect of prayer – **thanksgiving**. Because prayer is often a last resort for some Christians, we lose sight of this important part of giving thanks to God. There is a little verse in 1 Thessalonians 5v18 which says ...*In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

I wonder if that verse has ever caught your attention, particularly in reference to prayer. There are a number of things worth noting.

1 We are to give thanks in everything, and, of course, this is a tall order. If you are like me, giving thanks to God when things are going well is not a problem. However, if something of a disastrous nature occurs such as a car accident or financial difficulties, giving thanks does not readily jump to mind.

Giving thanks *in all things* is one way of acknowledging God's sovereign working in our lives. This is especially so when something of a difficult nature happens. Giving thanks means that nothing is wasted in His divine economy. We give thanks because we have the confidence that whatever is happening in our lives, God is using it to mould and shape us.

This leads us to Romans 8v28-29, *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew; He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son ...* So when we give thanks to God we do so because we know that God is using the situation to conform us to the image of His Son.

2 We should give thanks in all things because it is the will of God. It is God's desire that we give thanks because it is part of the process of helping us to develop a submissive heart.

Continued over

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PLEASE TURN OVER

Contact us by phone (08) 9453 3311 or fax (08) 9453 3006

Email: info@challengenews.org

PRAYER needed for

★ Our Board members. For wisdom to know the Lord's leading, including priorities; also the possibility of new Board members

★ Ongoing supply of testimonies and articles for the various editions of Challenge we produce around the world

★ The recent trip to the Eastern States and to see all the interest translate into ongoing orders for the paper

★ The ongoing protection for our premises and staff as we realise we are living in dangerous times

★ Thank you for praying with us for Tessa Coffey, who went home to the Lord on 24th September. Please pray for the Walker/Coffey families as they navigate through this time. We pray God will overwhelm them with His love, care and comfort.

★ Our upcoming Christmas edition of the paper in terms of content and orders

It is not that we sadistically revel in something unpleasant happening to us. It is not that I run around shouting "praise God" because I have had my leg chopped off. We give thanks because, despite the seriousness of whatever has occurred, we gladly thank the Lord for His working in our lives: because it is achieving His purposes in our walk with Him.

3 Giving thanks in all things is an individual response. Notice that Paul says giving thanks in all things is the will of God in Christ Jesus for YOU. It is always nice to think that this is an instruction for someone else, but not for me. How often have we heard someone say that a particular sermon was ideal for so and so? It is a nice way of deflecting the focus of attention away from our own hearts.

4 Giving thanks is another way of coming to a place of rest in times of testing.

This is summed up for us in Philippians 4v6-7; *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* Giving thanks means that we recognise that whatever happens in our lives is no surprise to God, and so we can rest in the Lord. Also we need to thank the Lord as a sincere expression of our gratitude to God for who He is and for what He has done.

Every day is a blessing and each day is a gift, to be used for the glory of God. Every breath that we breathe is a gift, because our very existence is in the hand of God. So in everything we must learn to give thanks.

CARL CARMODY, EDITOR OF CHALLENGE

MY RESPONSE

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\$50 \$75 \$100 \$200 OTHER: \$ _____

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