



A Thanksgiving Perspective

Greetings, to you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

Hunting has long been one of my passions, but it seems I do less and less these days. I came to camp this weekend with intentions of deer hunting. But I had a lot of work that needed done, so I brought my computer along. I am writing to you from hunting camp.

It is a frosty, clear morning with a light breeze. Suddenly I hear a scratching noise. What is that? I realized it was the nuisance squirrel trying to gnaw his way through the house siding again. I put down my computer, grabbed the .22 rifle and went out to exterminate that pesky critter once and for all. But once again he outwitted me, as he ran over the roof top down the back of the tree and out into the woods. I yelled, "You better be thankful you got away this time." I could hear him chattering out in the woods, which sounded a lot like squirrel laughter.

Now, back to my story....

On the way to camp yesterday I almost let Satan distract my thinking. I thought how many times Greg and I made this trip to camp, but of course Greg is in California now. I thought of all the work at the camp to get ready for winter (including squirrel damage) and how another weekend would slip by without even one minute spent in my deer stand.

Thankfully the Lord rescued me from such destructive negative thinking and reminded me to take a look at this weekend from a thanksgiving perspective.

Greg is in California, married to a lovely Christian girl with two beautiful daughters, and happier than I remember him in a long time. We visit them regularly by phone and computer video. And we have begun spoiling our new granddaughters already by UPS.

I have found renewed passion for photography with Sarah's help teaching the Perspectives Bible Study, which has provided many opportunities for us to spend some quality time together. Sarah's photography business is growing giving her lots of new adventures.

Terry had surgery and the doctors gave her a good report. I got to sneak away to camp to spend some time with some of my hunting buddies, tell hunting stories, dreaming of big bucks, and bellying up to heaping plates of venison tips and gravy over noodles. **God is good!**

It seems to me thanksgiving is a matter of perspective. Paul writes to the church in Thessalonica saying:

"Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1Thessalonians 5:16-18

Could this be possible? Give thanks in all circumstances?

I believe it is. I have been with folks who barely have the resources to keep food on the table and a roof over their heads and yet they continually tell me how much God is blessing them. Conversely I have visited folks that have abundant resources and continually complain about their circumstances. The interesting thing is this verse says it is God's will for us to give thanks in all circumstances. Why would that be?

Well, when we give thanks we approach life from a positive perspective regardless of our circumstances. We greet each day counting our blessings not focused on what we don't have or longing for the good old days. Truth is if we really look closely at the good old days they had just as many worries and frustrations if not more.

Our church hymn reminds us:

**Are you ever burdened with a load of care?
Does the cross seem heavy you are called to bear?
Count you many blessings; every doubt will fly
And you will be singing as the days go by.**

As the holidays approach, and schedules get busy, resources get stretched, let's covenant to begin each day with prayer. First thing each morning let's take a few minutes to recount God's blessing and begin each day from a Thanks giving perspective, and watch how God transforms us and our days.

I know he will. Why? Because it is His will for us and God doesn't will bad things for us.

With thanksgiving,

Pastor Duane