

A TIME OF REFLECTION

[Pastor Gene Henderson edited by Pastor Pier]

Be cheerful no matter what; pray all the time; thank God no matter what happens. This is the way God wants you who belong to Christ Jesus to live. (1 Thessalonians 5:17-19 Message)

We are ending Thanksgiving Week in America, instituted in memory of the Pilgrims (people in search of religious freedom) and their Native American hosts who shared a harvest meal together. An interlude of appreciation during a difficult time – worthy of a national holiday. In retrospect, have there been any Thanksgivings that did not occur during a difficult time? For someone? Somewhere? Perhaps for you? This year? Or another year still recent in memory? *Be cheerful no matter what...* Is that even possible? Is it even, *right*? Aren't there times when we should *not* be cheerful, when being cheerful is being blind, hiding one's head in the sand? Not connecting with reality? How can we be cheerful when _____ (you fill in the blank)?

We get the *pray all the time* part – that makes sense. But *thank God no matter what happens*? Why bother to pray for God's help if we're already thankful for what has happened? Sounds like an oxymoron. Which it is. Or a breakdown of simple logic. Which it also is. But then, if we step back and take an honest look at our world, the whole thing is an oxymoron (go ahead, say it). Maybe because "simple logic" can't explain the mysteries and conundrums of life on Planet Earth. In other words, a person does not have to believe the Bible or be religious to see the confusion, frustration and utter breakdown of human life and relationships.

So how do we do this? How can we be cheerful no matter what or be thankful no matter what? It means we'd better get on with it. Strip down, start running—and never quit! *"Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish with God—he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honor, right alongside God. When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he plowed through. That will shoot adrenaline into your souls!"* (Hebrews 12:2-3 Message)

Be Happy All The Time! (No matter what.)

Welcome

November 26th, 2023



"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so they can have life. I want them to have it in the fullest possible way."

SERVICES

Sunday Morning Worship: 10:30 AM
Unity in Prayer & Youth: 6:00 – 7:00 PM
Wednesday – Bible Study: 7:00 PM; Kid's Club
Prayer ½ hour before services

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Wednesday Bible Study – we will continue our study of John 17. Our children will enjoy Kid's Club in the basement.

Flagging Class – will begin again on Wednesday, November 29th at 6:00 PM. For more information, please see Debbie DeVries.

Ladies Christmas Party – December 8th, at 6:00 PM. Please bring a dish to share and a grab bag gift of no more than \$10. There is a signup sheet on the table in the foyer for all those attending. For more information see Caroline Zeyak.

Christmas Program Practice – December 16th at 11:00 AM. For more information see Leah Pier or Lori Slingerland.

Christmas Program – December 17th, Sunday morning. Let's invite all we can to enjoy this great service, believing God for many souls.

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