

Theme for 2018

**WE ARE THE ARMY OF GOD &
WE ARE ARMED AND DANGEROUS!**

“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV)



This Week’s Thought – November 25, 2018

“At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She asked him, “Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?” Ruth 2:10 (NIV)

In addition to turkey, dressing, greens, macaroni and cheese, yams, cranberry relish, sweet potato pie, football games, quality time with family and friends, shopping, etc., the Thanksgiving Holiday invites intentional reflection. It teaches us to cultivate a posture of gratitude for the many blessings we receive from the Lord. It doesn’t ask us to ignore the very real pain and sorrow in our lives. In fact, you may have arrived at Thanksgiving this year feeling anything but thankful! Your heart may be torn in two over the death of a loved one or the breakdown of a marriage or close relationship. You may be struggling to stay afloat financially. Thankfulness, if you’re honest, is the furthest thing from your heart and mind! If this is where you find yourself today, may I encourage you to find a friend in the biblical story of Ruth.

Like Ruth, we must learn to cling to hope and gratitude even in the midst of incredible pain and loss. As a foreigner and a widow, Ruth’s future looked particularly bleak. Especially as a woman in a patriarchal culture, she finds herself in a posture of utter dependence. She has no social standing and is completely at the mercy of the powerful and wealthy; and yet, even in this place of great vulnerability and loss, she remains constant in her devotion, virtue, and gratitude. In fact, her reputation precedes her!

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“Boaz replied, “I’ve been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.” (Ruth 2:11-12)

Simply put, Ruth is a model of how to be a person of substance and depth even when nothing in your life seems to be going right. So often, it seems to me that the tendency and message depicted in our society, is that our ability to live virtuous and thankful lives is entirely dependent on the relative success and stability of our situations. If our relationships are harmonious, if our work is high paying and stress free, if we’re healthy, then we say we can be peaceful, Christ-like people. The thing is however, this kind of stability and success can disappear just as quickly as it appears.

As such, if we can’t pursue God within life’s challenging moments, we may never pursue Him at all. If we can only connect with God when everything feels calm and under control, we may miss Him entirely! Ruth is in every way a model of faithfulness, and part of faithfulness is finding the strength to press into hard and difficult places, trusting that God will meet us in and through them. If we can do this, we will learn to give thanks in every season of life!

“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”
(1 Thessalonians 5:18)

Application: How can you pursue God with a grateful heart today, even in the midst of the trials and pain you may be facing? Strive to be a model of faithfulness today and all throughout this Holiday Season, being thankful to God that He is always with you, in good times and in bad. Ask Him to give you a heart of gratitude that seeks Him in every circumstance.

Words from the Master during your time of reflection this week: *“I, the Creator of the Universe, am with you and for you. What more do you need? When you feel some lack, it is because you are not connecting with Me at a deep level. I offer abundant Life; your part is to trust Me, refusing to worry about anything. It is not so much the adverse events that make you anxious, as it is your thoughts about those events. Your mind engages in efforts to take control of a situation, and your thoughts close in on the problem. You forget that I am in control of your life. The only remedy is to switch your focus from the problem to My Presence.”* (Romans 8:31-32; Micah 7:7; 1 Corinthians 12:3)

“And then God answered: “Write this. Write what you see. Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run. This vision-message is a witness pointing to what’s coming. It aches for the coming—it can hardly wait! And it doesn’t lie. If it seems slow in coming, wait. It’s on its way. It will come right on time.” Habakkuk 2:2-3 (MSG)

Yours in Christ, Pastor King