

***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 – December 2, 2018***

---

*“Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*  
**Ephesians 5:20 (NIV)**

---

We have just come through the season of Thanksgiving, and for many it seems to be nothing more than a gathering of our families to eat a huge meal and prepare to go shopping for Christmas presents. Don’t misunderstand me, I love Christmas as much as the next person. I just believe that the lessons of Thanksgiving are vital, because Thanksgiving is a beautiful entry point for the Advent celebration. You see, thankfulness and Christmas go hand-in-hand. As we enter the Advent season I am reminded of several things for which we should all be thankful: The plan of salvation. God’s love. The power and presence of the Holy Spirit. The Word of God. The community of faith. God’s grace and mercy.

The truth is however, it is easier to give thanks to God when things are going well; but much harder when circumstances are not going the way we might think they should go. Can you still thank Jesus when your body aches or when your trials and circumstances seem to be closing in on you? Can you be content to thank God for the ‘manna’ He has provided for today, and not be anxious and uptight with worry about how He will provide in the future?

Thankfulness for the Lord’s provision is His remedy for not rushing ahead of His will and wondering how everything will work out. We are wise to settle down and settle into our Savior’s rest.

December 2, 2018

*“Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions.’”* (Exodus 16:4)

It may be in suffering that we are most tempted to not thank God but complain to God. After all, why would a loving heavenly Father allow us to struggle and hurt? In His great wisdom, He knows it is in our adversity that we feel the greatest need for Him; in turn we see our challenging circumstances as an opportunity to draw close to Christ. Thankfulness to God during difficulty builds humility and wisdom for the better times.

*“We also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.”* (Romans 5:3–5)

The story of Christ’s birth reminds us that God is a God who is in control, and who works in our lives. He works even when we can’t see how He is working, yet He still works. He is even today working through ordinary people like you and me. He works and brings His plans to completion. The Advent hope is that the God who worked through the events leading up to Christ’s birth is still working today. He loves you and let us all be thankful as we enter the celebration of Christ’s first coming.

**Application:** While you may have already given some thought to the gifts you will buy for people this Christmas. You might also already be planning, stressing and wondering how you will get it all done. As we begin this journey through this year’s Advent Season, I begin by asking an important question: *‘What gift will you offer to Christ this Christmas?’*

**Prayer of reflection you might pray this week:** **“Heavenly Father, renew in me the passion to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. Make the experience of my conversion real and fresh so that I might be an effective witness for You. You have a plan for my life that is grander than I can imagine. When I am impatient, remind me that You are never early, or late; But ALWAYS on time. My hope is in You. Give me the courage to face the future with certainty, and the wisdom to follow in the footsteps of Your Son, today and forever. This is my prayer in the matchless, wonderful and compassionate name of Jesus, Amen!”**

*“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