



# REFLECTIONS

November 24, 2019

**Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks  
in all circumstances, for this is God's will for  
you in Christ Jesus.**

*1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

## From Perseverance to Hope

For many of us, holidays carry our minds back in time to remember when. We leaf through the pages of life to relive joys, heartaches, surprises, and disappointments. High points and low provide lessons learned, some painfully absent of pride to be the teacher of them. Prominent among those memories are the people we learned from. Often the lessons came less from what our mentors accomplished than from their faith and courage when called to work through difficult times.

James writes, *“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”* (James 1:2-5) And Paul echoes the thought, *“we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.”* (Romans 5:3-5)

Paul encourages us to, *“Give thanks in all circumstances.”* But in times of tribulation, joy usually doesn't top our list of emotions as James prescribed. Yet God is at work in this world and as followers of Jesus Christ, we are blessed to be invited onto his team. So today, let us...

*“Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name;  
make known among the nations what he has done,  
and proclaim that his name is exalted.  
Sing to the Lord, for he has done glorious things;  
let this be known to all the world.  
Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion,  
for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.”* (Isaiah 12:4-6)

And those trials I watched my mentors endure? God allowed their suffering not to teach *them* a lesson, but to teach *me* one.

From perseverance to hope, we have now become mentors too.

*Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
his love endures forever.* (Psalm 106:1)  
*Thanks be to God!  
He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* (1 Corinthians 15:57)

*You are the light of the world,*

*Richard +*

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