



REFLECTIONS

January 3, 2021

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

Broken

Give thanks for the pandemic of 2020? And give thanks to God for allowing COVID-19 to change life as we have known it by causing death of so many, and placing the world in a broken state? It feels unnatural to give thanks for such brokenness.

One might agree that the word ‘broken’ describes the state of the world today. But it’s not the first time for it. The world first fell into brokenness when a sneaky snake convinced Eve and Adam to eat fruit from a forbidden tree. Broken. Then, to get their attention, God expelled the world’s first couple from the perfect home He had made for them.

Soon, mankind strayed again. Broken. God responded with a great flood. Then finding the Israelites broken in Egypt, God, through Moses, led the enslaved people to the promised land only to have them faithlessly refuse to enter it. Broken. And on and on the stories go—mankind drifting from God into brokenness and God restoring them once they turned to him for help again. Likely, events leading up to today will also make history—broken.

Broken is the state when one is unable to help themselves, *and*, willing admit it. Maybe that’s the reason Paul told us to *give thanks in all circumstances*, great and small, good things and bad. When all our efforts fail, and there are no other places to turn, only then do we turn to God for help. Paul did and he learned: “*I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*” (2 Corinthians 12:10)

God warned us not to forget: *When the LORD your God brings you into the land he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you — a land with large, flourishing cities you did not build, houses filled with all kinds of good things you did not provide, wells you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant — then when you eat and are satisfied, be careful that you do not forget the LORD...* (Deuteronomy 6:10-12)

So, dear God, we turn to you today. The world is broken and we, your children, are to blame. We try to fix it ourselves because of pride that wants to prove we don’t need you; that we are as powerful as you. Some choose to believe you don’t exist at all. But our efforts seem only to aggravate it more. And throughout all the years from that beautiful beginning, only our brokenness lifts our heads to you. Today gracious LORD, we raise our arms and lift our faces to you.

*And we discover then that reaching solely to you is all you have asked of us all along.
Amen*

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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