



# REFLECTIONS

April 7, 2024, Refreshed from the Archives of November 23, 2008

**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*

## Giving Thanks

It happened decades ago, but I remember how hallway lights filtered a soft glow through a small crack in the doorway to my room, and muffled sounds from the nurses' station disrupted the quietness trying to nestle itself around my solitude. "It's just you and me, Lord," my mind uttered almost aloud, uncertain of what tomorrow might bring. Yet, I felt His presence helping me feel neither alone nor afraid.

The surgeon's knife would reveal the extent of my disease, but during those moments alone in my hospital room, I knew God would provide strength enough to endure whatever the diagnosis might be. *[For] we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.* (Romans 8:28)

That passage sometimes makes me step back from the blessings that make life good to see how hard times become blessings too. How much stronger we are from them; how much they prepare us for the next hardship or to help others through theirs. We are blessed by how much we grow from those difficult times. In moments of helplessness, what a blessing it is to feel God's presence. That's how I remember the night alone with Him at my side those many years ago.

Now, each day is one of thanksgiving: to celebrate the blessings of a loving family, a comfortable place to live, and comradery with dear friends. But I also give thanks for that night in a hospital bed with no one with me except my Lord. It was a time when He called me by name and reshaped my life with lessons to long remember—suffering strengthens resolve, and helplessness reveals God's presence.

So, "*Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.*" (Psalms 118:1)

*"You are the light of the world,"*

*Richard* +

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