

## Thankfulness In All Circumstances

Marian

### Scriptures:

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Luke 23:34

Romans 8:38-39

Philippians 4:8-9

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

There are times when circumstances make it very difficult to be obedient to this text. Maybe, like me, you have prayed your heart out and still a loved one remains poorly, or dies, and we feel anything but thankful. Life never runs smoothly and we may feel that God has deserted us in our deepest despair, believing that He never listens to our prayers when we are in our darkest valleys.

When I was a child in Junior School, I developed Psoriasis which spread rapidly until my whole body was covered with severe chronic Psoriasis. I began to hate school because I was taunted on the playground with cruel words. This led to a massive dose of self pity which began to affect our home life too. However, this was to change the day my mother took me into the garden for a little chat. It was a beautiful warm summer day and the flowers in the borders around the newly mown lawn were radiant as bees and butterflies danced around them. As I looked around in wonder, feeling secure to be home with my lovely kind mother, she suddenly began to ask me a few questions. “Do you love being able to see all these beautiful flowers and insects? Do you love hearing the birdsong coming from the hedge surrounding the garden? Do you love being able to run, skip, dance and make daisy chains with your sister? How would you feel if you were blind or deaf or crippled like some dear people are?” I told her I would hate that even more than I hated my psoriasis and asked why she was asking me these questions. She smiled and said, “Do you know that there are people with all kinds of disabilities all around the world who would swap places with you? Your psoriasis does not curtail the things you can do and enjoy. Have you realised just how much you have to be thankful for despite your psoriasis?”

My mother was a Christian and that day she changed my perspective. Not only was I no longer filled with self pity, but I began to feel deeply for the dear souls whose lives are exceedingly difficult. I began to count my blessings instead of bemoaning my woes. I began to ignore the taunting on the playground and to look for other children who may feel lonely or sad. Some had lost their father in the war. Others had been made homeless and were still living in tents whilst a Council estate was being built on a nearby field to house them.

The verse I have based this reflection on says, “give thanks in ALL circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you”. As I meditate upon those words I am reminded that no matter what this life throws at me, I will always have one gigantic reason to be thankful when I turn my eyes to look again upon my dear Lord Jesus, willingly dying for my sin upon the cruel

cross at Calvary, amid jeering and lashings that cut me to the core. And amid this He cried, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." Such immense love deserves my all. In Romans Chapter 8:38-39, the Apostle Paul writes:

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

AND

In Philippians 4:8-9 he teaches us how we can remain thankful in every circumstance:

"whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things..... and the God of peace will be with you."

**Prayer:** Precious Lord, I place my hand into Yours as I walk into the unknown future. Help me always to dwell upon all that is lovely, pure, true, and to show Your love, even to those who are less than loving toward me. Amid all the uncertainty and trials we continue to face today, help each one of us to turn our eyes upon You. Amen.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2tKVqZZiI4>