

Giving Thanks To The Father

As believers, we have so much to be thankful for that it's sometimes easy to take these gifts for granted. It's human nature for appreciation to wane over time as blessings become normality. This is why it is so important for us to take some time each day to consider just how much we have to be thankful for.

...being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Colossians 1:11-14 ESV

These verses close out a beautiful passage where Paul told the Colossians that he prayed for them to be filled with the knowledge of God's will, instructed them to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord Jesus, to bear good fruit, and to endure suffering for Christ with patience.

The transition between verses 11 and 12 can be also rendered with a comma instead of a semicolon, as, ***"...for all endurance and patience, with joy giving thanks to the Father,"***. I tend to prefer this, because it points to being thankful to the Father for something greater than our trials. We can and should be thankful for trials as they help grow our faith (cf: James 1:2-4), but Paul may have been talking about being joyful and thankful for something bigger: being ***"qualified to share in the inheritance of the saints in light."***

Once again, we get a glimpse into how little we had to do with our salvation. God the Father ***qualified*** us. In the Greek this is *hikanoō*, and means *to make sufficient, to render fit*. This happened long before we were born, as we learned in Ephesians 1:4, and isn't something we can do ourselves. The Father orchestrated our salvation, and Christ completed and perfects it (cf: Galatians 4:4-7, Hebrews 12:2). Truly an amazing gift worthy of being thankful for every waking moment. But there's even more!

The Father ***"has delivered us from the domain [power] of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son."*** Not only have we been qualified by grace to share in this great inheritance, but God has moved us out from under the power and authority of darkness (evil) into the eternal kingdom of Christ. What's so beautiful about this is it is all past tense. As believers, God has already delivered and transferred us to Christ's possession. Our souls are already His and united with Him through the Holy Spirit. Paul told the Thessalonians, ***"for you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness,"*** (1 Thes 5:5). As this truth soaks in, it should result in a deep sense of humble gratitude to our great and awesome Father God!

And we must also praise and thank our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, because through Him ***we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*** God's plan of salvation involved offering up His one and only begotten Son (cf: John 3:16), perfect, holy, sinless, and obedient, as a

living and eternal sacrifice for our sins (cf: Heb. 9:14-15). Formerly slaves of sin, we have now been redeemed – which is defined as *being released by payment of ransom*. The ransom for our sinful souls was far greater than we could possibly pay, akin to being asked to come up with trillions of dollars to be released from jail. Absolutely impossible! But to His praise and glory, Christ came up with the payment and satisfied our debt once and for all (Rom. 6:10, Heb. 9:12).

So whatever is happening today, take some time to give thanks with joy to God the Father and our Lord Jesus. In all situations and in all seasons, we have so much to be thankful for, as we consider that we are already citizens of Christ's kingdom, and that He paid a very expensive price to purchase and free us from the dark dungeon of sin. Let your heart be light and thankful as you ponder the magnificent and incomprehensible gift the Father and Son have given you in salvation.

~Associate Pastor Jeremy Preece
Truth Matters Church