



GIVING THANKS TO GOD

As a kindergarten teacher passed out gifts to her students, she asked what a proper response would be. Amidst the “thank you’s,” one student responded: “Oh... You shouldn’t have!”

We are not used to giving thanks. When we do, we’re not always so sure when and to what extent is appropriate. Most of the time, instead of being thankful for what we are given, we are quick to complain about what we don’t have. We receive so much from our parents, but it’s never enough. We learn much from our mentors, but blame our shortcomings on their insufficient teachings. Although we may have loyal friends, we focus on the one time we are wronged. Simply put, we are not used to giving thanks for what we have, because we are never satisfied.

However, David gave thanks to God because he was satisfied: “*The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want*” (Psalm 23:1). Trying to satisfy ourselves with the things of this world is impossible. No matter how much, or how new or amazing the things of this world may seem, no amount can be sufficient for us.

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Want to learn more about Binnerri English Ministry?
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If there is one recurring theme within God's Word, it is the idea of thanksgiving. We are constantly reminded and commanded to always give thanks, because as God's children, we have been given ultimate freedom. The Bible tells us to "enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise His name" (Psalm 100:4), "give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:18), and "give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever" (1 Chronicles 16:34). Without thanks, there cannot be true happiness, thus, in order to be truly happy, we must live a life of thanksgiving.

A young man named N.C. Hanks lost both eyes and both hands in a tragic mining accident. Unable to get over his despair, he tried unsuccessfully to commit suicide several times. One day, he attended a sermon by a Yale professor. The professor told the audience, "Each person has a mission from God." Upon meeting the professor afterwards, Hanks asked, "How could someone like me with no hands and eyes have a mission in life?" The professor said nothing for a moment, then replied, "However, you still have a mouth and ears. Even without eyes and hands, you can fully give glory to God with all you have left." Hanks returned home filled with hope from these words. He became a believer, repented and gave thanks for what he still had left to praise God. Afterwards, he attended Stanford and became a famous lecturer who shared his story and inspired many throughout his life.

It is the season for thanks. With all the happenings in the world around us, it's easier to complain, but instead of shedding tears over what we've lost, we should give thanks for what we have. Although the world may change, our God is always there and will never change. Knowing this, how can we not give thanks?

- Rev. Jim-Bob Park

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For each new morning with its light,
For rest and shelter of the night,
For health and food, for love and friends,
For everything Thy goodness sends.

~ Thanksgiving by Ralph Waldo Emerson

PASTOR'S CORNER



"Unless you are faithful in small matters, you won't be faithful in large ones. If you cheat even a little, you won't be honest with greater responsibilities" (Luke 16:10 NLT).

We all know that we are to be faithful. We all know that God is the faithful one. But have you thought about what that looks like in your life? Many times we think that faithfulness is about consistency, and it is. We think that faithfulness is about keeping our promises, and it is. We think that faithfulness is about loyalty and allegiance, and it is. But where someone becomes faithful is not in the big things, but in the small things. Everyone tries to be faithful in the big things, but it's in the small things that one shows true faithfulness.

You will never arrive at the place in life where you're too important to help with small tasks. God will never exempt you from the mundane. It's a vital part of your character development. The Bible says, "If you think you are too important to help someone in need, you are only fooling yourself. You are really a nobody" (Galatians 6:3 NLT).

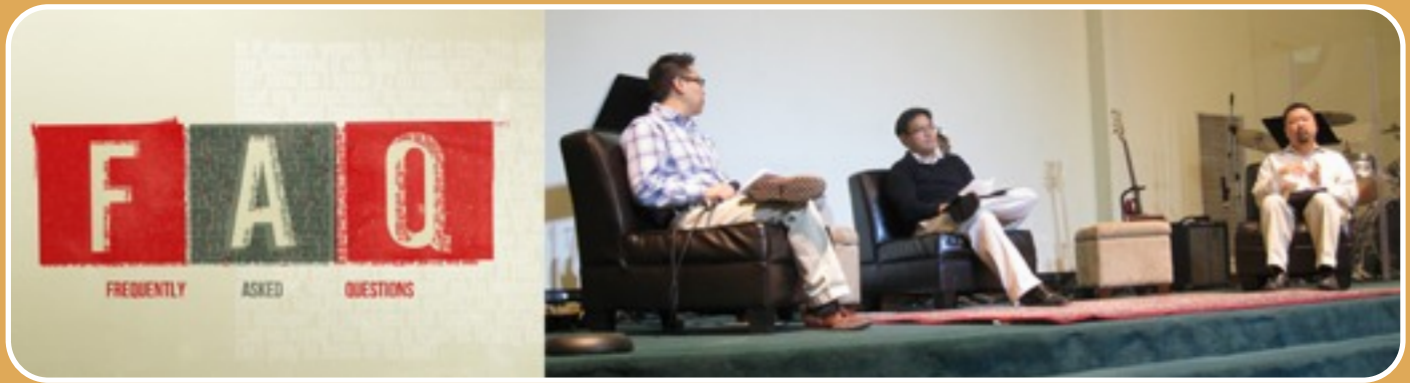
In fact, it is in these small services that we grow like Christ. Jesus specialized in menial tasks that everyone else tried to avoid: washing feet, helping children, fixing breakfast, and serving lepers. Nothing was beneath Him, because He came to serve. It wasn't in spite of His greatness that He did these things, but because of it, and He expects us to follow His example (John 13:15).

Small tasks often show a big heart. The little things in life determine the big things. Don't look for great tasks to do for God. Just be faithful in the small things. One author says, "The race to be a leader is crowded, but the field is wide open for those willing to be servants."

Sometimes you serve upward to those in authority, and sometimes you serve downward to those in need. Either way, you develop a servant's heart when you're willing to do anything needed.

So, be like God. Be like Jesus. Be faithful ... in the small things.

- PK



We recently concluded our series entitled FAQ. And in this series, we addressed some of the most common questions regarding faith, life, and other important issues from a Biblical perspective. Here are couple of answers to the questions we received. You can also find more Q & A on our website: www.binnerriem.org/faq.

What is God's will for my life?

Knowing God's will for our lives is sometimes difficult. We live in a world where we want it, "My way, right away." People want God to tell them specifically what to do, where to work, where to live, whom to date/marry, etc. However, God rarely gives people information that direct and specific. Yet, there are two keys to knowing God's will for a given situation: 1) Make sure that what you are asking for or considering doing is not something the Bible forbids. 2) Make sure that what you are asking for or considering doing will glorify God, and that it will help you grow spiritually. If these two things are true and God still is not giving you what you are asking, then it is likely not God's will for you to have what you are asking for. Or, perhaps you just need to wait a while longer for it. Sometimes, God says, "Yes!" At other times God says, "No." And many times, God says, "Wait." But every time, God says, "For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:11-13).

The only decision God does not want us to make is the decision to sin or resist His will. God wants us to make choices that are in agreement with His will. So, how do you know what God's will is for you? If you are walking closely with the Lord and truly desiring His will for your life, God will place His desires on your heart. The key is wanting God's will, not your own. "Delight yourself in the LORD and He will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4). If the Bible does not speak against it and it can genuinely benefit you spiritually, then the Bible gives you the "permission" to make decisions and to follow your heart. If you truly seek God's will with a humble spirit and an open mind, He will reveal His will to you.

How does God know everything we're going to do in the future yet we can still make our own decisions? Is it really free will or has God "predestined" everything?

We need to be careful to distinguish between God knowing something beforehand and predetermining that it will occur, overwhelming the attitude and behavior of the person. Jesus knew beforehand that Judas would betray him (John 6:64), but the bad choice of deciding to betray Jesus was made by Judas and he is to be blamed for it. It is true that God has planned for a future time of glory in the earth, but that does not mean that he has determined every decision that you will make yourself.

A useful analogy is when we watch a movie for the second time. We know what is going to take place because we have seen it before. But we are not causing it to happen. It is like that with God: he knows what is going to happen because he can foresee the future, but that doesn't mean he is causing it to happen.

The word "predestined" here means that God knows in advance what we will be like, and so is able to know who will be part of his kingdom and "conformed to the image of his Son". But it does not mean that he will force that outcome. Predestination just really means that God knows our destination even before we arrive there.

UPCOMING EVENTS

THUR - 11.18.10	SAT - 11.20.10	SUN - 11.21.10	TUE - 11.23.10	SAT - 11.27.10
College Gathering, 7:00 PM	Do Justice EM & Youth, 8:00 AM	Thanksgiving Sunday, 9:45 AM & 11:30 AM	Pathway Fellowship, 6:00 PM	Turkey Bowl EM vs. Youth, 1:00 PM

35TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



EM COUPLES RETREAT



Want to submit an article? We'd love to hear from you! E-mail us with your articles and ideas at connections@binnerriem.org. Submissions must be made by the third Sunday of each month. Want to serve in a different way? Join the *Connections* team! We are looking for: photographers, writers and other creative-minded individuals. E-mail us at connections@binnerriem.org for more information.