**Mad Gratitude**

***By Sis. Barbara Caldwell***

**1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 (NKJV) “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”**

God’s formula for happiness is this: Worry about nothing, pray about everything, thank God for anything, and keep your mind on the right things. If you follow it, the Bible promises, “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7 NKJV). Scripture tells us to “Give thanks in all circumstances.” James 1: 2 tells us to “…count it all joy when you fall into various trials.” So many people, including Christians, fail to apply these scriptures to their lives. One might question, how do you give thanks when you’ve just lost your job, when a loved one slips away, when you have more debt than paycheck or when you’ve just been told you have a terminal illness? Where is the joy? But notice that the Bible says to give thanks in all circumstances, not for all circumstances. There is a big difference!

Most of the time, God’s will is not done here on Earth; instead, people’s will is done. There’s a lot of evil in the world, and you don’t need to thank God for that. But you can thank God in the midst of it. Trust Him and depend on Him to get you through it.

The more deeply you understand God’s love, the more grateful you will become. The more deeply you understand God’s love, the less you will worry. The more deeply you understand God’s love, the more you will stand on these things: He is in control; He can bring good out of evil, and no matter what happens, God isn’t going to forsake you or stop loving you.

Giving thanks releases God’s joy, blessing, and viewpoint on the problems facing us. It defeats the devil’s plans to discourage and depress us. We find ourselves rising above our every circumstance with true joy, and we discover we are more than conquerors in Jesus Christ. It doesn’t take any effort to be grateful for the nice present someone just gave you. Anyone can do that. But being grateful in all circumstances takes mad gratitude.

So, start each day by giving thanks for God’s character, for His generous heart, for His mighty protection, and for the wisdom of His choices over our lives. God’s recipe for happiness isn’t a one-time shot. It’s something you need to follow every day.