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Hogs and Acorns

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My Granny used say, “*Now kids, don’t be like hogs and acorns.*” What did she mean? Hogs root around for acorns in the ground beneath an oak tree, never looking up to realize all along that the mighty oak tree was providing the acorns. In other words, hogs have no gratitude.

Scripture frequently refers to the Israelite’s lack of gratitude and God’s response. They were rarely satisfied with God’s deliverance, His miraculous power to their benefit, and His loving guidance in spite of their ungrateful spirit. They suffered dreadfully with the ‘hogs and acorns’ disease.

Lest we forget, God’s feelings about the importance of gratitude have not changed. Paul wrote to early Christians, “*Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful*” (Colossians 3:15). Paul also wrote by inspiration, “*In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you*” (1 Thessalonians 5:18), and “*Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Ephesians 5:20).

Was Paul saying a peaceful heart is a *thankful* heart? Yes. Did Paul say in *everything* give thanks? Yes. Did he say give thanks for *all* things? Yes. Paul’s words are even more profound when we stop to think of his first century readers and the peril in which they lived. They were subject to intense persecution from Jewish leaders as well as pagan government officials. In spite of these cruelties, they were a grateful people. Foxes Book of Martyrs gives an account of the peace and thankfulness early Christians expressed, even in the face of execution for their belief in Christ. The very thought of being thankful in the midst of adversity goes against every grain of human thought. Nonetheless, it is what God desires.

Gratitude is a rare virtue today. Folks may feel entitled to courtesies, gifts, or kindnesses that come their way, seeing no need for words of appreciation. Granny would say they suffer from the ‘hogs and acorns’ disease. God’s people are called to be different. A ‘thank you’ or an ‘I appreciate you’ is always appropriate. Gratitude is a small measure of grace we impart to the people with whom we daily rub shoulders. But more importantly, let us remember it is a virtue of great value to God, our Provider.

Today’s Verse: “*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God*” Philippians 4:6

Today’s Challenge: How many things can we find today of which to be grateful? Have we thanked God today for each of these blessings? Will we resolve to give thanks to God, even in adversity?

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