

11.28.10

Walking Dusty...

teacher: Dan Crist

About twelve years ago, I went to a prayer meeting at an evangelical church and heard something that is now changing my life. As our group was praying, one woman thanked God for her husband's recent job loss. I couldn't believe what I was hearing! She was a homemaker, her husband had lost his job, and she was thankful! These prayers were different than anything I had ever heard: people were speaking from their hearts. Their words were spoken as if they believed God was truly listening. Their requests revealed a belief that God could do something to bring good out of the situation. Because this woman knew these things (and more) about God, she was able to go to Him with thankfulness.

When Dan said he was speaking on thankfulness this week, God brought the memory of this prayer to me, and I realized how ungrateful I have been. The past year has been one of the most difficult I've ever had, and sadly, I haven't gone to God in thankfulness for very many things. In fact when times were hard, I became bitter, angry, frustrated, and depressed. Is it possible that God allowed me to experience this pain so that I could become thankful? This woman's prayer was a seed that was planted years ago, and through the hurt of the past year and the conviction of an ungrateful heart, God is growing that seed into a heart that can be more thankful. Isn't that just like Him? Turning something bad into something good . . .

"Be cheerful no matter what; pray all the time; thank God no matter what happens. This is the way God wants you who belong to Christ Jesus to live." (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 THE MESSAGE) When we want to be like our Rabbi, it might not be easy - but it will be life-changing!

Thank you, Father, for your generous provision throughout my life. Thank you for loving me enough to want to change me, and yet loving me just as I am, too. I am grateful that You have been the glue that has held my marriage together. I ask you to make my marriage stronger because of the challenges we have faced. Thank you for your Word that is never-changing and gives me guidance, and for the godly counsel You have brought into my life. Thank you for the blessing of children and relatives and for adopting me into Your family. Thank you for your willingness to redeem me through Jesus. Thank you for helping me see some of the hurt in the world and then sending your Spirit to guide me to help. Thank you for letting me see where You are already working – boy, are You busy!!! Thank you for not giving up on me. I'm sorry I haven't thanked you enough during this past year, and I'm so grateful that you will continue to bring about an attitude of gratitude in my life. Amen.

"My counsel for you is simple and straightforward: Just go ahead with what you've been given. You received Christ Jesus, the Master; now LIVE him. You're deeply rooted in him. You're well constructed upon him. You know your way around the faith. Now do what you've been taught. School's out; quit studying the subject and start LIVING it! And let your living spill over into thanksgiving." (Colossians 2:6-8 THE MESSAGE)

Questions to consider:

What does it mean to be thankful? Can we be thankful? How do we get to a deeper level of thanks?

We all have an attitude of entitlement, and yet we are really entitled to nothing. In what ways do we live like we're entitled to something? Is it causing us to sin in our relationships?

Ask: "What do you need for Christmas?" vs. "What do you want for Christmas?"

If everything in the world is stripped away, what would your relationship with God look like? Could you be thankful for something? Would you be bitter or angry or depressed?

Are we being transformed from the inside out, because of our relationship with Jesus?

Have we allowed Jesus to transform our heart so that we can change our community, both locally and globally?

Have we asked God to make us thankful? He loves to answer our prayers.

Counting your blessings can make you rich. How many blessings are you thankful for?

This Week's Memory Verse: *Philippians 4:6 - "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."*

Additional Scripture to Read: *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Colossians 2:6-8, Philippians 4:6, Acts 16:22-25, Acts 1:4-8, Psalm 100*

REMINDERS:

November 30 – Tuesday – Join us for our 1st "On Mission" meeting at 7 pm at SHU.

December 5th & 12th – The Gathering at SHU @ 6pm!

December 19th – 3rd:culture Event...watch the web & join us at the gatherings for more details.

December 24th – Christmas Eve Gathering @ 6pm – "A Mosaic Christmas"

**1MOSAIC – is committed to fill the week of December 6 – 13 at Share the Warmth!!! Please sign up at the gathering for a spot you would like to serve in.