

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

1:3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1:4 I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus,

1:5 for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind--

1:6 just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you--

1:7 so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1:8 He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1:9 God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ephesians 1:15-23

1:15 I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason

1:16 I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers.

1:17 I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him,

1:18 so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints,

1:19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.

1:20 God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,

1:21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come.

1:22 And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church,

1:23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

A thanksgiving prayer shows up in our recent lectionary texts that speaks to all the good in this season from Christ the King through Advent. Let us let it soak in our consciences instead of all the other distracting myths at this time of year: “For I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers.

Whom can we remember with thanks right now? Perhaps an old mentor or teacher has given you life or shared pain that cannot be even described fully. Perhaps the best words are: For this reason, I give thanks for you! Who needs to hear that right now?

A mentor and bosom friend of mine is Dr. Michael Frandsen, an unexpected angel in my life when I had very few. Once in my first role as youth pastor in the Presbyterian Church, Rev. Dr. Michael sent me on a store run for our regular Wednesday night dinner, as was our custom to prepare meals together for our people. Michael knew just how to gently nudge me in the right direction and he often spoke about my health practices as key to vitality as a minister. My selections for meal choices for church outings were high in fat and calories and often lacked nutritional qualities. Michael was overheard saying: “Well, Micah went to the store and we don’t know what he is getting but we know it will involve CHEESE” Another way he encouraged me was daily walks at our cemetery across from the church, where faith and mortality, the mysteries of the universe and where we were in our life were all discussed.

I needed reminders of a Soul Friend like my first Presbyterian Pastor, Michael Frandsen. Life is tedious and brief to quote the infamous clock maker from Alabama John McLemore’s favorite motto. Life is too short to forget to remember with thanksgiving good memories, great people and all the in between. Often it is people who bore pain with us and lived into patience and compassion as our God-bearers. We need thoughts and earnest prayers that call us to live into thanksgiving coming from our very lives that folks have poured into. This is THANKSLIVING!

How do we get there? Listen to these words to get started: “pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him.....” We need wisdom right now. That old school type of honest

reflection and time to be still and let God's truths speak to us individually and as the body of Christ. If we are not ready for thanksgiving, let us live a daily walk that can get us there with wisdom-filled decisions and living on purpose.

We are in a moment in our lives and world where we need the reminders that are spoken of here. Yes, we already know or should know, but we need to say it again. WE need to remind each other with THANKSGIVING. Live into your gift of gratitude for those who cannot. This is Thanks living from now through Advent celebrating the coming greatest gift of all: A child.

Our Advent texts swoop in with grace and peace from God our Parent. Like a Mother or Father God strengthens us and enriches us. We are Godchildren.

What a thought!

A person who has been such a Godmother to me is Elder Holly Dees. She daily gives to others, despite hardships in her own life. It is not about fake-joy with her. It's about genuine THANKS-GIVING. She gives as her very life; her living is a gift to many. Thanks be to God.

Who are you grateful for? A thanksgiving text in Advent and Christ the King Sunday should tell us that we need gratitude as a spiritual practice right now. Let us lean into a spirit of thanksgiving right now until it becomes second nature. Until it becomes Thanks Living. Amen.