

Mt Zion Christian Church Newsletter-NOVEMBER 2018

(Published in memory of Miss Lillian Sharpe)

How a Heavy Heart Gives Thanks

We are, for the most part, troubled people. We are troubled within, and troubled without. We are troubled in our bodies, and in our families. We are troubled in our workplaces, and in our churches. We are troubled in our neighborhoods, and across our nation.

We welcome trouble with our sin, but we are plagued by trouble even in our best efforts. Job's friend, Eliphaz, while not the best counselor, got it right when he said, "Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7). Jesus Himself said, "In this world you will have trouble" (John 16:33 NIV).

Therefore, we, for the most part, are burdened people, because troubled hearts carry heavy burdens with them.

And in the midst of all our nearly constant and complex trouble, Jesus says to us, "Let not your hearts be troubled" (John 14:1). And Paul, who knew more constant and complex trouble than most of us will know, says to us, "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

How are these commands possible? Most of what troubles us springs from moral, spiritual, or natural evil and corruption — and yet we're to give thanks?

Heaviest Heart in History

No one in the history of the world was burdened in his soul like Jesus on Thursday, April 2, AD 33. No one — no grieving spouse in a solitary house, no weeping parent beside a child's grave, no heart shattered by a love betrayed, no wordless ache for a wandering prodigal, no desolate soul staring at a terminal test result, no felon in an isolated cell of relentless shame knows the burden that pressed upon Jesus as He walked up the stairs to share the final meal of His mortal life on this earth.

It was the Passover, and Jesus was the Lamb. Like the ancient Father Abraham leading his trusting son up the slope of Mount Moriah, the Ancient of Days was leading his trusting Son of Man to a sacrificial altar (Genesis 22; Daniel 7:13). But unlike Isaac, the Son of Man fully knew what lay in store and He went willingly. He knew no angel would stay His Father's hand; no substitute lamb would be provided. He was the substitute Lamb. And His Father was leading him to slaughter where He would be crushed and put to grief (Isaiah 53:7, 10).

And oh, what grief and sorrow He bore (Isaiah 53:3)! Jesus fully knew the price He must pay to take away the sins of the world (John 1:29; 1 John 2:2). He knew the nature, scope, and weight of His Father's righteous wrath. "Crushed" was not a metaphor; it was a spiritual reality. The Son of Man (John 3:14), God the Son (Hebrews 1:1–3), the Word made flesh (John 1:14), the great I Am (John 8:58), the Lord Himself (Philippians 2:11), who came into the world for this very moment, would plead in bloody terror for the Father's deliverance before the end (John 12:27; Matthew 26:39)

Broken and Thankful

His burdens in body and soul would exceed every humanly conceivable measure. He would be despised and rejected by those in heaven and earth and under the earth. Yet He took bread — bread representing the breakable body holding it — and gave thanks and He broke it (Luke 22:19). With an incomparably heavy heart, the anticipated horror relentlessly pressing in on all sides of His consciousness, Jesus gave

thanks to His Father — the very Father leading Him into the deepest valley ever experienced by a human — and then He broke the bread.

We should not quickly or lightly overlook Jesus's gratitude because He's Jesus, as if knowing it was going to be all right in the end made it any easier. He was thankful because He did believe it would be all right (Hebrews 12:2). But we know little of the agony He felt or the spiritual assault He endured. What we do know is that He "in every respect [was] tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). So, in our difficulty to see past our troubles to the joy God promises us, we get an inkling of the infinitely greater difficulty He faced.

Learn from His Heavy Heart

When Jesus tells us not to let our hearts be troubled, and to give thanks in all circumstances, we can know that we have a high priest who is able to sympathize with us (Hebrews 4:15), and that He has left us an example, so that we might follow in His steps (1 Peter 2:21).

What is this example? In the face of unquantifiable, inexpressible evil — the worst trouble that has ever tortured a human soul — Jesus believed in God the Father's promise that His work on the cross would overcome the worst, hellish evil in the world (John 3:16–17). He believed that "out of the anguish of His soul" He would "see his offspring" and "prolong His days" (Isaiah 53:10–11). He believed that if He humbled Himself under God's mighty hand, His Father would exalt Him at the proper time (1 Peter 5:6), and that every knee would bow and tongue confess that He was Lord to the glory of His Father (Philippians 2:11).

It was that future grace of joy set before Jesus that enabled Him to endure the cross, and to give thanks as He was being brought there to be crucified. He is the founder and perfecter of our faith because He believed the Father's promise was surer than the doom that lay before Him (Hebrews 12:2). His giving thanks was a supreme form of worship, for it expressed like nothing else His trust in the Father.

We Can Give Thanks

Therefore, Jesus is able to say to us in our trouble, "Believe in God; believe also in Me" and, "Take heart; I have overcome the world" (John 14:1; 16:33). We who believe in Him have every reason to "be thankful" (Colossians 3:15). For an empty cross and empty tomb speak this to us:

In all our trouble, God makes known the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:10). He is working all things together for our good (Romans 8:28). He will complete the good work He began in us despite how things look now (Philippians 1:6).

If we trust the Father in the worst, darkest, most horrible troubles we face, He will make us more than conquerors (Romans 8:37–39). Every troubled tear we shed over the effects of the fall are kept in God's bottle (Psalm 56:8) and will be wiped away forever (Revelation 21:4).

It is possible to give thanks with heavy hearts in the midst of trouble. Trusting the Father by looking to Jesus (Hebrews 12:2), and remembering every promise is now "Yes" to us in Him (2 Corinthians 1:20), will lighten our burden (Matthew 11:30). It will pour hope and joy into our hurting hearts, giving rise to faith-fueled, worshipful thanksgiving.

(Jon Bloom----desiringGod.org)

Happy Birthday

- 11/1 Brice Stanfield
- 11/2 Sarah Vaughan, Ronald Barnett
- 11/4 Mark News
- 11/7 Joyce Tate, Mary Tatum
- 11/8 Sarah Lynch, Keyston Todd Young
- 11/10 Annette Wilson, Katrina Martin
- 11/11 Gail Tate Smith, Annette Skaggs
- 11/12 Cathy Stowe, Lorene Sutton
- 11/13 Tina Kirby, Amy Hall
- 11/14 Ashley Shue
- 11/15 Jeanette Holmes, John Byrd, Brittney Kendrick
- 11/16 Asie Glasgow, Susan Cates, Julia Johnson
- 11/17 Danny Gentry
- 11/18 Madison Byrd, Ryan Jones, Kristen Cole
- 11/20 Marvin Lynch
- 11/21 Jesse Webster
- 11/22 Paul Rigsbee
- 11/23 Kathryn Wilkerson, Stephanie Ray, Gene Evans
- 11/26 Cindy Kirby
- 11/27 Kim Oakley Hagler
- 11/28 Lou Ann Vaughan Myatt, Samantha & Lee Schnell
- 11/29 Jennifer Dean
- 11/30 Jeannie Parker

Happy Anniversary

- 11/12 Charles & Sherri Bradley
- 11/17 Don & Percilla Shepherd
- 11/22 Murray & Trisha Lynch
- 11/30 Mark & Dianne News

Each month we will show an individual's favorite hymn and Bible verse.

Teresa Moran: What A Friend We Have in Jesus

Proverbs 3:5-6

- 5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;**
- 6 in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.**

THANKSGIVING

H T H A N K F U L Y I G F T C
 A P I H S R O W A L N H O S A
 R T R G T Y P R A I S E O A R
 V S T S K Y P U R M S A T E I
 E I U N H T I A F A S R B F N
 S R A T A I H L U F E T A R G
 T H A N K S G I V I N G L E P
 T C D G O O D T I M E S L B A
 C H I L D R E N S S V T P M R
 H O T S E E S E E P I N U E A
 U L U U L N S C L I G U M V D
 R I R S B E E A C R R A P O E
 C D K E I G R E N I O F K N S
 H A E J B N T P U T F L I F E
 E Y Y A D S R U H T D N I K

Aunts, Bible, Caring, Children, Christ, Church, Cousins, Desserts, Faith, Family, Feast, Football, Forgiveness, Friends, Generosity, Good Times, Grateful, Harvest, Heart, Holiday, Jesus, Kind, Life, November, Parades, Peace, Praise, Pray, Pumpkin, Sharing, Spirit, Thankful, Thanksgiving, Thank You, Thursday, Trust, Turkey, Uncles, Worship

After you have found all the words, put the leftover letters in the correct order to form the *mystery answer*.

Last month's answer: **BABYLONIANS**

Our support group was unable to meet in October. The next luncheon will be on Nov. 7 at Cracker Barrel in Mebane at 11:30. Hope to see you there.

Libby Atkins

Activities for November 2018

Each Wednesday Night-----Adult Bible Study @ 6:30PM
Choir Practice @ 7:30PM

- 11/2 Potato peeling @ 8PM for Fall Festival
- 11/3 Mt Zion Fall Festival 4:30-6:30PM
Take out meals from 4:00-6:30PM
Daylight Savings Time Ends--Fall back 1 hour
- 11/4 Teacher's Appreciation
- 11/5 Ladies Circle--stuff Christmas shoeboxes @6PM
- 11/7 Mt Zion Support @ Cracker Barrel--11:30am
- 11/11 Veteran's Day Service--Flower Fund @ SS
- 11/12 7PM--BOCE Meets with Deacons/Deaconesses after
- 11/22 Happy Thanksgiving
- 11/24 Men's Prayer Breakfast moved to December 1st
- 11/25 Deacon's Fund Collection

Give thanks to the Lord,
for He is good.
His love endures forever.

Psalm 136:1

The Men's Prayer breakfast was held on October 27. Nine were present for a wonderful time of fellowship and some delicious food. Sick and hurting in our church, our families and our community were lifted up in prayer. Those attending were: Pete Enroughty, Haywood Shue, Cecil Shue, Johnnie Parker, Jerry Lane, Gary Moran Lewis Baker, Doug Atkins and Robert Bridges. Our next breakfast will be held on December 1st. Please come and join us.

Jerry Lane